UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Public Ideologies and Personal Meaning-Making in Postcolonial Grenada

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Anthropology

by

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2012

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The Dissertation of Noga Shemer is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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2012

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family – my husband, Eran, beloved companion on the Grenadian adventure and unwavering supporter through a journey that has spanned eight years, seven houses, four states, two countries, and the birth of our two children. My parents, Cynthia and Meir, for the countless ways they supported me through this project. My sister, Yael, for providing a space in which I could write. My son, Alon, with whom I was pregnant during my last period of fieldwork in Grenada, and daughter, Aviv, who arrived just after I finished the first draft. Their presence has added a profound new dimension to this enterprise. And last, but not least, Shirly, the world's best traveling companion.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Public Ideologies and Personal Meaning-Making in Postcolonial Grenada

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

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This ethnography of the small Eastern Caribbean nation of Grenada explores what it means to today's post-Revolution generation to be Grenadian. The dissertation is both a study of postcolonial nationalism and a person-centered exploration of meaning-making in the face of complex national narratives. Through an analysis of ethnographic data collected during fieldwork from 2006-2009, I examine the dynamics between dominant

ideologies about the nation and the personal worlds of youth as they make sense of their lives and country.

In the first part, I examine public representations of the nation and argue that there are two master narratives circulating about Grenada and its people. The "Isle of Spice" narrative is future-oriented, and utilizes development rhetoric to unite Grenadians as one people, one family, advancing toward a more independent and prosperous nation. The "Island of Conflict" narrative encompasses the nation's unsettled and violent past, especially the period of the Grenada Revolution (1979-1983), and depicts Grenadians as conflict-oriented and divided.

What is the relationship between these two narratives in the minds of Grenadians? In the second half of the dissertation, I explore the personal worlds of thirteen Grenadian youth. Through open-ended, in-depth interviews, this person-centered approach considers how individuals process public narratives in light of lived experience. Their meaning-making processes suggest: (1) contradictory narratives are differently internalized to manage cognitive dissonance, (2) politically alienated and uneducated about history, the youth focus on Grenada's economy and development, (3) the dual narratives foster a strong pre- and post-Revolution generational divide, (4) the common emic perception that Grenadians have a weak national identity must be examined in the broader context of the region's history and contemporary global power relations.

By holding both public and personal worlds in focus, it is possible to discern the complex implications of the ways in which individual minds make meaning of national ideologies and, in turn, inform the thrust of these evolving national narratives. As subjects and agents, Grenadians are engaged in an ongoing process of defining

themselves and their nation in the face of dynamic internal and external social, political, and economic pressures.

I. Introduction

This ethnography of the small Eastern Caribbean nation of Grenada explores what it means to today's post-Revolution generation to be Grenadian. During my three year fieldwork period, 2006-2009, I maintained dual foci: I examined the public face of life in Grenada through its myriad domains and representations in order to understand the dominant ideologies about the nation; I also explored the personal experiences of the post-Revolution generation as they made sense of their lives and their country. I present here a balance between representational and experiential approaches with the aim of conveying a multi-dimensional, textured portrait of life in Grenada today.

This is both a study of national ideology and a person-centered exploration of meaning-making in the face of complex national narratives. By refusing to privilege one approach over the other, this ethnography has two main objectives. First, I aim to contribute to the anthropological literature on the Caribbean a study of Grenada that reflects the historical-political-economic realities of this postcolonial nation. I present a panel of voices from a new generation that are actively and creatively making sense of this world and their place in it. The goal is to convey a nuanced sense of life on this small Caribbean island by exploring numerous sources and vantages, painting a broader picture than that afforded by many excellent, but more narrowly-defined, contemporary ethnographic endeavors. This multi-faceted approach is intended to provide the reader with a better understanding of the complex struggles this nation faces as it works toward achieving meaningful independence, as well as a sense of Grenada's young people as

they work within these realities to forge a life for themselves and envision a future for their nation.

The second objective of this ethnography is to further a theoretical argument about the anthropological study of nationalism and national identity. Top-down studies of nationalism run the risk of presenting national ideologies as uniformly-distributed, hegemonic, single narratives that are presumed to be absorbed and reproduced among its citizens, from whom the reader hears very little. Further, the discovery that there is a lack of a unified, hegemonic narrative can lead to the oversimplifying assumption that nationalism must, therefore, be weak. On the other hand, a bottom-up, or person-centered, approach to national identity must also take into account the broader picture within which the actors negotiate meanings and create their own understandings of themselves and their nation. This larger context must also attend to the complexity of public narratives, lest this approach inadvertently reproduce the idea that the nation possesses a single hegemonic ideology, or that a lack thereof translates into a weak national identity.

As Michel-Rolph Trouillot notes, a weakness of the peripheral state is ―its inherent difficulty in producing identification effects," the latter defined as ―that capacity to develop a shared conviction that ‗we are in the same boat' and therefore to interpolate subjects as homogenous members of various imagined communities" (2003:94, 90). Acknowledgement of this ―difficulty" does little to advance our understanding of the ways in which the postcolonial state generates particular ideologies, nor does it account for how they are received, rejected, or interpreted by its citizens. ―Ethnographies centering on the lived experience of subjects will have to demonstrate when such effects

are produced, through what institutional clusters, and explore the consequences of this *déplacement* … the political stakes are high enough to warrant such research. So are the intellectual ones" (ibid.:94). For this reason, I argue that the study of both nationalism and national identity must incorporate this dialectic within the parameters of the study itself. Public worlds cannot speak for the people who live within them any more than the experience of nationals can be understood outside of the context of the public worlds in which they live. The structure of this study and the presentation of the dissertation are intended as the actualization of this theoretical stance, bringing both representational and experiential approaches into a balanced framework in which each reflects upon the other.

Historical Background

Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique is the second-smallest independent country in the Western Hemisphere (after St. Kitts and Nevis), with an area of just 133 square miles. It is located north of Trinidad and Tobago, and south of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It is part of the Windward Islands group of the Eastern Caribbean. The nation-state consists of three islands: Grenada (pop. 95,000), Carriacou (pop. 7,000) and Petite Martinique (pop. 900)[1]. The majority of the population (estimates range from 80-95 percent) are of African descent. The rest are classified as "mixed" or of European descent. There is a small population of Indians, Chinese, Syrians, and Lebanese. English is the official language, but there is a wide postcreole continuum (Alleyne 1985:157) of

[1] Unless otherwise noted, my use of the term Grenada refers to the main island which is my field site. I do not tackle the question of national identity in relation to these smaller dependencies within this dissertation.

local dialect in which conversations are most often expressed. Grenada is a parliamentary democracy and a member of the British Commonwealth. In 2004, national exports were estimated at US$40 million; imports totaled US$276 million.

Grenada was first sighted by Columbus in 1498, but the Carib Indian inhabitants resisted colonization for over a century. In the seventeenth century, the French established the first sugar estates and initiated the slave trade to the island. A tug of war with England ensued, with Britain finally claiming the island in 1763. The following years saw Grenada's rise as a major producer of coffee, cotton, sugar, and cacao. It is important to emphasize the economic legacy of centuries of the production of raw goods for export, as this pattern is still visible in Grenada today. As Bonham Richardson notes, "the character of each of the insular plantation colonies was imprinted by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century trade restrictions. In general, local manufacturing … was prohibited by a complex system of duties and fines" (1992:53). British mercantile policy mandated that all British colonies buy goods from Britain (Steele 2003:179), and restrictive policies were enacted to ensure that local manufacturing was prohibited (Richardson 1992:52). Sugar was eventually supplanted by cocoa as the main export, with nutmeg, bananas, and cocoa becoming the lead products of the twentieth century. Until 2004's Hurricane Ivan, Grenada was the second largest nutmeg exporter in the world. As Beverley Steele notes, "an unfortunate heritage of the plantation era and the present preoccupation with cocoa and nutmeg production was that self-sufficiency in foodstuffs had never been a priority for those directing agricultural policy" (2003:267). This remains an important issue in Grenada to this day.

Following emancipation, the British West Indian colonies saw an increase in small-land holdings owned by former slaves, indicating the emergence of alternatives to estate labor (Young 1993:56). In Grenada, while some laborers continued to work on estates and others engaged in share-cropping with the estate owners, there was a rapid rise in peasantry. The 1938 *Commission of Inquiry into the Economic Conditions of Wage Earners in Grenada* legally defined peasants as ~~"a~~ small holder engaged in the cultivation of an area of land not exceeding ten acres in extent" (cited in Brizan 1984:226). These ex-slaves rented, leased, or owned small lots of land, resulting in the growth of new villages throughout the countryside. Grenadian peasantry emerged in the early twentieth century as ~~"~~one of the largest in the Caribbean, relative to size; young; predominantly Black" (ibid.:227). In a comparison between Grenada and St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Tobago, Barbados, and Montserrat, Grenada had the largest number of freeholds in the years 1844-1897 (Young 1993:58).

Class issues came to dominate the sociopolitical scene as Grenada entered the twentieth century. As Gordon Lewis notes of Grenada:

> Small island pride, strong feelings of localist loyalty, keep people together remarkably well. There is no colour problem of Barbadian dimensions, no ethnic-group problem of Guyanese dimensions; mainly because, as in the case of Grenada, sugar cultivators disappeared early on to make room for the class of small holders and because, too, the original white planter class was early on in part supplanted by a Creole mulatto group, a process culminating in the evacuation of the last of the ~~"o~~ld" English families under the pressure of Gairyism in the 1950's. But class snobbery remains still a potent force. [1968:163-164]

The presence of a creole mulatto group does not necessarily signify a primary identification with the new, local society – one of the keys to the consolidation and cultivation of national identity (Mintz 1971). Instead, Grenadian social structure retained

the traditional class-color pyramid, with the new "brown" elites accused of cultivating an identity attached to the metropole and favoring their class interests. The peasantry continued to survive under extremely oppressive social and economic conditions, sowing the seeds of unrest which would lead to the social revolution of the 1950s. For example, Steele notes that in 1935, the daily earnings for estate labor had remained the same for almost one hundred years (2003:293). Indeed, M.G. Smith advanced his "plural society" thesis based on research conducted in Grenada in 1952-3. His theory maintains that multiple and antagonistic cultural sections co-exist with their own discrete value systems and institutions; the total society is held together by one stratum which monopolizes power. Smith argued that "Grenada in 1953 was an excellent instance of Creole plural society in which political and economic control was traditionally vested in a numerically small, culturally dominant, and socially exclusive section" (1965b:236-237).

Prime Minister Eric Gairy came to power in 1951, riding the tide of regional labor unrest and creating Grenada's first populist movement. However, backed by his notoriously violent "Mongoose Gang," Gairy became an increasingly despotic leader, especially after Grenada achieved full independence from Britain in 1974. In 1979, Maurice Bishop overthrew Gairy in an almost bloodless coup, and his New Jewel Movement came to power. The Grenada Revolution, 1979-1983, launched a "populist socialism" which was ultranationalist and anti-imperialist (Lewis 1987:192). Grenada established ties with Cuba, the Soviet Union, and East Germany, and was quickly perceived as a threat by the United States. Grenada became the only English-speaking Caribbean island to undergo a revolution.

The new People‘s Revolutionary Government (PRG) enacted policies to bring real improvement to the lives of Grenadian working people. There were high levels of community involvement, national spirit, and volunteerism during the revolutionary period, as the impoverished masses experienced the first regime change that was ideologically-oriented toward improving their quality of life. The PRG‘s programs saw a decrease in unemployment and imports, and an increase in health care, literacy, and educational opportunities. All levels of education were made free, with a book and uniform assistance program to aid needy children. A literacy program registered three thousand persons, and scholarship programs to Cuba were initiated. Healthcare was also free. The PRG revived agriculture and opened farm schools to attract the youth. The Marketing and National Import Board (MNIB) took over the sale of farm produce; it is one of the few revolutionary institutions to survive in Grenada to this day. Food-processing factories were established locally. Hundreds of low-cost houses were built. With Cuba‘s help, the PRG undertook construction of an international airport – a project that greatly alarmed the United States. Ronald Reagan believed the airport was a Cuban-Soviet military installation, built for the purpose of shipping troops to South and Central America (Steele 2003:387-9). Tourism remained an important aspect of the PRG‘s development plan, but the industry fared poorly under Grenada‘s new militarized image. Low world prices for cocoa and nutmeg further undermined the PRG‘s efforts to showcase economic improvements under its regime, and as the cost of living rose, the people became increasingly disillusioned. By 1983, the PRG turned to the International Monetary Fund for a structural adjustment program (ibid.:391).

While a majority of Grenadians were devoted to their charismatic leader, Maurice Bishop, the foreign, rigid Marxist-Leninist ideology underpinning the PRG‘s Central Committee was never successfully spread to the masses. As Bishop‘s early promises to hold free elections turned to naught, an increasingly totalitarian government spread discontent among the people. During the PRG‘s rule, free elections were never reinstated and voices for the opposition were censored, or imprisoned. Over four years, an estimated 1,000 (Steele 2003:393) to 3,000 (Brizan 1998:421) persons were detained without trial. A prison camp was established at Hope Vale; reports of torture and abuse of prisoners still haunt Grenadians today. The PRG used the public schools for Marxist indoctrination, and secondary school students were enlisted in the Militia. The anti-religious stance of the communist regime was particularly difficult for many Grenadians to accept.

In October 1983, a minority faction of Marxist-Leninists within the government, led by the Party‘s ideologue, Bernard Coard, placed Maurice Bishop under house arrest. The masses immediately took to the streets in support of their leader, shouting –No Bishop No Revolution!” (Brizan 1998:436). The scene quickly unraveled; the exact chronology of events remains contested. Bishop was led to Fort Rupert (today‘s Fort George) to give a radio address to the people; the Coard faction perceived a popular uprising against their Leninist Forces; the People‘s Revolutionary Armed Forces arrived and shooting ensued; Bishop, two other cabinet members, and an unknown number of protesters on the fort were killed. Six days later, American troops landed in Grenada and seized full control.

The United States offered multiple justifications for the operation. Chief among these was the purported need to protect American lives, catapulting American-run St. George‘s University medical school, founded in 1977, into the international spotlight. There is, however, ample evidence that these students were not endangered prior to the military operation. Indeed, school founder and chancellor, Charles Modica, refused to comply with a request from the U.S. Ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean that he publicly call for an American intervention (Lewis 1987:104). Ninety percent of the students themselves wished to stay (Zunes 2003:3). The U.S. also claimed that there was a Cuban military buildup on the island, and the new airport under construction was alleged to be a Soviet/Cuban air base. The military operation was further justified by the request for aid by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States – a request drafted by U.S. officials and signed by select Caribbean leaders (ibid.:4).

In spite of evidence that the U.S. operation was premeditated and unjustified, most Grenadians were greatly relieved by the American presence. The massacre on the fort and subsequent 24-hour curfew terrorized the population, many of whom believed that the Americans‘ arrival was an answer to their prayers. Today, Grenada celebrates Thanksgiving Day annually on October 25th as a day to give thanks to the Americans who restored law and order. On the other hand, Canada, England, and the United Nations were strongly critical of the maneuver, and intellectuals abroad have written condemnations of the American operation. Analyses have also focused on the role of the conservative West Indian elite who felt threatened by the Grenada Revolution, and the region‘s enduring political, economic, and psychological dependencies (Lewis 1987:147-8). Today, Grenadians speak about the event as either an Intervention or Invasion,

depending upon their political views. It is also usually referred to as the U.S. or American Intervention/Invasion, in spite of the participation of a small number of Caribbean forces.

After the American operation, Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique eventually restored elections and came under the leadership of the New National Party (NNP), a center-right government. The NNP was defeated by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in 1990, but regained power in 1995. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Keith Mitchell, NNP led the government for thirteen more years until defeat by the NDC in 2008. The U.S. has provided massive financial aid to Grenada (and funded completion of the airport). As Lewis notes, the major architects of the donations have been the Americans, and ~~"t~~he philosophy of the reconstruction effort was one of unbridled free enterprise capitalism" (1987:183). As a leading donor following 2004's Hurricane Ivan, it is clear that U.S. priorities will also have a major impact on these latest reconstruction efforts. For example, in the Grenadian government's 2006 publication detailing the recovery effort, it is noteworthy that USAID's funding of the Grenada Business and Agriculture Revitalization Project, devoted to agriculture, business recovery and training, and construction, ultimately directed all funds toward tourism development. The only agricultural industries which were supported were those directly tied to hotels or the production of exotic plants and flowers for sale to the tourists (Government of Grenada 2006).

The mass destruction of crops following Hurricanes Ivan and Emily in 2004 and 2005, respectively, and a perceived governmental emphasis on tourism, have resurrected many of the historical concerns centered on agriculture and peasantry in Grenada. Land

used for agriculture has been declining since the 1960s. Interventions in the reallocation of land for cultivation have historically been exercised by the state, beginning with the Land Resettlement Scheme of 1910, followed by Gairy's "Land for the Landless" program, and the PRG's 1979-1983 creation of the Grenada Farms Corporation (Williams 2003; Steele 2003). Today, the state owns only ten percent of land in Grenada, the lowest level of state-owned lands in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (Williams 2003:iv). Housing needs and tourism development have encroached upon agricultural lands, also causing dramatic inflation in land prices. In 1990, agriculture accounted for 13.4 percent of GDP; this declined to 8.2 percent by 2000, yet employment in the agricultural sector only dropped from 18 percent to 17 percent (ibid.:4). Poverty in Grenada was estimated to be 32 percent of the population in 2000 (ibid.:2). As Sidney Mintz notes, Caribbean peasantries have never existed as an independent and self-sufficient population, but have always maintained intricate connections to the local – and global – economy (1985:138-9; see also Trouillot 1988). While large estates have traditionally monopolized state concerns, peasants continue in their struggle for land, resources, credit. These issues are today compounded by the invention of synthetic substitutes for traditional crops, larger-scale production, and competition from other tropical regions in the global market (Mintz 1985:151). Migration patterns reveal the toll of these struggles, as the farming labor force seeks wage labor in local urban areas or abroad. These economic struggles must be also be viewed in a historical light: "for centuries independent cultivation offered to the Caribbean masses the most important and dignified alternative available to plantation wage labor or migration" (ibid.:152). Today

in Grenada, loss of the agricultural base is read by many as a return to conditions of servitude in an era of neocolonialism.

The travel and tourism economy today accounts for 33 percent of GDP and 33 percent of general employment (WTCC 2007), reflecting a rapid rebound to pre-Ivan levels. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Grenada ranks #15 out of 176 countries for relative contribution of travel and tourism to the national economy. This reflects the fact that the Caribbean is the most tourism-intensive region in the world (WTCC 2004). Advocates within the tourism sector highlight the ways in which the agriculture and tourism sectors can be mutually beneficial, echoing USAID's funding strategy. Tourism generates a major portion of the region's revenues, yet in many ways it is a contemporary extension of the Caribbean's traditional "monocrop," sustaining historical vulnerabilities and dependencies. Nevertheless, many perceive the tourism industry as the best – and even the only – path toward modernization and development. The destruction wrought by Hurricane Ivan throws these perspectives into bold relief, as limited resources are allocated to advance development priorities established by national and transnational organizations.

Grenadians proudly proclaim that there is "never a dull moment," and the truth of this statement is belied by the placid Caribbean paradise sold to tourists on a daily basis. Without historical background, a visitor would never guess that a Revolution was created and extinguished among these people characterized as warm, laid-back, and hospitable by Grenadians and visitors alike. The marks of Hurricane Ivan are more readily visible: roofless churches, new street signs stamped with USAID, and families still living under blue tarp. Today, Grenadians are actively constructing a sense of their nation and

themselves. The complex question of what it means to *be* Grenada and *of* Grenada (cf. Cohen 1998:194), viewed in light of the island's turbulent history and visions for its future, is best understood by exploring both public ideologies of the nation and meaning-making within Grenadians' personal worlds.

A Chronology

The following selective chronology is intended as a general overview of Grenada's early history and an aid to the reader concerning the more recent events discussed in the following chapters. It is derived primarily from George Brizan's excellent history, *Grenada: Island of Conflict* (1984), but draws also from the other comprehensive history text written by a Grenadian, Beverley Steele's *Grenada: A History of Its People* (2003).

1498	Columbus sights Grenada on his third voyage
1609	First attempt by the English to settle Grenada; Caribs resist and the attempt fails
1626-27	France and England both claim Grenada
1638	French attempt to colonize Grenada; Caribs resist and the attempt fails
1650	The French under Du Parquet create a settlement and wage war on the Caribs
1654	Virtual extermination of the Caribs
1664	Grenada comes under the administration of the French West India Co.

1674	Grenada officially becomes a French colony
1700	Conducting of the First Census: 257 whites; 525 slaves, 53 free coloured. (In 1799, Grenada has 30,000 slaves.)
1714	Coffee and cocoa introduced
1763	Grenada ceded to Britain at Treaty of Paris
1764-80	Grenada is the leading coffee, cotton, sugar and cacao producer in the Windward Islands
1779	Grenada captured by French
1783	Grenada restored to Britain under the Treaty of Versailles
1795-6	Fedon Rebellion. An uprising against British rule by free coloureds, Roman Catholics, and French-speaking Grenadians. Led by Julien Fedon, a free coloured Grenadian, estate owner, and strong supporter of the ideals of the French Revolution, his efforts were increasingly supported by slaves; by early 1796, a general slave revolt against the plantation system was an essential part of the Fedon Rebellion. At its peak, insurgents seized control of the entire island except St. George‘s. British reinforcements eventually quashed the rebellion.
1823	Free coloureds of Grenada demand full civil and political rights
1832	Free coloureds receive civil and political rights
1838	Emancipation
1848	Introduction of metayage (share-cropping) system
1857-68	Cocoa replaces sugar as main crop
1857-85	3,205 Indian indentured workers arrive

1875	Old Representative system of governance begins to crumble. House of Assembly and Legislative Council, Grenada's 112-year-old legislative bodies historically run by elites, dissolved to create single legislative chamber.
1877	Grenada becomes a Crown Colony
1915	Establishment of newspaper, *The West Indian*, devoted to advancing the causes of self-government and creation of a Federation of the British West Indies
1924	End of Crown Colony rule with minor constitutional amendments; non-elected leaders retain control of government
1940-1950	Genesis of trade union movement
1951	Universal adult suffrage. General strike led by Eric Gairy; he and his Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) sweep the polls
1958-1962	Grenada is part of the short-lived Federation of the West Indies
1967	Grenada becomes an Associate State of Britain with a new constitution
1971-2	Gairy's Land for the Landless program
Mar 1973	Formation of New Jewel Movement (NJM). Their *Power to the People* manifesto, published that same year, included calls for agricultural reform, agro-industries, free secondary education, national health insurance, and nationalization of banks.
Nov 18, 1973	'Bloody Sunday.' Politically-motivated beatings of six New Jewel Movement members, including Maurice Bishop, ordered by Eric Gairy – later viewed as his political suicide.

Jan. 21, 1974	_Bloody Monday.‘ Gairy orders his secret police to violently quell the month of strikes and demonstrations which followed Bloody Sunday. Rupert Bishop, Maurice‘s father, is shot and killed.
Feb 7, 1974	Grenada‘s Independence. Gairy becomes first Prime Minister. For the next five years, Gairy enacts policies to monopolize power, including making the population economically dependent upon his government, crushing dissent, and creating a highly centralized bureaucracy in which he acted as key decision-maker.
1976	St. George‘s University established by an act of Parliament
1976	People‘s Alliance forms against Gairy‘s government and wins six seats against Gairy‘s nine. Parliament continues to be manipulated and dominated by Gairy.
1977	Queen Elizabeth II knights Sir Eric Gairy
Mar 13, 1979	Beginning of the Grenada Revolution. People‘s Revolutionary Government, led by Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard, overthrow Gairy and seize power in an almost bloodless coup.
Oct 8, 1983	Internal conflict within the People‘s Revolutionary Government‘s leadership leads to Bishop being placed under house arrest by the Central Committee
Oct 19, 1983	Mass demonstrations call for Bishop‘s release. The People‘s Revolutionary Army (PRA) executes Bishop and his comrades on Fort George, and an unknown number of civilians are massacred (estimates

range from 19 to 400). A 24-hour curfew is imposed by a quickly-formed Revolutionary Military Council (RMC). The bodies disappear.

Oct 25, 1983 United States military intervention/invasion in Grenada.

Oct 25, 1984 Point Salines International Airport opened, funded by United States aid

Dec 3, 1984 First election after the Revolution. New National Party (NNP) wins, led by Mr. Herbert Blaize. (Gairy returns from U.S. to lead GULP, and still receives 37 percent of the votes.)

Apr 1986 Trial of so-called "Grenada Seventeen" accused of the murder of Bishop and others. Fourteen convicted.

1990 National Democratic Party (NDC) wins elections, led by Mr. Nicholas Braithwaite. He is best known for his "homegrown structural adjustment" program which returned Grenada to a creditworthy position after being declared uncreditworthy by international financial organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank.

1994 Mr. Nicholas Brathwaite demitted office to allow Mr. George Brizan (author of *Grenada: Island of Conflict*) to become Prime Minister and to take the party into the June 1995 general election

1995 NNP wins elections and Dr. Keith Mitchell becomes Prime Minister for thirteen years

Sept 2004 Hurricane Ivan hits Grenada

July 2005 Hurricane Emily hits Grenada

Dec 18, 2008 In 2007, Privy Council in London ordered review of prisoners‘ sentences by Grenada High Court: Justice Francis Belle rules to free three prisoners, with the last of the ―Grenada Seventeen" to be released in 2009

2008 NDC wins elections, led by Mr. Tillman Thomas

Theoretical Context

This dissertation addresses the ways in which people creatively draw upon their personal worlds of experience and public ideologies of the nation to construct a sense of national identity. The investigation of nationalism and identity brings together two important bodies of contemporary anthropological theory. Recent scholarship places great emphasis on the role of discipline, hegemony, and ideology in the creation of modern nation-states (Foucault 1977; Gramsci 1971; Williams 1977; Althusser 1971). Many studies of nationalism draw upon a representational, top-down approach, focusing upon the politically-motivated manipulation of public ideologies and symbols of the nation and its citizens (Anderson 2006; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Handler 1988). This approach also reveals the ways in which discourses about a nation‘s past and future are deeply intertwined with nationalist ideology, implicating development rhetoric and revisionist writings of history (Trouillot 1995; Malkki 2001; Segal 1989; Edelman and Haugerud 2005).

At the same time, person-centered ethnographies and experiential approaches to identity reveal the complex ways in which individuals make meaning from public symbols and discourses, negotiating, resisting, and creatively constructing the identities

which are integral to their sense of self (Levinson and Holland 1996; Parish 1996; Holland et al. 1998). The concept of identity has thus emerged as a key theoretical tool with which to explore the intersection between the individual and the collective, the personal and the public, and the creative and the structured dynamics of life within culture and society (Rouse 1995).

This research project draws upon both personal and public worlds in an effort to address a critical paradox in anthropological theory which is thrown into relief by these two perspectives: how can humans be products of their society and producers of innovation and change? Studies of nationalism and identity have often reproduced, rather than challenged, this dichotomous approach. New theoretical efforts to resolve this paradox are emerging, such as the social practice theory of identity (Holland et al. 1998; Holland and Lave 2001) and mediational models (Cole 1996; Wertsch 1991), which build upon the work of Vygotsky (1978, 1987), Bakhtin (1981), and Bourdieu (1980). This study of national identity contributes to these efforts to rethink the relationship between persons as agent and subject by providing an ethnographically-grounded examination of the ways in which Grenadian youth actively draw upon symbolic productions of the nation and personal experiences to create their own ideas about their country and their place in the world.

This study of national identity is situated within existing anthropological literature on identity and self, identity in the Caribbean, as well as studies of nationalism, development, and globalization. By bridging these areas of scholarship, this work contributes to our understanding of the relationship between individual identity-making and national discourses in the context of postcolonial nation-building and neoliberal

capitalist globalization. The following sections review representative examples of the existing literature, with an emphasis on their relevance for Caribbean studies.

Nationalism, Development, and Globalization

This section examines the connections between nationalism, development, and globalization, particularly as they relate to the study of national identity and the Caribbean. Segal and Handler (1992) argue that nationalism has been falsely universalized as the realization of human nature, while also overly associated with Europe. While their own definition emphasizes the fluid and contingent nature of nationalism as something constantly invented by social actors, they conclude that nationalism has designated a distinct set of social practices for the last two centuries. These practices include: "the forming of boundaried social wholes of supposedly like individuals, and the privileging of such boundaried wholes as the legitimate foundation of sovereign territorial states" (ibid.:4). These practices are constitutive of an "ideal-typical model" of the nation, in which each nation is "a bounded, unshifting set of persons, the persons of each nation are joined not by complementary relations between hierarchically differentiated persons, but by the grouping of persons with a common, national identity … each nation is fundamentally constituted by a principle of equivalence or equality" (ibid.:3). The authors argue that these qualities of boundedness and homogeneity are contingent features of social orders rather than universals, and locate the cultural specificity of this particular set of relations in the history of Europe and its colonies.

One of Segal and Handler's most important observations is that "nationalism emerged from globally dispersed power relations – relations which constituted, reciprocally, nationalized European selves and raced, but not nationed, Others" (1992:2). They note the emergence of nationalism within monarch-centered realms in Europe as a means of reconfiguring not only European territories but power relations beyond Europe's borders. The shift from hierarchically-ordered medieval populations to the creation of a "people" homogenously accorded individual equality within a European nation required the externalization of hierarchy, most often manifesting in the idiom of race (ibid.:9). By comparing the nationalism of the French Revolution with the Hapsburg realm, and North American racial discourse with that of the West Indian colonies, Segal and Handler demonstrate the ways in which nation and race have been mutually constitutive. This displacement of Eurocentric narratives of historical progress toward a modern equality puts the discussion of nationalism squarely within the field of global power relations. Further, it points clearly to the ongoing repercussions of this hierarchical ordering of nations in a postcolonial context.

Segal (1989) stresses the emergence of development discourse in the context of the post-WWII independence of colonies. He notes that the inequalities of the colonial era were relocated between nations, rather than persons, resulting in the reconfiguration of old inequalities under the new rhetoric of national development. The result has been the creation of a single evolutionary scale in which "developing nations" must become equal to the "developed nations" – a process which involves achieving independence from those very nations in whom authority is vested (ibid.:174-5). Development is thus clearly linked to studies of nationalism and globalization, but it is less commonly

recognized that it is also tied to the study of identity. Like national and global politics, the politics of identity are intimately linked to culture, history, and power. As Edelman and Haugerud observe: ―Successful claims to local authenticity or indigenous identity in international arenas may confer significant advantages, and thus encourage people to strategically deploy or reinvent cultural, ethnic, indigenous, or local identities … In short, ethnographic studies of identity or cultural politics … place anthropologists at the center of development politics and practice – whether they claim ‗development' as their focus or not" (2005:31-2). This certainly turned out to be the case in Grenada, where I discovered that degrees of identification with a dominant national narrative about development directly affected Grenadians' feelings about their nation and national identity.

In recent decades, neoliberal economic policies and an emphasis on world markets by the World Bank and IMF, as well as debt crises and structural adjustment policies, have further intertwined development and globalization. Globalization has at least three common meanings: ―free-market' or neoliberal economic policies, which became dominant during the 1980s and 1990s … the increased integration of various places into the world economy, and the effects of vastly improved transportation and communication systems on multidirectional cultural flows" (Edelman and Haugerud 2005:3). Anthropologists have typically emphasized the latter, yet the first two aspects of globalization are critically linked to the development policies which structure the power fields in which these ―cultural flows" take place. As a result, the literature on anthropology and globalization has four major limitations:

> tendencies (a) to de-historicize globalization … or an exoticizing fascination with new manifestations of cultural hybridity; (b) to bypass or downplay the continuing role of nation-states as economic and political

> actors; (3) to naturalize contemporary neoliberalism by, for example, treating global phenomena as deterritorialized, impersonal ―flows‖; and (d) to portray economic globalization as an inexorable or overly simplified and coherent set of forces and then to focus on how they are culturalized. [ibid.:22]

This critique bears particular significance for Caribbeanists, who have struggled against the romanticizing trope of the ―Caribbeanization‖ of the world by anthropologists rethinking concepts such as culture and identity in the context of modern global movement. Bill Maurer offers a powerful rebuttal to this view of globalization. He writes:

> Here is where I see the Caribbean reflected in the world, as states rely on exclusionary politics, as ―free trade‖ initiatives foster the movement of money at the expense of people, and as nationalist and anti-immigrant sentiments justify the exploitation and criminalization of migrants whose labor is nonetheless necessary for the regimes that exclude them. This is the nature of ―the Caribbean experience‖ and its global reinscriptions. [1997:12]

As ―globalization‖ has become popularized and substituted for ―development‖ and ―modernization,‖ it has become even more important to examine the role of nation-states, and to draw the connections between local, national, and global arenas. Trouillot's 1988 study of Dominica in the world economy is divided into three sections – the nation, the world, and the village – as the framework for his analysis of the relationship between peasantries and global capitalist production. This structure is consciously adopted by Deborah Thomas in her exploration of nationalism, globalization, and the politics of culture in Jamaica (2004), as she particularly emphasizes the ways in which each level articulates with the other (global-national, national-local, and local-global). Indeed, it is often changing configurations of the nation-state that shape the ways in which global forces impact the local (Edelman and Haugerud 2005:24). As Maurer's study of

citizenship law in the British Virgin Islands reveals, ―the production of national difference is not in conflict with globalizing tendencies. Rather, the processes of globalization, including the creation of large-scale legal arenas, capital flows, and migrations, work to foster rather than mute ideas about national uniqueness and national difference" (1997:257). Though I adopt a different framework for the presentation of ethnographic materials (public/personal worlds, rather than local-national-global), the reader will readily note the ever-present and dynamic relations between these levels of interaction as Grenadians grapple with their image of the nation in the face of a wide range of global pressures.

Identity in the Caribbean

The question of identity has a long history in the study of the Caribbean, albeit under different names and guises. Having consistently defied convenient classifications and gatekeeping concepts (Trouillot 1992), the most salient themes in Caribbean ethnography nevertheless point to ongoing debate about what the region is and who the people are who populate it. These fundamental uncertainties underlie Melville Herskovits' early search for African retentions, debates over what holds Caribbean societies together, and arguments about conflicting cultural value systems. Bringing together binaries that are usually treated as dichotomous, the Old World-New World, First World-Third World, underdeveloped-modern character of the Caribbean points to the region's unique historical development and resulting heterogeneity of the population. The diversity of political arrangements in today's Caribbean adds complexity as people

forge new identities in the face of independence or continued colonial relations. These anthropological concerns are not isolated from the people under discussion – identity politics in the region powerfully confront visions of the past and future as people argue for and against African, Indian, European, American, Creole, Christian, national, regional, and transnational identities – to name a few. The Caribbean situation thus presents a particularly useful context for the study of identity in the twenty-first century. As Don Robotham writes: "For in this part of the world analysis of identity, culture, and ethnicity does not lead in the direction of reflections on primordial attachments, but, rather, to an analysis of the foundations of identity, ethnicity, and culture in the operation of economic and political forces and the hierarchical and conflictual relationships generated by these forces" (1998:308). The study of identity in the Caribbean is well-placed to confront many of the underlying assumptions attached to the concept and to explore the processes through which identities are forged.

Over the last several decades, the literature on identity in the Caribbean has fallen predominantly into two distinct theoretical and methodological camps. Representational approaches favoring public, official, and popular discourses have focused on race (Moore 1997; Thomas 2004), class (Austin 1984), religion (Toulis 1997), citizenship (Maurer 1997) and gender (Freeman 2000). Special attention has been paid to the ways in which these identities intersect with power, culture, and history within Caribbean particularities (Olwig 1985, 1993, 1999; Trouillot 1988, 1995; Yelvington 2002). Experiential approaches to identity, on the other hand, utilize person-centered ethnography and life histories to probe identity from the "inside out." A disproportionate number of Caribbean ethnographies using this vantage focus upon subjects who are described as "mad" or

–pathological" (Wilson 1974; Smith 1963; Price 1998; Littlewood 1993). Focusing on the psychological results of living within conflicting value systems, these works explore the relationship between madness and the colonial experience. While there are exceptions to this trend (e.g. Mintz 1974[1960]), these portraits of damaging psychological conflict continue to reflect the deep sociocultural divisiveness postulated by earlier, influential anthropological theories, such as Peter Wilson's respectability vs. reputation thesis (1969; 1995[1973]) and Michael G. Smith's plural society theory (1965a; 1965b). Indeed, few contemporary works apply a person-centered approach to the postcolonial context in an effort to develop a more balanced approach to the nature of identity in the Caribbean. This has partly motivated the inclusion in this dissertation of voices previously unheard in this body of ethnographic literature, adding the thoughts and experiences of well-adjusted Grenadian youth from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds to the conversation.

The issue of national identity and nationalism in the Caribbean has provoked a considerable amount of interrogation (Cohen 1998). Early on, Sidney Mintz enumerated nine major features common to the region, including "the prevailing absence of any ideology of national identity that could serve as a goal for mass acculturation" (1971:20; see also Mintz 1989[1974]). He defines national identity as "a subjective and shared feeling of belonging in the nation-state and regarding it as one's own," derived from "a body of values and behaviors that can serve to unite a people in spite of social and economic differences" (ibid.:33-34). As Daniel Segal notes, however, national identities are not inevitable results of shared cultural values, but rather are social constructions which may arise within heterogeneous or homogeneous settings (1994b:1028). Mintz

pinpoints a number of variables which help explain why Caribbean societies have historically varied so markedly in their development of national identity. Much depends on the extent to which early immigrants were initially able to assimilate into local life and develop a creole culture. The presence or absence of a prevailing national identity also affected the ways in which subsequent groups of immigrants were assimilated. Generally speaking, there were significantly different patterns within the French, British, Dutch, and Spanish possessions. While colonists settled permanently and began to create insular creole cultures early on in the Spanish possessions (Mintz 1971:34), the British and Dutch Caribbean lacked all the key forces which would have enabled a similar development. There was no missionizing religion, a lack of strong overseas control allowed for harsher local domination, there was a flux of temporary exploiters rather than settlers, and subsequently there was slower growth of an intermediate social grouping. In sum, Mintz posits —a negative correlation between colonial and plantation regimes and the growth of national identities and ideologies" (1971:35; see also Mintz 1989[1974]).

Mintz is not alone in this conclusion (see Knight 1990; Lowenthal 1972). Franklin Knight's historical work on the Caribbean, subtitled *The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, describes the situation: —As completely artificial societies indelibly stamped with the pervasive legacies of imperialism, colonialism, and slavery, the Caribbean societies have had an inordinate difficulty in creating and maintaining a strong, cohesive national sensibility" (1990:307-8). In an earlier work, David Lowenthal begins his chapter on —Racial and National Identity" with this assertion: —A striking feature of West Indian identity is the low esteem in which it is locally held. West Indians at home often wish they were not West Indian" (1972:250). In spite of the fact that this

work is now dated and does not reflect decades of change in the Caribbean, it is still frequently cited in contemporary literature. Further, noting that this negative identity runs along the twin axes of nationality and color, Lowenthal proceeds to prove his point by drawing upon a wide range of other texts – most notably relying heavily upon the comments of V.S. Naipaul. Naipaul, born in Trinidad and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001, is an ambivalent figure in the region, both admired for his achievements and reviled for his acerbic criticism of the Caribbean and its people. One can only hope that, today, a Caribbeanist would hesitate before advancing Naipaul's opinions as proof of the sentiments of the Caribbean people[2]. Beyond this rather extreme example of a text-based, generalizing, and top-down analysis, there is still a tendency in works on Caribbean national identity to favor a representational approach.

Turning to the question of post-independence struggles, Knight also points out that "creation of the state had to take precedence over creation of the nation" (1990:313). As Viranjini Munasinghe explores in her work on Trinidad and Tobago, congruence between nation and state is achieved through hegemonic processes, in which a privileged race and class seek to establish a metonymic relationship to the nation (2001:1). However, the development of nationalist discourses in the contemporary period have not yet received sufficient attention. As Bill Maurer notes: "The rich literature on colonialism and the creation of national consciousness that has been developed for other colonial situations … has no counterpart in the scholarship on the Caribbean" (1997:13). Segal (1989, 1994a) and Munasinghe's (2001, 2002) work in Trinidad and Tobago, as

[2] Compare, for example, Knight 1990:276; see also Strauss 1997 on the limitations of high art as a primary source.

well as Maurer's analysis of citizenship and law in the British West Indies and Deborah Thomas' ethnography of popular culture in Jamaica (2004), have helped to fill this lacuna, yet little work has been done on nationalism in the smaller, independent nation-states. These explorations of the nationalism of decolonization have contributed to postcolonial studies by exploring the ideological possibilities available to newly independent nations, as well as the deep interconnections between nationalism, neoliberal economics and globalization, and development discourses (Edelman and Haugerud 2005; Escobar 2005; Segal 1989; Handler and Segal 1993).

By continuing to privilege a representational approach, however, much recent scholarship has disregarded the complex ways in which nationalist ideologies are accepted, manipulated, or contested by the people for whom they purport to speak. As Deborah Thomas summarizes: "For the past twenty years or so, anthropologists have been attuned to the efforts of those engaged in defining public concepts of national cultural identity worldwide … We have only recently turned our attention to the uneasy relationships between state-driven 'identity politics' and 'development politics,' and the ways both may contradict the actual lifestyles, experiences, and desires of a populace" (Thomas 2004:264-5). This "uneasy relationship" points directly to the tension between public and personal worlds in the construction of national identity. It is this new direction which must be explored if we are to understand the ways in which individuals come to identify selectively with aspects of their nation and understand their experience as nationals.

Identity through a Double Lens

This dissertation builds upon the surge in scholarship on identity that has emerged over the last twenty-five years (Rouse 1995; Hall 1996). Some studies emphasize the public representations and politics of identity which arise around major structural features of society (e.g. Segal 1989), while other studies focus on the ways in which people forge and express their own personal identities in the face of these representations (e.g. Parish 1996; Linger 2001). Respectively, these representational and experiential approaches are intimately tied to understandings of the person (Linger 2005), generating debate about the extent of cross-cultural variation in concepts of self and person (e.g. Spiro 1993; Hollan 1992), and whether a fragmented or coherent self exists in the postmodern world (e.g. Ewing 1990; Wikan 1995; Strauss 1997). At stake are questions of human agency, processes of meaning-making, and the nature of the relationship between the individual, culture, and society in local, national, and global contexts.

The overarching framework for this dissertation is adapted from Daniel Linger's work, *Anthropology through a Double Lens* (2005), in which he argues that both public and personal worlds must be held in focus in order to see human worlds (ibid.:2). There are several components to this argument which bear special relevance for my approach to national identity. First, a focus on public and personal worlds each offers a different perspective on identity, and different attendant methodological issues. In broad strokes, the lens on the public yields a representational and discursive approach, focusing on symbols and meanings in the public domain. Such analyses of identity tend to view it as fluid, fragmented, and contingent. The lens on the personal yields a more experiential

and psychological approach, exploring personal appropriations, rejections, and manipulations of public materials into the complex lived experience of human beings. The key to the double lens model is holding both worlds in focus, and exploring the complex tensions and interrelations between the two in the formation of identity.

The second element of Linger's argument which I adopt in this dissertation is his rejection of a focus on cultural, rather than human, worlds. Trouillot echoes this sentiment:

> We need to abandon the word [culture] while firmly defending the conceptual kernel it once encapsulated … Words such as style, taste, cosmology, ethos, sensibility, desire, ideology, aspirations, or predispositions often better describe the facts that need to be studied because they tend to better limit the range of traits and patterns covered and are … more grounded in the details that describe living, historically situated, localized people. [2003:115]

The notion of a cultural identity has the potential to complicate the question of identity at the outset, since the concept of culture has generated voluminous definitional confusion. In particular, I avoid conflating national identity with cultural identity, and instead retain a broader focus on the many disparate elements which contribute to Grenadians' perception of themselves as a people and nation. Key among these elements are class and history, two concepts which are negated by the widespread use of the culture concept today, along with race (ibid.:100). Further, much of the local perception that Grenadians have a weak national identity derives from the notion that they have a weak culture. The origins and application of this weak/strong framework applied by Grenadians deserves scrutiny, as it permeates local perceptions of culture, national identity, nationalism, and development. At the same time, I am cautious not to replicate this framework in my own

analysis, as it tends to limit rather than enhance our understanding of the many elements at work in constructing national identity in Grenadian life today.

Third, Linger also argues that "significant future work will require anthropologists to think through the *model of the person* that underpins all approaches to meaning, all attempts to link public and personal domains, and thus, a fortiori, all accounts of identity" (2005:148). Implicit models of the person (or self, individual, subject) are inherent in different approaches to identity, thus entangling many streams of thought and debate. Although there is no consensus about definitions for these terms in the literature, I will adopt the use of the term *self* as I make explicit the model which underlies my approach to identity.

My model of the self includes a focus on experience and agency, and maintains a distinct relationship to the concept of identity. This understanding of self is a combination of Grace Gredys Harris' definition of *self*, "the human being as a locus of experience, including experience of that human's own someoneness" (1989:601), with her understanding of *person* as an agent-in-society (ibid.:602). Although these elements are awkwardly separated within this definition, it must be recalled that "social actors … are agents and subjects of cultural life, biographical, biological, and cultural selves, at the same time – thinking, feeling, and cultural beings all at once" (Parish 1994:231). I consider the experiencing and acting self as a psycho-sociocultural-biological whole, while noting that a self can encompass multiple identities: "people tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are. These self-understandings, especially those with strong emotional resonance for the teller, are what we refer to as identities" (Holland et al. 1998:3). I

follow Martin Sökefeld in his conclusion that ~~–it~~ is impossible to conceive of the actions of individuals embracing a plurality of identities without referring to a self" (Linger 2005:153). A model of the self which recognizes the interactions between personal experience, agency, and sociocultural constraints in constituting identities, rather than conflating the terms, provides a clearer window onto real lives.

Fieldwork in Grenada

Grenada was my home for almost three years, August 2006 through April 2009, with summers spent in the United States. I was fortunate to be able to follow many of my study participants through this extended time period and witness the many changes in their lives. During the first year, I conducted a pilot study at St. George's University (SGU). This was seminal to the development of the larger project, and is discussed in greater detail below. The following two years were dedicated to follow-up, person-centered interviews with a selection of participants from that pilot study, in addition to interviews with other Grenadians outside the student population. The analysis in the Public Worlds section of this dissertation is based on ongoing participant-observation in Grenadian public life. The following list, though far from exhaustive, provides a sampling of the kinds of activities that characterized my fieldwork activities in Grenada:

- Visited all major public sites, including tourist destinations, historic sites, new developments, and Grenada National Museum, conducting informal interviews with local staff.

- Attended public events, such as National Food Day, fundraisers, Carnival, Thanksgiving Day, Independence Day, regattas, lectures, book launches.
- Attended church services at two different Pentecostal churches, a Baptist Church, a five-week Seventh Day Adventist ―God News" Gospel Tent Revival, and several Spiritual Baptist events for the First Annual Spiritual Baptist Jubilee.
- Monitored public media, including radio, news, newspapers, websites, and popular online discussion groups.
- Visited the local court on approximately ten occasions.
- Volunteered at a health fair in St. George's.
- Attended Willie Redhead Foundation meetings for three months, a local non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Grenada's built and cultural heritage.
- Obtained copies of important local documents, including *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, National Culture Policy draft, primary school textbooks teaching Grenadian history and Caribbean Examination Council syllabi for secondary school students, census data, local histories, materials pertaining to new luxury developments.
- Participant-observer in two St. George's University undergraduate classes, ―Caribbean Government and Politics" and ―Caribbean Issues and Perspectives," Winter Term 2007.
- Observer in Sociology class at T.A. Marryshow Community College.
- Conducted interviews with twenty St. George's University undergraduates for pilot study.

- Conducted additional 60-120 minute interviews over two years with eight of the original pilot study participants.
- Conducted interviews with members of rural communities, spice vendors, tour guides, former revolutionaries.
- Conducted interviews with local intellectual elite, including an economist, a sociologist, a literary/culture critic, and a political scientist.
- Taught a six-week creative writing class to eight students in the rural fishing village of Gouyave, St. John's.
- Taught a six-week creative writing class to five students at a secondary school in a rural parish.
- Conducted interviews with a secondary school principal, teachers, administrators in the Ministry of Education, and teacher educators at the Teacher Training Program at the community college.

This range of activities represents the dual foci of my research in which I attended to both public and personal worlds.

The scope of this project required research in all six of the different parishes on the island. I have no doubt that a fascinating village ethnography could also be written in the classic anthropological mold based on life in a rural corner of the island. The contemporary realities of life in Grenada, however, seemed to require a more even distribution of attention to happenings in both rural and urban areas. Unlike most traditional ethnographies, particularly Caribbean studies that have emphasized the peasantry, this study also attends to the experiences of the formally-educated middle and

upper classes. This scope necessarily limits the depth of representation of any particular area or group, while allowing for a more kaleidoscopic picture of life in Grenada today.

While the rural areas of Grenada are still dotted with small villages, there are also many other kinds of communities. Geography is a very important status marker. For example, Westerhall is a beautiful peninsula that is home to Grenada's elite. Its entry is guarded by a gatehouse. (As a white foreigner, I gained entry with no questions asked; most Grenadians have never been there.) Lance aux Epines is another elite peninsula, full of luxury villas, apartments, and manicured lawns, but predominantly home to expatriates, foreign visitors, and foreign St. George's University students. At dusk, it is common to see white, female medical students jogging the pristine back roads – a scene evocative of student life in La Jolla, California, and considered unadvisable anywhere else on the island. Morne Jaloux and St. David's are known as middle and upper class neighborhoods, home to Grenadian politicians, executives, and bankers, and an easy commute to the capital. Gouyave is a fishing village and home to a large nutmeg processing plant; it is densely populated with an island-wide reputation for raucous parties and loud people. Grenville and Sauteurs are the second and third largest communities on the island, respectively, and serve as hubs of commerce for the eastern and northern coasts.

I lived in three different communities over three years. Each experience affected my relationship with the Grenadians with whom I interacted, as I operated both within and outside of the same geographical status markers as the locals. Many Grenadians assumed that I would live in Lance aux Epines, for example, and I made a point of telling them that I did not – a fact which often won respect and trust from my informants. On

the other hand, I did not live within a tight-knit, small community, which at times was a disadvantage in making contact with new informants and establishing a reputation within a particular group. The symbolism of my home was not lost upon me, either, as I wrestled with images of the anthropologist's lyrical mud hut. The following is a sketch of what that "hut" looked like in Grenada. This discussion of housing arrangements is intended as a window onto some of the practical elements which informed my fieldwork, while also beginning to convey a more nuanced feel for different communities and geographical distinctions on this very small island.

First, my husband and I rented an apartment on the southwestern True Blue peninsula, home to St. George's University. We rented it for the short-term from California, sight unseen, as it was difficult to find housing without yet having connections to the island, and this was part of the university community's housing that was advertised online. The landlord was formerly a prominent member of government and was very helpful over the phone; as is common throughout the island, it was a two-story concrete house with the landlords living upstairs and the lower level for rent. The rental fee was in U.S. dollars. It was conveniently located next to several bus routes, was internet ready, and had air-conditioning in the bedroom. It was also extremely cramped, as the architect had fitted three rental units on the lower level, and thus was also poorly ventilated and swarming with mosquitoes. With bare light bulbs, cracked tile floors, and bars on the windows, it had the aesthetics of a police station. There was no front door: a security gate was covered with mosquito netting, into which a hole had been cut. To lock the "door," one reached through the hole from the inside and used a padlock to secure the

bars and lock oneself inside. I was always worried I would drop the key while one-handedly maneuvering to unlock myself from the cell.

As it turned out, I was needlessly concerned – the security bars on the windows were not actually fixed, but could be easily loosened. This fact was brought to our attention by an observant thief who crept inside, while we were home, and stole a handful of valuables a couple months after we arrived. It is also relevant to note that in these same early months of fieldwork, a female university student disembarked at the bus stop across the street from our apartment at sundown, and was abducted and assaulted. Also in the same timeframe, around the corner, a car passing on a blind hill had a head-on collision, leaving the bloodstains of two victims on the road. Grenada is considered by locals and foreigners to be a safe island; indeed, it has very low levels of violent crime (which accounts, in part, for the islanders‘ shock when there was an actual spike in crime, discussed later in the dissertation). I mention these incidents not because I want to tarnish the island‘s image, but because they highlight the main relevant safety issues: robbery, sexual harassment and assault, car accidents.

Grenada is generally a safe place, but that statement assumes an understanding of, and operation within, a set of understood ground rules. Like most places, the risk level is differently assessed for locals and foreigners, women and men. Though I have found few ethnographies by women that acknowledge safety issues, it strikes me as disingenuous to conjure an ethnographic landscape in which one‘s status as anthropologist liberates the researcher from a host of constraints tied to outsider status, skin color, and gender. I had a difficult time accepting the obvious limitations of those rules, as the sun sets early in Grenada and most of the roads are very isolated. Other boundaries were more difficult to

discern. I recall debating the safety of asking one particular male informant to act as a guide into his remote community, a village in which I had a particular interest; I reluctantly decided against it. Two years later, the same informant stunned the locals by chopping to death a relative with a machete. Though there are a high number of car accidents in Grenada due to mountainous terrain and unsafe drivers (including foreigners unaccustomed to driving on the left side of the road; Grenada maintains the British system), mastering the roads was essential to overcoming some of the issues which otherwise limited my fieldwork. Grenadians never ceased to be surprised and impressed that I drove around the island alone as this was not common practice for foreign white women.

After the robbery, I was especially motivated to move away from the university where I knew I would always be perceived as a foreign SGU student. We moved to a southeastern village – not far according to driving time, but definitively outside Grenadians‘ mental map of the tourist/student belt. It was a mixed community, with larger cement villas enjoying views of the sea and tiny shacks with tethered goats nestled in the peninsula‘s interior. The area was home to fishermen, subsistence farmers, salespeople who commuted to the malls in town, Grenadian SGU faculty, Grenadians who had worked abroad and returned home to retire, and British expatriates connected to the yachting community. This mix of people was not uncommon in the coastal areas of Grenada, where beautiful views attracted middle and upper class residents to the terrain occupied by long-time farmers and fishermen.

We rented a small wooden cottage owned by a British expatriate couple and built by craftsmen from Carriacou. It was one room covered by the traditional galvanized iron

roof found on shacks throughout the island, with a small bedroom loft and an inside bathroom. It was situated in a beautiful tropical garden with palms, banana trees, and bamboo, and had a large outdoor deck with a wooden table viewing a lush green valley. It satisfied my anthropologist‘s fantasy of a Caribbean cottage in a small village – for six weeks. And then the bulldozers came. In a matter of days, three new construction sites were cleared in a 360 degree circle around the cottage. The lush green valley was obliterated and replaced with heavy machinery as construction workers swarmed over the land. This was part of the building boom affecting many picturesque corners of the island. The non-stop deafening noise eventually forced us to evacuate, but not before I had gained a much deeper appreciation for the realities of living in a wooden cottage with a metal roof in the tropics. Swarms of invisible biting flies, mosquitoes, and cockroaches quickly made themselves at home, while tiny frogs coated the walls of the shower. A kitchen chopping block turned to sawdust, the quick work of termites, while knot holes in the wooden exterior were plugged overnight by sprouting tendrils winding themselves around my books, plastered with lizard droppings. As the winter months passed and the dry season arrived, the metal roof turned the cottage into a furnace.

Our final residence took us to a hilltop concrete two-story house surrounded by squatters. The area was relatively neutral, situated off a main road in a very small development mostly known for its so-called shanty town. Our landlords lived on the upstairs level, and shared the fruits of their garden with us. We had a view of the squatters‘ shacks immediately below us, separated from the garden by a fence, and beyond, the warehouses of Frequente, Point Salines Airport, and SGU. In the other direction, peeking between two valleys, an opening framed the enormous cruise ships that

arrived in port during the high season. At dawn, stray dogs, roosters, and goats replaced the cacophony of construction sounds, along with a man and his megaphone: "Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus Christ is Lord!" The hilltop breezes eradicated biting flies and mosquitoes and kept the apartment cool without air conditioning – the links between geography and class became clearer to me as I realized the comforts afforded by different physical locations on the island. There are very few squatters in Grenada as most locals own some family land, and there is little government land on which to squat. The community on this particular hillside was one of the largest. It was home to many children who brought their goats to graze past our house every morning, and spent the afternoons flying kites that filled the air with a buzzing sound. With its panoramic views of the dynamic and boisterous flow of Grenadian life, this final residence became our first real home on the island.

The inclusion of this sketch is intended to convey some of the lived realities of my fieldwork experience while also serving as introduction to the nuances of geography in Grenada. I will now turn the lens back outwards and address development of the study parameters themselves. The next section provides background information about St. George's University and a discussion of the pilot study that I conducted with a pool of Grenadian undergraduate students, six of whom are later featured in the Public Worlds section of the dissertation.

Pilot Study

St. George‘s University plays a significant role in the social and economic life of Grenada. Although most famously known for its involvement in the events surrounding the U.S. Intervention/Invasion, the rapid growth of the university has continued to have a great impact on the island. It is one of the leading employers, with over five hundred Grenadians on staff. The university is the largest source of hard currency on the island, surpassing the public utilities and hotel sectors. Money enters the local economy in a number of ways, from direct donations to charities and the general hospital, the multi-million dollar construction boom on campus, and from the students themselves, with their steady need for off-campus housing. The university‘s charter also requires that five annual tuition-free scholarships to the School of Medicine be provided to citizens of Grenada; since its inception, over one hundred Grenadians have become doctors – some of whom are now faculty at the university. Gloria Payne-Banfield, new leader of Eric Gairy‘s Grenada United Labor Party (GULP) and columnist for the weekly newspaper *Spice Isle Review*, proclaimed of St. George‘s University: ―The best example of sustainable development in Grenada‘s context is a project which started some 30 years ago and is now well established giving livelihoods to hundreds of Grenadians and providing economic benefits and spin-offs in untold areas of the economy” (2007:19). The university has grown steadily since its founding, and today there are over three thousand students enrolled in the School of Medicine, School of Veterinary Medicine, and School of Arts and Sciences. While the influx of foreign students has created its own

set of problems, notably rising crime rates, the university generally maintains excellent relations with its community.

The School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) was established in 1996, with the stated mission of increasing educational opportunities for people of the Caribbean region. In January 1997, the school started offering baccalaureate degree programs in international business, life sciences, medical sciences, and premedical and preveterinary medicine. There are two major scholarship programs: the Grenadian Undergraduate Scholarship Program and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Undergraduate Scholarship Program. The Ministry of Education is aiming for all secondary school teachers to have undergraduate degrees within the next eight to ten years, and more Grenadians are seeking additional certification for fear of becoming uncompetitive within the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME). Enrollment in SAS is on the rise, with a record high enrollment in 2006. According to the St. George‘s University website, Fall 2006 admissions represented a 90 percent increase in intake over Spring 2006, and a 170 percent increase over Fall 2005. St. George‘s University enrolled 754 undergraduate students, more than half of whom are Grenadians. This has resulted in a sixty percent increase in this subset of students.

While the school maintains its primary identification as a medical school, along with its international perception as an *American* medical school, the last ten years have slowly witnessed a profound change in its functioning as an institution in Grenada. More Grenadians consider St. George‘s University to be a Grenadian establishment. At the same time, the medical and veterinary students, who are predominantly American, are hardly aware of the presence of the local undergraduates. Caribbean students express

discontent with their position in the university hierarchy: the library stocks few Caribbean Studies texts, the cafeteria is unaffordable for most of the local students, and peers are often criticized for ―talking Yank" when interacting with Americans. The influx of degree holders into the Grenadian economy also points to the limited job opportunities available on the island. While the degree programs are oriented toward practical applications, the students also have the opportunity to elect a limited number of courses which address Caribbean issues. It is from two of these, ―Caribbean Issues and Perspectives" and ―Caribbean Politics and Government," that my pilot study interviewees were recruited.

In Spring 2007, I conducted one to two-hour semi-structured interviews with twenty Grenadian undergraduates. I met with fourteen women and six men (two-thirds of the undergraduates are female), ranging in age from nineteen to thirty-eight. The students came from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, and none anticipated incurring debt for their education due to the scholarship program. Interviewees included children of the wealthiest Grenadian business owners, as well as students who were the first in their family to finish secondary school. While the pilot study made no pretense of representing Grenadian society, or even Grenadian St. George's University students in general, the conversations frequently echoed trends observable within classroom debates and the community at large. The semi-structured format allowed discussions to emerge in directions not dictated by the interview schedule. The findings discussed here, then, reflect impressions and themes which emerged throughout the interviews, with numbers cited as general benchmarks. Biographical and locating data were collected, and the

questions focused on national identity, culture, history, and development[3]. I will draw attention here to three major points which were critical to the formation of the larger dissertation project.

The first point of interest is the response to the question: "Do you think Grenadians have a strong national identity? What makes you say so?" There were eight affirmatives, citing the strong showing on Independence Day, statements of national pride, and the bonds of history. On the other hand, six of the students argued that Grenadians do not have a strong national identity, noting emigration, the selling of land to foreigners, and the rapid loss of a Grenadian accent once abroad. Five equivocated, commenting that it was still growing, and could surface for short periods when called upon for events such as Independence Day. The comments covered a full range of interpretations, indicating that this is an active point of contention and concern. Indeed, this same topic also sparked heated debate within the classroom setting, in which the framework of weak vs. strong nationalism and national identity was the dominant model employed.

The second point concerns responses to the question: "What do you think are the most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?" Eighteen students cited the Revolution, four chose Hurricane Ivan, three noted Independence, and slavery and Gairy were mentioned once each. Strikingly, almost all of the students who noted the Revolution quickly volunteered that they "knew nothing about it." This might seem to confirm Lewis' argument that, since 1983, the "controlling sector

[3] I am indebted to Diane J. Austin for some of the questions used in the pilot study which were adapted from the interview schedule used in her 1984 book, *Urban Life in Kingston, Jamaica. The Culture and Class Ideology of Two Neighborhoods*.

of West Indian society … are anxious to forget all about it, almost to pretend to themselves that it never happened" (1987:148). This claim belies the fact that, in the case of these interviewees, students from revolutionary families and lower-class backgrounds often claimed the same ignorance. Further, many of the students had immediate family affected by the Revolution and Intervention/Invasion, yet cited the same lack of knowledge about what actually happened during that era. Students noted that these historical events are not taught in school, with some indicating that this is an unfortunate lacuna.

It is significant that the event which is cited as having the greatest importance is also the one about which this generation claims to know the least. Further, the repercussions of these events are far from resolved. In February 2007, the Privy Council overturned the sentences of the thirteen prisoners still held for the massacre on Fort Rupert, referring the case back to the Supreme Court of Grenada for a new sentencing process (*Grenada Advocate*, Feb. 16, 2007). The proceedings stirred up voluminous debate in public forums, including the following appeal issued by the New National Party (NNP):

> The Government and People of Grenada join [the Governor-General] in a national appeal for the perpetrator(s) to step forward and if not an open apology to the masses, tell us where we can find the remains, if there is any to be found, of our loved ones. The grieving families and affected persons can accept no less. The wounds can only be healed with proper closure. The absence of this information remains a major criminal offence against the People of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. [*Grenada Advocate*, Jan. 25, 2007:8]

The students' statements of ignorance must be read against the background of these widespread, emotional, public appeals. Following Unni Wikan (1995) and Michel-Rolph

Trouillot's (1995) imperative to attend to silences and the unspeakable, this aspect of Grenada's history clearly requires particular investigation as it manifests in the nation's present.

The discussions about experiences after Hurricane Ivan revealed the deepest socioeconomic divisions between the students, pointing to some other important considerations in Grenadian society. While some complained that "boredom" was their greatest problem in the immediate recovery period, others witnessed severe deprivations in basic human needs among their families and communities. One interviewee became clinically depressed, citing her impotence in the face of her community's hunger and the inequity of the government's distribution of aid. Rich and poor noted the partisan quality of the government's relief efforts. The chaos and looting which followed Ivan evoked shame and anger, particularly on the part of middle and upper-class students whose family businesses were jeopardized. Seven students answered that Grenada is a better place now than it was before the hurricane, citing improved infrastructure and renewed national spirit. Seven answered that Grenada is a worse place, pointing out that many still live under tarps, attend damaged schools, and the country has an enormous national debt. Most of the students agreed that the development efforts are focusing too heavily on infrastructure, with insufficient attention paid to the development of human resources. The speed with which some segments of the population recovered from the destruction, and the glaring presence of some communities' ongoing struggles, highlight the inequities of Grenadian society. These realities complement and conflict with government messages about "building back better," and spark debate about the right path for Grenada's future.

The findings discussed here were supplemented by four months of classroom participant-observation, which included lively debate, regular student group presentations, and student opinion pieces posted to the class website. The active construction of national identity, debate about the degree to which there is shared sentiment among Grenadians regarding a sense of belonging to the nation, and argument about the current and future shape of the nation were dominant themes in these forums. Further, there were strong undercurrents relating to class issues within Grenadian society and the wider Caribbean region. Finally, this preliminary research highlighted the significance of recent historical events, illuminating the need to address the ongoing effects of the Revolution and Intervention/Invasion, and post-Ivan reconstruction and development. The lines of investigation initiated in the pilot study formed the basis for two subsequent years of fieldwork.

Overview

This dissertation is divided into two major sections: Public Worlds and Personal Worlds. The Public Worlds section analyzes a range of public representations of the nation, and presents the argument that there are two master narratives that circulate widely about Grenada and its people. One narrative is past-oriented, while the other looks toward the future. These different orientations reflect the ongoing importance of the Revolution in Grenadian life, as the historical narrative reaches up to and includes the 1979 Revolution, while the future-oriented narrative uses the language of development to turn away from this history toward the island‘s economic prospects. This bifurcation

parallels a pronounced generational divide in Grenada today, in which those over forty at the time of my fieldwork remembered and/or participated in the events of the Revolution, while those under forty were either too young, or were not yet born. This study focuses particularly on the views of Grenadian youth, a category which I have termed the post-Revolution generation.

The Public Worlds section begins with an explanation of my use of the terms public worlds, public representations, and narratives. It is then subdivided into two parts. The first part examines the master narrative about the nation's future, which I term the "Isle of Spice." I argue that this narrative utilizes development rhetoric to unite Grenadians under the image of one people, one family, advancing toward a more independent and prosperous nation. It encompasses a vision of Grenada as both a tourist destination and as an agricultural, spice-producing nation. I argue that the former vision most strongly embodies the favored development paradigm, emphasizing tangible symbols of modernity and progress. Tourism is generally embraced by nationals, though controversies do arise when Grenadians perceive new developments as impinging on the nation's sovereignty, or when it seems that the profits will not benefit the people. Agriculture, on the other hand, is seen as a less ideological and more pragmatic sector in need of modernization. It is regarded as a key part of Grenada's heritage, but its role as a foreign exchange earner tends to be dwarfed by tourism. Food security, however, remains a major concern on this small island, and guarantees ongoing attention to revitalization of the agricultural sector, particularly in the wake of massive hurricane destruction in 2004 and 2005. Grenadians are united by their quest for development and their general agreement that tourism and agriculture are both important parts of the

island‘s future, in spite of debate over the allocation of resources. However, I argue that the same development rhetoric used to unite Grenadians also embeds the seeds of its own discontent by pointing to the nation‘s neediness, politicized competition for aid, and Grenada‘s weak position within the hierarchical world order implied by the development framework.

The second part of the Public Worlds section examines the public representations that create a master narrative about the nation‘s unsettled and violent past. I call this the ―Island of Conflict‖ narrative, inspired by the title of George Brizan‘s 1984 history of Grenada, and argue that it depicts Grenadians themselves as a conflict-oriented and divided people. This image is enhanced by the fact that Grenadians today remain deeply conflicted over the unresolved events of the recent past, particularly the Revolution and subsequent U.S. military action. Further, the unifying narrative thread that Brizan uses to describe the island‘s series of historical conflicts is lost in contemporary representations of Grenada‘s history. Brizan describes the larger narrative of social injustice that fueled the unrest behind Grenada‘s major conflicts, thus portraying these acts as just rebellions against oppressive forces. Today, there is no single source that relates the conflicts to one another in a larger or meaningful context. Thus, Grenada becomes an island of conflict without clear motive or meaning. This absence has implications for the image of Grenadians themselves. Instead of a sense of righteous struggle and rebellious spirit, when it comes to their history, the people of Grenada are portrayed as divisive, ―tribal,‖ and capable of great violence – a far cry from the image of one people united in their quest for development. By examining public representations of the past, from the national museum and school curricula, to national holidays and politics, I argue that

efforts to unify Grenadians under the banner of shared historical events are inevitably divisive. Further, the absence of a national education program addressing Grenada's own history has created a new generation that is ignorant about, and feels alienated from, their nation's past. This furthers the generational rift between pre- and post-Revolution Grenadians.

What is the relationship between these two narratives in the minds of Grenadians? While the top-down approach applied to the preceding section provides a window onto the dominant national ideologies in public circulation, they cannot be viewed in isolation from the people who live within these public worlds and must make sense of them. In the second half of the dissertation, I present the personal worlds of thirteen Grenadian youth. Through open-ended, in-depth interviews conducted over three years, the person-centered approach presented in the second part explores the ways that individuals process these public narratives in light of their personal experiences, ambitions, and biographies.

The second half of the dissertation is entitled "Personal Worlds: Voices from the Post-Revolution Generation." This consists of nine chapters, eight of which feature interviews with a single Grenadian from the post-Revolution generation. Six of these are students from St. George's University, and two are youth who earn their living in the tourism spice trade. The ninth chapter encompasses the voices of five boys from secondary school who participated in a focus group. In the interviews excerpted in these chapters, the youth reflect upon key issues affecting Grenada today while also offering insights into their personal experiences and dreams for the future. This small number of study participants is not intended to represent the views of Grenadians, as the person-centered approach favors depth over breadth. The diversity of the participants'

backgrounds and viewpoints, however, are intended to offer the reader two vantages that are otherwise inaccessible. First, by listening to Grenadians in their own words, the transcripts reveal the complex and nuanced processes through which the speakers interpret, reject, and absorb pieces of the national narratives that might otherwise be perceived as part of a hegemonic national ideology. The fact that the two master narratives identified in the Public Worlds section are, in some ways, in conflict does not translate into fragmentation or disorientation on the part of Grenadian youth. Instead, the interviews offer a glimpse into the work of individual minds as these participants draw upon public representations to form their own coherent narratives. Second, the inclusion of extensive transcript in this dissertation privileges the voice of Grenadians, allowing the reader to become better acquainted with a few of the people whom this dissertation purports to describe. This approach creates a chorus of voices which reveals both the uniqueness of each life story as well as the breadth of life experiences on this small island.

While the small number of study participants does not lend itself to a search for consensus or collective conclusions, the meaning-making processes at work in the minds of individual Grenadians are suggestive of a number of observations. First, two contradictory national narratives about who Grenadians are (conflicted/united) are not experienced as contradictory because they are oriented toward different time periods and thus avoid a psychological collision. The narratives thus become effective psychocultural tools for the management of the cognitive dissonance that surrounds conflicting images of the nation and its people. The post-Revolution generation clearly perceive an unsettling lacuna when it comes to their nation‘s past and episodes of violence, but they

are able to strongly gravitate instead toward the future-oriented narrative with its promise of development and unity. Further, the teleology implied in a movement from a conflicted to united people feeds the development narrative as a move from a metaphoric state of savagery toward the utopic paradise promised by the ubiquitous touristic imagery of the Caribbean. Although the Euroamerican fantasy of the islands as an earthly paradise feeds upon the notion of an untouched state of nature (Sheller 2003), for young Grenadians, the utopic potential of their beautiful island will be realized when it is developed enough to provide a good standard of living for all who live there. This future orientation persists among Grenadian youth in spite of the late twentieth-century tendency to nostalgically seek utopias in the past (cf. Özyürek 2006, Trouillot 2003, Boym 2001).

Second, the dual narratives foster a strong generational divide, as the youth gravitate more toward the future-oriented narrative while the older generation remain preoccupied with the unresolved conflicts of the recent past. The future narrative seems most appealing to the youth because the idea of development promises them a better future. Indeed, it is so broadly-defined that Trouillot labels the term development as a "North Atlantic universal" because it "projects the North Atlantic experience on a universal scale that they themselves have helped to create," is prescriptive in its vision, and seductive in its ambiguity (2003:35-36; see also Trouillot 2002). The idea of development also resonates with the youths' notions of self-development and individualistic ambitions. It fuels their economic investment in the nation, while allowing them to remain politically alienated and disengaged from their nation's history. Young Grenadians have thus become more vested in the idea of their country as an

economic body than as a political, historic, or cultural entity. To the extent that national identity is thus tied to the nation's economic viability, it can be justifiably argued that nationalism in Grenada is "weak." This is quite different from the common emic perspective that the weakness of Grenadian national sentiment derives from a weak national culture.

Third, there are several implications that follow from the youth's lack of affinity to the past-oriented narrative. The intertwining of contemporary politics and revolutionary history fuels political apathy among the younger voting bloc. Lack of education about Grenada's history, along with the perception that talk about the Revolution is taboo, further pushes the youth to embrace the future-oriented narrative. However, without a contextualized understanding of Grenada's historical struggles, the youth are not able to critically assess their nation's contemporary economic challenges. Instead, colonial stereotypes about islanders as lazy, uncreative, or lacking entrepreneurial spirit persist in the minds of young people. Lack of "progress" is then blamed on partisanship, internal conflicts such as social class divisions, and the perceived weak position of Grenada within the Caribbean and the larger world order in terms of under/development. These are problems noted within the discourse of development itself, and what is intended as a unifying narrative comes full circle by ultimately fueling the local concern that Grenadians lack a strong national identity.

Finally, it is important to attend to the reasons why Grenadians perceive their national identity within a framework of weak or strong. Generally, there is a concern that theirs is weak, especially compared to other countries. This value-laden framework of weak/strong reflects the internalization of a single, hierarchical world order in which

Grenada is —behind" more developed countries. While the hierarchy implied in talk of developed, underdeveloped, and developing nations is quite obvious, there is another strong contributing factor to this local perception that emerges in talk about national identity. Grenadians frequently relate strength of national identity to the degree of pride maintained in national culture. There is a concern that the latter is something Grenadians lack or do not cherish. It seems that this view derives from a particular view of culture rooted in the region's history that emphasizes static traits rather than the dynamism that scholars have come to associate with the Caribbean. Thus, the perception by many Grenadians that they have a weak national identity must be examined as part of the broader picture of the nation's national narratives, as well as in the larger context of the region's history and contemporary global power relations.

While an analysis of public representations in Grenadian public worlds reveals the presence of dual master narratives about the nation and its people, a person-centered approach is required to understand the ways in which these narratives are received and interpreted by Grenadians. As public and personal worlds are brought into dynamic relation, it is then possible to discern the complex implications of the ways in which individual minds make meaning of national ideologies and, in turn, inform the thrust of these evolving national narratives. As subjects and agents, Grenadians are engaged in an ongoing process of defining themselves and their nation in the face of dynamic internal and external social, political, and economic pressures.

II. Public Worlds: Narratives of Past and Future

This section explores the ways in which the nation is imagined within public worlds in Grenada. The focus is upon representations which circulate ―out there" in the public sphere rather than how they are received and interpreted by individual minds. The second half of the dissertation is devoted to the latter. I will briefly outline here what I mean by public worlds, public representations, and narratives.

This dissertation presents ethnographic material using the framework of public and personal worlds. I follow Daniel Linger's conceptualization of public worlds as the:

> environments to which people are exposed, into which they are thrust, or which they build together, and from which people learn, over the course of their lives, to assemble ever-changing universes of thoughts and feeling … Public worlds have interactional and representational dimensions: they are scenes of interpersonal engagement and scenes of linguistic and imagistic representation. [2005:12-3]

Public representations, in turn, are those ―rough, ambiguous, widely circulated messages that evoke varying cognitive responses" (ibid.:14). By choosing to split worlds of meaning into public and personal spheres, rather than society/individual or public/private, the framework emphasizes both a relationship and a parity between the two spheres that might otherwise become eclipsed by anthropology's inherited Durkheimian emphasis on the public (ibid.:9-12).

Studies of nationalism have frequently focused upon the materials generated by the state for public dissemination. Not only does this presume the second half of the equation – namely, that they will be received and absorbed by citizens – it also presumes a strong state apparatus for this creation and dissemination. This is not the case in Grenada. Although official publications, state ceremonies, and political speeches, for

example, are important, they are not the sole means through which images of the nation are produced nor are they necessarily the most powerful. The Grenadian government has limited resources for promoting nationalist propaganda. Must this necessarily imply that nationalism in Grenada is weak? This reasoning follows only from the assumption that a strong centralized state is the necessary prerequisite for creation of a national ideology, and that this strong arm will lead its citizens to absorb the ideas so propagated. On the contrary, I would suggest that the case of a small postcolonial country with a struggling economy invites a broader analysis of the many sources of ideas about the nation circulating in the public sphere. The question that must be answered is how this context affects the ideas held by the people about their nation, and cannot be presumed either in the case of a coherent state-run campaign or in a more diffuse situation.

Attention to representations of the nation in Grenadian public worlds requires looking beyond official materials to a broad range of public sources, including tourist sites, brochures, and developments; local newspapers and publications; museums and monuments; national holidays and school curricula. Some of these sources blur the line between public and personal; for example, I cite an online discussion group that serves as a forum for Grenadians to chat about current events. The postings are reflections of personal ideas that, once catapulted into a public space, become part of longer threads of conversation that carry the potential for a wider sphere of influence. Indeed, it is important to emphasize the very close and rapid linkages between public and personal domains on a small island, where newspaper editorials become fodder for evening street corner chats – conversations which may appear in newspapers the next day with the tag, "Rumor has it …". These clear ties between public and personal worlds reinforce

Linger's argument that public representations ―meet cognitive processes at the interface between public and personal worlds" (2005:14).

In the analysis of public representations which follows, I argue that in spite of a multitude of sources and visions, images of the nation in Grenada coalesce around two central themes – those I have termed the ―Island of Conflict" and ―Isle of Spice" master narratives. While the Island of Conflict narrative tells a particular story about Grenada's past, the Isle of Spice narrative conjures visions for Grenada's future. As Carrithers notes, these narratives allow ―humans to grasp a longer past and a more intricately conceived future, as well as a more variegated social environment" (Brockmeier 2002:27). Neither a Grenadian, nor an outsider, could point to a single source or domain in which these narratives are made explicit. Neither would one expect a Grenadian to articulate or embrace either narrative in its entirety. Rather, I argue that these narratives emerge as the overarching effect of multiple, and often contradictory, images of the nation and its people; taken together, the narratives comprise the dominant public ideologies in circulation about the nation. While some patterning is evident, as different narratives seem to resonate more with some groups of people than others, individual voices reflect the selective usage of these narratives as they make sense of their own experiences as Grenadians.

I use the language of narrative because of its emphasis on storytelling and its important role in meaning-making processes within both public and personal worlds. Following Jens Brockmeier's definition of narrative as ―every text that tells a story, while a text is every meaningfully organized sign system" (2002:32), I wish to emphasize that the latter, which I call public representations, do ultimately tell a story to, and about,

Grenadians in spite of disparate sources. Just as narratives seem to ~~p~~play a privileged role in the process of self-construction" (Miller et al. 1990:292), public narratives have a ~~d~~distinctive capacity to give shape to the temporal dimension of human experience" (Brockmeier 2002:27). The stories that individuals tell about themselves and their personal experiences, along with the stories that public representations tell about a nation and its people, are in dynamic interaction. These narratives can be seen as emerging from a process of co-narration, ~~a~~ social process of telling and acting in which teller and listener are not stable and permanent positions but moments of an interplay whose outcome remains open" (ibid.:36). Although there are obvious differences between the broadly-defined, collective public narratives emerging from a concatenation of representations and the personal narratives individuals use to ~~c~~reate, interpret, and publicly project culturally constituted images of self in face-to-face interactions" (Miller et al. 1990:292), by emphasizing their shared qualities as narratives, my aim here is to highlight the equal importance of attending to public and personal worlds, as well as the relationships between them.

This double lens is especially important in the study of nationalism and national identity in a small, newly independent country that lacks a single hegemonic narrative. The following quote captures the relationship between official narratives and the stories citizens tell:

> The work of interpretation and the combination of official ideologies with other processes of meaning making – such as various ways in which people narrate and give meaning to their own subjectivity and their everyday life – are crucial in how people form their imageries of nation. In this respect, to understand how hegemonic narratives circulate and stay powerful, it is not sufficient to ask whether citizens read nationalist textbooks, attend state ceremonies, or are compelled to go to museums

> that present nationalist narratives. It is vital to examine how people represent these cultural products in the stories they tell and rewrite official narratives filtering them through the prism of their own life experiences. [Gür 2007:68-9]

In Grenada, there are no nationalist textbooks, state ceremonies are generally relatively small and poorly-attended affairs, and the sole museum does not present a cohesive nationalist narrative. This situation presents a host of new questions: what narratives are in circulation about the nation and its people? Which ones are ―cognitively salient" (Spiro 1994), to whom, and why? How do people feel about their nation and themselves as nationals in light of different narratives? As the subsequent analysis will show, diverse public representations still create important public narratives that convey multiple and dynamic ideologies of the nation; it becomes even more critical to examine the subtle and complex ways in which they are received and interpreted by Grenadians.

The Isle of Spice: Imagining Grenada's Future

> Threats [to the Tourism Sector]:
>
> i. Development may not come in time and the island may be left behind and have its tourist sector "crowded out" as other destinations in the region (including Cuba) build critical capacity and gain decisive advantages.
>
> ii. With the recent demise of agriculture as a key export earner and slow growth in other economic sectors, panic may set in, if significant development fails to occur within a reasonable time frame, and government may abandon its current policy of controlled, eco-friendly, sustainable tourism development in favour of high impact mass tourism.
>
> *Grenada Tourism Sector Profile*, *SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats] Analysis*.
> Agency for Reconstruction and Development, 2007.

Introduction: The Isle of Spice as Brand and Livelihood

Talk of progress and development is pervasive in Grenadian public life. As the national motto states, "Ever conscious of God, we aspire, advance, and build as one people." While the rhetoric of development has long been present on the island, the need for massive reconstruction in the wake of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily has amplified discussions about the prioritization of scant resources. While advancements in sectors such as manufacturing, construction, education, and healthcare are certainly part of the national agenda, the most prominent public themes are the development of the tourism industry and resuscitation of agriculture. Although not necessarily in conflict, public representations of these two key economic sectors often portray the development of tourism as pushing out the agricultural base. Further, there is debate about priorities

within each sector. Grenadians wrestle with the sociocultural and environmental costs of tourism developments as they court both mass tourism and high-end luxury developments. They also struggle with different models for agriculture‘s future, framing it as a source of local food security, as an export to earn foreign exchange, and as a lucrative link to the tourism industry. While each sector entails some variation in the development model, most would agree that both agriculture and tourism are vital parts of Grenada‘s future. Thus, in spite of debate over the best way to achieve their goals, Grenadians are generally united by their shared vision of a more prosperous and independent nation.

Grenada is known throughout the island, the Caribbean, and the wider world as the Isle of Spice, or Spice Isle. I argue that this unique epithet embeds dual emphases that reflect Grenadians‘ vision for their nation. The Spice Isle references the island‘s unique and carefully-cultivated brand within a commodified tourism industry, in which their trademark spice cultivation is used to establish a special niche within the Caribbean tourism market. At the same time, it reveals the supreme importance of Grenada‘s spice industry to Grenadians‘ image of themselves as an agricultural nation. The production of nutmegs in particular is a key part of Grenadians‘ national identity; the nutmeg is even featured on the national flag. This label thus captures the combined importance of the tourism and agricultural industries within the island‘s most important and ubiquitous public representation of itself.

While the island‘s agricultural roots remain strong, production was in decline even before the massive devastation wrought by the hurricanes in 2004 and 2005. Thus, in recent years, Grenada has necessarily turned toward increased development of the

tourism industry, branding itself the Isle of Spice for marketing purposes. Grenada's National Strategic Development Plan, prepared in the wake of Hurricane Ivan by the Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) under a mandate from the Government of Grenada, outlines the island's objectives for tourism and agriculture. In the tourism section, the first and second anticipated results of their programme objectives are to redefine the tourism product and to institutionalize the Isle of Spice brand. In order to achieve the latter, "a range of marketing products with harmonized logo" are to be agreed by 2008, and the Isle of Spice brand is to be nationally accepted (ARD 2007a:61-2). These goals are shared in the agriculture section, in which a key objective is also "to promote Spice Isle as brand" so that Grenada will be "recognized as having a unique brand" (ibid 2007:64). This brand is to be "incorporated in marketing campaigns and exhibitions abroad" as well as "increased number of spice gardens in tourist belts to reinforce the product" (ibid.:64). Thus, the product becomes both the spices and the island itself.

This chapter examines both the tourism and agricultural dimensions of the Isle of Spice epithet. In the first section, I explore key debates about the development of the tourism industry. I focus on the unintended consequences of both mass and luxury tourism, considering the sociocultural, environmental, and economic dimensions of a series of controversial episodes that occurred during my fieldwork period. Together, they shed light on the most sensitive areas of tourism development: Grenadians fight for access to their land and the profits derived from its sale and use by foreigners, and struggle to maintain a sense of autonomy in the face of an industry dependent on outsiders. In spite of these obstacles, however, Grenadians remain eager to expand their

tourism industry, and new luxury facilities are often seen as symbols of progress and development.

The second part considers the fate of agriculture in post-hurricane Grenada, and the ways in which its prospects are framed by those charged with its resuscitation. Although agriculture is undoubtedly an important part of Grenada‘s future, it does not garner the same level of public attention as tourism nor does it generate the same level of controversy. While there is some debate about its future, the aging farmer population is at a disadvantage when it comes to making their voices heard in the media. Further, although an emphasis on agriculture presents a more autonomous development paradigm for the nation‘s future, it is rarely viewed as an ideological alternative to tourism‘s dependencies. Agriculture remains an integral part of Grenadian identity and heritage, yet its status as a sector in need of modernization and revival does not attract the attention of the tourism industry and its iconic symbols of progress. In spite of its relatively weak public representations, however, agriculture remains an important personal and political issue for Grenadians, and it is still widely perceived as a key part of the nation‘s future.

The conclusion considers the role of conversations about Grenada‘s future within Grenadian public life. In contrast to the nation‘s conflict-ridden past and divisive uses of history in the present, public ideologies about progress and development provide a unifying narrative for the Grenadian people. In spite of disagreement about the best way forward, Grenadians are united in their understanding of the nation‘s problems and options. Further, a development-oriented narrative appeals particularly to the country‘s youth. The post-Revolution generation are alienated from the past and eager to improve their future. The youth also relate to the concept of development through the idea of self-

development, a term that usually refers to increased education and serves as a bridge between individual pursuits and the national narrative. Nevertheless, this future-oriented narrative is not without its pitfalls. The image of a united Grenadian family is undercut by the implicit acknowledgment that Grenadians are a people *in need* of development. Neediness points to social divisions, raises questions about entitlement and priority, and generates anxiety about Grenada's position within a larger world order. Conversations about development are thus unifying and fragmenting, generating a fertile ambivalence that today's post-Revolution generation mine for their own ideas about the nation's future.

Tourism in Grenada: An Island in the Balance

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC 2004), Grenada ranks 15 out of 176 countries for relative contribution of travel and tourism to the national economy, reflecting the fact that the Caribbean is the most tourism-intensive region in the world. In 2007, the travel and tourism economy accounted for 33 percent of Grenada's GDP and 33 percent of general employment (WTCC 2007), reflecting a rapid rebound to pre-Ivan levels. In the November/December issue of the same year, the *National Geographic Traveler* magazine featured a rating guide to the world's best islands. The grading system of one to four divided the islands into the following categories: Best rated (score 77 and above), doing well (66-76), in the balance (50-65), and in trouble (below 50). Grenada scored 59, an ―in the balance" rating that meant ―a mix of strong attributes with potentially serious problems that need immediate attention"

(2007:111). The short commentary summarized: ―Still recovering from devastation by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.‘ Dangerously tempted by ‗big box tourism,‘ but geotourism approach now gaining favor would focus on its good mix of culture, scenery, diving, birds, and sailing" (ibid.:124). This description just scratches the surface of a very deep and complex debate taking place in Grenada during my fieldwork period, yet the overall impression conveyed is correct: Grenada seemed to be hovering between several different approaches to tourism, each with profound implications for the island‘s future.

This section focuses on public representations of tourism. This includes the many ways that it is made manifest as a concrete reality in Grenada, both in terms of infrastructure and tourists, as well as the ways that it enters public discourse, ideology, and debate. In particular, I will focus on some of the unintended consequences that emerged from both the mass market and high-end approaches to tourism. In each case, controversies arose which highlighted the many ways that dependency on tourism impacts Grenadians‘ sense of themselves as a sovereign nation. Beyond the obvious economic advantages of tourism as a source of revenue, the necessity for which has driven many a Caribbean island headlong into self-promotion as a destination for sun, sand and sea, tourism raises a host of complex cultural quandaries which I explore in this section.

The first part addresses mass tourism, followed by consideration of a host of new luxury developments. I attend to the controversies generated by each approach, and provide an in-depth case study of the largest proposed development, spearheaded by British entrepreneur Peter de Savary. I then consider the ways that tourism is taught in

the national education system. The conclusion considers the development model implied by Grenada‘s approach to tourism.

The Unanticipated Consequences of Mass(ive) Tourism

Grenada‘s international airport and new cruise ship port facility have opened possibilities for the island to host an ever-increasing number of visitors. Grenada is becoming a popular destination for daytrippers, and concerted efforts are underway to increase lodging options to host greater numbers of stay-over visitors. In this section, I consider two controversial episodes that occurred during my fieldwork period. First, I look at an unexpected consequence of becoming part of the Caribbean cruise ship itinerary. While Grenadians eagerly welcome the thousands of visitors who disembark daily during the high season, the scheduled arrival of gay cruises raised an outcry. Rallying behind their self-identification as a Christian nation, many church-going Grenadians were offended by the prospect of openly gay passengers displaying affection in the streets – acts which are also illegal under Grenadian law. When these protestations led to the threat of a boycott by international organizations, the conflict highlighted the impasse between the large conservative Christian population, and their sense of their nation‘s moral strictures, and an industry dependent on welcoming all outsiders. The second part considers Grenada‘s role as one of the Caribbean host countries to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup in 2007. In this case, I focus on the massive new stadium that was constructed by the Chinese especially to host the anticipated crowds. This stadium became an important symbol in Grenadian public life,

representing both the establishment of diplomatic ties with China and the controversial results of this new alliance. In both cases, Grenada's efforts to become a mass tourism destination raised questions about just how far Grenadians are willing to go when it comes to perceived compromises to their nation's sovereignty.

Grenada as Cruise Ship Destination

A US$24 million cruise ship port facility opened in Grenada in 2005. The port can accommodate two mega cruise ships, plus five additional vessels strategically anchored at the quay and in the outer harbor. Since then, Grenada has become a popular cruise ship destination. The 2007/2008 cruise ship season (November to April) anticipated more than a quarter million passengers, with as many as 30,000 daytrippers arriving in one month. The cruise ship schedule with the number of passengers alighting per vessel is published weekly in the local newspapers so that vendors are prepared. A single ship can bring over three thousand visitors. The 2007/2008 season was considered one of the best since Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, with a seven percent growth over the previous year. The importance of the cruise ship industry to Grenada is underscored by active efforts to recruit new lines. In 2006, Prime Minister Keith Mitchell led a delegation to the 13th Annual Florida Caribbean Cruise Conference, in which ~~he~~ he met directly with several other cruise ship principals [in addition to Carnival Cruise Lines] with the hope that they will be persuaded to include Grenada on their cruise itineraries" (*Grenadian Voice* 2006:24).

Cruise ship tourism leaves a large footprint on the island with comparatively small financial gain. According to the Agency for Reconstruction and Development's (ARD) commissioned report on the Grenada Tourism Sector Profile (ARD 2007c), annual cruise visitor expenditure averaged EC$16 million (US$6 million) over the 10-year period from 1996-2005 (ibid.:17). In 2005, total visitor expenditure (cruise daytrippers and stayover visitors) was EC$250 million (US$93 million). Although cruise ship expenditure grew by 11.97 percent from 2004 (ibid.:17) to a total of EC$22,006,400 (US$8 million), the 275,000 cruise passengers accounted for only a fraction of the total visitor expenditure. The 100,000 stayover visitors in 2005 thus accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of the revenue. The thousands of visitors alighting in one day clog the roadways and streets of the capital, spend little pocket money, and leave behind massive amounts of trash. Radio stations broadcast the arrivals, and remind Grenadians to make a good impression. Of course, it is the hope that daytrippers will plan a return trip in the future after getting a glimpse of the island. To my knowledge, the percentage of return visitors that are accounted for in this manner is not documented.

The fact that cruise ship visitors account for such a small percentage of tourism revenue does not seem to be common knowledge, nor is this a frequently heard lament. Instead, for most Grenadians, the high visibility of the modern cruise ship port with its mega ships towering over St. George's creates a favorable image of modern development. The cruise ships moving in and out of the harbor are massive symbols of progress. On days when the ships are in port, the hustle and bustle of vendors, taxi drivers, and tour bus operators creates a vivid picture of a thriving tourist business for the general public, and symbolizes Grenada's desirability as a tourism destination.

While this form of mass tourism is generally lauded in the public media and actively solicited by the Mitchell administration, there was a rising tide of discontent during my fieldwork period aimed at the cruise ship industry. The criticism did not arise from the more obvious issues of ecological damage or minimal revenue, rather, Grenadians rallied against the arrival of gay cruises. In November 2007, news spread that several of the large cruise ships scheduled to arrive during the Christmas Season were all-gay cruises and sparked a firestorm of public debate.

The government did not yet have an official position on gay cruises, although homosexuality is illegal in Grenada. Much of the debate focused on enforcement of a ban of any displays of homosexual behavior, rather than an outright ban on the arrival of homosexuals. The Minister of Tourism, Hon. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, stated, "As a government our policy is that we don't support it, but are we going to put a barrier that says that if somebody is gay they should be debarred from coming to this country. This is my question, what does the Grenadian community want of us?" (*Grenadian Voice,* Nov. 10, 2007). The *Grenada Advocate* (Nov. 16, 2007) reported:

> The news has created a major stir here and has sparked a raging debate in the country … "There is the law of Grenada which makes criminal the display of intimacy between same sex persons. I am very well aware that we are a religious country and our culture is different from others … We have to be careful not to get homophobic. Not to get paranoid. Now the display of intimacy on the streets is something I am very much against, and I find it intolerable," the tourism minister explained.

The confusion evidenced by this statement mirrored the government's uncertainty as it struggled with Grenada's public image and a flood of anti-gay outcries from the general public.

The debate was soon reported in the international media. A headline appeared in the *Toronto Star*, "Grenada Considering Ban on Gay Cruises" (quoted in *Grenada Advocate,* Dec. 14, 2007). Hotel cancellations sparked concern among tourism officials, and Modeste-Curwen told reporters "that persons have also protested by dispatching letters to the Canadian Government asking that country to cut aid to St. George's" (ibid.:3). Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism voiced concern for the tourism sector, and hastened to issue a new public statement:

> The Ministry therefore wishes to make it clear that the cruise lines which regularly visit Grenada and are scheduled to do so during the cruise season are important to all of us and as such, we will continue to welcome all visitors and we will work, along with our population, to ensure that their time and ours will be enjoyable … Grenada respects the rights of all persons of all persuasions and life styles and has not, as reported, made any attempts to turn away any of those visitors to our country. [ibid.:3]

The cruise ships arrived as planned, and the public debate subsided.

Debate over gay cruises is not unique to Grenada. Many of the Caribbean islands have faced a similar quandary over the past decade. Claude Douglas, a Grenadian political scientist and lecturer at St. George's University, devotes a chapter of his book, *Homosexuality in the Caribbean: Crawling out of the Closet* to a review of the debate over "'Gay' Tourists – A Growing Phenomenon" (2007:28). His approach emphasizes the question of national sovereignty, noting, for example, that the colonial status of British Overseas Territories like the Cayman Islands forces acceptance of the non-discriminatory laws of the United Kingdom (ibid.:31). He concludes:

> The conventional wisdom that tourism is unambiguously good is a traditional myth that needs debunking. Tourism in the Caribbean reflects a colossal contradiction. On the one hand, it is the economic panacea for ailing Caribbean economies through employment creation, income redistribution and poverty alleviation. And, even if they do not approve of

> homosexuality on a moral basis, some government tourism boards, hoteliers, restaurateurs, taxi drivers, tour companies and others in the hospitality industry say that gay tourism is good for business because gay and lesbian travelers spend big. On the other hand, tourism can cause irreparable damages to the society‘s moral fibre and no amount of money can compensate for the consequent immoralities. Gays and lesbians feel a sense of anonymity when they are traveling in a foreign country which allows them to do things they would not normally do at home – ~~t~~hings" that fail to respect local customs and moral values. [ibid.:35-6]

In this section, as in the rest of the text, Douglas‘ personal views seem in tension with his efforts to use a more objective social scientific approach. His book is a testimony to the emerging importance of the debate about homosexuality and tourism in Grenada, while also reflecting the difficulty that even Grenadian scholars face when addressing the subject.

Grenada‘s economic challenges, greatly exacerbated by the destruction of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, have made the government reluctant to turn away any tourism-based prospects. Similarly, Grenadians generally seemed eager to embrace any sign of recovery and progress. Cruise ships promise the arrival of foreign exchange and serve as a highly visible symbol of Grenada‘s proud participation in the wider Caribbean tourism economy. Grenadians tolerate the flood of tourists and accompanying inconveniences with little complaint, and generally play the role of hospitable, gracious hosts. As someone who was often mistaken for a cruise ship passenger when walking downtown when a ship was in port, I was frequently struck by the pleasantness of my encounters with Grenadians soliciting business. In spite of the sharp competition among vendors, the atmosphere was never aggressive and a polite _no thank you‘ was immediately respected. Indeed, the Grenadians with whom I spoke rarely expressed any

resentment toward the tourists. On the contrary, they seemed truly proud and pleased that foreigners wanted to see their beautiful island.

Given this level of tolerance even in the face of mass tourism, the degree of intolerance toward homosexuality is noteworthy. This issue clearly strikes at the heart of Grenadians‘ sense of their country as a Christian nation with a set of moral injunctions. More than this, however, it also highlights their dependency on outsiders. The negative press in the international media, coupled with the mere threat of protestors asking the Canadian government to withdraw aid to Grenada, caused the Ministry of Tourism to quickly issue a public statement settling the matter. The issue sharply illuminates Grenada‘s lack of autonomy even on matters that a large bloc of Grenadians perceive as critically important to the moral foundation of the nation.

Grenada and China: The Legacy of ICC Cricket World Cup 2007

Nine Caribbean nations jointly played host to the 2007 International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup. This massive undertaking required enormous investments in infrastructure, security, and human resources, while also garnering tremendous enthusiasm and energy for years in advance of the games. The host countries were Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada. Grenada‘s role carried a particularly heavy symbolic load because the island‘s original stadium was destroyed by Hurricane Ivan. There was much speculation that the new stadium would

not be ready in time for the games, and Grenadians were exceedingly proud that not only were they ready, their stadium was considered one of the finest.

Prior to Hurricane Ivan, Grenada maintained diplomatic ties with Taiwan. When the stadium was destroyed and the ICC was ready to remove Grenada from the list of hosts, the Grenadian government accepted an aid package from China that was more lucrative than what Taiwan could offer. In exchange for pledging support for the One China policy, China promised US$250 million in assistance (Straker 2009a:1). Further, they funded and supplied workers for the construction of the US$40 million Queen‘s Park stadium, with a seating capacity of 20,000 – one fifth of the population of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. Like the mega cruise ships anchored nearby in St. George‘s harbour, the improbably large stadium just outside the capital became another visually and symbolically towering symbol of modern development.

Despite widespread predictions that Grenada‘s infrastructure could not sustain the massive influx of foreigners expected for the games, the event went very smoothly. This was partly the result of a lower turnout than predicted. According to the Grenada Board of Tourism, from April 10 to 20, Grenada‘s National Stadium held an average of 10,000 cricket fans at each of the matches. The most well-attended game in Grenada was Australia vs. New Zealand which brought out 12,229 fans (Grenada Board of Tourism 2007). In other words, the stadium was never filled to capacity at the event for which it was created. It was even widely rumored that the Prime Minister would call elections after the games, aiming to ride the wave of enthusiasm he anticipated the event would generate. The New National Party very proudly claimed the rebuilt stadium and the games in Grenada as key successes of their administration. The fact that elections were

delayed by several months may be a reflection of the fact that enthusiasm over the games seemed to fade quickly, while controversies about the stadium lingered.

The stadium generated a series of debates in Grenadian public life. Most visibly, the ultra-modern facility contrasted starkly with its immediate environs. Situated in the middle of one of Grenada's most notoriously poor neighborhoods, many questioned the government's willingness to invest so heavily in a sporting arena instead of much-needed community development. As is common in Grenada's close-knit political scene, I heard stories of personnel who, after publicly questioning the wisdom of this venture, were quietly sanctioned by the ruling party. Nevertheless, the stadium's location could not be completely ignored. The lack of sanitation and landscaping in the surroundings generated concern right up to the final days before the games.

The high cost of the stadium construction was not unique to Grenada. There was considerable debate about whether it was beneficial for the Caribbean to play host to the games at all. An article in the *L.A. Times* noted: "Few of the host nations have disclosed their total spending on the tournament, burying event costs in their public works budgets. Lockerbie [venue development director at ICC Cricket World Cup 2007 headquarters] estimates the collective cost to be upward of $800 million – more than the net worth of five of the host countries" (Williams 2006). As costs escalated, it became increasingly doubtful that any amount of increased tourism traffic could recoup the expenses incurred by the hosts. The merits of the games even became the topic of discussion in a class at St. George's University, in which the professor asked students to prepare presentations on the question: "Is Cricket World Cup a boon or a bane to the region?" Students seemed to find an even number of arguments for and against the games.

While Grenadians were excited and proud when the games finally began, the controversies did not end. As in many of the islands, a key issue was the price of tickets. Rae Roberts described the situation in his article in the *Grenadian Voice*, ―A World Cup almost without the people":

> There is no way the ordinary man – a cleaner, a road worker or even the average public and private sector workers could have afforded the lowest price of a ticket at EC$68 [US$25] per game for six days, along with purchasing food at a cost of EC$25 [US$9], a coke $6, and beer $8 at the stadium.
>
> To save face following the Antigua fiasco of thousands of empty seats for the Super Eight series, which made a horrendous TV picture around the world, the World Cup organizers came to their senses, accepting EC$25 for a section of the stadium for some games.
>
> … Undoubtedly, the Caribbean governments' focus was all on the tens of thousands of visitors coming to the region to see the games. Much of it turned out to be wishful thinking. None of the World Cup countries has seen a mass of visitors. It's been a little more than a trickle. [Roberts 2007]

The Grenadian organizing committee eventually lowered the price of tickets, and also gave free admission to some school groups. At the last minute, the government declared a national holiday so that workers would be free to fill the stands.

Ticket price was not the only deterrent to local participation. Stadium regulations prohibited traditionally Caribbean ways of celebrating cricket. A ban which prohibited the bringing of outside food and water into the stands was met with outrage – not only because the cost of these items by official vendors was prohibitive, but also because Grenadian families were accustomed to enjoying the games with their own repast. An ICC media release listed musical instruments as restricted: ―Musical instruments and items of cultural expression – such as conch shells and shak-shaks – can be taken to

CWC matches as long as persons secure permission from the Local Organising Committees (LOC)" (Alleyne 2007). As a practical matter, of course, the use of musical instruments was effectively banned. Eventually, when faced with the prospect of empty stands, some of the regulations were loosened. Public resentment at being excluded from their own World Cup, however, was not so easily reversed.

The 2007 Cricket World Cup and its massive stadium were never unequivocally experienced in Grenada as of the people, for the people. Against this controversial backdrop, I will now turn to an examination of the most enduring legacy of this event: Grenada's diplomatic ties with China. I should note at the outset that it is entirely possible that Grenada would have shifted its alliance from Taiwan to China in Hurricane Ivan's wake, regardless of the pressing problem of the destroyed stadium. Nevertheless, what is significant here is that this shift is most commonly perceived as tied to the stadium. For Grenadians, it is the stadium that brought the Chinese. And after the construction of the stadium was completed and the games finished, the Chinese stayed.

Grenada's decision to sever ties with Taiwan and enter a lucrative agreement with China was thrust into the international limelight due to a diplomatic gaffe. At the inauguration ceremony for the stadium, in which the Chinese Ambassador and laborers officially handed over their gift to the Grenadian people, the Royal Grenada Police Band accidentally played the Taiwanese national anthem. The confusion apparently stemmed from the fact that Republic of China is the formal name of Taiwan, while China is known formally as the People's Republic of China. Thus, the Republic of China's anthem was played for the Chinese. This embarrassing blunder made headlines across Asian and Caribbean newspapers, as well as CNN and BBC. Within this context of the Chinese-

built stadium, the reports noted Grenada's 2005 shift in diplomatic allegiance from Taiwan to China. Thus, the association between Taiwan, China, and the stadium was cemented in the minds of Grenadians and the wider world.

China's increasing presence in the Caribbean during my fieldwork period stirred debate about "checkbook diplomacy," as it is named by Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA) research associates in their article, "Votes for sale? Japan, China and Taiwan duke it out in the Caribbean" (Monteforte and Smith 2007:12). Mainland China was actively recruiting small Caribbean countries to vote for their One China policy in the United Nations in exchange for promises of aid. "Antigua-Barbuda open to Chinese investors, says minister" (*SIR,* Sept. 13, 2007), "China's Vice Premier promises continued aid for the region" (*Grenadian Voice,* Sept. 15, 2007), "Taiwan president makes deals on Caribbean trip" (*Spice Isle Review*, Jan 24, 2008), and similar headlines periodically appeared in the local newspapers. Indeed, Grenada's was not the only stadium constructed by the Chinese – Jamaica and Antigua and Barbuda also had arrangements with China. Still, five CARICOM nations remained tied to Taiwan (Sanders 2008). Sir Ronald Sanders, a business executive and former Caribbean diplomat who writes a regular column for the *Spice Isle Review*, strongly advocated for all CARICOM nations to bargain collectively for a strong aid and investment agreement with China in exchange for a One China Policy (ibid.). David Jessop, Director of the Caribbean Council, whose regular column "A View from Europe" appears in *The Grenada Advocate*, noted that "China has become a major regional player … Soon a moment will come when others outside the region will have to find ways to co-ordinate their development policies with those being delivered by Beijing" (2009:9). He further

noted that in its first policy paper on Latin America and the Caribbean, China's intention is to ―build a comprehensive partnership based on equality, mutual benefit and development with, as an underlying principle, a one China policy" (ibid.:9). It was thus abundantly clear that China was leveraging aid packages in exchange for votes supporting efforts to reclaim Taiwan and undermine the latter's push for sovereignty.

In Grenada, the government's acceptance of aid in exchange for its vote in the United Nations was widely known. For example, on the third anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from China and Grenada published their letters of congratulations in the newspaper. The Chinese Minister wrote: ―Grenada has strictly observed its commitment, adhering to the one China principle and given full understanding and support to China on the Taiwan issue. We highly appreciate its commitment." The Grenadian Minister wrote: ―Grenada is acutely aware of the challenges your great nation faces in its efforts to maintain its territorial integrity, and in this regard, I want to reassure you that our Government will continue to advocate and practice the One China policy as is done by the majority of countries around the world" (*Grenadian Voice,* Jan. 19, 2008). While there is often criticism that local political dealings lack transparency, the China-Taiwan-Grenada transaction was exceedingly clear.

This abrupt switch in the Grenadian government's loyalties did not pass local scrutiny unremarked. Several commentaries in the local newspapers argued against the shift in allegiance. While no one argued that Taiwan had provided aid with a different motive than China – they, too, sought votes in the United Nations – some Grenadians did

question which country deserved Grenada's support. Lloyd Noel argued in favor of Taiwan:

> Whereas in Taiwan … with its 23 Million people – and its independent and extremely admirable economic record, its human and workers right, its highly democratic practices that allow its people to enjoy all the freedom we are always clamouring about, including religious freedom to worship as the people desire … they are more than qualified to take their seat in the United Nations and ought to be allowed to do just that.
>
> … The source and the basis from which the world records of economic excellence are obtained in Mainland China, are not any better, in my view, than allowing money laundering from drugs, or any other fraudulent dealings, to enter our States on the pretence of economic development.
>
> True enough, we will get a new Stadium, a few bridges and some houses, and whatever else – but at the expense of suffering workers, and millions who are deprived of basic human rights in their own homeland. There is nothing to learn or achieve, in the context of human development as a people, from the foregoing. [Noel 2007a:9]

A letter to the editor by Fernando Johnson in *The Grenadian Voice* (2008:7) compares aid from China to other major donors:

> Our true friends the Canadians, over the past many years, have given millions of dollars to help us, without wanting a piece of our country. The United States, the EU and other countries have given us more money than we can count over the years, without any strings attached.
>
> The Taiwanese have given so much without taking from us … Now, the Chinese have come and are, apparently, demanding and getting our collective souls, for what – the stadium?

On a strictly ideological level, some found it problematic that Grenada was offering political backing to a communist country with a poor human rights record and notorious working conditions for its laborers. Soon, however, the controversy spread as these issues hit closer to home.

Five hundred Chinese construction workers completed the stadium in record time, and by all accounts did an excellent job. However, they did not all return to China once the project was completed. In what was perhaps an unanticipated outcome of the government's arrangement with China, soon Grenadian constructions workers found themselves in competition with Chinese laborers. A bid for the Grand Harbour condominium development project was a focal point, as the Chinese company that built the stadium offered a lower price than a local company. A representative of the Chinese company which constructed the national stadium, Li Jia Hong, issued a statement regarding their bid, noting that they had been approached for the quotation for the Grand Harbour project on Egmont point and had not solicited the work. "They came to us; we did not go to them! We are not looking to take jobs from Grenadians" (Straker 2007a:3). Further, he stated that of the 500 stadium workers, only 50 remained, awaiting government instructions "to commence construction of houses that the Chinese Government promised Grenada" (ibid.:3). Although he noted that they are contracting with local supply companies, the issue of involving local workers was more problematic: "We had a quick turn over of Grenadian workers on the stadium project, some of them just left us after a week or two, they cannot work the long hours with us, it is just not easy for them … However, we would like for some to join us so they can learn from us" (ibid.:3). Hong also responded to concern that his company was not contributing to the National Insurance Scheme, a requirement for Grenadian companies. Hong made public that, "Based on the agreement between Grenada and the Chinese Government, we are not required to pay that …" (ibid.:3).

This issue sparked widespread concern that the playing field was not level because of concessions granted to the Chinese as well as unfair labor practices. Senator and president of Grenada Technical and Allied Workers Union, Chester Humphrey, voiced concern that the Chinese were being exploited. In an article entitled, "Resolutions and petitions against Chinese," a case is made that the competition is unfair:

> They could produce cheaper for obvious reasons; the law states that the normal work-day is eight hours, but the Chinese often worked 15 hours – it is not that they produced more but they worked longer. At the stadium they lived on site so their working costs were less. There was little likelihood, since they came here as a state corporation, that they took out injury insurance or NIS [National Insurance Scheme], so their wages could be less than a Grenadian.
>
> … After Ivan small local contractors had invested in equipment and bought trucks; now a foreign nation of 1.5 billion people was staying to compete with an island of 100,000 people.
>
> Mr Humphrey wanted to clear the air on the Egmont developer – they were not to be blamed for hiring a cheaper contractor – but 240 of [Grenada's] Creative Design's labour force was now out of work. They could never bid as low as the Chinese for the contract. [Patterson 2007a:7]

Lloyd Noel points out the ripple effect on the Grenadian economy from these lost jobs. Not only would the 240 workers lose over a year of employment, the Chinese workers "would not be paying (NRL) National Reconstruction Levy – because their wages of six or seven U.S. dollars per day, according to reports, would be way below the limitation figure of $1000.00" (Noel 2007b:9). Further, Noel speculates that the workers are exempt from the usual EC$1,500 (US$550) for work permits as part of their special arrangement with the government (ibid.:9). Johnson also notes that "the Chinese spend little or none of the money they earn here. Most of it is sent to China and is never again to be seen in our economy. Is the stadium worth that?" (2008:7)

The question of work ethics touched an especially raw nerve among Grenadians. Some argued that open competition was a good wake-up call for locals who would soon be expected to compete against other Caribbean workers in the open CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). An editorial entitled, "Grenadian workers need to step up" (*SIR*, Nov. 22, 2007:4), outlines the argument:

> The work ethic of many construction workers leaves very little to be desired as they continue to do their own thing with impunity and without fear of reprisal. They arrive late for work, they leave early, they have prolonged lunch breaks and find every excuse for a break in between, making their basic productivity level very low. Many ordinary Grenadians can relate horror stories about their experiences with Grenadian contractors who have taken their money and have not delivered either goods or services.
>
> … [The Chinese] workers are slight in stature compared to our own workers, and have to adapt to a tropical climate which they are not used to and which happens to be the natural environment for Grenadian workers. Yet the difference between the level of performance and productivity of Grenadian workers as compared to that of their Chinese counterparts is like day and night … it is high time that local builders/contractors and construction workers take stock, and take a look at themselves and the manner in which they have exploited the Grenadian consumer over the years.
>
> … Today it is the Chinese; but in a relatively short space of time the threat would be coming NOT from the Chinese but from workers in the rest of the region when CSME comes into full effect.

On the other hand, others felt that it was unethical to endorse Chinese labor practices. Noel sharply condemned "those who are so quick to 'Big-up' the Chinese so-called 'work ethics', they are no different from the white proponents who justified slavery of black people for purely economic purposes to their benefit" (2007b:9).

Controversy about the Chinese presence was not limited to construction contracts. Periodic allegations of corruption surfaced in the local papers and fueled rumors in the

streets. For example, land for a workers' hostel was provided to the Chinese construction firm building the stadium. As an enormous pink structure with a large Chinese gateway was erected, suspicions arose that the new building was actually a hotel. Soon a story in *Grenada Today* (Jan. 18, 2008) quoted an official at the Chinese Embassy confirming that "the private sector firm is building a 'hotel' for use by the general public with some 'office space' for its construction firm." Further, a container was seized at customs with paperwork indicating that the contents "are for the sole use of the national stadium" and were thus duty-free. However, it was alleged that the television sets and telephones were for use at the hotel (ibid). This was not the first seizure of a Chinese container at the port; in October, 2007, a forty foot container of "counterfeit toothpaste and other products which violated the island's labeling and advertising standards" were seized and destroyed, as the products were described as "extremely dangerous for human consumption" (Straker 2007b). Following this rather alarming statement, the same article concludes: "The importer, according to Collins [Director of Grenada Bureau of Standards], said that he was unaware of Grenada's importation rules and regulations and a decision was taken to issue him with a warning letter. 'This is his first offence, so we did not take a decision to stop him,' Collins said" (ibid).

The Chinese presence in Grenada, along with the massive stadium which they built, are the enduring legacies of hosting the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup. It may have been only a matter of time before China forged ties with Grenada as it expanded its strategic efforts in the Caribbean and Latin America. Nevertheless, for Grenadians, the diplomatic alliance is tightly linked in the national consciousness with the Queen's Park Stadium. As new issues continue to arise about the high cost of maintaining the

structure, and the presence of Chinese workers on this small island with high unemployment generates tensions, it is clear that the symbolism of this monument to modern development will continue to be entangled with controversy.

Exclusive and Exclusionary Luxury Developments

Grenada's marketing materials frequently describe the island in terms of its "unspoilt beauty." As recently as 2009, the National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations placed Grenada among the "ten great places to currently have its beauty unspoiled … one of the last Caribbean island countries not yet overwhelmed with huge, all-inclusive resorts" (*Grenada Advocate*, Jan. 9, 2009). It is an irony of this selling point that Grenada's lack of development is often pitched to developers as a reason to choose the island for a new project. During my fieldwork period, Grenada was publicized widely as "undiscovered," and over a dozen developers heeded the call for new investments. By the time I left Grenada, the sharp contraction of the global economy in 2009 had stalled many of these projects and their future remained uncertain.

The dramatic surge in interest in Grenadian real estate generated a near-constant stream of public debates, as Grenadians considered the impact of so many new luxury resorts dotting nearly every pristine bay along the southeastern part of the island, as well as a major new project along the capital's harbour. Grenadians are not new to high profile investors arriving on the island. The post-Ivan era was different, however, for the sheer number of investors and projects being planned simultaneously. Further, public discourse on the subject of developers inevitably turned to the frequency with which

planned projects have fallen through. Grenada has been prey to a high number of fraudulent schemes, and locals have repeatedly witnessed the physical mutilation of the land for the early stages of a purported development, only to witness the evaporation of the ~~"in~~vestor" and his funds – which, in at least one case, were guaranteed by the Grenadian government (Benjamin 2008). Thus, Grenadians are accustomed to critically viewing outside investors. Nevertheless, the nation's dire economic situation and the pro-investment stance of the government resulted in a generally welcoming atmosphere, with the majority of the struggling local population embracing any sign of new economic activity.

In this section, I will focus on two particularly controversial developments. The first part considers the proposed Four Seasons Resort, plans for which encroached on national park land dedicated to Grenada's critically endangered national bird, the Grenada Dove. This case illuminates some of the ecological hazards threatened by new luxury resorts, and the role of the government, nationals, and the international community in public debate and policy change. The second case study focuses on the arrival of Peter de Savary, a UK-based investor, with his many plans for developments and his self-proclaimed and widely-publicized vision to shape the future of the island. In this case, I will focus on the casualties faced by the local population on two fronts: exclusion from the land, and less visibly but more far-reaching, exclusion from the profits of the development venture.

The Grenada Dove v. Four Seasons Resort

Consider this description from the Mt. Hartman Development website, future home of the largest Four Seasons Resort in the world: "The resort site centers on an exclusive bay with great beaches, bordered by a protected dove sanctuary and significant mangroves. Supporting this exclusive property shall be a Tom MacKenzie designed Golf Resort …" (Mount Hartman Estate 2009). While many of the new developments planned in Grenada posed threats to the ecological balance of their environs, these concerns received little notice compared to the national and international outcry generated by the Mt. Hartman development plan. The co-existence of the dove sanctuary, mangroves, and resort were in obvious conflict. The result was a protracted battle which called into question the Grenadian government's stated commitment to biodiversity and ecologically-sound development.

In late December 2006, local and international newspapers announced the government's intention to sell national park land to a development company planning to build a Four Seasons resort. The Mount Hartman National Park, in the southwest of the island, was created through an Act of Parliament in 1994 as a sanctuary for the critically endangered national bird, the Grenada Dove. This move had followed the decision to turn another important dove habitat into a landfill. Grenada received an EC$4 million (US$1.5 million) grant from the World Bank for this biodiversity project (Straker 2007c:4). The park comprises approximately one-third of the government-owned Mount Hartman Estate. The government's plan was to remove the park's protected status and

sell the entire parcel of land to a developer. The existing Dove Sanctuary in Mount Hartman was reportedly home to 22 percent of the population of the Grenada Dove – just twenty pairs. Further, Grenada is the only place where this dove lives. As secondary school students are taught in their social studies textbook, habitat destruction is the greatest threat to the bird's survival, and "if there is any more alteration to this habitat, the dove will become extinct" (Peters and Penny 1998:57).

BirdLife International, a global partnership of conservation organisations, identified the Sanctuary as "a Important Bird Area (IBA) for the Grenada Dove and for eleven other species that occur only on Grenada or in the Caribbean region" (Caribbean Net News 2006). This advocacy group raised a firestorm of publicity surrounding the proposed development. David Wege, the organization's Caribbean Programme Manager, stated: "For the Government to sell off one of the island's most prized natural resources to make space for a high-end luxury development sets a clear message: the Government of Grenada has a complete disregard for environmental protection" (ibid.). Authors Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson, Honorary Patrons of BirdLife's Rare Bird Club, supported the protest: "There's a terrible irony in the Government's willingness to critically compromise the continued existence of the Grenada Dove – which as the island's National Bird is a symbol of the country's distinctiveness and its culture – simply to provide sea-views to people from away. They should build somewhere else" (ibid).

Soon, American Bird Conservancy, another conservationist group, added its voice to the protests (Straker 2007c:4). The organization issued a letter to the Four Seasons' CEO, calling for withdrawal from the project or dramatic alterations to reduce its size:

> The proposed 150 room hotel, 300 luxury villas, golf course, marina and conference center will encroach upon and destroy, degrade, and further fragment the core remaining Grenada Dove habitat, particularly within the existing National Park … The planned development will no doubt cause the extinction of the species. The claims to the contrary by Mr. Pemberton [the project's director] and his Grenadian environmental consultant, Valma Jessamy, are both false and misleading. [American Bird Conservancy 2007]

They argued that the proposed villa sites would destroy as much as half of the doves' habitat.

Grenadians were particularly outraged at the means through which the government had maneuvered to legalize the selling of protected national park land. The ruling party authored and successfully passed an amendment to the National Parks and Protected Areas Act, which gave the Governor-General the right by proclamation to ―declare for the purposes of conveyance, possession, use or access or both, an area declared to be a National Park or a protected area exempt from the provision of subsection (1), subject to such terms and conditions as he or she may deem necessary after consultation with the National Parks Advisory Council" (*Grenadian Voice*, Apr. 21, 2007:3). The Minister responsible for Grenada's lands, Gregory Bowen, stated: ―post Hurricanes Ivan and Emily Grenada has not developed, because we have no export product and we have no way of earning foreign exchange in this country at the moment except through tourism we just have to develop the tourism product" (ibid.:3). The release of aerial photographs added fuel to the fire in January 2007. In spite of the government's statement that ―noifial decision on the development has yet been made" while the developer was undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment, photographs

revealed that half of Hog Island – part of the proposed Four Seasons development area – had already been cleared (*Grenada Informer,* Oct. 26, 2007a:10).

The UK-based developer Capital88 and its Grenadian subsidiary, Cinnamon 88 Grenada Ltd., relented under international pressure. They procured the services of Bonnie Rusk, conservation biologist and leading expert on the Grenada Dove, to conduct a two-phase census identifying key habitats within Mt. Hartman Estate and in the rest of the island. They issued a statement that they are ―committed to working with accredited scientists to develop tours and exhibits within the existing visitor centre so that Grenadians; especially schoolchildren and resort guests can learn more about the dove, while at the same time protecting its natural habitat" (Straker 2007d). In April 2008, a smiling Michael Pemberton was photographed in front of a bulldozer, under the headline: ―Four Seasons compromises to save The Grenada Dove" (Straker 2008a:6). Following a meeting with stakeholders, including ―Government departments, the International Bird Community, the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility and non-governmental Organisations," the developers agreed to reduce the number of private residences from 250 to 175 (ibid.:6). The Mount Hartman National Park boundaries were redefined and consolidated to preserve most of the doves' habitat. Bonnie Rusk also identified another area on the western side of the island, Beausejour, as a key area for the birds' survival, and the bird conservation organizations advocated the declaration of a new protected area (Grenada Dove Campaign n.d.).

The issue soon dropped from the public limelight, although clearly the compromise reached under international pressure did not resolve all of the ecological

issues. The threats to Grenada‘s mangroves received little public attention in Grenada, though local experts were strongly opposed to their imminent destruction.

> ―Grenada‘s mangroves are incredibly important to the eco-systems of the surrounding area and what is happening in Grenada will have an impact on fishing stocks in the Caribbean which are at the point of collapse,‖ says Clare Morrall, a marine biologist working at Grenada's St George's University. ―I am not against development, but considering the fragile state of the Caribbean marine environment, clearing mangroves to make way for a hotel resort is nothing short of madness.‖ [Kelly 2008]

Further, in 2009, an article reported that a proposed sand mining quarry threatened another known habitat of the dove (Straker 2009b). New threats to the island‘s environment and biodiversity continue to arise.

In spite of ongoing environmental challenges, the compromise reached with the developers signified a rare victory. It was clear that international attention was critical to the revised development plan, especially given the government‘s extremely investor-friendly position. The fate of the Grenada Dove also drew special attention locally because the dove is the national bird – an important symbolism that partly compensates for its near-invisibility (not only are its numbers small, the bird is described as shy and drab. Few Grenadians have ever seen one). While certain other natural attractions on the island have clear revenue potential – such as tours to watch leatherback turtles lay their eggs – the dove is not likely to attract large number of tourists. Thus, there was little financial incentive to maintain the dove‘s habitat. Although the government repeatedly issued statements asserting their commitment to maintaining the island‘s environment, this priority clearly ranked below the imperative to develop the tourism industry.

Hurricane de Savary

During my fieldwork period, there was a sudden boom in investors planning luxury hotel and condominium complexes. The Prime Minister publicized the creation of 6,000 new jobs in three years as a result of these new developments (*SIR,* Apr. 10, 2008). Bacolet Bay Resort and Spa, Grand Harbour Resort, Levera Beach Project, Le Phare Bleu Marina, Four Seasons Resort, Mt. Cinnamon Resort, Prickly Bay Resort – the list seemed to grow longer by the month as billboards were erected along the main roads announcing the arrival of new luxurious real estate ventures.

While a couple of the projects were spearheaded by local investors, the majority involved foreign entrepreneurs. Most of the projects were based upon a similar model in which condominiums would be pre-sold, and the revenue would then fund the actual construction. The villas would be rented out as luxury hotel accommodations for at least 40 weeks of the year. The latter requirement was determined by the Grenada Industrial Development Corporation in reaction to concerns that exclusively condominium development would contribute little to the local economy (Straker 2008b). Sir Royston Hopkin, a leading local successful hotelier, noted that ~~"a~~ 64-room hotel employs more than 200 persons, but a 64-room condominium will employ no more than 35 to 50 persons" (ibid.). With hundreds of condominiums suddenly in the works, the government did not yet have policy guidelines in place to manage the development boom in a manner that would most benefit the country. Tourism officials reportedly turned to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, Caribbean Tourism Organisations, and experts in Barbados, an island with many condominiums, for assistance with this new situation.

Further, many of the developments featured all-inclusive amenities, such as pools, spas, mini-markets, restaurants, and private boat docks. It seemed that wealthy property-owners might have little incentive to leave their luxurious grounds, and in this way, the developments might also curtail spending in the local economy.

In spite of lingering questions about the luxury condominium model, the developments generated far more enthusiasm than concern among the general population. Press coverage remained effusive over these many new prospects, despite their high-end, all-inclusive nature. The focus was clearly on hopes for job creation and foreign revenue. It the midst of this generally welcoming atmosphere: enter Peter de Savary. This well-known British multi-millionaire investor and entrepreneur descended on Grenada with a force that lent itself to many popular jokes and media puns about de Savary as the latest storm to hit the island. With the powerful combination of his personal fortune and his personality – confident and charismatic, or arrogant and bombastic, depending on one‘s perspective – de Savary‘s presence reverberated throughout the island. His decision to turn Grenada into his last great project brought an unprecedented wave of media attention from abroad, spotlighting Grenada as the next hot tourist destination. It would be difficult to overstate the impact that his arrival made on the island, both in terms of local upheavals as well as international media attention.

Unlike some of the scam investors that have preyed upon Grenada in the past, de Savary had the advantage of a long track record of successful investments. A self-made millionaire who amassed his fortunes in oil and shipping, de Savary is famous in the United Kingdom for once owning Land‘s End and Skibo Castle (where Madonna and Guy were married – a newsbyte endlessly repeated in the media). He spent the past

thirty years developing hotels and private clubs in the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Caribbean that cater primarily to an international crowd of celebrities and other extremely moneyed sorts" (Doyle 2008:276). It is no coincidence that Grenada was featured in the September 2008 *Condé Nast Traveler* –Power Issue: The Places, People, and Ideas that Shape Travel Now." De Savary's vision of Grenada as the next St. Tropez and yacht haven for the mega-wealthy was both seductive and alarming to Grenadians.

De Savary, or PDS, as he brands himself, embarked on an ambitious agenda that involved the purchase of multiple properties. He bought a mansion for his personal use, several old plantations and estates to turn into exclusive eco-spas, and an older hotel on the Grand Anse Beach which he reconstructed into a boutique hotel with planned private villas. This was christened Mount Cinnamon (formerly the more modest Cinnamon Hill), and the hotel was fully operational in short order. It also included a spa and restaurant named Savvy's. The first phase of villas was quickly pre-sold to foreigners. These acquisitions received little public scrutiny and were generally welcomed. However, the Port Louis development, his pièce de résistance, generated a surge of controversy and protest. De Savary's perceived arrogance, allegations of government corruption, and restricted access to formerly public lands and waterways led to a highly publicized battle between PDS and Grenadian activists.

De Savary's high profile fueled both his supporters and detractors as they tackled the issues raised by the Port Louis development. Indeed, De Savary's projects are difficult to separate from the man himself. He personally oversees much of the work, and is a highly vocal and oft-quoted spokesman for his own projects. He invested US$200 million of his own fortune into the Grenada projects, and as an international celebrity of

sorts, his opinions and impressions of Grenada quickly ended up in print locally and abroad. His projects carry his imprint and bombastic style. The restaurant at Mount Cinnamon is named Savvy's. The bar at Port Louis – the only part opened for many months – is named the Victory Bar. Port Louis itself is named for his long-haired Chihuahua, Lord Louis. Also, in a projection of power that did not go unremarked among some Grenadians, his private airplane was named Nutmeg 1 (*Grenadian Voice*, Sept. 22, 2007:23). Further, de Savary launched a local public relations campaign by sponsoring regattas, donating to public schools, speaking to student assemblies, and purchasing a traditionally-built sloop from Carriacou, which he also named *Savvy*. The launch celebration for the latter was attended by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs.

De Savary also launched an enormous publicity campaign abroad and invited a host of journalists to visit Grenada. Grenada was subsequently featured in *Condé Nast Traveler* and British Airway's in-flight magazine *High Life*. The quick visits by journalists resulted in a fair number of minor inaccuracies in the publications, such as misspelled names, though it seems notable that the "Mediterranean" style Port Louis was inaccurately described by one journalist as having "a colonial theme" (Hawker 2007). The most prominent voice in these articles is PDS himself, who seemed to grant interviews to every visiting journalist while touring them in grand style through Grenada.

In his comments about Grenada, PDS is effusive about the land and its people. He often recalls his visit to the island when he was eight years old and how much he has always loved this place. He insists, "Grenada is special, and when you love a place, you don't want to screw it up. If you have a soul, you'll love Grenada. If not, you won't.

That's fine. Some people have souls and some don't" (Doyle 2008:276). He is also quoted in the *Independent*: "We are hell-bent on helping Grenada, and equally hell-bent to keep out rubbish tourists who spend no money, and mass stuff that is ugly and dilutes the natural beauty" (Ross 2008). This latter quote offers a glimpse into the position to which he ascribed himself in determining Grenada's future as a tourist destination. Indeed, de Savary overstepped enough in this comment to spark an official response from Grenada's Director of Tourism, stating: "All tourists are welcomed. I am appalled if that has indeed been said and this is not something that augurs well for us …" (Titus 2008a).

De Savary also speaks with great confidence about the island's people and history. His off-the-cuff comments reveal gross factual inaccuracies, as well as a patronizing and alienating attitude toward Grenadians – a people whom he also constantly describes as hospitable, friendly, elegant, and warm (this, too, some might argue, can be read as condescending). While many Grenadians embrace his projects, his arrogance toward the locals did not go unnoticed. Consider the following quotations from Peter de Savary:

- "Grenada was never a sugar cane island. It made its money as a spice producer, the crème de la crème of agriculture, and this elegance is reflected in Grenadians" (Hawker 2007).

- "'The great thing that Grenada has going for it,' he says, 'is that the world passed it by 40 years ago. Parts of the island are unchanged since the Arawak Indians settled here hundreds of years ago. In the 20th century, some other Caribbean islands – especially the sugar-cane-growing ones – diversified into tourism. Grenada didn't. The Grenadians were content to grow spices. Hurricane Ivan changed all that. It caused the country to look at their tourist-stroking neighbours, and say to themselves, 'We'd better get our act together.' De Savary is the director and producer of that act …

> De Savary has his own theory about why the people here seem different. ‗On the sugar-cane islands like Barbados and Antigua, the people had no love for the land because they associated it with back-breaking hard work,' he explains. In contrast, Grenada has running streams and plenty of shade. So the people have always loved the land.
>
> ‗In the Caribbean, the difference between cultivating sugar cane and cultivating spices is the equivalent difference between orchid gardening and potato farming in England.'…
>
> De Savary has spent £10m ‗doing a lot of front-end stuff making things ready for normal people'" (Ross 2008).

- ‗Over the next four or five years, De Savary says, his projects will directly employ some 2,500 people. ‗Indirectly, who knows.' And then I ask him what those people will be paid. ‗These people are happy to make two dollars an hour,' he says. ‗They live very simply'" (Doyle 2008:276).

De Savary's misconceptions about Grenada's history are clearly aimed at erasing the stain of slavery and creating the illusion of a pristine Eden, where carefree natives catch cocoa and nutmeg as they fall from the trees. The ever-increasing cost of living, dire trade imbalance, mounting national debt, and poverty levels of one-third of the population are worlds away from "these people who are happy to make two dollars an hour" because they live simply. With this image of Grenadians, it is little wonder that de Savary would define them as a category unto themselves, belonging to a frozen and idyllic past that is worlds – and centuries – away from "normal people." Whether one believes that de Savary's intentions and impact on Grenada are for good or ill, his attitude toward Grenadians and his beliefs about the island are important. They influence the way that he deals with Grenadians, particularly when conflicts arise. And in the case of Port Louis, many Grenadians took issue with his agenda.

Three major controversies exploded around the Port Louis development. First, de Savary's acquisition of prime government land for EC$1, followed by the revelation of major tax concessions, stirred accusations of corruption and lack of transparency. Second, the proposed development required buying out homeowners to acquire the full headland, as well as relocating many squatters. There was concern that PDS was squeezing out proper landowners, and while money was granted by both PDS and the Grenadian government to build new homes for the squatters, the new facilities were poorly constructed and unsanitary. Finally, plans to reclaim part of the lagoon in order to build cottages along the waterfront raised cries that the development was blocking traditional users of the lagoon as well as views of the waterway which were the birthright of all Grenadians. The latter fight was the most well-organized, with the rallying cry of "No Cottages on the Lagoon" leading to protest marches, banners, and calypso lyrics.

In order to grasp the degree of emotion stirred by the Port Louis development, it is important to understand its geographical location. The capital of St. George's lies along the northern section of the famous horse-shoe shaped harbour known as The Carenage, a perfect location for boats and a picturesque promenade. The high landmass at the end of this northern point is the panoramic location for Fort George. The center of the horseshoe consists of a landmass that serves as the official port. The southern leg encloses a body of water known as the lagoon, where small boats and the local yacht club are situated. The headland on the southern side, named the Ballast Ground, which separates the lagoon from the open sea, is a prominent land mass just across the harbour from the capital. It has spectacular views toward Fort George on one side, while the other beach-side runs south until Grand Anse. It was the site of the Islander Hotel in the

1950‘s, where the movie –Island in the Sun” was filmed featuring Harry Belafonte and Joan Collins. Later, Maurice Bishop chose this location as the base for his revolutionary government. The hotel was bombed during the American Invasion, and only ruins remained. The lagoon was also filled with debris following Hurricane Ivan, leaving rusting ruins along one side. In spite of its condition when PDS entered the scene, this headland maintained a very prominent position geographically and psychologically for the Grenadian people. In essence, it is the mirror headland to Fort George and the capital city, and an important historical and cultural site. This is the land that de Savary acquired for EC$1, along with rights to the marina used by locals.

The Port Louis development was described as a US$500 million resort and spa maritime village, featuring hotels, villas, cottages, duty-free shopping, and safe harbor for the largest of the mega-yachts. The following description is reproduced as written on the Port Louis website:

> It may be a fantastic spa, a superb ski resort or a funky beach on an island in the Indian Ocean. Very rarely, does a number one –must-do” destination have all the ingredients required for longevity; we‘re thinking of St Tropez of the 50‘s, Martha‘s Vineyard of the 60‘s, Costa Smeralda in the 70‘s and Barbados in the 80‘s.
>
> Port Louis is set to be become all of this and more. A Mecca for the aficionado.
>
> Peter de Savary with his many years of experience establishing clubs and resorts around the world has recognised a yet untapped opportunity on the unspoilt island of Grenada. As Chairman and Founder of Port Louis, de Savary will oversee the entire US$500 Million project. Inviting a number of joint venture partners, he stresses the importance of the vibrant and international identity of Port Louis through its marketing focus. The new community will capture the warmth, charm and spirit of Grenada.
>
> Grenada‘s location alone means that unlike most destinations, this is a _year-round‘ getaway, set outside the seasonal hurricane belt …

> Grenadians have chosen to retain the best of their strong French and British influences whilst preserving all that is distinctive from their own West Indian heritage. Facilities are modern and efficient as can be expected from such a progressive country, built today on education and stability.
>
> Port Louis itself is spectacularly set and is definitely the ―St Trop" or the ―Portofino" of the Caribbean. The headland rises high above the picturesque and colourful capital of St. George's and development is underway to create a new and vibrant _mediterraneanesque' village community which will appeal to an international and diverse clientele.
>
> The village will offer a wide range of options for investors, holidaymakers, yachtsmen and prospective homeowners. Designated a free-port by the Grenadian Government, Port Louis will provide duty-free shopping, a magnet for retailers and shoppers alike! …
>
> Port Louis will evolve as a complete village and one of the focal points will be the rebirth of a five star landmark hotel, ―The Islander" (which may be known to older locals by its original name the ―The Santa Maria"). In the 1950's this world famous property was a huge draw for the discerning and also the location for the movie ―Island In The Sun" with James Mason, Harry Belafonte and Joan Collins to name but a few. The hotel exuded a warmth and style that was typical of the West Indies and the charming hotels of yesteryear. The new hotel on Pandy Beach will be of exquisite design and style and of an exceptional international standard.
>
> Two or three more contemporary, boutique hotels are also planned within the maritime village offering a variety of styles and price points. [Port Louis Grenada Website 2010]

On the one hand, the scope of this massive undertaking was met with enthusiasm by many. The land was mostly occupied by squatters, the lagoon was an eyesore filled with rusting debris, and the only buildings lay in ruins. The promise of a booming maritime village generated excitement, as did the vision of million dollar yachts pulling into the small harbour. On the other hand, the development seemed to scream exclusion to many Grenadians: from the land, from the water, and from the profits. To understand these

objections, it is necessary to delve more deeply into the details of the development's history.

In the final months of 2006, the Ministry of Tourism announced that Peter de Savary's group, Port Louis Land Limited, had finalized arrangements with the government to develop the Ballast Ground, the adjoining yacht basin area and Lagoon Road. He had purchased the land for EC$1. This revelation prompted anger on three counts: first, there was no open discussion nor information about the transaction prior to its completion; second, the land was sold and not leased for 99 years, as has often been the case with public lands; third, why EC$1? Port Louis had not even broken ground before it was off to a bad start with the Grenadian public. Nevertheless, it seemed it was already too late to affect the terms of the agreement.

The sale of the land for EC$1 and the granting of extensive tax concessions stirred allegations of corruption and anger over the loss of government revenue that was sorely needed by the struggling nation. Lloyd Noel, former Attorney General of Grenada and prominent attorney, researched the terms of the agreement and published his findings in an article published on Caribbean Net News, "Law and Politics: We must have accountability and transparency" (Noel 2006). Without recounting here all of the convoluted contractual details, the bottom line is reported as follows: In 2002, the government signed an agreement with a company named "Poole Capital S.A. Limited" based in Tortola, BVI and Grenada, for the acquisition and development of the Ballast Ground lands and the Yacht Basin area. Poole advanced the purchase price of US$3.2 million, as well as US$425,000 for the relocation of the squatters. Nothing was done about this project for three years. A new deed, dated 5 October 2006, released the

government and Poole from their obligations under the 2002 contract. Most significantly, the new contract also released the government from

> ―any obligation to repay to Poole and the financing company monies paid by Poole and/or the financing company under the agreement, being the sum of US$2.8 million together with the sum of US$825,000 which was deposited with PriceWaterhouse Coopers" … And ―Poole" also undertook to transfer forthwith the benefit of the said sum of US$825,000 to ―Port Louis Land Limited." [ibid.]

Another document signed on 5 October 2006 is an indenture of conveyance between the government of Grenada and ―Port Louis Land Limited," conveying Ballast Ground lands for EC$1. Noel concludes that ―the people are entitled to know, for example, how much money was paid by ‗Poole' to the government of Grenada under the 2002 agreement" and ―how and where were those monies accounted for?" He also points out that the nominal price exempts the buyer from paying the five percent land transfer tax which the real price would certainly incur, as it applies to all property priced above EC$20,000 (US$7,500). Finally, he asks ―why all the secrecy and protection?" It is unfortunate that this article was not printed in the local newspapers, and it is curious that the details were not more widely known and disseminated. Although there were some references to the particulars of the transaction, discontent generally focused on the giving away of public lands without taxes to benefit the public rather than anger over the possible under-the-table pocketing of funds by politicians. In 2008, there was significant insult to injury when de Savary sold the rights to the marina and lagoon to Camper and Nicholson marina developers for US$24 million – a hefty profit on his EC$1 investment which was also exempt from taxation under the terms of the concessions he negotiated with the government.

While it is accepted as common practice for Caribbean nations to entice investors with tax concessions, de Savary‘s deal with the government raised the public‘s ire for several reasons. First, the terms of the contract were meant to be confidential. Anyone familiar with life on a small island, however, will understand the challenge of keeping secrets. In an ironic turn of events, the confidentiality clause of the agreement was scanned and posted on the popular Grenadian online chatroom, SpiceIslander Talkshop, on May 11, 2007, as part of a lengthy list thread with the subject: ―GOG [Government of Grenada] Agreement with DeSavery" [sic]. The scanned file appeared to be an exact image of the original, including two scribbled sets of initials from the parties signing the agreement. The text read as follows:

> 11. Confidentiality & Publicity
> 11.1. The existence of and the terms of this Agreement, and the terms of all past and future correspondence and negotiations, is to be treated by both Parties as strictly confidential except that a Party may make such information known to its senior staff, bankers, accountants, legal representatives, associates, and others having a genuine need to know for the purposes of processing the Project and/or assisting the Party to comply with its obligations under this Agreement.
> 11.2. Any press release by the Government in connection with the Project shall be subject to the prior approval of the Developer (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed).

The second clause, in which government press releases concerning the Port Louis project are first subject to the developer‘s approval, also caused some alarm. Many Grenadians felt that the government should not be beholden to, nor need approval from, the developer. This clause amplified what many perceived as an inappropriate power balance, with de Savary ―calling the shots." After all, no one was approving the content of his press releases, which were filled with his personal interpretations of Grenada, Grenadians, and their history.

Not only did SpiceIslander Talkshop reveal the existence of the agreement and its confidentiality clause, a discussion group member also took the liberty of posting a scanned copy of the agreement's Annex A, which consisted of almost three pages of fiscal incentives. The following are some examples of these incentives:

> 3. The incentives shall comprise exemption from:
>   - Corporate Tax for the period of 20 years.
>   - Common External Tariff (CET) and General Consumption Tax (GCT) on all materials, equipment, furnishings, fixtures, fittings, vehicles, construction, machinery, and boats and other watercraft, soft furnishings, plate, glass, cutlery, computers, electronic equipment of any kind … and any other items (without limitation and so as to give the widest possible interpretation thereto) imported by any of the persons listed in (1) above for the construction, equipping or operation of the Project.
>   - Property Transfer Tax and/or any other property acquisition taxes …
>   - Any Customs Service Charge on imports of any kind.
>   - A cap on property taxes for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the date hereof to the effect that the value of each unit shall not be taken to exceed the sum of EC$300,000 …
>   - Any income tax or other tax on salaries of up to twelve (12) alien or expatriate managerial staff members and directors of the Land Owner and the Developer …
>   - Withholding Tax
>   - Any capital gains tax
>   - Any investment tax; and
>   - A limitation of Aliens Landholding Tax to 5% (five percent) for first-time property purchases, except that if the property is to be let for five (5) years or more for more than 270 days a year than the exemption shall be total.

The Alien Landholding Tax, which applies to foreigners purchasing land in Grenada, is normally ten percent for buyers along with a fifteen percent sales tax. De Savary reduced this to five percent for buyers, with just two and a half percent tax for his villa owners when they decide to sell. Further, under the terms of this agreement, when de Savary sold the rights to the marina to the developers Camper and Nicholson for US$24 million,

these tax concessions amounted to a loss in government tax revenue totaling US$6 million. The revelation that the terms of the agreement – indeed, the existence of the agreement itself – were meant to be kept confidential reinforced Grenadians' anger about lack of governmental transparency.

Early 2007 brought a new wave of controversy on the heels of the revelation about de Savary's land acquisition and development plans. In order to proceed with his project, it was necessary to buy out the homeowners whose lagoon area properties were included in his master Port Louis blueprint. An independent local real estate company assessed the value of approximately twenty homeowners, and a compensation package for the full market price was offered by Peter de Savary's Port Louis development group. This negotiation was reported in *The Grenada Advocate* (Titus 2007a:1) with a frontpage headline: "De Savary Says He Will Pack-Up ... and go home if home owners refuse to sell." The situation received little further media attention; presumably, some arrangements were made that allowed the project to proceed. What was striking about the issue was, once again, the sense of power imbalance in which de Savary wielded far more clout than the Grenadian homeowners. De Savary was ready to invest hundreds of millions of dollars into a struggling nation – who would take the side of a single homeowner unwilling to relinquish their little plot of land? Consider the tone of de Savary's interviews with reporters, as evidenced in this excerpt:

> I have taken that risk and at the end of the day if there are some impediments that prevent this project going forward or it get [sic] too difficult then I will just stop and go home to England that is all I can do. I am trying that is all I can say … Everybody else has talked about it for years. I don't see anybody else doing it. I don't see anybody else cleaning up this unsightly ugly mess. This place was a dump, absolutely

> [sic] disgrace in the capital of the country. At least we are doing something and we are trying. [ibid.:3]

De Savary is well aware of the weight of his threat to return to England. Indeed, it immediately became front-page news. In this and subsequent controversies, de Savary typically maintained the position that he was working with Grenadians for the benefit of the nation. However, when the arguments and protests became too troublesome, de Savary used a different tone in which he made clear that he was not obligated to negotiate with ordinary Grenadians, and was doing so as a courtesy. This courtesy was quickly revoked when the opposition became too persistent.

While the issue of the homeowners quickly faded from view, another more tenacious controversy soon took its place. The Ballast Grounds, beach, and lagoon area were also home to approximately seventy squatters. These people were relocated to land donated by the Ministry of Lands, and two new settlements were constructed with US$425,000 from the developer and US$400,000 from the government. After receiving complaints about the settlements, de Savary‘s group donated an additional US$400,000. Only two squatters preferred cash settlements of approximately EC$160,000 (approx. US$60,000); the others resettled and received title to their land (*SIR,* Nov. 15, 2007:2).

With seemingly ample funds, this arrangement might have settled the matter; however, it soon became apparent that the new settlements were very poorly constructed. There were reported problems with the septic systems, drainage, leaky roofs, and dangerous access roads. An owner of a construction company toured the resettlement and stated, ―this is a disaster waiting to explode" (Straker 2007e:7). The umbrella body for Developmental Non-Governmental Organisations in Grenada called on the

government to provide proper facilities, and the Minister of Works sent a team of officials to inspect the problems. *Condé Nast Traveler's* journalist, Kevin Doyle, too, found his way up the steep hill to one of the controversial resettlements. He reported: ―At the top, I see dozens of basic one-and two-room homes with concrete walls covered by wooden siding. Their thin plywood floors are set on, but not secured to, concrete posts. The pathways are muddy and in some places soiled with puddles from leaking septic systems" (Doyle 2008:276). The next day, when Doyle found himself sipping drinks with de Savary in an edenic setting on the grounds of one of his estate properties, he hesitantly raised the thorny question of the squatters:

> We're in polite company and the mood is light and I'm drinking from his cooler, but I can't stop thinking of the scene on the hill yesterday, so I ask him what he knows about the living conditions of the squatters. Without a pause, and very emphatically, he ticks off the facts as he sees them. ―We spent $1.5 million cash and built new houses that the squatters will own. They were illegal, now they're legal. They had no water, no electricity, no lights or anything. Now they have proper little houses. They should be kissing the government's ass for relocating them. Ninety-five percent of the people here love me, and five percent think I'm the devil. But how many jobs have those people created? How many scholarships have they given? How much have they given to charity? If you show me what I've done that's been destructive or unhelpful, I'll apologize and undo it. Otherwise, I'll tell you to f— off." [ibid.:276]

Finally, an enormous controversy exploded over the Port Louis development's plans to reclaim land along the lagoon shore in order to build cottages. The airwaves were flooded by the Grenadian public as they sought first to understand the plans, and eventually, to contest the obstruction of public views to the sea. A local activist named Sandra Ferguson became the most well-known voice in this controversy, as she regularly published long letters in the local newspapers easily recognized by her trademark epistolary style of words in all-caps, bold, and italics. Indeed, this controversy became

the impetus for her creation of the organization "Citizens in Defence of Grenada's Lands and Heritage," and, as spokeswoman for the opposition, Ferguson's photograph appeared with de Savary's in the *Condé Nast Traveler* article. Also, an organization named the Willie Redhead Foundation, a non-profit devoted to preserving the island's built heritage, stepped into the debate and conducted direct negotiations with de Savary. The latter resulted in a concession from de Savary's group that the density of the cottages would be reduced. This did not, however, resolve the issue.

When the protests became a persistent national issue, de Savary agreed to appear on a live television talk show to answer questions about the development. After hearing objections from sections of the audience, he pledged to suspend any construction of cottages on the Lagoon. Further, he offered to host a public meeting at Port Louis within a few months and provide the opportunity for all interested Grenadians to put the decision to a vote (*Grenada Advocate,* Oct. 19, 2007:4). This promise on live, national television was met with mixed reactions. As Sandra Ferguson was quick to ask, "Since when is the PROCESS OF APPROVAL DECIDED BY THE SAME DEVELOPER WHO IS APPLYING FOR THE APPROVAL? Since when does a developer decide that HE is holding a meeting to decide by a VOTE?" (Ferguson 2007:7). Many questions were raised about what appeared to be the government's passive role, including what should have been the role of the Land Development Control Authority, the Physical Planning Unit, and the results of any Environmental Impact Assessment. A letter signed "Group of Concerned Citizens" stated the case:

> Now all this [televised discussion about calling a public vote] was taking place in the presence of the Minister of Physical Planning and Economic Development who, instead of putting Mr de Savary in his place by

> informing him that there are planning laws and regulations which govern the development process, and that no developer – far be it a foreigner – could come to Grenada and make such a pronouncement of calling a public meeting as an authority to decide or not to build cottages along Lagoon Road. This would be in violation of existing planning laws and regulations and an affront to intelligent Grenadians … Instead, the Minister was heard to say (or words to that effect) that Mr de Savary should be congratulated in allowing himself to be subjected to this public harassment, as he is one of three ―blue chip" investors, which is the envy of other Caribbean territories, in the country. [*SIR,* Nov. 2, 2007]

Grenadians took issue with the apparent imbalance of power between de Savary and the government. It seemed that the former was in charge, yet again. In short order, suspicions surfaced that de Savary's elections would be rigged and the debate took on partisan tones. As ―Pandy Man" wrote in a letter to the editor: ―Obviously, the man thinks that we are a nation of fools … Already, many reasonable people are convinced that he will conduct a stage-managed event … He is expected to act in collusion with his friends in the ruling NNP and finance the bussing in of NNP party hacks" (*Grenada Today*, Nov. 9, 2007:9).

Given the intensity of this debate, many Grenadians were shocked and angry when it was announced that de Savary had sold the marina and lagoon to Camper and Nicholson for development. In an article entitled ―Back to Square One," the Willie Redhead Foundation issued a statement:

> We were however led to believe that Camper & Nicholsons would honour the agreement reached with Port Louis, that is, that NO COTTAGES WOULD BE BUILT along the Lagoon, but at a meeting held on January 9, 2008 with Mr. Bru Pearce of Camper & Nicholsons and Port Louis, the Foundation could not get a straight answer from Mr. Pearce … What was even more disturbing was the display of a recent model of the development which showed unequivocally, cottages along the disputed area of the Lagoon. [Willie Redhead Foundation 2008:12]

The protests continued, and Citizens in Defence of Grenada‘s Lands and Heritage erected protest banners outside Port Louis Marina on May Day. De Savary responded at a news conference:

> —There is a small area of the lagoon edge that will have some limited development on it which would not obstruct the views, which will enhance the attractiveness of the lagoon‘s edge, will make it much nicer for local people, make it much nicer for visitors … Guess what? If it isn‘t it won‘t happen and furthermore, I am not even going to worry about it today and I am fed up with talking about it. You help me find 120 million US dollars to build this damn hotel. So I am not discussing it anymore. It‘s not a closed door but it‘s not an issue today," said an openly annoyed de Savary. [*Grenada Advocate,* May 9, 2008]

De Savary again gave the impression that he was willing to humor the Grenadian public only up to a point; in the end, he was the one with the legal agreement and the investment money, and was thus free to do as he pleased.

With the subsequent downturn in the global economy, construction slowed and de Savary was reportedly seeking additional investors. The marina began to see the arrival of mega yachts, including the US$120 million Maltese Falcon, owned by billionaire venture capitalist Tom Perkins (Titus 2008b). Although the issue of the cottages along the lagoon remained unresolved, the lack of active construction quieted the issue. Indeed, many of the condominium/resort developments that caused such a sudden stir in the Grenada tourism and real estate scene were put on hold. Nevertheless, the apprehension and excitement that they created brought Grenadians a taste of what it means to be marketed as the next hot destination. The desired, undesirable, and unintended consequences of a focus on tourism development created a complicated landscape which highlighted the country‘s dependencies. These issues forced Grenadians to confront their

national priorities – be they religious, diplomatic, or environmental – while struggling to maintain a sense of sovereignty in the face of powerful foreign investors.

Teaching Tourism

Tourism is part of daily life in Grenada. It is most visible in the southwestern corner of the island, where the majority of the hotels and facilities are located, but it is also part of the wider reality of the most remote corner of the island. During the high season, the announcement of cruise ship arrivals is broadcast over the radio, tour buses careen around mountain roads, and daytrippers stop to buy spices and fruit from vendors in the smallest of villages. Grenadians represent themselves in their tourist brochures as an hospitable, friendly people, and negative interactions are frowned upon or earn a letter to the editor expressing concern about jeopardizing the tourism industry. Even the youngest schoolchild will painstakingly offer directions to a lost tourist. Many families earn some income directly or indirectly through the tourism industry.

While these first-hand experiences with tourists build the foundation of Grenadians‘ feelings toward the industry, there is also a concerted effort in the public school system to educate the population about its role in Grenadian life. In this section, I turn to the materials used to teach primary and secondary school children in order to understand the ways that tourism is represented to the country‘s youth. Unlike the sparse treatment of Grenadian history, tourism is taught from Grade Four through upper secondary school. Even in the lower grades, it is treated as a complex but carefully-explained subject with many pros and cons which merit consideration. Further, it is

consistently connected to the broader economic situation facing many small island nations. Thus, the daily relevance of tourism is reflected in the curricula, in which it is comprehensively treated as an important part of Caribbean social, cultural, environmental, and economic life. This emphasis on its importance does not, however, whitewash the negatives which accompany reliance on the tourism industry, and students are encouraged to think critically about its impact on their country.

The social studies textbook used in Grade Four has a chapter entitled "Tourism and Trade." This is the only social studies textbook that is specific to Grenada, as the curricula for the other primary school grades are shared throughout the English-speaking Caribbean. This book provides Grenadian schoolchildren with their first formal introduction to the tourism industry. It begins by offering a dictionary definition of tourists: "Tourists are people who come from one place to another in order to enjoy themselves" (Peters and Penny 1998:66). This is immediately followed by a suggested class activity, in which students are asked to think of a better definition and discuss this with their classmates. This opening potentially invites critical thinking about who tourists are and why they come to Grenada.

The section "Tourist industry" describes why tourists might choose Grenada, and why tourism is important to the country. There is an emphasis on Grenada's natural beauty – sunshine, sea, beaches, forests, waterfalls, wild plants and animals – but there is no mention of cultural tourism, such as visitors for Carnival. The authors interject a sentence which seems an attempt to intercept any judgment on these leisure-seekers: "At home they work hard to earn money, as we do" (Peters and Penny 1998:66). The next paragraph explains that tourism is important because it earns money for the country and

provides jobs for many Grenadians. There is an illustration of a young man wearing a tie, sitting at a desk in an office counting money. This picture is accompanied by an italicized story:

> *Kenneth works in a hotel, in the accounts department. He is a night auditor. His job is to count all the money received by the hotel during the day. The money comes from the guests who stay in the hotel. Before Kenneth took this job, he had to attend college to learn how to set out accounts property. Kenneth works from 11 at night until 7 the next morning. He works every night, but is given a few days off from time to time.*
>
> Perhaps when you grow up you may want to work in a hotel like Kenneth.
>
> Have you ever spent time in a hotel? How long were you there? Why were you there? [Peters and Penny 1998:67]

It is interesting to note that Kenneth‘s job, for which he has undergone training at college, is not idealized. He works the night shift every night, and his days off do not seem to be contracted or scheduled but rather, in the passive voice, are ―given‖ from time to time. Nevertheless, the authors prompt the students to consider that they might aim to find employment like Kenneth some day.

The next page is dedicated to an explanation of why tourism is especially important to Grenada, noting that it is the island‘s main industry. It provides employment, and ―if these people did not work in the tourist industry, they would probably not have any work‖ (Peters and Penny 1998:68). Also, the authors note that local craft workers sell their products to tourists, and most of the country‘s foreign exchange to buy imported goods comes from tourism. A table breaks down the country of origin of Grenada‘s visitors, while another charts the increase in types of accommodation between 1984-1991 (ibid.:68-9). A photograph with the caption ―luxury

hotel reception area" shows two Grenadians behind a counter speaking with two white women. Its inclusion is fair indication that most schoolchildren have not seen the inside of a Grenadian hotel. The authors state: "Grenada is one of the world's top resorts, so our hotels and guest houses offer first-class services" (ibid.:69). Not only is the entire country described as a resort, at the time this textbook was last revised, the claim about Grenada's world ranking and accommodations might be considered an exaggeration.

The section concludes with a few discussion or homework prompts. Students are invited to create an itinerary for a visitor, to make a list of jobs that people have because of tourists, and to think how to ensure that Grenada continues to attract tourists. The final question seems like a prompt for discussion: "Can you think of any reasons why tourists might be a **bad** thing for Grenada?" (Peters and Penny 1998:70). While the chapter on tourism does not provide any exploration of possible negatives, it is worth considering what the students have been taught in earlier chapters. There are at least two sections which the students might draw upon in their efforts to think critically about tourism. First, there is a section entitled "How a community grows" that features a flow chart showing how a small fishing community builds a new harbour, leading to more vehicles, shops, services and trade, which leads to more factories, more jobs, and more people, which ends with arrows to two consecutive flowchart boxes: "Community grows" followed by "new hotel is built" (ibid.:36). The next section, "Social problems" explores why large settlements may have social problems, such as overcrowding, unemployment, increasing crime, and increasing involvement with drugs and drug dealing (ibid.:37). Implicitly, the new hotel is linked to increasing social problems.

Another section in an earlier chapter is entitled ―How our culture changes.‖ An inset prompts a discussion of how ―we can lose aspects of one culture and perhaps gain from another culture when we go to another country‖ (Peters and Penny 1998:42) based on the fictional story of Loo Loo:

> Loo Loo lived in Sapodilla village from the time she was born until she was 10 years old. She had many friends in Sapodilla. She got to know one particular family very well. They had come from India, and Loo Loo taught them a lot about the culture of Grenada. She taught them how to cook ―Oil Down‖, and how to speak in French Creole.
>
> Then she went away to Canada for three years, to live with her mother there. Now she is back home in Grenada for a short visit. Her Indian friends invite her to lunch. They are embarrassed to learn that she doesn‘t like the taste of the ―Oil Down‖ dish they have made for her. They find they cannot understand the way she speaks now. She even rather rudely comments on how odd their clothes look. [ibid.:42]

This section introduces the idea that interactions between people from different countries can change those people in potentially negative ways. Culture loss and devaluation of one‘s own culture are commonly vocalized concerns in Grenadian public life, and though they are not specifically linked to tourism in this textbook, students might draw upon this earlier material when they are prompted to think about the impact of tourists.

While opening the possibility that tourism may have some negative effects on Grenada, the next section presents the larger context needed to understand why the industry is so important for the country‘s economy. The section on trade first discusses Grenada‘s export trade, and notes, ―in recent years, Grenada has received less money for its traditional exports, especially for nutmeg. Grenada is therefore making great efforts to sell more of its non-traditional exports, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, cut flowers and plants, and products such as jams, jellies and syrups‖ (Peters and Penny 1998:71).

Then Grenada's import trade is examined, with a list of the many things that are brought into the island, including agricultural products. The sections are then tied together under "Balance of trade," which explains surplus, deficit, and debt – concepts that are clearly so important to life in Grenada that they are introduced to fourth graders. A graph depicts a balance of trade for three countries, with country A importing less than it exports, country B importing the same amount as it exports, and country C importing more than it exports. The textbook then asks: "Which country would you like Grenada to be, A, B or C? Why? Which situation do you believe our country is in? Is it country A, B or C? Write down a list of things that the government could do to give Grenada a favourable balance of trade" (ibid.:74). Although tourism is not explicitly mentioned in this section, six pages earlier, the authors explained that "most of our foreign exchange comes from tourism. We need foreign exchange to buy all the goods we import from other countries" (ibid.:68). While the concept of "exporting" an intangible good might confuse young students, tourism is clearly part of the equation. Nevertheless, students are left to drawn their own conclusions, just as there was no direct commentary about any negative effects of tourism.

Education about tourism continues in Grade Five. In a textbook used throughout the English-speaking Caribbean, a chapter is devoted to "Trade, travel, and tourism" (Morrissey 1992:78). Many of the same topics and issues are raised and expanded, while also being placed in the wider Caribbean context. Regional and inter-island trade and travel are emphasized before tourism is even discussed. Unlike the Grenada-specific textbook, the section devoted to tourism directly addresses the question of whether the industry is good for the Caribbean. After reviewing where tourists come from, and why

they might choose the Caribbean, there is a section entitled, ―Do we benefit from tourism?" (ibid.:94). A series of bulleted answers follow, noting the jobs that tourism provides; the businesses that are started, which can also help the country develop; the government revenue from taxes; and foreign currency spent by tourists so the country can buy the things it imports. In between these bullets, however, are three case studies. The following excerpts capture the gist of each story:

> **Curtis Khan – taxi driver.**
> I have been a taxi driver for twenty-five years, so I must have made that journey [to the hotels and airport] over 100,000 times!
>
> I like to talk to the tourists … Tourists always need taxis and I am always ready to help them.
>
> I am worried about the future, though. I think the traffic jams, the road accidents and the drug dealers are making our country a less attractive place for tourists.
>
> **Creole Beach General Manager Warns**
> The new Creole Beach Resort opened its doors yesterday with great festivity. The $25 million complex has over the past two years provided employment for many construction workers, plumbers, painters and others in the parish of St. Patrick. Now 400 full-time staff have been taken on ... General Manager Oswald McKitty felt the wages offered by the resort were good. He warned that tourists wanted a friendly atmosphere in the hotel, and strike action for higher wages could drive away tourists and cause the resort to close. He said that workers in the area should protect their future, but be reasonable about wages at this time.
>
> The manager promised to play his part in linking the tourist industry to the local community. He pledged to train people from the area to take on all the top jobs in the hotel. He also promised to employ the excellent local entertainers and buy locally produced food products for the restaurant.
>
> **Euphemia Browne's vegetables**
> Euphemia Browne lives in Old Road Village in Antigua. She is a champion vegetable farmer …
>
> The hotels and supermarket give her good prices for her produce, but they demand high quality. Euphemia and her family are able to live

> comfortably on their earnings. Their home has three bedrooms and all the modern amenities. Euphemia wants to extend her farm. However, she finds that the price of an acre of land has soared. [Morrissey 1992:95-6]

Students are asked to discuss the benefits and disadvantages mentioned in these studies, and then to generate their own list of additional pros and cons. Unlike the Grade Four text, the problems of the tourism industry are made very explicit, from land inflation, to increased crime, to low wages and efforts to break union actions. A section, "Are there any disadvantages?" adds additional items to the list:

> Some people are concerned that if there are too many tourists, we will forget our own ways of behaving and copy their ways. We may begin to talk like them and lose our own culture. There are tourists who want dangerous drugs … Some tourists may bring diseases to the Caribbean.
>
> Another problem that tourism may create for the countries of the Caribbean is the way in which tourism can damage the environment … Trees may be cut down, farming land may be turned into plots for hotels and restaurants. Pollution of the sea also often results. [Morrissey 1992:98]

While the Grade Four book hinted at concerns about culture loss, this textbook makes the issue explicit. The ever-present fear that foreign cultural influences will erase local culture reflects an ongoing preoccupation: locals are depicted as valorizing outside cultures more than their own, and as all too willing to imitate foreigners instead of embracing their own heritage. By the end of the section, it seems as if there are few advantages to the tourism industry.

Secondary school continues to educate students about tourism as part of the curricula. In the lower forms, the social studies general syllabus indicates that a unit is devoted to "The Caribbean as a tourist destination." In the upper forms, students can choose to prepare for the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) exam in Social

Studies. According to the syllabus guidelines, the study of ~~–i~~ndividual interaction" and ~~–d~~evelopment and use of resources" are applied to one of three options: ~~–c~~ommunication, consumer affairs, or tourism" (CXC 2000:4). The section on tourism tests the students' understanding of a broad range of concepts, including economic advantages and factors limiting development of the industry, environmental issues and cultural influences, career opportunities and government policies, and marketing strategies and tourism products (ibid.:23-26).

Education about tourism and its place in the larger economy is clearly an important topic in curricula developed for Grenada and the English-speaking Caribbean. While the Grenada-specific textbook portrays tourism in a mostly positive light, it does open the door to critical thinking about its impact on the region. This line of thought is then carried into Grade Five, where students are more directly presented with a picture of the negative aspects of tourism. It seems that teachers have more liberty with the lower secondary school approach to the teaching of tourism as there is no detailed syllabus or Grenada-specific textbook, while the Caribbean Examinations Council sets the agenda for the upper secondary schools. Here again, there is a balanced examination of the pros and cons of the industry.

While certain anxieties seem to recur in the treatment of the negatives of tourism, other problems are disregarded altogether. Concern for the environment and sociocultural influences are prominent themes. These are apparently offset by the economic advantages, yet there is little consideration given to the disadvantages of an economy dependent on the tourism industry. There is no mention of the vulnerability inherent in reliance on a single major industry, for example, or the vagaries of the

Caribbean's place in the larger tourism market, with the latter subject to trends and factors outside of the region's control, such as climate change and new passport regulations. On the other hand, while there is clear concern for environmental degradation, there is no mention of the possibilities of eco-tourism and green development as a tourist attraction. Generally, foreign cultures are seen as a negative influence on local culture instead of turning the tables; tourism could be considered an opportunity to valorize and share local culture with foreigners. This would portray Caribbean nationals as rightfully proud of their language, food, and other cultural traditions, rather than perpetuating the idea that locals are ~~"~~mimic men." Thus, while the texts do a fair job of presenting the positives and negatives of tourism and encouraging students to think about the two sides, the curricula is not designed to take this questioning to the next step. The pros and cons seem inevitable, with the nationals as passive recipients of the benefits and detriments.

Discussion

While many of the issues discussed in this section could apply equally to other nations with tourism-based economies, the details of the controversies have a uniquely Grenadian flavor. A study of the debates generated by tourism development over several years of fieldwork provides a window onto life on this small island, reflecting the keen hopes and disappointments of the people whose lives are directly affected by the ways in which their island's resources are managed. The promises and pitfalls of tourism must be considered on multiple levels – as part of a lived reality by locals, as part of a national

conversation about the island‘s future, and also as an ideological paradigm that reflects contemporary global trends within the specific context of Grenada‘s historical and current realities. While this section has focused on the national level, the personal level will be explored in Part Three. Briefly, then, I will comment here on some of the broader implications of Grenada‘s tourism-based development paradigm.

The icons of the tourism industry appeal to many Grenadians‘ ideas about progress, modernity, and development. While conversations with Grenadians about development may reference human resources and training programs, new manufacturing or industrial capabilities, upgraded facilities, or increased use of IT in schools and workplaces, development seems most often to refer to tourism. For many, the massive cruise ships and new terminal, the gleaming cricket stadium, new villa resorts, and swarms of foreign visitors are iconic symbols of the island‘s progress. Especially in the wake of two destructive hurricanes that left 90 percent of the island‘s structures damaged or destroyed, the sight of monumental new buildings carries an understandably heavy symbolic weight. Modernization of infrastructure and international reports about Grenada as a world-class destination are a source of pride for many Grenadians. At the same time, a primary focus on tourism development makes the island vulnerable and dependent in a number of ways.

While most industries are increasingly entangled within transnational economic webs, tourism is a particularly transparent dependency. The need to make one‘s nation appealing and accessible to outsiders strikes at the heart of Grenadians‘ efforts to establish themselves as a newly independent nation. It requires compromises that highlight the ways that economic dependency can affect cultural, religious, diplomatic, or

environmental values and priorities. Clearly, many Grenadians are disturbed by these compromises in spite of tourism‘s economic importance.

Further, tourism is particularly vulnerable to ripples in the world‘s economy. Most of the new developments that generated such waves of enthusiasm and concern in 2007 and 2008 stalled with the global economic crisis. The following is based on an interview with a Grenadian realtor in March 2009: Bacolet Bay Resort, owned by UK investors, was seeking a new financing source abroad. Four Seasons seemed to be on hold, although the realtor was not able to get a straight answer from persons connected to the project about its prospects. Grand Harbour, owned by Grenadian investors, had also ceased all construction and was trying to sell land in the Egmont Development for about EC$22 (US$8) per square foot (a price which the realtor thought was still high compared to ten years ago, when his relatives bought a property with a better view for just EC$8). They seem to be selling well, however, and most of the buyers were Grenadian. Some of the projects were downscaling, as well. Mount Cinnamon was apparently open to offers as it figured out how to proceed with the next phase of building, and Port Louis was selling parcels of land in the area where grand villas had been planned. The issue of cottages on the Lagoon was now moot, as that aspect had been scaled back as well. De Savary was also selling some of the individual properties he had picked up for himself, staff, and press, such as Azurra Castle and Edgecombe Estate.

The fragility of the tourism economy was also amply demonstrated by the effects of the United States‘ Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), effective January, 2007, requiring travelers to the Caribbean to have a passport rather than just a driver license or birth certificate. This bureaucratic obstacle created an estimated loss of more

than $400 million to the Caribbean economy in the first four months of 2007 (COHA 2007). Thus, while tourism generates a major portion of the region's revenues, in many ways it is a contemporary extension of the Caribbean's traditional "monocrop," sustaining historical vulnerabilities and dependencies.

The dependency inherent in this development model has raised cries of neocolonialism in Grenada. The highly visible, daily reality of exclusive hotels filled with white foreign tourists waited upon by black Grenadians is a disturbing echo for those who are educated about Grenada's colonial past. While the shift from an agriculture-based economy to a service-based economy is heralded by many as appropriate, inevitable, and desirable, the fact that so many of the "services" place Grenadians in service, for low wages, to wealthy white people is a troubling aspect of the tourism development model. Further, the symbolic value of land cannot be overstated on an island that is the second smallest nation in the western hemisphere. The sale of land and subsequent exclusion of locals from pristine landscaped grounds and spectacular views that are newly tailored to suit the tastes of foreigners represent changes that feel irrevocable to most Grenadians. The creation of these playgrounds for the rich and famous generates a complicated stew of desires and resentments that permeate Grenadian society at all levels.

Meanwhile, there is an alternative development paradigm in Grenada that focuses on the importance of agriculture. While this has its own vulnerabilities and economic challenges – issues which are explored in the next section – it also has the potential to provide Grenadians with a different vision for the future that emphasizes self-sufficiency and the value of the land. Although the People's Revolutionary Government was open to

tourism, it is no coincidence that one of their top priorities, both from an economic and nationalistic standpoint, was developing the agricultural sector. Today, however, the farmer population is aging and this model is not embraced by Grenadian youth. Instead, the latter are attracted to the flashy tourism industry, with its yachts, resorts, and symbols of luxury and wealth. Though it is often repeated that working the land is associated with slavery and, therefore, shunned by the youth, this historical grounding seems an unnecessary explanation for their inclination toward the service industry. Agriculture remains hot and difficult physical labor, and few who were raised outside of a farming family would elect to adopt that lifestyle. Like arguments about neocolonialism, an agriculture-based development paradigm that emphasizes the real and symbolic value of local production requires an education about Grenada‘s past that most youth today have not received. Without a meaningful understanding of Grenada‘s long colonial history, its social and economic legacy, and the reasons for past popular uprisings and early ideals of the Revolution, today‘s youth are ill-equipped to think critically about some of the problems associated with tourism as an exclusive development paradigm.

Agriculture in Post-Ivan Grenada

Agriculture is a fundamental part of Grenadian life. From the island‘s historical roots in sugarcane production and tree crops, to its modern identity as the Spice Isle, more than 60 percent of the population live in the ―country‖ (as everywhere outside of the southwestern tourist hub and capital city is commonly known) and are tied to the rural economy. A map of Grenada still reveals large tracts of lands labeled ―estates,‖ and a

drive around the island quickly dispels the impression that the Grand Anse/St. George‘s area is representative of the island as a whole. Grenada is heavily forested, mountainous, spotted with tiny villages, and full of narrow dirt tracks which wind high into barely accessible parcels of land covered with crops. Amidst the small wooden cottages on stilts are large concrete houses with wide verandas, often built with nutmeg wealth. Occasional roadside stands showcase the remarkable diversity of produce sustained by Grenada‘s fertile soil. In town, a daily market in the central square of St. George‘s brings together vendors from all of the parishes – a beautiful display of fruits, vegetables, and spices for locals and tourists alike. Elderly women hawk spice necklaces – painstaking holes bored in nutmeg, clove, and decorative seeds – earning a few dollars for their labor. Piles of enormous bay leaves, bags of cinnamon sticks, and endless little ziplock bags of assorted spices fill the stalls in the market adjacent to the vegetable stands. Grenada smells like spice.

These striking displays are the most visible side of an economy which otherwise often recedes from public view. In part, this is due to differential access to the means of producing the public representations that foster debate. The tourism industry is full of foreign investors, fancy new hotels and condominiums, and the arrival of mega cruise ships. The aging farmer population and their small, hilly plots of land tucked into mountains and valleys do not attract the attention of a Peter de Savary. In a rare article submitted by a local farmer, Michael Ogilvie eloquently makes the case:

> It would seem that unless we can erect a structure that fits the description of ~~–m~~ega" ~~–w~~orld class facility" or ~~–in~~ternational standard" it is either worth less or given the scantest courtesy. For quite sometime the farmers have been maliciously dramatized by competent individuals as a person who is only fit for menial jobs … The majority of us are continually being

> described as ―small farmers". This term is also in our leaders' subconscious. We are small; eventually we become little, least and nothing. So, naturally, we receive little or no attention. [Ogilvie 2008]

A Land Utilisation Survey conducted in the wake of the hurricanes revealed that almost three quarters of all farms have less than five acres; the median farm size is one acre. Further, average annual farm revenues dropped by EC$5,000 from EC$8,300 in the year subsequent to Hurricane Ivan (ARD 2005:n.p.). This means that *before* the devastation, the average farmer was earning EC$13,000, the equivalent of just US$4,950. Grenadian farmers average 53.76 years of age, and 77 percent have not advanced beyond the primary level of education (ARD 2007a). Further, even before the devastation of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, agriculture's contribution to GDP was on the decline – from 26 percent in 1977 to nine percent in 2003 (ARD 2005). Also, most of the public information about the agricultural sector is elaborated in thick policy reports, government websites, and agency-sponsored project reviews. Most Grenadians do not read this material, nor do they have easy access to it. Public representations of agriculture are limited, and perhaps this partly accounts for some of the struggles this sector faces as it tries to rebound from the devastation of the hurricanes.

Nevertheless, agriculture occupies a uniquely important place in the national consciousness. The nutmeg on the national flag is a ubiquitous reminder of the island's heritage. About two-thirds of the country's population live in the country and are directly or indirectly connected to agriculture. It is estimated that the income earned from nutmegs was second only to remittances for 25,000 people – one-quarter of the population (*SIR,* Nov. 29, 2007:15). Further, according to the ARD's 2005 Land Utilization Survey, it is estimated that 81 percent of farmers are the main breadwinners in

their households, and that each breadwinner has approximately three dependents (ARD 2007a:21). The fourth grade social studies textbook on Grenada has a section entitled "The way we live," in which three Grenadian children's lives are described:

> My name is Nigel. I live on the coast. There is a harbour in my village. My family own a fishing boat. My father earns his living by fishing. Sometimes I help him sell his catch, and at weekends I go with him in the boat.
>
> My name is Gervette. I live in the hills. My family grows potatoes, yams, corn, dasheen, tannia, carrots and cabbages. We sell some in the market to get money to buy other things. It is about 5 miles (8 kilometres) to the nearest town from our house. I like to go to town on market days. The market is very colourful.
>
> My name is Mandy. I live in St George's, our biggest town. My father works in the Ministry of Agriculture. We do not catch fish but we do grow some food in our back yard. The rest we buy in the market or in the supermarket. Most people in Grenada grow some food crops, even in the town. [Peters and Penny 1998:22-23]

While this content has a clear a ideological thrust, urging schoolchildren to valorize locally produced goods and kitchen gardens, it is significant that all three children are portrayed as fundamentally tied to the local production of food. Further, this is not a section on resources or trade or agriculture: it is a section about *the way we live*. (It is worth noting that the section on agriculture, specifically, is very brief, and Grenada no longer has a farm school.) When compared to the vocal debates about tourism, the relative dearth of public materials about agriculture might give the impression that Grenadians are focused exclusively on the former. This is not the case. In spite of its current challenges, agriculture occupies a special place in Grenadian's sense of who they are, their heritage, and their future.

Hurricanes Ivan and Emily devastated Grenada‘s local crop production and the nutmeg and cocoa industries. According to the ARD‘s 2005 Annual Report, Ivan flattened 20,000 acres of crops, including about 550,000 nutmeg trees – or, 50 percent of the trees (ARD 2007a:21). Prior to the hurricane, nutmegs accounted for 60 percent of the country‘s agricultural exports, involving approximately 7,000 farmers and providing direct and indirect benefits to approximately 30 percent of the population (ARD 2005:n.p.). In the year prior to Ivan, more than half of all farmers harvested nutmeg, with an average harvest of more than 2,000 pounds per farmer. Post-Ivan, one in ten farmers harvested nutmeg, and the harvest was approximately 100 pounds (ARD 2005:n.p.). In addition, Hurricane Ivan destroyed 25-40 percent of cocoa trees (ARD 2007a:21). Prior to Ivan, four out of ten farmers harvested an average of 1,000 pounds of cocoa; post-Ivan, less than one in ten managed to harvest approximately 50 pounds (ibid). At the time of the Land Utilisation Survey, only four out of ten farmers intended to reinvest in nutmeg production, and one in three planned to reinvest in cocoa (ibid). Further, the emergency rehabilitation efforts initiated after Ivan received another blow after Hurricane Emily ripped through the island in 2005, dropping the domestic food sector‘s production by 38 percent (ibid.). This second hurricane was not only physically devastating, it was deeply demoralizing.

During my fieldwork period, it was a common perception that the New National Party government favored the development of tourism over the resuscitation of agriculture, placing these two sectors in apparent conflict. While their development might in fact even be complementary in some ways, the post-hurricane 2005 budget was criticized for apparently favoring tourism. The Agriculture Emergency Recovery Project

received EC$5.1 million (US$1.9 million) – down from 2004‘s EC$14 million (US$5.2 million) – and tourism marketing and promotion alone received EC$9 million (US$3.4 million) (Boatswain 2005:23-24). These funds allowed for the clearing of just 25 percent of the acreage (ARD 2005: n.p.), and the continued prevalence of overgrowth has fostered a highly destructive rodent population declared a ―national crisis‖ by 2007 (Titus 2007b). The 2007 budget allocated some ten million dollars to agriculture, ―a figure that many believed was very inadequate, given the importance of the sector‖ (*SIR,* Oct. 11, 2007). Coupled with an aging farmer population and the perception that the youth are no longer interested in working the land, the future of agriculture seemed up in the air.

In an analysis of conversations about agriculture‘s prospects, three possible emphases emerge. I consider here the following main categories: for the local market, agriculture is perceived as a source of food security; for the foreign market, nutmeg, cocoa, and other exported spices are sources of revenue; and for the tourism industry, local produce is supplied to hotels, and its production and processing serves as the basis for agritourism sites. I should note that the three trajectories around which I organize this section are based on my analysis of public debates, but that within public discourse, they are often lumped together. While at times this indicates a confusion about the future direction of Grenada‘s agriculture and debate about priorities, it is also a reflection of the fact that most farmers have a diversified crop base and are growing crops for both the local and foreign markets. Unlike the monocrop economies that traditionally characterized many of the other Windward islands, Grenada‘s agriculture has been more diversified since the early days of sugarcane plantations gave way to small freeholds. The mountainous topography lends itself to tree crops such as nutmeg, cocoa, mangos,

citrus, golden apples, and avocados, in addition to the banana trees that still dominate Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent's agriculture. Thus, many of the issues facing farmers affect production for local markets as well as the country's export potential.

When it comes to the production of public representations about agriculture, the rural farming population is at a disadvantage. Their relative silence and invisibility means that it is especially important to mine a wide range of sources in order to understand the significant quandaries facing agriculture in Grenada today, and its place in Grenadians' vision for their future. Thus, I consider the local newspapers, public policy reports, a Grenadian online discussion group, and conversations with local experts, including a leading economist and high-level employee at the Ministry of Agriculture[4]. I also attend to the creation of agritourism destinations and the implications of agriculture's links to tourism. These diverse sources convey the importance of agriculture in Grenada's national consciousness and its role in Grenadians' vision for their nation's future.

Eat What You Grow, Grow What You Eat

The Agency for Reconstruction and Development's 2006 report, *Modernising Agriculture in Grenada: A National Policy and Strategy*, contains the following statement: "Food Imports: One of the most alarming trends is the overall importation of food gradually climbing from EC$60 million (US$22.3 million) in 1987 to an estimated EC$107 million (US$40 million) in 2001. This cannot be accounted for due to inflation"

[4] All interviews were conducted in confidentiality, and the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

(2006:n.p.). The increase in food importation is not a result of the hurricanes; in fact, by 2007, the vegetable and food crops sub-sector had basically returned to its pre-hurricane status (ARD 2007b:4). In a country with a negative overall fiscal balance and, in 2004, an unsustainable debt/GDP ratio of 129 percent (ARD 2007a:20), there is significant motivation to reduce the import bill. Unlike many Caribbean islands, Grenada is exceptionally fertile – so why does the nation import so much food? There is no single answer, of course, nor is the problem unique to Grenada. As David Jessop writes:

> [Senior civil servants] argued that although St. Vincent had much available agricultural land, farming was not organized well for food production. Lack of investment, absence of capital, an inappropriate marketing system, the absence of insurance, poor cool storage facilities and the individuality and smallness of farming operations made the creation of a local market for food difficult.
>
> Much the same could be said about agriculture in virtually every other country in the Anglophone and Hispanic Caribbean. [Jessop 2007]

The role of local foods and imports in the economy preoccupies many Grenadians and generates a steady stream of debate. While the Ministry of Agriculture and agencies dedicated to the agricultural sector grapple with the complex, ground-level realities of revitalizing and modernising the industry in order to make food production competitive, public perception of local foods and agriculture plays its own important role.

The following thread from a popular online Grenadian chatroom, SpiceIslander Talkshop (http://www.spiceislandertalkshop.com), presents some facets of public opinion when it comes to Grenadian agriculture and imports. Before turning to this conversation, I will add a few notes on the forum. Talkshop discussions are a unique ethnographic source. They are public and officially anonymous, though the identities of some regular posters are known within the community. Posters know that there are ―lurkers"

eavesdropping on the conversation, yet the debate between regulars has a relatively intimate feel. People with a wide range of literacy skills post, and many opt to write in a Grenadian English dialect. Grenadians abroad also participate in these conversations. After reading thousands of threads, I might also add that very often the spirit of the debates moves from opinionated, to quarrelsome, to offensive (at which point the moderator steps in). Frequently this is followed by a call to rise above the usual squabbling, and perhaps a religious posting is inserted. It is almost always the case that the threads include personal insults and name calling at some point, as well as a call to cease that kind of behavior for sake of the discussion. The content of the threads frequently reflects the issues uppermost in the minds of Grenadians on a day-to-day basis. These online conversations share some of the same spirit as the street corner conversations in which daily news subjects are digested. Just as rumors can fly quickly through a Grenadian village, so too does this technology facilitate the rapid dissemination of information. While topics posted reflect happenings in Grenada, it is sometimes the case that topics on Talkshop become the subject of live conversation in the streets.

Under the subject heading "Spiceislanders, can you explain this?" a discussant asks the chatroom members to tackle the reasons that Grenada's supermarkets are filled with imported produce. The answers are varied, and in usual Talkshop style, digress into vitriolic accusations (most of which I have cut so that the reader may follow the topic more easily; missing sections are noted with ellipses). The rest of the discussion serves as an introduction to some of the frequently-heard arguments circulating about agriculture in Grenada today. The excerpts are reproduced as written.

Date: March 16, 2008 at 20:39:03

From: islandlover,

> I fly from California to Grenada. It takes me almost 24 hours by the most direct routing possible. I go into the Supermarket at Grand Anse to buy some groceries. Almost all the produce there comes from less than 100 miles from where I just flew (and farther from the airport, I might add-but seems to have gotten to Grenada more quickly than I did). Grenada has ideal growing conditions for lettuce, tomatoes, spinach etc. etc. In fact much more ideal than California (which is essentially a desert). Why, oh why do you import this from so far away in the US? It can't possibly be cheaper to grow and transport. It certainly cost more than what I paid for it in California.
>
> If you can tell me why, then you deserve a post as economic minister with a corrupt administration.
>
> Date: March 17, 2008 at 10:57:01
> From: Man From Morne Jaloux,
> Disregarding the last sentence of your extremely critical question, the Caribbean and developing countries everywhere are being strangled with the exponential costs of food imports.
>
> Consequently many of us reacted with alarm that a recent World Bank report urged Caribbean countries specifically, to concentrate less on growing their own food and more on public welfare programs.
>
> To many of us who comment on Grenada's severe decline of agricultural production make the connection with government's inadequate focus on the farming sector and its rapt attention to banking sector experiments and individual deal making. Worse, there is little if any consultation with the fledging farming constituency about the critical inputs it requires to resuscitate this sector.
>
> I read everywhere that the reason for the decline in agricultural production is caused by young people's unwillingness to "work the land". This argument fails for several reasons.
>
> First, young people never were engaged in this sector. Unless agricultural production were a family sole source of income, it was the patriarch of the family who employed other farm workers to till, plant and nurture the bannanas, cocoa, spices and nutmeg. The farming family prepared its young men for futures away from the land.

While land reform is viewed as a gateway to increased agricultural production in the developing world, no such solution was relevant to Grenada because over 70 percent of its population owned and grew food products from the small family farming plot. Thus, almost every home had a kitchen garden and at least one bannana tree.

What has changed? For one, the government's support for the agricultural sector has collapsed under IMF and international lending agency pressure to severely reduce support for this sector.

Let us be clear: this cannot be blamed on the NNP. It has been well documented that lop-sided focus on foreign investment as a way to rescue economies in the developing world has eliminated local subsidies for health care, training and education programs, and agrucultural production.

How do we revive the agricultural economy. We certainly know how, the risk is whether the prices for local food will be compatibile with foreign imports. Recent evidence indicates it will be a struggle.

That California lettuce, grapes, Florida tomatoes and South Carolina chicken have been permitted to flood the local market to the detriment of the local farmer is deplorable.

But if a Grenada government decides to stand up to the IMF and reject its conditions for foreign exchange loans (this $$ is used by our governments to purchase goods and services on the international market) will we stand up and support that government.

In the initial phase of reviving the local farm economy will we concede to paying more for those products?

I believe the answer is yes but it depends on the forthrightness and sincerity of the government's consultation with its people.

No country in this world can compete with America's farmers. They are subsidized with billions of dollars. The Mexican farmer is reduced to subsistence living after the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was passed. It is so debilitating to Mexico's economy that the exponential rise in illegal migration has been directly tied to the farming sector disaster.

In Grenada we have a small economy with oversized appetities. But the local consumer cannot be blamed entirely. She is offered no alternative. And now the current government has allowed the Chinese contractors to

expand its encroachment into the Grenadian economy by using its vast resources to displace the few remaining viable farmers.

So, the solution may be in allowing the American food to remain on the docks. Or, provide incentives to farmers like substantial long term low or no interest loans, cooperative mechanized services and preferential placements in the local supermarkets.

I am not an economist so I may be shooting blanks at a this problem. One this is certain. Unless we revive the agricultural sector, more and more of our (Grenada's) dollars will be spent for food and in time, we will become wholly dependent on US farmers for our sustenance. Where once we were a viable self-sustaining nation with respect to food production, we are fast approaching a point of no return where what we eat is not what we grow and our food choices will be controlled by the whims of foreign farmers basking in the flush of subsidies they get from the US to dump their foods on our well-trained appetities.

Date: March 17, 2008 at 17:06:30
From: Quest,
When I was growing up, market day was Friday and Saturday; today market day is every day. We say that Grenadian are no longer interested in working the land, then where all the produce are coming from. What I think is that Grenadians should look for export market for their produce. Grenadians should look for other means of produce, because everyone seems to be growing and selling the same thing. I suppose maybe they have no choice when every breadfruit and pawpaw tree is ladden.

I don't think the produce the individual saw in the supermarket was import. I think that the supermarkets are marketing their produce in a very presentable manner. The individual may have seen grapes, plums etc., because we don't produce these products and they are many foreingers who are away from home but like the task of home - don't we all?

Date: March 17, 2008 at 12:11:53
From: Slice,
Let us be clear: this cannot be blamed on the NNP. It has been well documented that lop-sided focus on foreign investment as a way to rescue economies in the developing world has eliminated local subsidies for health care, training and education programs, and agrucultural production.

As much as I respect you I totally disagree with the above statement.

I do not care what the IMF and other organisation say, in the end the goverment must know what works for their nation.

It is fact there are tons of money to be made in the agriculture industry, and goveremnts must have the forsight to see that.

NNP or NDC must have something in place to take full advantage of the Organic industry that is growing faster than Wild Fire.

Date: March 17, 2008 at 09:23:33
From: SPIDER,
When I was growing up the lands is where most of the monies came from nowadays all the foiks think about is the best and biggest car they want to drive so that's the price they have to pay "go back to the lands"

…

Date: March 17, 2008 at 12:17:36
From: Slice,
Farming too damn hard. I ent doing it if you kill me. As ah boy growing up ah use to pay me cousins and dem to do my share of work in the gardens.

…

Date: March 17, 2008 at 03:48:46
From: td,
…NNP created a 'culture' of no-brainers who rather beg than work. The has-been gardeners are now too old to work the land and the school drop-outs are 'too nice' to get their hands dirty. This is serious business.

Nothing more to add.

…

Date: March 16, 2008 at 21:30:15
From: subform,
This is actually one of my issues with the NDC....mind you i don't go to any political rallys of any party etc. but i do speak to supporters from time to time,,,and they keep pushing this get back to agriculture line. Seems to be a mantra of theirs...and whenever i ask them the simple question of who do they plan to export these good to and expect to be competative with, they always get angry and the conversation ends without an answer being given. It will be great if farmers were able to grow more vegetables, e.t.c to reduce the import bills, but how exactly are these farmers supposed to compete with the big farms in the US etc where the farmers get subsidies etc.... I would love for an NDC supporter to answer that question for

me...and please don't say raise the taxes on the imported goods to make the local prices competitive....in this day and age where tariffs and restrictions e.t.c are being lowered or removed under the threat of sanctions if they aren't!!!

…

Date: March 17, 2008 at 10:57:20
From: DON,
If de demand and the market is there..local farmers will grow..

But what we have is de commerical monied group catering to a small segment..importing all types of food....at de expense of de local farmers...as long as we spend more on imports than we produce and consume and export for ourselves...by ourselves...our ecomonies will never see de sun rise...

The nations as the US who preach about free trade etc...subsisize thier own farmers....any nation dat depends on others to provide it its food.. is doomed

Date: March 17, 2008 at 02:28:24
From: Commie,
islandlover do you remember the Grenada Revolution? It was making a bold step to solve this import problem. The Grenadian farmers were getting a great deal of assistance from the PRG to produce more in Grenada and import less. They established the marketing board so farmers could sell their produce whole sale at a good price, instead of going to the market and sitting around all day to try and sell their produce. The PRG opened many feeder roads for the farmers to get out their produce without damage. And how about the agro industries which were already exporting many of what we now import? I agree. Many of what we now import can be grown right here in Grenada.

Chicken back and neck are popular imports, while our Grenadian grown organic fowls are treated like poison. Grenadian cow milk is no longer sold in Grenada. What raises my blood pressure is the sale of the National Commercial Bank which was founded by the PRG and sold to the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago. Before the sale, the NCB was bringing in millions of dollars per year into the treasury. Grenada has made a few steps backwards and in order to move forward, we would have to return to the positive programs of the PRG.

…

> Date: March 17, 2008 at 04:27:50
> From: Me Again,
> The problem with this dialog is that we have every excuse why we're not growing our own food. We are going to have a real problem when that ship stop sailing. Like Bob Marley said "In the abundance of water the fool is thirsty".
>
> I'll make it short and simple. Our policies in Grenada are both Idiotic and Lazy. Hence the reason the land is going to waste and the youth hands are going to waste. Another quote "Idle hands is the devil workshop".
>
> Now, when California cleanup it's Immigration problem, Grenada will either go hungry and/or the prices for food will go sky high, by then the little foreign exchange we have will be gone and we still have to turn around and plant our own food.
>
> We buy everything from abroad. Even Our Food. We have so little to export. That is not good policy.

Party politics, generational differences, influences beyond the nation‘s control such as American farm subsidies and the IMF, and reflections on farming policies under the PRG – these are some recurring themes in the public debates about the contemporary fate of agriculture.

Another important aspect of the local foods vs. imports debate concerns Grenadians‘ perception of local produce. The government sponsored an ―eat what you grow, grow what you eat” campaign in an effort to highlight the nutritional benefits of eating local and encourage backyard gardens. Prime Minister Mitchell called on Grenadians to ―concentrate on eating more local food, not because of the overall positive impact on farmers and the country‘s importation bill but more specifically on the health of the people‘” (Straker 2007f). Annual World Food Day celebrations display Grenada‘s bountiful produce and aim to educate the public about the advantages of local agricultural

products. These messages are intended to counter the growing trend, particularly among Grenadian youth, of favoring processed imported foods. Local produce is often viewed as old-fashioned, lower class food, while imported packages are valued status symbols. This is a common lament heard among the older generation. "The consumer mentality has become so ingrained that it is more fashionable for mothers to put a Chubby soft drink into the lunch kit of their children instead of using our local produce like limes, oranges, golden-apples, five fingers etc. to make local juices which are far more nutritious…" (Marryshow 2007a). Foreign fast-food chains are also favored targets, cited by Grenadians as a sign of consumerism. As an employee at the Ministry of Agriculture explained in an interview on May 10, 2008:

> But you would appreciate that one of the things that has happened to islands like Grenada, people have developed tastes for new kinds of food. A lot of our young people are not into the traditional kind of a food that the older folks use. They have developed tastes for the fast food industry, the KFC, and the burgers. They have developed tastes for them, and this whole idea of this consumer spending attitude, everything you must buy rather than produce.
>
> At one time in Grenada, you were able to see every home with a backyard where they have some kind of a food being produced, supplementing their incomes and producing food for their table. Nowadays, people want to go to the supermarket to buy. And I think that is one of the challenges for this whole area of replanting, it's a new orientation. Some national mobilization has to take place. You have to change attitudes. It's a deep cultural thing that you're dealing with now.

This debate took on a new level of intensity in 2008 with the global food crisis. The World Bank documented that global food prices increased by 83 percent in a period of 18 months (*Grenadian Voice,* Apr. 19, 2008:10), and the United Nations World Food Programme stated "an extra 100 million people who previously did not require help could now not afford to buy food" (*Grenada Advocate*, Apr. 25, 2008). The director general of

the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Jacques Diouf warned heads of government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that the world was ―on the brink of a serious food shortage ... [letting] them know they must do everything possible within their borders to produce whatever they can because the prognosis is that food on the world market would become more and more in short supply and automatically become more and more expensive" (*Grenada Advocate*, Mar. 28, 2008:13). On April 7, 2008, thousands of Haitians tried to storm the Presidential palace to protest the price of staples – ―the Caribbean's first food riot in living memory" (Jessop 2008:9).

The Grenadian government struggled to respond to the crisis. The administration removed the Common External Tariff on a set of forty imported items deemed fundamental to the basic food basket. The NNP proposed increasing the number of beneficiaries for the old age pension scheme and increasing their current monthly allowance of EC$130.00 (US$50) (*Grenada Today,* Oct. 26, 2007:13). In a highly-visible publicity campaign, they donated food baskets to needy persons throughout the country. Educational campaigns aimed to promote careful budgeting and attention to nutritional content in food purchases. Heads of government discussed ways that regional cooperation could alleviate the food crisis.

For many, these stop-gap measures only pointed to the sad state of Grenada's food security, and gave a higher profile to calls for clearing and resuscitating agricultural land, education and training programs for the youth, and investment in much needed services to facilitate irrigation, access, and transport of produce. Randoll Mark, a Grenadian who periodically submits articles about agriculture to the local press, wrote the following impassioned plea:

> The group of people that are suffering the most are the poor old farmers, who have worked very hard in their young days to build this country, and who have lost nearly all that they had prior to the destruction by Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, and now they are forgotten.
>
> Despite the glaring knowledge of the fact that the majority of old farmers who depended on their nutmeg and cocoa crops, have little or nothing today, and because the farmers on the island are so disorganised, there is no one to plead the cause of these poor old farmers.
>
> … The nutmeg buying stations once bustled with activity five days per week, today the majority of them are closed, and a once very active station at La Tante St. David is demolished.
>
> It is now nearly 3 ½ years since the devastation of Grenada's agriculture, and still we have only just scratched the surface toward the rehabilitation of the industry.
>
> … A modern sea port, a brand new stadium, beautiful buildings, everywhere, some improvement in the Tourism industry.
>
> However, a survey of the Agricultural Sector which was once the backbone of the economy of Grenada, particularly in the parish of St. Andrew which was once considered the breadbasket of Grenada, would find that today about 70 percent of the fertile agricultural land is covered with vines and completely neglected ...
>
> … Many may say that agriculture is a dying industry and looking forward to it being buried when it dies. But the question is: How will you survive when Agriculture is dead? Can the human being survive without food? [Mark 2008a]

As food prices and general cost of living continued to rise in Grenada, the decline in local production hit closer to more homes. Grenadians focused increasingly on agriculture as a domestic issue of food security and self-reliance, raising the profile of this waning sector and also drawing more attention to the plight of the export-oriented nutmeg and cocoa industries.

The Fate of Nutmeg and Cocoa

Grenada‘s traditional cash crops are nutmeg, cocoa, and banana. Nutmeg and mace (the lacy red membrane on the outside of the nutmeg) were the most significant agricultural exports in Grenada, with a combined contribution of 65.46 percent in 2003 (ARD 2006:n.p.). In the same year, cocoa made up 7 percent of exports, and bananas were just 1.83 percent (ARD 2007a:21). Fish exports account for the other 25 percent of the agricultural sub-sector (ibid.:21). While the fishing sector requires its own share of investment capital, improved facilities and marketing, and conservation of renewable resources, it generally receives less attention in spite of its prominent contribution to the agricultural export sector. This is perhaps because it suffered less under the impact of the hurricanes, and fishermen comprise a smaller sector of the population than the rural farming base. The banana sub-sector began to lose prominence as a stable export in 1996, with the erosion of EU preferential trade agreements and a decline in world prices resulting from over-production (ARD 2006:n.p.). In recent years, it has become an important food security crop geared toward satisfying local demand rather than an export. Thus, efforts to revitalize agriculture focus primarily on nutmegs and cocoa, while also prompting discussions about enhancing and diversifying crop production to sustain farmers while waiting for the slow regrowth of nutmeg and cocoa trees.

In the wake of the hurricanes, scrutiny of the nutmeg and cocoa industries prompted debate about their future direction. In particular, questions were raised about the methods of replanting, the continued relevance of the historic nutmeg and cocoa farmers‘ co-operatives, and there was renewed interest in moving away from the export

of raw goods toward agro-processing ventures. The following interview with an employee at the Ministry of Agriculture (May 10, 2008) presents an overview of the state of agriculture in Grenada during my fieldwork period, and introduces some of the key issues under consideration.

N: So today, what is the status of the banana, cocoa, and nutmeg industries? What do you think are their prospects?

X: Grenada still has a comparative advantage in the production of nutmegs and cocoa. I say that because prior to Hurricane Ivan, Grenada was the second largest exporter of nutmegs, second to Indonesia. And we continue to produce a fine flavored cocoa that is demanded highly on the international market. In fact, we cannot have enough to supply. And given the research that is being done on those commodities, and the health properties that they are finding in cocoa, there is a place for cocoa for a long time. So while I believe the industry is in a kind of a depressed state in the moment, I believe there's good prospect for rehabilitating those cocoa fields that we have.

Nutmeg for us will remain very dear to Grenada. One of the things that has happened in Grenada around nutmeg is the fact that we have been branded as the Spice Isle of the Caribbean. Nutmeg was, in a great way, responsible for that branding. I think the prospect there is to even strengthen that image that we have already in the international market, and to even broaden the variety of spices we're doing. New markets are emerging all the time. There is a growing demand for processed spices in the world. And we have a tradition of growing quality spices. However though, I believe that we need to move more into the processing sector, as against selling the raw materials. In fact that is where the world market is pointing. People are demanding more processed spices now. Because consumers are moving to a more ready-to-use product. People are getting busier, they want a product they can pick up and use right away. So I think that is the future for the industry in Grenada.

Banana will remain a very important crop for us for the fact that banana is an important food security crop for Grenada. In the past, in _70s and _80s, we used to be exporting a sizeable quantity of bananas. However in the _90s, the exports of bananas from Grenada was reduced significantly. That was due in part to the ruling that took place at the WTO against the European Banana Regime, where they were giving preferential treatment to the ACP countries. What that has done was to reduce the price of bananas on the world market. So that a lot of farmers recognizing that the profitability of bananas has fallen, and the future, because what was emerging was that Latin American

bananas are going to enter the market cheap. Farmers sensed they couldn't make it. So the banana industry has been reduced to a very small size now. And in fact, we've diversified a little bit and are selling bananas under what we call the Fair Trade label – it's an arrangement where you are able to sell your bananas given the production practices that you adopt in producing it, there are the consumers in Europe that are willing to pay you a premium price. Issues like recognizing human dignity in production, paying people fair wage, and using good agriculture practices, and all those things. And so Grenada is now selling under that label to the European Union. However though, at the moment, the banana industry is being plagued by a lot of pests and diseases. We have moko, we have black sigatoka, and these are posing great challenges together with the high cost of imports, the increasing price of oil is also affecting agricultural imports. So that is becoming much more difficult to cultivate bananas. However, the local demand is very good. People are utilizing a lot of bananas on the local market. So I think farmers are pretty much happy with the prices that they are getting on the local market. We also do some exports to Trinidad. So there is a place for banana. Banana will continue to be an important both economic and food security crop for Grenada.

N: So what is Grenada exporting now?

X: Grenada exports bananas in a small quantity. Once the production would have picked up, we have this agreement with WIBDECO, which is the Windward Island Exporting Company, to ship to Europe. That's our main markets, Europe, Caribbean Regional Market, Trinidad in particular, and the local domestic market.

N: Is nutmeg being exported?

X: Yes, in fact most of our nutmegs are exported.

N: So there's a sufficient amount back in production?

X: Oh yeah. Prior to Ivan, nutmegs was our leading agriculture export. In fact, I think it was in 2002 or 2005, it contributed 22 percent of the total merchandise export in Grenada. It was a huge export crop for Grenada. It is still an important export crop.

N: How long do you think it will take to get back to pre-Ivan export levels?

X: Probably, given the pace at which things are happening, probably it might take about ten to fifteen years. Given the nature of the crop.

N: How long does it take to bear fruit?

X: The normal method that we use, which is the seedlings, you would take about seven years before you start fruiting. So in about ten years it would come into full production.

N: So there's been sufficient replanting that ten years from now, you'll be back to pre-Ivan levels?

X: I must say, I don't envisage the replanting of nutmegs to occur to the scale of pre-Ivan. In other words, while yes, we would like to see nutmegs replanted, at the same time, there are other challenges we face. One of the biggest challenges for us, in Grenada, is the issue of labor and our aging farming population. A lot of the farmers that are involved in agriculture are on average about 53, 54 years. There was a survey done in 2005, showed that farmers on average were 54 years. So that age is a challenge. Because they do not have that kind of a vigor, we don't envision that the kind of acreage we had pre-Ivan would come back. However though, we expect that we'd get to a level that allows for a more efficient and more productive kind of – in fact, the plan is not to replant nutmeg in the same manner as it was in pre-Ivan. Again, to address the issue of labor, the aging farmer population, we believe that we need to utilize the technologies so that we would replant in an efficient manner which would lessen the amount of labor that would be required and at the same time, the technology would also attract younger people into the agriculture because of the fact that it would be profitable enough to lure them. Because we believe, you know, young people are attracted to what makes money, they are attracted to jobs that turn out revenue, huge revenue. And so we believe that if we can incorporate systems in the production of the nutmegs, and all the agricultural crops, that would allow for them to make money that can sustain their livelihood.

N: What would that look like, if most of the nutmegs were on privately-owned small plots, [X: Yes] so how do you go about replanting more efficiently?

X: The idea of replanting more efficiently is to use a more, what we call, modern kind of tree. Before, a tree would have grown up to, you can get a nutmeg tree 50 feet high. Now, harvesting a nutmeg tree fifty feet high, you can imagine the difficulty. So what used to happen was that farmers harvested nutmegs by simply when it fell to the ground, you harvest the nut. We believe that with grafting technology, we can do a grafted tree that would be a much shorter tree that can allow the crop to be harvested on the tree. What it allows for, you would get a better quality nut but in addition to that, there is also the mace. Now, when a nutmeg falls to the ground and the fruit opens, the nut comes out and covering the nut is the mace. Now when this falls to the ground, insects eat the mace. It also deteriorates over time. So sometimes when the farmer comes, he would only get the nut, but not the mace. We believe that with these short trees, he would be able to get both his nut and his mace. Hence, his income will be improved.

But also, one of the challenges of agriculture, what you hear from people that are not getting into agriculture, is "Oh, this thing, you gotta work too hard to make money" (in dialect). So you want to put a system in place that would allow this farm to generate money. So

what you can do is to adopt farming systems that allow for interplanting the nutmeg with other crops so that even while the nutmeg might not be fruiting and you're not harvesting nutmegs, you can harvest another crop that is within the nutmegs. So you can have a continuous stream of income to support you.

N: Has this little nutmeg tree been planted in Grenada already?

X: We have started experimenting with it. We are looking to bring in some technical experts to assist us with mass grafting. Another advantage with the grafted tree is the fact that – now when you use a seedling, you are not sure whether it is a male or female tree. So when you plant a tree from a seedling and sometime, only when it reaches full tree and ready to bear fruits, you recognize that boy, this is a male. But through grafting, you can ensure it is a female. So that is the other advantage of using that technology.

N: Is cocoa being exported now?

X: Yes, most of our cocoa goes to Europe I think, and probably the U.S.

N: And that's separate from the Grenada Chocolate Factory?

X: Yes, the Grenada Chocolate Factory purchases cocoa locally for processing.

N: I remember we spoke once about the cooperatives, the nutmeg and cocoa cooperatives. Are those, do you think, still useful bodies? What role do they play in the industry?

X: Prior to the formation of the cocoa and the nutmeg associations – it's two cooperatives – you had individual exporters who were buying the products from farmers, paying them whatever price, and then exporting that product. The returns that they made on the exports obviously all went to them. Given the number of farmers that were involved in these two crops, cocoa and nutmeg, the government at the time initiated this cooperative to bring farmers together. It was a way of helping to enhance the livelihood and helping to sustain these industries. The idea was if you can allow for the returns that are generated from these commodities to be shared among those who are involved in its production, that's the whole cooperative idea behind it. So statutes were passed in the Grenada parliament that established both the cocoa and the nutmeg associations, and what it allowed was for all the surplus generated from these commodities, they distributed back to the farmers. And that principle farmers came to love very well, and rallied very strongly behind those commodity boards. In fact, when you speak of these commodity boards, farmers are very very sentimental about it. I guess because they know the benefit that they got and derived from the operation of these commodity boards. So both of these commodity boards have monopoly power for buying the commodities from farmers and exporting it.

N: And all the profits get redistributed back to the farmers.

X: Back to the farmers. That's how they operate.

N: To this day.

X: To this day. So if another person wants to enter the industry, according to the current statutes, they cannot buy from the farmers, because the statutes allow for farmers to only sell to the cooperatives. And they cannot export the raw materials. That is in the purview of both of the cooperatives …

In fact, we believe that to some extent, how the law was crafted, while yes it sought to protect the interest of the farmers, it didn‘t allow enough for the development of the cooperatives. Because they had to pay back all the surplus, they could not plow back revenues into the same industry. So what you find now is though the cooperatives have been functioning for a number of years, they are still far underdeveloped.

N: I was surprised, on Lagoon Road, there‘s a new building coming up under the Nutmeg Association. I thought, what were they doing with real estate? So that‘s an attempt to create another source of income?

X: It‘s another source of income that belongs to the farmers. So now they are recognizing that it is important, and they should move to diversify their revenue base.

N: So it sounds like agriculture today is a foreign exchange earner and food security. It‘s both. Do you see that in the future being in balance, or do think one is likely to be more important than the other?

X: I think it would evolve. It would continue to be both export earner and food security, but with a focus on food security. I say that because, while the commodity base for export might be reduced – so that, for example, you look at, over the years, we used to generate a significant income from bananas, we no longer generate that kind of an income from exporting bananas. But we use bananas as a food security crop. I believe what will happen is we would need to strategize and to look at specific commodities where we have comparative advantage for export. So that, for example, there‘s a move now to invest heavily in the fruit subsector, to get into the fresh fruit market, tropical fruits. There‘s a growing demand for fresh fruits, we believe that our climate, our soils here, we can do excellent tropical fruits. Mangoes, golden apples, papayas, for export. And exotic niche markets, exporting exotic fruits. So that is one of the areas. Same so with the issue of nutmegs, and moving to the more value-added products. Do some processing for the export market.

N: Do you see more agro-industries coming to Grenada? Do you think that‘s going to happen?

X: I believe that will happen. In fact, the government policy at the moment is to move into value-added products, especially for those export commodities. As a small island, we do not have the large volume, so we believe that we need to compete on quality. So, we need to look at ways how we can add value to what we‘re doing.

N: What kind of products, for example?

> X: For example, the fruits. While you might say fresh fruits, yes, you can also do fruit purees, mash fruits, there's a huge market for dried fruits. That kind of a thing. Find niche markets for those commodities. There is a lot of high end products in nutmegs. A lot of essential oils in nutmegs. There are certain ingredients in the nutmeg that is used in the Coca-Cola industry. Some of them are used in the pharmaceutical industry, the perfume industry. So if we can target those high-end markets, we believe that we can add value. As we say, Grenada continue to produce quality nutmeg, quality spices, quality cocoa. But we need to move away from the raw materials that we export and add some value to it.

This interview outlines some of the ideas generated by the Ministry of Agriculture to modernize production. Efforts to graft a shorter nutmeg tree and replant it in a more accessible fashion would eliminate some of the greatest difficulties farmers face when harvesting nutmegs. In theory, these changes would also attract more young people to agriculture. It is clear that multiple new strategies are being pursued, from the Fair Trade marketing of bananas to the production of processed spices. The agricultural sector is trying to turn the devastation of the hurricanes into an opportunity for modernization.

As part of this effort, there are two other deeply-entrenched traditions that have come under scrutiny. First, there are questions about the place of the cocoa and nutmeg associations in the contemporary marketplace. The Grenada Cooperative Nutmeg Association (GCNA) was established in 1947. It successfully cut out middlemen by providing farmer members a higher price for nutmegs than did the dealers. The GCNA also set up nutmeg collection and processing stations around the island. A reserve fund protected farmers against a sudden drop in the price of nutmegs, and the GCNA regularly distributed earnings to farmers, with excess funds distributed as an annual Christmas bonus (Steele 2003:337-338). The Grenada Cocoa (GCA) also evolved into a farmers' cooperative from its early days as a project of the Colonial Welfare and Development

Fund, established in 1951, and later as the 1964 Grenada Cocoa Industry Board (ibid). These institutions enhanced farmers‘ lives by procuring higher prices for their products and providing a degree of cushioning against the vagaries of the world market. They are entrenched institutions in Grenada, and as the employee at the Ministry of Agriculture comments, farmers are deeply sentimental about their cooperatives.

By contrast, reports produced by the Agency for Reconstruction and Development argue that the cooperatives are holding back the development of the nutmeg and cocoa industries. In the Agriculture Sector Profile, a section entitled ―Growing Consciousness of Commercialization in Agriculture" states:

> Increasingly, there has been a growing movement against the continuation of the monopoly powers enjoyed by the commodity associations responsible for the marketing of nutmeg and mace, cocoa and the minor spices cooperatives. Underlying this movement is the recognition of the need to develop a sector that is genuinely competitive with a more energetic and entrepreneurial leadership from a more innovative private sector in order to re-establish Grenada as a prominent producer in the global marketplace. [ARD 2007b]

This ―growing movement" was not widely publicized during my time in Grenada, and while it may indeed be an accurate reflection of the sentiments held by some of those involved in the industries, it is unclear whether it has any origin in the farmers themselves. In the wake of two destructive hurricanes, foreign aid agencies and their many consultants produced a plethora of reports in consultation with local experts. I would suggest that this position advocating the dissolution of cooperatives and encouraging open competition is unsurprising, and any assertion that this emerges from the grassroots should be examined critically.

Nevertheless, there is no question that these cooperatives were struggling to regain their footing after the decimation of the nutmeg and cocoa trees. For example, an article in 2007 reported that the government purchased five acres of land from the GCA just to provide enough revenue for the GCA to meet its debt servicing payments on time (*Grenada Informer,* Oct. 26, 2007b:8). The GCNA attempted to diversify their income by leasing commercial spaces at a new complex under construction along the Lagoon (*Grenada Today,* Apr. 7, 2008). This move also generated criticism:

> Why isn't the Board prepared to invest some of the profits that the industry generated over the years back into it? Why are they instead investing all of it into real estate? Will the real estate be able to generate the $40 million earnings per annum that the nutmeg industry generated over the years? [*Grenada Today,* Nov. 30, 2007]

As of 2009, the building had not been completed, they had overrun their budget for construction costs by millions, and the government minister in charge executed his right to dissolve the Board for incompetent performance in May, 2009 (Noel 2009). Given their economic struggles post-Ivan and Emily, the future role of these long-standing cooperatives in the resuscitation and modernization of the industry remained unclear.

The second aspect of Grenada's agricultural sector to come under scrutiny was the practice of exporting raw goods. As in much of the Caribbean, this practice is an inheritance from colonial times when local manufacturing was restricted and the islands' natural wealth was extracted by colonial powers for processing into value-added products abroad. Nutmeg and cocoa are still sold to wealthier nations, whose investment capital and manufacturing technology allow them to produce expensive products such as nutmeg oil or chocolate. Nutmeg is a main ingredient in pain-relieving rubs such as Bengay, and is used in the recipe for Coca-Cola. Mace is primarily imported by Germany for use as a

key ingredient in sausages and prepared meats. The result of this practice is far greater profits accruing to the manufacturers abroad, while Grenadian farmers continue to receive a relative pittance for their raw products. It is worth noting that this historical context is not common knowledge among Grenadians, particularly the youth. Without an understanding of the economic constraints that gave rise to this practice of exporting raw goods, many young people interpret the current state of affairs as arising from a lack of industry among Grenadians. Ironically, this perception perpetuates racially-loaded colonial stereotypes about "lazy islanders" and a negative view of Grenadians' entrepreneurial abilities.

Part of modernizing agriculture in Grenada entails shifting from the sale of raw goods to the local processing of value-added products. Movement in this direction is advocated in the ARD's Agriculture Sector Profile: "the export of primary produce needs to give way to the production of higher quality primary products for direct consumption and for further processing into higher value-added secondary and tertiary products" (ARD 2007b). The NDC platform during the 2007 campaign season also included an emphasis on agro-processing (*Grenada Today*, Nov. 23, 2007:17). There are a few local agro-processing businesses that are already producing nutmeg-based foods, medicinal products, and an award-winning organic chocolate.

Grenada has an erratic history when it comes to agro-processing. In the wake of the 1983 U.S. Intervention/Invasion, the United States provided US$102 million in development assistance as part of its economic plan for Grenada. Part of this vision was to dismantle or sell government-owned enterprises developed under the PRG and

promote a free market economy. An important and symbolic example was the case of the Spice Isle canning plant:

> One of the first enterprises to go was the Spice Isle canning plant, where local produce had been processed into jams, juices and sauces for local consumption and for export. The canning plant had been important to many Grenadians because it employed local people, provided a market for small farmers and made use of local crops that would otherwise have gone to waste. The local processing and preserving of fruit and vegetables had both increased the country's food supply and added value to the crops it exported …
>
> The Spice Isle plant embodied the type of economic activity that the PRG had hoped would increase the country's earnings and reduce its dependence on expensive food imports. The canning plant linked agriculture, the main source of wealth and livelihood in Grenada for centuries, to industry, one of the keys to the country's development. Thus, to many Grenadians, the plant symbolized a development strategy that would build a bridge from Grenada's impoverished past to a more prosperous future, without sacrificing the present generation. [McAfee 1991:97]

The question of agro-processing is one of the few issues that sparks recollections of the past, as it was a priority under the PRG. Those early efforts, and their premature abandonment, still trouble many older Grenadians – particularly when similar initiatives are proposed decades later. As a prominent local economist stated in an interview on April 2, 2008:

> N: Where do agro-industries fit into this picture then?
> X: Grenada is in a particularly ironic situation with respect to agro-industries. Very ironic. There was an agro-industrial plant in Grenada that was established, if my memory serves me well, in 1981, 1982. After the U.S. invasion of Grenada they – I don't remember who gave assistance in building it, would have been Cubans or East Europeans, but it was Eastern Bloc assistance, you might want to call it. It was dismantled, purely on the basis of it being Eastern Bloc economic assistance. It's ironic now, and I honestly at times do not get into the debate about agro-industries, because here it is, twenty-eight years

after you'd have done that foolishness you talking about starting it over again.

N: Who's talking about it?

X: Policymakers.

N: So it's on the table, to resurrect this.

X: Yeah.

N: Was it Grenadians who dismantled it, or was that a U.S. initiative?

X: I don't think it was the U.S. It was, you know, I guess ideological exuberance on the part of some people that says, look, anything that came from Cuba, we'll dismantle it.

N: So in theory, it could still be something –

X: It could be, but I'm not sure whether or not it would survive now. Because other agro-industries, given the fact that they've been in existence so long, would have climbed that learning curve, and I'm not sure you starting now would be successful. That's the problem they have.

N: So Grenada got behind.

X: Really behind.

Nutmeg and cocoa lie at the heart of Grenada's agriculture sector, and are key symbols of the nation's heritage. As the second smallest nation in the western hemisphere, but the world's second largest producer of nutmeg prior to Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, nutmegs have historically been Grenada's greatest claim to fame. Its special microclimate and soil have also blessed Grenada with uniquely fine-flavored and award-winning cocoa beans, earning the nation a distinguished place in the chocolate market. These specialties are essential to the nation's efforts to brand itself the "Isle of Spice," and in spite of major obstacles to the resuscitation and modernization of the industry, few Grenadians can imagine their country without them.

Agritourism

In the wake of two hurricanes and faced with limited economic resources, agriculture and tourism often seemed to be in competition. This was fueled by a common public perception that the NNP administration favored tourism development over agricultural resuscitation, coupled with the greater visibility of the tourism sector. Nevertheless, there were many efforts to tie together these sectors in ways that would be mutually beneficial. There are two main areas where agriculture and tourism seem naturally complementary: hotels can be major purchasers of local products in both raw and processed forms, and agricultural sites can be turned into excellent tourist attractions. As brand and livelihood, the Isle of Spice epithet is a constant reminder that both sectors are essential to the nation‘s economy and international image.

An oft-cited study conducted by the Caribbean Hotel Association found that 74 percent of hotels‘ vegetables are procured locally (CHA 2006). Though island-specific statistics were not available, it is likely that this number was far lower in post-Ivan Grenada. Part of modernizing the agricultural sector involved increasing the reliability of production so that hoteliers can count on a regular supply of high quality produce. As a local economist described during an interview on April 2, 2008:

> When we talk agriculture and services, or agriculture and tourism, the central issue is how do we establish linkage between these two sectors of the economy. And here‘s where agro-processing and so on comes in – you can process fruits and have juice served in the hotels. Grenada at the time when they had the plant, they were producing

> some excellent nectars – mango, tamarind. They were. Good nectars. Good quality.
>
> The problem, unfortunately, with the agricultural sector, and hoteliers would tell you that upfront, is that supply is unreliable. It's unreliable, and we can bring that stuff in from Miami, Amerijet it here, place the order on Monday, and have it in Grenada on Thursday. We can order it from you in Grenville on Monday and would have to wait for one month to get it. Unreliable. That's one problem.
>
> Consistency with quality when you have a very discriminating client, who would not accept a fruit with blemishes and all these sorts of things. In other words, I don't think the suppliers of agricultural products for hotels would have made that mental shift as to how do I prepare my output for a hotel. I'm preparing it in the same way that I prepared it for the local market.

Another issue is competitive pricing. Many hotels import foods from the United States more cheaply than purchasing locally. This issue is also addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture, according to an employee interviewed on May 10, 2008:

> N: Do you see a tension with the development of tourism and agriculture?
> X: Certainly. That is an area that we also need to strengthen the linkages between. There have been numerous efforts to go in that direction, but I believe as we see more investment in the tourism sector, we need to integrate agriculture with tourism. So that with the guests that are coming, how can we get our farmers to supply the fresh fruits. We still have a sizeable quantity of fresh fruits that are imported into Grenada. And obviously there are those that we cannot produce. Some of them. But there are those that we can produce.
> N: Since even before Ivan?
> X: Yes. For example, we import melons, peppers, lettuce. We can grow some of those things here. We can grow them. So we need to forge the cooperation with the hoteliers. It is often said that the hoteliers tend to look at the bottom line, and they feel that they can bring it in much cheaper than they can get it here. But we believe that more and more, we need to upgrade our farmer's skills, their efficiency, help them bring down their production cost so they can supply competitively. So that is the idea. So now we're investing in an irrigation system, the technical know-how of scheduling production, managing harvests, pest management, so they can deliver the right quality product, the right time, at the right price.

While the high-end hotel restaurants feature menus that boast of this or that local ingredient, the majority of the food that they serve is imported. Even tropical fruit drinks are typically made with canned pineapple juice or coconut milk. The increasing number of hotels and condominium complexes with on-site restaurants offer a ready market for local products. Unfortunately, the farmers are not yet well-prepared to take advantage of this, and the lack of agro-processing facilities on the island means that many products will remain imports for the foreseeable future.

Agritourism sites are already a well-established part of the tourbus itinerary and feature prominently on local maps' "places of interest." These sites raise the profile of agriculture for visitors and nationals alike, as they provide a venue to describe and celebrate Grenada's natural bounty of spices and the laborious processes involved in their harvest and processing. Laura's Herb and Spice Garden ("Lauraland") offers tours of carefully labeled gardens and raised beds, and visitors can see cinnamon, bay leaves, nutmegs, and cocoa pods still on the tree. Bay Gardens offers similar tours in a natural rainforest setting – as the guides are fond of telling visitors, they began by trying to create an English garden, and eventually realized that tourists were more interested in seeing Grenadian landscapes. Westerhall Estate Rum Distillery and River Antoine Rum Distillery offer tours of their rum-making facilities, though only the latter actually processes sugar cane. The former imports pure alcohol to turn into Grenadian rum. Spiceland Estate (a pseudonym) offers tours of its cocoa fermentary and features a restaurant serving local cuisine, much of it grown on its grounds. They recently added a small museum with artifacts from the estate, and became host to a non-profit goat cheese-

making venture. The Grenada Chocolate Factory's small solar-powered operation was open to visitors until its expansion, when the noise from new machinery made tours impossible. The towns of Gouyave and Grenville open their nutmeg processing plants to visitors – although during my fieldwork, the Grenville plant was essentially shut down for actual processing due to the lack of nutmegs and had become solely a tourist site. In Gouyave, visitors can buy tickets to "Nutmegland" and witness first-hand the laborious manual labor involved in separating the mace, sorting the nutmegs, and packaging them in burlap sacks destined for the overseas market.

A popular postcard of a nutmeg hopper in Gouyave's processing plant shows women workers sorting a mountain of nutmegs. On the wooden hopper above a work station, the photograph also captures the words that someone has written in white paint:

> God look at my work and was please.
> Then He look at my salary
> Bowed His Head and
> Sadly walk away

This points to one of the added benefits of agritourism: these sites offer the visitor a multi-sensory experience conveying the island's spectacular natural riches as well as the labor and struggle involved in its small-scale harvesting and processing efforts. The rough wooden troughs and rusting machinery, the harsh sun and sting of biting flies, the smell of fermenting cocoa and fragrant nutmegs, the sound of a sudden tropical rain on corrugated roofs – these sensory experiences take the visitor far away from the luxury hotels on Grand Anse beach and into the heart of the country. In addition, tourists have the opportunity to interact more extensively with Grenadians. Instead of being on-guard against the local vendors who approach them on the street or beach, tourists are often

more comfortable asking questions and learning about local culture in the structured setting of a tour. A trip around the island with visits to some of these agritourism destinations offers the possibility for tourists to learn something about the island beyond its sun, sand, and sea.

Local sites that are promoted as points of interest help define what has value for both locals and foreigners; what is of interest to foreigners often gains value in the eyes of locals. Agritourism thus valorizes for Grenadians what is often seen as a humdrum part of daily existence. Nevertheless, integration of tourism and agriculture is not without risk. Efforts to link tourism with local agricultural producers compound vulnerabilities by making agriculture dependent on the world tourism market, which is itself subject to fluctuations based on factors outside of regional control. Further, bringing agriculture and tourism together can create the appearance that the spice industry is just another marketing gimmick in the tourism bag of tricks rather than a valuable source of income and a proud symbol of Grenada‘s heritage. It is clear, however, that a range of strategies are being actively employed by creative Grenadians in an effort to resuscitate agriculture and modernize the sector in a way that makes it both economically viable and sustains its important symbolism as part of Grenadians‘ identity as the Isle of Spice.

Discussion

Agriculture promises greater independence for Grenada. This contrasts with tourism, an industry that often seems to compromise Grenadians‘ sense of their nation‘s

sovereignty. The ability to feed their people without reliance on imports, employment for the majority rural population, and foreign exchange for spices are key incentives to modernize the agricultural sector. As a development paradigm, agriculture focuses on self-sufficiency and local ownership of the land. These ideas were integral to the Grenada Revolution and the ideals of the People's Revolutionary Government. In its 1973 manifesto, the New Jewel Movement argued, "We must recognize that agriculture is, and must be, the only real basis of our development." In Bishop's 1982 "line of march" address to his party, a preliminary emphasis on tourism was justified only as yielding the "greatest potential for giving us the profits to invest in the areas we really want to invest in – agriculture, agro-industries, fisheries, and nonagro industrialization." (cited in Pryor 1986:32-33). In the destructive wake of this period of history, however, the ideological aspects of agricultural development seem lost. Today, it is often perceived as a necessary foundation, while the promise of a prosperous tourism industry generates far more excitement. Agriculture requires "revitalization" and "modernization" to remain economically viable. Its improvements are not generally heralded as signs of national progress and development.

Agriculture is both deeply personal and political, intertwining individual biographies with national narratives and daily choices with historical trends. As I discovered during my fieldwork, there was no more effective class indicator than assessing a participant's food budget and diet. While kitchen gardens and traditional fare were a reality for many, this diet inevitably bestowed a low status upon its consumers. Imported, processed goods were a widely-shared aspiration in spite of educational campaigns preaching the value of whole, local products. Thus, daily food choices sent

Grenada‘s import bill skyrocketing, and the price of food became fundamentally tied to the price of oil – a vulnerability felt keenly with the 2008 global food crisis.

The power of Grenada‘s rural majority has consistently maintained agriculture‘s status as a key political issue. Candidates must speak to the concerns of the farming population, and the NDC made agriculture a cornerstone of their campaign in the critical 2008 election. The party promised to undertake serious measures to resuscitate the industry, and the party leader, now Prime Minister, Tillman Thomas drew upon his own background as son of a rural farmer to strengthen his platform. And while the NNP did not hesitate to accuse the NDC of maintaining dangerous ideological ties to the PRG, the idea of reviving agriculture rarely became a political football; the rural electorate was too valuable to both sides.

Thus, as a practical matter, the status of agriculture remains a critical issue for the majority of the population. It is fundamentally tied to basic questions of livelihood and cost of living. It is not, however, widely perceived as an alternative development paradigm with its own set of contrasting values that stand apart from a growing dependency on tourism. It is rarely discussed as an ideological platform, and generates far fewer social controversies than tourism developments. It also receives less media attention, and despite their large numbers, farmers remain a relatively silent population. Further, youth are generally less interested in agriculture than in building a future in the service industries, adding momentum to tourism developments and diminishing hopes for revitalizing the agricultural sector as a major foreign exchange earner. Nevertheless, the country‘s rural base and pressing food supply issues ensure the ongoing importance of

agriculture. As both a personal and political issue, it remains a key part of the island's development plan and a celebrated aspect of its heritage.

Conclusion: To Aspire, Build, and Advance as One People

When Grenadians speak about their future, they rarely reference the past. While it might seem that the Grenada Revolution offered a relevant alternative development model to today's free market, tourism-heavy approach, it seems that few Grenadians care to look backwards when it comes to the island's prospects. Unlike the frequently divisive use of history in public discourse, talk about the island's future tends to unify Grenadians as they look toward a more promising, prosperous vision for their nation. The future-oriented narrative is especially appealing to the post-Revolution generation and their drive towards self-development. As the end of the national anthem proclaims:

> May we with faith and courage
> Aspire, build, advance
> As one people, one family.
> God bless our nation.

It is this shared aspiration to build and advance that brings Grenadians together as nationals. Nevertheless, there is an ambivalence embedded within the rallying focus of development. While it unifies people toward a shared set of concerns and broadly-defined goals, it also exposes rifts within Grenadian society and creates anxiety by weakly positioning the nation within a broader world order.

Although there is a fairly constant stream of debates about the best way to assign national priorities, the population is generally united in their quest for development. In

part, this is a function of the very general definition of development as an umbrella term that signifies any improvement in quality of life. The term development thus belongs to the group of words Trouillot defines as "North Atlantic universals," terms which "hide the affect [they] project behind a claim of rationality. It makes sense to be modern. It is good to be modern. How could anyone not want to be modern?" (2003:36). Indeed, those opposed to particular real estate ventures must frequently preface their objections by the reassurance that they are not opposed to development. Given its broad use and meaning in the daily Grenadian vocabulary, it is hard to imagine anyone being *against* development. While this makes opposition to specific projects more challenging, it does not undermine its utility as a unifying force among the general population. While disagreements and controversies are clearly a part of the national discourse about the future, Grenadians are united by these shared concerns. There are a fairly limited number of possibilities for economic advancement available to this small island, and Grenadians share an awareness of the limitations and possibilities for their nation's future. While there are real differences in the models implied by an emphasis on agriculture or tourism, the lived reality is that both are important aspects of daily life on the island. In a country still struggling for economic independence, Grenadians are pragmatists and embrace the prospect of any change that will bring improved quality of life.

A future-oriented development narrative appeals particularly to the country's youth. This seems a natural inclination for young people focusing on building their future, but in Grenada, this orientation is perhaps especially strong because of the youth's lack of education about their nation's past. Further, contemporary references to the past are often highly-politicized and divisive, generating a conflict-oriented narrative that

further alienates the younger generation. Given the older generation‘s unresolved and highly emotional ties to the violence of the recent past, the youth are especially inclined to focus on future prospects that may bring peace and prosperity to their homeland. This focus on national development is paralleled by the post-Revolution generation‘s idea of self-development. Typically referring to training programs or higher education, self-development is a term often substituted for education. This notion of improving oneself is especially strong among those who are able to access educational programs, and self-development is often conceived as the means through which national development will ultimately take place. This serves the self-interests of the younger generation, raised in the post-Revolution era of capitalist individualism and unaware of the community-orientation that preceded, and was idealized during, the Grenada Revolution. It also connects the youth‘s individual pursuits with the ever-present national conversation about the island‘s future.

Grenada‘s narrative about its future also projects an image of the nation‘s people. On the one hand, it portrays Grenadians as united as one people or, as is often said (and officially encoded in the national anthem and motto) one family. Whether in agreement or debate, Grenadians rally behind a shared set of concerns as they work toward the promise of a brighter future. The image of one people is not only a potent ideological tool, but it also carries real practical weight on this small island where it often seems that everyone is, literally, related as one big extended family. On the other hand, while this narrative carries widespread appeal and creates a forward-looking orientation geared toward a shared idea of development, it also subtly undermines this unity by creating an uneasy platform for solidarity.

Underneath the umbrella notion of development lies an acknowledgment of need, and with this recognition of neediness – of basic material improvements, technology, expertise, foreign aid – rifts within this family are exposed. First, who is neediest? Class divisions slice through this nation of one people and quickly reveal the deep divide between the society's haves and have-nots, and the dramatically different levels of neediness. While the educated youth need white-collar job opportunities, the rural poor struggle for food. Second, who should get their needs met first? Party politics and rampant accusations of partisanship affect distribution of aid and skew the perception that the administration is working equally for all members of this national family. Finally, what does it mean to be a needy nation within the Caribbean and wider world? A shared desire for development simultaneously unifies Grenadians while positioning them within a hierarchical world order in which they feel themselves a low-ranking country. As the Personal Worlds section will show, these underlying problems are more readily revealed in conversations with Grenadians than in the national discourse itself. It is especially significant to note, then, when these individual concerns coalesce into a collective anxiety so tangible it becomes encoded in a national policy report. As the opening quotation for this section reveals, the report developed by the ARD articulates the overarching fear: "Development may not come in time and the island may be left behind" and "panic may set in" (ARD 2007c). Left behind whom, and behind in what sense? This national anxiety exposes the perception that Grenada is positioned in a precarious world status, and Grenadians are quick to point out the achievements of other Caribbean nations and their own perceived weaknesses. Thus, a shared narrative about Grenadians aspiring,

building, and advancing as one people toward the luminous but vague goal of development can undermine the very unity it creates.

Imaginings about Grenada‘s future as the Isle of Spice conjure a vision of the island as both agricultural producer and tourist destination. Grenadians unite behind the hope for a more prosperous future and share the national language of development as a way to articulate these aspirations. As a struggling and vulnerable young nation, these national conversations about Grenada‘s problems and prospects create a forward-looking momentum that counters the unresolved conflicts of the recent, violent past. At the same time, this future-oriented narrative harbors its own ambivalence. Development cuts both ways within Grenadian society, unifying Grenadians behind a banner that also reveals deep class divisions, social tensions, and national anxieties about their young nation‘s viability in the larger world order.

This narrative of Grenada as the Isle of Spice does not tell the whole story, however. While it dominates representations of the future, there is another strong narrative in the public sphere. Reflections upon Grenada‘s past are as pervasive and potent as visions of the island‘s future. Indeed, it is perhaps because the memory of the past is so divisive that Grenadians have rallied so keenly around the alternative unifying theme of development. While the means and end of development are as hotly debated as any other controversy in Grenadian public life, there is, at least, a general agreement about the terms of the debate. Development is the indisputable key to progress, and nobody would argue that Grenadians are not keen to see their island developed. This contrasts starkly with Grenadians‘ feelings about their history, a subject which often reveals fundamental disagreements and portrays Grenadians as a people divided. In the

next section, I explore the national narrative about Grenada‘s past and the ways in which history is made present on the Island of Conflict.

The Island of Conflict: Representing Grenada's Past

The SpiceIslander TalkShop
Date: June 13, 2008 at 13:55:09
From: Robbie
Subject: Rum punch contains the whole history of the Grenada.

Rum punch contains the whole history of the Grenada. 1 sour, 2 sweet, 3 strong and 4 weak.

One sour, Colonialism, encompass the past and sour as a hundred squeeze lime, dat should be about a bottle.

Two sweet, de island really sweet boy, just like a bottle of LaGranade nutmeg syrup, and the Grenadian people, woi-oh-yoi
really sweet for true, just as one of dem bottle of red cherry in syrup, blend up with the syrup fine fine fine.

Three strong, T.A. Marrishow, the father of Federation bold and strong as pure Clarks Court [rum]. Uncle Gairy, the father of Independence and having the sting of a wicked Jack Iron when it bun unda yu tung.

And Maurice Bishop, the father of the Revolution that tasted as smooth Ole Grog while drinking it and you wake up next morning wondering what just happen.

Four weak, dey say Janet and Ivan leave the whole place weak weak, however Grenadians are resilient, when we are given lemon we make lemonade, but we ting up and we go call it two bottle of orange juice instead. Sometimes one event happens in our history that weakens us, and anyhow we explain it, there will be two sides, just as two bottle of pineapple juice, some like it some don't like it.

Now if you take each of the ingrediants by itself it not so good but when you mix de right amount of everything it is whom we are as Grenadians and enjoyed as a good Rum Punch with nutmeg grated on top.

Introduction: Grenada as an Island of Conflict

This section examines the ways that the past is made present in Grenada today. Drawing upon a range of sources in the public sphere, I argue that there is an overarching historical narrative that describes Grenada as an island of conflict. This epithet derives from the history book by this title, written by former Prime Minister George Brizan and published in 1984. In ways both explicit and subtle, this vision of Grenada's past permeated public representations during my fieldwork period. While Grenada's conflicts have much in common with other Caribbean islands during the early days of colonization, the Grenada Revolution of 1979 was the first of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean. The events of the revolutionary period and its violent demise are still very much alive for many Grenadians, particularly those in the forty-plus generation. Thus, these conflicts of the recent period define Grenadians' understanding of their island's past as particularly conflict-ridden. Further, when viewed in this historical light, Grenadians are portrayed as a people divided, with a passionately opinionated, argumentative, or conflict-oriented, streak of character. This image is enhanced by the fact that Grenadians today remain deeply divided and conflicted over the unresolved events of the recent past.

George Brizan's well-known history, *Grenada – Island of Conflict. From Amerindians to People's Revolution 1498-1979*, is organized around the central thesis that Grenada's history is a series of conflicts. Brizan argues that these conflicts arose ~~–ei~~ther between local groups and classes or between rival imperial cultures. In each case, when a major conflict arose, the contradictions between the groups were so antagonistic

and the differences so irreconcilable, that it was invariably settled violently" (1984:xv). Brizan considers five major conflicts: Arawaks and Caribs (pre-1492); Caribs and French settlers (1651-54); Anglo-Saxon and Francophone communities, culminating in the Fedon Rebellion of 1795-6; post-emancipation class conflict between mulattos and white Creoles, and ex-slaves, leading to another wave of violence and Eric Gairy's rise in 1951; and finally, the clash between Gairy's regime and his opposition in 1979 with the start of the Grenada Revolution. What is important to note in Brizan's treatment of Grenada's history is the relationship between these conflicts. Rather than viewing them as a series of isolated acts of violence, Brizan carefully traces the ongoing oppression of the masses. He documents the deplorable living conditions, unlivable wages, unequal distribution of land, and the inflexible relationship between color and class. By showing the continuity of their struggles pre-and post-emancipation, he reveals the larger narrative of social injustice that fueled the unrest behind Grenada's major conflicts, thus portraying these acts as just rebellions against oppressive forces.

When examining the ways in which history is represented in Grenada today, it is important to attend also to omissions and silences. One of the key points to bear in mind is that this aspect of Brizan's narrative thread is lost. There is no single source that relates the conflicts to one another in a larger or meaningful context. Thus, Grenada becomes an island of conflict without clear motive or meaning. This absence has implications for the image of Grenadians themselves. Instead of a sense of righteous struggle, collective action, and rebellious spirit, when it comes to their history, the people of Grenada are predominantly portrayed as divisive, squabbling, ~~"t~~ribal," and capable of great violence.

How is the ―narrative of the nation" (Hall 1996:351) told in Grenada today? That is, what representational strategies are deployed, and by whom, in order to construct ideas about Grenada's past within the public world? This section considers the public arenas which most prominently contribute to the story Grenadians tell about themselves when it comes to their history. To begin, I consider the two main sources for comprehensive information about Grenada's history, from the earliest inhabitants through the more recent political upheavals. First, Grenada's National Museum is the main historic site for Grenadians to see their island's entire past represented. Unfortunately, it is a poorly-funded enterprise whose displays convey a static, passive vision of Grenada's history as a series of events which happened to the island and are now part of a closed history book. There is scant evidence of interaction between the different peoples who came to the island, nor is Grenada's past made relevant to contemporary culture.

The second source for a comprehensive vision of Grenada's history is the official educational curriculum, which reveals the way that Grenada's past is taught to today's school-aged youth. It becomes especially important to attend to silences when investigating this area, as I discovered that Grenada's history is relegated to approximately fifteen pages in a textbook for eight- to nine-year-old schoolchildren. An examination of this material reveals the challenges the authors confront in their efforts to convey the motivations and context behind these conflicts to young children. Further, it becomes necessary to consider the structure of Grenada's public school system and the reasons why Grenadian history is not taught at more age-appropriate levels.

I will then consider Grenada's history-oriented national holidays: Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day (which commemorates the U.S./Caribbean Intervention/Invasion

of 1983), as well as the unofficial, shadowy twin to this holiday – the Anniversary of the Massacre on Fort George which signaled the end of the Revolution. Independence Day underwent a marked revival during my fieldwork and was hailed as a sign of new patriotic fervor. Upon closer analysis, however, it is clear that the inevitable recollections invoked by this anniversary are still divisive, as independence resurrects the memory of a conflicted nation. Thanksgiving Day, too, is not without its controversy. As a public holiday dedicated to remembering the U.S./Caribbean Intervention/Invasion, it highlights the gap between the pre- and post-Revolution generations. The youth care little for its official significance, while the older generation question why this day is officially marked while the anniversary of the massacre on the Fort is ignored. It also draws attention to the prominent memorials in Grenada dedicated to the American soldiers, while the Fort has only a small plaque to mark the site of the massacre. These anniversaries point to the difficulty Grenadians experience when attempting to unify around a shared national holiday, as these events mark conflict-filled periods in Grenada's history and reignite unresolved controversies.

I conclude with an examination of the interplay between politics and recent history in the period leading up to the 2008 elections. As Esra Özyürek notes, "memory is both productive and a product of political struggle in the present" (2007:7). At no time was this more apparent than during a heated election year in which the ruling party, the New National Party (NNP), sought to portray the Opposition as former revolutionaries seeking to reinstate their failed communist agenda. The Opposition, on the other hand, portrayed Prime Minister Keith Mitchell, who was seeking an unprecedented fourth term, as an aspiring dictator in the mold of Eric Gairy. The atmosphere was compared to the

days before Gairy's overthrow by Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement. This tension exploded during an incident popularly known as Spicegate, in which accusations of spying, kidnapping, detention, and torture were alleged against both parties, drawing upon painful memories of Gairy's violent Mongoose Gang and the dark days of the Revolution. This event sheds light on the way in which history became a political pawn in contemporary politics, further rifting the tensely divided nation and perpetuating the image of Grenadians as squabbling and ~~tr~~ibal."

This section draws upon a range of ethnographic sources which pertain to representations of Grenada's past. In addition to static and text-based sources, such as the Grenada National Museum, monuments, and school curricula, I have also endeavored to convey the tone and sensibility of some of the events and public debates which surround Grenada's history. This aspect is critically important, as it inflects the ways in which Grenadians see themselves as a people in the light of their own history. I have transcribed the text of important official speeches and include many quotes from Grenada's newspapers. These pieces capture the tenor of political and official discourse in Grenada, which is often characterized by both high ceremonialism as well as informal jabs. It is also important to note that public sources are very closely linked to talk on the streets. "~~S~~peculation is rife" is one of the favorite openers for hot topics in the newspapers, alluding to Grenada's active rumor mill, while issues covered in the papers spread quickly through the streets. In this vein, I again include an excerpt from a discussion thread posted online in the popular Grenadian chatroom, SpiceIslander Talkshop, in which Grenadians debate a speech by the Prime Minister. As a public forum dealing with a national speech, the discussion blurs the line between public

representations and the personal street-corner conversations where much of Grenada‘s debating takes place. By using a range of sources, this section presents the main public arenas concerning Grenada‘s history, while also providing a sense of the tone which surrounds debates about Grenadian history as they arise in the nation today. Together, these disparate sources create a coherent past-oriented narrative about Grenada as an Island of Conflict which exists alongside the very different future-oriented vision of Grenada as an Isle of Spice.

The Past on Display: Grenada’s National Museum

To begin, I consider the site for the most explicit representation of Grenada‘s past: the National Museum. Before turning in-depth to this institution, it is important to note the ways in which this site is substantively different from the other historical sites on the island. The National Museum is the only historical venue that aims to cover Grenada‘s entire history and provides an interpretive framework. The other sites lack the Museum‘s prominence and are more limited in scope.

Perhaps the most visible historical sites in Grenada are the ruins of forts that still grace several hilltops in the parish of St. George‘s. They feature several explanatory plaques, but do not offer information about their broader historical context. Generally, visitors (mostly tourists) are left to wander the forts on their own or can hire a local unofficial tour guide to answer questions.

The most prominent contemporary site of historical relevance is an enormous memorial of concrete, interlocked arches situated on the main road from the airport. It carries a plaque dedicated by Ronald Reagan on his visit to Grenada in 1986. The plaque ―expresses the gratitude of the Grenadian people to the forces from the United States of America and the Caribbean, especially those who sacrificed their lives in liberating Grenada on 25 October 1983." It also carries a plaque installed in 1995 by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, dedicated to ―Operation Urgent Fury ... To honor those members of the United States military who, through commitment and sacrifice, returned freedom to Grenada." The dramatic memorial site is the most prominent monument on the island. As I discuss in the section on Thanksgiving Day holiday, the absence of a memorial for Grenadians who died during the Intervention/Invasion continues to generate controversy; however, as a practical matter, the American memorial is clearly positioned to impress visitors arriving from the airport. Grenadians themselves can often be seen gathering underneath its arches as a convenient place to chat. It does not create a space for a broader interpretation of Grenada's history, but focuses on the single event it commemorates.

The Westerhall Rum Distillery provides tours of old rum-making equipment and ends in a room filled with a collection of antique curios. This privately-owned display is a fascinating little museum in its own right, but is not well-known to the Grenadian public. It seems more like an added attraction tagged on to rum factory tours as a bonus for visitors than a concerted effort to convey an interpretation of Grenada's past.

Similarly, a recent addition to the Sauteurs _Carib's Leap' tour bus stop is a round house featuring a diorama of Carib life and a collection of artifacts. On my visit, a

school-aged Grenadian proudly gave a tour of the objects and described their uses by the Caribs. What was most striking was that the objects on display seemed to be a medley of originals, replicas, and modern-day interpretations of what might have been – with no effort to distinguish between them. Again, this display focused on a single period in Grenada's history and its purported dramatic culmination: the last of the Caribs leaping into the sea.

The Grenada National Museum stands apart from these other sites as the only official, national effort to comprehensively represent Grenada's past for Grenadians and visitors alike. The museum occupies a special place in the national consciousness. Whether as a source of pride (a place all Grenadians *should* visit), or a source of shame (for its perceived inadequacies), it is the primary place that Grenadians use to focus their thoughts and feelings about the learning and teaching of Grenadian history outside of school. As a destination for both Grenadian schoolchildren and cruise ship passengers, the museum must withstand scrutiny from locals, visitors, and locals considering how visitors might perceive the island based on their visit to the museum. This potentially heavy interpretive load is, in a way, lightened by a single dominant lens which taints the way in which the museum is perceived: it is not a well-funded enterprise. While this alone presents the island in a poor light – literally – it also removes a degree of intentionality from the displays. Their haphazard quality is accounted for by the fact that most items are donated. Experientially, the museum feels a bit like a walk through a collector's attic. The staff and volunteers have clearly done the best they can with what they have. These constraints underline the necessity of reading images of the nation through multiple public sources, as the central government does not have the resources to

produce and disseminate national propaganda in any single, well-organized campaign. This contrasts sharply with the nationalist projects undertaken by states with greater funding and resources (e.g. Gür 2007). I emphasize this point because the analysis which follows should not be read as describing a carefully-executed intention on the part of the museum directors. Rather, I focus on the way that the museum's materials and presentation come together to create an interpretive frame for Grenadian history, even if not by design.

The Grenada National Museum is located in the heart of the capital, St. George's. It occupies a historic old building that underwent renovations during my fieldwork period. The foundations date to 1704, built by the French as army barracks, and it was then taken over by the British for use as a prison until 1880. In later years, it was used as a warehouse and the superstructure became a hotel. The museum was opened in 1976 ~~–o~~n the request of the government of Grenada. It was founded by a group of citizens, who later formed the Grenada Historical Society," as stated in the museum's brochure. According to a staff member, the government provides the building and pays for the electricity. The Grenada UNESCO commission in the Ministry of Education helped with repairs following Hurricane Ivan. Otherwise, it is supported by donations (there is a box by the entrance), admissions fees (EC$5/adult, $2.50/child – approximately US$1.85 and $.90), and some sales of postcards and books. Most of the artifacts are donated, but some are acquired.

There is one staff member in charge of the front desk, tours, and handling requests for information. At the time we spoke in spring, 2007, the full-time position paid approximately EC$1000/month (US$372). The staffer had already given his resignation;

having purchased books on bartending during a visit to the United States, he had determined he could earn a better livelihood running a bar at his parents' little shop. There is also a full-time Manager and a Board of Directors. Volunteers assist with the displays, including composing the labels.

Visitors include tourists and organized fieldtrips of local students from primary and secondary school, as well as the community college. The cruise ships typically bring in about fifty persons – few, by this staffer's account, since they often carry thousands of tourists. The frequently-heard feedback is that they like the building and the location, but that the building lacks amenities such as air conditioning and wheelchair access. The museum's log from 2006 and 2007 documents a total of 3,119 visitors in 2006 and 4,340 in 2007, with a monthly average of approximately 300 visitors.

The museum has a broad mission statement printed in their brochure: "To educate the public (residents and visitors) about Grenada's past and present: the land, fauna and flora, the people who have lived here; their origins, their technology, their festivals – the events that have shaped their lives and determined how they lived." The mission purpose reads: "The Grenada National Museum is a non-profit organization the objective of which is to collect, document and preserve evidence of Grenada's cultural past – and to serve as an education and entertainment center for all." For the latter, the museum hosts various events which include entertainers, storytellers, and persons dressed as historical figures. I once saw an ad posted on the door recruiting cassava makers for a demonstration.

My first visit to the museum was during a brief campaign to bring business into the downtown area by keeping stores and attractions open into the evening one day per

week. I toured the museum after dark, which certainly added dramatic flair to the old stone foundation walls, prison cells, and decaying stuffed fauna. The most comprehensive guide to the museum comes from the two-sided, black-and-white brochure that visitors receive after paying admission. It shows a labeled floor plan and legend, and some rooms have a brief description. It is useful since there are no explanatory displays in the rooms beyond the individual labels for objects.

The first section is labeled in the brochure "Natural world" and consists of a large, cracking relief model of the island and "a collection of its soils, birds, mammals, insects as well as seashells and corals." There is a display of diverse preserved creatures in glass cases; the condition of some of the items is abysmal. There is a stuffed Macaque monkey, though this species does not live in Grenada. In an adjacent room, there are some exhibits from "the maritime history of Grenada including a small whaling industry that lasted for a short time." This room is described in the brochure, but is not included on its map or legend. Some of the larger maritime objects occupy a good amount of floor space in the room entitled "Peoples."

According to the floor plan in the brochure, the entry area is labeled "Entrance" and "Reception" (where the relief map is actually located); there is no indication that this space is part of the museum's displays. However, it is in this entry-space that the only explicit elaboration of slavery can be found. On the wall hangs a framed display of a National Geographic poster "Africa: Its Political Development" dated February 1980. Next to a map of Africa hangs an old framed map of Grenada, "Carte de l'Isle de la Grenade." A glass case on the wall then displays a series of boards on which articles have been pasted. The fine print indicates that they were printed in Great Britain. The

section is entitled "The Slave Trade and Its Abolition" and the articles cover slavery, plantations, the middle passage, a reprint of a flyer for a slave auction, and a final article with the headline: "Why did it take so long?" An African drum is displayed in a window nook. The contents of this room are not described anywhere in the brochure.

The next exhibit on the brochure's legend is the room entitled "Peoples." This is the largest room in the museum, and is described as "an exhibit illustrating the origins of the present Grenada population – a mixture of Carib/Kalingo, European, African and Indian." Presumably the ordering is chronological, as it certainly is not a proportional representation of the present population. The brochure also has two paragraphs devoted to the "Carib section," which is actually a corner of the "Peoples" room. This section in the brochure provides one of the most detailed elaborations of Grenada's history:

> The Kalingoes (otherwise called Caribs) were the inhabitants of the island at the time of European discovery of the Caribbean by Columbus. The exhibits include pottery, religious items like the Zemi, petroglyphs, a Carib stone.
>
> The Caribs were supplanted by Europeans (French and British) who set up a plantation economy and brought in Labour to work on the plantations – African, Maltese, Portuguese and East Indians. Many battles were fought between the British and French for possession of the island. Cannon, cannon balls and a mortar in the Young Street entrance illustrate these conflicts.

These last sentences, and the objects to which they refer, provide the only allusion to conflict in an otherwise rhetorically and visually static exhibition. The passive, explanatory tone of a people being "supplanted," or "brought in" as labour is echoed by an exhibit that isolates the different "peoples" on exhibition into distinct glass cases, eliminating any sense of interaction, whether it be positive or negative.

The "Peoples" room contains a startling array of objects. In the center of the space, there is a free-standing guard house in front of the cannons, featuring a life-size Caucasian mannequin dressed in a British uniform with musket, under a painted emblem "GR" with a crown. There is no explanatory material attached to the house. Beginning with the wall immediately to the visitor's left after passing through the doorway, there is a glass case filled with items from Africa. Most of the objects are displayed with brief captions listing the country and date of origin, and the donor. There is an African drum, a necklace belt of snake vertebra, a bronze bracelet, etc. Some of the items come from individual donors, while two were a gift from museums in Brussels.

Only two labels in the African case mention the Caribbean. The first comes from a "Voo-Doo shrine" description: "Orisha' is the Yoruba word for 'Voo-doo,' a highly complex system of religious ideas. 'Shango,' the god of thunder, is as much alive today in Brazil, Haiti and other West Indian islands as he is on the African west coast." Grenada is not mentioned specifically, although Grenadians will frequently use the term to refer to the practices of older persons believed to possess special powers, or to "Shango Baptists," a religious group properly known as Spiritual Baptists who are highly visible throughout Grenada. The other label describes an Ashanti Chief Stool: "This stool came from the Gold Coast in Africa. Many of the first Africans who arrived in Grenada came from the Gold Coast and their descendants still live here today." This single sentence provides the only explanation in the museum as to why Africa is on display at all.

Next to the Africa case, another glass case features old bottles, glass jars, brushes and an ink well. The labels simply name the item ("old wine bottles") with no further

description or context. There is one elaborated item: a framed letter from Buckingham Palace dated 11th January, 1949, with a photograph of a brooch. The letter reads: "I have received, with great pleasure, the beautiful pink pearl, set in platinum and mounted as a brooch, which the People of Grenada have so kindly given me as a Wedding Present. I send them my warmest thanks for their generosity and for the good wishes which accompanied their attractive and most acceptable present." The signature is almost illegibly faded. One can just make out "—abeth". This case appears to represent Anglo-European items from colonial days in Grenada. These items are, however, quite far from the small, adjoining room that has items which might have been grouped with these, such as Singer sewing machines, or weights labeled "British measures 1836 & 1888." These latter items, however, fall under the wall label, "Our Forefather's Tools."

As one continues around the "Peoples" room, the next corner features several large glass cases with many shelves displaying archaeological finds. The many pot sherds, animal effigies, and baskets carry few labels. One section, entitled "The Pre-Columbian Toolbox," has descriptive labels. A turtle effigy is attributed to the "Saladoid peoples, immigrants from South American who rapidly colonized the West Indies at about the time of Christ." Further information about these peoples reads: "The largest Saladoid site in Grenada is Pearls. Limited archaeological excavation has shown its importance as a Saladoid center. Unfortunately, looting and illegal buying and selling of artifacts has destroyed much of the archaeological record." Indeed, a visitor need only round the corner from the museum to find an art gallery selling such artifacts quite inexpensively. Underneath a shelf displaying "Recent Finds – Saladoid Archaeological Site, Grenada" is a shelf entitled "Mayan Pottery – Pre-Columbian." This rather

confusing display comes with no explanation about the Maya or the site of these finds. Although this is the largest section of the "Peoples" room, there is no discussion here of the conflict with the Europeans or the fate of the original inhabitants. The only allusion to the contemporary significance of these peoples refers to the looting and destruction of Grenada's archaeological history.

Across from this display is a freestanding section of posters. One is a hand-drawn map entitled "Migration Route of Arawaks and Caribs," with stone grinders and mortars on a shelf below. There are also four posters from the Florida Museum of Natural History featuring Maize, Chilies, Potatoes, and Tomatoes. Across from these items, on the far wall, hang some pictures of petroglyphs, a large display of unlabeled baskets, and a tapa cloth, "A gift from the King of Tonga to members of the Guinness City Symphony Steel Orchestra who performed at a function where this cloth was used. It is made from the bark of the mulberry tree." This Orchestra is based in Trinidad and Tobago; there is no further information about the function. The unexplained juxtaposition of these items renders them unintelligible in any larger attempt to integrate the displays into a coherent framework.

The "Peoples" room leads to "Our Forefathers' Tools." This area is not described separately in the brochure. In addition to the sewing machines and British measures, it contains ceramic jars, a gas street light, a donkey cart from the 1920s, and a mini brick oven, with a label: "This type of oven is still being used today." There is an accompanying photograph of Grenadians using the oven. There is also a case with a trophy that belonged to Prime Minister Hon. Herbert H. Blaize. At the back of the room is the only object featured along with the rooms as part of the map legend on the

museum's brochure: Empress Josephine's Bathtub. The large label reads: "Josephine was born in Trois islet, Martinique and was married to Napoleon Bonaparte and became Empress of France. This is a bathtub she is said to have used in Martinique." A second label, underneath, elaborates: "An eighteenth century marble bath tub used by Josephine Bonaparte in her homeland of Martinique. It was used as a garden flower pot, thus the dark inside walls." The bathtub is located at the back of the museum; nevertheless, the visitor perceives it as an important object because it is specially mentioned in the brochure, and carries one of the most elaborate descriptions of any item. Ironically, it does not directly have anything to do with Grenada.

The last room listed on the brochure legend is "The Plantation Economy," described as follows: "The Island concentrated in the colonial period on the production of crops for export to Europe including cotton, sugar and later cocoa and nutmegs. Exhibits include sugarcane crushers, boilers called coppers, and a still." The "Plantation" Economy is described benignly, as if the "Island" as its own agent decided to "concentrate" on exporting crops to Europe. There is no mention of slavery. In fact, the sole reference to slaves in this room is tucked into a paragraph on a plastic-covered document hanging on the wall, entitled "Early Colonial Economy 1764-1780." The document details the comparative production of major crops among the Windward Islands, and reveals that Grenada was the leading producer in 1764. This achievement, which is elaborated through two charts and several paragraphs, is tempered only by the single sentence: "Slaves provided the labour force for the ... plantations, and their labour produced the wealth and profits for planters and their retinue of dependents both resident and foreign."

In addition to the sugarcane-processing items and a "Rum Sippers Bar" corner display of a barrel with copper pans and jugs, the brochure does not mention that the room features two brick archways with recessed spaces. Inside one arch, there is a wooden bath tub used by prisoners, dated circa nineteenth century, from when the building was used as a prison by the British. Inside the dark, second archway at the far back of the room stand two life-size mannequins, presumably representing prisoners, as the archway is gated by heavy bars. One is light-skinned and missing an arm. His head appears to have been reattached. He sports a baseball-cap shaped hat and an outfit reminiscent of tie-dyed scrubs. The female mannequin has a handkerchief tied around her head that matches her patterned dress, and is missing part of her cheek. Next to the arch hangs a document of prison rules from 1850.

Experientially, this is perhaps the most compelling room in the museum. It is located at the back of the building. It is dark, dank, and windowless, and reveals the old brick and stone foundation. The sugarcane equipment looms large and black. The discovery of two ghoulish mannequins in the far back corner can be quite startling to the unsuspecting visitor. It seems a fascinating, if unconscious, move in the organization of the museum that a display on the plantation economy that omits any direct reference to slavery simultaneously features a section with prisoners.

Although there is a small poster with photographs of old sugar mills in Grenada, there is no attempt to connect this period of Grenada's history to any aspect of Grenada today – for example, contemporary crop production and the River Antoine distillery that still harvests cane for their rum, or the ubiquitous street-side rum shops that are a modern version of the Rum Sippers Bar. Instead, like the rest of the displays, Grenada's history

is presented as a closed book; the dusty past is reduced to a collection of artifacts that are viewed in isolation. They are not evidence of active interactions between peoples and cultures, nor do they explain anything about Grenada today. They are just curiosities, relics of a time gone by.

The upper level of the Museum is accessed by an outside stairwell, creating a sharp transition as the visitor temporarily emerges into the Caribbean sunshine. The top floor is bright and airy, creating a stark contrast from the dungeon-like backrooms of the lower level. There is one large exhibit space, and the entrance and "Arts Council Gallery" area feature different contemporary Grenadian artists. I saw several different exhibits over the course of my visits to the museum, and at one point, there was a small stage area for performances with children's stage props. In 2009, the Maurice Bishop and October 19th 1983 Martyrs Foundation, dedicated to preserving Bishop's legacy, hosted a special exhibition in this room entitled "Grenada Revolution Remembered. 30th Year." It consisted of hundreds of newspapers from the revolutionary period tacked to the walls and laid upon display tables. Schoolchildren toured the exhibit on organized fieldtrips. Unfortunately, the overwhelming amount of fine print, coupled with strict rules not to touch (or, therefore, open) any of the reading materials, made it difficult to digest much information. Nevertheless, the dynamic and contemporary feel of the exhibitions and display space create a radically different ambience from the lower level.

The back area maintains two permanent exhibits noted on the brochure's legend as "Antilles Room" and "Island of Conflict." These actually occupy a single shared space, partitioned by free-standing display boards. The brochure offers two descriptive paragraphs for the upper level:

> Birth of a Nation: Grenada became independent in 1974. This exhibit traces the political history of the island from a colony to becoming an independent nation. Exhibits include the first Parliament, the Grenada flag, the independence gift from Britain, photographs of the first prime minister and governor general.
>
> Island of Conflict: The history of Grenada is marked by many conflicts. The battles between the French and British and the Kalingoes, the battles between the British and the French, the Fedon Rebellion in the colonial period. The exhibit features the Fedon documents of 1795. The exhibit also traces recent events in which a revolutionary Government in March 1979 replaced the government of Eric Gairy, the Prime Minister at Independence. The revolution collapsed in 1983 leading to an intervention by American and Caribbean forces to restore the island to democracy. An interim Government presided for a year after which there were elections and the return to parliamentary rule. Relics of the period are on display.

This section of the museum covers a shorter chronological period than the lower level, and focuses explicitly on Grenada's political history. As a result, the section has a more cohesive feel than the lower level, in spite of a few seemingly random objects like a Japanese long sword.

The "Birth of a Nation" section, as the brochure designates it, features a standing glass case with neatly labeled photographs of the Parliament of Grenada, 1967, Members of the House of Representatives, 1974, and the Legislative Council, 1962. There are artifacts from the Independence Ceremony, including white gloves and a yellowing, British-style wig worn by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. There is also the Independence gift from Britain to Grenada: a silver plate engraved with the countries' coat-of-arms, and a tea set with silver spoons. An adjacent partition has photographs of the flag-raising ceremony, descriptions of Grenada's coat-of-arms, the national anthem, and a photograph of the first Governor-General. The "Birth of a Nation" section suppresses any mention of conflict, in spite of the obvious connection to colonialism and

the well-known tensions between Gairy and the people at the time of independence. By separating the ―Birth of a Nation" from the ―Island of Conflict" section, the display implies that independence was devoid of conflict. The ―Birth" is portrayed as an event that happened in 1974, rather than as a larger process which encompasses the history of colonialism and moves into Grenada's ongoing struggles to define meaningful independence to this day.

The back section, presumably the ―Island of Conflict" room, has a smattering of objects and explanatory posters which cover a wide range of conflicts. There is no explicit reference to George Brizan's book, *Grenada: Island of Conflict*; nevertheless, it is likely that the title of the room derives from that source. It is another interesting example of the way that this epithet has become pervasive as an interpretive frame for understanding Grenada's history. There is a poster describing the Caribs' conflict with the French, and a reproduction of a 1795 proclamation by King George III calling for peace after the insurrection led by Julien Fedon. These items would have fit, chronologically, into the displays downstairs, yet it seems that all of the conflicts suppressed in the ―Peoples" and ―Plantation Economy" rooms are channeled upstairs to the one section designated to contain them. WWI is represented by a display of article clippings, including one from 1916 describing a ―West Indian battalion of coloured troops, numbering about 1200, officered by white men" destined for England but diverted to Halifax, where the ―scantily clad" West Indians suffered extreme frost bite and amputations. There is a case displaying a uniform and ―Grenada: Identification 5" badges and buttons from WWII, donated by a Grenadian ex-servicewoman. There is no information about Grenada's involvement in these world wars.

A partition presents black and white computer printouts mounted on cardboard entitled Bloody Sunday, Bloody Monday, the Revolution, and Maurice Bishop, along with photographs of Gairy and Bishop. In an effort to present the historic events objectively, the material provides a rather dry and brief discussion. The section on Bishop, however, acknowledges the split opinions that surround his reputation to this day:

> ~~"B~~ish" [his nickname] was 6'3" tall, an excellent speaker, a handsome man, recognized as a charismatic personality. He was pragmatic by saying that the results of an idea are the best criteria by which to judge its merit. Yet he was not rigid about this, for he kept creativity and hope alive in his vision. He was a realist in figuring how ideas would work out. He was articulate and warm with people.
>
> Bishop's charisma and some democratic sensibilities, though, proved not to be a substitute for wielding authority and leadership. On the distaff side, Bishop was criticized for being wandering, wavering, and waffling. The charge that he was _vacillating' repeatedly occurs.

Although the presentation is quite tempered when compared to the heated debates which still circulate among Grenadians, it is noteworthy that the unidentified author of the poster felt obliged to at least acknowledge the controversy about his personality and legacy. The present tense "~~o~~ccurs" strikes a very different note from all the other materials in the museum, lower and upper levels alike, as it acknowledges that these "~~c~~harges" occur in the present. Here, briefly, history is still alive.

There are two glass cases with objects from the revolutionary period. One case is marked as containing relics from Calivigny, although there is no additional information to explain that there was an army base camp at the coastal area known as Calivigny, nor that this is the location where many Grenadians believe the bodies from the Fort were burned. All of the weaponry on display is unlabeled with one exception: "~~S~~oldier's

Beret. Worn by a member of the 82nd Airborne Division which operated here between October 25 – November 23, 1985. The beret is distinctive headgear of an American paratrooper." In a separate case, there is an item which appears to be a crumpled parachute, next to an aerial photograph of paratroopers descending on Grenada. These two items have no label, but would appear also to represent the armed forces which landed for the Intervention. When one considers that the period represented occurred just over twenty years ago, the sparseness of the display is striking.

After finishing a tour of the National Museum, what conclusions might the visitor reach about Grenada's history and culture? First, the downstairs offers a very different visual experience from the upper level. A casual visitor might note that much of the museum feels dusty and dank, and many items are not in good condition. The *Caribbean Islands Lonely Planet* writes: —The Grenada National Museum has a sad little display of colonial and other artifacts." The collection feels random, and probably most visitors – foreigners and Grenadians alike – wander through seeking curiosities rather than a comprehensive educational experience. This ambience of randomness and decay, however, inevitably conveys its own message. There is a sense that Grenada's history is poorly preserved, and, implicitly, may not be worthy of greater preservation. The revelation that Grenada's archaeological history is being looted and destroyed in the present reinforces that impression.

Grenada's history is also presented as a frozen past, a series of static epochs devoid of human interaction or contemporary relevance. With the exception of the oven which is —still being used today," there are no displays which convey Grenada's present. A visitor with even scant knowledge of Grenada's history need only pause a moment to

consider the more obvious omissions from the displays. For example, Grenadian tourist publications commonly list words used by the island's native inhabitants which are still in use today, yet references of this sort are entirely absent from the Kalingoes/Caribs section of the "Peoples" room. Descriptions of these people's conflicts with the first Europeans are entirely omitted. Further, the island's history of slavery is clearly marginalized. The scant references to this profound period create an uncomfortable silence on an island that is predominantly of Africa descent. The uprising led by Fedon in the eighteenth century violates the downstairs' static presentation of history, and is thus channeled upstairs to the room dedicated to conflict. Also, the special attention drawn to Josephine's bathtub, as opposed to, for example, the Ashanti chief's stool, hints at an enduring valorization of Anglo-European history, even in the postcolonial context. Similarly, there is no reference to the continued relevance of African culture beyond a rather oblique mention of "Voo-doo' and the West Indies. In short, the lower level of the museum presents a static view of Grenadian history as a closed book.

The upper level, on the other hand, seems to present a more contemporary and dynamic view of Grenada's history. The room is bright and clean. It is an active space with changing exhibitions and living artists' work on display. Other than the poster describing the Caribs/French conflict and the reproduction of King George III's proclamation, the rest of the materials highlight Grenada in the twentieth century, seeming to bring Grenada's history up to the contemporary period. The upper level presents a more active view of history than the downstairs displays, as it is organized around the themes of "birth" and "conflict."

However, in spite of these overt differences, the upper level perpetuates thematic resonances with the lower level that may not be immediately apparent. Conflict is suppressed from the "Birth of a Nation" section, presenting independence as a static event without active participants or agency. The section specifically addressing the famous conflicts of the twentieth century – from Bloody Sunday through the Intervention – focus upon two key agents: Maurice Bishop and Eric Gairy. The materials examine specific violent events between individuals; there is no discussion of the involvement of the Grenadian masses or the ideological issues involved, beyond the flat statement that Bishop established a Marxist-Leninist government. Life during the revolutionary period is entirely omitted. Thus, the experiences of the wider population are silenced.

Further, when one considers how recent is the period on display, the material seems stunningly thin. A handful of photographs, artifacts, and newspaper clippings are used to represent events that most Grenadian adults can still remember experiencing first-hand. The temporary display organized by the Maurice Bishop and October 19th 1983 Martyrs Foundation reveals that thousands of newspapers and photographs from the revolutionary period remain in the possession of private persons in Grenada, yet the permanent exhibit consists of a few posters and military remnants. Rather than use the museum as a venue to explore the many facets of this period and its significance for Grenadians to this day, the display tries to fit these conflicts into the same static, passive interpretive framework that dominates the rest of the museum. The attempt to eliminate controversy and present this period of Grenadian history as closed results in the near total exclusion of materials from the period.

Finally, why omit all aspects of Grenada‘s contemporary culture? Celebrations, traditional foods that reflect Grenadians‘ diverse heritage, local idioms and patois, religious traditions – these unique aspects of local culture are commonly cited by Grenadians and lauded in tourist brochures, yet are entirely absent from the museum. In spite of the museum‘s mission statement, there is no inclusion of Grenadian ―festivals‖ – it appears that Carnival does not fit into the museum‘s scheme. The museum‘s dominant vision of history presents Grenada‘s past as a series of delimited periods that came to pass without agents or contemporary relevance. In spite of the upper level‘s overt theme of conflict, there is little documentation of interaction between peoples on the island anywhere in the museum; without these interactions, it is difficult to explore contemporary Grenadian culture. For Grenadians or visitors who might wish to learn more about the island‘s history, the museum is a limited resource.

Teaching Grenada’s History: Representing the Past in Public Schools

This section considers the treatment of Grenadian history within the public school system, from primary through secondary school. After an overview of the organization of Grenada‘s education system, I review the teaching of history – or its absence – at each level. I focus the analysis on the sole textbook devoted to Grenada‘s history, which is used in the fourth grade. I conclude this section by considering the reasons for this scant treatment of Grenada‘s history and its larger implications.

To begin, it is helpful to have a brief orientation to the organization of the Grenadian education system. Primary school consists of six grades, typically ages five to

eleven. After age 11, but usually before age 14, students take the Common Entrance Exam. This determines whether they will be allowed to enter secondary school. Students and their parents rank their top choices of secondary schools, and the students' performance on a placement exam determines to which school they will be assigned. This system is controversial and had already been phased out of Carriacou in favor of a "universal" system in which all students were allowed to pass directly to secondary school. In Grenada, there were also efforts to move toward a universal system. However, the results of the ranking system had already deeply affected the school system because the best students tended to choose the oldest and most prestigious schools. The latter are the schools with a religious affiliation; they receive funding from the government as well as from their church, and therefore have superior resources. The result is a hierarchical stratification that places all of the lowest performing students in the same public schools. Thus, even when students who failed the exam are eventually permitted to enter secondary school, they are all clustered in the lowest-performing, poorly-funded schools.

Secondary school consists of five forms. Students may enter secondary school from ages 11 to 16, depending on how quickly they pass the Common Entrance Exam. Most enter before age 14, thus graduating by age 19. Lower secondary school, Forms One through Three, use a curriculum developed by a designated committee from individual islands, while upper secondary, Forms Four and Five, share a curriculum across the English-speaking Caribbean developed by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Students choose how many and which "O-level" subjects they will

attempt to pass at the end of secondary school. (―A-levels" designate courses taught at a community college.)

There is a striking absence of formal curricula addressing Grenadian history. Upper secondary school students may elect to study Caribbean history, but it is not a mandatory subject nor, of course, does it focus upon Grenada's history in particular. According to the CXC website, ―The substantive content of Caribbean History is the activities of the peoples of the islands from the Bahamas to Trinidad as well as those of the peoples of Belize and the Guianas, from the coming of the Indigenous Americans to the present" (Caribbean Examinations Council n.d). Lower secondary school covers history and geography together with social studies. According to a source in the Ministry of Education, social studies topics do not vary much across the English-speaking Caribbean, although they may cover specific histories of the islands. Teachers are free to elaborate as they wish. The official topics in Form One include People of the Caribbean, Family and Family Life, and Religion. Form Two covers The Caribbean as a Tourist Destination, Resources, and Human Resources. Form Three includes The Caribbean and the Wider World (geography and climate), Transportation, Communication, Government. The only section in which history is explicitly included is Form One, Peoples of the Caribbean, in which the sub-topics covered are: Indigenous groups – the Amerindians, European settlement, African settlement, Ethnic integration – immigrants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, cultural life styles, and location (Ministry of Education 2000). However, this syllabus which was developed in Grenada for the Grenadian school system does not specifically create a section for Grenadian history.

When I asked a curriculum development officer in the Ministry of Education about the teaching of Grenadian history, he became notably agitated. He indicated that history is seen as a dead man's science, but that if interested, there are many resources available, such as George Brizan, Paul Scoon, and Beverley Steele's books. Schools can buy these and make the resources available in libraries and for teachers, who can use them to prepare lessons or assign research projects. (This statement would indicate that schools are not automatically given a library of Grenadian historical resources.) He also argued that teachers can make time for Grenadian history in the curriculum if they plan ahead. This discussion sparked a strong lament that "people here" do not read, they just want everything on a platter … I don't know what they want, a pamphlet delivered to all the schools? And then they probably won't even read that!"

Primary schools in Grenada use a general Caribbean Social Studies curriculum. The course outline is accompanied by a text for each year, published by Macmillan Caribbean. Caribbean Social Studies 1 studies the environment – basic needs, school, home and family, and weather. Grade 2 focuses on the local community – different types, change in, and comparison with other communities. Grade 3 studies the administrative divisions within a country – local administration, settlements, agriculture and industry, weather and maps. And Grade 5 focuses on the Caribbean region – geography, cooperation and trade, and people and their history and culture. One section, entitled "Ancestors from five continents," provides a brief historical overview of the region. People from South America, Europe, Africa and Asia are described in short sections, with North America featured on a map. There are four short paragraphs devoted to slavery, followed by three paragraphs on indentured servants. The only treatment of

colonialism is in two sentences: —The islands were taken by the different European countries. As a result the Caribbean region is divided into many countries today" (Morrissey 1992:54). This theme is continued in the final section of the book, —Change in the Caribbean," which explains —How the Caribbean came to be divided." A *colony* is defined, and there is a table listing Caribbean countries by their official language. The text then explains which colonies became independent, and what is the *Commonwealth of Nations*. A table which charts the differences between —When it was a colony" and —Now that it is independent" uses Grenada as the example, describing the changes in government from rule by a British Governor to universal suffrage and democracy (ibid.:108). The section then segues into a discussion of regional cooperation and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). These four social studies courses are taught across the English-speaking Caribbean.

Only Grade Four focuses on individual countries. There is a separate book available for each English-speaking Caribbean country, typically covering these topics: landscape and people, tourism and trade, using resources, government and the development of the nation. *Caribbean Social Studies: Grenada* was published in 1994 and revised in 1998. It is available, along with all the other texts, in a bookstore in downtown St. George‘s that provides school supplies and educational materials. In my search for texts pertaining to the teaching of Grenada‘s history in the public school system, I was surprised that my findings were ultimately narrowed down to approximately fifteen pages in a book for eight- to nine-year-old schoolchildren.

The Grenada fourth grade textbook covers six topics: landscape, people, natural resources, tourism and trade, government, and our independent nation. Two of these

topics include discussions of Grenada's history. The "People of our Country" topic briefly describes the arrival of the Arawaks and Caribs, and offers a description of their way of life. This section is followed by a discussion of "Settlements in our country today" and uses a Grenadian village as a case study. The village of Vendôme was once part of an estate, thus there is a reference to slaves who were used on the plantations. The section also mentions the 1970's government "scheme called "Land for the Landless'. Land was bought by the government from the estate, and re-sold to people who paid the government back over a period of several years" (Peters and Penny 1998:35). This section moves into a consideration of "how a community grows" and "social problems." When one considers that this topic is devoted to the people of Grenada, it is striking that the only peoples considered in depth are the ones who no longer live on the island: the Amerindians. There is a complete absence of additional historical context for the arrival of Europeans, Africans, Indians, Maltese, North Americans, etc. This material is presented briefly at the end of the textbook, under the topic "Our independent nation."

The final chapter of the textbook is divided into three main sections: our national symbols, nation builders, and important events in our history. After a brief discussion of the flag, coat of arms, and national anthem, there are several pages dedicated to T.A. Marryshow, Eric Gairy, and Maurice Bishop. It is at this point that the presentation of the material becomes most interesting. The authors attempt to explicate Grenada's tumultuous recent history, while maintaining the textbook's format, which is geared toward children under the age of ten. The result is a confusing medley of facts, discussion prompts, and explanations that raise more questions than they answer.

Consider the sections on Gairy and Bishop. Gairy is credited with acquiring independence for Grenada, –although he faced considerable opposition from some of his own people. On 7 February 1974 Grenada became independent, and Eric Gairy became Grenada's first Prime Minister. At the time, there was a general strike throughout the country, against independence and the government" (Peters and Penny 1998:96). Why were Grenadians striking? Why did they not want to be independent? Why were they protesting the government? From the brief statement above, one might conclude that Grenadians were keen to remain British subjects indefinitely.

This confusing conclusion to the section on Gairy is followed immediately by a discussion of Bishop, detailing his early participation in a nurses strike and the formation of the New Jewel Movement (NJM). An inset box prompts the students to –1. Look in your library, at history books and newspapers, to find more information on the incident that took place at La Sagesse Estate between the Jewel and Lord Brownlow in 1972. 2. Sunday 18 November 1973 is known as _Bloody Sunday'. Why? Who was involved in what happened?" The first refers to a successful effort, led by the Jewel movement, to prevent Lord Brownlow, cousin to Queen Elizabeth II, from blocking access to a public beach. Bloody Sunday refers to politically-motivated beatings of six NJM members, including Maurice Bishop, ordered by Eric Gairy. The successful completion of this homework assignment would be critical to understanding the information which follows. Bishop wins a seat in parliament in 1976 and becomes leader of the Opposition, –frustrated in every way by the ruling party. Parliament was dissolved early, there were bans on the use of loudspeakers in the streets, on political gatherings, on strike action. There was much unrest, and the island was placed under **a state of emergency**. On the

morning of 13 March 1979, the government of Eric Gairy was overthrown by Bishop and his followers in a **coup d'état**" (Peters and Penny 1998:96-7).

It seems highly unlikely that eight- and nine year-olds could successfully mine the local libraries on their own and find accessible information about the historical events indicated. However, those clues are their best chance to understanding this section, as the book provides no information about who was leading the unrest in the streets and why. What was the trouble with Gairy's leadership? What was Bishop trying to achieve? Who were his followers? This tumult cannot be understood without additional information. In a nod to the age level of the readership, this confusing conclusion is followed by an inset that asks: "What is **a state of emergency**? What is a **coup d'état**?" These phrases are not included in the glossary at the back of the book. Given the limited resources available to the majority of Grenadian schoolchildren, it is unlikely that they could successfully uncover the meaning of a *coup d'état*.

From this brief sketch of the significant actions undertaken by Gairy and Bishop, the final section, "Important events in our history" launches into a more thorough historical discussion. As the authors attempt to explicate the complicated events of the revolutionary period and Intervention/Invasion for primary school-aged children, there is a sense of increasing absurdity. The concepts involved are simply too advanced. The section begins simplistically enough: "History tells us about what happened in the past. We can learn from our history how to live in the present" (Peters and Penny 1998:97). A standard discussion follows about the Caribs' encounter with Columbus and early settlers, the traditional tale of the loss of Grenada to "knives, glass beads, mirrors and brandy," ending in their heroic suicide by leaping off the cliff in Sauteurs (ibid.:98). A

section on the British and the French details the back-and-forth battles between colonial powers, with a couple of sentences about Fedon's rebellion. One sentence covers slavery and Emancipation. An inset prompts the schoolchildren: "Try to find out about slavery in Grenada. Imagine you are a child of a slave on a plantation in about 1800. Describe the way you and your family live, and how you feel about it" (ibid.:99).

Independence is described as "a difficult time," although as in the preceding section, there is little explanation about these difficulties. The text simply states again that Bishop overthrew the government, and he ruled the country from 1979 to 1983 "under a revolutionary government" during which the constitution was suspended. The final five pages are devoted to "the end of the revolution, "invasion and intervention," and "1983 and beyond." There are two photographs in this section: one shows a destroyed building with the caption, "ruins of battle, October 1983", and the other shows approximately twenty Grenadians in 1970s civilian clothes standing around casually chatting as if waiting in a line, with the improbable caption, "Members of the Grenada People's Revolutionary Army (PRA)" (Peters and Penny 1998:101).

"The end of the revolution" begins with an effort to explain the events in simple language. It begins as follows:

> One section of the PRG felt that the policies of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop were too relaxed. It was suggested that Bernard Coard should share leadership of the party with Maurice Bishop. Bishop would continue his good relationship with the people, while Coard would be in charge of party organization. Bishop would lose power to Coard, who was a strong believer in the Communist doctrines and principles laid down by Marx and Lenin. [Peters and Penny 1998:100]

Clearly, there is a problem with the explication here, as the authors seem to forget that primary school children may not be familiar with Communist doctrines laid down by

Marx and Lenin. The explanation continues with a description of ~~t~~ension" between the two groups, leading to Bishop's house arrest and a public demonstration. Bishop was taken to the Fort to ~~p~~revent Coard and his followers from taking over the country, but on that same day the fort was attacked. Men, women and children were shot, and later that afternoon Bishop and many of his supporters were executed" (Peters and Penny 1998:101). Attacked by whom, the reader might wonder? Executed by whom? The text continues by noting that the PRG was placed in charge of the country, and ~~f~~or a short time there was a total curfew" (ibid.:102). This sentence is followed by a space and a sentence in red: ~~—W~~hat is a curfew?" Again, it seems the authors have briefly recalled their audience, and a few sentences explain what life under the curfew was like.

The ~~I~~nvasion and intervention" section becomes increasingly strained as the authors struggle to make these events understandable to their young audience. It begins by describing Grenadians awakening on the morning of 25 October 1983 to the sound of U.S. helicopter gunships. ~~T~~his action was supported by some countries and condemned by others" (Peters and Penny 1998:102). The initiator of this action is described as the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), who asked the United States for military assistance. The latter were motivated by concern for ~~t~~he safety of some 1000 US students ... [and] were also anxious to avoid the establishment of any Communist base in the Caribbean that could be used by the Soviets or the Cubans" (ibid.:103).

The ~~i~~nvasion" and ~~i~~ntervention" of the title are used interchangeably, as the authors attempt to describe why some favored or opposed the operation. They explain: ~~M~~ost of the people who condemned the intervention by the U.S. and Caribbean troops were supporters of **Marxist-Leninist ideals**. They felt the invasion was unlawful. But

the OECS had a legal basis, in the words of the Treaty, on which to take action ... many of the people of Grenada hoped for some form of outside intervention" (Peters and Penny 1998:103). At this point, the authors realize that the discussion might raise issues that are difficult for young children to grasp. They devote the final paragraphs to additional explications of Marxism, capitalism, and imperialism:

> The Marxist ideal states that human behaviour is controlled by the need to produce wealth. Labour (that is, working people) is necessary to make a country wealthy. The people of that country, as a group, must therefore take over the production of wealth from the few rich people (called **capitalists**). Eventually the society of the country becomes classless, but in order to achieve such a classless society, there has to be a violent revolution ... In addition, Lenin believed that the most extreme form of capitalism was **imperialism**, which is the practice of one country taking over another country. [In red:] Can you think of another word for **imperialism**? [~~"~~Class discussion" inset box:] Do you agree that the military action taken in Grenada in 1983 was lawful? Is it important that such action should be ~~"~~lawful"? [ibid.:103]

The final paragraph states that Coard and his supporters were arrested and, after a seven year trial, found guilty of murder and other crimes. ~~"~~They were sentenced to death, but this sentence was commuted to life imprisonment" (Peters and Penny 1998:104). At this point, the authors do not even try to explain *commuted*. This is the standard wording found in history books to describe the trial and sentencing, and there is no effort here to rephrase concepts to a level appropriate for primary school.

While in no way belittling the abilities of eight- and nine-year olds, it seems clear that it is a challenge to present this historical material in a way that is intellectually and emotionally accessible to this age group. The ideas that are introduced are conceptually complex, and would probably prove challenging even for secondary school students. Imperialism, capitalism, Marxist ideals, *coup d'état*, lawful or unlawful uses of force by

other nations – not to mention bloodshed and executions within recent memory in their small island home – these are all difficult ideas to comprehend and integrate into an understanding of Grenada‘s historical experience. This is compounded by the very cursory treatment of Grenada‘s earlier history. Without understanding slavery, emancipation, Grenada‘s rigid class structure and ongoing oppression of the working classes, Gairy‘s dictatorial turn and the ensuing violence, how can any student be expected to contextualize Bishop‘s takeover, the ideals of the Revolution, and its demise? None of these subjects are easily simplified, nor can they be understood in isolation.

Given the complexity, and also the importance, of Grenada‘s unique history, it seems odd that the only official curricula devoted to the subject is taught in primary school. This is a result of adopting the English-speaking Caribbean-wide social studies curriculum, which designates island-specific materials be taught in fourth grade. Upper secondary school curricula is, again, fixed by Caribbean-wide protocols which prepare students for the regional exam. Yet, this would not preclude the inclusion of Grenada‘s history in social studies at the lower secondary school level.

Why, then, is Grenadian history not taught in secondary school? I frequently heard Grenadians charge the current administration with a willful cover-up of Grenada‘s recent history, subscribing to a general conspiracy theory that ensures the population remains ignorant. My own examination of the situation does not substantiate that charge, as it does not seem that there is any single authority dictating the exclusion of this material. The situation on the ground seems more complex. Those in charge of curriculum development in the Ministry of Education state that there is space for treatment of Grenada‘s history if the teachers will simply plan ahead. Their office space

proudly displayed a poster that outlined the events of the Revolution, created by the staff for Independence Day celebrations. It was my impression that the office was simply understaffed and ill-equipped to provide a comprehensive educational plan addressing Grenadian history. Instead, they expected the teachers to do it. I was given the gift of an apparently rare resource by an officer in the Ministry of Education – a laminated, spiral bound –Social Studies Syllabus: Lower Secondary School" revised in 2000. This twenty-two page document outlines the aims and objectives for each year in very broad strokes. Grenadian history is not given a special section, but could conceivably be tackled by a motivated and knowledgeable teacher. It seems that therein lies the problem.

First of all, secondary school teachers are products of the same school system that omitted education about Grenadian history. They are therefore ill-prepared to develop such a curriculum themselves. Second, as is often the case in public schools, the teachers are overworked, underpaid, and too caught up in the daily challenges of managing their classes to undertake an independent research project about Grenadian history. Third, according to a Grenadian social scientist who informally shared with me the results of interviews with secondary school teachers on this subject, teachers are afraid of a backlash from their students' parents. There is a concern that if the teacher presents a version of recent Grenadian history with which the students' parents' disagree, they will create trouble for themselves. Thus, it is easier not to deal formally with the material.

Instead, what I heard most often from students and secondary school teachers alike is that a discussion of the revolutionary period may be randomly sparked during a class, and students will press the teacher for information. The teachers respond with their personal experiences, or that of their family, providing an anecdotal framework for

addressing this controversial period of Grenada‘s history. A bigger picture of the issues involved is not provided in discussions such as these, nor in any formal period of the school system‘s curricula. The result is that Grenada‘s recent history is treated as a period of anecdotal interest, rather than as a significant occurrence in the larger context of the history of the island, the region, and the world.

This process of turning important historical events into fragmented, personalized anecdotes conflicts with another sentiment popularly expressed by residents of this small island: a desire for Grenada to be known abroad, and pride at being a player in a significant world event. Many Grenadians know, for example, that there are books about the Grenada Revolution and U.S. Intervention/Invasion in libraries outside of Grenada. This provides a sense of importance and pride, and makes them want to know more about their own history. However, few youth have the resources, literacy, and motivation to access these books and teach themselves about this complex period in Grenada‘s history. Thus, as some of the Grenadian youth I interviewed express, there is the sense of a lacuna when it comes to their own past.

United and Divided: Grenada’s Independence Day 2008

There are two national holidays which celebrate events in Grenada‘s history: Independence Day and Thanksgiving Day. These holidays provide another important view into the way that history is represented in public life today. As events marked by official speeches, national celebrations, and public debate, significant events from the

past are once again made present for Grenadians. I begin by considering the celebrations and controversies of Independence Day, 2008.

Most Grenadians agree that Independence Day, February 8, 2008, witnessed the largest celebrations in the island's thirty-four years of independence. Participation exceeded even the tremendous patriotic outpourings of 2007's holiday, which at the time were regarded as landmark celebrations. Perhaps most telling for this small Caribbean nation of 100,000, the 16,000 persons in attendance at the Independence Day ceremony at the National Stadium surpassed the number of attendees for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2007 for which the US$40 million stadium was built by Chinese donors. Even bigger and better than last year, the National Celebrations Committee sponsored weeks of sports and village beautification competitions, church services, a national arts and crafts day, a national food day, and a national colours day. Whereas in the past, food, craft, and the wearing of national colours were part of the February 8 celebrations, these theme days became so large that they were declared events in their own right. Indeed, when I happened to visit the Ministry of Education on February 7th, the entire staff was distracted by preparations for National Colours Day. I was told it was not a very good day for doing business as the day was really set aside for decorating. Later, I read that they won the government's competition for best-decorated Ministry.

Formal Independence Day festivities include a military parade and rally at the National Stadium. Free buses gather Grenadians dressed in national colors from all corners of the island to converge for the early parade. The parade is a highly formalized event, involving the Commissioner of Police, Prime Minister, and Governor-General in the unfurling of the flag with appropriate salute and fanfare. The Governor-General

inspects the troops and volunteer groups who comprise the parade, including the Royal Grenada Police Force, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and school groups. The militaristic nature of the parade may strike the outsider as strange given the fact that Grenada has no army, but Grenadians simply say it has always been this way. As with many official events in their country, they are deeply vested in the precise execution of elaborately formalized rituals. The proper bearing, costuming, and presentation of each group is a source of pride for Grenadians, and any slight misconduct draws rapid fire. The parade is followed by a national rally, which, in 2008, revolved around the theme, "Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity." The National Anthem and Invocation are followed by various cultural presentations, the granting of national awards, and the Independence Address by the Prime Minister. I overheard many Grenadians after the event conducting a postmortem of the performance, with comments such as the Prime Minister's speech was not too long, the crowd was too rowdy, the performers could have sung better.

Following the celebrations, I was invited to join some Grenadian friends in their home for a lunch of the national dish, oildown. As with most holidays, Grenadians take the opportunity presented by a day off of work to gather with friends and family and share an afternoon meal. The conversation over lunch began with opinions about the national festivities at the stadium, and eventually circled back to the events of Independence Day thirty-four years ago. As everyone present was over forty, it was not long before they began to share memories of the Revolution, and debate its merits and downfall. The conversation was filled with reminiscences about where each person was when Maurice Bishop was shot. The group was split between those who perceived the

Revolution as mostly positive, and those who decried the loss of personal freedom. In spite of some minor tensions, the debate remained friendly with quips and laughter. I imagined that similar conversations were taking place at dining tables all around the country, as Independence Day spurred recollections and debate about the country's past and current directions. The scope of the conversation made it clear that the message of patriotic unity heralded by Independence Day was only part of the story.

The notable rise in enthusiasm for Independence Day celebrations is the subject of much interpretation and debate among Grenadians. Indeed, no other annual event provokes as much lengthy commentary in the four weekly local newspapers. These articles include the journalistic reporting of events and "facts about Grenada" sections, as well as "Independence Day Messages" from key political figures, editorials, and opinion pieces. Together, these articles create a collage of personal opinions and reminiscences, political platforms, and histories of the nation. It is the aim of this section to mine the recurrent themes and arguments in these articles in order to understand the multiple narratives of the nation which emerge. I argue that in spite of Independence Day's overt theme of unity, the national holiday is in fact inherently divisive because of its history. As an anniversary, it inevitably resurrects recollections of the multiple conflicts which surrounded the nation's independence in 1974. Efforts to overcome this tension focus upon the future-oriented narrative of development. While this, too, evokes debate about the best path forward, the narrative of progress is itself uncontested. This orientation toward the future also explains the recent surge in patriotic fervor, as the event is geared toward a new generation who are comparatively free from the baggage of Grenada's turbulent history. Instead, the youth can focus with pride on the key historical event of

their generation: the devastation of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily in 2004 and 2005, and the dramatic recovery and resilience shown by Grenadians.

Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity

I begin the discussion with an examination of Independence Day messages from three key figures: the Governor-General, the Prime Minister, and the Leader of the Opposition. These speeches transition the analysis from the live events at the stadium, where they were delivered, to the ways in which they fit into the larger narratives created in the newspapers, where the speeches are reprinted. They are also published in the program distributed at the stadium. The speeches are brief, so they are reproduced here in their entirety. They reveal at the outset the strong degree to which Independence Day is political and politicized in spite of an overt theme of unity.

The first speech is given by the Governor-General:

> A Message by the Governor-General His Excellency Sir Daniel Williams, GCMG, QC, on the Occasion of Grenada's 34th Anniversary of Independence:
>
> An expression might be simple and yet fundamental for success. As an example, a home, village, town or country that is continually engaged in quarrels, strifes and fights will be unstable and will not make satisfactory progress. The quarrels, fights and confrontations will frustrate the efforts made by the positive actors.
>
> Every community should desire peace. It is in the context of peace that the theme for this year's independence, which is "Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity", is progressive. The theme is very practical in its content; it suggests sober behaviour for progress and prosperity.
>
> Grenada is a very young nation. When many countries chronicle several hundreds of years of independence, Grenada is only thirty-four years.

> Probably the majority of Grenadians have witnessed the transition from colony to independence. The theme is telling us if we want continued progress and prosperity, Grenadians and friends of Grenada must contribute to the stability of the country. This can be a small great country, but we have to do what we should do. In essence, quarrels, strifes and fights will cause instability and hinder progress and prosperity.
>
> Since our independence we have had several successes of which we should be joyous and delighted. In the joy of our independence celebrations, I elect to make an economic point. Almost all the material things we enjoy in Grenada are imported, for example, motor vehicles, machines, computers, television, a variety of electronic devices, household goods, clothing and other wearing material are imported and have to be paid for from earnings in Grenada in foreign currency.
>
> The money to buy our foreign pleasures is derived mainly from tourism, services and remittances. I am therefore making a special appeal on this our thirty-fourth anniversary, that we should do all we can to support tourism. Our Grenadians abroad can also be tourists. Charity begins at home; we must treat our returning Grenadians with no less friendliness, decency and care as other tourists.
>
> I have great hope for this wonderfully beautiful country and our talented people. Despite our struggles we can be proud of our achievements up to this time. Grenada can be a small, successful dynamic country. Let us all join hands to make this country the best it can be.

The first part of the speech is characterized by generalities and platitudes. The generic reference to "quarrels, strifes and fights" skirts the real history of conflict in Grenada. The Governor-General clearly wishes to avoid evoking particularities as he advises that Grenadians "do what we should do" to promote stability and ensure progress. This approach to his speech befits the Governor-General's position as the official representative of the Queen of England; he is an important figurehead who represents the nation and is not to take sides in contemporary politics. The historical reality has been quite different, as, for example, Governor-General Paul Scoon was deeply entangled in the aftermath of the U.S. Intervention/Invasion. Nevertheless, involvement in local

politics by the Governor-General is treated as scandalous in the newspapers, and Grenadians expect their representative to bring dignity to their nation.

The second part, however, becomes very concrete as he lists material goods imported into Grenada. His economic appeal to support tourism stands apart from the rest of his speech, and overshadows his reference to services and remittances – two points which could also have formed the basis for an appeal. The end result is a strong message about Grenada's dependence on foreign goods and foreigners, which is offset only by his entreaty that Grenadians who live abroad be treated like any other tourist. The appeal to unity, to "join hands," is premised upon a plea to build a "successful dynamic country" through tourism. Once again, development rhetoric is employed in an effort to unify Grenadians while steering them away from recollections of a conflict-ridden past.

The second speech is delivered by the Prime Minister:

> A Message by Prime Minister Dr. The Right Honourable Keith C. Mitchell, on the Occasion of Grenada's 34th Anniversary of Independence:
>
> Fellow Grenadians, within the thirty-four years since we gained independence as a sovereign nation from Britain in 1974, we have made considerable strides in our efforts to build a prosperous nation and shape a quality society. During the last twelve years, in particular, even after two devastating hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, we have been able through grit and determination, to achieve levels of growth, peace and prosperity, of which every Grenadian, at home and abroad, can feel justly proud.
>
> This sense of national pride is appropriately reflected in this year's Independence Celebration theme of "Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity". As we reflect, evaluate, celebrate and rededicate ourselves to continue the progress with positive change into the future, we should also be mindful not to take for granted the gains we have made in the development of our infrastructure, productive capabilities, social services, educational opportunities, the prospects for training of our young people, health, sporting and agricultural facilities, our tourism product and economic growth.

> The challenge for my Administration of managing very complex imperatives of development in a fast changing world over the past twelve years has not been easy. But we have endured. As a nation, we are associated with excellence in our quest for industrialization and development.
>
> Grenada today has been remarkably successful in operating in a world order in which we have no enemies. No country regards us as unfriendly or hostile. As a result, we should remain open to all countries that are willing to contribute to our development.
>
> This is not a simple matter. For if we are unable to build and sustain a culture of excellence in our country then we have nowhere going as a nation. The quest for excellence begins with the quality of our thoughts. And the quality of our thoughts has everything to do with our prospects for maximizing returns from multi-million dollar foreign direct investments, building a quality educational system, and building a first rate work force which will prepare us for global competitiveness.
>
> My Administration values excellence in all that we do; and we are well on our way to developing an addiction to it.
>
> My hope is that this year‘s Independence celebrations will serve to remind us all that we are united in a single fabric of unity, weaved together by the shared desire to succeed and take our rightful place in the world as a brand of quality, attractive enough to our young people who will be stirred to purchase our example of excellence as down-payment for a future of stability, peace and prosperity.
>
> I therefore invite all Grenadians, at home and in the Diaspora, young and old, to use this, our 34th year of Independence, to build on our sense of meaning and patriotism, set good examples of leadership for our young people, and demonstrate sustained love and loyalty for the land of our birth and the liberties we currently enjoy. Let the progress continue.
>
> Happy Independence everyone.

As one might expect, the Prime Minister‘s speech is heavily slanted toward his political party‘s perspective. The gains of the last twelve years – during which his party has been the ruling administration – are emphasized in his introduction, while also drawing attention to the recovery from the hurricanes as a major focal point. Keith

Mitchell appreciates the unifying effect of this particular historical event, while skirting any other specific references to the past thirty-four years of independence. Indeed, the day's theme of "Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity" is carefully orchestrated to echo his party's motto: Let the progress continue. Yet the imperative to promote stability automatically invokes the question of instability – else why would it need to be promoted? The nation's unstable past remains a shadow behind the Prime Minister's speech, as it does throughout Independence Day celebrations and discussions.

Mitchell continues his speech with an emphasis on industrialization and development. He cites the fact that Grenada is not seen as hostile to any nation as rationale for welcoming development aid from any willing country. This statement is somewhat ironic, as Grenada has no army nor any alliances which could make it threatening to any other nation at this point in its history. It is likely an attempt to justify the use of Chinese funds (which built the stadium in which the speech was delivered) after signing on to the One China policy and cutting ties with their former ally, Taiwan.

The monetary metaphors which permeate the following paragraphs are striking. Indeed, the development-oriented nature of his speech takes on new dimensions when he claims that the "quality of our thoughts has everything to do with our prospects for maximizing returns from multi-million dollar foreign direct investments, building a quality educational system, and building a first rate work force which will prepare us for global competitiveness." The personal nature of one's thoughts are bridged directly to national development goals. The plea for unity which follows is a potent example of the way in which development is seen as the key to building a successful future. Grenadians are described as "waved together by the shared desire to succeed." Grenada is

characterized as a –brand of quality" which the youth will want to –purchase" as —down-payment for a future of stability, peace and prosperity." The financial metaphors endeavor to link an individual's aim for excellence to the nation's successful development, while also positioning the nation as a brand-name commodity worthy of the youth's materialistic acquisitiveness.

The final speech was delivered by the Leader of the Opposition:

> A Message by Leader of the Opposition Hon. Tillman Thomas on the Occasion of Grenada's 34th Anniversary of Independence:
>
> As we celebrate our 34th anniversary of Independence let us stride forward together and make great things happen for Grenada.
>
> Great things could only happen for Grenada when we build on the right foundation. We have to be more conscious of God as stated in our national anthem and create an environment in which our moral values and standards are sacrosanct.
>
> As a Nation we have made some improvement in physical infrastructure, but at the same time we have experienced serious decline in moral standards and in our institutions. We cannot sustain our independence without strong institutions, manned by persons of character and integrity.
>
> The issue of Governance continues to be a major challenge for us as a people. However, with effort and determination if we work together we can remove the negative image of our country brought about in recent years and at the same time bring back some pride and dignity in our country and ourselves.
>
> We must work to re-build our agri-economy and to feed ourselves. We must educate our boys and girls to face the competition of a more globalized world. We must develop our country in a fashion that suits the needs of our people so that our efforts are mutually beneficial for locals and investors alike.
>
> Our Tourism industry must be properly managed, to avoid Real Estate Tourism making it difficult for Grenadians to own land in certain parts of Grenada.

> Our patriotism must go beyond symbols. We must demonstrate our patriotism by defending our heritage and protecting our democratic institutions. We need to revive the community spirit that existed in the past when we came together and worked to beautify and enhance our communities.
>
> Finally, we must remember that as a people we have to create an atmosphere for capacity building because we need competent and capable persons to manage our Nation. It is therefore of utmost importance that we create opportunities to improve the professional skills and knowledge of our people especially the youthful members of our population.

The Leader of the Opposition's speech is predictably critical of the current administration. Thomas devotes his opening to a commentary on the decline of the nation's moral standards and institutions. Further, he comes the closest to acknowledging Grenada's turbulent history when he notes that governance *continues* to be a challenge for the nation. He also invokes the ―ecommunity spirit that existed in the past when we came together and worked to beautify and enhance our communities." Grenadians often point to these community efforts when reminiscing about times past. Even more significant, I observed that this is a point invariably made when discussing the positive aspects of the revolutionary period. Although Tillman himself was imprisoned under Bishop's regime, and is, therefore, exempt from accusations of sympathizing with the Revolution, his National Democratic Party is perceived by many as favoring policies from that era. While Mitchell speaks of Grenada's perception as ―friendly" to all nations, Thomas points to Grenada's negative image abroad – the result of multiple political scandals involving Mitchell and his party.

Tillman acknowledges the improvement of Grenada's infrastructure, but then turns his attention to the areas which his party most frequently cites as needing development: agriculture and education. He also calls for a more careful protection of

Grenada's heritage and lands through judicious tourism investments. While finances form the undercurrent of Mitchell's speech, Thomas places his emphasis on ~~o~~ur people." And unlike the Governor-General's invocation of material goods and dependency on foreigners, Tillman speaks of Grenada's communities, of development that will benefit Grenadians, and of capacity building that will lead to better internal management. Nevertheless, it should be noted that in spite of his own areas of emphasis, the overall narrative of economic development is not contested.

These three Independence Day messages are an introduction to the highly political nature of a day dedicated to unifying the people of Grenada and celebrating a new outpouring of patriotic fervor. They point to the difficulty of silencing the past on an anniversary celebration, even as they attempt to unify Grenadians by looking toward the future. The local newspapers offer another window onto Grenadians' understanding of thirty-four years of independence. In the next section, I analyze articles related to Independence Day published in the *Grenada Advocate, Grenada Today, Grenadian Voice*, and the *Spice Isle Review* for recurrent themes and metaphors. They reveal the ways in which Independence Day functions as both a unifying and divisive event for Grenadians. While there is an obvious narrative of progress and unity, there is an equally strong counter-narrative of unresolved conflict. This tension is resolved only by a shared focus on bringing the younger generation together within a particular vision of Grenada's future.

Narratives of Unity and Conflict

An analysis of the articles relating to Independence Day reveals a strong, overt narrative of progress and unity. There is a set of recurring metaphors: divisiveness to unity, immaturity to maturity, instability to stability, poverty to prosperity, dependence to independence, darkness to light. In particular, this narrative highlights the strength and unity of Grenadians in the aftermath of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily. It attempts to draw a picture of the steady development of Grenada as a strong, unified nation.

The 34th Independence Day celebrations celebrated a new burst in patriotic fervor throughout the nation. The *Spice Isle Review* states that the crowd at the stadium celebrations was the largest ever, and quotes the Culture Minister's speech to the crowd: "To stand here and behold the outpouring of fervour and patriotism, gives me a profound feeling of pride in being Grenadian" (*SIR*, Feb. 14, 2008a). The *Grenada Advocate* headlines: "Patriotism at an All Time High" (Titus 2008c). Sherma Wells, Public Relations Officer of the Celebrations Committee is quoted: "I think it's an indication that Grenadians are now mature and ready to move this country forward in a big way" (ibid.:3). The article notes that celebrations since 1974 "have been generally considered mundane and low-key. However, within the last three years following the devastation caused by Hurricane Ivan, public involvement and an overall show of patriotism have surpassed previous years" (ibid.:3). David Edwards, Deputy Chairman of the Celebrations Committee, describes the event as "growing in maturity" as he proclaims that "It takes adversity to help us to come together, because I can tell you ... after

Hurricane Ivan it really helped to cement us as a people because we recognised that time, irrespective of our political differences when Ivan passed through, we were all affected … We all had to come together and rally people to rebuild and I think coming out of that adversity there was greater unity. People started to look at country.'" (ibid.:3). Another headline in the *Grenada Advocate* proclaims: "Grenada: A resilient people continue to press onwards" (Feb. 8, 2008a). The article details Grenada's recovery efforts following the hurricanes. These articles are complemented by photographs from the celebrations, featuring the massive crowds, impressive military parade, steelband performers, and children dressed in national colours. These articles and images fuel the general public's impression that Independence Day is a new rallying point for an unprecedented wave of patriotism.

Yet in spite of the many references to progress and unity, there is a counter-narrative threading its way through the newspapers. The difficulty with a thirty-fourth anniversary celebration is that it inherently evokes the past thirty-four years. While this may seem a redundant point, it is one that is not always readily apparent in the midst of the patriotic hoopla generated around the celebration itself. A review of the newspapers quickly reveals, however, that the history of Independence Day is also fraught with tumultuous political memories. These fall into four main categories: disagreement about the merits of becoming independent in 1974; disagreement about the leadership of Eric Gairy, the Father of Independence; the troubling memory of the original Independence Day itself; and debate about the actual meaning of independence and the achievements of the past thirty-four years. The result is a holiday celebration which resurrects memories

of conflict and highlights a continuity with, rather than a break from, the struggles of pre-Independence days.

Historical references in the newspapers mostly focus on the Gairy period. Although _independence' refers to independence from England, there are only two references to colonization, and one to slavery, in all the articles. On the other hand, there are over a dozen references to Gairy and the turbulent events surrounding Independence Day, 1974. At that time, Grenadians were by no means certain that they wanted independence from Britain while still living under Gairy's rule. In *Grenada Today*, Lloyd Noel writes:

> As history have seen to it, from then on we have become famous or infamous for always being –first" in many national occurrences. And while many are displaying flags and other buntings, and there will be all manner of celebration in recognition of the 34th anniversary … that status did not come about without serious struggle, tears and even bloodshed in our land. There was objection to the manner by which Eric Gairy had gone about getting the British Government to grant Grenada Independence. Many groups saw the method used as a –backdoor" entry, because Gairy refused to go to the people by a referendum on the matter. He used the section in the then Associated Statehood Constitution – which allowed the Government of the day to simply request the granting of Independence and leave it up to the British Government to say yea or nay. He wanted to be free of supervision as an Associate State, and no doubt the British wanted to be rid of him after all the events that took place since the sky-red days of 1951. [Noel 2008]

Leslie Pierre (2008) further comments in the *Grenadian Voice*: –I was president of the Chamber of Commerce when it was decided to shut down the business community for three months to show objection to Independence being granted to Grenada under Gairy." Further scattered references to Bloody Sunday, Bloody Monday, and the Committee of 22 (a coalition of trade unions, civic organizations, and churches formed in the wake of Bloody Sunday) recall the violence of the days surrounding the move to independence, as

Gairy attempted to suppress any opposition in his move toward dictatorial powers. Independence *under Gairy*, as Grenadians often emphasize, was seen by many as a dangerous step.

In light of this history, Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell's move to designate former Prime Minster Sir Eric Gairy as Grenada's First National Hero at the 2008 celebrations was understandably controversial. Gairy remains a figure both adored and reviled in Grenada. The long-lasting impact of his land redistribution program, for example, has won him devoted followers who do not believe that the Mongoose Gang committed the atrocities of which they are accused. There is also a strong impulse to celebrate home-grown leaders in the face of a colonial history, in spite of their imperfect leadership. A large poster entitled, "Sir Eric Matthew Gairy Feb 18 1922 to Aug 23 1997" with a photograph of Gairy was placed near the central stage during the 2007 celebrations, and a picture of the poster was again featured in the *Grenada Advocate* for their coverage of 2008 celebrations with the caption, "Father of Independence, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy" (Titus 2008c:3). The *Grenadian Voice* (Feb. 16, 2008) features an article entitled, "Glynis Roberts [a member of Parliament] welcomes choice of Gairy as National Hero." *Grenada Today* includes an editorial which celebrates Gairy's achievements and postulates that he would be disappointed in the current administration:

> It is now 34 years since Premier Eric Matthew Gairy took the bold step with his Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) government to break the colonial ties with Great Britain and create history for himself by becoming the first Prime Minister of the newly independent Nation State. There were many who opposed independence under Sir Eric for all sorts of reasons. However, it is heartening to see that if not these people themselves but their children and grandchildren now openly embracing our independence and what it means for us as a people. [Feb. 8, 2008]

On the other hand, many also recall Gairy as a divisive figure who brought the nation to independence for his own gain. Leslie Pierre notes that ―being overthrown doesn't make Gairy a hero" (2008). An editorial in the *Spice Isle Review* notes: ―The country at that time was divided over the granting of Independence under a Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) led by Eric Gairy who only days before had distinguished himself as a brutal dictator who had unleashed violence against the peaceful protests of the Grenadian people who had demonstrated against his regime, in what was known as Bloody Monday" (Feb. 7, 2008). David Edwards, the Deputy Chairman of the Celebrations Committee, is quoted in the *Grenada Advocate*: ―I could remember in the early days and even at the time of independence, there was some bickering about whether Sir Eric Matthew Gairy went about it the right way ... whether it was the right time" (Titus 2008c:3). Thus, Sir Eric Gairy and the context in which independence was achieved remain controversial subjects in Grenada rather than proud points of unification in today's celebrations.

The actual events of Independence Day, 1974, also conjure troubling memories for the people of Grenada. Following the violence of November 18th's Bloody Sunday, the Committee of 22 called for an island-wide strike. Social unrest continued throughout the month of January, culminating in another outbreak of violence on January 21. Steele writes:

> The general shutdown of the island, which began on 21 January, ended two weeks after independence … The British government was well aware that the country was in turmoil. A very minor member of the Royal Family replaced the member originally selected to be present on the night of 6 February 1974 to witness Grenada's birth as a new nation. Special lighting had to be arranged for the ceremony on the Fort, as there was no electricity, due to the general strike in progress. [2003: 372]

Recollections of this first Independence Day frequently refer to the island's darkness. It seems a natural metaphor that has taken hold of the Grenadian imagination, and references are common in all of the newspapers. Lloyd Noel (2008) writes:

> Grenada lowered the Union Jack on then Fort George (later Fort Rupert), and raised up the Grenadian Flag of Red, Green and Gold – in total darkness Islandwide. A small Generator provided light for the Ceremony of the Fort – on the night of 6th February, 1974, while Maurice Bishop was held in a cell at the top of the same Fort – having been arrested by Gairy's forces earlier that day, on the usual faked charges of possession of arms and ammunition.

Terence Marryshow refers to the "shroud of darkness" (*SIR* 2008a), and Gloria Payne-Banfield notes "All the evening's activities had to be done in lights created by noisy generators" (*SIR* 2008). There is perhaps an unconscious irony in the full page advertisement on the back of the *Grenada Advocate's* special Independence Day Feature (Feb. 8, 2008b) which depicts the Carenage illuminated at night with the statement: "Happy 34th Anniversary Grenada. 80 Years Lighting up Lives. Grenada Electricity Services Limited 1928-2008." The Fort where the Grenadian Flag was first hoisted in darkness lies just beyond the bounds of the photograph.

Finally, Independence Day provides an occasion for reflection and debate about the meaning of independence and the achievements of the past thirty-four years. With the significant exception of Grenada's remarkable comeback from the hurricanes, many of the comments about the nation's achievements since independence are barbed. Often Grenada's economic dependence and openness to North American cultural influences are highlighted. Briggs-De Gale (2008) writes:

> Historically we have been a people of turmoil but has this elevated our thrust for national honour? … We should also strive to become more self-

> reliant and regard with honour and promote with resilience the ownership of our cultural attributes, national heritage and achievements … we should yield to and recommit our lives to God as fervent nation-builders in our pursuit to making Grenada our haven.

Randolph Mark's letter to the *Grenadian Voice* editor (2008b) points to Grenada's economic plight: "Despite all the past dismal events in Grenada, Grenadians are today still very proud of their independence ... We must now all work together to transform our present political independence into a sustainable economic independence." The *Spice Isle Review* ran an article entitled "Country urged to press for true independence," in which Governor-General Sir Daniel Williams is cited as saying "in the not too distant future he wants to see a Grenada that is a truly independent country, one that does not have to depend heavily on agencies and friendly governments for its survival" (*SIR*, Feb. 14, 2008b). Terence Marryshow writes an article entitled, "Need to assert our Independence," (2008b) in which he argues:

> There is lots that need to be done to ensure that our Independence becomes more meaningful. It involves first and foremost people's participation in the development of the country … It involves defining our borders so that we can fully utilize our resources … and finally it involves encouraging a mindset that it is the responsibility of each and every Grenadian together with their government to develop our country and not wait for handouts from foreign governments.

Lloyd Noel (2008) also argues:

> A whole host of questions still remain to be answered about our so-called Independence, and whether or not, and to what extent, that Independence Constitution of the 7th February, 1974, really did bring us freedom from oppression, injustice, and denial of our human rights; or did help us as a people to improve the standards and the qualities of our lives; and how much, by any scale of measurement we may choose to adopt has the said Independence and freedom to do our own thing – really helped us to grow and improve and develop our lives as individuals, and more importantly as a people.

Justin McBurnie (2008a) goes so far as to argue that since 1984:

> Grenada then regained a fragile Independence orchestrated by both America and Britain. The ownership of Grenada has since belonged jointly to America and Britain in secret treaties following the American led invasion of October 1984 … So Grenada is now only independent with a change of flag and absolutely _NOTHING‘ else. That is why America is fully influential in both the economic and political affairs of Grenada.

While most Grenadians do not subscribe to a theory of secret treaties, this more extreme position does highlight a nagging concern among the general population that Grenada is not yet truly independent. Thus, Independence Day becomes an occasion to reflect upon the struggles continuing since 1974, and the ways in which Grenada remains dependent upon wealthier nations.

Although the festivities are designed to celebrate a break from the dependent days of colonialism to the formation of a successfully independent state, Independence Day also highlights the many ways in which Grenada‘s history of conflict remains current in the popular imagination of the nation. The memories of Gairy‘s era are closely tied to the Grenada Revolution which eventually removed him from power, which in turn, resurrects the U.S. Intervention/Invasion and subsequent economic and cultural changes. These memories of conflict compete with the dominant nationalist narrative that also circulates during Independence Day, one which tells a story of steady progress and development.

Advancing as One People

Given the strength of this counter-narrative, which highlights Grenada‘s history of conflict and ongoing struggle for meaningful independence, how can one account for 2008‘s spurt in patriotism? The masses at the stadium, the rising sales in paraphernalia,

the ubiquitous national colours painted throughout communities and adorning nationals from head to toe – these manifestations of national pride seem to show new levels of unity and patriotism. There are three keys to understanding the ways in which these two narratives operate simultaneously. First, the counter-narrative is primarily propagated and contemplated by the older generation who lived through the Revolution. Second, the most recent historical memory that Grenadians share involves recovery from hurricanes Ivan and Emily. Third, both narratives celebrate a shared goal in spite of disagreement over how to achieve it: advancement as one people.

Independence Day points to a strong generational divide between the pre- and post-Revolution generations. The voices regularly featured in newspaper commentary come exclusively from the older generation, almost all of whom had strong personal experiences within the Grenada Revolution. As such, they maintain a sharp historical perspective on the context in which independence was achieved and the ways in which the holiday evolved thereafter. Dr. Terence Marryshow's column "Food for Thought!!" in the *Spice Isle Review* (2008a) provides the most cogent summation of this point which, in my experience, mostly goes unarticulated in Grenadian society. Marryshow was active in the Revolution and is currently the head of the Maurice Bishop and October 19th Martyrs Foundation. He describes the context of independence in 1974, with due reference to the bloodshed and darkness of those days. He then notes that the Revolution decided to downplay the importance of February 7th, focusing instead on March 13th, the day when Gairy was deposed and the Revolution began. February 7th assumed importance once again as the NNP and NDC governments began to observe it again"

(Marryshow 2008a). In recent years, he observes, Independence Day has taken on unprecedented importance:

> In my mind I have been trying to analyze this growing enthusiasm for Independence in recent times and I have come to the realization that a whole new generation has grown up since the demise of the Revolution on 19th October 1983. They have no knowledge of the bitterness and strife of the past, the pre-independence struggles or the revolution for that matter except from what they might have heard from their parents or families. It matters not to them what took place in that period of political disharmony and they remain untainted by it.

The rise of Independence Day thus marks a sea change from the dominance of the forty-plus generation to a new wave of Grenadians who are relatively unaware of the burdens of their past. These youth have yet to attain political power in Grenada, but the holiday provides a glimpse into the impact of this generational shift.

This shift is also seen in the focus on recovery from Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, the seminal historical events of the post-Revolution generation. While the youth may or may not have knowledge of the events surrounding Independence, or opinions about the conflicts which followed, they all share the experience of surviving two devastating hurricanes and participating in the island‘s recovery. This experience is not without its divisiveness as well, as narratives from Grenadian youth make clear. Class divisions were painfully illuminated in the wake of the destruction, and there is still much bitterness surrounding the partisan appearance of aid distribution. Nevertheless, there is an overarching consensus that Grenadians can be proud of the speed with which the island has come back from near-total decimation. It is common lore that the days without electricity brought Grenadians back to how it used to be in times gone by, conjuring a romantic image of community togetherness that eclipses the more frequent references to a

turbulent past. As a very recent and major historical event, it is well-poised to serve as a patriotic rallying point for a new generation.

Finally, as discussed in the previous section, it is clear that there is a broad consensus that Grenadians must focus on a future of nation-building and development. The political parties may define particular goals and areas of emphasis differently, but the teleological vision of movement from an undeveloped state to a proudly developed nation is broadly shared across party lines. Even more significant, it is shared across generational lines. The youth are keen to see development come to their island, and are less discerning about its manifestations. This shared goal continues to provide the most unifying rubric through which Grenadians can envision themselves as One People, and it is especially useful in moments when the island's history of conflict resurrects divisiveness.

Remembering the Revolution's End: Thanksgiving Day and October 19

Thanksgiving Day, October 25th, is a public holiday in Grenada. Along with Independence Day, it is the only other national holiday dedicated to Grenada's history. (Emancipation Day has historical import, but is not unique to Grenada.) It marks the anniversary of the 1983 U.S./Caribbean military intervention, although the Caribbean role is rarely mentioned in the events and discussions. There is a formal ceremony on the campus of St. George's University, at the site of a large memorial dedicated to the nineteen U.S. soldiers who died during Operation Urgent Fury. While public engagement with the holiday is minimal, particularly when compared to Independence

Day, the event generates plenty of controversy in the newspapers. Further, I argue that it must be seen as paired, *de facto*, with October 19th, the anniversary of the massacre on the Fort that marked the bloody end of the Revolution and the death of Maurice Bishop. Although the 19th is not an official holiday, the two days reflect upon each other, opening old wounds and generating new conflict. The result is a perpetuation of the idea that Grenada's history is a series of conflicts wrought by a divided people who have yet to fully reconcile.

Thanksgiving Day, October 25, 2007

I attended the ceremony for Thanksgiving Day in 2007. It drew a small gathering of formally-dressed Grenadians and Americans, yet the proceedings carried the full weight of the State. It was held outside, under a tent, at the foot of a large memorial and fountain prominently located at St. George's University. The memorial bears a plaque: "Here inscribed on this monument are the signatures of the United States servicemen who gave their lives in the evacuation of the students of St. George's University School of Medicine, October 25th, 1983." The Royal Grenada Police Force Band opened the event with the Grenada National Anthem, followed by the Star Spangled Banner. There was an invocation and a closing benediction performed by a reverend from the Grenada Methodist Church. The Provost of SGU, Dr. Allen H. Pensick, offered the welcome address, followed by Grenada's Prime Minister and U.S. Charge D'Affaires. A wreath was laid upon the memorial by Sir John Watts, KCMG, CBE, Deputy to the Governor-General, followed by a moment of silence. Afterwards, there was an elegant reception in

a campus building nearby, during which I was unexpectedly introduced to the Prime Minister. He logically assumed that I was an SGU student, and told me that Grenada was a better place for my presence.

I transcribed the addresses presented by the U.S. Charge D'Affaires and Grenada's Prime Minster, and reproduce these brief speeches below (paragraph breaks are mine). They capture the tenor of the event, which focuses attention on the ongoing cooperation between the two nations rather than detailing the events of the past. Here is U.S. Charge D'Affaires, Ms. Karen Jo McIsaac:

> I'm honored to participate on behalf of the U.S. government in St. George's University memorial service commemorating the 24th anniversary of the 1983 U.S./Caribbean intervention. This is a week of remembrance for Grenadians, Americans, and other Caribbean nationals, remembrance of the lives that were lost during the tragic events of October 1983, remembrance of the actions that led to the restoration of democratic government, laying the groundwork for today's vibrant democracy in Grenada. Grenada's commitment to democracy is the strongest legacy the American servicemen who lost their lives here in 1983 could have. [Applause.]
>
> We also remember today the events of October 1983 so that they will not be repeated. In ceremonies like this one around these three islands we strive to keep alive the memory of that sacrifice in order to renew our commitment and to teach our children, and in order to ensure that Grenada's democracy remains strong and vibrant long into the future. As the poet Archibald MacLeish said, Democracy is never a thing done. Democracy is always a thing that a nation must be doing. Democracy requires hard work and constant vigilance by all its citizens.
>
> Since October 1983, the United States and Grenada have worked together to become strong partners. Our peoples have come to know one another. Thousands of Grenadians and Americans have spent time on each other's soil, and one need only look around the magnificent campus of SGU to witness the physical expression of the faith and trust Americans place in Grenada today. America sends its young people to Grenada to learn. In the first ten years after the intervention, the U.S. provided over $120 million in aid to Grenada, and after Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, my government provided a wide-ranging $46 million program of assistance to

> help Grenada's people and government, and about half of all the assistance promised was delivered to rebuild schools, clinics, homes, hospitals, community centers, and other projects. The U.S. continues to provide assistance both bilaterally and multilaterally. In the run up to last April's Cricket World Cup, the U.S. either wholly funded or contributed to nearly 1,300 regional training programs for the countries hosting games, including Grenada, and I have to say Grenada has always taken advantage of all of the opportunities that we have presented them, unlike some other countries in the region. [Applause.]
>
> Much of the security equipment which was provided via that training, such as the advanced passenger information system, remains in place and in use, helping to secure Grenada's and indeed the region's, borders, which in addition helps the U.S. secure its borders. We continue to provide regular assistance to the police force and work closely with Grenadians in all areas of life. The 1983 American/Caribbean Intervention demonstrated our friendship and commitment to democracy and a better future for the people of Grenada. American support over the years since then has helped to cement that commitment. I want to assure you that the events of October 1983 will not be forgotten, and they should not be. We want our children to learn from our past so they don't repeat it in the future. Thank you very much.

This address provided an opportunity for the U.S. representative to detail American aid to Grenada. In the wider context of the U.S. war in Iraq, this was also a chance to trumpet a successful effort to restore democracy, albeit in a tiny country. Prime Minister, Dr. the Right Honorable Keith Mitchell also gives praise to the United States, but his speech is more wide-ranging:

> Thank you Mr. Chairman and Provost of this special institution, Governor-General Deputy Sir John Watts, U.S. Charge D'Affairs to Grenada Mary Jo McIsaac, Sir Paul Scoon, Former Governor-General, Vice Provost of this special institution, Reverend Hackshaw Superintendent of the Methodist Church, all the staff and students, member of the Royal Grenada Police force, my dear brothers and sisters all.
>
> On this very special thanksgiving day, it is my distinct honor and privilege to pay tribute on behalf of the government and people of this country to the American servicemen who lost their lives in reestablishing democracy to our beautiful country, and to our Caribbean brothers and sisters who made the sacrifices in assisting that effort. I'd also like to continuously

thank the American government and people for the tremendous support that has been consistently given to Grenada before my period of service as Prime Minister and during that period also, at various levels, whether it was during the period of the restoration of democracy, or during the period of reconstruction of our country after it was battered by two major hurricanes. The American government and people have been consistently there, side by side, and moreover, not only in direct assistance but whenever we have sought to have support from the international institutions, the American government led by its president has consistently given Grenada absolute support. For this we will be eternally grateful.

I wish once again to express the sincere appreciation of the government and people of our country for the valiant and noble efforts of those who stopped the senseless killing and returned Grenada to its people. I also wish to sympathize and of course also to pray for the loved ones of those who are still hurting and have not been able to bring closure to this horrific experience. Probably fitting also for us to continuously pray for those who lost their lives in a time that they made the sacrifices in what they perceived to be the defense of the sovereignty of this country.

We certainly know today as we look around us that the sacrifices of everyone were not in vain. Democracy is thriving, we have leapfrogged in development and God continues to bless us with his mercy and guidance. We have indeed entered a period of peace and security, promoting the need for forgiveness, reconciliation and unity, and have demonstrated our commitment to the maintenance of our democratic principles and fundamental freedoms. Our government has set the bar very high enough to accommodate holistic development, so we are conscious that there is still much to be done.

My dear brothers and sisters, this special institution, St. George‘s University, where we gather today, is in itself a glowing testimony of the stride this country has made in the right direction and the cooperation it has with its friends regionally and internationally. At this time, I wish to commend management and staff of this university for their outstanding work and their achievement of this very great institution. The numerous Grenadians that have been benefiting in terms of their education in this place can only make us better as a nation, and the university also serves as a remarkable marketing tool for this beautiful spice country.

My dear brothers and sisters, the challenges ahead, especially in these lean economic times worldwide, are enormous. However the prospects for advancement are indeed encouraging. This government is pursuing the development of science and technology and is providing skills training for

> young people as well as we prepare ourselves to meet the challenges of the regional competition that the CSME will present.
>
> My brothers and sisters, on this day we have much for which to be thankful. There is renewed hope and optimism in spite of the devastation brought by hurricanes in the past three years, and recently Felix, the resilience of our people and the support we have received from our friends worldwide, were indeed remarkable. We give thanks and praises to the Lord for his mercies and his many blessings. Let us continue to seek ways to take this nation to its full potential spiritually, socially, and economically. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt, my friends, to love one another, for he who loves his fellow men has fulfilled a law. Romans chapter 13 verse 18. I take this opportunity therefore to wish everyone of you, and all Grenadians, a very special thanksgiving. May God continue to bless every single one of us. [Applause.]

While the Prime Minister's speech reiterates his administration's agenda, there is one line that stands out: "Probably fitting also for us to continuously pray for those who lost their lives in a time that they made the sacrifices in what they perceived to be the defense of the sovereignty of this country." The uncertainty of the first word, coupled with an opening that creates a grammatical fragment, breaks the tenor of his speech. It draws attention to the controversial nature of his statement. He is responding to public calls for greater tribute to be paid to the Grenadians who lost their lives fighting the Americans, with the recognition that they were defending a sovereign nation from what was, until the preceding week, seen as Grenada's number one enemy: the United States. This is clearly an awkward tribute to work into a diplomatic back-patting event, hence the uncertain tone of the sentence.

Generally, it seems that many Grenadians have only a vague sense of the original purpose of this official commemorative day. The ceremony was not well-advertised, nor did it receive coverage in the local newspapers. Even St. George's University students

are largely unaware of the event. Their absence is especially striking given the abundant free gourmet food at the reception following the event. There was also a concert held at an outdoor park near Grand Anse beach, featuring two country western singers and gospel acts. This event was headlined in the *Grenada Advocate* (Oct. 26, 2007a) as: "Oprah Winfrey's dad to visit for thanksgiving day," as he was invited to help highlight Grenada's recovery from the hurricanes. For many, the historical significance of Thanksgiving Day is lost, and the day is seen as a pleasant break from school or work.

In a section of the *Grenada Advocate* entitled "Your Voice" (Oct. 26b, 2007), four random Grenadians were photographed with their answers to the same question: "Do you believe that the general public understands the meaning of Thanksgiving Day?" George, a former school teacher, said: "We, the older folks, know that there was a rescue mission and the reason why that decision was taken, but I don't believe that the younger generation understand why we observe such a holiday. Personally I don't think we need a holiday, it's October 19 that should be remembered with a holiday." George Grant, a well-known weekly radio talk show host, said: "Generally speaking the majority of the people don't have an appreciation for thanksgiving, most people, especially the younger generation, don't even remember why October 25 was declared a public holiday." An older man named Elsee (no profession noted) commented: "We have to be thankful to the Americans for rescuing us from that group of Marxist and Leninist who have changed our history, but I don't think that October 25, should be declared a public holiday. It is necessary that more education be done about the significance of the day and we don't see that happening on the day, before the day or after the day." A younger man named Nick is quoted: "Tell the Government to make it a requirement for students to know our

history, and then they will understand what October 25 means to Grenada. The younger generation don't have knowledge about our history so they see the day as one to fete, that should be a day to remember, but I still don't think it deserves a holiday." These four voices sound a clear consensus that the meaning of October 25 is lost to the younger generation and that education about Grenada's history is necessary; and, for three of them, the day should not be marked as a holiday at all. Their opinions are a fine introduction to the controversy that surrounds Thanksgiving Day, as we turn to the newspapers and Thanksgiving Day's twin holiday: October 19th.

October 19, 2007

The events of October 19th overshadow, in many ways, the arrival of American troops six days later. It is the massacre on the Fort, and the death of Maurice Bishop and others – that violent beginning of the end of the Revolution – that weighs most heavily on the national consciousness during October. The newspapers provide a useful window onto the controversies and debates which are resurrected during these difficult weeks. They provide coverage of the ceremony on the Fort, give voice to those who wish to speak about their experiences on that fateful day, and open debate about the propriety of a national holiday which marks the death of American soldiers instead of officially commemorating the Grenadians who died on the 19th.

Unlike the Thanksgiving ceremony at St. George's University, the gathering at Fort George of family and friends who lost loved ones on October 19th received coverage in two newspapers. The event was not publicized, and unfortunately I only learned about

it after the fact. Based on the papers, close to one hundred people assembled at the Fort, which would make the event significantly larger than the one at SGU. It is organized by The Maurice Bishop and October 19 Martyrs Foundation. Speakers included the organization's vocal member, Dr. Terence Marryshow, and an Anglican priest, as well as performers of poetry and song. Father Edward Mark is quoted as follows:

> I say that more respect must be given to this day. It must be recognized as a day of prayer … a day when we can open our houses of worship, a day when we can begin to teach our children our history and stop pushing it under the carpet. We must recognize also that on that day, just as October 25, blood was spilled … I was right here, no one told me about it. I saw blood, I saw a piece of an arm, I saw many severe injuries. I stand here not as a stranger, but as one who experienced near death and today I thank God for having me alive. [*SIR*, Oct. 25, 2007a:7]

His call for a National Day of Prayer became the headline for the article.

Marryshow read aloud the names of the seventeen victims, and argued for the recovery of the bodies so that the families might have closure (*Grenadian Voice*, Oct. 27, 2007). He called for the government to open a ~~"c~~ommission of inquiry" into the events on the Fort and the location of the bodies. Bearing in mind the exchange between the Prime Minister and U.S. Charge d'Affaires on Thanksgiving Day, consider the following excerpt from the *Spice Isle Review* (Oct. 25, 2007b:3):

> [Marryshow] said that they have petitioned the government over the years without any success and will continue until something tangible is finally done. "~~R~~ecently the government received some information from the United States Embassy regarding the whereabouts of the bodies." The United States Government has been accused of being aware of the location of the bodies.
>
> Many are convinced that the Americans know where the bodies of Bishop and others are, but will not give them up for a decent burial because Bishop, who was very much against the policies of the U.S. government, would be made a martyr. The U.S. Army is said to have been in contact with the bodies at Calivigny after their arrival here on October 25, 1983.

> … Marryshow also called for due respect and recognition for the local soldiers who died defending Grenada's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, just as the 19 U.S. soldiers who were killed in "Operation Fury" … "This must be corrected because today we have in Grenada a monument that is dedicated to those who invaded; but those who lost their lives defending Grenada's independence have never been recognized."
>
> … At least 13 soldiers died during the war here 24 years ago.

Marryshow raises the question of a U.S. cover-up regarding the remains of the victims – a possibility frequently noted in the literature concerning the mysterious disappearance of the bodies. His call for a new commission of inquiry can also be understood as an indirect comment upon the recent release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report and its widely-perceived inadequacies.

The theme of the service was "Give us the chance to smile, even though death's frozen frown has wounded our souls. Give us Decency! Give us Peace!" The tone of the theme speaks volumes toward the unresolved emotional turmoil generated by these events. In 2007, this was magnified by the recent resentencing and release of the prisoners still held at Richmond Prison for the violence committed on the Fort. Marryshow is quoted as noting that "Grenada has seen six of the perpetrators set free and very soon there would be a crime but no criminals as the justice system seeks to set them free … 'Closure is part of the division in this country'" (*Grenadian Voice*, Oct. 27, 2007a). Two poems delivered by Augustine Vesprey are also reprinted. Consider these two stanzas:

> Wherever is your resting place
> Come hither in haste,
> Your enemies that slayed you in beastly proportion
> Are now back in motion,

> With amnesty and a genuflecting
> Constitution
>
> .
>
> Jurisprudence that ignores social agony,
> Her Majesty‘s Court bout resentencing travesty.
> Christian Doctrine disparaging morality,
> Political animosity, murderous absurdity,
> Victims Rights and Justice an elusive fantasy! [ibid]

The events of October 19th are clearly very much alive for many Grenadians. This makes it all the more striking that the younger generation generally remain uneducated about Grenada‘s history, nor do the majority appreciate the significance of October 19th and 25th.

October: A Month of Remembering and Forgetting

Beyond discussion of the anniversary days of October 19th and 25th, the newspapers are filled with articles tackling the turbulence of October 1974, and more broadly, the revolutionary period and its lasting impact on Grenadians. The themes of remembering and forgetting run through these narratives in a topsy-turvy fashion, with the imperatives constantly changing target and accusations flying in both directions. It is the martyrs on the Fort who should be remembered! But do not forget the victims of the revolutionary period who were tortured and detained! Remember our beloved leader, Maurice Bishop! But do not forget the atrocities he committed! Remember the Americans who rescued us! What about the Grenadians soldiers who died defending us from the Americans? October 19th! October 25th! It is time to move on! It is time to remember!

While the ceremony on the Fort commemorates the loss of Grenadian lives on October 19th, the day also offers a chance to remember those who suffered under the Revolution. I should note that newspaper articles about this period of Grenadian history are commonly characterized by a certain informality in which personal experiences are interwoven with undocumented statements of fact or purported behind-the-scenes peeks into the goings-on of the Revolution. Selwyn Mitchell (2007) authors a long article in the *Spice Isle Review* entitled ~~"O~~ctober 19: The other side of the coin." He chronicles the start of the Revolution on March 13, 1974, when Bishop's party first seized power, and elaborates the many restricted freedoms and atrocities committed under the new ~~"d~~ictatorship." He emphasizes the attacks on religion and the church, and details methods of torture used by supporters of the PRG. He concludes:

> The families of Bishop and others killed on that fateful day were most traumatized and may even be grieving to this very day. But what of those who were killed on March 13, 1979? What of those who were jailed innocently by the PRG and are still suffering today? Haven't they families and relatives? Haven't these people flesh and blood too?
>
> The revolution of March 13 was the most evil, tragic, horrific, brutal and painful period in Grenada's history. The revolution must have died for God reigns supreme. The PRG was born in deceit, it thrived on deceit and it died in deceit. [ibid]

It should be noted that the ubiquitous phrase found in historical sources about the takeover on March 13th is that it was an ~~"a~~lmost bloodless coup." Mitchell's reference to ~~"t~~hose who were killed on March 13" perhaps refers to ~~"t~~he only confirmed death among the soldiers was that of an officer, Hyacinth Brizan, but it is widely believed that there were more" (Steele 2003:382).

These recollections of the brutal side of the revolutionary period are coupled with efforts to complicate the typical picture painted of Maurice Bishop as a Grenadian hero. An article by Maurice Patterson (2007b) in the *Spice Isle Review*, entitled "Thanksgiving – a political stunt" opens as follows: "'Maurice', his mother Alimenta admitted, 'was not an angel.' (She wishes they would just leave it alone, this yearly thanksgiving and opening of old wounds). Even she is getting tired of this star boy, good or bad simplistic version of October 19." His article offers yet another chronicle of some of the events during the revolutionary period. As is typical of this genre of articles, there are references to events which are not common knowledge and may or may not be true, as well as a personalized take on the events, replete with nicknames of Grenadians. Patterson concludes:

> No, Maurice was no angel and no romanticized legend, nor was he ever a real Marxist or a revolutionist. He was a power infatuated boy who since in college days had been writing letters to friends of his plans to become prime minister. He died by his own law that anyone spreading rumours to undermine the revolution or taking up arms was to be shot, and his signature on 200 detention forms are no fakes. [ibid]

Of course, this effort to portray Maurice Bishop in a negative light has its counterpart. An article by Michael Roberts (2007), who describes himself as a member of the People's Revolutionary Army and a former Chief of Personal Security to Bishop, describes in painstaking detail the events of October 19th from his perspective. He emphasizes their friendship – how he used to hide Bishop's cigarettes, or the rotor from Bishop's car to keep him from sneaking away from his own bodyguards. He recounts their conversation on October 19th, when he visited Bishop while under house arrest. Roberts also offers his interpretation of the demise of the Revolution, arguing that

—immaturity within the ranks of both the ruling party and the armed forces ... is what created the fault lines that culminated in the house arrest of perhaps most popular of Grenada's Prime Ministers" (ibid). He also argues that the primary mistake of the New Jewel Movement was that, in spite of its —progressive, people-oriented approach ... it forgot one thing. Grenadians have always identified a strong nationalist leader first and party affiliation second. And most importantly Grenadians have always identified political change with elections and voting" (ibid). In this analysis, the downfall of the Revolution is traced to suppression of the Constitution and house arrest of a beloved leader, rather than atrocities committed by the PRG.

These articles point to the politics behind days of remembrance in Grenada, where the events commemorated occurred within the lifetimes of Grenadians, or their parents'. Who is it that is being remembered? And who is forgotten? Memorials in Grenada raise similar questions, as two very large monuments dedicated to the American soldiers and Operation Urgent Fury stand in stark contrast to the small plaque marking the site on the Fort where so many Grenadians lost their lives. Letters to the editor entitled —The Forgotten Faceless People" (*Grenadian Voice*, Oct. 27b, 2007) and —October ... a month to remember" (Marryshow 2007b) exhort Grenadians to recall and commemorate the events that shaped Grenadian history. These calls become especially meaningful when considering the general lack of education about these events among the younger population. Marryshow writes that following the recent release of prisoners, —Grenadians can now be counted among the most tolerant and forgiving of people around the world which is why it is said that Grenadians have short memories. This so-called short memory is a euphemistic way of saying that Grenadians are very forgiving" (ibid). At the

same time, this short memory is problematic for the many Grenadians who still seek closure for the wounds opened during the revolutionary period and its bloody end. They wish to keep alive the memory of their loved ones, and to unravel the mystery of the whereabouts of the bodies.

Days of remembrance in Grenada do not bring a neat sense of closure, a chance to merely reflect upon the past. This is because the past is not past – Grenada's history continues to entangle Grenadians' present, complicating their efforts to see themselves as a united people and nation. The conflicts of the revolutionary period seep into important areas of daily life today, perpetuating the sense that Grenada is an island of conflict and the image of Grenadians as conflict-oriented, divisive, and even violent.

Echoes of the Revolution: National Politics and Grenada's History

One final and important public arena in which Grenada's past is made present is contemporary politics. This was never more apparent than in the tense months leading up to the 2008 elections, in which Keith Mitchell and his New National Party (NNP) sought an unprecedented fourth term. The conflicts of the past resurfaced to create conflicts in the present, as Grenadians tussled with the divisive use of revolutionary history by political players. The public arenas of political debates, official speeches, newspaper reports, editorials, and online discussion groups resounded with efforts to evoke, interpret, and contest representations of Grenada's recent history in light of contemporary political developments. Further, the very fact of these struggles generated debate about the *kind* of people Grenadians are – politically, historically, and in 2008. This forceful

and dynamic interrelationship between contemporary politics and representations of Grenada‘s recent history had an alienating effect on the youth, most of whom know little and care less about the Revolution‘s ongoing tremors in contemporary society. As a key voting block in the 2008 elections, leaders of both political parties had to make strong efforts to recruit the youth through alternative schemes devoid of historical content, such as massive gospel and reggae concerts.

Spicegate and Elections 2008

The general elections held on July 8, 2008, were preceded by a turbulent year of politics. Though constitutionally due by the first quarter of 2009, the Prime Minister determines the actual election day. The suspense around this unannounced date was used for months to heighten the nation‘s feverish anticipation of an important election. By February 2008, both parties had campaigns in full swing and it was felt that elections could be called at any time. The Prime Minister announced the date on June 2, 2008. Meanwhile, the preceding year witnessed five changes of administration in other Caribbean nations – St. Lucia, Jamaica, Bahamas, Barbados, and the British Virgin Islands – sparking talk of the ―winds of change" reaching Grenada.

Keith Mitchell‘s New National Party was running for an unprecedented fourth term. The NNP had been in power for thirteen years after defeating the National Democratic Congress (NDC) led by then Prime Minister George Brizan in 1995. In 1999, they secured re-election in a landslide victory, winning all fifteen seats in the House of Representatives. In 2003, however, they narrowly retained power by six votes

cast in the Carriacou and Petit Martinique constituency, giving them a majority of only one seat in the House. Projection polls promised a tight race, and the country became vividly divided into yellow and green – NDC and NNP party colors, respectively. While some felt that this divisiveness was par for the course, and typically Caribbean, others resented the political tribalism that rifted the nation. In spite of Grenada's own turbulent history, political tactics like the color war were labeled foreign imports, with fingers pointed at Jamaican political advisors as the likely source.

Tension surrounding this election was further heightened by the common understanding that the Prime Minister held an especially vested interest in winning. Mitchell, as head of state, had received immunity from prosecution in the United States for allegedly accepting a bribe in the locally well-known "Briefcase Affair." However, it was widely publicized that he would face charges if he did not win re-election. While many felt that this heightened the stakes for NNP supporters, NDC supporters were equally adamant that this was a key election: many felt that Mitchell was well on his way to becoming a dictator if he achieved a fourth term.

This sense, on both sides, of heightened stakes in the 2008 election may account for the surge in references to Grenada's politically turbulent past. Echoes of the revolutionary period reverberated throughout the campaigns. References generally fell into four categories. It was contended that the tension within the nation was reminiscent of the pre-Revolution atmosphere; Keith Mitchell was becoming a power-hungry dictator like Eric Gairy or Maurice Bishop; the tactics employed by politicians resembled those used by the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG); and the politicians themselves, particularly from the NDC, were once active players in the Revolution and now sought to

reinstate their previous agendas. Within this tense atmosphere, a series of events in February and March, 2008, served as a lightning rod to bring these accusations together into a loud and angry debate. An incident popularly referred to by Grenadians as Spicegate is thus a useful case study in the way that post-Independence history became a key player in contemporary Grenadian politics.

The basic outline of the occurrence runs as follows: On February 26, a plainclothes police officer named Kelon Noel was caught spying on a National Democratic Congress executive meeting. The red light of his recorder alerted the NDC members to his presence in an adjacent abandoned building. Noel was apprehended, and his belongings confiscated as the NDC performed what they termed a "citizens' arrest." They admitted to "manhandling" him before he confessed that he was a member of the Royal Grenada Police Force. Noel subsequently filed suit against the nine members of the NDC Executive who were identified as participating in the alleged manhandling and detention. Four of these were current members of Congress running for re-election. Noel maintained that he sustained personal injury and loss of his belongings. When the accused NDC were interrogated downtown, a large crowd gathered near the Criminal Investigations Department, generating concern that there would be an uprising among the angry masses. Rumors of political unrest flew through the streets, with some even stocking up on food. NDC leaders called for peace, arguing that the NNP was deliberately provoking a situation in which a State of Emergency could be declared. Criminal charges were shortly dismissed, partly based on a medical report documenting only two bruises near Noel's elbow. A civil case was filed instead, which gradually faded from public interest.

In the very long list of scandals that regularly come and go in Grenada's political scene, Spicegate received extraordinary coverage in the newspapers. The event brought into the open what is usually an undercurrent of innuendo revolving around political players and purported ties to the Revolution. Suddenly, accusations were flying. An editorial in the *Spice Isle Review* (Mar. 6, 2008) comments:

> One must always remember that the conduct and complicity of certain executive members of the NDC in the demise of Maurice Bishop and the ill-fated People's Revolution in 1983 has been well-established, and no one knows for sure what they are planning or concocting … This country is split down the middle where support for political parties is concerned and it is hoped that the tribalism that exists does not translate or erupt into the kind of election violence that is associated with Jamaica or other countries.

In the April 17 (2008) editorial, the *Spice Isle Review* goes even further:

> Given the past involvement of some of the executive members of the National Democratic Congress in the tragic events of October 1983 … would it not be reasonable to find out what their plans are, even if it has to be done in a clandestine manner? If for example they were planning to use some form of force or underhand tactics to seize power just as they did in the case of Maurice Bishop in 1983 … is it not advisable, even reasonable to be able to gather such information?

The *Grenadian Voice* editorial (Apr. 5, 2008) echoes:

> [Detaining and abusing Noel] smack[s] of the days of the People's Revolutionary Government, of which some members of the NDC Executive were a part … Einstein Louison was also a member of the PRG but, even with the cloak of authority around him, can [one] point to any such high-handed and illegal actions on his part toward any citizen?

Louison is the NNP's Minister of National Security, and is used as a favorite rebuttal by NDC supporters to accusations that their party is run by former revolutionaries. A letter by a "Concerned Citizen" to the *Grenadian Voice* (May 3, 2008) claims that:

> the present members of the NDC are mainly members of the former Coard faction of the revolution. It is also clear that the bulk of their supporters

> are mainly persons who supported the joint leadership of Bishop/Coard (militias/PRA) … If one considers the recent incident with the police officer, it is clear it was the cartel at work.

On the other hand, the event is also compared to the work of the Mongoose Gang under Eric Gairy. This tact is favored by the pro-NDC camp, wishing to emphasize that the current political tensions and tactics echo the approach taken by Gairy when he feared his power was waning. This approach draws parallels between Gairy's dictatorial turn and Prime Minister Keith Mitchell. An article in the *Grenada Advocate* notes:

> Some critics of the local police have likened their tactics to the Mongoose gang, an extra legal group of enforcers created in 1970 by former Prime Minister Sir Eric Gairy to rough up political opponents. "I can't say I am too surprised because I think the powers that be are becoming desperate, and with such desperation at hand, anything can happen," said [former Attorney General, Lloyd] Noel. [Titus 2008d]

A *Grenada Today* editorial (Feb. 29, 2008) echoes this concern: "Our strong feeling is that the NNP out of its desperation will engage in activities that will set the stage for unrest in Grenada and the eventual declaration of a State of Emergency." Further, the Opposition Leader, Tillman Thomas, publicly accused the Royal Grenada Police Force of operating a special political unit that works for Keith Mitchell. Superintendent Anthony de Gale was identified by Noel as the superior who sent him to the Opposition's meeting, and according to *Grenada Today* (Mar. 14, 2008), "De Gale is known to have ordered police officers to form a human shield around the Grenadian leader last year to prevent a court bailiff from serving a court document on Dr. Mitchell in connection with a court matter in the United States." Thus, the credibility of the entire Royal Grenada Police Force is called into question as it is accused of acting as a political body.

After Noel testified that his testicles were squeezed during the ~~–m~~anhandling," this detail was reprinted across the newspapers. At a news conference at the ministerial complex, a ~~–s~~enior female journalist wanted to know if the officer sustained any injury to his testicles. _I never went back to do a follow-up. My testicles were squeezed, but not to the point where I might have lost one …,' said a smiling officer Noel to an outburst of laughter from a room packed with media workers" (Titus 2008e:7). While Noel's alleged treatment by the NDC is reported with humor, it can also be considered another ominous echo from the Revolution's dark history. Some of the most notorious documented acts of torture performed upon _counter-revolutionaries' involve cutting testicles and rubbing hot peppers in the wound. It is reasonable to expect that most Grenadians would read about the abuse of Noel's testicles with a shudder of recognition, even though this allusion to the revolutionary period is somewhat more veiled than the other accusations.

The tension caused by Spicegate fueled concern that the 2008 elections would spark instability in Grenada. As Spicegate drama spread throughout Grenada, popular references exploded. A new calypso featuring politicians' comments, entitled ~~–E~~verybody Peeping," saturated the airwaves. ~~–W~~ho send you?" became a rallying cry and shorthand for the event. At the same time, it seemed that tensions in Grenada were already leading to a surge in violence – yet it was taking the form of apolitical violence, often between friends and family and frequently over money quarrels. The murder rate in Grenada was surging to a record high in the middle of this politically tumultuous period, prompting a national address by the Prime Minister. This speech, and the new wave of controversy it generated, are the subject of the next section.

Law and Order

The first months of 2008 witnessed an unprecedented streak of murders in Grenada. By early March, there were already seven deaths – compared to nine for the entire year of 2007. With one exceptional case of a storekeeper being shot during an attempted robbery, the others involved altercations between persons who were familiar with each other. In two cases, the violence occurred within the family: a common law wife stabbed her husband, and a young man – who also happened to be a student at SGU and participant in my pilot study – chopped to death his half-brother with a machete. These shocking acts of violence rocked the nation, and soon there was a radio station-sponsored motorcade of youth around the island calling for an end to violence, and appeals for a Day of Prayer. In the midst of this tense and grieving atmosphere, the Prime Minister stepped forward to deliver a speech to the nation. On March 6, 2008, Keith Mitchell broadcasted a "Law and Order" speech. Instead of calming the people, however, it fanned the flames of unrest and sparked a new wave controversy. Popular discontent mainly arose from three key points: first, Mitchell's decision to invoke the political turmoil of the 1970's as the framework to understand the current crisis; second, his focus on the Spicegate incident in an effort to discredit the Opposition and link their actions to the PRG's tactics; and third, his insistence that no one is above the law, while he himself pursued legal immunity in the United States based upon his position as Prime Minister.

Mitchell opened his speech with a section dedicated to a discussion of the political upheavals of the 1970s and 1980s. The following is his key argument:

But to give of your best in this struggle against lawlessness and disorder, especially those born over the past two decades, we must first appreciate the historical context of the evolution of this problem from the perspective of the threat posed to our sovereignty in CARICOM.

LESSONS OF THE PAST

The threat to law and order in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique emerged, and was consolidated, in the 1970s. Our tri-island states' constitutional democracy then, faced the influx of instability and destabilization from forces opposed to the government of our first national hero, Sir Eric Mathew Gairy, who had to endure the consequences of radical populism.

Violent and criminal acts were perpetrated throughout the country for which Sir Eric Gairy was blamed, and designed solely to undermine democratic governance throughout Grenada.

The murder and disappearance of innocent Grenadians, the torching of schools and other such atrocities, were attributed to acts of desperation by Sir Eric Gairy only to be acknowledged after the facts, by the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) of 1979, as part-and- parcel of their own pre-revolutionary strategy.

The phantom plots and the strategy to undermine democracy, was carried over into the revolution of March 13, 1979.

In true Nichodemus-style, the PRG hijacked the country's democratic ideals at gun point falsely promising to liberate the people on the basis of an imported foreign ideology unsuited to the African ancestral heritage of the people of the Caribbean.

But as day broke on the revolution, its true meaning and purpose came to light.

Hundreds of Grenadian Rastafarian brethrens were subjected to the most brutal suppression under the PRG[5], while other prominent sons and daughters of the soil were singled out for special humiliation.

[5] Maurice Bishop originally courted Grenadian Rastafarians, successfully recruiting them to his cause. It is estimated that 400 Grenadian Rastafari were members of the National Liberation Army, participating in the overthrow of Gairy's regime. After gaining power, however, the Rastafarians felt betrayed by some PRG policies, especially efforts to destroy the cultivation of marijuana. A series of protests culminated in the detainment of 300 Rastafarians in a labor camp, where they were confined in unsanitary and inhumane living conditions (Steele 2003).

> Brother Strachan Phillips‘ body was riddled with nineteen (19) bullets on the orders of the People‘s Revolutionary Army (PRA) without any tangible proof of guilt.
>
> The media landscape was corrupted and became the source of Marxist and Soviet-style indoctrination. Hundreds more Grenadians, during the revolution, were routinely picked-up by revolutionary forces and jailed, while countless others were labeled ―counters‖ for not toeing the ideological line of the revolution.
>
> Even our present leader of Her Majesty‘s loyal Opposition, Mr. Tillman Thomas, was himself subjected to imprisonment during the revolution, under conditions best described as filthy and inhumane.
>
> Suppression, anti-Christian sentiments, tyranny and repressive laws, signaled the death of the ―revo‖.
>
> The revolution of 1979 ended in 1983 the way it started - violently and shrouded in deception.
>
> As a Christian society, we have endured the anguish to our psyche since 1983, willing as a nation to come together and forgive the transgressions of our past history though not necessarily forgetting the lessons learnt, lest we make the same mistakes twice.
>
> Brothers and sister, I am certain that you will agree that great strides have been made since the traumatic events of 1979 to 1983, to restore Grenada‘s capacity for industriousness, productivity, economic growth and stability, social peace, prosperity, progress and fulsome support for democratic governance and law and order. [Mitchell 2008]

The next section calls for a return to Christian values through the formation of a ―Rainbow Coalition‖ of ―the church, politicians, village groups, groups on the blocks, professional organizations, the schools, and other elements of civil society in defense of law, order and decency.‖ This is followed by a section entitled ―No One is Above the Law,‖ in which Mitchell raises the Spicegate incident:

> The exploitation of the ―politics of expectation‖ today, similar to the 1970s, is leading some among us to attempt to push the country dangerously close to the brink of anarchy.

To our collective mind, in circumstances where any citizen of our country is alleged to have broken the law or have serious allegations leveled against them where there is evidence to substantiate wrong-doing, then the laws of the land must be obeyed without fair or favour.

In this context, sisters and brothers, fellow citizens, if reports of the recent kidnapping, robbery and torture of a member of the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF) by some members of the executive of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) are substantiated to be evidence-based and true, then the rule of law must prevail …

The police in every democracy have a legitimate role to play in securing peace and safety. In today‘s geo-political world, their law enforcement functions are heightened by diverse and powerful local and international influences impacting domestic politics.

There are anti-democratic funds readily available to support subversive activities in the geo-political world in which we exist. There are also forces wedded to terrorist agendas and drug money has been used to subvert legitimate governments.

The Grenadian public needs to know that in the present period of preparations for general elections, all these issues are given added significance and the police as an arm of the state are obliged to act in the best interest of peace, security and stability.

The police, my dear brothers and sisters of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, represent the last line of defence for peace and stability in our country.

If they are subject to physical attack, detention against their will and abuse by anyone, for any reason, ***when there is recourse in law for their indulgence of any alleged transgression***, then we would have no society left.

Didn‘t we once before turn a blind eye to such acts of lawlessness only to later regret it?

Sisters and brothers, if incidents like these are allowed to take root in our developing society that we have worked so hard to re-build after the traumas of the 1970s, 1980s and two very dangerous hurricanes, then all our efforts will have been in vain. We will have nothing respectable, decent, fair and just to bequeath to the next generation.

> If and when this happens, we can turn the lights off on Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. [Mitchell 2008]

The alarmist tone of this section certainly did nothing to quell national anxieties about the rising political tensions.

The next section, "Present Challenges," carries forward the political thrust of Mitchell's speech by listing acts of "lawlessness" by the NDC. The angry reference to illegal NDC actions, such as constructing bus shelters and painting a pre-school without prior permission, must also be understood in the historical context which he is evoking. Similar community-based beautification efforts typified the revolutionary period. Thus, Mitchell describes the NDC's seemingly innocent actions as subversive. Significantly, there is no mention of the spate of recent murders which ostensibly sparked this address in the first place.

> But in recent times we have had the emergence of some rather disturbing acts of lawlessness and disorder that ought to cause serious concern for all of us. The problems that have arisen from this state of affairs are not hypothetical; they are not insignificant.
>
> The Grenada Boy's Secondary School (GBSS) was burnt a second time in the recent past similar to the Anglican High school and other buildings, by unknown persons.
>
> We have seen members and supporters of the NDC most recently dig up some of our roads, erect street signs, and construct bus shelters and other buildings without the permission of the Government.
>
> We have witnessed the defiance of the NDC Member of Parliament for the Town of St. George vowing to continue this lawless practice.
>
> Only recently, members of the NDC at the level of its leadership invaded my own constituency and interfered with a property of the government, namely a pre-school building, by proceeding to paint it without the consent, knowledge or permission of the Ministry of Education.
>
> But the episode did not end there.

> For following this act of lawlessness, the invading NDC forces then proceeded to curse and verbally abuse me threatening to hang me in the market-square after the next general election.
>
> If this is not provocation of the highest order my brothers and sisters, then what is? [Mitchell 2008]

Mitchell concludes his speech with a "Call for Unity" – an ironic move given the emphasis on "NDC forces" vs. NNP.

Opposition leader Tillman Thomas responded sharply to this speech, noting that the alleged "kidnapping" of the police officer was being used to whitewash the fact of his spying on the NDC. He is quoted as follows:

> I think that there are so many issues that the Prime Minister could have addressed at a time like now, when you have all this crime in society. Instead of trying to bring people together, and trying to set the tone for unity, trying to inspire people in a positive direction, the Prime Minister seemed to be on a road of division. [Titus 2008f]

This same article notes that "Analysts believe the Grenadian leader, who sought to put a historical context to current political tensions, was targeting former PRG members who now hold executive positions with the NDC" (ibid). Justin McBurnie, political leader of the GODP party, was even more pointed in his critique. His article, "To Hell and Back," notes that the national address

> was very meaningless to the current criminal state of affairs now raging in Grenada … What we heard Wednesday night was the prologue, preface, or preamble. We still waiting for the address itself to the nation. You forget Mr. Prime Minster that your Deputy Prime Minister is still to answer to charges in the United States? So what you talking about Grenadians should be law abiding? All you law abiding??? [McBurnie 2008b]

He might well have also pointed out that Mitchell was granted immunity from prosecution in the United States while in office, adding irony to his insistence that no one is above the law.

The NNP quickly rebutted this commentary in their own weekly article, NNP Perspective. Entitled "The NDC's Hypocritical Morality," the article marks a further deterioration in the tone of the debate:

> In a national broadcast on "Law and Order in Grenada" on March 6, 2008, Prime Minister and party leader of the New National Party (NNP), Dr. Keith Mitchell, devoted one-and-a-half pages of an 11 page text, to the historical context of the ill-fated Grenada Revolution of 1983. **One-and-a-half pages out of 11 pages!**
>
> This act of intelligence was enough to stir great anxiety in the leadership of the opposition NDC party, which prompted it to rush into print and to distribute a most vulgar political flyer demeaning (yet again) the Office of the Prime Minister and, for good measure, wrongfully accuse Prime Minister Mitchell of reliving the past and "hurting the conscience of all Grenadians" …
>
> The National Democratic Congress (NDC) should be re-named the **National Dance Company**, for its best performances are dancing from pillar to post in intellectual confusion, historical illusion and political backwardness. [NNP 2008]

Mitchell's decision to invoke the Revolution clearly touched a raw nerve on both sides of the political divide. While his speech perpetuated the tensions and arguments between political parties, it also incensed the general public.

SpiceIslander Talkshop Online Chatroom

The popular Grenadian online discussion forum, SpiceIslander Talkshop, provides a vivid glimpse into the public's reception of Keith Mitchell's speech. The following

topic, posted by the Government of Grenada under the subject line: "Address to the Nation by Dr. the RT Hon. Keith Mitchell - March 6th, 2008," which included a link to the text of his speech, provoked a long thread of commentary. I have edited and condensed the lengthy postings here for easier reading; missing sections are noted with ellipses. Unless otherwise noted, the repeating subject line reads "Re: Address to the Nation by Dr. the RT Hon. Keith Mitchell - March 6th, 2008":

> Date: March 07, 2008 at 01:29:01
> From: outsider,
> I find it very unpatriotic/politically motivated that the PM repeatedly cry down the revolution, and he say we all under the law,,well except those who have diplomatic immunity.
>
> Date: March 07, 2008 at 17:07:01
> From: Nutten Nu,
> You acting like you don't know that Keith was one of those who acted to undermine and destabilize the Revolution. A Howard lecturer is know to relate to students ways in which this was dane. I've also read a long time ago (in a book about Reagan) quotes of Keith decrying the Revolution...This is nothing new.
>
> Date: March 07, 2008 at 00:39:51
> From: Corporal Naught,
> Subject: Re: Address to the Nation by Thief Mitchell
> A desperate man making a desperate speech to desperately stay in office! What a pathetic sorrowful man?!
>
> Date: March 06, 2008 at 22:00:36
> From: Ideas,
> Please dont insult my intelligence, that was not an address to the nation. It was clearly an address to the NDC. Our Grenadian Politicians seriously lack Citizenship.
>
> Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:57:59
> From: onlooker,
> This man should be either in the pink house [local term for institution for the mentally ill] or under house arrest. This man is hell bent on sending Grenada into anachy. I have no doubt about that.....It's his only chance of retaining power, but it's risky....very risky.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:51:31
From: Lordhungry,
You got to be kidding me!
Law and ORDER?
aw and ORDER?
Law and ORDER?

Who use to ride in Kozenky's plane?
Who Kozenky bought motor car for?
Who invaded Restiener's home?
Who admit he collected money from Restiener?
What happen to the Call Center?
How he cud talk about the death of Stranchan Phillip, and don't mention his National Security chief was leading a squad?
Why he ask for immunity, if he has no reason to be immunized?
Dipcon
Capbank
Mikey Creft
Grynsberg
[These are shorthand references to scandals associated with the NNP.]

LAW and ORDER? you got to be kidding me.

Who said they have no gangs in Grenada,only some devious youths?

Yes I agree, "if the Cow kicking, the Calf go kick too" - But just remember, we are not on Old McDonald's Farm, we in Grenada.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 21:22:04
From: Observer,
I find the 70s and early 80s era outdated...fear mongering.....during the turmoil period I was under the age of 10.....this man don't serve people of my age and younger at all with all these nonsense....the bloody population is 30 and under...why the hell he using that era.....it's quite obvious the children of the nation is ignored for they selfish ways

Date: March 06, 2008 at 23:23:12
From: Cujo,
>>> I find the 70s and early 80s era outdated...fear mongering.....during the turmoil period I was under the age of 10.....<<<

Was talking about that topic...the age thingy, a few evenings ago.

Very good point;and I was about to mention this age thing, then I read your post.

There is a saying about knowing your past,to understand the present and so armed with both,plan your future.

So,do not be too dismissive about the 70's and 80's.

The participants are the same,their treachery well documented and the results of same ingrained in the minds of those who participated, the brutal murder of a well liked PM and several others.

Im sure you may have heard your parents speak of those days.

A victory for the NDC and its present leadership is a victory for Coard; and his group (orel) within the NJM/PRG; in which both Burke and David were a part; in the forcing MB [Maurice Bishop] to accept joint leadership and having him put under house arrest.

Hiding behind another good man, TT [Tillman Thomas] as they did MB.

Why reward that group of dishonest, traitors?

By the way, the tactics currently being used are also 70/80; the insiting of unrest, NJM/PRG programs, youth & others doing stuff in the community etc.mentioned in the NDC press release.

Coard also used the police to gain their support (gave them a pay raise,while MB was out of the nation),so you see, the reference to the 70/80 are very relevant to todays political arena in Grenada.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 07:12:18
From: sjb,
Excellent Post!

I read the NDC "Press Release", and I was shocked at how 70's it was. The Youth program painting schools and washing the streets is exactly the crap they did leading up to the Revo. It is all BS to fool young people. TT should know that and that is what makes me question his intellegence.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 00:41:47
From: Observer,
yes knowing one history is relevant and i am not asking for it to be wipe out but I think it's unfair to use tactic like these.....it will only perpetuate an ugly part in out history.

to me these guys are stuck in time....this is 2k8....and few remnants should not dictate what we should be dwelling on....we have nation affairs tpo deal with

here are more important thing to use in this mordern times.....so what you suggesting NDC will bring communisme once elected....I odn't think so and the guys NNP knows that as well but are using the period of the 70s and 80s for personal gain...it has nothing to do with children of the nation...

f these guys of NDc and NNP who remain from the era are wanton criminals why are walking free.....

bottom line Grenadians are looking for entigrity and good governance.....as I said a million times on here I voted for NNP in 1995 I was naive.....kiet came with his big American talk and the peole fell for it.....he squander the credit worthness you used to bash brizan about.....

what I am saying folks younger then me want real substance to face the challenge ahead....education,work just a chance to do someting for themselves and those around them.....

this explainx why the youths of the nation was blatantly neglicted since NNP is caught playing cold war games with the NDc.....this is why the youths will always feel left out and disenchanted.....now tell how the youth of today suppose tp relate to that....

If we continue like this we as a people will never move forward on mental front.....we mentally enslave ourselve with these ideologies that never relate to the current time.

Cujo your fear is not the fear of the youths today....

Date: March 07, 2008 at 20:23:05
From: StatsMan,
Subject: Re: Address to the Nation by Dr. the RT Hon. Keith Mitchell - March 6th, 2008-COMMUNISM?
Observer i don't want to acusse anyone here but u made mention of the fact that NDC will not bring back communism to Grenada.

I herd Hon. Peter David mention at an NDC meeting at the Melvile street fish market that based on the problems the country is now facing they are going to EXPLORE ANY 'MODEL' in the future.

Can u please shed some light on this for me. thank you.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 22:31:50
From: Observer,
Subject: Re: Address to the Nation by Dr. the RT Hon. Keith Mitchell - March 6th, 2008-COMMUNISM?
LMAO [laughing my ass off] mista statsman miss oui....whenever I rant or give lip sservice on here it's for the better of the island.....I am not affiliated to no party but it's right part take in the affiars of island and I od in the capacity as a citizen....

I am against mal administration and current administration fall into that pit and I am waiting for day I see corrupt bunch backs....

If NDc want to take the island into anarchy I am totally against that...though I know for a fact it's fear mongering

I must admit in my quest to rid the country of NNP the opposition is not put under the microscope.....they will be once elected to run the country affairs....

anyways I can't share any light on the issue

Date: March 07, 2008 at 08:32:16
From: Cujo,
>>> what I am saying folks younger then me want real substance to face the challenge ahead....education,work just a chance to do someting for themselves and those around them.....<<<

That is why I have suggested the need for another out,yes a third party.

No need to put your future on a failed,yes failed group;that brought and end to a bright future.

It's re fried beans.

There are enough people here (TS) and in Grenada that can launch out on their own and map out a path for exactly what you are wanting....you can even begin that movement.

This election should put to and end,once and for all the revolutionary period,not embracing it.

Cant relive the revo,but can build on the foundation it left us...to aspire to better things.

Another thing, Tillman was imprisoned by the very people in his party,as was Lloyd Noel when " they" disliked their stance against the revo.

Now, "they" are suggesting that KM is out to muzzel the press....propaganda once used being repackaged.
I have no fears,friend, just disgusted that the same people who kept Grenadians in bondage for so long are using the same methods to keep you in bondage just because they want a change.

Look for an alternative or start one yourself,you will get help.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 10:35:14
From: Observer,
Subject: But Cujo
why take yourself out of the scope....? NNPp got the same elements too and yet you support them....it getting rid of the revo elements is you mantra it shoukld be for all.....

you said Tillman was arreste back then....I think it show Tillman is the bigger man. I still think all free Grenadians should have a say in they country affairs.....this from Revo know better much better than think otherwise....I know they know those days over and it time to move on....it's only way can continue a healing process....

so in stead of advocating NNP you should be advocating unity,patriotism.....and yes you should be in the forefront of the new party too

My wife keep telling go back and get involve and when I do it will a Canadian Contingency....LOL...seriuosly I have thought about it since I was in high school.....my classmate were all ready to go....LOL and I know where to find a few of them when the time is right.....

Date: March 07, 2008 at 11:24:06
From: Cujo,
Subject: Re: But Cujo
>>> so in stead of advocating NNP you should be advocatingunity,patriotism.....and yes you should be in the forefront of the new party too <<<

One at a time.

The bondage people have been kept in is just what you have said,and the cause of many problems.

We are led to believe that if you don't support NDC you support NNP, that is crap.

If there is no alternative to end that revolutionary period and tactics;maybe I could work with NNP and deal with KM at a later date.

Yes, there are NJM/PRG in the NNP,but they were not the ones that unleashed the vitriol that led to the murder of a PM.

Thats the difference.

As to the starting a movement,maybe too late for me,since I could not be a candidate due to absence from the country.....must be resident for at least a year.

But you can do it,ask for help and you will find enough people who will support and finance another option.

Im suggesting that other option.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 21:37:58
From: CPD,
Subject: Re: But Cujo
This reminds me of something RD said before (not an original, it was said before); "at least he is our dictator" when talking about dictators friendly to the US.

This sounds like my RMC [Revolutionary Military Coucil] is better than your RMC. Idiotic if you ask me.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 23:53:33
From: townman,
Cujo, dam you, GOD GIVE ME STRENGHT, you got to be an NNP plant, when will you start to respond without looking at things from inside of a four king tunnel, you are very upsetting. in your present state you are behaving like Keith, you will bait the Devil.

Did you by chance get to listen to that Insulted statement that went down as a national address to Grenadians and the rest of the world. If that was not setting the stage for political trouble then what is. I taught that was a funeral and the dead person got up and started speaking and you happened to be the only person who found himself listening. Cujo, Cujo. Cujo.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 08:36:11
From: Cujo,

>>>Cujo, dam you, GOD GIVE ME STRENGHT, you got to be an NNP plant<<<

Where in the post is the planting of the NNP ?

Does the truth offend you?

Like I mentioned to Observer,get together and form a third party and relalise your hopes, don't go for the failed politics of the 70/80.

Create your own change and make your own world.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:54:50
From: Townman,
Lordhungry that man belongs in the pink house, the COP too,

Date: March 06, 2008 at 21:09:49
From: Lordhungry,
Ask who benefitted from the 1983.

They used this unfortunate incident to ride on the backs of the people. Just say RMC and blind them, and for years they got away with that mess (we are in 2008) - It did not work last election and it certainly won't work this time around.

Calling out Uncle [Eric Gairy] name "The First National Hero" - that is why he bestowed this honor on the deceased? Pityful trying to use the dead for POLITICAL milage.
"LET THE DEAD BURY THE DEAD"

Date: March 07, 2008 at 09:59:21
From: Lanse Boy,
This is an attempt to plant fear in the minds of the people of Grenada using references of 1979 – 1983. What nerve to talk about law and order with so many allegations against him and his administration? What nerve when he is seeking immunity from prosecution in the United States. What nerve? Well, I hope they can produce the evidence if the police officer was in the line of duty. I guess that is why it took him so long to respond to the incident, he and his team was looking for the most advantageous spin. Sometimes I wonder how people can say the things they know in their hearts are not true, how can one sleep at night? What a man without conscience. Just imagine I admired and befriended him when we were growing up. Lord help us all.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:45:31

From: Enlightened,
I am utterly embarrassed by our dishonourable PM. Waited to hear the "real" facts but none was forthcoming. As usual, the thrashing of the opposition. Can you recall a time when this psycho spoke the truth? Desperate fella.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:17:23
From: Observer,
Subject: Re: This Man dwell On The Past....Fear MOngering
I refuse to listen any further.....only people that wants to be fooled will be fooled....

It will be a mockery if this man is not charged and jailed,....

the pink house is too good

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:09:21
From: Iabaye,
I can't believe I heard the same man that applied for immunity against accusations/allegations on corruption charges while in office, in US court of law telling the audience that neither , the son of the minister of social development, his former body guard or"HIM" yes "HIM" is above the law. Thats gross hypocracy while contradicting his application for immunity. Please!!! who really fooling who?
….

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:12:03
From: You don't know me,
I've never posted here before, but the Prime Minister's address has compelled me to speak up. I personally am very proud of my country and our leaders. I think the Government has behaved very well, with a considerable degree of restraint in light of all these ridiculous accusations made against them. Just because the NDC make accusations, doesn't mean the accusations are true, and I am amazed at how low people's media literacy is that more can't see the value laden language, bias and editorializing that goes into the so-called 'news' around here!!!!

..the media jump on Government reporting on the basis of gossip far more often than is healthy for a society (except George..u know who u are, and I love ya), and then, when they are vindicated, I never see the same attention paid to correcting the mis-truths the media have created, except in some very rare cases.

This country has progressed, and is in fact seen as a model of post-disaster recovery all over the world. We should be relishing in pride! If this

government were nearly as corrupt as some would like us to believe, then there NO WAY we would be where we are now. Sometimes when I hear all these criticisms I get so frustrated by the ungratefulness of some elements in this country I want to scream, "LOOK AROUND YOU! CAN'T YOU SEE HOW MUCH YOU HAVE??".

Why Grenada, do we have such a hard time counting our blessings? Why do we seek to villainize people who strive to serve us?

This isn't some party-line I'm towing here, because I am not a Member of any party in Grenada: I am basing my opinion on the same news 'you' see, but perhaps I'm watching the stories with a bit more media literacy than you've got?

Propaganda is dripping from the NDC approach to siezing some power, and the signs are on the wall for the kind of regime they'd bring to this country. Although I believe VERY strongly in the principles the NDC espouse, I do not believe they are genuine. Instead I see a party manipulating the use of 'buzz' words and concepts that are popular...but they're only talking the talk - I don't think they'd walk the walk.

No government is so good that they don't need a robust opposition, and therefore, it's my view that it is time for Grenada to ensure that Grenada benefits from a strong, ethical, accountable opposition
- rather than -

"Her Majesty's Obstruction"

…

Date: March 07, 2008 at 10:27:51
From: Lanse Boy,
What ridiculous accusations? Wake up! You must have been asleep. You are out of reality when it comes to Grenada. Beautiful buildings are not progress. Are the majority of Grenadians happy? Hell no. Are the majority of Grenadians enjoying prosperity? Hell no. Are all Grenadians regardless of political party enjoying whatever you call progress? Hell no. Is the Government corrupt? Hell yes. Is the Country in debt? Hell yes. Does law and order prevail? Hell no. By the way, you sure sound like an NNP to me because nothing you have said here is fair or balanced. For instance if the accusations are so ridiculous why are they continuing to seek immunity from prosecution in the United States why not just face the charges and get it over with?

Date: March 06, 2008 at 21:32:56

From: Enlightened,
You are half blind. I too, am not a member of any party, but you seem not to realize that it is the government's responsibility to build roads, hospital etc. so what's your point? (Expletive Deleted) is (Expletive Deleted)! All they seem to do is (Expletive Deleted). This opposition is the most well-behave opposition in the region. Maybe you don't like to read. If this is progress it must stop; First Bank, questionable stadium, oil and gas, briefcase,capbank, spying, lying and the list goes on. Do you know a time when our dishonourable PM spoke the truth? He embarrasses us every day.

Date: March 07, 2008 at 06:11:12
From: Dazed,
Subject: Re: PM 's last evening address to the Nation - March 6th, 2008
Beloved Posters - You are invited to think higher thoughts as Grenada seems to sink into an abyss of disquiet.

Stop the bickering for a minute and allow the following to inform your thoughts and direct good actions toward our nation. Let us remember one thing - politicians come and go, Grenada lives on!

As it relates to our current situation - that too shall pass. Have faith and move on!

Higher Thoughts
Today's Scripture
―As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9).

Today's Word from Joel and Victoria
God's dream for your life is so much bigger than your own! He wants to bless you indeed and enlarge your territory. His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours, and His plan is so much bigger than we can imagine. Choose today to focus on the good things God has in store for you. Don't allow the circumstances of life to drag your thoughts down. Choose to think God's thoughts by meditating on His Word. The scripture says to ―set your mind on things above." Those ―things above" are God's thoughts and ways which are, ―I am blessed and highly favored. I am above only and not beneath. I am the head and not the tail. I am a victor, not a victim. I am righteous, and my path shines brighter and brighter to the full day. I am more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus." When you allow those higher thoughts to fill your mind, they will direct your steps, and you will rise higher in life! You will see yourself as an overcomer and live the abundant life the Lord has for you.

A Prayer for Today
Father in heaven, thank You for thinking good thoughts about me. Help me to focus on Your higher thoughts today. Empower me to obey Your Word so that I can live as an overcomer in every area of life. In Jesus‘ Name. Amen.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 21:11:05
From: Townman,
you are nothing less than an fool to talk this nonsense. This man surrounds himself with foreigners to prove he dont trust Grenadians. He and His deputy seek ed immunity from the US state Dept. for what they claimed they are not guilty of. Then tell us why seek immunity. Most of the development you see in Grenada A non governmental, we have serious road work to be down on the western side of the country, rocks falling everyday, its my hope one of the falling rocks dont kill you on a visit.

Think before you open you blasted mouth or check with somebody on the ground. Its also my hope you can conceive so that your children may one day enjoy Grenada free of some leaches.

Date: March 06, 2008 at 20:23:59
From: Observer,
Subject: Re: WTF Wrang Wid YOu.....I am Not Proud to be Grenadian....I am Proud To Be from the Caribbean...It could have been any other piece of Rock
what fookery you talking about ungrateful.....the same fooking people that are asking for good governance were the same that begging and having fund raising to send to Grenada in time of need....

the only ungrateful ones are the tiefing corrupt poilitician who baltantly refuse to seek and wrok i n the interest of the hard working Grenadian at and abroad.

NNP don't just nedd to go these scum bag need to jailed

Date: March 06, 2008 at 19:55:34
From: Cujo,
>>> look at where this man has gone back to, <<<

Very valid points given the players today, and the linkage they gave to that past; when they presented the proposed Govt. of national reconstruction after Ivan.

That proposal,contained the same/similar wording as the joint leadership forced on the late Maurice Bishop.

> Date: March 07, 2008 at 14:24:35
> From: Dazed,
> Lanse Boy and Cujo - please take the energy level down a notch. We have just entered the atmosphere of a weekend when we ought to exhale with relief that yet another week is over - thanking our God that we have yet another opportunity at life to better of yesterdays.
>
> Let's move on to another subject through the following question: What do you all think is the best thing for Grenada right now? All posters are welcome to participate. By the way - thanks for the warm welcome I have received thus far. As you can see, I am not here to snipe not deliver any personal blows. I am here to contribute at the level I am used to all my life never falling beneath!
>
> It would appear that there is a Gospel Fest this week end to mark International Women's Day and what a wonderful opportunity it is to offer up our country in song and prayers. After all - don't you think that is the kind of energy Grenada requires now in order to be revived? Come on - leh me hear amongyou!
>
> Date: March 07, 2008 at 15:44:26
> From: Lanse Boy,
> Dazed welcom. Not a day goes by that I do not pray that things will change for the better in Grenada. We all should look forward to the day when we can have a Government in Grenada that serves all her people regardless of political affiliation, religion, and gender and socio economic class. Until then we will experience the crap that has been going on for years, this Government gives the appearance that Grenada belongs to them and only them and their party, and they can do anything they want to and for anyone.

In this thread, the many levels of discontent spawned by Keith Mitchell‘s speech are exposed. Talkshoppers fiercely critique his decision to use this particular historical framework, the way that NDC is linked to communism and the Revolution, the fact that this whole process alienates the youth, as well as the hypocrisy of his ~~“n~~o one is above the law” stance. Further, this thread captures much of the content and spirit of political debate in Grenada. To begin, the presentation of facts is always contentious. Multiple

versions abound. A meta-discussion of the contours of the debate ensues, questioning the validity, purpose, and motives of those who question the facts. The discussion continues to move outwards, with the tone of the whole endeavor being questioned, as well as its implications for Grenada and Grenadians. Posters are opinionated, and quick to condemn others. Indeed, this very much fits some of the cultural stereotype of Grenadians – an observation which is often noted by posters themselves. Mitchell's speech provided the impetus for a concentrated dose of Grenadian political debate in this Talkshop thread.

Discussion

An editorial in the *Grenada Advocate* (Mar. 14, 2008), striking a rare note of objectivity, calls for politicians to rise above the tensions and ~~"l~~ead the nation out of this petty squabbling." In an effort to frame the incident in a larger context, the article once again draws upon the representation of Grenada as an Island of Conflict.

> While a minority with ulterior motives and dishonourable intentions may be happy with this unstable political climate, we would like to believe that the majority are simply fed up.
>
> Former Prime Minister George Brizan in his book "~~G~~renada – Island of Conflict" chronicles our instability and ongoing political upheavals as a nation over the years.
>
> To many, it would seem that every time we are on the verge of lifting our heads from the murky waters of this instability, a socially or politically motivated scenario is created to threaten those efforts …
>
> Political commentators here seem to think that things are bound to get worst [sic] in the months ahead as campaigning intensifies.
>
> We hope not. [ibid.:8]

An article by Dave James of Snug Corner, published April 17, 2008, in the *Spice Isle Review*, sounds the only other voice of dissent in the midst of the scandal-filled pages. He argues:

> Our problem is neither a N.N.P. problem or a N.D.C. problem, but a larger Grenadian problem that has transcended over the years … We have moved from developing Afro centric communities in the 1960‘s and 70‘s to communities of pain and shame, with high unemployment, and underemployment, sky rocketing cost of living, with a huge underclass, growing drug-infested communities, prostitution, gambling and crime … I do hope that the people of Grenada emerge from their sleep and smell the coffee – this is the year 2008 not 1978. [James 2008:15]

These two commentaries attempt to paint a larger picture of the events in Grenada, drawing on the wider historical context without using that history to further divide the nation. Perhaps what is most striking about these authors‘ contributions is the comparative rarity of this approach within the public sphere.

Ultimately, Prime Minister Keith Mitchell‘s speech heightened the divisive, tense climate in Grenada. He did not address the actual murders in Grenada, domestic conflict, or the socioeconomic struggles which seemed to be raising tensions across the nation. Curiously, Talkshop discussants did not address this omission. Thus, while the ostensible purpose of his speech was to address the rising tide of violence, his move to politicize the events with a 70‘s/80‘s historical framework was successful. Debate focused on his use of Grenada‘s revolutionary history, diverting attention from current social unrest and hardship born of unusually trying economic times.

While Mitchell‘s political motives are obvious, I would argue that there is an additional subtext to his speech. Grenada‘s narrative about its past as an Island of Conflict provides a functional framework through which violence can be understood. It

was very difficult for many Grenadians to understand the unprecedented rash of deadly interpersonal conflicts of 2008, particularly in light of the contemporary future-oriented narrative of progress and unity. As a result, it was not difficult for Mitchell to link current events to a conflict-filled past in which Grenadians are habitually seen as divided, conflict-oriented, and capable of violence. In doing so, Grenadians were offered a familiar framework for apprehending what was actually a new phenomenon in Grenadian society. This move served the ruling party's agenda by further heating up the political scene and painting a picture of the Opposition as former revolutionaries ready to seize control as they did in the 70's. It also diverted attention from the economic crisis that threatened to destabilize the island's development trajectory as it had been defined by the NNP for the previous thirteen years.

Conclusion

Analysis of these public representations of Grenada's past reveals the multiple ways that history continues to divide the nation, particularly among the older generation and between the older and younger generations. The island's past is not yet past, as there is still conflict over the events themselves and their representation in the present. Grenada's pre-Gairy past is treated as ancient and mostly irrelevant history. There is no continuity or relationship between the conflicts of the colonial period and the struggles that led up to, and continued into, the nation's independence. Thus, much of the larger context and motivation behind Grenada's tumultuous recent political history is lost. The result is an image of Grenadians as divisive and conflict-oriented, rather than rebellious

or struggling for a righteous cause. The closed book of Grenada‘s earlier history vividly contrasts with the living history of more recent conflicts, references to which remain pervasive.

For the older generation, there is a widely acknowledged lack of closure regarding the revolutionary period. There is still controversy surrounding the fate of the prisoners sentenced for the massacre on the Fort, some of whom were re-sentenced and released during my fieldwork period, as well as the unresolved mystery concerning the whereabouts of the bodies. Thus, efforts to use the memory of Grenada‘s revolutionary period for political effect find fertile ground among those who lived through that era. National holidays which are officially intended to unite the people through the marking of shared historical events inevitably resurrect memories of divisiveness and conflict. Contemporary politics become inseparable from the events which rifted the nation in the recent past, and the frequently acrid tone of political debates only serves to reinforce the image of Grenadians as divided and conflict-oriented.

The youth‘s lack of education about Grenada‘s history creates a rift between the younger and older generations. While they perceive a lacuna when it comes to their nation‘s past, the youth remain detached from the current debates that still circulate among those who were more directly involved in the revolutionary period. Nowhere is the rift between the generations more apparent than in national politics, where history becomes a political football that is of little or no interest to the younger voting block. On the other hand, their lack of historical baggage liberates the younger generation to enjoy a holiday like Independence Day without resurrecting that tumultuous period of Grenadian

history. Instead, the youth can focus upon the major historical events of their lifetime, Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, and feel proud of their island's speedy recovery.

For the post-Revolution generation, the complexities of Grenada's national narratives about its past and future weave a fertile springboard for the creation of their own narratives about themselves and their country. As agents creatively negotiating these images of Grenadians as united and conflicted, advancing and behind, the youth draw upon the pieces of these national narratives that speak to their own experiences, perceptions, and ambitions. In the next section, we turn from public worlds to the personal worlds of Grenadian youth. In their own words, we hear about their life experiences, their understandings of the country and world in which they live, and their aspirations for the future. The analysis presented here about past- and future-oriented public narratives gives way to an exploration of the personal processes through which Grenadians make sense of these narratives and come to their own understandings of what it means to be from the Island of Conflict, Isle of Spice.

III. Personal Worlds: Voices from the Post-Revolution Generation

Background

This section explores the personal worlds of thirteen Grenadians in their own words. By creating space for their individual stories and unique voices, these transcripts provide a window onto a spectrum of Grenadian life that is distinct from – yet develops in interaction with – the public worlds within which these people live. I begin by explaining who these Grenadians are, how they came to be a part of this study, the context for the interviews, and the rationale behind their inclusion in this particular format. I address substantive issues about the content of the interviews and the relationship between public and personal worlds in the dissertation's conclusion, after the reader has had the chance to become acquainted with this group of Grenadians.

The study participants presented here range in age from fifteen to thirty-one at the time the interviews began in 2007. This age group falls within my definition of the post-Revolution generation; the oldest is at the upper limit, as he would have been three at the start of the Revolution and seven when it ended (and he reveals the greatest influence of the Revolution on his life), while the youngest were not yet born during that period of Grenadian history. I have organized the participants in groups of two, with the exception of the last section of five secondary school students.

The first three sections feature students at St. George's University. These interviews spanned three years, from 2007-2009. They were conducted in a small,

private study room at the university library, which the administration graciously allowed me to reserve for this purpose. I first met these students when I was a participant-observer in their university classes in 2007: "Caribbean Issues and Perspectives" and "Caribbean Government and Politics." They volunteered to participate in my pilot study at the end of the term, in which I asked twenty-two undergraduates the same set of questions. The pilot study was foundational in designing my research project, and based on my rapport with the students, and their willingness and availability, I approached ten students for further interviews in 2008 and 2009. The six students presented here were chosen based on the richness of our conversations and the diversity of their viewpoints and life experiences.

After conducting the pilot study in the library, I found that I had unwittingly set a template for the interviews that was nearly impossible to change. This created certain advantages and disadvantages for the study. On the one hand, the students were generally unwilling to change the format or venue because they *liked* to meet in the library. It was convenient and familiar, and as a practical matter, it greatly increased the odds that they would actually come to the meeting (notwithstanding Grenadian notions of time, which often meant I waited for hours before their arrival). As the months passed, I came to realize that the setting was much more than a convenience: the closed study room created the setting for a rare – for many, even unprecedented – speech event. In a country where everyone seems to know everyone, the interview space was exceptionally private. The one-to-one format created an intimacy that prompted a general feeling of openness and candor; at times, I felt it even created an atmosphere I termed the "therapy effect." Coupled with the implicit importance accorded their every word by the presence

of the voice recorder and my presence as an unflaggingly interested listener, the setting created a greater openness in a shorter time than I ever anticipated. By contrast, meetings in my home or at a café, for example, generated far less introspective commentary.

There was also a disadvantage to this format, however. Some of the students were subsequently reticent to bring me into their personal lives outside the university. After jumping at the chance to confide their feelings about parents, friends, and significant others, I could understand their desire to keep those conversations in a private room rather than bringing me into their homes. As a result, at times I was unable to corroborate the stories they told me with actions in the world – hence, my emphasis on these transcripts as narratives. Nevertheless, whether or not their stories are verifiable is not particularly important in the context of this study. The focus here is on how these Grenadians choose to present themselves, and the stories they tell about themselves and their country.

The university students are divided into three sections. "Teachers as Students" explores the perspective of two secondary school teachers who decided to return to school to obtain higher degrees. "Privileged Lives" presents the stories of two light-skinned St. George's University students who come from wealthy families. "Inside-Outsiders" considers the lives of two Grenadians who have strong ties elsewhere: the first was born to a Grenadian father and St. Lucian mother, and after being raised by her mother in St. Lucia, returned to Grenada for university. The second was born and raised Grenadian, but had settled in Brooklyn, New York, by the end of the interview period.

"Working the Spice Trade" turns from university students to two youth who received less formal education. One finished secondary school, the other did not. This

section tells the stories of these Grenadians who live in villages far outside the metropolitan hub of the southwest, and whose livelihoods are tied to spices and the tourist trade. The first interviewee is a young man I met when he was working at a tourist attraction in the far north of the country. We met several times over the course of my fieldwork, but conducted only one recorded interview. The setting was public – the open-air dining room of the estate where he worked as tour guide – but fortunately, it also felt quite private as very few people were around at the time. The second interviewee is a young woman I met at the market in downtown St. George's, where she was selling her spices. We also met several times informally, and conducted one recorded interview in her sister's cottage. There were family members coming in and out of the small space, but few showed much interest in our proceedings and the setting was conducive to relatively uninhibited conversation.

The final section presents the results of a six-week afterschool creative writing workshop and focus group that I conducted for five fifteen- and sixteen-year-old boys at their secondary school. I knew these boys for the shortest amount of time of any of the study participants, and the setting for our interactions was unique. We met in a classroom after school once a week and began with creative writing exercises as part of a workshop I had volunteered to teach. The students granted me permission to include their writings in my project, and I have excerpted them by way of introduction for each student. After the workshop, we conducted recorded group interviews for approximately one hour. The boys were shy to meet with me individually, but jumped at the chance to be part of a group discussion. I think the reasons are clear as one reads the transcript: the boys rely on each other for ideas and support, particularly for the "hard" questions. As

the youngest members of the study, they contribute very different voices to the chorus of Grenadians presented here.

The process of translating fieldwork experiences and accumulated data into a written ethnography requires the ethnographer to make endless choices about presentation. Some of these are pragmatic, some are unconscious, and some may seem inconsequential. In the end, they carry forward the ethnographer‘s deepest intentions about how he or she wants the work to be understood by the reader. Each choice also carries theoretical consequences, and for this reason, I think these choices warrant greater transparency than is often accorded in an ethnography. For this reason, I will briefly draw attention to a number of alternative formats and the rationale behind the final presentation.

I could have excerpted more interviewees‘ comments by subject matter, and created chapters with topical headings like ―Development‖ or ―History.‖ This may have coincided more neatly with the Public Worlds section, while also facilitating the tricky process of making the participants anonymous. However, it would also have turned the data into floating excerpts, stripped from the larger context of the speaker‘s life and thoughts on other issues. The tidiness of this approach would mask the inherent complexity of individuals‘ stories.

I could have edited myself out of the transcripts altogether and presented flowing monologues. While I had more than one occasion to cringe when listening to my own commentary and flawed interviewing skills, I also felt that taking myself out of the script would create a dishonest presentation. Although I strived to follow the interviewees‘ trains of thought, some interviewees waited for me to prompt them with questions more

than others. I welcomed free commentary from those who were comfortable with it; others finished their answers and waited for me to ask the next question. In those cases especially, my questions and interests inevitably sparked and steered the conversations.

It is also important to acknowledge the fact that my presence – who I am – influenced the conversations in incalculable and unknowable ways. While I am aware that critics of reflexive ethnography might argue that I am unjustifiably turning attention onto myself rather than the subjects of the ethnography by addressing this point, I think that lack of open reflection on one's role as ethnographer can be a serious omission. There is the objective reality of my presence as an educated, middle class, married, Jewish, American, white woman sitting across the table from Grenadians. As the most obvious example of my influence, the participants immediately chose to speak to me in a different kind of English than their usual, everyday conversational Grenadian English.

In addition to these factors, there is the influence of my personality, my style of dress and personal appearance, my conversational habits. The following example may shed some light on the troublesome dynamics that emerged from this package of factors that created my persona as an ethnographer. One of the study participants was a young man from a particularly underprivileged neighborhood. He worked as a DJ, and wore the popular New York City-influenced gangsta style of clothes; he was heavily tattooed and wore a diamond earring in one ear. When he first approached me after the class in which I was a participant-observer, he began: "So how are you finding the class, Madam?" Several encounters later, he was calling me "Babe." On a similarly uneven trajectory, he began by greeting me with the fist bump typical between hip Grenadians. Soon after, he changed his tact to a polite air kiss on the cheek. This example highlights the myriad

judgments which each participant consciously or unconsciously made in my presence, assessing what to make of me and how best to interact. No doubt the interviews reflect their choices.

Finally, I think it also relevant to note the influence of my gender on interactions with the participants. I have found scant commentary on this issue from women ethnographers in the Caribbean, but find it hard to imagine a fieldwork situation in which gender would not play some role in the interviewing arrangements and dynamics. While often the women readily confided in me in a way that made me feel like a girlfriend, the dynamic with the men was more complicated. Perhaps the following interview excerpt will succinctly make the point:

> X: I know I will not be getting married to a Grenadian ... it wouldn't happen.
> Noga: Why?
> X: My preference in women. This might sound really really bad, but ... Grenadian woman, mmm. Have turned me off, in terms of you know, like what I desire in a woman. The women that I have encountered here on the island seem to be very narrow-minded, and I can guess that's because most of them have never left the island ... I am not attracted to black girls anymore. My preference would be Caucasian, Asian, Indian, or Latina. It's very hard to find a white Grenadian. Like my Dad is complete opposite, he likes his brown skin. And I don't tell people that, like only very few people know that … I have a lot of female black girls that are friends, but sexually I can't, like, my cousin tried to show me porn the other day. _Cuzhe's really worried about me. And I couldn't stand to look at it. It's that bad. I would *not*.

It is hard to imagine the same conversation taking place if I had brown skin, or were male, or were from Grenada. This elephant-in-the-room was a relevant dynamic with many, though not all, male interviewees, and thus influenced some of the conversations in ways both obvious and subtle.

By keeping my voice present in the interview transcripts, I remind the reader of the ongoing influence that the ethnographer wields over the conversation as it is produced, rather than creating the illusion of an objectively-delivered monologue. By highlighting this role, I do not mean to imply that my influence was greater than any other ethnographer's working in the field. Rather, it is an effort to address the reality that the presence of the ethnographer, and his or her background and individual characteristics, shape all ethnographies, whether or not the ethnographer chooses to specifically draw attention to this fact. It is also a recognition that the category into which I was typically classified – that of a privileged American white woman – is not unfamiliar to Grenadians. I was no mysterious stranger approaching the tribe, in the fantasy of some early ethnographies, but sadly, I was a painfully *familiar* presence in this postcolonial nation. There was a well-worn niche for people like me, and I was immediately constrained by local expectations for someone with my skin color and gender.

It is also important to consider why I selected this particular group of Grenadians. They are not meant to represent the experiences or opinions of youth in general. There are far too few, and that was not the intention of this project. I did, however, consciously try to draw upon youth from a variety of backgrounds in order to present a spectrum of experiences. I also did not choose any youths that seemed to me to be radically exceptional or deviant in any way. There has been a trend in Caribbean ethnographies to focus person-centered works on individuals who are ~~"m~~ad" or ~~"p~~athological" (Wilson 1974; Smith 1963; Price 1998; Littlewood 1993). It is surprisingly rare to hear at length

from ordinary individuals reflecting on themselves and their country. The Personal Worlds presented here are an effort to bring a new set of voices into the conversation.

Finally, the format I chose to present this data raises the obvious question: why introduce the voices of individuals at all? The transcripts are lengthy, and the data could be presented more succinctly in an alternative format. Though I did not conduct a broad survey, more data from more participants could have been included in a summary. Like most decisions about data presentation, my choice is intended to advance a particular theoretical platform. At its most basic level, by creating individual portraits, the reader is able to become acquainted more deeply with the people about whom this study is written. There is no substitute for hearing their individual, unique voices – no summary or excerpts or statistical data – that can achieve this goal. The question then becomes: does this goal have merit? What do we gain by hearing these individuals?

In his article "What Is It Like to Be Someone Else?" Daniel Linger (2010) reflects on a criticism leveled against his 2001 ethnography, *No One Home*. At the heart of this particular work are a series of lengthy interviews with a handful of Brazilians in Japan, bracketed by the larger relevant context and empirical conclusions. Takeyuki Tsuda, a researcher on Brazilians in Japan, writes in his review of the book:

> I have never seen an anthropological ethnography in which fieldwork data is presented in such a raw and undigested form and am quite baffled why the author made almost no attempt in these chapters to analyze his material, or at least present it in interpretive narrative form … One wonders whether anyone, besides narrow specialists studying Japanese Brazilian return migrants, would find a book that primarily contains such detailed interviews with this or that individual to be very interesting … Some might say Linger has chosen to abandon his professional obligation as an anthropologist to analyze and interpret field data. [Linger 2010:219]

While acknowledging that an objective presentation is also valuable (and one which he does provide in the ethnography), Linger defends his decision to include the actual interviews:

> The interviews in *No One Home* are thus irreducible monuments that index the restless subjectivities of particular persons … The chief goal is not to generalize any individual's particular self-explorations across a population, but to exhibit a common subjective process yielding diverse substantive outcomes. [ibid.:220]

By including both an objective analysis of public representations and intimate portraits of personal worlds, I am also striving to show that the subjective work of creative individuals who strive to make sense of themselves, their lives, and their surroundings, is not reducible to the historical and collective trajectories which act upon them. The thirteen Grenadians presented here do not reach the same conclusions about the world around them any more than they share the same dreams for their futures.

What we gain by delving into their shifting, evolving, and dynamic self-representations and reflections on their country is a sense of the stabilities and instabilities created by the turbulent nexus in which they sit as a post-Revolution generation. The interviews do not reveal a consensus nor allow for generalizations (e.g. ~~"G~~Grenadian youth are for/against development"). In this vein, the discussion section that follows each interview is intended only as a forum for reflections and observations, and must not be taken as a summary or conclusion. Instead, these interviews offer a glimpse of the complex inner work that Grenadian youth must engage in when they confront issues such as Grenada's history, politics, nationalism, and development in light of how they see themselves, their country, and their future. These strands are inseparable and

irreducible, and only through an experience-near presentation can the ethnography capture the complex ways that creative minds grapple with this dynamic reality.

Based on the analysis I presented in the Public Worlds section, there are a number of issues which bear considering as we turn to the transcripts. We might expect the youth to show that they possess little knowledge of their country‘s history. How do they feel about this, and how does this affect their perspective on other issues? Similarly, we might expect the youth to be more aware of a master narrative about the nation‘s future and development. But again, how do they feel about these ideas, and how do they relate to their sense of self and their country? Given the fact that the master narratives about past and future are not equally distributed across Grenadian society, nor are they easily seamed together into one streamlined national narrative, how do these youth make sense of who they are and where they are from? These are the kinds of questions that the interviews allow us to explore by offering real-time access to the dynamic thought processes of individuals.

Before turning to the next section, a few final notes on the transcripts themselves. The following chapters contain compiled excerpts that are culled from all of the recorded interviews that I conducted with each participant. Due to the quantity of the materials gathered and length of the original transcripts, I endeavored to edit them for easier reading in a number of ways. Generally, because the chronology of the interviews did not significantly affect the content, I felt that organizing segments by topic made the transcripts much easier to follow. Significant shifts in time are accounted for within the excerpts. I also inserted paragraphing within monologues and eliminated repetitions and colloquialisms of casual conversation. Spaces between sections indicate a break in time.

Ellipses mean a section of text is cut. Parentheses indicate an action, tone, or non-verbal cue that occurred during the interview, or occasionally an undecipherable word or passage. My additional comments or explanations are bracketed. All participants endeavored to speak Standard English to me; generally, I decided to correct minor irregularities in grammar to facilitate the transition from spoken word to page. Written English and spoken English are typically quite different in Grenada – and the English-speaking Caribbean generally – and it seemed to me that maintaining a spoken grammar in written transcript had the potential to convey a negative impression of the speaker as inarticulate, when that was far from the case. Occasionally, the speaker spoke in strongly-accented or basilect Grenadian English in order to make a point or for emphasis. I have reproduced these sections as they were spoken.

All interviews were conducted in confidentiality, and the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement. Names in the text are pseudonyms, or, where indicated, deleted. All locating data have been changed. Names of places and schools are replaced with pseudonyms when their identification could compromise a speaker‘s anonymity; general references are unchanged. While endeavoring to preserve the integrity of each biographical portrait, I have also taken further measures to protect the participants‘ identities. Drawing from interviews with the wider pool of pilot study participants, I have occasionally spliced and shared sections of speech between those who hold similar opinions and backgrounds. Thus, should a participant‘s identity be suspected, no section of the transcript can be reliably attributed to him or her. Though this has little effect on the gist of the narratives, I felt it was a necessary additional

measure of protection for the participants‘ anonymity due to Grenada‘s small size and the general feeling that everyone knows everyone.

Teachers as Students

Randy

I met Randy through a St. George‘s University undergraduate course on Caribbean Politics in which I was a participant-observer. He responded to my request for participants in a pilot study, and we continued to meet for recorded interviews three times over the course of two academic years. Randy was thirty-one years old at the time of our first meeting, and he already had a career as a teacher. He took a study leave from teaching at a secondary school in Grenville, but remained an active leader of the teachers‘ union and planned to return to the same school to continue teaching after graduation. Randy also devoted much of his time to involvement in his evangelical church. He lived in a small town in the interior, and was deeply attached to this community where his mother and his mother‘s mother were born.

Randy spoke most passionately about politics, development, nationalism, and Grenada‘s history. Although his free time was scant, he always professed to enjoy the opportunity to discuss these subjects and frequently stayed past the timeframe he established at the outset of the conversation. His ideas often echoed those of the teacher in whose class we first met, views that I came to identify more with the forty-plus generation than his undergraduate peers. Although he was only three years old at the time of the Revolution, his closest family members were immediately involved, and he talked about their enduring influence in his life as revolutionaries.

Topics: Development and education; nationalism, politics, and the Revolution.

Development and Education

Noga: If you were teaching before, and want to go back, what inspired you to go to SGU?

Randy: Because the world has changed, and I believe that I have a significant contribution to make to my country. That is, to me, in politics, and I have looked around and I have assessed a lot of the persons that are involved who, I would put it this way, they are not very educated. And, a lot of the decisions that they make reflect that. And I believe that if you are going to get into something, you must study it, you must understand it. That you can seriously make an impact. That is why my minor is international politics.

Recognizing also the advent of the CSME [Caribbean Single Market and Economy], and the fact that as Grenadians, we are sort of at a disadvantage, because okay, I am a qualified teacher. But according to my teacher‘s certificate, it doesn‘t really position me to be very competitive on the general market outside of Grenada. Yes I‘m able to secure a job here in Grenada with that, and that can get me somewhere. But if I want to leave Grenada, I need to at least ensure that I have a Bachelor‘s, that I have a master‘s, that sort of a thing ... I intend to get a master‘s, most likely in international relations. I also intend to do some law … If SGU offers it, I will definitely take it. I believe in taking advantage of the opportunities that I have here at home rather than going outside.

Noga: Is SGU part of Grenada‘s development?

Randy: SGU has a major role to play, in my mind, in Grenada‘s development. The process has started. It is slow, very slow I should add. And I‘m saying that from the perspective that many of us as Grenadians now have access to the university. So, we in, and we developing ourselves. So from that perspective yes, it‘s playing a part. When you look at its contribution, otherwise, to Grenada, I am not satisfied that sufficient is done. The fact that we training doctors here, because the medical school is one of the most recognized, I think SGU should be in a position to do more for the medical system in Grenada. Be it assigning doctors to the hospital here for internship or whatever. I think it can play a more active role. Maybe set up a university hospital. A lot of buildings are going up here, there, and all about. So it means that somewhere along there are finances, so maybe they should look into that. As Caribbean students, and a Grenadian and a Caribbean student, I don‘t think enough is done to bring students together. That, too, is shortcoming of the student government, I must

add, the undergrad student government. And even as Grenadians we should be motivated to form ourselves into some form of Grenadian student association.

Noga: And there isn't?

Randy: As far as I know there isn't. You know, that we can really use this institution to get where we want to. But these things are slow in coming, and I hope at some point it would change and we could really have that *Grenadianness*, should be reflected at the university.

Noga: And you don't feel that it is yet?

Randy: I don't feel, I don't really feel it. In terms of the quality of education, I'm satisfied with what I'm receiving. I'm satisfied with the mode of delivery, and being a teacher myself, I think I'm in a position to assess what is happening from that perspective. And from that perspective, I must say it's of a very high quality. And I think that is very commendable. I really think we could do more. Because I see a university as really shaping the course of development of a country. That's my whole scope of a university. So SGU in Grenada here, some serious research, some serious something should be going into what is happening. We are on the road to elections. Is SGU bringing these political leaders together in a forum to discuss issues, to meet with students and to pose some serious questions to these persons? Are we facilitating that kind of thing? No. We could do much more.

Noga: What do you think development is?

Randy: For me, development has to do with education. Education and improvement in standard of living. Capital development projects, what we have going on now, we have complex, we have banks, we have cruise ship terminal, that is not development to me. Because it's not really enhancing the life of the people. It gives a show. But outside of the show, that is not being translated into money in somebody's pocket. It's not helping somebody to live better. And so I don't think of that as real, true development.

Noga: Do you think Grenada needs further development?

Randy: We definitely need further development. Grenada is one of the most expensive places in the world to live, in the Caribbean to live, and that is because again, as the leadership is not willing to take the steps that are going to take us out of that situation. Whereas we should be feeding ourselves and a lot of what we importing should not be importing, we not encouraging the development of agriculture. We talk agriculture. We give it lip service. But we not putting our money where our mouths are.

So take for example, we have carrots. We are importing carrots from Trinidad. Whereas some people will say what's coming from Trinidad is better to use because it's longer, it's smoother, and all of that. I agree. But the same technology, the same method that's

used in Trinidad to get that sort of a carrot can be used here, because we have better soil than Trinidad. But we are just not willing to get into that and to encourage people to do that. You go to the supermarket, you go to the shops, the shelves are filled with Buster [brand] and all of that. Trinidad again ... There's a lot of local industries that if you put things in place you can encourage them to produce more and cut down on the importation bill. If you're willing to do that, it's going to be even easier for us, you have more money to circulate in the country. We don't have to tax people as much. You too could export some stuff. But we, we ain't doing that. We ain't doing that ...

Traditionally, saltfish, green bananas, saltfish, sweet potato, and yams – we call green bananas fig – so you'll hear somebody talk about fig and saltfish. That was the food of the working class. Because a gentleman went into his backyard and got a hand of fig, and went to the shop and paid next to nothing for a piece of saltfish, and he was able to feed his family. Breakfast time in the morning, he was able to make local cocoa tea, and make saltfish souse again, or make what we call fish cake, and to provide a breakfast for his children. Saltfish now is eight dollars a pound. Which means that the average working class person really has to make a sacrifice to obtain saltfish ... Everything is just going up and up and there seems to be no consideration for the fact that we have people who are disadvantaged, and there must be some allowances made that these people could survive. It's a serious change. And if we are to get anywhere, we must ensure that people are able to eat.

We need to provide more opportunities for young people in terms of education. We have the T.A. Marryshow Community College, and I believe that we have the capacity in Grenada to make use of the facility even more, maybe even into a full-fledged university. But if we have bigger will to do that is a different story. And you'll hear talk about, —Oh we have scholarships that we're giving them, a scholarship to go to Mexico and what and what and what." Again, if you're not aligned then you wouldn't get one of the opportunities. In recent times, it has been realized that it has become so that I guess maybe the people that sit on some of these boards are aligning with a particular religious denomination. And so you'd recognize that a lot of people from that denomination is getting the opportunities. That is when sometimes you (?) based on who you know in society and so on. You know. This is what happens. Somebody told me a few years ago, and I don't know if we have changed that, that whereas the other islands will be sending up a hundred and something students to Cuba, we're sending just a handful, maybe a fifteen or twenty or twenty-five. (?) And all the other islands

sending all these young people. Why aren‘t we sending them? The opportunity is there, send them.

Noga: How do you feel about development of the tourism industry in Grenada?

Randy: In my view, Grenada isn‘t ready for tourism. There‘s potential in Grenada for tourism, but we not ready for tourism. We have no idea how to market our product. We haven‘t made our product tourist friendly. And when I look at St. George‘s, I said to someone some time ago, you walk through St. George‘s, you have Kentucky Fried Chicken, you have (?), there isn‘t a restaurant that is going to provide, is providing, strictly local dishes.

Noga: No? What about Marvelous Marva‘s?

Randy: You will get some local. You will get some local. Marvelous Marva‘s, Dayna‘s, you‘ll get some local. Right. But you come in on a cruise ship any day of the week, there should be a place when you get in in the morning that you can experience a local Grenada, a Creole breakfast. A hot cup of cocoa tea, don‘t you think? A fry bakes with saltfish souse or fish cake or a bakes that was made, as we say, with fire on top and fire below. You know, fig and saltfish. Oildown. On some days you can get oildown. But a restaurant that is set up primarily for these purposes, that someone can come there and really *experience* a *Grenadian* meal ... That when you leave now, you leave with a taste of Grenada.

Noga: Why do you think the government gave away all that land [to Peter de Savary for the Port Louis Lagoon Project] for $1EC?

Randy: Because Keith Mitchell is a pure capitalist. He opens up, what happens happens, and I guess under the table as usual they would have received what they wanted, so they can‘t be bothered. I think they are at the point where right now they want to get all that they can and they will can all that they can get. Whether he wins the next election or not, that is basically his last leg. I can‘t see him going beyond one more term if he gets it. It‘s a grab-all-you-can kind of strategy right now, so he doesn‘t care.

Noga: How public were the terms of the agreement?

Randy: Not very public at all. It was a hush-hush kind of thing. I think a few people here and there may have whispered a few things, I think the Opposition and a few other persons, and that‘s when people realized, well hey, these guys literally gave away the property. And that kind of thing. Another thing I am wondering, why sell? Why not lease? Yes, you interested in this, you want it okay, we‘re going to lease you the property for fifty years, a hundred years. That way you still have some form of control.

Noga: What did you think when you heard de Savary sold the marina for twenty-four million U.S. to Camper and Nicholson?

Randy: Well, de Savary is a businessman. I must say, I respect him for that and if I were in his position, maybe I would have done the same thing. He's a businessman, he's out to make money. And if, as we would say locally, if you get a fish head to suck, suck it. He acquired, he realized he can turn it over quickly, it would be profitable to him, why not. Do it.

Noga: How did you feel about Grenada's end of the deal?

Randy: I'm not satisfied with it from day one. I wasn't satisfied. My position is, extract what you can extract from a man. If he is coming, it means there is something that he sees that is interesting. He wants something. And we have a lot to offer, as opposed to the other islands. We have a lot going for us. And we have to take advantage of that. Yes, as a Grenadian, we would say that there is an increase in violent crime. But that is taken from the perspective that traditionally, you may have had one, two, three, or four. But when you look at our neighbor, Trinidad, where at one point in the year, if there's seventy days in the year, they would have had seventy crimes, or eighty-something, you realize, and when you look at your population, the crime to population ratio, your realize nothing is happening. I mean, people making a big thing because to them it's something new. But really, our crime rate is extremely low. People can walk the road freely without fear. And generally, the persons that are involved in these activities are persons who, they know each other, so it's not an isolated case when somebody just walk in the road and they are attacked.

Nationalism, Politics, and the Revolution

Noga: How would you describe the people of this island to a stranger?

Randy: … One of the things I find lacking now, in Grenada which I find to be more prominent in the other islands is that spirit of nationalism. You would find that the Trinidadian, the Guyanese, the Barbadian, the Jamaican, different nationalistic – if you take them out of the Caribbean and you put them in the U.S. and you can pick them out. They keep their accent and that kind a thing. You know them. What you would find is that in some cases before a Grenadian boards the plane, he or she already starts to yank. We don't have any more, I should say that, that spirit where we want to see Grenada go forward and I would attribute a lot of that to the political powers that be because that sort of a spirit we saw a lot of during the revolutionary period ...

But because, after that, a lot of what came, it seemed to me, was just an effort to erase that period of our history. You know, and with all of that, a lot of what would have been worked hard for during the revolutionary period has been lost to a lot of the new generations.

I find that really lacking. At one point in time there was talk about why not name the airport Maurice Bishop International Airport ... but evidently some people feel that if we do that, we'll be giving some form of credit, some form of credence to Maurice, and to the Revolution, and we don't want that. So it's only recently, maybe about ten or so years ago, that the highway was named Maurice Bishop Highway. It is only last year that somebody placed a sign there. And still, look at the size of it. If you don't know it's there you're not going to see it.

It's, to me, it's a whole conspiracy I believe to just erase that part of our history rather than embracing it and taking from it what was good. We had a soap factory here during the revolutionary time. When the interim government came we sold the stuff to Dominica. Dominica is now producing Refresh soap and we're buying it from them. A lot of the industry that was started – we had agro-processing, all the mangos and so on, we had the nectar, as it was called, so we had local fruit juices being produced. But we lost all of that. And so, we have placed ourselves in sort of a dependent position. What we really should have been producing here, or what was producing here, we now have to import, all because it was started under the Revolution.

Noga: What do you think are the most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people? That is, which historical events still influence Grenadians' identity today?

Randy: It's the Revolution, and I would say that because it has impacted in my life and as a youngster in Grenada at the time, and the fact that most of my family, my uncles, my cousins and so on were revolutionaries, and being around them, you know, it has impacted my life … Now you have the government administration identifying the Opposition as being revolutionaries, and so some people who may not have known about the Revolution, who did not live through the Revolution, are now curious as to what the Revolution was all about …

Noga: And the Revolution, it's not taught in schools?

Randy: It's not taught in schools as far as I know. Even when you look at the West Indian history syllabus it's only recently that they have included the Grenada Revolution as part of the study of Revolution. But that is not mandated in any way by the Ministry of Education that even at the primary level that Grenadian history should be taught.

Noga: Tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are.

Randy: I think it's not a specific experience as much as it is the era that I was born, and the people around me. And the (?) socialization and so

on, has made me who I am. Primarily, I tend to be radical on issues, most issues I tend to hold a more or less radical view, at times. And I always say I'm kind of a product of the revolutionary era. I see things sometimes outside of the ordinary. I don't always believe that because of here people say X, that that is necessarily the way to go, but a man should follow his own convictions. Everybody may not like it, but at the end of the day I believe what matters is results. And people love results. They don't see the dirty work, they don't see the hard work, but they see the results. So it has to do with that and a lot of my relatives and so were involved in the Revolution. My uncles, my cousins, and so on, so being around them growing up and so on, that sort of an influence I guess rubbed off on me. With that, I have developed that kind of passion for my country and wanting to see things happen in my country, as opposed to, okay, just sit back and what happen. So, I'd say it has to do really with the people around me and the time that I really grew.

Noga: Do you see that shared with other people from your era, your generation? Do you see that same sort of influence?

Randy: Few. Few. Very few. Most persons, well, I'm living what comes, comes. But as it relate to commitment to country and that whole nationalistic spirit and so on, I don't think, it's not widespread.

Noga: Going back to the Revolution, there were lots of ideas at that time, as I understand it, about Grenada's development. Emphasis on agriculture and agro-industry, manufacturing and not just exporting raw goods. Do you think those ideas are still relevant, and important, and even capable of being implemented in Grenada today? Or do you see things just going in exclusively tourism-oriented development, toward high-end clientele?

Randy: I think they are more relevant now than they were then. And maybe not the mode that would be employed to get it done then, you may have to change it now. But the underlying principles I believe is important. I hold the opinion that for every developing country in the world to reach where they are, they must have achieved some form of food security. They are able to feed their people. So they are not totally dependent on external supplies of food. And if we really want to see true development, as a small island developing-state, as a vulnerable state, we must be able to feed ourselves.

And in doing so, you do so at a level where then you can export the excess. So you're not doing it at substandard quality but you're doing it at a professional level that okay, people can feel satisfied hey, I am buying local, I am using local, and I am enjoying local. A lot of the packaging and so, we have to rise above. That we look good. Trinidad is right there and everything you see from

Trinidad, one time you see it you want to buy it. And it's not that it's better than ours. [Repetitive conversation on carrots deleted.]

Noga: Do you think you can entice youth to go into agriculture today?

Randy: You could, and it can be done. Anything that has serious money can attract young people. But we have to change the whole perception we have of agriculture. Because you cannot promote agriculture as being the person in the dirty clothes walking the road, living in a little house drinking from outside and using a pit latrine. Can't meet his obligations at the end of the month, and that kind of thing. You cannot promote it like that, that's the way our parents and grandparents did it because they could not have done better. But you have to bring it now, with the technology, so we ain't going and forking a piece of land for five days before it's ready and that kind of thing, but you got to bring in ploughs. And ploughs would be available for [lease ?] so in the space of a day you have your whole piece of land properly ploughed and you could start to plant. You know, even the use of the technology in terms of the genetic (searches for word) ...

Noga: Genetically modified?

Randy: Yes, yes. So whereas before we had to wait for five years for this one to produce, now you get your stuff in two years, three years, you plant now and with good husbandry you can reap in the next two, three years. And you create that local environment where you going to encourage people to buy these because you going to ban some of the imported ones, or, you do it in such a way, okay, if you say it's an open market system, but make it expensive. That at the end of the day people would realize hey, I can use the local, it's given me the same or better benefits, and I don't have to spend my money on this.

Noga: So you would implement a system to make local products cheaper by taxing outside products, right?

Randy: Anything that is going to compete with locally-produced goods. I think you must do that. And you have to find a way of ensuring that the locally-produced goods are produced at minimal cost. Because in a lots of instances with the locally-produced stuff, they're more expensive than the imported stuff. So we have to find some ways and means of ensuring that we lower the production cost.

Noga: If that could be done, if Grenada could have food security and reduce its food import bill, what would be the next step do you think? What are the other kinds of things?

Randy: Once that is done, then we look in terms of health, we need to look in terms of education.

Noga: These were the ideas of the Revolution, though, right? It's the same –

Randy: Yeah. It's the same. Democracy can't work, or let's put it – the Western-style democracy, democracy as promoted in the Western hemisphere, cannot work well for development in small island states.

Noga: So what would you prefer to see?
Randy: You need to have a combination – I call it communist dictatorship.
Noga: What do you call it?
Randy: Communist dictatorship.
Noga: Is that what you would say you had under Bishop and Coard?
Randy: Under Bishop and Coard, you had communism straight out. There was no real democracy as such. The guys said this is the way we're going to go, and they went that way. If you didn't go, then you were considered a counter-revolutionary.
Noga: So how is that different from a communist dictatorship?
Randy: Communist democracy, to me, is where you, as a government, you have to realize the decisions that you *have* to make. It may not be a popular political decision, but in the interest of the country, you must make it. And you make it, you educate the people as to what is going to happen. You make the decision, and you ensure that they see the results. Once you're going to put things to a vote, people are going to disagree. There are vision-killers, as I would call them, who would tell you that it can't work. Based on the fact that some people say that it cannot work, then you have others who feel, okay, this man should know what he's saying. So if he says it can't work then it can't work. You have circles where I would go and once I say, anybody would say x, y, zed. Once I come and I say watch, we ain't doing that because so-so-so. It doesn't matter who come after might say, they going to take my word for it.
Noga: Do you think it's because of a lack of education?
Randy: Then things would have been different. An example of that lies with, if you compare Barbados to us. And Barbados to the rest of the region generally. Barbados has more or less a history of that kind of democratic process. But when you look at the level of education, the population is very educated. So when it comes to politics and political issues, people look at issues and not personalities. It is what are you doing for us as it relates to x, y, and zed, not who is doing it and who didn't do what and what.
Noga: So here it's personality based.
Randy: Personality based. You know, and people get caught up in that, because we like that kind of thing. So (?) all talk.
Noga: So what would your ideal system of governance look like?
Randy: My ideal system of governance is get the people's input in what you're going to do, but as the leaders, as the government – and when I say government here I'm speaking both of the Opposition and whoever is the ruling party – you have to be prepared to bite the bullet. The voice of the people is not necessarily the voice of God. And I think in countries as ours, people elect us because they have confidence in our ability to lead, and they have confidence in our ability to make decisions that are good for them.

Noga: So right now, would you say then that, for the government and the Opposition, the people‘s voice *is* the voice that they are listening to, and they *shouldn’t* be?

Randy: I wouldn‘t say that they‘re listening to the people as much as, because of the nature of things, they‘re doing things to appease the people. Things that they themselves know are unsustainable.

Noga: For example?

Randy: Okay, the government has what they call an IMANI [youth training] program. They have that GTEP [Grenada Training and Employment Project] program. Which in themselves are good programs. But as to whether it‘s seriously sustainable, you know it can‘t be sustained. And even if it can be sustained, it‘s going to put us in a hole. But you recognize that a large percentage of the voting population are young. So you get them tied up in the concept that okay, yes I have a job. And to them, part of what is very important is the whole thing of just dressing up and knowing that you‘re going to work. They say I am going to work, I am working here, working there.

But at the end of the day, what are you taking home? Because I can‘t pay my rent with what some of them taking home for salary. But when you just leave school and you have not, you ent play with money yet, as you would say, you never have a job – if a man give you 500 [Eastern Caribbean] dollars you find that‘s a lot of money. Because the most you had in your hand was maybe a 100 dollar bill, and that‘s when somebody send you out. Or somebody from the States, your relative or somebody, sent you a little money and you got a 100 dollars. So getting 500 dollars sounds like, yeah, I‘m getting a lot of money. But when you look, if you have to, and then you living home, living under your parents‘ roof, and you‘re not – your parents making it and you ain‘t so sure how they‘re making it. Because we‘re not a society where parents talk to children about the struggles that they actually going through for them to survive.

And this is part of the reason why a lot of our young people just doing what they want, because they want something they get it, but they don‘t know how the money is came. I mean, you have women who are literally prostituting themselves to send their children to school, but their children don‘t know that. But to them, that‘s the way that they can get it. So they, they have to. I think we have to acquaint our people with the struggles. Because if we don‘t, then they place no value on what they have. We‘re seeing the same thing in the trade union movement. That persons are leaving school now, leaving university and going to the workplace, and they‘re not involved in the union. And why? ―I don‘t need union, I make my own money.”

Noga: So unions are weakening now.

Randy: So unions are generally weakening. You know. Because people feel they could handle their stories on their own. They're not recognizing the benefits that they're getting today. Okay, you come to work you're getting 3,000 dollars to start. It didn't just happen. Somebody fought that now you could get 3,000 dollars. So you now need to be cognizant of that and realize, hey, if I fight now, then my children, or my grandchildren, will get six. Or they'll get ten. But we don't have that kind of thing.

Noga: So going back to your vision of government, and comparing that to what was happening in the Revolution. I'm still trying to see the difference between how things were under Bishop and your ideal scenario. Because it seemed that they did consult and get input from the people, but then they did do ultimately what they thought was best for the nation.

Randy: There was some form of consultation. Community organization and so on. You had troops, so, things. And this is part of the reason they were able to get things done. Because people bought into the vision. That's why I say you need to sell things to people properly. Sell it to them, get them to *own* it. And they would run with it.

Noga: So you think the current administration doesn't know how to sell things?

Randy: They don't know how to sell things. It's, well, we doing something and we think that this would get us some votes so we do it. Though we not really doing it because we really want people to buy into the concept and we really want people to run with the concept because this concept is going to take us thus far.

Noga: So you are counting on a leadership that knows what is good for the country.

Randy: You need that.

Noga: That does put a lot of store in the proper leadership.

Randy: You need that.

Noga: Do you think, even if the Opposition takes power, that that's in Grenada's future?

Randy: It's, maybe, and I'm still not seeing it happening one time. The nature of Grenadians, if we were smart people, this government would have never even gotten into office. Because the government before this one, they were able to reduce the national debt. Mr. Brizan had a structural adjustment plan which the IMF supported, which was praised for (?), and so on. It worked well. The country was back to a state of credit-worthiness.

Noga: So the structural adjustment plan was under Brizan?

Randy: Under George Brizan. And there hasn't been one since. They talking about doing a little, what, thing, and what, but nothing major.

Noga: And you see it as a good thing, the structural adjustment program?

Randy: It was an excellent thing because this is what gave this administration the springboard now to go ahead, do this, do that, and so when they came into power it looked like they were doing so much. But the fact is the foundation was set by the first NDC government. That these guys, when they got into office, they were able to just go out there and say hey, I want to do X project and get money. So really, they have not grown on their strength. They have grown on the strength of the first NDC.

Noga: Brizan's party was NDC?

Randy: Yeah, Brizan was the prime minister in the latter part – was Mr. Nicholas Brathwaite, he resigned and hand over power to Mr. Brizan I think about a year, year and a half before the election. In his mind, I guess, he wanted to see that transfer of power. We, as a people, could not have seen that. We, as a people, we didn't understand what they were saying to people. We make the country credit-worthy. The average Grenadian doesn't understand the concept of credit-worthiness. If you tell him, —We couldn't go nowhere for money, but under this government we positioned the country where we could go anywhere now and ask for money to do any project and we get it", and they'll understand that.

Noga: So what do you think about what the NNP has done with the credit-worthiness through their tenure.

Randy: Tchh. They've built us some national monuments. The prime minister has done well to ensure that when he leaves, whenever he vacates the chair, that his legacy would live on. He has done an educational complex, he has done a ministerial complex, he has done a national stadium. Anything that he can possibly break down and build that he can say the NNP did, he does it.

Noga: Do you think Ivan created a break in the previous course of development, or was it just a momentary hiccup and things are continuing exactly as they were before Ivan?

Randy: It created a break. It created a significant break, I believe. It's different now in that we have less, that kind of momentum. We slower. We've lost a lot of the momentum. If you look at even the road projects, and so on. Because the only thing that kept the pace going a little bit was the World Cup. The fact that World Cup was coming and they wanted to get the stadium ready, so stadium running, roads running, and all of that because World Cup is coming. But since after World Cup would have passed, you realize there isn't any significant projects going on. The contracting company that does the roads, you see they have laid off a number of workers for quite a few months well right now because there's nothing happening. So they're kind of on the backfoot, as relates to that.

Ivan, too, has made them look good. Because in the international arena, even though they don't deserve the credit, but they get the credit

for a lot of what has happened in Grenada post-Ivan. Because really and truly, this government has done nothing to bring the country back on foot, that is the reality. The two little houses that they built here and there, that is nothing to say we've done as a government. But Grenadians, who were insured, who had families abroad, send money, thing, what-what-what, Grenadians, that's one thing Grenadians did, they got up and they repaired their homes. You understand? But to say government had this massive drive where they assist people in reconstruction, no. They take credit for things that they had no involvement in …

Noga: But in terms of the kind of projects that the NNP was prioritizing before Ivan, their overall development model, whatever that was, whatever they were focusing on, is it the same after Ivan or do you think priorities have been reshuffled?

Randy: They have reshuffled slightly, in the sense that they're talking education and training kind of thing. And I think that is because the international arena is willing to pump financing into these things, these kinds of programs. And so I believe they don't have a choice but to at least push that kind of thing. Post-Ivan, they established ARD [Agency for Reconstruction and Development] and part of the thing of ARD was to get into communities, do the de-briefing with people, and that kind of thing. So all of that kind of lead into, okay yes, we going to develop people now. We going to give you money to do that, to do your schools, you know. So you don't have a choice but to flow that way.

So all the white elephants, the buildings and what, because that's what we people like to see. We want to see, "Oh, big ting, build this, build the other, build the next" (speaking in dialect). Which in themselves, they're good things, you know. But they, in the long term, the benefits that you would get from it, is not really sustainable. Okay you build a nice, big port. How many times a week is that port used? It may have been better to just upgrade the one you have, cost you less, and you flow. You know. You build a massive stadium. When is it ever going to be filled again?

Noga: It wasn't even filled for World Cup.

Randy: Exactly!

Noga: And if it wasn't filled for World Cup ...

Randy: When would it be filled again? So these are the things. Yes, you're going to build a stadium. But take into consideration, okay, after World Cup, what are we going to use this for? And if we're going to do it, well then let's do it in such a way that the same one that we're going to use for the Cricket is the same one we'll put down the athletic track. We'll take it up after. So you know, okay, all activities will be centered there. You have two of them, the athletics one will be used regular and that one will be packed out because schools using it,

you know, so every year you have the primary school games, you have the Inter-Col games, so people going to that. After that, then what? A football game? There was a football game in the stadium just this week, the stadium wasn't packed out. Even if you have a national independence parade, it would not be packed out.

So when you're looking at the long run, and you look at the cost of maintenance, you in trouble. And countries that are better off than us economically struggling to keep theirs in good shape. So why put yourself through that? Yeah, it going to make you look good, you could say "We have done this and we have done that," but in the final analysis, what. I think that this is where they're off. And they're not worrying because, in a sense, it's like pensions. They're doing all what they're doing now and they know when they leave office it's not their headache to fix it.

Noga: What do you think are the lessons to be learned from looking at Grenada and its situation, its history, its future. What would you say?

Randy: We are extremely resilient, as was seen in the aftermath of the hurricane. We are resilient people. We are people, whom, under proper leadership, we can do well. Because we want to be led, in reality, we want to be led. Where there is a great level of ignorance, they want to be led.

They put their confidence in you that okay, here, you're going to do this. They'll give you the legal authority, and they'll even go as far as to give you the spiritual authority to lead them, because they want to be led. We believe in God, we a Christian society, and we believe that okay, God will use you as the Prime Minister, God will use you as the government to do things for us, that's the mindset of our people, alright. So if we are given the right type of governance, we can go far.

But we also have to be careful in the sense that we are people who can take a lot, but with that taking, there comes a point where there's always an explosion. And I think this is what we have to be very careful with now. I always say the people, when you look at the history of the Caribbean, when there were riots taking place in St. Kitts, in Trinidad, over working conditions, it never happened in Grenada in the 1930s. But then it came down to the 1950s, when Gairy came on the scene, and then everything *boom*. Then Gairy thing, he form the fool, bap-bap, them fellows come, young fellows come on the scene, they say well no, Gairy's forming the fool. And if you look at Gairy's administration, and if you look at the current administration, you see a lot of parallels. You see a lot of parallels in terms of the way they operate, some of the things that are happening, and all of that. You see Gairy. As a matter of fact, some people say Keith Mitchell is Gairy's son. Gairy had the charisma, he was smooth.

As my mother would say, he was smooth and thing, but really, all he was doing is looking for heself. He enjoying the life.

Noga: But they're resurrecting him now as the First National Hero.

Randy: Which is good. It ain't bad. I could live with that. I could live with that.

Noga: Do you think there was a Mongoose Gang?

Randy: Yes there was a Mongoose Gang. Yeah.

Noga: Do you hear people disputing that these things were really done by Gairy – done by the PRG [People's Revolutionary Government] to make Gairy look bad?

Randy: There were those that was done by the PRG, but there are those that was very much well done by Gairy, you know. As in cause and effect. It's because Gairy did what he did, then these guys started to do different things. Now you have a situation where the government, this government, they're doing things. They're blaming it on the Opposition. Things that are not even political they turn into political issues. Issues that they're not supposed to be involved in, you hear them being involved in it. Gairy was accused of Squandermania. When you look at what the Prime Minister, this is the *first* Prime Minister that we've ever had who has been accused of corruption. The others, and, and, accuse, and, there's evidence. When Mr. Brizan was Prime Minister, they said he was building a house in Lance-aux-Epines. To date, he's out of office, we can't see the house in Lance-aux-Epines, the gentleman is still living in his one little house in St. Paul's. You understand? So even if people said that, the reality is that it wasn't true. Ministers who, this Minister who tief [thieve] carpet from where or what, they're fired from the government [referring to a past scandal]. These Ministers here, they're doing all kind of ting, what-what-what, they're still in government. Prime Minister's saying ~~I~~didn't take no money" then he come back and say approximately 15,000. So you move from not having, to approximately fifteen. What are you saying to me? And on top of that, you come and you say, ~~I~~t's me damn money." [Randy is referring to the ~~b~~riefcase scandal" in which the Prime Minister allegedly received a cash bribe. At first he denied the allegation; later, he was widely mocked for snapping at the press, ~~I~~t's me damn money." This quote was turned into a cellphone ringtone.]

Noga: But Grenadians are savvy, Grenadians are very critical thinkers, don't you think? I mean, they see these things.

Randy: We not. We not critical thinkers. We not critical thinkers. There are few critical thinkers. And the few critical thinkers we have will *think* critically but they will not act critically. Because the bottom line is, even if they think that way, one of the things we always check (?) on, I have to live. And I need a job. And some of them are working with the same government. So if I say this, or if I do that, then I going

to lose my job. And so with that, I will just keep my mouth shut. I feel that way about it, I know that ain't making sense, but I keep my mouth shut. If they get a job, yeah, they gone. Pick up in the morning and they gone.

Noga: It just seemed to me reading all the editorials and hearing Grenadians, they see a scam, they smell it, it seems to me.

Randy: They guys who write the articles, they are ostracized. They are painted as Opposition forces. Everything now, this government has politicized everything. So whoever writes a column that is against their flow is Opposition, you understand, even if that person has nothing to do with Opposition ...

If you go right now, if you walk off this campus and you walk around and start talking to a few people, asking them the kind of questions you've asked me, I'm sure before the day is up some wouldn't talk to you, because they would ask you who sent you, who you working for. When you pass, "Keith Mitchell and them, she looking for information for," "don't bother with her, she one of them NDC" (speaking in dialect).

Discussion

These interviews with Randy give voice to some of the familiar contours and recurring themes of Grenadian public life. His passion is politics – a passion shared by many of the older generation, but rare among his younger undergraduate counterparts. Time and again I had conversations with older Grenadians that covered similar terrain: development, education, agriculture, food security, infrastructure, hurricane recovery, politics, partisanship, the Revolution. Randy is particularly knowledgeable about current and historical events, as one might expect from a secondary school teacher. He also speaks about "doing for country" and national spirit. Even this tendency to refer to "country" and "the people" sets him apart from his peers and groups him more with the forty-plus generation.

Randy has strongly internalized Grenada's master historical narrative of Grenada as an Island of Conflict, and he draws upon the nation's past when he speaks. His historical awareness is connected to his political involvement. He is politically active, which also means he reflects upon and is himself a reflection of Grenada's partisan climate. His implicit pro-NDC position fits with his disgruntlement about the lack of development of agriculture and agro-industries. Randy also ties this to the Revolution and the erasure of its history. His allusion to Grenadian's resilience – proven by Ivan – quickly segues into a caution about Grenada as an Island of Conflict: "There comes a point where there's always an explosion." Even my question about experiences "that have made you the kind of person you are" is redirected from personal experiences to the revolutionary era and his socialization with revolutionaries. Randy is a teacher, and he is clearly motivated to teach me about the Revolution and its impact on Grenada.

Randy prides himself on his high valuation of "Grenadianness," yet he also expresses alienation from Grenadians. This is a recurring tension in his conversations as he positions himself as both one of the people, and also apart from (or above) the people. On the one hand, he has strong working class roots and union ties, a commitment to his small community and church, and spends his free time on the street, tinkering with his cars or "liming" with friends (Grenadian slang for hanging out and chatting). Unlike most of the other interviewees, Randy switched into dialect periodically to show me how he would explain something to "the people" – in other words, what the people would understand and how he would normally converse. In fact, as soon as the recorder was off, he automatically switched into more Grenadian English. This pattern of codeswitching was much more common among interviewees from lower and lower-

middle class backgrounds than among the upper classes, who never spoke dialect around me. Randy clearly enjoyed his position within his circles as an educated person and teacher, and during one unrecorded conversation, he expressed that it is important to ―carry your office" in dress, speech, and manner in order to maintain respect. He applied this concept equally to the Governor-General, who represents Grenada, and to himself, an educated member of his community.

On the other hand, Randy clearly defines himself as separate from Grenadians, as a people. Unlike his description of himself as a free-thinking radical, he argues that Grenadians are not critical thinkers; indeed, they want to ―be led." His education, while giving him standing within his community, also alienates him from the masses which he describes as uneducated. Note the shifting pronouns: ―*We* want to be led. Where there is a great level of ignorance, *they* want to be led" (emphasis added). He repeatedly asserts that change can only happen if it is ―top-down," which requires putting much stock in the government. As a result, he does not hold out much hope for the current situation given the deeply partisan environment which he believes has been deliberately fostered by the ruling administration. In the final section, when I press Randy by characterizing Grenadians as critical thinkers, he argues that Grenadians who speak critically are immediately ostracized and have their livelihoods jeopardized. Randy himself quickly blurs the line between critical thinking, critics, political opposition, and NDC-affiliates, reflecting the highly partisan climate in Grenada.

The section of transcript concerning Randy's ideal mode of governance is most revealing. First, he states that his preferred mode would be what he calls a ―communist dictatorship." As the conversation progresses, however, it becomes apparent that he

misspoke. In fact, he does not ever seem to realize his error, and he switches to referring to a "communist democracy." As his description of this system makes clear, there is little difference between his vision of a communist dictatorial or democratic mode of government, as both require a top-down process through which the government ultimately decides what is best for the country while effectively selling these ideas to the people. While I speculate that Randy might be loathe to purposely name his system of government a dictatorship, there is little effective democracy in the description of his ideal. The people's limited power for input is a direct reflection of his perception that Grenadians are not yet capable of determining what is best for their own future. Ironically, critiques of the Grenada Revolution have emphasized that the top-down ruling by the Party's small elite intellectual leadership is what led to its downfall. Randy's comments closely echo Maurice Bishop's well-known statement: "So what we did we did in their interest, even though they did not necessarily understand why we were doing what we were doing" (Meeks 1993:129).

For Randy, development is "education and improvement in standard of living." He is skeptical of the material symbols of development – the port, the stadium – and speaks instead of "developing ourselves." This does not reduce his skepticism concerning the current administration's educational training programs, perhaps emerging from his fairly strict party line. Indeed, it is because of lack of education that Randy believes Grenadians need to be led by a top-down form of governance. St. George's University should play a much larger role in Grenadian public life, according to Randy, and has yet to become a truly Grenadian institution. In keeping with his self-image as an educated person and educator, Randy has adopted the idea that self-development means

increased education. He perceives this as the key to national development, and it is a commonly-expressed theme among Grenadian youth.

In some ways, my conversations with Randy stood apart from those with his peers. This was due partly to the very political nature of his speech, in which he steered away from personal topics and focused with great intensity on the political issues of the day. At the same time, much of his information and opinions seemed to me to be gleaned directly from the class in which I had met Randy and was a participant-observer. The teacher shared with Randy a background as an educated person from a rural and lower-income background. They also shared an emphasis on speaking dialect to reveal this affinity with the masses while asserting an educated difference. Many of Randy's arguments were immediately recognizable from the teacher's lectures; indeed, certain favorite, stock examples were repeated more than once in the interviews (for example, frustration over importing carrots). While at times these borrowed arguments made me question how radical and critical Randy's thinking really was, it also underscored the importance of this self-identification for this thirty-one-year-old man.

As the oldest of my post-Revolution "youth" interviewees, Randy's age placed him just between his younger peers and the Revolution generation I have defined as "forty-plus." In 2007, when I began the interviews, the Revolution had occurred twenty-eight years earlier, and ended twenty-four years earlier. Anyone under the age of twenty-four was clearly post-Revolution, but few under thirty have memories from this time. Forty-year-olds were twelve at the time of the Revolution and were immediately involved in its programs, many of which were geared toward youth. Thirty-something Grenadians are somewhere in the middle, feeling the influence of the older generation while also

absorbing the ideas of the younger generation. This tension is readily apparent in Randy‘s conversations. Randy‘s internalization of his nation‘s historical narrative, and its orientation toward the past with its conflicts, permeates his view of Grenada today and sets him apart from the younger generation. He thinks collectively about ―Grenadians‖ or ―the people‖ and identifies with his older relatives and the university professor, but is alienated from his peers who are less historically and politically aware. At the same time, he lacks the firsthand experience of the Revolution to bring him into the fold of the older generation, many of whom are uneducated but valued for their involvement in this critical period of Grenadian history. Randy has negotiated a place for himself between these two generations by self-identifying as a radical and critical thinker. Even though this identity positions him as an outsider, it places him in a valorized position outside of his younger peer group and the uneducated masses. He embraces the younger generation‘s idea of self-development through education, and by becoming a teacher and obtaining a higher education, he is well-positioned to assert himself as a community leader.

Karlene

Karlene was twenty-five years old when we met in the St. George's University course on Caribbean Politics. She volunteered for my pilot study and we subsequently managed to meet formally four times over three years, in spite of the fact that she was exceptionally busy. I found her story compelling, as her circumstances were quite different from the other students. Nearly impossible to track down by phone or email, I managed to run into Karlene repeatedly on campus and schedule (and reschedule) brief interviews. My accumulation of information from her was more haphazard than with the other interviewees who had hours to spare, but eventually we touched on many of the same issues. When we first met, Karlene was considering becoming a psychologist and practicing therapist in Grenada, and I believe this interest accounts for some of the self-analysis that she recounts in our conversations. Most of the excerpts below are from one interview which was longer than most due to an unexpected delay in her next meeting.

Karlene was born and raised in Grenada. One parent is Grenadian, the other from Suriname. Both parents, divorced, now live in the United States, although she is not exactly sure where her father is. The eldest of seven siblings, she moved around frequently as a child before settling in a rural corner of western Grenada. When Karlene was nineteen years old, her mother left for New York where found employment in a nursing home. Her mother has been sending support for the past seven years. The youngest, second, and third oldest siblings traveled with the mother, leaving Karlene in charge of raising her three younger brothers and sisters. They are now twelve, eighteen, and twenty-one – which is to say that when Karlene was nineteen, she was taking care of

children ages six, twelve, and fifteen. Her current household also includes one additional member: "a little boy" of sixteen for whom she became guardian since Hurricane Ivan destroyed his family's home. She describes her responsibilities as the household head: "Let's see, guidance, have to take care of them, make sure they go to school, pay bills and stuff. What else do I do there ... when I look at guidance, it's a whole big realm, ensuring that they fulfill all their responsibilities as adolescents, right. And also I have to monitor their activities, and then I have to help them with their homework, and stuff like that." Although Grenadians often speak about their nation as "one big family," Karlene was not the only one I met who lacked any extended family ties or support. She felt that this placed her at a disadvantage, and she anticipated being quite alone after her siblings joined her mother in New York – a process which was already in the works when I first met Karlene.

Karlene worked full-time as a secondary school teacher to support the family until she became an undergraduate at SGU. Now she works part-time at the local community college and is enrolled as a full-time student. This family of five grows food in their yard, and gets by on about EC$400 (approximately US$160) in groceries per month. Karlene has relinquished some aspects of the household chores; her siblings now do their own laundry and have dinner before she comes home. Nevertheless, Karlene is a perfectionist and it is hard for her to let go of household tasks when they are performed "substandard" by her sister.

I asked Karlene to describe a typical weekday: She often goes to bed by 9:00 p.m. so that she can wake at 1:00 a.m. and study until she leaves for school. She reads on the long bus ride down the winding western road, and comes to SGU by 7:45 a.m. On

campus, she studies in the library, attends classes, and organizes for the course she teaches at the community college. "Generally, I just always have a lot of reading to do and trying to get papers done. I don't have idle time, as I call it, to sit down and chat with friends. You have to make special days for that."

Topics: Life experiences; national identity; Hurricane Ivan; development; Revolution and education; class and color.

Life Experiences

Noga: Tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are.

Karlene: Ooh, that's an interesting one, no wonder I could take the whole day to do this. Well let's see. I think first, it'll have to be my dad leaving my mom. They got divorced pretty early, I was probably about eight. It was very shattering. Had to be strong. I don't think it was classically how people react to it, I just took a different turn, I had to be really strong. And my mom was totally trying to do as if it wasn't affecting her, but it did, and you knew. And, I guess, that's it. Just having that aura of strength, and that has been with me forever.

Sometimes I think I hate being strong, because everybody sees me as strong. So when you feel weak, you still appear looking strong. But you weak! You need help! Right? And that's one of the instances. I think it made me grow up faster. Because you had to mature so fast, I mean you trying to be so understanding for your mom, and for your brothers and sisters. I'm the first, so. You just have to get that. And so I think early maturity spread on for me. That definitely impacted on the person I am. Very strong will. Very determined. I don't think these things are ever going to go.

But there are several. That's just one factor. I think the second one, my first relationship. Definitely impacted on me, my boyfriend at the time really cared about my education, and always encouraged me to do well. Looking back, I think of him as a pain in the back because he wasn't the type of guy that would have you on the phone talking, no. Five minutes. "You have to go study. You have to go do this." At my age, sixteen, nobody wants to go study (laughs).

Noga: How old was he?

Karlene: He was older, significantly older. I kind of like older guys. He was thirty-five, I was sixteen. So, the whole push to do well. He's kind of a perfectionist, so I ended up being like that. I don't like it all the time now because the whole idea of always excelling is always in me, but I think at this point, perfection seems to – it's hard to meet, and I make it such a big deal that I have to have it.

Like classic example last night. I have to study four big chapters and I was sick for the whole week. And I'm like, "This isn't me." If I'm sick, I'll still make the effort and do it. I'm like, "This isn't me." So last night I was like, "I don't care, I'm tired or whatever, I am doing it because *this* is *me*." I pushed it. I didn't even look at the clock. And when I did finish, it was twelve o'clock. I was like, "Okay, that's enough for one subject, I'm going on now I have something else I need to read." And I was up by 4:30 finishing a summary, trying to read the next piece of paper. And I was like, "This is me, this is how I operate when I need to get stuff done" (laughs).

But I feel so on task, I feel more confident that the exam will be aced now than how I was feeling Monday – Monday I was like, "Oh my God, what's going to happen to me? I'm going to fail." And failing for me is like a B ...

… [Being a perfectionist] becomes a pain sometimes, but I guess that's just how I am. And I've accepted it more so. Now it's very nice when I work in groups because I'm very domineering in terms of how we do stuff. Because I don't – especially if we have to work in groups – I can't see myself getting below an A, and I'd like to be closer to 100 (laughs). So that's the example, and not to stray too much. So what was I saying, really hard-working, determined kind of person.

And I think the last one that really impacted was looking after my brothers and sisters. I've had so many different emotions to describe this thing. Sometimes I am *angry* at it, why I did this, *why* did you do this? Because I've grown up even more. I feel out of touch with other people because I have friends who are younger than me, and I have friends who are older than me. I rarely have friends who are my age. And generally, because my friends of my age, their maturity is just not mine, and I find it very hard to relate to. So just by looking after them, I think I'm super mature. You know?

It's helped me a lot to understand certain things. I've become a little bit more open to certain things. You have to try, well, just tell myself you know, I'm not going to be the parent my mom was. I'm always critical, I think, but. I realize that could be hard. I see it different, too, in terms of how parenting is, because it's hard. It really is. Especially when you're parenting people who aren't your children. So they will let you know at times, "Hey, you're not my mom. You can't tell me to do this." That's a pain. But I think it's probably the

biggest experience, and definitely changed me and made me even more goal-oriented. So I feel like I just have to have these things, and one hurdle to the next, and that's how I take it.

I mean all I do is academics though (laughs). I'm trying someday to get a fun – but it's fun, I do enjoy, I enjoy my work. I do (laughs) … I don't really go out on weekends. My life is so dictated. School Monday to Friday. And Monday to Wednesday, work. And then Saturday to Sunday chores and homework. And assignments. Maybe if I get two hours sleep or something like that, you know you crash that in, bam. And that's it. And yeah, I forget me. But. I tell myself when I'm studying it's *me* (laughs).

Well yeah. I mean I'm not a perfect being, I still have a lot of areas to work on. And I think I'm very aware of myself, so that's kind of good. So I know the little areas – or maybe big areas, depending on who (laughs) – that need working on, but I think these three incidents in my life definitely have impacted and made me the person that I am today. And I actually like it. I was actually telling a friend of mine I like *this* me more than the me before. The me before was timid, afraid, wanted to please everybody, you know?

Noga: The me before? When was the change? At age eight, or sixteen, or (voice trails off)?

Karlene: Mmm. When did the total change come? I mean, I started changing at eight. Definitely, in a way, I had to be more mature, right. But I think by sixteen, not even sixteen, fourteen, fifteen, you could just distinctly tell I was different, and I would do things different from my friends. So, there goes numbers of friends (laughs). And then when I was sixteen, I looked at, well, my boyfriend before, we relate really well still. I think he's one of the few people that still really knows me, besides my mom. And he's always comparing, looking back, this is where I was. And I like this me. This me is stronger. She is assertive. She is goal-oriented and she won't stop. The other me, I had this fairytale issue on life. Trust me, I really believed when you came out of school, you were going to get married and have children, and, it was so strange, even if you did come to university, you really came to look for a husband. That was how I thought.

Noga: Really?

Karlene: Yeah, so even if you come to it, you want to learn, yeah, but that wasn't really the motive. The motive was just to locate the husband, and that's it. That is what at sixteen I thought life was going to be about when I got out of college. And, no. It didn't happen. And the realities come, and you're like okay, alright. So I often tell him, I said I wish the me now, somebody would have told me that *before*. And, so, I would be that me then. But oh well (laughs). I wouldn't have these experiences to talk about, right? ...

Noga: … So let me ask you this, if someone were to ask you —who are you" how would you answer?

Karlene: That's a good question, you know, because I'm doing this course and they always ask me, and I always say, I'm Karlene. And when I say it, I think of my name ... I was named after my dad, and I think, how I had this meaning with my name. Because it's strange, there's no book definition for my name, so I had to come up with it myself. Which I did. But it started off, like me and my dad we had a really good relationship, and so I had the knowledge of being named after him. Because my dad is Karl, and I'm Karlene, and I was happy with that. Just knowing my name means I'm strong, I'm diligent, I'm bright. What did I come up with? I usually say I'm sunshine, that's it. That's what my name represents. That's the characteristics that come out of me when I'm with people, I think I'm able to light up the room, whether it's with humor, I hope you do find it (laughs), or with intellect. And I pride myself now with just having that capacity to think a particular way on a diversity of a lot of issues. I probably still need to do more, but I think I'm pretty well-versed in a few schools of thought, so. That's me. That's me.

I'm sorry, in terms of having a nationalistic view of things, which is the course that's really asking me who I am, but I don't really feel nationalistic vibes. I'm sorry, because we're not nationalistic yet. Or, I don't know if we ever were. That's what we're trying to discover. And I'm still thinking about it in my head. But, that's me. The dominant features of me. My core characteristics.

National Identity

Noga: Do you think Grenadians don't have a strong national identity then?

Karlene: I don't think so, because, okay. When you ask, —What's being a Grenadian?" I'm sure you're going to go down the road and hear people say different things. And, I'm really not sure, and I have to figure that out before I write this paper, I know it's going to come. Because it's like, different things impact us, that make us who we are, but we don't have this nationalistic pride. I look at the Americans and I think they do. It's America. And you just know, this person is an American, the way they do things, the way they defend their country, and stuff like that. We're not going to defend our country like that. We don't, I don't have the will (?), you say, —There's a war, go and fight"? Are you crazy? No. I would probably run. But if you had a nationalistic view you'd stay and you'd fight in honor of your country, and I know for sure I don't have it. I would love to develop it. I think maybe by the end of this, the way things are going, I probably would have it.

Noga: By the end of what?

Karlene: Just, probably, this education that I'm taking here, my degree, I'll probably have it. Because I used to want to study and have a job somewhere else. But now I think differently. I can remain here. Even if I get the experience from abroad, I can come back and I can do things, things in our social (structure?) that will make Grenada a better place in terms of setting it with other developed countries. I mean, it's going to take time. But that's my thought, and I'm like one person, but I know one person can make a difference. This is a new trend of thought that I have. God I hope I'm not the only one that's thinking that.

Noga: I don't think you are. So now you're thinking to come back and work here.

Karlene: Yeah.

Noga: Because last time you had said you were thinking no, things are becoming so unsafe here, and (voice trails off).

Karlene: See what I mean. I'm totally like, we need to come back here. I'm trying to figure out, even wanting to be a psychologist right now is a debate. I started off coming here and I'm like, I'm going to be a psychologist. This is what I want to do. And I'm wondering if I want to be a sociologist now. And that's the debate. Granted if they were giving scholarships to do law, I would do law. It's not to practice it, like go to court. I realize maybe because of certain courses I do, and I relate it to our society here, we're not that developed, and the people in our administration aren't as developed either.

For instance, the people in our Cabinet, many of them don't know anything about law anyway, as opposed to the U.S. Congress who, everybody are lawyers. So they understand how to go about making laws, and make laws with the people in mind. Whereas our laws are being – people just make laws with *some* people in mind. And I mean okay, I know, the American thing, it's not like they don't do it, but they represent a still bigger population when they make the laws, as opposed to here when we make laws. And then a lot of laws are outdated. A lot of things are happening in our society that they need to like – being gay in Grenada is illegal. You could spend ten years in jail, right? How can you have a society like that? People have their different views about it, but that doesn't mean we have to constrain other people. To me, *limiting* people – we're not God. We can't say what people do necessarily. So if that's the issue, well, okay. But, I don't think a society should make it so uncomfortable that people have to hide to do whatever they have to do.

So I think there are certain things that have to be done. Even our child support laws and stuff like that, you pay like sixty bucks [approximately US$25] a child. Are you crazy? The economy is so – things are rising. You can't pay sixty dollars! Classic example, I just did some veggies, shopping for some vegetables, I paid seventy-five

dollars for that. Can you imagine having a child on sixty bucks a week, or something like that?

Noga: So if you did law, you would want to apply it, you would want to be more politically active?

Karlene: Yeah. I hope I don‘t get corrupted. I‘d really try not to (laughs). But that is the area I‘d like to go into, to help, to develop something, because I think that‘s where our idea of nationalism will come in. If we see that the society cares, is purposive, so there‘s a will, there‘s a direction. Looking at our society today, I don‘t really know where they‘re going with anything. And without that clear distinction of where we‘re headed, then we‘ll have issues for how we feel. And that‘s why many Grenadians leave anyway because we‘re like, there‘s nothing here. So why stick around? And the nationalism sentiment isn‘t even there so, why bother? And if we‘re to save what little heritage that we do have, we‘ll need that. Gosh, so now that I think about it, I get so excited (laughs)! I really hope these ideas stay and they‘re not just a phase, and I‘m able to actually do stuff. You know?

Noga: So in ten years, how would you like to see yourself?

Karlene: That‘s a work in progress. Let‘s see. One, I think, I definitely want to have a doctorate. Definitely. That‘s my aim. Doing some form of social work. Helping people. Because I think that was my argument for even if I don‘t become a psychologist, my will is to help people and that‘s what I wanted to do in any occupation that I go into. So if I do become a sociologist, I‘m still going to help. If I become a lawyer, I‘m still going to help.

[Interrupted by cellphone.]

What do I want to do, for me? I want to be happy. I‘m having new realities on a lot of different issues and I‘m not sure where I really stand with some stuff right now. The idea, marriage is still somehow, though I try not to get away from it, it‘s really important to me. And I‘m trying not to make it important (laughs). I believe, if I keep focus on it, then it wouldn‘t happen. It really wouldn‘t. And so I really don‘t know if I‘m going to get married. I‘m not sure by that time, I‘ll probably think that I need to. I hope I‘m still in (?), in helping, in getting social action and all this stuff, you know. Well, my life will be fulfilling. That‘s what I want. A fulfilling life. And I don‘t think, you don‘t definitely have to be married to have a life like that. So that‘s like my personal aspect here. He may not agree with me, you know, I‘m at this point in my life when I‘m trying to, I guess, equate stuff. I‘m twenty-six and I‘m still not married!

Noga: Is that old for not being married?

Karlene: Yes! (Laughs.)

Noga: What do you think was the age to get married then?

Karlene: Well, for me, I thought it was going to happen earlier. So maybe that‘s why. And then again too, here‘s the most embarrassing thing I

think. I have people I've taught who are marrying, I have people that went to school who are marrying, and have children, both ways. I don't really want to have kids right now, no. Scary. But maybe I guess it's how I look at marriage. I have a different view of it. I ask myself the question, so when you do get married, would life just suddenly just change and become mystical? No. You're still going to be on Earth, still going to have daily problems, whatever. So, don't make it define my life so much, but you know it's easier said because I've been conditioned my whole life to think that I was going to get married. And then you meet these people who are like, "You're not married yet? What you waiting on?" (spoken in dialect). And they're always harassing me. I'm just, "Would you just stop, already?" …

Because I'm thinking, okay, as much as I say I'm a modern day woman, there are some traditional values, and I still think you ask. And I'll consider. That could be something I have to change one day but – no. I don't really think. I'll work toward just being happy for now and trying to have that growth in self (?) and try to understand myself more, and find avenues to have a social life, because I don't have one of those. I guess that's what marriage seems to me, it would be comforting, you know. You have always somebody around. But. That might be a lot of trouble too (laughs). Different people have different experiences you know. So what else am I going to do. Probably have some dogs, definitely. I love dogs. Probably open a kennel.

Noga: So you [and your boyfriend] don't live together?

Karlene: No, it's easier that way. We used to, but it's too much. I get too much work. He's from the old school of thought, he would not come out and say that though, but women are supposed to take care of men. So I'm going to cook, I'm going to clean. He's pretty laissez-faire, nothing bothers him. Everything's going to bother me. If something is out of place, it is going to get me *upset*. If you get up and you didn't make the bed, and I happen to go back in the room and it's unmade, I am going to be *blue*. Because I want, when you get up, the room has to look good, I like to just have my windows open. I don't want anyone to pass and see my bed is all rumpled (laughs). But you know it just helps set the tone of the room. You know? He's like that. So for awhile, when his dad died, I think he really needed me then, so, he wouldn't admit that. So. And then I think it was just a little after Ivan, so we still probably didn't have electricity.

Hurricane Ivan

Karlene: We got electricity really late.

Noga: How long did it take?

Karlene: It took us almost ten months to get it back. Nothing happened to our house but. It was the most frustrating time of my life. For real. Because you couldn‘t iron, and when we had to iron, we had to go back to the traditional one, we had to get a coal pot iron, and when you finished there, you feel so hot you could iron something with your own body. That‘s how bad it was. Everywhere. It used to hurt me because nothing happened to my house. We didn‘t need to rewire, nothing. But they were fixing in order of parishes, so it took *forever*.

Noga: So was [your parish] last?

Karlene: I think almost. For real, I think so. In all the parishes all the towns had current, but the villages didn‘t have any.

Noga: For ten months. So no refrigeration – what did you do?

Karlene: What we did, we bought meat every day if we had to cook. On the weekends we probably have a cooler of ice and then stack it up there. That kind of thing. I‘m kind of wondering how we did that!

Noga: Were you still studying?

Karlene: Actually I was working still, I didn‘t start yet. That would have been frustrating, for real. If I was studying. Then, I had a friend in Gouyave, who‘s my tailor actually, I began ironing there. So I would pay him to use his electricity to iron, I was already fed up using this hot. So I would go down and iron for everybody, *everything*. Used to be what, ten, fifteen shirts, plus mine.

Development

Noga: Going back to what you were saying about Grenada developing and knowing the path that it‘s on, what do you think development is? That was one question I had. And also, another question related to that is do you think that Ivan impacted the course of Grenada‘s development?

Karlene: I‘ll do the first? What development is. I think development has to do with, I guess it has to do with the structure as well, but I‘m thinking of education. We need to have a more educated population ... it‘s so empowering to be knowledgeable. You think so differently. And if everybody had an opportunity, our society would be so much better, right?

Because we did some lecture on how the British would have used education to actually underdevelop Africa, because they didn‘t allow them any education, or just marginally. They‘re still underdeveloped today, while Britain is fully developed because they allowed everybody to have education. And that‘s why it‘s really important. Here, we have a lot of structural development, and everybody thinks that‘s development, but it has to be beyond that. It has to be in the people. We have to come to that aura, that feeling, that we can think for ourselves and not be dictated to. That we have a voice. And we don‘t really have that voice. We‘re not really

proactive. And I realize even if you don‘t want to be – I think if I wasn‘t a proactive person I‘d probably want to be a follower. I think being a leader is (sighs) so much work! You don‘t have a life! But I guess sacrifices are there to be made, and we probably have to do that.

Because I look at the news, and I‘m sorry if I‘m always straying, but there was this little boy who was demonstrating against the Iraqi war, and he had a little poster marked ―Bush is a tush,‖ and he‘s like what, nine? They interviewed him, and he was like, ―I felt motivated to come here, and I wanted to express my opinion, and this is what it‘s like‖ … This is liberating, this is a voice. We don‘t really have that happening. And it‘s because of the education system that we do have. And I would love to see a revolution in that here too. To make our kids more proactive. Because we‘re stuck on telling them, ―Don‘t say this, don‘t say this, don’t.‖ And it limits them. And you grow up trying to be so proper, you forget how to be assertive in a society and actually have your own stuff. Trust me, you dare not talk back to your parents when they‘re talking to you. And they look at it as respectful. You might want to just interject and say, ―Well, um, I don‘t believe‖ – they want you to be quiet.

Noga: Same for boys and girls?

Karlene: Both ways. It‘s worse for girls. Boys have more leeway and have always had more leeway in the Caribbean. Especially in Grenada … Generally they have more leeway, and I think it comes from our whole experience as slaves. Men, very liberal, women, a little more seclusive. That‘s why we kind of matriarchal instead of patriarchal. Whereas you guys are patriarchal, the house is the man. No, the woman controls the house here. I mean, they don‘t admit it, but it‘s true (laughs). We are. And most African societies, it‘s matriarchal. We‘ve dominated in that aspect. Remind me what the second one is?

Noga: Do you think Ivan changed anything in terms of Grenada‘s course for development and its priorities, and how people feel about the country? Was it a major change or was it just a blip, with things continuing as they were before?

Karlene: It definitely would have had some impact. Probably not sure the extent to which the impact was. We had a lot of buildings after Ivan, with people thinking – I guess it‘s people‘s different ideologies on what development is. Because there are a lot of buildings. You go around town now, I mean, my mom hasn‘t been here for the last seven years and I try to keep her up to date, and I‘m like, I don‘t know if you‘re going to know what a terminus is, because that never used to be there before. We have two malls in town, there‘s a next one coming, and we have all these businesses that have emerged.

But, when you look at it, people are poor. The standard of living is worse than it was. I mean, I didn‘t do any statistical analysis but you could just go around and see. There are people who actually

don‘t live with electricity, they live under tarpaulins, they‘re living under really deplorable conditions. And if you have these factors in your country still, then that isn‘t development for me. So I guess it‘s the different ideologies that our politicians have to define what it is.

So Ivan would have just generated the idea to build back better, yeah, I think that was the slogan they used, to build back better. And when they meant build, they definitely meant *building*. Because it never really – in terms of scholarships and stuff like that, no. It‘s not a lot. Thanks to SGU, SGU provides a really valuable service in that you can come here and they even give you a scholarship, you don‘t have a government scholarship. So it‘s how a lot of people are having an experience of university life. In fact, for me, it was the best option because it‘s so much more expensive to go out there and study. You know, you actually have a university here that you can go and attend to. I can‘t wait for them to have more courses and different stuff …

I mean, that is a course of development, a way of looking at it. Because even TAMCC [T.A. Marryshow Community College] which is supposed to be our institution, our tertiary institution, and no planning went into it. I always complain about it because it‘s like, I don‘t want to be rid of it, I‘m happy we have a community college, but. It‘s how it‘s organized. It‘s not. It‘s all over the place. I have issues with surroundings and aesthetics and stuff like that. When I go there, I teach there at times, and when I went to college there it was a lot better than it is now. I guess it‘s how they care the place. They‘re offering a lot of courses and that‘s good. They‘re offering so much more courses than we‘ve had. I just wish the aesthetics would get better. I think these are important things. You can‘t learn in rigidity. They just think, okay, you go in a classroom, you just learn and that‘s it. What about people who appreciate surroundings? You know, you got a nice tree here and that kind of thing [referring to SGU] … But they cut everything down and we say this is development. I guess we want to look like all those big buildings you guys have. I don‘t want it to be like that! It becomes impersonal, and the Caribbean would lose what it has. Its caring nature.

Revolution and Education

Noga: What would you say are the most important events in Grenada‘s history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?

Karlene: We were discussing that in Caribbean Identity [a new course offered at SGU], as to whether we do have one, and then we kind of touched on home, whether we actually have one here. Because our history isn‘t really taught in schools in any chronological order. A lot of information is withheld from us. For instance, like the Revolution which had the most impact, and everybody knows about the

Revolution – like *everybody* internationally. You'd think that a little place like this would probably just be known for its spice, right? No. Revolution comes up before that.

And there's a lot of things we don't know about it. There are no strict books that are written on the Revolution because people are not really allowed to talk about it. It's not a law, but it's like this kind of silent law in society. So. And then there are these different branches, it was good and it was bad, and then you go ahead playing the two. Like the Opposition party now, NDC, they have a lot of people who were Revolutionary members, and so the ruling administration puts it, they'll ask the question, "Do you want another, or a similar event, to happen with these people? Look what they did."

So it's always like this really shameful thing. But I know a lot of Grenadian people who lived through that time talk about it as being really good. Because aside from now having the development that we have, that's the only time I think Grenada had it. Because even Independence came to us on many shaky grounds. We had a lot of riots and a lot of social unrest, even on the *eve* of Independence. It's not really a big thing, I think, the Revolution, really. But because of how we had to grow up and not really appreciate it – we can't because we don't really know the story. You keep hearing these little different stories here and there, because when I grew up, how was it? No. Used to be Gairy. My parents used to talk about Gairy quite a bit.

Noga: Were they fans of his?

Karlene: To some degree. I never asked my mother that, but when I look back, I think my grandmother was really into him. Though she wasn't even Grenadian. And I think that's how we got our plot of land. Because what he did at a certain time, when he came into power he took over the plantations and he dissected it and gave people land. That's how Grenadians actually came to own any land in Grenada.

Noga: So you think that's how you –

Karlene: Yeah. I believe that. I never asked, I probably should. I could be wrong and these people probably bought their stuff (laughs). But yes, he actually did revolutionize Grenada to a certain point before he became as bad as the colonizers. And the Revolution, yeah. To a lot of people, the different branches, the good and the bad, that would really set people off.

I really can't think of anything else that really unites us as a people. Because, well, they have released them [the prisoners held for the murder of Bishop and others] though but, when arguments were put forward for the releasing of the seventeen, it got crazy, everybody was like *no*. The whole thing. But we're not really proactive as a society, so they still released them anyway (laughs). You know, like in other countries they demonstrate. But they had that, they had a little

bit of that. But not like mass demonstrations that you see in other societies.

Noga: So most of what you know from the Revolution is word of mouth because it wasn't taught?

Karlene: Yeah, it wasn't taught. In fact, it's only recently, and it's not even a part of our curriculum. Teachers take it upon themselves to teach the history, once they're a history teacher they will teach Grenadian history. But it's not *mandated* in the curriculum that we teach Grenadian history. So I don't have all of this – like, if I have a course I have to be always remembering, this happened when, this happened, this – because you didn't grow up literally knowing this is what happened through the entire course. Even when you were in primary school, nobody told you that the Independence came and we were still in trouble. We were like, oh, Independence! And we celebrated Independence all along, and that kind of thing.

So even now, I think this year, when they named Sir Eric Matthew Gairy as the Father of Independence, knowing the history now, you kind of skeptical, wondering how did they come to give *him* that, because though he got it, he got it under his whole malicious reasons. It wasn't really that he wanted it *truly*, but it was just a way for him to stay in power again, and then you had the people suffering still ... One of my lecturers that taught politics put it really good, ~~"~~He's a good bad man." Because he started off really good, but then he got really corrupt because he was the only one in power for so long. And that's how he left his legacy, just fell apart.

Noga: I guess people are scared of that happening again. Seems that's why they're talking about that now, because thirteen years is a long time. So whether you like the current administration or not, you get the feeling people are anxious about having one person monopolizing power. Are you going to vote?

Karlene: Of course, voting is essential. If one thing I think my late history teacher – God rest his soul – when we did history, he always instilled in us the will to vote because our ancestors fought so hard to have that ability. So why now waste that? I think people who waste voting should get back, just get a little dose of slavery, somewhere, just let them see what it's like. I know sometimes there aren't always the best choices, but we still need to exercise our wills, or maybe who knows, we probably would have to form our own parties!

Noga: Do you know who you're going to vote for?

Karlene: It's makeshift still. I'm still exploring it. There's not a lot of different choices out there that you could possibly make. But, it's my view, I think the ruling administration needs to move. They haven't really been doing stuff for country, they've been doing for themself. And it hurts me now, even as I'm doing this course, it makes me so

much aware of the things that people do that aren't for country. They want *us* to be patriotic but they are not really patriotic.

It hurts me as a teacher because I look at my education system. My Education Minister cannot speak properly. That is embarrassing. I'm sure the rest of the Caribbean islands are laughing at us. She doesn't speak properly, doesn't articulate her words properly, her tongue could never stay in her mouth. She called a press conference and I was like, "Oh my God, why did she do that? Why couldn't she stay on radio?" People make fun of her, that kind of thing. And aside from that, if you go to a public library, it's a shame. It's really a shame. I told my friend this morning, I said, "You can equate our education system with the library." And she laughed. She's like, "God, that's awful." But our library hasn't developed. And all the money they say they pump into education, they're not pumping it right. Okay, everybody is studying in Grenada, a lot of people are studying, you're telling me that the public library cannot be functional in that, even if it goes up to eleven in the night, it should be open, the facilities. You should have computers, I don't think one computer should be enough. Let's have two computer labs. This is Grenada, a population of what, 90,000 plus people. Let's have the little village ones and let them open to a certain time. We are aware that people can't afford certain things, so if you close them five o'clock everywhere else, I don't understand. They're still not meeting the needs of the people, and these are things they really need to look out at. It hurts me, it bothers me.

I went to Trinidad – if you saw the new library they built, I was like, "Oh my God. It's like a mall." That's to tell you how big it is. But there are different sections, there's a children's section, and it's spacious. You could accommodate people. I mean, there's a children's section in our thing and the books probably that I read are still in there. We haven't really changed that much. The adult section. I mean, I see they're getting more books, you can barely pass in the library right now, so what. Just now there'll be more books, there'll be no space to pass! The compartments are so tight. It's dark. The seats are uncomfortable.

Noga: This is the library in your parish?

Karlene: No, St. George's [the National Library]. Well I can't even see the one near me because it closes too early. So by the time I get home, it's already closed. By the time I leave, it's not open …

Noga: So that would be your priority? If you could develop anything in Grenada, you'd focus on the libraries and education?

Karlene: Yeah. Because I think if you really want people to develop themselves you have to provide some means at least. We know, okay, we kind of operate in a capitalist society, but at the same time we need to provide means for those who can't really afford. And that's another

thing. They just provide for people who can afford. They *give* them. And the people who can't afford are still left struggling. I guess every administration would possibly do that because they have favors they have to give people who would have done this, or whatever, but I wish they could operate with some kind of fairness …

It's not like I'm really upset so much, it's just that I think they need to broaden their horizons. So they give it [governmental support] to all other programs, and they give it to people who aren't going to go back into the system, and that to me is hurting. So the children now are left to suffer. They get to see a different teacher every so often, the link with each one has to be developed. Because it's people you're dealing with. And by the time they do really get there, it's exams. And when they don't perform, you blame the teachers, so. But the whole system, it should be blamed. If you develop that – people who want to come back into service and really do stuff. Keep them please! No. Everybody wants to go. I know half of the people who doing science here will not go back to teaching, who are teachers. Will not go back. What do you do then?

Class and Color

Noga: What are the classes in Grenada, would you say?

Karlene: Working class, middle class, and upper class. Working class is kind of like, how would I put it, plantation workers. Because it still happens. Like really minimal wage pay. Middle class is like lawyers, although some lawyers could belong to the upper class depending how long you've been in practice. Teachers, kind of blue collar positions. Teachers, accountants, those kinds of professions. Professional ones. Like architects and stuff, they're – not architects, carpenters and stuff like that who probably make more money than teachers are considered working class.

Noga: Because of the nature of the work?

Karlene: Yeah. And upper class, you have to own stuff. Possibly born into money, one. And have stuff. Big house, lots of cars, that kind of thing. That's how our society is. It'd be nice to just go around and thing, but because I don't socialize so much, I can't really tell you how people are treated. You just know from histories that certain people get more preference than other people. It happens in every society but it's more prominent here. Like if I know you, links. That's a real big thing in our society. If I know you, (snaps fingers) you get stuff done like this. So you have to know somebody …

Like people in the upper class, they figure that they only need to move around certain people and not integrate with other people. I hope that doesn't happen to me. Well yeah. Then again, location. See like, we were discussing that in class yesterday. I didn't even know

where – I know St. Paul‘s people, a lot of them, a lot of politicians stay there. But from what the teacher said, dating back to history, that‘s been a prominent upper class society. Westerhall Point. For God‘s sake, you can‘t even get into – some of the villas, I don‘t know, you have to have some permission to get in there.

Noga: Have you been into all these communities, have you seen them?

Karlene: I have been to Wester – no, not, I passed through Westerhall, I haven‘t gone into like the really upper class thing, because I‘m telling you they have *gates*.

Noga: Yeah, they have gates.

Karlene: How you going to get in there? Whereas St. Paul‘s is a little bit more open still. A little bit more open. Lance aux Epines is definitely – it‘s a new kid actually, in terms of being upper class. How you distinguish what‘s upper class is the amount of money you pay for land. So some places will be like four dollars or something for a plot, or something like that. When you see six, not so bad. When you see twelve, you see twenty dollars, you‘re like, okay, the common man is not going to go and buy land in Lance aux Epines. In fact, a lot of people, trust me, *can't* buy land in Lance aux Epines, because it‘s *really* expensive. You have to come from England with pounds (laughs).

Noga: Do you think that there are things that bind all of the classes together, regardless of this rigid stratification that you‘ve described with these classes? Or do you think they‘re kind of like two worlds in parallel?

Karlene: I‘m not sure if I‘m able to make a really good deduction since I do not hang out with a lot of upper class people. I don‘t actually know a lot of them. Although I think I should, because I have to go up in this society. I have to be *strategic* in how I get there (laughs). But um, I know middle, and, because, how do you look at it, we‘re middle class. And middle class and working class, I know like in Carnival, church, I don‘t really go to church, but you see a link there. People will be a little bit communal in church and those kind of stuff. Because, you can‘t have animosity at church, it‘ll look bad, both ways.

Carnival I think definitely does that. Nobody cares who you are when you‘re in Carnival. You don‘t care who you‘re dancing with, whatever. *I* do, but most people don‘t (laughs). So you get to see *anybody*. You see some of the politicians, they too go out and do their thing. We have some kind of crazy ones that lime [Grenadian slang for hang out and chat] around with everybody, but most people like that because they look at them as very charismatic that they can come down from where they are and lime with the people. So, you see that happening.

But the people who really have, I don‘t think they – we can‘t enter, it‘s hard to enter, whereas like, some places you just *know* are

meant for some people. Because even like, okay, there's this new club that's out, it's [called] Karma. And before he built the club, he'd have parties and he'd cater for a certain class of people. Working class people. The parties are like twenty bucks, or they could be fifty dollars to go to the show. Now to go to his club now, there's a particular dress code. Whereas before he had a party, he didn't tell you how to dress. And just by having a dress code, it tells you who is going to be there. So you hardly find working class people because, then again, you offer it every day. Although you might find some of them in there still trying to keep up with the middle class and the upper class. We have that …

Noga: … Have you been?

Karlene: Nooo! I don't really dig it too much, but I think I probably will go and try it, just to see different things …

Noga: Do you think skin color still plays a role in society then?

Karlene: Will always probably play. I don't think there'll ever be a time when it's not. Because, for me, growing up, my mom used to tell my brother, you're going to marry a nice pretty girl with long hair and nice skin color. Like, really light. Closest to white. But she didn't come and say white. But you know, if she's light then she's almost white. That's our white, being really fair. And my mom is dark. And I think that she's really pretty. And I was like, "Why can't he marry a dark girl?" And she's like, "Oh the children will come out too *black*." I was like, "Mommy, now you're racist?" (laughs) … I mean, I've come to that conscience, I don't really care what color you are. Whatever, you could be yellow. But not too yellow (laughs). Yellow's a little stretch, right? But that doesn't really have to – but like, in some places, it's still there, like who's in the front desk. Like there was this bank, and they actually came from slave money too. Don't know why I joined it.

Noga: Which bank?

Karlene: Barclays, at the time. Well, the people who were so, they weren't white, they were black people, but they were so fair they matched the other administrative positions, they were white, and they used to always rate that bank for doing that. And even Scotia Bank, the people are very very light. You never see black black people, like really dark-skinned people, *no*. Now there's a trickle, you see some people who probably look like me. But they're still few. Still few. So this one bank for sure have been known for that. I use First Caribbean now and I haven't gone into it to see, but there's still a huge portion of fair people that essentially work and interact with the people. I guess darker people are probably hired for upstairs jobs that you don't have to see people, and that kind of thing.

And even men, they look, you watching skin colors, you watching tones, that kind of thing. I don't think it's extremely

> prevalent as it was maybe twenty years ago. But I think when people thinking about having kids, then color becomes an issues because they want to know that the child doesn‘t come out too black, or, you know, the hair …
>
> But the hair thing, I don‘t know what‘s up with men and hair anyway. They want all this long hair, but *tuh* (gasp of exasperation) they don‘t manage it. But they want that soft hair to play in and that kind of thing. It‘s a real drama with this thing. I don‘t know if it happens in other – because I don‘t have interaction with upper class people in terms of what they consider for these things. But working class people and middle class people, they consider that. You don‘t want a child‘s hair to be nappy, they‘ll be like, ―Oh, it‘s going to be too haaard,‖ and that kind of thing … So, that‘s some of the issues that in my little world, I‘ve interacted with people having that … [There was this man who was] really fair, and he had really nice eyes. And I didn‘t think he was mature enough for me. I couldn‘t be bothered with him. But my sister‘s like, ―Are you crazy? You‘re going to let that catch get away? Look at that color! Do you know what kind of nice children you all would make?‖ She‘s younger than me, and she has the whole color concept going still (laughs). So, it‘s still there. It‘s not going to leave us. Again, it‘s a repercussion of what would have happened from slavery, and that‘s how they divided us. So we went against each other because of color, that when the mixed ones, the Caucasians and Africans, mated and they come out really light, they had a better spot in society.

Discussion

Karlene is an intense conversationalist. She can hardly contain her aspirations as she alights on a broad range of subjects – to help people, to have a social life, to open a dog kennel, to become involved in politics but not become corrupted, to become a therapist, a lawyer, and later a sociologist and teacher, to obtain a doctorate, to marry, to achieve upper class status. Her list of goals seems never-ending and ever-changing, and she speaks with a rapidity that often leaves her breathless and laughing. She prides herself on her intellect, education, self-analysis and critical thinking, and does not hesitate to describe herself as “sunshine,” though at one point she pauses to state that she

hopes she does not seem full of herself. By her own account, her strength and determination came out of formative life experiences and have carried her through her struggles as a student, a teacher, and a parent to her younger siblings.

Her discussion of major life experiences reveal a very consciously-formed narrative about how she moved from the ―me" of the past to the ―me" of the present. The trajectory has moved her from being weak and fearful to strong and assertive. At the same time, she speaks about the strain of being a leader and always appearing strong. Her early maturity alienated her from her peers, and her perfectionism causes anxiety. She recognizes that her situation is unusual, to a certain degree, and hopes to write a book about it some day: ―I also want to write a book on my experience. I always thought I had this boring life but. Taking care of my brothers and sisters for the last seven years has been, I don't like to say a turbulent time, but it's been really mix. There's been good, there's been bad, a whole kaleidoscope of feelings that a person my age wouldn't go through until they were like thirty. So I thought that could be a good book." Karlene's story provides a glimpse into the inner struggles of someone who outwardly fits the widespread image of the strong Caribbean woman who is a single head of household.

Karlene sees development as something that ―has to be in the people." It is a means of empowerment, both for the impoverished masses and also for herself. She places great emphasis on the importance of the education system and increased access to educational opportunities. Karlene takes great pride in the education she is receiving. While many of the SGU students drew on their coursework to answer my questions and show off their knowledge and newly formed opinions, Karlene goes one step further. She identifies herself deeply with the very act of learning. When she describes pushing

herself to study, in spite of being ill, she says she does it because ―*this* is *me*." Perhaps it is partly due to the fact that she has little time for other activities that she has turned to her intense study mode as an act of self-definition. Nevertheless, even when she speaks more generally about ―development yourself" and national development, these concepts are synonymous with education. As a teacher, student, and ―mother" to her three siblings and foster child, she constantly reinforces the importance of education. Indeed, part of the reason she became guardian for her neighbor's child is that he started doing so well in school after staying with her. Of all the study participants, Karlene most strongly exemplifies the way that ideas about education link intimate notions of self-development with external ideas about national development.

Karlene draws upon history to explain phenomena that she sees in contemporary Grenadian society, such as current ideas about skin color. Her historical awareness extends beyond coursework for school; I did not meet many youth who made similar kinds of connections between their history texts and current issues in Grenada. In fact, she is the only interviewees who explicitly connected a lack of access to education with colonialism and contemporary underdevelopment. Given her heightened awareness and interest in education, it is revealing that she thinks there are no ―strict books that are written on the Revolution," when, in fact, there are many. Grenada's libraries carry some of the literature on the Revolution, but the island is surprisingly ill-equipped to educate their own population about their history. SGU's library has a very small section devoted to Caribbean Studies. Karlene perceives this information as being ―withheld" because of a ―silent law in society" that forbids talking about the Revolution.

Karlene is undecided about whether or not she will stay in Grenada. In our second interview, she said she preferred to study abroad after graduating from SGU because Grenada's crime rate was increasing. In our third meeting, she reaffirmed her initial idea that it was important to help her country. When it comes to a topic that is personally important to her, like education, she expresses strong emotion: "It hurts me now … it makes me so much aware of the things that people do that aren't for country." Otherwise, patriotism becomes abstract. For Karlene, nationalistic sentiment is something she hopes to "get" – it is a thing she might also learn through her education. She thinks it is a good thing "to have." This language reveals the extent to which it is an objectified and external entity, quite different from her intimate analyses of self and core characteristics.

Teachers occupy a somewhat ambiguous position in Grenadian society. Their salaries place them in the lower class, while their profession is considered more middle class. Karlene considers herself middle class, and she articulates the aspiration to move up in society. Although Karlene hesitates to state that the upper class are entirely separate from the rest of society, she invokes the usual geographical delimitations and repeatedly mentions that she herself does not spend much time among the upper classes. She is also aware, however, that she will need to be more strategic in her networking if she is to get ahead. In our final interview, Karlene had determined that she wished to remain a teacher even after obtaining advanced degrees.

Privileged Lives

Colleen

Colleen was nineteen years old at the time of our first meeting and in her third year at the university. She lives with her parents in a pleasant suburb of the capital, in an area popular among the professional class. Her father is the general manager of one of Grenada's largest companies. Her mother also held a managerial position in a major business, and now spends her time pursuing hobbies such as flower arranging and etiquette classes. Her only sibling is a few years older and has been living in the United States for several years.

Colleen is very active in extra-curricular activities and organizations, and places high value on a "well-rounded" education. She has also traveled quite extensively, including a formative trip to France for her eighteenth birthday. The desire to broaden her horizons and prepare herself for the wider world is part of the story she tells to explain her decision to move from a sheltered private school environment into a public secondary school. There is another subplot to this story, however, which comes through her discussion of class, skin color, last names, and achievement. Colleen has the blessing and burden of an important last name. In a small country, everyone knows who are the wealthy and powerful families who hold high positions. Indeed, a quick visit along the downtown waterfront Carenage is a fine introduction to the "Who's Who" of Grenada, where shingles along the waterfront buildings bear these important families' names. Thus, Colleen seems to struggle against the assumption that her achievements follow

from her family‘s position of influence rather than her own aptitude. This idea may partly account for her equating class with education; rather than emphasizing her family‘s background, which would set her apart as upper class, she emphasizes her attendance at a prestigious public secondary school, which joins her with a cohort of well-educated young ladies who have earned their acceptance into this competitive institution.

We met together over the course of three years, and conducted three recorded interviews. Colleen was always punctual, polite, informative, and willing to share resources she had gathered in the course of research for her own class projects. Indeed, her studies often entered our conversation and she was eager to reveal the ways in which her education informed her viewpoints. Her post-graduation goal to train and find employment in the tourism sector remained unchanged over time. She had completed an internship at a major local hotel (there was no such program officially; she just went to the hotel and asked), and her mother‘s friend had already offered her a job interview at a new resort following graduation. Although Colleen was hesitant to accept the upper class label that she knew people ascribed to her, she was one of only two light-skinned Grenadians in my study who came from a prominent family. There are interesting parallels in their stories which reflect their rarefied position in Grenadian society – positions which yield both the advantages of privilege and struggles with a sense of exclusion. Together, they provide a window onto the workings of socioeconomic class and race in contemporary Grenadian society.

Topics: Social class; education – school projects; Hurricane Ivan; development; ~~–G~~renadianness”; life experiences.

Social Class

Noga: Do you think there are social classes in Grenada?
Colleen: Yes.
Noga: Would you tell me what classes there are, and what sort of people belong to each one?
Colleen: Social class is such a big thing in Grenada. You have, I don‘t even know what to call them, I guess you can put upper class, middle class, then lower class. The upper class would be people at the top, you have prime ministers, ministers, that‘s what it should be. But. And, you know, those up there. Maybe some lawyers, maybe some doctors, some business owners. And then middle class would be normal workers. People in banks, teachers. Lower class, you might find some of the unemployed there.
Noga: If you were describing Grenada to a stranger, what kinds of social distinctions would you say are most important here? …
Colleen: It‘s so messed up.
Noga: How so?
Colleen: Because even being in the [Miss Grenada World] pageant, that‘s where you found everything coming out. Because they said, some said to begin with, oh, a light-skinned girl would win, and only light-skinned girls would be in the final five, and it‘s because it‘s so and so's father, it‘s so and so's daughter, and that‘s why she would win. And it‘s because of where they are in their last name, that‘s why she won. And it‘s a whole mess. Because that is how, unfortunately, we think down here. It‘s in terms of your name, not necessarily in terms of what you can do, and what you‘re able to do. Or even what you have done.
Noga: So was being in the pageant eye-opening for you, or were these things that you knew?
Colleen: I always knew, but the extent to which it has escalated to, in terms of what people have been saying, I never expected it.
Noga: So there was a lot of discussion of skin color in there?
Colleen: Mm-hmm. People generally equate class with the color of your skin.
Noga: How do you feel about that? Do you think there‘s some basis for that?
Colleen: You‘d think that it would go back to the days of slavery, but then you think that we‘re all so mixed up anyway, that you can never really – it never really makes sense. And it‘s sad, because you automatically think that even though you might have achieved, you will have achieved something, there‘ll always be people thinking, oh, it‘s

because of your color, oh, because of your last name, that's why you got through …

Noga: So did you feel that your name came up as an issue in the pageant?

Colleen: Oh yes, it did. And also where my father works, the position that my father has. Because two of us in the pageant, there were rumors that our parents bought the pageant. And then, well, we didn't win. So. Those rumors have been forgotten. Grenadians like to talk.

Noga: Outside of the pageant, have these been issues that you've encountered in Grenada?

Colleen: Yes. My primary school education was done at a private school, and basically all of us came from the same background. So it didn't really matter to us, what we look like or anything like that. We were young. We just knew that we used to play together. When I got into secondary school, it was a public school. And, the primary school that I went to had a lot of stigma attached to it. So I got into Form One as a little twelve-year-old, not really knowing *anything* about the *outside* world, because I'd been so sheltered. And then I arrive, and there are so many different girls, from so many different backgrounds, and all of them, they just looked – I mean granted there were children who were lighter than me, but none of them had my last name. And none of them had come from my primary school. So immediately I was – and I didn't talk like them – immediately I was considered to be stuck up, and considered to think that I was white, and to think that I was – my first two years in secondary school, it was very hard. Adjusting. Most girls who went to my primary school – my primary school had a primary and a secondary department. They would go to my secondary school and then leave and go back. Because they couldn't handle it.

Noga: And you didn't.

Colleen: I didn't.

Noga: Why?

Colleen: Because the secondary school is best in the island. St. Mark's Convent, St. George's. It's the best girl's school on the island. And that school, it doesn't just focus on academics. But it gives you a well-rounded education.

Noga: Did you change the way that you spoke?

Colleen: A little, yes. It was inevitable, spending all my time in this school.

Noga: So one question I had, looking at Grenada's classes, I've heard some people say that there are two Grenadas. That it's like two different worlds side by side here, the upper class and the lower class, and historically, there have been ethnographies that have treated Grenada that way. Do you think that's true, and if so, to what extent? And do you think that there are also things that bind all Grenadians together, regardless of class?

Colleen: I don‘t know if it‘s the fact that it‘s upper class and lower class, but there are definitely some things that differentiate people. A good example is we went to Karma [a new nightclub] one night, and I was seeing some girls walking around barefoot, and I‘m thinking, but how do you walk around barefoot in a public place like that? And then you‘d go to the bathroom, and it‘s just how they behave. I‘m thinking, hmm, I wouldn‘t behave like that. And I‘m thinking it‘s not just because of – because people would probably class me as being upper class, but I don‘t really see it as that. I see it as the secondary school I went to. Because in my time, even though that wasn‘t that long ago, but it‘s completely different now, the girls are different – you went to the Convent, and you just didn‘t do certain things.

Noga: Because of the religious –

Colleen: Probably. Probably you had nuns. And then Convent was seen to be the best school. And you came out from Convent and you still didn‘t do certain things, because you were a Convent girl.

Noga: So what would be the things you wouldn‘t do?

Colleen: When we were in school, you didn‘t eat on the streets, you didn‘t drink on the streets, you didn‘t stand up talking to a flock of boys while waiting for a bus to go home, you didn‘t stay in town until dark before going home, you weren‘t loud on the streets, you sat down properly, you deported yourself like a proper young lady. But now it‘s so different, you see them eating on the streets, drinking, drinking alcohol in uniform, they behave so wild. I‘m just like, that‘s not the Convent I went to five years ago.

Noga: What do you think has changed? And what do you think of the changes?

Colleen: The children themselves, the children came in, they just got very very slack. Some people would say it‘s because we don‘t have as many nuns, but even when I was there, there were only two nuns. There‘s one now. But. She‘s still as strict. The thing is, the head teachers are still as strict, but the children are so out of control, and the thing is, they‘re coming from primary school like that. They try, but the numbers are just too big. When you have forty-five students in a Form One class you can‘t break them out of their bad ways as easily as when I started and there were thirty-seven.

Noga: That‘s still a pretty big group.

Colleen: Yeah, it‘s big. That was my smallest class I‘d ever been in. The largest one was forty-four, but that was in Form Five, and we were only forty-four when we had English.

Noga: So what do you think about the fact that it‘s changed? Is it good or bad?

Colleen: When you hear things that‘s happening in Convent now, I kind of turn my ring over and I don‘t really want people to know I‘m a Convent girl.

Noga: Oh, that ring is a –

Colleen: SMC. Yes. SMC [St. Mark‘s Convent]. So, it‘s amazing, just how the children are behaving. Like when I was there, yes, people used to get pregnant, and we‘d have children not graduating. But now apparently, the secondary schools, people have weapons, they have drugs, they have STDs, they have everything. In secondary school. They didn‘t do these things when I was there.

Noga: Any idea, I mean you said it‘s the children coming in that are different, but it would be unlikely that parents just birthed a wild group of children (laughs).

Colleen: I would really hope that‘s not the case.

Noga: What do you think would be the factors that would influence these children to change the way they‘re acting? Any ideas?

Colleen: I don‘t know. One could argue that it‘s TV, but –

Noga: You had TV too.

Colleen: I had TV too. And one would argue that it‘s the music. I listen to the same music too.

Noga: Do you think Ivan had any effect?

Colleen: I left Convent before Ivan. Ivan did give a lot of people some free time to do a lot of crazy things. And some people still aren‘t in full school, still have shift school, school in the morning or afternoon only, so I guess they have a lot more free time. So, they just idle and they have nothing else to do. But it‘s just the level of respect. I just don‘t understand it anymore.

Noga: So you seem to know a lot about school reputations. Let me ask you to compare your school to, say, Hill Academy and Valley Secondary School [pseudonyms].

Colleen: I went to Hill Academy primary school, Hill Junior, but Hill Junior then isn‘t what it is now. Hill definitely can be considered as a bourgeois school. But even then, Hill gets better grades because their classes are smaller, so, you really have more individual attention, whereas in Convent you have more things to do. So you end up being a more well-rounded student. In Hill it‘s just more or less academics. They‘re trying to get clubs and so, but it‘s still just academics. Valley, I wouldn‘t send my children there.

Noga: Why?

Colleen: Like the SSU [police] have to be there every week. Because they‘re fighting and they‘re rowdy. The thing is, when Valley first started, the people that went there were those that couldn‘t get into their first, and second, and third choices. So you have these students that didn‘t perform so well in primary school that are ending up there, and they probably still have some kind of mental block that I‘m not that bright so I‘m just going to give trouble. And then, they probably came from rough neighborhoods. And so all of that in one place, that can never be very good.

Noga: So it‘s not so much a class thing, the divisions you say, it‘s more where you went to school?

Colleen: Where you were in school, how you were brought up. I guess that could be class as well, how you were brought up. But when people tell me, oh, I‘m from the upper class, I‘m like, what defines upper class?

Noga: What do you think?

Colleen: People think upper class is just wealth, or money, but then, you can have money and have no respect for anyone. And have no morals, no values, and then you end up being class*less*. But you can not be making so much money, but be *so* respectful and have such strong values and morals, does that still make you lower class? Because to me, when you think of upper class, lower class, you think of lower class people as being wild, rowdy, and uneducated. And upper class, that‘s supposed to be educated, polite, drinking tea or something like that. But I don‘t see that happening.

Noga: So it‘s more about respect, respectfulness, and values?

Colleen: Yeah. To me, in my experiences, when you talk about people being low class it‘s because of how they behave.

Noga: So what kinds of behaviors are low class then? So eating and drinking on the streets –

Colleen: Yeah, in uniform, when you‘re in school. When you‘re in uniform, you‘re being identified, you have on your tie or something like that. When you‘re out of uniform, all children look the same, unless someone knows you. Then you can tell that you go to Convent, or wherever. But like even, some people, just the way they behave in public, when you‘re supposed to be with important people, and they sit down and they‘re very brawlish, and they‘re very, um, sprawlin‘ out, or something like that, it‘s like, oh my gosh, that‘s such a low class person in a high class position, especially when you‘re supposed to be an important person.

Noga: Okay. Like who are important people?

Colleen: Prime Ministers, professors, things like that. You know, there are just certain etiquette things that you don‘t do. Like you don‘t go to a cocktail party and fill your plate high, or talk with your mouth full. Little things like that that I see big people doing. And I know not to do it.

Noga: Do you think of those people as being more low class when they do those things, regardless –

Colleen: They are exhibiting low class behavior.

Noga: Okay, so it‘s a behavior code, more or less. And do you think that lower and upper class people share some ideas about what those behaviors are?

Colleen: Yes, they definitely do.

Noga: So lower class people who would follow the rules, have certain respectful behaviors, you would you think of as being more middle or upper class, or as low class people that are respectable?

Colleen: Yeah, well, because I don't separate people based on upper class, middle class, lower class, because I just think it's how you behave.

Noga: So do you hang out with people who behave in lower class ways?

Colleen: Yeah, you can't really avoid them.

Noga: Are you friends with them?

Colleen: Yeah, I friends with everyone. Well, there are some people I don't talk to because they just don't deserve to be spoken to because they've done bad things, or done me bad things. But, I don't really discriminate. People that loud, rowdy, they drink, they smoke, they curse, they do everything, while I might be around them, but I wouldn't stay with them, I'd say, "Hi, how you doin'" little chat and then I'd be on my way.

Noga: Tell me about the culture of liming. I see people come out on the street at sundown, you see all around the country people hanging out and talking in groups and parties – how do you read those scenes? Do you feel comfortable in all of them, or are there certain rules, unwritten rules of behavior, like where you would go, where wouldn't go?

Colleen: If it's on the street, no. Mm-mm, I wouldn't be there.

Noga: Why? What's the rule?

Colleen: I guess because, it's just a stereotype. If you're liming on the street that means you're drinking, or smoking weed, or something like that. For me, before, a lime just used to be we'd go to the beach, or we'd go to the mall, or we'd just sit down in a big group talking, or having a Coke or something like that. At the end of last year, I started moving with a different set of people, it's my boyfriend and his friends, and they would – you know Wall Street? You know where all the banks are? In front of RBTT bank, that's like their spot. So on a Friday night and a Saturday night, you'd see them there. They'd park up their cars, get something to eat, and they'd just stay around the cars and talk, and then go home or something like that. The first couple times that I went with him there I was really, really uncomfortable. Because I didn't know, I knew them, I didn't really *know* them. I'm like, this is Wall Street, I'm not supposed to be liming on Wall Street. Bad things happen on Wall Street.

Noga: Were you worried about your safety?

Colleen: Yeah. The first time it was my safety. But then you realize, in front of the bank, nothing happens in front of the bank because it's always just them there. Where you have all the rough crowd, that's further down, where they actually sell the food, that's where everything happens. That's where all the fights break out and everything like that. So after awhile, I got comfortable going there, staying there with them.

Noga: Did your parents mind?
Colleen: My parents, they don't – they would know that I'd go to Wall Street, but, like, "You're on Wall Street, doing what?" I was like, "In front of the *bank*." "Oh. Okay."
Noga: Oh, okay, so they know.
Colleen: Yeah, once you know it's not to the entrance, that's where everyone is. I wouldn't stay there. [Note: the physical distance between the bank and the food vendors is very short. Her point exemplifies the subtle distinctions that mark geography on this very small island.]

Education – School Projects

Noga: What do you think are the most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?
Colleen: I wasn't born, but I think independence had something to do with it. Because that's when, the independence time was all around the time when the Caribbean with the whole Black Power movement, when Black Power came into the Caribbean. And that's when people started to stand up and say okay, this is what I want to do, this is where we're going. And also the same thing with the Revolution. So this is just from what I've read and been told. I wasn't around (laughs).
Noga: Have you talked about those events with your family and friends, or is it more from school?
Colleen: School to an extent. My parents were not in Grenada at the time, but my uncle was, and my brother. When he was in secondary school, their Young Leaders project was on the Grenada Revolution. And it was a *big thing*. They found body bags and everything.
Noga: What was the name of that project?
Colleen: Young Leaders. It's a program that's run for Form Four students and you have to do a project. Their project was on "Nurturing a Culture of Peace," so they tried to get some answers for those families who lost loved ones in the Revolution.

And it was huge. My brother was featured in an article in the L.A. Times. It went far. They went looking, they interviewed the prisoners, the Seventeen, they went digging up – there's an old campsite in Calivigny. They went digging and they found body bags and then, authorities tried to hush it up and it was incredible, that project. They went to Trinidad and met with forensic specialists.

Noga: And were they able to identify some of the bodies?
Colleen: No. After a while, they had to stop and just wrap up their projects.
Noga: Because the bodies were too decomposed, or because the government wanted to stop –

Colleen: They were putting a stop to it. And people were saying, ―Oh, this is not something for young boys to be doing, they're too young."
Noga: Does your brother still talk about that experience?
Colleen: He does. He mentions it sometimes. He really enjoyed doing that project. I did the same. I was in Young Leaders as well. Our project was on poverty though.

Noga: I was going to ask you about the Young Leaders' Program, Form Four. Is that all over Grenada? All the secondary schools?
Colleen: Yes. All the secondary schools are given the opportunity to take part. Because it's a competition. It's sponsored by RBTT bank. It's actually a regional competition. So you have your national competition. And then the winners from that one, their projects are submitted to the regional competition.
Noga: So how do you get to be on your school team?
Colleen: It's purely voluntary. They would identify people they'd like to be Young Leaders, but usually it's voluntary. You can do one big project or several small ones. You get a theme – our theme was with Poverty.
Noga: So what did you do?
Colleen: We were trying to raise awareness. So we did little things. We had a consultation, we had things in the newspaper all the time, we did soup kitchens, and we did a Big Sister program with GRENSAVE [Grenada Save the Children Agency, a local non-profit organization]. Just little projects. And we raised funds and everything. And we tried to use ourselves to show how we can help out, so we attempted to have our own garden. It didn't work very well. Had a book drive. Things like that …
Noga: Did it change your awareness of poverty in Grenada?
Colleen: Yes. Because when we found some of the statistics, and did interviews and questionnaires, it was amazing at how little people can get by with. Really when you see the figures, it's like, how are people surviving on this? Earning like five dollars a day, and you have children to send to school. It's like, ―How do you survive?" And the lady was like, ―From people like you."
Noga: How do you send kids to secondary school?
Colleen: Some companies, like Cable and Wireless, have scholarships programs. Pay for uniforms, books, school fees, CXC [Caribbean Examinations Council. ―O", or ―ordinary level" exams are written at the end of five years of secondary school] – because CXC is not cheap. When I did CXC, we paid 500 dollars for ten subjects.
Noga: And you have to do all those subjects?
Colleen: Had it been up to me I would have done eight, but when I first chose my subjects in Form Three, the teacher told me and three others

that children like us can‘t do less than ten. Children like me? What‘s a child like me? What are you talking about?

Noga: What do you think she meant?

Colleen: I guess she thought I was able to handle it.

Noga: What do you make of the recent rash of violence here?

Colleen: The moon, and leap year. That was all I could come up with. But then you notice, most were the result of arguments. Only one was a random murder. They don‘t teach you conflict resolution anywhere. They don‘t teach it in secondary school. The closest we came was a little class in Health Education and Family Life, which was basically, because it was a Catholic school, it was very religious. If you‘re a good Catholic, you‘re not supposed to fight. That‘s what Family Life was more or less about.

Noga: How do you think you learned your conflict resolution skills?

Colleen: At home. I mean, I didn‘t grow up having my parents quarreling and cussing each other, and my dad threatening to beat my mom or my mom threatening to beat my dad, or something like that, that a lot of people my age grew up with. So I grew up in a very calm environment. My brother and I had our usual sibling fights, but it was nothing to say we‘d grow up extremely angry with the world. I never had to grow up feeling oppressed, or that the system was against me. Or something like that. So, I believe it‘s our environment that helps you. And, I didn‘t grow up in a rough neighborhood. I‘ve been living in the same place all my life. I didn‘t grow up in a rough neighborhood so it‘s not as if I had to survive by any means necessary, whereas some people who I know now had to really fight to survive where they lived. It was really rough. And they had older people always tormenting them, things like that.

Noga: How do you recognize a rough neighborhood?

Colleen: It just looks rough. It just looks as if this is not somewhere you want to walk through at night. You can see it‘s just scary looking. Very, um, people – you can see the looks on their faces, the looks of aggression on their faces. They stand up in the road and like, if you‘re driving past, they don‘t want to get off the road. If you blow the horn then they‘ll turn around and just look fierce and angry as if they‘re going to beat you. Or you just see people liming all the time, you might see a cutlass next to them, and you‘re wondering hmm, were you working the land or is that for some other reason? And some of the parts you just learn, okay, they sell drugs here.

Noga: Like where?

Colleen: Mon Tout. By Sugar Mill. There‘s just some areas you know, okay, they‘re going to sell drugs here. And other places that you see, where you hear of the gangs originating from.

Noga: Like where?

Colleen: There's a place in St. David's called Coal – Coal's Gap. When gangs started to come into the news, that's where the biggest one came from in St. David's. There's always reports in the news coming from there.

Noga: Any other areas you associate with those things?

Colleen: Mon Tout area. There's some places, I guess too, you can see that there's a certain level, I guess a lot of places where you'd find squatters.

Noga: Like where?

Colleen: There's a little squatter community in Grand Anse Valley. They're not as menacing looking as those in Mon Tout. And, well, when you go up the Western – ooo, there's a place when I did community health, my community health teacher brought us to a place in Gouyave called Gun Battle? All of us stood up like that (mimics standing upright, arms tight to side, eyeballs looking right, left). We were petrified.

Noga: Why?

Colleen: Because Gun Battle, they were telling us every drug you can think of passes through Gun Battle.

Noga: And that's the name of a little neighborhood?

Colleen: You go through, it's on the lance, and you go through a little alley, and the little alley is called Gun Battle, and when you come through the alley there's a little area, and that is called Gun Battle. And the guide told us that you will find people there all the time. And there was a woman there, we said, "Morning" and everything like that, because the guide told us to be polite, and we said, "Morning" and she started to curse us all! And she, our, she was like our guide, she told us don't worry with her, she's the only female coke addict in the area. And she's really bad, she doesn't recognize people.

Noga: And this was a community health project through SGU?

Colleen: Yeah. Community health. We had to do a field assessment of an impoverished place.

Noga: So you were doing parts of Gouyave, then?

Colleen: She brought us to Gouyave, yes.

Noga: And how did you do a field assessment?

Colleen: We spoke to people, we spoke to the guys in Gun Battle. And there was a little thirteen-year-old, twelve-year-old, and the thing is school was still in session, so they should have been in school but they weren't. And then we spoke to – because how Gouyave is, your house is on the road, more or less – so we were able to speak to people around the area.

Noga: So you just went as a group and talked to people? And what kind of questions did you ask?

Colleen: We split up. We asked them what are the downfalls, what are the positive sides, what do you think can be done to improve the place.

She told us, don‘t ask them too many questions because they might not want to answer us. She said they like to talk about what they want to see change, so we focused on that a lot.

Noga: So what did you learn?

Colleen: All of them really want something to do. They say they don‘t have proper recreation. But that was before Fish Friday came in. So that was in 2005. So at least Fish Friday has now given something to them, so that they can spend the week preparing for it. It‘s given them something to do. And that time, it was still after Ivan, so the basketball court was still in disrepair. A lot of the houses were still not – but last time I went through Gouyave, the basketball court was picking up. A lot of these smaller communities, they don‘t really have – they have a basketball court, but it‘s not maintained. So they don‘t really have anything to do …

Noga: I wanted to ask you more about that poverty project that you did with Young Leaders. More about the interactions that you had with individuals, and what that experience was like for you. First of all, how many poor people did you know growing up in Grenada?

Colleen: Not that many. Just maybe those that I saw driving around, but I didn‘t really know what it was, because where I went to school. Everyone came from the same background that I did almost. It was only when I got into secondary school, and I was in a class with children from all over Grenada, I knew, sitting down next to a girl that would have lunch one day, wouldn‘t have lunch another day. A girl who you could tell was wearing the same shirt for two weeks, or something like that. You could say my eyes really got opened to that, okay, there are children out there that aren‘t as fortunate as I am.

Noga: Did you have the chance to go and visit these people in their homes, or see how they live?

Colleen: No.

Noga: Have you ever been in one of these little wooden houses?

Colleen: Yes.

Noga: In what context?

Colleen: In Young Leaders.

Noga: Was that your first time?

Colleen: Yeah, we bought food hampers, and things like that. I remember when we were doing our soup kitchen, there was this lady that came and she had three children. One of the babies, we were playing with him and everything, and it turned out that she lived kind of down the road from me. So I got to know her. And then, if my mom had something, mummy would help her out. Something like that. My mum kind of adopted a little family that lives down the road. So, my mum paid for the little girl‘s school uniform, because she just started secondary school. Things like that ...

Noga: So knowing what you know now, having gone on these health community projects, and then the poverty assessment, why do you think some people are poor in Grenada?

Colleen: What we learned from Young Leaders is that so many people think that poverty is a cycle, and there's no way to break the cycle. So like, they think, "My mother was poor and had eight children, so then I'm doomed to have eight children too. And raising eight children by myself." A lot of people think that it's a cycle, and they just sit back and don't want to do anything. People think that things should be provided *to* them, they're going to get things automatically, and then they don't want to work *to* get it. They just sit down waiting for something to happen instead of actually working for something to happen.

And then, well, there's always stuff like mismanagement of funds. There was this girl who used to board by us – well not board, because she didn't pay anything. She was one of mummy's scholarship students and she was living in a two by four God knows where, somewhere up north. Yeah, she was actually making an effort to go to school. She was going to TAMCC [T.A. Marryshow Community College] at the time. I remember for Christmas, her father – her step-father – is a fish*monger*. Not even a fisherman. A fish*monger*. So he was selling fish that other people caught. They didn't have – he went, and he was an alcoholic too, so he went and drank the money, so for Christmas they didn't have any kerosene. Which meant they had no food for Christmas. So mom and dad went up to Victoria to drop off food for them, and everything like that. [Note: Victoria is a town in the north, in one of the poorest parishes. Apparently Colleen knows exactly where they live; thus, her comment that they live "God knows where" can be understood as a commentary on the nature of the place.] But. Yeah. It's little thin—and then mother, the mother has polio, and has something like four children. She sews, but there's no opportunity for her to really sew in Victoria because Victoria doesn't really have much happening in it. So little things like that, and I'm thinking, isn't this where the Department of Social Welfare supposed to come in? Isn't that why we have a Ministry of Social Services? To help people like this? But, half of these ministries are underfunded anyway. So even if they wanted to, they don't have the resources to do it …

Noga: Do you see the ministries of social welfare and the various agencies that are supposed to help as feeding the attitude of people who are poor that they are waiting for something to happen?

Colleen: It probably could. It probably could. But, well, there are so many success stories of people who grew up in poverty, and they decided I'm not going to wait, I'm going to do something myself. And they fought their way to school, and had a job, and got a scholarship to

go away or something, and got to actually make something of themselves. And I guess, even those might be a select few, but it still happened. But I guess it's not enough for people to say, well, I can't be like him, he was lucky. Or something like that. And I guess people have their priorities mixed up. Everyone wants two cellphones, or to have the latest outfit, or hair style, or something.

Noga: Why do you think those things are important to people?

Colleen: I don't know. I don't know why material things matter so much. I mean, I'm perfectly fine wearing free T-shirts and jeans (gestures to own T-shirt). But they have to have the latest outfit, and they have to go to the hottest show, and they have to see this performer when he comes, and I wonder, is that really where your priority is supposed to lie right now?

Noga: Do you think there are people whose priority really is to help themselves and their family to have a better life, who are just not able to do so?

Colleen: Yeah, definitely. And those are the unfortunate ones.

Hurricane Ivan

Noga: In the months following Hurricane Ivan, how was your life affected? Did you need any help? If so, did you get what you needed? And from whom?

Colleen: Our house wasn't badly damaged. We had a roof. But, my uncle didn't have a house, one of my uncles, so he moved in with us. My grandmother, the home where she was staying was badly damaged so she moved in with us as well. We didn't have electricity, for, well, hurricane was in September, we didn't get electricity until two days before Christmas. So that's about three months. But I was still at school. My mother being [at company X], she was in the office every single day from early morning 'til late in the evening – my dad as well had to secure his building. Both of them were under incredible stress. My dad especially. And all of us had to be on guard because there were many times, people were very angry because he had to secure the store. And they were saying, "Why don't you let us come in and take everything?" They broke the store three times, and everyone was on edge and feared for our safety … After a while, school had started, and I couldn't take it anymore, and I said to my mummy, "Mummy, I'm going to go crazy – I need to see a street light, I need to hear a television, I need to eat baked food." And she sent me to Barbados. We had a long weekend, it was Thanksgiving weekend, she sent me to Barbados for the weekend. From Thursday to Tuesday, just so that I could see streetlights and eat baked food.

Noga: Did it help, going to Barbados?

Colleen: Yes, it did.

Noga: Do you think that Grenadians share any qualities which helped, or slowed, the recovery efforts?

Colleen: Qualities that we shared is that, we looked out for each other. They found people helping each other clean up and get things together, sharing what they could. But what slowed down the process is when the looting took place, and we had so many people looting, and if you had so many people looting then you had a lot of people with the same qualities. They didn‘t just loot and take things, but they vandalized places. So added to the destruction that Ivan caused, the looters caused more destruction. So that means more work had to be done. So let‘s say for example, in our store, the window would not have been broken but they broke the window to get inside. Or they broke down a door to get inside. And there are some insurance policies, while they cover damage from hurricanes, they don‘t cover damage from looters.

Development

Noga: Grenada is often called a developing country. What do you think development is?

Colleen: When I think of development, I would like to think in terms of the people, not infrastructure. People – so I think about healthcare, education, welfare, not how many four-story buildings and stadia and things like that, but things that would be more beneficial toward the people.

Noga: Do you think Grenada needs further development? Why or why not? If yes, what would be the most important area to develop?

Colleen: Development in healthcare, education, welfare, not necessarily buildings.

Noga: How do you feel about the development of the tourism industry in Grenada?

Colleen: I think the tourism industry is being developed, but not developed in the best way. I don‘t think that they are actually trying, they‘re not looking at the right things to develop. If I was a tourist, and I was coming from a metropolitan country, I wouldn‘t want to go to a mall. I would want to go and lounge on the beach, I would go and trek through the rainforest. These are places that we need to develop. Grand Etang rainforest, for example. It took so long after Ivan to get the little Great House up and running, it was looking so dilapidated. Yes we just had a hurricane, but the tourists are walking through this mall, beautiful mall, but they‘ve seen it all already. They want to see something different, something that they‘re not used to seeing. So you can develop Grand Etang into a nice little area where you‘d want to go and hike and everything. Develop the beaches. Right now, when the cruise ships come in, you have some plastic umbrellas. You don‘t

have to have plastic, use the coconut palm fronds and make a little hut. They just don‘t think in that way.

Noga: Today Grenada is often called a Third World or developing country. Drawing upon what you know about Grenada‘s, and the Caribbean‘s, history and the world today, why do you think Grenada is still challenged economically? Why do you think Grenada is where it is today?

Colleen: When I hear people talk about Grenada as a Third World country, I laugh. I‘m like, hmm, do Third World countries have two stadiums – well, we don‘t have two anymore, but we had two. Do they have two stadiummm – stadia – have a huge hospital, well, if it‘s supposed to be huge. But, that‘s how I always think of it. Developing, yes, because they‘re getting there.

But my whole thing is that Grenada is not using its resources properly. If you look at Trinidad, Trinidad yes has oil and iron and nitrogen and all sorts of things that they‘re exporting. Grenada doesn‘t have those things, but it can have a really good tourism product. And it can also have, well, the nutmegs and everything like that. But things aren‘t managed properly. If you don‘t have proper management of your resources, then you‘re not going to be able to grow. St. Lucia now is developing at crazy speeds with their tourism. You go down to the south and it‘s construction on construction, hotel, hotel, hotel. And the thing is, you‘re going to have people coming in there to use it. St. Lucia doesn‘t have any real, major exports like Trinidad, other than bananas. But they *using* it. But Grenada‘s mismanagement of everything. Everything is in such disarray. There‘s so much confusion, people can‘t agree, no one really agrees where these funds should go or where they shouldn‘t go, that‘s no way to grow. And I mean, because they share a currency with four, five of the islands, it‘s not to say that Grenada, if times get hard, can devalue the currency. Because, if you devalue it, it‘s going to be harmful for St. Lucia, St. Vincent, or St. Kitts. Or something like that. So, I think it‘s really all about the management. It‘s not being managed properly.

Noga: You started off talking about Grenada‘s resources. Historically, Grenada, even as a small place, has had a fair amount of natural resources. Cocoa, nutmeg – there was a big market for those, those things were really valuable at one time. I mean, why isn‘t Grenada rich?

Colleen: Mismanagement.

Noga: By whom?

Colleen: Governments, I guess.

Noga: Going back _til–

Colleen: Yeah, has to be, because I guess, everything has happened, okay, only recently they started actually the Grenada Chocolate Factory. So it was a matter of sending cocoa out, and us buying it back processed. I mean, the Chocolate Factory, if they was able to do more processed stuff, then we could send them out and don't have to pay for it to come back in, or something like that. I remember the soap company in Dominica. It wanted to set up in Grenada, and my dad told me – because he used to work for a soap company, the soap company in Dominica, and he told me that yeah, they said no, they didn't want it here.

Noga: Why?

Colleen: That Dominican soap company is the one that does Palmolive, the Palmolive that we get here. And Refresh.

Noga: Why didn't Grenada want it?

Colleen: I have no idea.

Noga: Ten years from now, what would you like Grenada to be like? Do you think this will happen? If not, why not?

Colleen: Ten years from now, I would like to see more emphasis on the non-material things. And I really hope that it would happen. I would hate to come back from my travels in Europe and see the little little rum shop that used to look so quaint completely hidden by some monstrosity of a building. Or the mountain that I used to admire just full of houses.

Noga: There's a lot of building going on.

Colleen: There is a mountain going toward Grand Etang, and just how it's shaped, I had a book about a boy in school, a chalet school in Switzerland, and the cover of the book had this kind of rolling mountain, and the mountain just reminded me of that. And I don't think anything is supposed to go on that mountain but trees.

Noga: Do you feel like foreigners are buying up a lot of the land?

Colleen: I think the foreigners are *developing* a lot of the land. But it's because the locals aren't stepping forward to do it. So you can't really blame the foreigners. Because the locals aren't doing it. So they are jumping at the chance.

Noga: Since I've met you, it seems there are so many new projects coming up in Grenada. One of my questions is what do you think about all these new luxury developments? There's Point Marquis, the whole de Savary thing, Bacolet Bay, Four Seasons, all of those. Do you see them all the same way or are some different? And do you like them?

Colleen: I did a tourism class as well. So during the tourism class I really got to understand what was going on. And then I did my big research project on condominium development in Grenada. So that's where everything came in – the Point Marquis, the de Savary and Grand

Harbour. I actually focused on Grand Harbour. I think it is beneficial, in terms that, right now Grenada doesn't have enough rooms, so if you don't have enough rooms you're not going to have the number of flights coming in. Because people need places to stay when they get here. So in that sense it's good.

But the problem is, these things are happening and the public doesn't know what's happening. So like with de Savary, because that's where the most confusion has been happening, especially Port Louis. Because people don't know what they're doing, and everything was so hush hush, and then there'd be a big burst and, "Oh, this is what they did, and that's wrong," and everything like that. Grenadian people like to know what's happening. So if they don't know then they're going to oppose it. I actually like how the lagoon looks now, I think it's beautiful. When you pass in the night, and you see the lights, and I never thought that they could clean up that place so nice. I like it how it is now. I think they shouldn't build condominiums along the lagoon. I think that would just spoil it. As it is now, it's just a normal marina, I think it's beautiful and they really shouldn't do anything else with it.

Noga: Do you know, since you did research on this, about how much de Savary paid for that area?

Colleen: He honestly didn't pay as much as he should have, as much as it's worth. And he got so many privileges and rights and everything for what he paid. We found, my dad got the document of the agreement, and it really doesn't make sense. He doesn't have to pay duties, and he got concessions, and he got so many things.

Noga: And he sold it.

Colleen: Mm-hmm. Camper and Nicholson. But I think it's beautiful. Even Mt. Cinnamon – who would have thought that down there could look so pretty. But it's just that if they put the condominiums they're going to make it too commercial. And then they also run the risk of getting like Barbados. Barbados has so many condo hotels and not enough traditional hotels. That you don't provide the variety that people want. Not everyone wants to stay in this, some people want to travel and stay in a traditional hotel. If you convert all your hotels to these condominium-type ones then you're going to run into problems.

Noga: And that's what most of these new projects are –

Colleen: They're condo hotels … [Discussion of rental pools.]

Noga: So if they do manage to fill them, do you think that will be a good thing for Grenada as a whole?

Colleen: It would, because you'd have people coming in. But because the condo hotels are all-inclusive properties, then people would never have any incentive to leave the resort ... You can get everything you want there.

Noga: So how does money enter the local economy from these places?

Colleen: You'd have to pay fees. Well, you'd have to buy food for your kitchen and things like that. But it's not as much as – well, they're going to be hiring locals to staff the place. And if they want entertainment at night, they'd hire people to come in to dance, play an instrument, something like that. One of the suggestions that I made in my project is that they have a day when they can get local people to come in, vendors, to come in say every Thursday, so that the visitors can buy something. Or if not, have every Wednesday shuttles going into town. Because you have to either get the people out, or bring people in.

Noga: What do you think about the way the government has handled things? Do you think it's just a problem with transparency or –

Colleen: Mm-hmm. Transparency definitely. You can't expect to tell everyone everything, but you have to tell people what's going on. Especially in a small place like this because everyone is going to know anyway. Even if they don't know exactly what's happening, everyone is going to know something. Might be the wrong something, but. And then when they come out and they speak, it's not what you want to hear. They're going to cover it up still. It's like you know that what they're doing is nonsense, then they're not telling you exactly what's happening. They're still trying to cover it up. I don't know, I guess that's just politics.

Noga: Do you follow the election news and all the political happenings now? Do you pay attention to all that?

Colleen: I don't really have a choice, you know. My dad watches it, and it's all over. But what I could never understand is that you never hear anything about the Republicans? Every time you turn on CNN or something it's always Barack and Hillary.

Noga: You're talking about the U.S. elections, I'm talking about the Grenada elections!

Colleen: But the Grenada ones, it's still being overshadowed by the American thing. Because that's what everyone else talks about, who do you think is going to win, Barack or Hillary? ...

That's what everyone is talking about. No one is really talking about Grenada. Grenadians aren't talking about Grenadians. Because they're not calling elections, no one knows, it could be this week they're going to make an announcement, they're just brambling on, so everyone just prefers to focus on America. It's more interesting …

Noga: Who are you in favor of for the *Grenadian* elections?

Colleen: I have no idea. I'm supposed to vote in the next election and I have no idea who I'm going to vote for.

Noga: Do you think you'll start paying attention to the news once the election is called?

Colleen: Yeah, definitely once it‘s called.
Noga: Do you know who your parents vote for?
Colleen: I don‘t know, you know. With my dad, my dad is really funny. He makes so many jokes about everyone. With my dad you really can‘t tell. And my mum is just indifferent …

–Grenadianness”

Noga: What about the Independence Day celebrations? Did you attend?
Colleen: Nope. I‘ve outgrown it. I used to have to march in the military parade for five years, as a Girl Guide. No, mm-mm.
Noga: Do you have fond memories of participating? Or are you glad it‘s over?
Colleen: I used to laugh, because the police officers used to be dropping like flies from the heat. You‘d see us poor little guides standing up strong and they were falling down. We used to give so much trouble on the field. We were awful.
Noga: Did you watch it on TV?
Colleen: No, it was annoying me. All this patriotism, it‘s just so. Sometimes it seems false, because it just happens one time. I used to have a Grenada band I‘d wear all the time, all year round, I wouldn‘t just wear it at Independence. I gave it to some St. Lucians who came to swim. It‘s so commercial, Independence is like Christmas. It‘s an opportunity to spend money and make money. Because everyone is selling flags, and red cloth, green cloth. It‘s like oh, wear your national colors. It‘s just so – I don‘t really see the point.

Like for Independence, the day before Independence, all I did, and it‘s the same thing I did last year, I have a T-shirt from my old dance group, and it has a Grenada flag on it. And I wore it. I wasn‘t putting on all kind of clothes, red, yellow, green. No. I wasn‘t doing it. Even the parade, there‘s nothing that‘s happening there. You stand up and you listen to long, long speeches, and then you have these cultural performances that half the time are pathetic, because you can never hear them, and it‘s never done properly, and they‘re never produced properly. What‘s the point.

Noga: Do you think it has any point for people?
Colleen: People like something to do, people like just for one day to say they‘re Grenadian, even if the other days they are not proud to say it. Gives them something to hold onto, I guess. There was this car, and I thought it was so hilarious, it had Grenada flags all over it, but then you see who is driving it, it‘s a Syrian.

But they go too far, they paint everyone‘s wall in this red, yellow, green. Did you see the cemetery? They had this sign, Welcome to Bone City, they had bunting and banners and flags, they painted the gazebo and steps, red, yellow, green. It‘s going too far,

everyone‘s wall, the bottom of trees, it doesn‘t look pretty anymore. They might put a lion in between and it‘s like, that‘s not Grenada, that‘s Rasta!

Noga: Okay, so you see the Syrian with the flags. So, who do you think are Grenadians?

Colleen: I wrote this for my Caribbean Issues [an SGU class] position paper. What I said is, it‘s something that‘s in you. It‘s not something physical. Grenadianness, Caribbeanness, is an essence. Because it doesn‘t really matter if you‘re born here or not, that‘s just a formality. But there are people who come, who weren‘t born here, they come and they embrace the culture and embrace everything Grenada has to offer, and they become it. The food, the people. You don‘t have to adopt the language, but you‘re proud to say I‘m Grenadian. But you don‘t have to be wearing the colors, or have a flag on your car, for everyone to know that you‘re Grenadian. It‘s just something that‘s within you, that‘s what I wrote. That‘s how I feel.

Especially after Vivian [Burkhardt] won Miss Grenada World, everyone said, ―Oh, she‘s not Grenadian because she wasn‘t born here.” And she can‘t be Grenadian because she doesn‘t know about eating crayfish from the river, and eating this, and she doesn‘t know where this is, that is, and I‘m thinking I was born here, and I don‘t know where this place is, and I don‘t know how to eat crayfish from the river, are you going to tell me I‘m not Grenadian? But I was born here. It‘s all about the experiences you have.

I remember in my position paper, what the article was arguing is that this person said that Caribbean literature is literature that uses the dialect and addresses the themes of the black working class. So someone like the author of Wide Sargasso Sea, Jean Rhys, because she was a white Dominican, it‘s not Caribbean because she‘s white and she‘s not doing that. But I‘m thinking, *no*. Because everyone‘s experience is unique, and when you write about it it‘s your Caribbean experience, because who is anyone else to tell you who you are?

Noga: So I mean, granted there can‘t be a list of things that you have to have experienced, like eating crayfish from the river, you can‘t have a checklist, right? So what are the fundamental parts of this essence? What are the characteristics that you see as Grenadianness?

Colleen: Grenadianness is friendliness. Grenadianness is a vibrance. I don‘t think I‘ve ever met a dull Grenadian. I mean, I don‘t like oildown, but I‘m Grenadian. You don‘t have to like oildown to be Grenadian. I just don‘t happen to like calalloo and breadfruit, which is the main constituents of it. I think being Grenadian is about just having that kind of love for the place itself, so that regardless of what is going on, you‘re still going to say okay, I‘m Grenadian, I‘m still going to stand by my country.

Because you have all these people in New York, or wherever, in Brooklyn, we have a lot of Grenadians in Brooklyn, they stay there in their little cubicles, and they surf the internet and go on the Talkshop, and they talk about everything that's happening in the island, but ask them to come back and help out, and they'll never do it. So I don't know, yes, you're a Grenadian because it's a formality, you were born here, but you don't have that love for it, because you're not going to come back and help. I'm going to leave to go and study, but I want to come back. Because as much as I don't like everything that's happening, a little part of me thinks that I can do something to change it. I guess Grenadianness is not something set in black and white that you can actually define …

Noga: Being here is part of it then? So if you're in Brooklyn, and you send money, does that count? Is that helping? Is that showing love for your country?

Colleen: It could be showing love for your country, or it could also just be obligation. It's just so hard to define what it is. I just don't think that you should tell someone you're not Grenadian because of xyz.

Noga: What are the things you don't like that are going on?

Colleen: I don't like the mismanagement. I don't like the fact that so much is happening and people don't know about it.

Noga: Do you think it's corruption, or is it just mismanagement?

Colleen: Mismanagement. Like the tourism industry could be so much better if they had people that knew what they were doing handling everything. There's misappropriation of funds, there's lack of training. And the people who are supposed to be in charge, they don't know for themselves.

Noga: Do you think it's because it's sort of an older generation, and the education is different now?

Colleen: Yeah, they're kind of old. And those in administration now, they're all in the traditional professions when you went away and you had to become a doctor, and you had to become a lawyer, and you had to be a scientist, or something like that. It's not like now, when you can do tourism and public relations.

Noga: So you think things will change with the younger generation?

Colleen: I really hope so. But then there's such a level of apathy among young people that they don't want to get involved.

Life Experiences

Noga: Tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are.

Colleen: Major experiences.

Noga: You can define that any way you want.

Colleen: What‘s major. Well, what‘s major. Well, I don‘t know if they‘re really major, but to me I guess they‘re major. Um, leaving Hill and going to Convent. Leaving that sheltered system and like, getting thrown into the world. Because at that point in time, Convent was the world. Um. And all the little things, being exposed to having children not like me because of where I came from. Um, when I got to Form Five, everyone was against me and I remember my teacher, she was the dean, telling me ―When all is against you, the cream will float.” Because if you look at cream, cream always floats to the top. Yeah, that‘s how she explained it to me. And after that, I never really took anything that people had negative to say about me, it never really got me down. I just kind of use it to step over, to continue.

Noga: What do you mean ―everyone was against you” in Form Five?

Colleen: When I was in Form Five, there was this plot to not, like, they would nominate me for valedictorian and then not vote for me. Like, everything. They were just plotting against me, they didn‘t want me.

Noga: So why did they nominate you?

Colleen: I don‘t know, they were spiteful children. Like, when I got Head Girl, apparently, I was the teacher‘s choice for Head Girl, but the students didn‘t want me. But I couldn‘t be bothered.

Noga: Why do you think they turned against you?

Colleen: I have no idea. I never do anybody anything.

Noga: Is it very cliquey in secondary school?

Colleen: Yeah. Yeah. I guess they didn‘t like my group either. But, I couldn‘t be bothered with them. Um, let‘s see. Going to France by myself.

Noga: How old were you?

Colleen: When I went by myself I was eighteen. My eighteenth birthday, my mother told me she was sending me to be cultured.

Noga: Really? So she sent you to France?

Colleen: She sent me to France.

Noga: Okay, tell me about the trip.

Colleen: For three weeks, and I was completely lost.

Noga: All by yourself?

Colleen: Yeah. I was staying with a lady, but, I was completely lost.

Noga: What lady?

Colleen: She used to be the director of Alliance Francaise here, so she was my mom‘s friend.

Noga: Was this in Paris, or the country?

Colleen: No, I was in the south.

Noga: You‘d been out of the Caribbean before?

Colleen: That was my second time going to France. It was my first time by myself.

Noga: What did you do the first time?

Colleen: I went with my mom and dad.

Noga: As a vacation?

Colleen: Well, she went to a meeting, and she usually used to take my dad. And I said I wanted to come too, so she brought me. I had just turned fourteen.

Noga: So four years later, you're on your own.

Colleen: Yeah, I'm on my own. And I realized I didn't know as much French as I thought. Because in Grenada, it seemed that I knew a lot of French. Seemed that I knew a lot.

Noga: You studied in school?

Colleen: Studied in school, went to classes, I got a one in CXC. And then when I went to France, I realized that okay, the world is a lot bigger than Grenada. There's a lot more – because when you go with your parents, you're still sheltered. It's only when you're by yourself that you see wow, there's so much more that I'm missing out. And even though I had no idea what people were saying half the time, it really made me think that, okay, there's a lot more to life than just what Grenada has to offer. And I'm not going to sit, there's a lot more that I want to be than what Grenada can offer me.

So after I came back, that's when I really started working. I said you know what, I'm going to – not up and leave one time, but I want to make sure that I have such a good foundation that when I do leave, I don't get lost. So that, more or less, that's how I work now. Like everything I do now is because I want whatever happens later, I'm going to be prepared for it. I mean, you can never be fully prepared, but at least I'm going to have something to rely on in myself. So I'm getting involved in all of these activities now because I know one day, I will be able to say, okay, I did this before. This is familiar. I know how to approach this. It didn't work then, but it will probably work now if I do it a little bit differently. Or something like that.

Noga: This idea of being cultured. What do you think your mom had in mind, and then how did that work out for you.

Colleen: She wanted me to experience different things, eat different food, meet different people … So she was all about me not staying in the same place, and me experiencing something on my own, without her telling me to do it. Without her telling me ~~–tr~~y something different," or something like that …

Noga: So when you were in France, how did you feel at the time?

Colleen: Overwhelmed. Everywhere was just so big, and foreign. I was lonely. I missed home. I was incredibly homesick. But, I think my best poetry was written in France.

Noga: Did you go out on your own every day?

Colleen: Nope. Mm-mm. I stayed in the house while the lady went to work.

Noga: She went off to work everyday, and you were all by yourself in the house?

Colleen: I stayed at home. I was not venturing out. If I go now, yeah, I'm going all over the place. Even if I wouldn't be able to – my French has gone way down. But if I was to go back now, I would be out everywhere. I wouldn't stay inside.
Noga: So you stayed inside most of the time?
Colleen: Mm-hmm.
Noga: So in retrospect you describe it as an experience where you saw all these things that you wanted to have as part of your life and your future. How do you reconcile that with what sounds like a kind of scary and lonely experience?
Colleen: Yeah. I was scared and lonely then. I mean, some things I did, go out. But it was just that I was with her. When I was with her we did everything, we went everywhere, we tried everything. I just wasn't ready to do it by myself yet.
Noga: And when you went with her, how did you feel about those things, was it more positive?
Colleen: Yeah, didn't seem that big …
Noga: Any other major experiences strike you?
Colleen: I guess Ivan is one. Seeing everything that happened after it. Really knowing that we could survive. We're tough. Survive without electricity for four months. Yeah. Little disappointments here and there. I'd applied to this course in Japan, on sustainable development, I was really excited and I didn't get accepted. I was really disappointed about that. My mom was like, "Oh, but no one else from Grenada got accepted. They have something against Grenada, not you" (laughs). They told me, "Very strong application, but we were looking for people with a unique and diverse cultural experience." And I'm thinking, okay, Grenada isn't? It's apparently a very competitive course. They were only accepting twenty-four international students, so I guess I didn't make that grade. I'm still waiting on some more major experiences.

Discussion

Colleen's reference points quickly reveal her privileged position within Grenadian society. Her trip to France to become "cultured" gave her the chance to write her best poetry. Grenada's countryside has a "quaint" rum shop, or evokes a Swiss chalet; she hopes these will remain untouched when she returns from her travels in Europe. Grenada's economic struggles and the governments' suspiciously generous concessions

to foreign investors are chalked up to ―mismanagement" and lack of ―transparency." There is nothing so important as a ―well-rounded education." Colleen's focus in her discussion of Hurricane Ivan is the looters who threatened her family's business. When she felt as though she would go crazy without electricity for three months, ultimately she was able to get away to Barbados for a long weekend. Although she recognizes the lack of reconstruction in many parts of Grenada, leaving schoolchildren ―idle," she also perceives that there are those who just use Ivan as an excuse. Even though she eschews the language of class, she is able to articulate a clear set of rules for determining respectability based on background and behavior. Her school project on poverty taught her that the ―cycle of poverty" is, like Ivan, an excuse for not attempting to do more with one's life.

Colleen is defiant about narrow definitions of who is, or is not, Grenadian. She points out that popular definitions tend to focus on the experience of village life, a heavy Grenadian dialect, and dark skin color. These definitions exclude Colleen's own experiences, and have left her alienated from peers in school and feeling like an outsider when traveling around Grenada. Nevertheless, in common with most people with whom I spoke, the criteria for being Grenadian are not limited to questions of birthplace, marriage, or a naturalization process. Instead, Grenadians tend to express the idea that a love for the experience of Grenada – variously defined through encounters with the land, the people, and the culture – are the only prerequisite for becoming Grenadian. While this open perspective embraces Colleen's own experience of being a light-skinned, upper class Grenadian, she thought it was ―hilarious" to see a Grenadian flag-covered car driven by a Syrian.

Colleen's views on development, education, politics and her future share many parallels with Vanessa, whom we will meet in the next chapter. She is the only other wealthy, light-skinned participant in my study. Vanessa, too, spoke passionately about Grenadians' assumptions about skin color and nationality. She also acknowledged her upbringing in private school as being "sheltered," and although her entry into the wider world (of Grenada) came later than Colleen's, it was an eye-opening experience for both. Also, like Colleen, Vanessa perceived that her major life experiences still lay in the future. With both of these young women, this statement seems a recognition that their lives have been somewhat sheltered thus far, while also suggesting that they look forward to a future of enriching new experiences.

At our last meeting, Colleen came directly from her new job wearing a tidy suit, color-coordinated hair adornments, and high heels. She had searched for work for six months following graduation, and had found employment as the head of marketing for the local chapter of an international company. The position required a car and license, which she already had. She continued to live with her parents, and was earning EC$2,000/month (US$750) plus EC$500 (US$185) as a car benefit. She had turned down two other positions.

In the end, Colleen reported that she voted for the NDC, adding that she was tired of talk about what happened thirty years ago and only cared about what was happening in the country now. She said that they are pushing agriculture projects and trying to make jobs for laborers, but that creating that level of employment does nothing for people like her and her friends who now have a university degree. Colleen indicated that many of her SGU graduate friends were having a hard time finding work, with the only exceptions

being those who had a job before and were on study leave, or those who are older and have experience. Colleen set a personal deadline to go abroad to obtain a master‘s degree in August 2010, or latest, January 2011.

Vanessa

When we first met, Vanessa was twenty years old and in her final year at SGU. She majored in business administration, and found employment in a real estate agency shortly after graduation. We met in her office several times – a comfortably chic, air-conditioned environment into which she had transitioned gracefully, shedding student attire for the appropriate slacks and high heels. Vanessa has a strikingly gracious, sparkly, and open personality. She told me that she was particularly glad to have her experiences included in my study. Like Colleen, she was conscious that her experiences were not represented in popular conceptions of ~~–G~~renadianness," nor in ideas about who qualifies to be Grenadian. Even more than Colleen, however, she spoke about the ways in which her nationality had been questioned, and she frequently raised the issues of skin color, race, and class.

Vanessa is comfortable using the language of class, though she asserts that she herself is not upper class in spite of her awareness that she is frequently perceived to be ~~–r~~ich." Her family is very well-connected and her father operates a successful business. Nevertheless, her notions of upper class are influenced by her ideas about wealthy Americans, a category with which she feels few Grenadians can compete. Within Grenadian society, there is little doubt that her family occupies an elite niche. One of my preferred indicators for socioeconomic class is a food budget: her family spends EC$600-$650 (approximately US$230) per week for a family of four. (She thought her family spent twice as much, but her mother corrected the figure.) This is the highest expenditure for the SGU student study participants. By contrast, compare this to another student

whose family of four spends approximately US$200 per *month*. They have a large garden plot. Vanessa's family has ample land, but they favor decorative plantings. Indeed, even the notion of weekly shopping is distinct from most Grenadians who typically "make groceries" monthly. Vanessa's family also employs a gardener and a helper in the home; the latter works a forty-hour week doing the cooking and cleaning. She earns a monthly salary of EC$700-$750 (approximately US$270) per month. (Here again, Vanessa thought the wage was twice as much, but her mother corrected the figure.) Vanessa noted that her mother grew up with a helper, and once one is "accustomed" to something, it is hard to do without.

Vanessa has led a privileged life in Grenada, and she is well aware of her good fortune. She is also aware that she has been sheltered, and in the excerpts below, she provides thoughtful examples of experiences which have taken her outside of her comfortable social world. Many of the excerpts below are as interesting for what they omit as for what they reveal.

Topics: Color and race; Revolution and Hurricane Ivan; social class; development; politics; life experiences.

Color and Race

> Noga: Do you think it's important for people to keep close contact with their family, and if so, with particular members, and why?
> Vanessa: Definitely, we have to keep contact with our family. I've never been asked why. Just because your family, they're who raised you, who you were part of, in terms of grandparents, you get to learn about your ancestors, about your history, it helps you to understand who you are, and where you came from.

And, in my case, living in Grenada, it‘s not easy to be this color. It‘s like – what are you. So without my family I wouldn‘t be able to know who, what races I‘m made up of. And also, too, it‘s just having people there, you know. We‘re social beings. Just having people around to support you.

Noga: So do you know your family history, and your ancestry?

Vanessa: Not fully, but we talk about it. We ask a lot of questions.

Noga: So you talk about issues around skin color and being Grenadian?

Vanessa: I mean, my parents never made it an issue. Our skin color. It‘s only as I got into high school, and even university, people like, ―You ask me what am I?‖ [as if responding to invisible interrogator]. What sort of question is that? I was shocked when people actually asked me that because my parents didn‘t make an issue of it. But as I got into high school and people started asking me, I started asking. Even [the ―Diasporic Culture‖ section of the four-module SGU course, ―Caribbean Issues and Perspectives‖] was a shock for me because I‘ve never spoken so much about race in my life. I didn‘t even realize it was an issue. Because I‘m not really, exposed, really, to racism. I mean, every now and then. But, like, what is all this race thing about? It doesn‘t matter, you know.

Noga: If someone were to ask you, ―Who are you?‖ how would you answer?

Vanessa: Who am I? I‘m Vanessa. Um, Grenadian. I have never, I didn‘t even know people did this until the module, well, I‘ve seen it on TV sometimes, but you‘re not sure whether to believe it, but I‘ve never classified myself in a race. Like, in the States, sometimes when people ask you who you – you say, I‘m African American, or something. I‘ve never done that. I would never think of doing that. So, I‘m Grenadian.

Noga: And how do you think most people of this island would answer?

Vanessa: Same way. I don‘t find there are a lot of racial issues here. I think every now and then you meet the one person who just tends to talk about color a lot, or makes certain comments. But generally, I don‘t think.

Noga: And do you think Grenadians have a strong national identity?

Vanessa: No.

Noga: What makes you say that?

Vanessa: Sometimes they do. Like when we had an Olympic runner, an Olympic gold medalist go up, it was like Grenadian, oh, they‘re proud to be Grenadian. Or, now that cricket is going on, with Grenada hosting cricket world cup and that sort of thing. But little things, like I don‘t find people are proud to say they are Grenadian. I‘ve met a lot of people my age from other Caribbean islands, and they‘re very proud to say I‘m from Barbados, I‘m from Trinidad, or so. I find it‘s only

now getting, only now I hear people say, –Oh, I'm from Grenada" and stuff.

Okay, when the American national anthem plays, you all stand at attention, and you put your hand here, and you see people crying. Down here, national anthem going on and they're having a conversation with somebody else, and it's like they don't understand the significance of these things.

Revolution and Hurricane Ivan

Vanessa: There are some questions that you don't ask. What I find, I don't know if it's like this with other families, but I was quarreling with my father the other day, it's like, I was born after when the Revolution happened, and I don't find that people talk about it. They don't teach it in school. I mean, my grandmother has never come to me and spoken about it. Only on occasion when I sort of try to remember to ask my dad questions. So a lot of times we don't know, because I wasn't alive then. I find they should educate the younger ones more on it, because if you don't ask questions nobody tells you. My family doesn't talk about it. My father doesn't talk about it. So I don't know …

Noga: And if you ask questions about the Revolution will they answer, or is it a touchy subject?

Vanessa: No, they'll answer. Well, my family will. I don't know about other people. I think it is still a bit touchy because a lot of the people that were involved are still alive and they're still in jail.

Noga: And what do you think are the most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?

Vanessa: The Revolution, although I don't know too – I don't know anything about it.

Noga: Okay.

Vanessa: I don't know too much about it. I know that it has definitely impacted a lot of Grenadians, but I don't think that it's really impacting the younger people. Even myself, I'm twenty, so people my age, um, from my brother's age, twenty-two, go down, I don't think we know much or anything about it, so I don't think it's going to impact us at all because they're not educating us about it. And, to be honest, I don't know, I'm still ignorant, I don't know the full impact that it has had on the people and on the country and so, just because I don't know really really what happened.

Noga: Have you read any of the published books that have been written about it?

Vanessa: Some, or, I started one, and I didn't get to finish. But it's different reading books and then hearing different experiences, because we read a couple articles for one of the courses, and so on, then I heard my parents and so talk about their experiences, and you know, it's completely different. And I think that's one thing that they should definitely teach in school because it's supposed to be such a big event. But as generations go by, I mean it's not going to impact us at all.

Other than that, I don't know what else. Well, Ivan. I think Ivan sort of opened people's eyes. Well, I was here during Ivan. Oh, I think Ivan increased national pride, in sort of a secondary way. I don't know how to explain it. I mean, the devastation after Ivan was horrendous, I mean it was dreadful, *dreadful*. You should have seen – everybody's house went, my house went. I lost everything. And then, us having recovered so well, I think a lot of the local people sort of realized well, we did a good thing, we recovered so well, and so I talk to a Grenadian now, you know, we could overcome everything.

And then there are people like me who sort of like, when I hear about Ivan I get embarrassed because of all the looting. It sort of shows the mentality of the people. Because like, Ivan was fine. We could have handled Ivan. What we couldn't handle was the looting. Because, for instance, Deco industries in Tempe. They manufacture T-shirts and stuff, and they're also agents for some food items. And they employ about five to six hundred people, because they have a factory. Nothing happened to it physically after Ivan. Nothing happened to it. The doors didn't break, the roof didn't fly off, the windows – everything was intact. Yet, they bulldozed the place, broke down all the doors, broke down all the windows, stole all the food that was in the warehouse there, stole all the clothing, all the material, vandalized the place. Broke all the computers, all the machinery that was in it, for no reason at all. So there you go, have five to six hundred people without a job. You know? It makes no sense.

So I'm embarrassed, because of the mentality of the people. They don't think. They just went on like – I don't know, maybe they thought it was the end of the world and we need to get as much food as possible, as much clothing as possible, but I don't think a lot of them *thought*. Simple things like that, like Shell Gas Station, they had a mini-mart. And in the mini-mart you've got food, it's a mini-mart so you've got everything from toothpaste to shampoo to food. Everything. Small mini-mart. Nothing happened to it. They took a truck and drove it through the front door, and looted everything out of it.

That's what upsets me about Ivan, it embarrasses me because of the mentality. Now I don't know if it would have happened anywhere else in the world, but the looting is what upset me. And I

think after Ivan, I never realized, I still don't think there's much racism, but after Ivan – how can I, let me see if I can try to explain it – a lot of the hostility that the poor people have toward the rich people showed after Ivan. Because you'd hear comments, like while all the looting was going on, and even afterwards, you'd hear people talking. You know, "They loot out the place, it's Mr. So-and-So's place, and he rich. He don't need all this, we poor people whose house blew down" (speaking in dialect). You know, so they didn't think that the rich people were affected, but in all honestly, everybody was affected. They have some houses in Lance aux Epines, and True Blue, and in Westerhall, whose roofs went, who lost everything. They sort of had that mentality yeah, we looting now, because it's us, the poor people that suffering. You understand what I'm saying?

Noga: Sure. But do you think the rich and the poor suffered equally even though everyone was affected?

Vanessa: Well. Initially, I – um, no. The poor would have suffered more than the rich. Okay, I would say I'm like middle class, right. Even though, just to use myself and my family as an example. My house and my two aunts, both of their houses, their roofs went. All of us, our roofs went. There was nowhere for us to run to, we ran to a neighbor's house. So our roofs went, fine. We lost some clothes and whatever. But we were able to get some of the food and stuff from the cupboards.

Besides that, we have family away. And our family away is middle class, upper class, had the resources to help us. My father had business friends in Trinidad and so, who had the resources to help us, to send food for us, to send money for us. They were even offering, telling us, "Come to St. Lucia, come to Trinidad, you can stay here until things pass over and whatever," whereas I don't think the poor people had that.

Okay yes, they have smaller houses, their whole house goes down. They save what little they can save. They don't have that family away, or even if they have family away, the family away doesn't have the resources to help them. Because when something happens to you, you immediately lean on your family to get you back on your feet. Whether it's emotionally or physically or so on, being from a middle or upper class family, you have that.

But the poor – so I guess they don't think. The whole looting, everybody was going crazy and they thought, you know, the end of the world, and we're not going to have any work, we're not going to have any way to get food so let's just get as much as we can now. Whereas we would think, don't loot. Because if I loot here, tomorrow I'm not going to have a job.

[Discussion of syllabi and the primary school textbook‘s section on Grenadian history.]

Noga: Who remembers what they learn in fourth grade (laughing)? But, I think that, as I understand it, that‘s the last time that Grenadian history is taught.

Vanessa: No, it‘s ridiculous. It‘s absolutely ridiculous. I probably need to make more of an effort to sort of, I don‘t know, get involved in an organization or something to sort of influence the teaching of Grenadian history in high school. Because that‘s one of the things I see as a negative in our high schools. Because we learn history, but we learn Caribbean history. You go through your entire five years of history class and you don‘t learn anything about Grenada – well, you don‘t read any books specific to Grenada. I mean, through class discussion you would sort of hear stories about Grenada, but you‘re not taught about the Revolution or anything that went on. It‘s just sad …

I just think, even if they don‘t actually have history learning books, textbooks, I think students should be encouraged, the same way [my SGU professor] encouraged us to read certain books, excerpts from the internet, we should be encouraged to read these history books.

Noga: You don‘t think people are, right now?

Vanessa: No, I think secondary students should be taught. I think the history books that we learned from, well, that I learned from, it‘s like the Caribbean history book. So it‘ll have information on Grenada, on St. Lucia, on Trinidad, the entire Caribbean instead of just Grenada alone. I‘m not saying – I think we should learn about the Caribbean also, but I think more focused on Grenada.

Noga: Do you have an understanding of what life was like under the Crown Colony?

Vanessa: Yeah, a little bit. But not. I‘m going to be completely honest. I didn‘t do history for CXC. I stopped history in Form Three, when I was fourteen, and since then I haven‘t read *any* history books. So it‘s sort of my fault.

Noga: So you choose for CXC which subjects and then you can just drop –

Vanessa: Yes, up to Form Three, there are a certain number of subjects that you have to do. You have to do history, Spanish, French, geography and everything. But for your last two years, you choose usually between seven to eleven subjects. You can decide how many you want to do. I did eight for CXC, because there‘s no need to do eleven. So you get to choose, and I didn‘t do history. Because I didn‘t like it …

So yeah, I need to take it upon myself to do some research and read some history books and stuff. It‘s just that since I graduated SGU it‘s like, I don‘t want to see a book for a long time. So no, I don‘t.

But I think that's just me though. I was really never interested in history, it was boring to me.

Social Class

Noga: Do you think there are social classes in Grenada?

Vanessa: Yes. But not, large, the gaps aren't large, I don't think. There's the upper class, or what we consider the upper class because the upper class here may not be the upper class in the States or in Europe. So there's the upper class, very small few. Middle class is bigger, but I think the lower class is the biggest in Grenada. And like in slavery, it's the white people on top, (laughs uncomfortably) it's really true. It's still that way today.

And you see that attitude, sort of, I went to the only private secondary school on the island, Hill Academy, and the majority of the students there were white. Well, they'd consider me white, right? Because I'm mixed. But the black people would consider me white. And it was sort of like, "Yeah, only you white rich snobby people go to that school." That sort of attitude. Because it was a private school and we had to pay to go. But you can, some people would like to deny it, but you can see the distinction with the upper class who lives in True Blue, and Lance aux Epines, and Westerhall. The majority of them are light, fair skinned people. And then as you come down, your skin tone sort of gets darker. Because, I mean, the majority, if not all of the low class people here are black.

So, I guess that's from the history that we spoke about [in the SGU course, "Caribbean Issues and Perspectives"]. But as a young person, I don't feel it that much – or maybe, like you hear comments sometimes, like I can't ignore it, I wouldn't say that there are places where the rich young people lime, and where the low class young people lime. We sort of all lime together. I have friends from top, go down. And I don't feel that I cannot lime with them, or I don't feel embarrassed to be rich, I don't really – I mean every now and then talk comes up, and there is a clear distinction that, you know, clearly you're not as well off as I am, or you were brought up differently to the way I was brought up. But when it comes to just doing schoolwork or going out liming, going partying and stuff, we all lime together.

Noga: Do you find that at SGU *and* secondary school, has it always been that way? Or is it now that you're older?

Vanessa: It's always been that way. Because when I was in high school, I tended to lime with my high school friends more. And right now my closest friends are my high school friends who happen to be upper to middle class, because they all went to private school. But even when we were in high school, we had friends from outside.

Noga: Do you feel comfortable here in Grenada? Are there any places that you don‘t feel comfortable going?

Vanessa: I‘ve never felt extremely uncomfortable. But, for instance, a few years ago, okay, I made friends at SGU. And usually when I lime, I lime within the St. George‘s area, okay. Parties in the St. George‘s area. And I have some friends here who are – I don‘t like to use upper class, lower class, but like they aren‘t as well-off as, say, my parents are. They come from lower class households. I mean, they‘re not poor, but you could tell that they were brought up differently to the way I was. They brought me up to a section of Gouyave, right where Fish Friday is, and the first time I went, you can tell, I was like, ―Okay, I don‘t belong here.‖ I‘m like, ―They‘re going to kick me out just by the color of my skin,‖ and I felt a little uncomfortable. Not that anybody came and told me anything. It was sort of just like, I wasn‘t accustomed to that type of environment. I felt like one or two people were watching me, but I didn‘t feel like everybody was watching me or talking about me or anything, I just – something that I wasn‘t accustomed to. And I *felt* the difference in my skin color immediately as I reached up there. I was like, ―Okay, I‘m the only light person here.‖

And also, too, last weekend, for the first time, my brother dragged me up to Moonlight City, in Grenville, they had a concert going on. And I think they just, they live differently to us. I don‘t know. It was more *ghetto* than I‘m accustomed to. And, I didn‘t feel a hundred percent safe. And I‘ve always felt safe in Grenada, that was like the first time I‘ve never felt safe, and I just felt like – I felt like I didn‘t belong. But nobody made comments. It could be just me. I don‘t find the locals really make comments. A lot of the time they think that my brother and I are foreigners because, the only thing I could think of, is because of our skin tone. Or maybe we don‘t dress like the locals do. Or something. So, you know, they tend to make comments like that, but, I‘ve addressed it. I know how to handle them, I just put them in their place. I say, ―Because I look like this you think I‘m not local?‖ You know, I put them in their place. But they‘ve never made comments like, ―What are you doing up here? You don‘t belong here.‖ So, it could be just me. But you understand where I‘m coming from? Usually I feel comfortable everywhere.

Vanessa: To be honest, I don‘t really come into contact with the lower class. I‘m not saying I‘m upper class, I‘m not saying that. But like, you know when you go into town, I find you can tell the way that they talk and speak to each other, compared to the way, I don‘t know, I guess even the people in the mall, or hotels, or Grand Anse speak to each other.

Noga: Do you know how to speak that way, and do you understand what they‘re saying?

Vanessa: Yeah, I mean I don‘t speak like them. When I say I don‘t change my accent, I went to school so I think I can speak proper English, like I‘m speaking to you now, I can write if I have to write something, but then when I‘m around my friends, we sort of relax and we speak in slang, and some people say they can‘t understand us. So yeah, I do understand what they‘re saying. And yeah, I can speak to them and they understand what I‘m saying. But it‘s just, you can tell the difference.

Noga: Is that the biggest class indicator to you, the language you hear?

Vanessa: Yeah. That and – I‘ll tell you what did it for me, this same boyfriend that I just broke up with, I met him through school. Okay, I think I lived a very sheltered life, because I went to Hill Academy from the time I was three all the way up to the time I was sixteen. And everyone that was in my class when I was three graduated with me when I was sixteen. So I have a very very very close circle of friends. I mean extremely close, like sisters, because we started when we were three and we graduated at sixteen, and it‘s only then did they go away. So I played tennis with them, I swam with them, whatever. It‘s only when I left and I went to SGU did I meet different people, from Jamaica, from St. Vincent, even different people like my boyfriend, who is from Grenada, but he‘s from the western side.

I met him through school, and it‘s only through getting to know him that I realized he was the odd one out in his family. He was one of the only ones who had an education – when I say, they all went to high school – but he saved up and he got a scholarship, and then paid the rest of the way for him to get into university. And he‘s really really bright …

Obviously, because we were together, he brought me to his – it‘s a village, I have to tell you it‘s a village – to his home and it‘s only through spending time with him I realized. And he had one of the biggest houses in the village and it was a big difference to me just like how, just seeing the things that‘s he‘s accustomed to. Like his mom doesn‘t work, his mom basically stays home the entire day. She cooks and she cleans the house and she does the washing and whatever. And she makes breakfast, she makes everything, breakfast, lunch, and dinner for them. There‘s always somebody in and out of the house coming to visit her. She lies down watching TV, a lot of the times we go and she‘s just there reading the Bible. The father is out at work, and I was there a lot of the times during the evenings, and his mom and dad are never sitting down chatting. I mean, I‘ve spoken to him and there are obviously times when everyone sits down together and they chat, but it‘s not something that they make an effort to do and it‘s not something that happens every day. A lot of the time his father

would be out, drinking by the rum shop or just liming outside on the wall, and his mom would be inside watching TV, or one of the friends would come over and the kids from all over the community are there …

And just sort of, the way they treat each other. My mother and father are accustomed to telling me they love me every day, always hugs and kisses. None of that in his household. I mean, he wasn't accustomed to that, and that's a lot of the problems that we had. Because I was like, well, see now I understand that he wasn't brought up in a way to show affection the way I was. But I'm like, you've got to adjust. But he's so not accustomed to doing that. I mean, they don't even exchange presents on Christmas. I mean, now I've learned to understand it but I thought it was so strange. And when his birthday comes, his mom and dad don't give him a present. I mean, that doesn't happen in my house. Christmas time, birthdays, even on Valentine's we exchange little chocolates sometimes. Easter, my parents still give me chocolates on Easter. And he's not accustomed to any of that. And I think, I have the feeling that this is the norm in most of the societies in Grenada. And I didn't know that.

Noga: When you said that it was a village, what does that mean to you?

Vanessa: Well, what I think a village is is like a hill? Yeah, a hill, and a bunch of little houses scattered around the hill. Very very low income houses. All very tight together, I don't even know who owns what land. But you see in my neighborhood, it's like half an acre here, half an acre there. This is sort of 300, 3,000 square feet, 2,000 square feet. They're very close together. They share everything. They grow their own crops, they're very very close-knit. They share everything. Everyone's related, most of the time ... They have like one rum shop, one convenience store, and everybody limes together.

Noga: [In terms of learning about current events] ... Are there any sources that you think carry more weight than others?

Vanessa: Newspaper. The news and the radio. People always have the radio on. But I think what most influences the *opinion* of most Grenadians, I'm not talking about upper upper class or whatever, but most, just average working Grenadians, is definitely word of mouth. Because what I've noticed – although it's not like that in my little community, I mean it's just my family at home – but there are a lot of communities in Grenada where it's just that: it's community, and everybody limes outside. And they go sit on the block, or they have one, like the main house in the community where everybody gathers and they sit and that's what they *do* throughout most of Grenada in the evening. They sit and they talk. I don't know, they may have like, high – I don't know, the heads of certain households, or the head of the village, and they'll sit down and I think most of their opinions came

from that. Like they'll sit down and they'll talk about a certain issue, and, I don't know. Most Grenadians don't have an opinion, if you understand what I mean. Like, we'll sit down and talk about it. And say big grandfather is sitting down talking, and it's someone that they look up to, that they trust, and he'd come and talk about a situation, and they all of a sudden just adopt his opinion, and his opinion becomes theirs.

Noga: Do you talk within your family, and argue about things? Or where do you get your opinions from?

Vanessa: I don't know, I'm very opinionated I think. It's just usually my mom, my brother, and my dad and I at home, and if something comes up, yeah, we do argue. But in my house, we don't really talk about politics and religion and those type of deep – in my house, it's just kind of an understanding. But in the communities, you'd find them talking a lot about that. Politics is a big topic. So I don't know, because most of the time I'm at home, and I've only experienced these sort of village talks every now and then because I've met a lot of really local, local people from SGU and I've visited their homes, and it's only then that I realized well wait a minute, this is a completely different life to what I'm accustomed to. Because whereas I would stay at home and chat with my family, they'll be out on the wall talking with everybody …

If you go to the most, well, the middle class residential areas, Egmont, Westerhall, Fort Jeudy, Lance aux Epines, True Blue, even where I live, there are lots of houses, but everybody stays inside. Just like where I live, we stay inside and the four of us chat. Whereas if you'd go along further north, along the western coast. If you take a drive around six or seven, even eight in the evening, everyone is outside liming, chatting, and that's what they do. And the murders that happened throughout the day, whatever is going on with politics, that's where they sit down and chat. You'd find the night's discussion will all of a sudden become your opinion. You pick up opinions from certain people and then you take that back into school or workplace. But we don't really talk about politics at home.

Noga: So, who is upper class in Grenada, in your mind. Who is the upper class?

Vanessa: Royston Hopkin (laughs). [Sir Royston Hopkin is a high-profile hotelier and philanthropist.] Um, yeah, the majority of the upper class people live in True Blue, or Westerhall Point, or Lance aux Epines. I don't think we have an upper class the way there is an upper class in the States, where people have massive houses, and they're driving two, three, and four cars, and they have private planes and stuff. We don't have that kind of wealth here. I don't think anyone on the island owns a private plane. Or, the most expensive car on the island is a BMW.

So I don‘t know what you would consider upper class in Grenada. If you look at it in comparison to the states and other countries, we don‘t have an upper class.

Noga: Within Grenada, then. How did those people, those who you see living in those areas, how did they get to be upper class? Do you have any idea?

Vanessa: Just, history. Because it would be whoever were the big dogs back in the day, and whoever owned the estates. It all started with land. For one reason or another, your family acquired land. Because back in the day, you didn‘t really buy land. Like for instance, my grandparents‘ family, they acquired the whole of [a scenic peninsula, now a valuable stretch of land]. And they have a lot of families like that who own these big chunks of land, these big estates. These same relatives of mine, they not only owned [the peninsula], but they owned some estates and a lot of land throughout the island.

Noga: Do you know how they acquired the land?

Vanessa: I must find out exactly, but it‘s sort of like, whoever had connections in the government at that time. I should really find out exactly how they acquired the land. Some of it they may have bought. I mean, the population was very small in Grenada, and there were very few significant families, and they were all friendly with the people in the government, or whatever. I can find out for you, I just have to ask. And you have all this land, and you sell it off, and of course you become rich. So the few significant families from back in the day, they‘ve just come up. And those who own the few big companies in Grenada.

Noga: All the ones that have last names attached –

Vanessa: Yeah. So yeah, that‘s pretty much the upper class people in Grenada. They just started from back in the day with land, and then sell off land become rich, and whoever started the companies first and so forth. I mean, some people would consider my family upper class.

Noga: But you‘ve said before you don‘t consider yourself upper class.

Vanessa: If you talk to my dad, he‘d be like, –Upper class? What.” He‘s struggling. I mean, he‘s building a new building now. According to him, he‘s struggling financially because, okay fine, he rebuilt his house after Ivan, the insurance was helpful with that, fine. But now he‘s taken the massive step of building this new building. So it‘s not to say, we have extra money we could take a vacation wherever we want, or go out to dinner every night and whatever. So, we don‘t. But some people look at us, because my dad drives a Mercedes and we have a nice house – but it‘s not to say we have a big house with a pool, we don‘t even have a pool. But some people would consider us upper class in comparison to Grenadians.

But um, yes. The upper class Grenadians are those that are just, initially started, formed the businesses like Hubbards and

Huggins and Rennick and Thompson, and Hadid's, who owns the mall, and the hoteliers, like Royston Hopkin, and the Hopkin family. That was another big family who owned a lot of land.

So it's just really families, that sort of, I think most of it started just from acquiring land back in the day. But I suppose just like anywhere else in the world there are a few very level-headed individuals who are interested in opening up their businesses, so they open up their businesses and they've grown and it just trickles on. But a lot of the people who live in Lance aux Epines and True Blue right now are expats. People who are brought in, mostly from England, a few from the States, so their entire family is brought in, and the company puts them up in a really nice house in Lance aux Epines or True Blue.

Noga: So did your parents grow up in a middle class background, or – what would you say?

Vanessa: You see it's different – *I* would consider it middle class, but they have some people that consider it upper class. For instance, I was talking to my grandmother, and she wouldn't tell you she was rich at all, but then her brother owned all this land. And they had two yard boys, and two housekeepers, and a tennis court … and and and a chicken coop and they had a whole farm, they had a lot a lot of land, and a big house, and a farm in the back, and all these yard boys, and I'm like, okay, well clearly you all were rich. Upper class. But you won't hear them talk like they were rich … [Discussion of her genealogy and location of family lands.]

Noga: Do you think about it in relation to slavery and slave owners and emancipation?

Vanessa: I mean it must have been, but I need to find out more. Because my aunt is a black woman, a half-white, half-black. And I have to talk to my grandmother too, because it is all related, because my grandmother is half-white, half-black, and I think her great grandparents, or grandmother, was a slave. So yes. And that slave married one of the plantation owners, who was a white man. So that would be where the money initially came from, if you want to – because I have heard her talk about it. So yes. In terms of my grandmother, it started from slavery. A slave married a plantation owner, or a – whatever you want to call him.

Noga: So they were formally married?

Vanessa: Yeah.

Noga: What role do you think skin color plays in Grenadian society today?

Vanessa: Thankfully, I don't think Grenada is a very racist society. Thankfully. I don't think it plays such a big role. If a local person sees a white person they automatically – or, or a person of my color – they automatically think they're rich, or they're not from here, they're

from somewhere in the States, or from England, or from Canada, and that we're rich. So there is the association, there's still the association that all white people are rich.

But I don't feel that racism that because you're a certain color you can't go to certain places in Grenada, or that you're looked down upon. It's not like they're looking down upon you because you're white and you're from Canada or the States, they just associate white with being rich and from away. I don't think there's much racism at all, like hatred toward different races, because we're a very very colorful society. I mean, there are the darkest of the dark and there are the white Mon-Mors. I don't know if you've heard that term. They live in Mt. Moritz?

Noga: The "poor whites," they were called originally?

Vanessa: Yes, but they all married each other. That's why they look – (laughs). I don't know how it started. Just like a group of people who lived in that village and, I guess back in the day in Grenada, I guess you can imagine there's not many people, so either you marry a plantation owner who has come in or some rich guy come in to open a company, or you marry your cousin or your brother, or whatever the case is, so you know, the people who live in Mt. Moritz are *true* Grenadians, but they're white. Or red skin, as they call it. And so a lot of times when I tell them I'm Grenadian, "Oh! You're from Mt. Moritz?" No, I'm not from Mt. Moritz, because I'm this color. So yeah, I don't know in terms of what role. I don't know if that answers your question. There is an association with being white and being rich, or being white and being from the States or Canada.

Noga: Do you see dark skinned people in high positions?

Vanessa: Yes.

Noga: So you think opportunities are the same, regardless of skin color?

Vanessa: I think opportunities are the same. It's just, it's just unfortunate that a lot of local black Grenadians are not as educated, because of course they're the poorer ones. They originally were the poorer ones. Like the true black Grenadians. They just, from way back in history, they were poor. The slaves, I guess you want to call them. Because a lot of us are slaves. A lot of the people that are here are slaves. And so they are poorer, so of course they couldn't afford the education, like say, my family could have afforded. And so, you're not going to appoint someone in a high position just because they are black, if they're not educated. So I think a lot of the black people are just not as educated. But they're coming along. But I don't think, at least I'd like to think, that the companies don't hire based on race.

Noga: Do you think companies hire based exclusively on education, or what else? What criteria?

Vanessa: Yeah, education and experience. Definitely. I mean, there are some people like my [relative], he owns [a prominent shopping

center]. He's another one, his family owns a lot of land. I think he didn't even finish high school. He just sort of worked his way up in the family business and then created his own, etcetera, etcetera.

But in today's world? Yes. Education. And it's just the trickle over effect, it's not that the black people can't get higher paying jobs, it's just that they're not educated, and if they're not educated then they can't get the higher paying jobs. I mean, there are a few black people who – I mean, local Grenadians – they've just been very good at sports, or they manage to get a scholarship from away and they get educated and they come back here. So I'd like to think, I could be wrong, everyone has their own opinions, or maybe I'm seeing it from a different perspective, but I don't think they hire based on race …

Development

Noga: Do you think Grenada needs further development? And if yes, what would be the most important area to develop?

Vanessa: Yes, Grenada needs further development, but it also depends what our goal is. We need to develop our people more, because our people are very uneducated. I don't know, I think our government contradicts themselves sometimes. Like we're supposed to be depending on tourism, you know, and tourism is a service. People provide this service. So your biggest asset would be your people. You need to spend money and train your people if you want to depend on tourism. I have no problem with Grenada depending on tourism, that's fine. We're a beautiful Caribbean island, whatever. Although, when you compare us to other islands, we're sort of the same. But I think we have a lot to offer. But you have to spend the money to develop the people. If the people don't have that attitude, we're not going to develop in the tourism sector and we're not going to develop in any other sector that we choose to depend on.

And also, too, I think the government, I'm not very into politics, but from what I hear, I think the government is very narrow-minded. Like it's always one thing at a time. Like we jumped on agriculture, to tourism, to, I don't know, they sort of don't look at the bigger picture and realize you can't depend on one thing. Because if one thing goes wrong, if, I don't know, a hurricane happens, one thing can happen to affect that one industry that we're depending on, then we go *poof*. So. I think the government is making a big mistake by just depending on one thing. Nobody can depend on one thing.

Noga: How do you feel about the tourists who visit Grenada?

Vanessa: We're happy to have them, but I don't find we're giving back enough. We want them to come, but we're not training ourselves

customer service to serve them. One of the reasons that Grenada‘s not flourishing as a tourism destination is we have nothing to offer the tourists. Grenadians, I find, are very lazy. We‘re sort of happy with how we are now. I don‘t find they‘re very ambitious people, like, this is what I want and I‘m going to go get it, and I‘m not happy with the way I am now, I need better. A majority of the people are sort of, they built their life and this is – if I grew up in a poor family, well this is where I belong. I don‘t go to school and be a manager because that‘s just not for me. I‘m just going to go and get a domestic job and clean the house, or clean the garden and so, but they are quite content with how they are.

And that‘s why I think – there are a lot of opportunities for people to capitalize on the tourism industry and open new businesses. I mean, open new attractions. Because Grenada is boring, when people come here there is nothing for them to do. You go up to the waterfalls, to the forest, to the lake and something, but nobody‘s done anything with the lake. You could, I don‘t know, we don‘t have any natural spa resorts here. Somebody could get some land in the country and build something. There‘s nothing for the young people to do. We don‘t have any casinos, we don‘t have a bowling alley. Not everybody that comes here wants to go partying in Bananas [nightclub] or something. Why is there only Bananas? Why can‘t there by other, different types of nightclubs? Why can‘t there be a bowling alley with a pizza joint or something? To me, there‘s just a lot of opportunities. We need to bring more entertainment, more attractions here, and we need to do more with our natural resources …

Noga: How do you see yourself in ten years?

Vanessa: I hope to by then finish my master‘s. After my master‘s of course everyone‘s dream is to get a job that pays well. I have no desire – some people want to be rich – I have no desire really to be rich. I just want to live comfortably. You see, this is the Grenadian coming out in me. We‘re very laid-back – I, I don‘t need all of that – we‘re sort of just, you know. I want to maintain the life that my parents have provided for me, so that‘s sort of why I‘m going to school, because you have to earn a certain amount of money, my father works really hard. Prove him proud. But I also want to make a difference to Grenada. Because, as a Grenadian, I mean, I don‘t want to go through how many years of schooling – even if I go away, get my education away, work away – I definitely at the end of the day want to come back and make a difference in Grenada. Whether it‘s through writing, whether it‘s through opening a training institute. Just, something. Something to help the people. Whether it‘s a training something, whether it‘s a charity. Just something. Just to give back. I don‘t know.

[Note: The following sections come from interviews which took place after Vanessa had graduated and found employment in a real estate agency.]

Noga: How do you feel about foreigners buying a lot of land in Grenada?

Vanessa: From working here, I've realized that more of Grenada is owned by foreigners than I knew. I mean, they have some foreigners living here and they've been living here for years, and I didn't even know about it. One thing I can say that I don't agree with so much is a lot of these new developments – okay, let me backtrack. If a foreigner comes in and they want to buy some land or some property, they have to pay the government ten percent alien landholding license, which is ten percent of the purchase price. So you can't just come down here and just buy a property.

Noga: Is that ten percent one time?

Vanessa: Once. Ten percent of the purchase price. Whereas Grenadians don't have to pay anything because they're Grenadians, they're entitled to own land. But with these new developments, they've negotiated with the government where, for instance, Mount Cinnamon, it started out at something like five and they've gotten the government to reduce it to like one percent. So if you buy a property at Mount Cinnamon, instead of paying ten percent of the purchase price as a foreigner, you're paying one percent. I don't know. But then another part of me feels, well, Grenadians are not doing anything. They're just sitting on their butts. We have a lot of opportunity in Grenada, but yet we sit on our butts, and then when the foreigners come here with their great ideas and want to develop our land we complain. But then we're not doing anything with it.

Noga: What do you think of the controversy that de Savary has faced about the Lagoon? Do you follow that?

Vanessa: Um, yeah. I'm sort of in two minds. Part of me is like yes, why has the government let this foreigner purchase such a beautiful part of our country, and is allowing him basically to do anything with it. Okay, he's not doing [just] anything with it. I mean, he has a good idea. But then, the other part of me is the same thing, you know. Locals have been living there for years, look how they've been keeping the place. It was a dump, basically. The water was polluted. There was litter all around the Lagoon. Although in a way we appreciate what we have, but we don't show it. Because to me, if you so valued the lagoon, then why the hell didn't you clean it up and keep it nice, sort of take care of your space, if you understand what I'm saying. I don't know …

In all fairness to the government and de Savary, a lot of the people that were living around the Lagoon, they were squatters. They didn't own the land. So therefore the government has the right to sell

the land if they wanted to. But, I don't know, I think the government lets these foreigners sort of twist their arm.

Noga: What does the government get from these developments then, if it's down to a few percentages off the selling price? Is the government getting any other funding?

Vanessa: Not that I know of. Not directly. They're looking at the effect that it will have on the tourism industry, which of course is supposed to be our number one industry. So I think that's what they're looking at …

[Noga introduces the subject of a new government training program for youth.] Well, I think the government has realized that they have to start preparing our locals for jobs because a lot of the times we are – one, we're undereducated, and two, we don't understand the value of customer service and so forth, and that's a lot of the problems that the hotels and restaurants and so are having with locals, which is why they end up importing people in the first place. So I think the government is trying to prepare the people so that they're qualified enough so that when Bacolet Bay [resort development] and so start hiring they hire Grenadians, and not other people. But I don't know too much about that training program at all. You know de Savary sold Port Louis though? He sold it to Camper Nicholson. Apparently they're some world-class developers. I don't know too much about them either.

Noga: So he sold the whole thing, or just the marina?

Vanessa: He sold Port Louis, the entire concept, which is the marina plus the townhouses. So the physical thing that he sold is the entire hillside –

Noga: The whole Ballast Ground.

Vanessa: Exactly, the whole area that he bought, which includes the Lagoon road plus the entire hill, he sold the entire thing.

Noga: So he bought it, came up with a concept, and sold the whole thing off –

Vanessa: That's the thing. That's where I think the government gets fooled. It's like these foreigners come in, they talk a pretty game, because to be honest de Savary is just full of chat, they come in, talk a pretty game, but I think that was his plan initially. Because once he owns it, then he can sell it to whoever he likes, and they can do whatever they want with it.

But I think that these people are planning on sticking to his original master plan of the marina and the sort of eco-friendly – although I don't see how it's really eco, I mean it's going to be pretty, but I think it's going to transform a little bit. One thing I'm scared about is that Grenada turns into a Barbados, with all these new developments. But that's just my opinion ... I think the government is giving away our land. It's just my opinion again, but I think when it

comes to foreigners owning land in Grenada, there needs to be a much higher tax or whatever. Because soon the whole island is going to be owned by non-Grenadians.

Noga: Do most Grenadians own some land somewhere?

Vanessa: Yeah, they do. I'm just, you know –

Noga: But there are squatters, there are people who don't.

Vanessa: No, there are squatters. See, I, I'm caught between, you know, half of my mind is saying this, the other mind is saying that. Half of me is like, why are we selling all of our land to foreigners? And then, like, well we have to sell it to foreigners because the Grenadians are not doing anything with it.

Noga: In what way do you see money entering the Grenadian economy through these developments?

Vanessa: Well, they have to hire local people. I think that will be the main thing. I think that's pretty much the main thing, because a lot of times the food and drinks that they use they import. They use a lot of imported goods. And I heard that – yeah, I really think it's just labor. And, well, tourism in general. Because if it attracts tourists coming in, they obviously not going to want to stay on the resorts the entire day, so all the local vendors and tour operators and so will get more business. So hopefully tourism will boom. I mean there will be some tourists who will stay in the resort for the entire day, because there's a pool, and there's shops there, and there's restaurants, bars, everything you need. But there will be the few who want to go on an island tour and see the waterfalls, things like that.

Because all the goods that they bring in, the majority of them are imported so I don't think we're benefiting that way. Although I'm sure they're going to try to buy local, but I really don't think Grenada has enough to supply. So even if they wanted to buy local, it's not every week you can get local carrots and cabbages and so in the grocery.

Noga: No, there's not a regular supply of all the –

Vanessa: Unfortunately.

Noga: Do you think that there are prospects to improve that?

Vanessa: I think we could. I think agriculture should be one of our main focuses. It's just that nobody seems to be showing much interest. As in, there are not as many farmers as there used to be. Nobody wants to work as a farmer, that's sort of deemed as a low income kind of job. It's not looked up at, I don't know. This is just what I'm hearing.

So I think there is the potential, because we have a lot of land and fertile soils, and the weather is perfect for growing all these vegetables and stuff. It's just not being utilized. And also, since tourism is supposed to be our main focus, agricultural department

doesn‘t get as much funds from the government as they should, as much as *I* think they should.

Noga: I‘ve heard that from a lot of people. Do you see a tension between agricultural and tourism developments?

Vanessa: No, they‘re not battling. But it‘s just, around the budget time there is a lot of tension, yeah, because agriculture is losing out because all the money is being given to the tourism sector. I don‘t know. I think agriculture has a lot of potential, I don‘t see why – I think less focus should be put on tourism and more on agriculture. That‘s just my opinion.

Noga: Do you think nutmeg, cocoa, and banana are still viable as export crops, or do you think the focus should be on foods for local consumption? What would your emphasis be?

Vanessa: I think both, but the thing with the nutmeg is – I don‘t know if Grenadians are just too lazy, or not very innovative, or I don‘t know. But like, we were the number two producer of nutmeg in the world, but we just produced nutmeg, the raw product, and we exported it. We never did anything else with it, if you know what I mean. It‘s only now they‘ve started making nutmeg soaps and sprays and byproducts of nutmeg. And I think we should concentrate on not just exporting the raw product, but marketing ways of using it. Because it‘s very good for health, it‘s very good for cooking. You could put nutmeg in anything. So I think we focus too much on just exporting the raw product, whereas we could have done something else with it and sort of exported raw product as well as other things.

Politics

Noga: So, are you going to vote?

Vanessa: Yeah, I‘ve never voted before. Here you have to be eighteen. So last election I wasn‘t eighteen yet. So yes, I‘m going to vote.

Noga: Who are you going to vote for?

Vanessa: Probably NNP (laughs). [New National Party is the ruling party at the time of the interview.] It‘s not like we have many choices. But I think, from what I‘ve been hearing of the NDC [National Democratic Congress], I just find they‘re too corrupt, and I don‘t know. And then there‘s the whole thing with all the revolutionary guys that were just released from prison and I think, I don‘t know, I think they may have an influence on the NDC. I just think the NDC is too corrupt.

Noga: So you think the revolutionary guys are well-represented in the NDC?

Vanessa: Yes. Oh yes. Yeah.

Noga: And the guys who got out of prison, are they in the party, or just, connected?

Vanessa: No, they're not in the front line, but I have a feeling that they are a part of it. But sort of on the side. Because they can't be in the media. They can't be. So I think that they're having an influence on them, but from the side.

Noga: What about the NNP, do they have any connections to the revolutionary people that you know of?

Vanessa: Not that I know of.

Noga: And what about the Prime Minister's court case and immunity that he's applied for in the U.S.?

Vanessa: With the whole briefcase situation?

Noga: Uh-huh. And the Deputy Prime Minister also applying for immunity from the whole bribery thing. What about that corruption scandal?

Vanessa: To be honest, I try not to listen to that too much. Um. What do I think?

Noga: Yeah, I mean, comparing that to NDC corruption ...

Vanessa: I don't know (laughs). To be honest, I don't keep myself abreast of these situations. Like I didn't even know he was applying for immunity in the States (embarrassed laugh) …

Like I said, I don't keep myself so abreast – it just, gets my head, hot. And it's not worth listening to sometimes. But I probably should start paying attention, seeing as I'm going to vote. And I didn't used to pay attention before because I was like, okay, I'm not voting. But I think the NDC, it's just the feeling I get, it's like they're not looking out for the best interest of the people. They're caught up in their own little worlds and they're battling against each other, and I just don't like the vibe that I get from them …

No, I think most of my opinions on the NDC and the NNP just come from my parents, just listening to them talk, and hearing one or two things on the news. But it's not like I pay attention to what's going on all the time.

Noga: Did you hear about the recent spy thing? [This refers to the political incident several months before the election was called, popularly known as "Spygate," in which a member of the police force was caught recording a private meeting of the NDC party leaders.]

Vanessa: Yes, and my parents were saying that a similar incident happened right before the whole revolution thing, so they were like, "Lord have mercy. Next thing, they get re-elected, they probably – yeah." So the same sort of, they're seeing the same pattern happening. A similar pattern happening, with the whole spying incident.

Life Experiences

Noga: Tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are.

Vanessa: Oh boy, okay ... I mean, I've had a very *easy* life. I'm probably one of the luckiest people on Earth. If you would talk to me from my childhood coming up? My parents have been married, stable. I've lived in one home my entire life, I've lived in Grenada. I went to school from the time I was four to the time I was sixteen I had the exact same friends, I had a *large* group of friends. It was like eight of us girls and we did everything together. I played tennis, I played swimming. My mother and father are healthy, my brother is healthy, actually my entire family – knock wood – are healthy.

My parents, okay, financially struggled in the beginning because my dad was opening his business, but they never brought it upon us. My mom was like, you know, she wants her children to go to a good school, that's why she took the extra money to send us to private school. And she wanted her children to be well-rounded, that's why she sent us to tennis lessons, and ballet, and swimming, and jazz. And, and she was a really good mother, she would allow us to have friends come over. We can go spend the day by friends. We always had birthday parties. She always made us feel special – she basically spoilt us. She basically spoilt us.

And then after high school I was able to go to university. I mean it's true, I wish I would have gone to the States to get the same experience that my friends got going to the States and living on their own, and blah blah blah, so in some ways I think I'm a little bit more sheltered than they are, because they've seen more of the world and met new people and whatnot. But, um, I think that *major* experience, I think mine is yet to come. Because my life has just been smoooooth sailing!

Noga: Well, major experiences don't have to be upheavals necessarily, or shocking – though most people think of it that way, actually. People think of a major experience as kind of a negative thing because it transforms you in some way, but, you know –

Vanessa: Okay, well I guess I could look at it that way. It's just sort of, because I've had such a wonderful life I think I'm a very positive person. I'd like to think I'm a very positive person. It's like, well if you put your mind to it, you could do it. And if something upsets you, or, it's not the end of the world, it'll be okay tomorrow. It's just part of life and you try to learn from your experiences, don't make the same mistake twice, blah blah blah.

But I don't know, because I haven't had major trials and tribulations, I've never been one to sit down and sort of think, what am a doing with my life. Or, I've never had any major decisions to make. I'm one of the luckiest ones. Honestly. Because it's just been nice, smooth sailing up to here. I mean, I'm so happy I have this job right

now. I thought I'd be struggling to get a job and I found a job in a couple months. I mean, I could still think about it and tell you what else I think, but just off the bat –

… I mean, probably the most devastating experience was Ivan. It was more like, seeing my father stressed out. We were down at the neighbor's house, and he just couldn't stop looking out of the window. Because he's spent his entire life to build his home, which is like a man's castle, I guess, and at that point, during the hurricane, you don't – he thought it was just him, that his house had gone.

Noga: Of course, you don't know what's going on –

Vanessa: So after Ivan, it was just like, it felt like it was the end of the world. Like we'd probably have to move away. Grenada was like a war zone. But then again, my parents are very positive people … My parents never cried, it was just sort of, the following day we got up, we went up to the house, and we started cleaning. So I think my attitude has a lot to do with parents. I mean yes, my dad was stressed, but it's not like they were ever crying, or sitting down like, "Oh my God, what are we going to do." I mean, probably they do it, when I'm sleeping. Maybe.

Noga: What damage did you have to your house?

Vanessa: The entire roof, everything, gone. I lost all my clothes. Everything. The clothes didn't fly away in the breeze, but everything got very stained and ripped up. So we had to pretty much rebuild the entire house.

Noga: Is it a two story house?

Vanessa: No, it was just a flat house.

Noga: So everything got waterlogged. What about personal documents, and photographs, and those kinds of things?

Vanessa: The following day we went up – the night before we had packed a bag with our passports and stuff. But in terms of pictures, the following day we went up and we took the pictures and we took them out and we dried them up. So we didn't end up losing that much. And I cleared out my closet, and from the first day I was washing, trying to save all the clothes I can. And I put the shoes out to dry. And the same thing with the towels and the linens. So we didn't end up losing as much as other people did because my parents, from the morning after, it was like, okay. They were in shock, but this is our life. We can't just let it sit. So I think, my parents are very positive, strong people.

Noga: Well, maybe then, to reframe the question, you say you think your major experiences are yet to come. So, in your imagination, what are the things that you see for yourself? What do you want for yourself? What do you fear? What are some of your dreams and ambitions?

Vanessa: I don't really think I have major, major ambitions. Just to be financially independent. I want to own my own land, and my own

home, and my own car and whatever. I would really like to, I would just kind of like to live like my parents. And I would love to have a family and whatnot. I would like to travel. I don't have the desire to open my own business, or write a book, or anything like that, if you know what I mean. Right now it's just pretty simple. I just want to get myself financially independent. And maybe after that I can think of doing other things.

Noga: Are there things that you worry about?

Vanessa: Right now, I don't really have to worry about money. But I guess I kind of worry that I won't be able to maintain the lifestyle that my parents have provided for me. I worry that I'll be an old maid and never find a husband (laughs).

… I don't really worry about too too much. Not too much. Because I don't really have to worry about money now because I'm still living with my parents. But I don't want to be living off my parents for the rest of my life.

Noga: So if you get married, will you continue to work?

Vanessa: Oh yes. Please (laughs). Nope, I'm not going to be a housewife. Never. Unless I'm sick, or the kids are sick and I need to take care of them or something like that.

Noga: Would you want to marry a Grenadian, or anyone?

Vanessa: Any – well, I'm not going to be like, ~~"~~I'm not going to marry you because you're not Grenadian," but I'd like to live in Grenada. You see, I say that I'd like to live in Grenada because I've never been anywhere else! Living in Grenada's been nice. It's peaceful, it's safe, you can go on the beach, bright sunshine, it's a nice place to raise your kids, you could let them run about without worrying that somebody's going to kidnap them. So Grenada is a nice place to live, but I've never lived anywhere else. So I don't know. Can't say.

Discussion

Vanessa's interviews reveal both conscious and subtle tensions around the idea of being Grenadian. It is particularly interesting to attend to the ways in which she uses categories such as ~~"~~we," ~~"~~local," and ~~"~~Grenadians" are employed. Consider, for example, this excerpt: ~~"~~*Grenadians*, I find, are very lazy. *We*'re sort of happy with how we are now. I don't find *they*'re very ambitious people" (emphasis added). Or consider her use of the term local, which frequently signifies the lower classes: ~~"~~I've only

experienced these sort of village talks every now and then because I've met a lot of really local, local people …". The double "local" is meant to infer something beyond simply a resident of Grenada. For Vanessa, to be really local is to be a poor, dark-skinned Grenadian. This distinction is clear in her discussion of "the mentality of the people" after Hurricane Ivan, when the poorer Grenadians (the "locals") looted businesses. Her discussion about looting echoes Colleen's, and it is worth noting that few of the lower or middle class students mentioned the looting at all in their conversations about Hurricane Ivan.

This question of who is Grenadian slips back and forth from a class-based distinction to a color issue. In her discussion of looting, Vanessa comments, "I still don't think there's much racism, but after Ivan – how can I, let me see if I can try to explain it – a lot of the hostility that the poor people have toward the rich people showed after Ivan." Indeed, in answer to my questions about racism, Vanessa's exclusive focus was the degree to which she, as a light-skinned person, had been discriminated against by darker Grenadians. She seemed quite unaware of the possibility that racism could also work the other way around.

Vanessa sees herself as very "lucky" and "sheltered." She also feels very fortunate to have found a well-paying job which she enjoys. In terms of cultural capital, it is clear that the way she was raised, or, as she often puts it, what she is accustomed to, has prepared her socially to handle interactions with wealthy, property-purchasing foreigners. Even more concretely, one of the conditions for employment was having a car. Not only was Vanessa able to meet this criterion, she was able to buy a new car appropriate to the task of shuttling wealthy prospective buyers around Grenada. Her new

car cost EC$90,000 (approximately US$33,500), and she pays EC$1,400 (US$520) each month on the loan. (For comparison, a trained teacher may earn EC$2,500-$3,000 per month.) Although she expresses a sincere appreciation for the many ways in which her life, thus far, has been "smooth sailing," she perceives that a positive attitude and desire to obtain a professional position, coupled with her parents' dedication to their children's' education, are all that are required. Other Grenadians, by contrast, are lazy, and a majority of poor people are "quite content with how they are."

Vanessa has learned little about Grenada's history, which indicates that the private school's curriculum is similar to the public schools' in this area. For example, she attributed the pattern of exporting raw goods and importing value-added products to Grenadians' lack of creativity. In fact, she was not the only Grenadian who commented on the people's "laziness" in this regard. She said she felt "shame" when I told her a bit about the pattern of colonial laws which suppressed local manufacturing efforts, candidly expressing her discomfort with a foreigner telling a Grenadian her own region's history. She clearly stated that the lack of Grenadian history in schools is regrettable and should be rectified. Still, her curiosity was not so great as to compel her to read a book on the subject. Like many Grenadians, Vanessa questioned the value of a history book and put greater store in hearing from individuals about their personal experiences.

She was also distinctly uncomfortable during our conversation about politics – so much so that I offered her the chance to pass on the question. She gladly seized the opportunity to change the subject. While some Grenadians felt uncomfortable talking about politics with me, the reason was usually an effort to avoid declaring a loyalty or generating conflict. Vanessa seemed more uncomfortable because she had easily

declared her voting inclination, but was too unaware of current events to explain her choice. Clearly, she had absorbed some of her opinions based on the overheard conversations of others – based on descriptions of her home life, probably her parents – as she was aware of the argument that the NDC is influenced by revolutionaries. She was the only person I heard accuse the NDC of corruption, however, which is why I pressed her on the matter. NNP corruption scandals are usually the headline news. Although she contrasts her "opinionated" self with her description of Grenadians "not having opinions," her perception of the way in which villagers gather around important people and adopt their views may well fit the way in which she developed her position on politics vis-à-vis her parents.

Vanessa does a beautiful job articulating the ways in which village life is defined against the geography of the upper classes – a landscape which every Grenadian can recite like a mantra: True Blue, Lance aux Epines, Westerhall, Fort Jeudy, and maybe Egmont/Calivigny. These are all beautiful, breezy peninsulas along the southern and southeastern coasts. Much like when Colleen describes liming in the safe part of Wall Street (just several stores down from the area that is considered unsafe), it is clear that on a small island, the distinctions are drawn finely but clearly. Vanessa's boyfriend, for example, is "from Grenada, but he's from the western side." Recall Colleen's discussion of "one of mummy's scholarship students [who] was living in a two by four God knows where, somewhere up north." Later in that same paragraph, Colleen revealed that she knew exactly where they live: the town of Victoria, which is the capital of St. Mark's. It is one of the poorest parishes on the island.

Grenada may be only twelve by twenty-one miles in size, but that is more than enough room to carve out countless geographical distinctions. On the other hand, unlike a wealthy American suburb, for example, a ―sheltered life" in Grenada still cannot avoid bumpy roads with goats, squatters' shacks, and rum shops. The road from the gated community at Westerhall to the upscale mall in Grand Anse, for example, necessitates traveling through these ―local" landscapes. Thus, there is a constant confrontation between an upper class, privileged lifestyle and the lives of most Grenadians. In Vanessa's commentary, we hear this tension as she moves from us to them, we Grenadians to them, the locals. Given the degree of sheltering which Vanessa experienced in her private school environment, it is little wonder that a defining moment for Colleen was her radical decision to leave private school and enter the public school system. Still, both young women share feelings of exclusion from conceptions about who is Grenadian – conceptions which reveal the identification of nationality with class and skin color.

In our final meeting in 2009, Vanessa reported that she had received a substantial promotion within the company. She now takes home EC$2,500 (US$930) at the end of the month, and her commission was doubled to fifteen percent. Business was very slow, however, compared to this time last year, and Vanessa remarked that everyone was complaining about the drop in tourism. She does not hold the new administration responsible for any of this economic downturn, noting that some of the developments went on hold even before the election. Although her family is still doing well, she also feels the effects of the global recession. For the first time in her life, she saw a thief stalking her family's property at night, but was able to alert her father in time.

Vanessa continued to express some slight embarrassment at what she considers to be her naïveté and lack of worldly experience. She would still like to study abroad, an opportunity many of her friends have had. Now that many of them have returned, she seems to feels more keenly her sheltered upbringing, in spite of the fact that they all tell her how lucky she was to stay in beautiful, warm Grenada, and how homesick they all felt. She is loathe to leave her job, and is hoping the company's directors might agree to hold it for her if she pursues a relevant master's degree. She would really like to see Europe. She went to New York in the fall and thought she could never live there – though a trip for shopping was fine. To her, she said, growing up in Grenada makes you feel special, surrounded by friends and family. In the city, she said, she felt invisible, anonymous, and unimportant.

Inside-Outsiders

Anika

Anika was twenty-five years old when we first met, although she usually tells people she is twenty-one out of deference to her mother's wishes to appear younger. Her own preoccupation with age and expectation emerged early in our interviews. As she stated bluntly within minutes of sitting down for our first interview, "It's just I feel a bit as though life is passing me by, all my friends are having kids and have their white picket fence and I'm here, studying … You kind of get used to always a bridesmaid never a bride." This theme evolved over the course of our meetings into a wider discussion about her identification and disidentification with the "typical" Caribbean woman. We met for recorded interviews four times over three years.

Like many Grenadians, Anika straddles life on more than one island. Her mother is St. Lucian, while her father is Grenadian, and she has spent time on both islands, as well as in Brooklyn, New York, where she has extended family. Her parents are divorced, and she was raised by her mother. She is an only child. Her father, now remarried and living in Grenada, does not provide her with emotional or financial support. When asked about her nationality, she replied, "I prefer to think of myself as a 'Caribbean woman' rather than identify with one nationality over another. Being of dual citizenship, dual parentage ... to acknowledge one over the other is to deny the influence that the other one has had on who I am today." Interestingly, the respondents who most

emphatically perceived Grenadians as having a strong nationalist sentiment were those with ties to other Caribbean nations.

Anika was a full-time student who worked on campus to support herself. Her teaching assistanceship paid EC$9.35 per hour (approximately US$3.50). She managed on EC$400/month (US$150) for groceries, and her mother sent some financial assistance. Anika is very ambitious, by her own standards, and her stated goals shifted through our meetings without any sense of contradiction. Her first proclamation – "Ultimately, I want to be the first St. Lucian-born Secretary General of the United Nations" – later shifted to a desire to work for a large American corporation after graduation. She also intends to become a tenured professor after completing her Ph.D. in an American program. Her independent nature, also referred to as stubbornness, are self-consciously cultivated, displayed, and discussed over the course of our meetings. As with all the open-ended interviews, I asked a number of similar questions, but tried to allow the participants to steer the conversations in the directions most important to them. Unlike most of the other respondents, Anika spent little time on the themes of development, history, politics. More pressing were her efforts to sound out her image of herself through the construction of narratives about her personal history. These stories especially explore the intersections between gender, and national and regional identities.

Topics: Social class; national identity, Revolution, Independence Day; Caribbean woman; life experiences.

Social Class

Noga: Do you think there are social classes in Grenada?

Anika: To a certain extent, yes. They are not as clearly defined as they were in generations gone by, but I think they still linger ... And I think that holds true for most of the Caribbean … My grandmother would have judged people by their town of origin. And then determined if someone from that town was good enough for any of her children. That spilled over to my mother, to a certain extent. But I guess this also has to do with personality. Mommy took it a bit further. She added educational level. My grandmother did not go beyond primary school, formally. She on her own trained as a nursing assistant and a midwife, but as far as formal structured education she only had up to primary school. My mum was the first university graduate in the family. Well, the first female university graduate in the family. So obviously she felt very strongly about marrying someone who was her intellectual equal and so on. And then again, when she was looking for a mate, there was the whole woman‘s lib thing going on and all of that. So. As far as *I* go, I am a bit more lenient when it comes to things like that. Not everybody has access to tertiary education. It may be because of where they live, it may be because of their economic ability. I count ambition as greater than a university degree. I mean, yes you‘d have smart, I mean genius-type people at university, but they don‘t always make the best husbands. For example, my ex, he has his master‘s in computer science, and he‘s not a nice person. I have a very vivid term to describe him but it‘s not appropriate for an interview. I have to edit myself (laughs). On the other hand, one of my other boyfriends before I met my, who‘s now my ex, he did not then have the opportunity to go to university, but he was working, taking evening courses part-time, just trying little by little to enhance his marketability, and that I think counted for more because he was, the determination, the drive to get where you want to go by whatever means – whatever legal means possible (laughs), that, for me, counts for more than economic status, where you live, anything like that, so I think now, my generation, the lines are becoming more blurred.

There are still lingering effects of my grandmother‘s influence. For example, there are certain areas, like if you live in Gouyave, apparently you have a certain mindset, a certain way of behaving, and that stereotype tends to linger. So if I was from Gouyave, I would never admit that I am.

Noga: Really?

Anika: Because I am not, I don‘t have that personality. And for me to tell a prospective mate that I‘m from Gouyave might drive him away. Especially if he‘s from, say, Westerhall for example …

And then you have the solid middle class, who‘s in St. George‘s, um, can be very scattered. And then you have, for lack of a

better term, the underbelly of society. People who live, for example, in River Road.

National Identity, Revolution, Independence Day

Noga: Do you think Grenadians have a strong national identity?
Anika: Definitely.
Noga: What makes you say so?
Anika: They seem to believe that Grenada is the best thing to happen to planet Earth (laughs). I know it's a kind of harsh way of putting it, but.
Noga: This is different from St. Lucian attitudes toward their islands, or you see sort of an equivalent sentiment?
Anika: There is an equivalent throughout all the islands. I think it really came out in my first semester here. One of my friends, I think she was from North Carolina, she said to me – well, this was actually while Hurricane Ivan was sitting on top of us and smashing us – she said the taxi driver told her upon inquiry as to hurricanes frequency etc., ~~–O~~h, we don't have hurricanes here, God is a Grenadian."
Noga: Do people still say that?
Anika: Not regarding hurricanes (laughs)!
Noga: So what do you think are the most most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?
Anika: The Revolution and the subsequent invasion.
Noga: And do you know much about those events?
Anika: Except that I was deprived of a cousin who I would have loved dearly, not really. I've actually had the opportunity to learn more about it, but never took that opportunity. I was given that opportunity while I was here at university, and juggling that with term papers, assignment, this is not counting toward my overall degree credit, so (grumbles).

Noga: Just curious, because Independence Day is coming up, is that an event you would go to?
Anika: Me personally, no. I've been doing that too many years in St. Lucia to count. For me, having come to university and having had the opportunity to learn about, for example, different leadership styles, the format of the independence parade smacks too much of communism slash fascism. At least in St. Lucia, I've never been to one here, there's this whole military parade, examination of the guard, addresses by government officials. And I don't need all of that, it doesn't do anything for me. Yes, great, we've gone through another year as an independent country. But what good does that do, what good does a military parade do, when we're up to our ears in *debt*. You're spending money to rent this venue to have people march up and down

for an hour, two hours, stand out in the hot sun, and you cannot pay off your loans. What is the point?

Noga: So do you feel that the independence in Independence Day is not for real because of this indebtedness?

Anika: I think it is diminished by the degree of indebtedness. I don't think there is any country without debt. But I do think you have to prioritize. It might be a tradition, but does it serve any purpose in terms of nation-building? Or is it just an opportunity for you as a government official to display your oratory skills?

Noga: So you don't see it as a contribution to nation-building?

Anika: I don't. You go, you sit down and listen to how many people have been awarded OBEs and MBEs, and what does a couple letters after my name do for me? Even Ph.D., what does that do for me? Yeah, it gets me some more money, but at the end of the day you are who you are, you're not defined by the letters after your name. A country is who it is regardless of how many notable people it has as its citizens.

Caribbean Woman

Anika: I have sort of timetabled out my life, in terms of I have a fairly definite schedule, you know, what needs to be done in the next ten years, the next five years, so on and so forth.

Noga: Okay. Tell me.

Anika: (laughing) Okay. Well, I've just turned twenty-six and if everything goes according to schedule, I should be able to leave SGU by the time I'm twenty-seven, twenty-seven and a half. Six months home puts me at twenty-eight, which is when hopefully I'll start the Ph.D. program. I'm allowing five years for that. Normative time is four years, so I'm factoring in the whole shit happens thing. That puts me at thirty-three. Which is when I'll adopt my first child. Then I'll get the professorship. Then I'll get married. Then I'll get tenure. So that puts me at forty. Then I'll consider having a biological child.

Noga: When you're forty?

Anika: No, it's been well-thought. It's easily done in my family with minimal health risks to both mother and child. I've done my research. My mom was thirty-two when she had me, but my aunt, my mom's youngest sister, had her first child at forty-one. And her second child at forty-six. And they are wonderful wonderful children.

Noga: So, let me just ask, generally speaking, why is it important to you to have this timetable?

Anika: I believe in planning, primarily because my ex didn't. But, yeah (laughs). I believe in the merits of planning. I want to be able to maximize the amount of time I have to do what I *want* to do, which is teach. And if I take the time to do a master's degree, yes it will prepare me better to do the Ph.D. program but, I'm known for my

resiliency. And I think I'm up to the challenge of just jumping into the Ph.D. ...

Noga: So how possible do you think it is to execute a plan like this?

Anika: I think it is possible if I factor in contingencies, which I think I have done. Like five years for the Ph.D. program. I'm allowing myself a certain amount of wiggle room in terms of the years because, by all rights, if you'd asked me this five years ago, by the age that I am, I should already be on my way to a Ph.D. And I'm not (laughs). I mean, one or two years doesn't make that big of a deal in the grand scheme of things, just that I believe if you set very definite goals for yourself it is easier to meet them, it is easier to get through whatever is going on right now because you know this is what I'm headed for, this is what's going to happen in the next however many years. So for me it's, to a certain extent, a coping mechanism when life throws stuff my way. It's like, you know what, this is just part of the bigger plan, I factor this in, it's not going to deter me from my goal.

Noga: And you want to be a professor in the U.S. or – ?

Anika: Anywhere.

Noga: So your ultimate goal for where you want to settle down and raise a family is –

Anika: Very very open to negotiation.

Noga: And is there a reason you want to adopt a child before you get married?

Anika: It's part of my independent streak that has been nurtured by my mother. My parents split when I was really really young, can't remember exactly what age, but. My mom had virtually no help raising me financially or psychologically, anything like that. I think she did a pretty damn good job. A lot of my friends, a lot of my colleagues, view this level of independence as almost a bad thing, and I don't think it is. I have a lot of love in me for children, and I know not everybody does, and for one reason or another there are babies, there are children out there who are parentless, whether they're orphans, or they were just given up for adoption, whatever. And whatever I can do to help these kids.

Noga: Why would people see it as a bad thing? What is unusual even, that they would make that sort of comment?

Anika: It is unusual for a Caribbean woman to think the way I do. That I can do pretty much anything by myself on my own with minimal help from a guy, in particular. I think this way primarily because of having the opportunity to see my mother raise me the way she did, being both parents to me wrapped into one package. My mother taught at secondary level, at high school level for going on thirty years now. It doesn't pay much but I was never left wanting. And I didn't have ~~"u~~ncles" (gestures scare quotes) traipsing through the house helping mommy. And seeing that growing up taught me how to be that way.

Noga: And do you think that's different from – I mean, I've read that there are many single heads of households who are women in the Caribbean –

Anika: Yes. It's more than prevalent, it's almost the norm. But, I think Caribbean woman both in Grenada and St. Lucia, any island you go to I think, you'd find that while the fathers, the male figure, might be absent physically, he is still to some extent present financially. If that makes sense. Because there are some mothers who will go out there, find this man, the father, and say listen, these are your children, you need to give me money to feed them. My mom is stubborn and she decided she was not going to take alimony or child support, nothing. She did it by herself. So, it's a matter of proving hey, I can do it too. Kind of.

Noga: I remember in our last conversation, you said you identify as a "Caribbean woman" and you used that phrase a number of times. And you've sort of differentiated yourself from the typical Caribbean woman in some ways, but overall you still identify as a Caribbean woman. Not as a Caribbean *person*, but as a woman. So tell me more about what you think the typical Caribbean woman is and how you see yourself, why you choose that identification even as you're sort of separating yourself from it.

Anika: Right. A typical Caribbean woman is very very family-oriented. She's coming more and more into the fore of business dealings, as are women all over the world. Caribbean women are slowly but surely realizing their true worth in the grand scheme of day to day Caribbean life. They've managed a household for so many years, why can't I manage a business? You know, we've finally started to get to that point. So in the context of business, that is what a Caribbean woman is. And I guess it's no different from women all over the world. Somehow we still successfully manage to balance that and family life and kids and husband and church, all of these different things. Oh, and we still take pride in beating our kids if they misbehave, like spanking, not child abuse-type beating, no. Oh yeah, I was spanked, I'm damn proud of it, and my kids will be spanked too. We believe in the value of punishment in whatever form, whether it's denial of privileges or a paddle on the butt.

I differentiate myself from the average Caribbean woman because most Caribbean woman do not progress past a master's degree unless there's some external influence, or unless there is what is considered in the Caribbean to be an abnormal level of ambition. I also differentiate myself in terms of my degree of independence. Most of my friends, I went to an all-girls high school, most of my high school friends are married, have kids already, I'm not, and I'm perfectly fine with that.

Noga: If you met the right man would you still wait until – marriage came in at like thirty-five, or somewhere in your timetable? I'm trying to remember.

Anika: (laughing) I would. My ideal would be to wait awhile, at least until I get into the Ph.D. program. I believe in doing one thing well. Yes, there is value in multi-tasking, but I believe when you concentrate on one thing at a time there is a higher probability that you will do that one thing to the best of your ability. That is the position that I'm in now, that is why I'm here at SGU, yes I'm dating, but not seriously.

Noga: Is this friend of yours a confidante, is it an emotional connection?

Anika: Not really. It's purely physical. It works for me right now. Yes my body is telling me, "You need to reproduce sometime soon," but it's not a huge deal for me. If it happens, it happens. If it doesn't, I've been fine all of these years. I'm fine with just having a companion. And this again is very atypical for a Caribbean woman. Caribbean women do not do casual relationships. Caribbean women, while some of them might not go for the whole idea of marriage, would usually be in a common law relationship. That common law relationship might end, but she will start another common law relationship. There is not that sort of laissez-faire view of relationships that I tend to have, which is probably bad in a sense but (laughs), it's what works for me right now. There are merits and there are drawbacks to each approach, but I believe in the individual determining what is best for that person.

Noga: Do you ever feel lonely?

Anika: Hardly. I grew up an only child. Most of my friends growing up were my mother's friends. Much older than me. Once I had my books, I had something to do, I had something to think about, I was happy. I am very very comfortable in my own company. I do get homesick. But loneliness is not a feeling that, I don't think I've ever had.

Noga: What about Caribbean man?

Anika: Oh God, you do not want to get me started on that. Where do I start? Caribbean men say that they're complex creatures. They're not. All they think about is sex.

Noga: Do you think that's unique to Caribbean men?

Anika: No. It's just that Caribbean men are just a little bit more focused on it. As much as I hate to admit it, Caribbean men are not very ambitious. It is extremely rare to find a Caribbean man progressing beyond A-levels, equivalent of grade 12.

Life Experiences

Noga: Tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are.

Anika: I think, right off the top of my head, there is one major thing that pretty much had an ongoing effect. My parents' divorce. My parents tell me I was two and a half when this happened. My dad, who was still married to my mom at the time, took me on a trip down the western side of St. Lucia to deliver some stuff. He had this little truck, not like what you see these days. It was a weird little thing. I used to call it a buggy. I fell asleep in the cab. Of course, it's a hot day, I mean we're in the tropics, what else would it be? Either it's raining or it's too hot. And when I woke up he was finished with the delivery and we were on our way back home. Typical precocious two-and-a-half-year-old, I said to him, "Daddy I'm thirsty." So he stops, he buys me an orange Fanta. It's amazing how these little things stick out in your mind. I do also remember that the shop that he bought it at had a blue door. Color for me at that time was a huge thing.

And I remember enjoying that drink, I enjoyed it a lot. My parents tried to raise me on very healthy stuff, so soft drinks were a rarity. It was a treat. Because my body had pretty much overheated while I was sleeping in the cab of the truck, the temperature difference between my body and the cold drink started to get me ill. My sinuses had started to act up, and I started generally feeling as though I was getting a cold. I was always, I was very very fragile growing up. I mean, a breeze with one germ particle passes too close to me, I'll catch that cold. By the time we got home, I was just feeling completely rotten. And being the momma's girl that I always was, I went to mommy and told her I'm not feeling well, I'm getting a cold, however you say that in two-and-a-half-year-old language. Whatever. And she puts me to bed.

Now, when I told her that, I remember her looking at my dad. And it wasn't a tender look, you know. It was almost accusatory, like "My child left here well this morning and now she's coming back sick, what did you do to her?" You know? But there wasn't venom in it. I think there was more suspicion, now that I look back on it. At the time though I just remember thinking, okay, something's up. But I'm sick, so I'm going to bed, forget it, you know. That, looking back, is probably the one thing that for me, as a young child, pointed to the fact that everything was not okay between mummy and daddy. So that when, one day, I don't think there was ever one single moment when my mom said to me, okay, daddy won't be home today or anything like that. It's just one day he just wasn't there anymore. And I remember mommy saying something to me sort of like, "Your dad is going back to Grenada, he doesn't live here anymore," whatever, you know, however it is that she put it. But, it's only when I got older that I understood that there had been a divorce. That was not a word that was thrown out to me as a young kid. And so, from about, I was about

four at the time, from then onwards, it‘s been mommy and me. Two of us against the world basically.

She‘s a teacher by profession. Teachers don‘t earn a lot in the Caribbean. I don‘t know if they do anywhere, but I think one of the places that they‘re the most underpaid is in the Caribbean. But I‘ve seen my mother make sacrifices. Not necessarily in terms of seeing her feed me versus feeding herself. But once I knew that teachers didn‘t make a whole lot, and we were still able to go on annual vacations – my mother took me to Disney as a small child, that‘s by no means an affordable thing to do on a teacher‘s salary. As a single parent. And she wasn‘t receiving alimony, no child support, nothing. And my mother showed me what it was like to be able to rely on yourself. If you can‘t afford it, then you do without it. But you do whatever it is in your power to get where you want to be, to do the things that you want to do. And it‘s okay every now and then to treat yourself.

So growing up, just mommy and me, showed me that. I think showed me that a little bit too well because now I‘m independent to the point of stubbornness. I wouldn‘t say that I‘m spoiled though, because I got my share of spankings, I got my share of no‘s. But I think, seeing my mother not having to rely on quote-unquote uncles to help her provide for me, kind of showed me that hey, you can do it on your own, regardless of what life throws your way.

And my mother is also the reason why I‘m so damn busy (laughs). I mean, this woman is retired. She‘s been retired for four, four and a half years now. She hasn‘t stopped teaching, she‘s taking French classes. She teaches two places, both part-time, she‘s taking French classes, she gives afterschool lessons. Does this sound familiar (laughs)? And as much as I hate to admit it, I do see myself turning into my mother. I do. I mean both physically, if you look at me now and my mother sitting right next to me, you‘d think we‘re sisters. We look alike, we sound alike. I think it may have been unconscious, I don‘t know, but she‘s created a clone (laughs). She really has created a clone. I‘m a little bit more lazy than her, which is scary. It‘s scary because if I‘m this busy, and I‘m lazier than she is then (groans).

So I think the divorce and seeing my mom subsequent to the divorce managing to make ends meet, save money, take me on vacations, buy me stuff. Going to school, I was never in need of anything. It‘s only since I‘ve come to university that I find myself living off of Ramen. This is something that is just completely foreign to me. We weren‘t rich, but I never had to budget.

Then, the other major experience that has contributed to primarily my cynicism of sort, now, is what I went through with my ex-fiancé. This was what, four years ago.

Noga: You were engaged pretty young.

Anika: Yeah. Which my mom didn't like, but I was just so in love that I didn't care. We met at work, actually. He was the manager, I was just entry-level. But we clicked, and then I left that job to go to another company. Then is when we really hit it off because working in the same place there was always this thing about interoffice romances. And he was, just some recurring themes in my life (laughs). He was going through a divorce at the time.

Noga: Okay. Was he in St. Lucia?

Anika: Yeah. By all accounts, most of the blame lay with his ex-wife. I wasn't just taking his word for it by any means. It would be so easy for him to say, "Oh, it's all her fault." All of our mutual friends who I spoke to indicated that there was significant fault on her part. So I was like, "Okay, fair enough, I'll give him a chance." Everything was going good, we'd never had any major fights. We would argue from time to time, but nothing earth-shattering. Then I decided to apply to SGU to get my family off my back, because everybody was nagging me, "When are you going to go to college? When are you going to get your degree?" Blah blah blah. So I applied to SGU, get accepted, I tell him. His reaction was, "Oh well, then we'd better break up until you come back." That just came from left field. I mean, we're already engaged, why –

Noga: You were already engaged?

Anika: Yeah. Why would you choose to spring this on me now? I'm going into a whole new life experience. This is probably one of the most crucial times in my life when I'm going to need your support, my mom's support, as much support as I can get. And this is what you're springing on me? So. At least by my estimation we worked it out. I was fully aware that a long-distance relationship, if 150 miles can be called long-distance, would take a little bit of extra work, but I was willing to put in that work.

Within the first month of me being here at SGU, Hurricane Ivan decided to pay a visit to Grenada. So, I got traumatized, I got PTSD, I went home for three weeks because we were evacuated for three weeks. In that three weeks, I wound up getting pregnant. And I didn't know. So I come back to SGU incubating a little one, wondering why the hell am I sleeping this much? I slept for twenty-two hours straight ... Then I started eating, eating, eating, eating. I like food, don't get me wrong, but I was always hungry. The whole idea of pregnancy just had not entered into my head at this point. Go to the clinic, pee on a stick, congratulations. I'm like, huh?

Noga: So they suspected? Or you went for the test?

Anika: I went to find out what was wrong with me. They asked me when was the last time you've had sex. I answered them. They said, go pee on a stick. I said nothing's going to happen. It comes back, so I'm obviously.

So that was more than a slight shock for me. At the end of the day, I'm very very traditionally minded. Marriage comes first, then comes the babies. And we weren't quite married yet. We were on our way there. We were due to be married over Christmas, and this was around Halloween, the end of October. In St. Lucia, if you get married and you have a premature baby, even if it is legitimately premature, you will be the subject of intense discussion and scrutiny. Much less if it's an alleged premature baby that looks full size, as would have been the case with me. So.

Then there was the whole question of how do I tell him, how do I tell my mother? Do I even keep it? Then there was the whole thing, you know what, this child did not ask to be conceived, I have no right to take its life away. So okay, come hell or high water, I'm keeping the baby. I went Madonna – you know that song from the 80's? I did that. I didn't tell my mom yet. I hadn't figured out how I was going to tell her. I was due to go back to St. Lucia on the 17th of December. That night of the 17th. The morning of the 17th I woke up at 6:30 – yeah, raise eyebrows here, because I'm not a morning person, why the hell would I wake up at 6:30 in the morning? Everything from my waist down was hurting me. I'm like, okay, just turn over, go back to sleep, nothing's wrong. Just figured some weird muscle spasm, something. By this time I had just begun to get used to the whole idea of being pregnant, having something living inside of me, which creeped me out (laughs). I wake up half an hour later, the pain is worse. I lay there, just trying to stay composed, you know, "You're not going into hysterics Anika, you're going to stay calm," talking myself through it. And the pain goes like (snaps fingers). Okay. That was weird. And then I feel it coming back. Then it goes away again. The next thought in my mind was "Oh shit, I'm having contractions." And then I'm thinking, "But hang on? I'm in my first trimester, why would I be having contractions?" Meanwhile they're getting steadily worse. I'm like, "Oh God, I'm having a miscarriage." Couldn't tell anybody. I didn't even have the strength to get up to go to the clinic. I stayed in my room. Had my baby. Then I went to the clinic.

When I got home that night, I called him, I told him I needed to see him the next day, it's not something that I can discuss with him over the phone, but I really really need to see him. When I told him that I had miscarried, his first reaction was, "What did *you* do to *my* child to *kill* my child?" Yeah. My reaction was "Gee. Thanks for the sympathy. Thanks for asking how I am," you know. So that was, I think, the one moment when I knew that there's no way in hell that I'm marrying him … Needless to say from my end, things were a little bit strained. Then the next year, 2005, I decided to go home for Easter. Decided not to tell anybody, not even my mom. Nobody knew. I was just hopping on a plane, going. Decided to pay him a

visit. Because I had put off the wedding after that. I mean, I've just had a miscarriage, I'm in no frame of mind to get married to anybody. So we pushed it back to June. And I let myself into his house, he was renting a place fairly close to the airport, I figured I'll cook him a meal, wait till he comes home, you know.

To sum it all up, I find him in bed, and it wasn't my legs around his waist. Because I mean, I was standing, so I mean, I can't be in two places at once (laughs). So I actually came this close to getting accused of murder. I stopped myself by telling myself that I'm an SGU student, I'm not going to spent the next twenty years in jail, I'm going to spend the next three-and-a-half years in school forgetting about his, yahdah, yahdah, yahdah. Left the ring for him. Left his house, went home. Mommy noticed that I didn't call him once that entire weekend. She didn't ask me a single thing because my mom knows if something happened that's bad enough for me not to call him, then it had to be really bad. After that, the Monday night, he calls me, he's like, "How are you? How was your weekend?" I'm like, "Not as good as yours." He's like, "What do you mean by that?" I'm like, "Look on top of the cable box, see if there's anything there that looks familiar." Because that's where I'd left the ring. I said, "But before you do actually get up and look there, I don't want you to call me, text me, email me, nothing. Forget I exist. Just forget me. Kind of like you did at X o'clock on Thursday morning." And I hung up.

He emailed me. For some perverse reason I decided to open the email. He said to me, "I'm sorry, it's not what it looked like." I saw her legs around your waist and you weren't wearing pants, what else could it look like? So. After that I kind of got to a point where I am almost anti-marriage, anti-having kids of my own. Because I know how deeply I loved him, and I know how badly I was hurt, and I do not want to put myself in that position again voluntarily. I really don't. So that, plus the independent-slash-stubborn streak from my mom, has made me what I am.

And seeing my mom go through the stresses of teaching at a high school level, I decided you know what, if I teach, it's not going to be at anything less than a tertiary level. Where if you work toward getting an F, it's my job to award you the grade that you worked for. At the high school level, there's more of an obligation, especially here in the Caribbean, to help and coddle and do everything in your power, as a teacher, to get this student to pass this course. I'm not about coddling. So I figure at university, you are reasonably independent, whether or not it was your choice to be here or your parent's choice. So your learning, with a few exceptions, is self-directed …

So that's pretty much what's made me who I am. Those two, and a half, things. I don't know if the last thing qualifies as a major experience. It kind of merges with seeing my mom operate really

independently and seeing her sacrifice. She'll be up, even now, at three in the morning marking papers. That's dedication. Just seeing her do that year after year. I saw my mother go gray from the stress of dealing with the administrative side of teaching, and all of that sort of stuff. Just seeing that has effectively chosen my career path for me.

Noga: Going back, you mentioned Hurricane Ivan and that afterwards you developed post-traumatic stress disorder. Can you tell me what happened during Ivan?

Anika: The one thing that scared me the most during Hurricane Ivan – I was living on the Grand Anse campus at the time, so we got evacuated up here to True Blue. All of us got put in the Bourne lecture hall to wait out the storm. At the time, there were no bolts on the inside of the shutters of Bourne. The shutters were just there for effect, I guess. So the wind is blowing, rain is falling, debris flying, and something hit the tiles on the roof of the science building. Which is directly opposite to the windows in Bourne. The tiles come flying through the windows and the shutters of Bourne. And, of course, shards of tiles, sharp pieces of glass, coming straight for me. I'm standing there, I'm looking at these chunks of glass just, in shock almost. I'm looking at this piece of tile coming toward me at God knows how many miles an hour, and somebody pulled me to one side. That piece of tile embedded itself in one of the walls. So just the knowledge of the fact that I was this close to having my head sliced off kind of, I have never been afraid of thunder and lightening but I did have a couple of bad episodes after Hurricane Ivan. Even as far as when Hurricane Emily hit in '05, I was at home in St. Lucia at the time, and it was ten at night. And I'm hearing the wind howling around the corners of the house, and I could not sleep for any – you could have doped me up with valium, whatever, I could not sleep. I was almost twenty-four at the time. I had to go and sleep with my mom, I just could not sleep by myself.

Discussion

Anika is one of the few participants who focused upon a Caribbean identity rather than an island-specific one. She is interested in Caribbean culture, networks, and gender roles, rather than Grenadian or St. Lucian culture per se. This is likely a product of her dual citizenship and the broader regional perspective brought by her travels to the United

States. Anika paints a broad picture of regional mores, and then defines herself through and against the expectations laid upon a woman of her age and background. Like Karlene, Anika sees herself as a strong and independent woman. Yet also similarly, they both state that, deep down, they are still very traditional. Karlene wants her boyfriend to propose, while Anika believes in marriage before children. They also share ambitious visions for their educational future, seeking master's and doctoral programs in the United States. Whereas Karlene (and most of the participants) articulated a desire to bring their skills back to Grenada, Anika is not interested in returning to the Caribbean. However, in keeping with her focus on interpersonal relationships, Anika would like to adopt a Caribbean baby.

Anika is clearly focused upon constructing her identity, and she used our interviews as a chance to sound out a personal narrative that integrated her life experiences, relationships, and ambitions against a picture of Caribbean gender roles and culture. On the one hand, she stated that her mother did not raise her "to be a clone of anybody else." On the other, she sees herself turning into her mother, and laughed that her mother had created a clone. Anika even determined to become a teacher like her mother. From an early age, it was "mommy and me. Two of us against the world basically." Anika sees herself as fiercely independent, and she seems proud to define herself against regional gender stereotypes. At the same time, Anika does not feel that her independence is at odds with her continued closeness to her mother. For example, she did not hesitate to admit that she had to sleep with her mother during a storm after Ivan. Anika admires the way her mother raised her as a single head of household with no

assistance from her father or ~~–u~~ncles," and uses her mother as a role model as she struggles to sort out her own interpersonal experiences and professional ambitions.

Nigel

I met Nigel when he was twenty years old and one semester away from graduating from SGU. He aspired to become a doctor, and although he did not receive one of the five government scholarships for SGU's medical school that he had been hoping for, he planned to pursue a master's degree and then reapply. His dream is an important part of his identity. When I asked him how he would answer the question, "Who are you?" he replied: "Nigel, of course, a Grenadian man, young man. Aspiring to be a doctor. I have African, Indian descent. And I'm very much a Grenadian, after all that's most of what I know. Well, I shouldn't say *know*, but most of what I've experienced."

Nigel moved around a lot while growing up in the parish of St. Andrew's. His father works in construction, while his mother has occasionally been employed in restaurants. He has an enormous extended family on his father's side. His father is one of about twenty siblings, organized around shared mothers in what Nigel terms clans. They live all around the world, though many are in Brooklyn. On the topic of family, Nigel commented, "They're warm, they help each other out. It's not good to be a loner. You need to have people around you to help you out, mentally and so on. And also, in my case, you need to know your family or else you might end up dating one of them!"

Nigel resides with his parents in a remote village in the interior, living on leased land in a small wooden house. They grow much of what they eat. No one in his family has gone to university; most did not finish secondary school. Nigel has always been extremely self-motivated in his studies and attended SGU on a full government

scholarship. An avid reader (he loved Dickens as a child), Nigel once referred to himself as —very well traveled, I'm very worldly." Even though he left the Caribbean for the first time just months earlier, Nigel perceives that his knowledge of the world beyond Grenada creates a rift between him and the other members of his rural community.

Over the course of our meetings, Nigel traveled to Brooklyn twice – first for an internship, and second after graduation. I was able to conduct phone interviews with him during his time abroad, and include excerpts of his reflections on Grenada from the vantage of New York. He was very dejected when he learned he had not been accepted to medical school and so had to return to Grenada. Early on, Nigel told me that he considered himself to be an urban person, expressing his dislike of the rural village communities in which he had grown up and a preference for Grand Anse (hardly an urban jungle, though it is part of the more cosmopolitan climate of the southwestern part of the island). I was initially mystified by his conviction and wondered how he would actually like living in New York. As it turned out, he loved it every bit as much as he expected. Only toward the end of our interviews did Nigel help me fill in the bigger picture: Nigel is gay. Moving from the homophobic climate of Grenada to the liberation of Gay Pride Day in New York was a revelation, and his ambition to succeed professionally was, at least partly, driven by a desire to obtain the freedom to live outside of the Caribbean.

Topics: National identity; education; history and Revolution; Hurricane Ivan; social class; development; politics; perspectives from Brooklyn; back in Grenada; coming out; life experiences.

National Identity

Noga: Do you think Grenadians have a strong national identity, and what makes you say so?

Nigel: I think yes, they do. Like I say, we have a big history that binds us. It's like all the islands, everybody on their own small plot of land, and they're trying to be distinct from the others. Yes, we're West Indians, but at the same time, you don't want people to mix you up for a Vincentian, or for a Dominican. You know, you're a Grenadian, you have this hundred years, hundreds of years of history, and you know what, you know this is what you are, you're a Grenadian. There's a lot that we have achieved here over the years. And there's a lot to be proud of. So, even somebody had a plot of land, they proud of that, because they know that it's hard to get elsewhere. So, this is what we have. So I guess we have to be proud of it, I mean we're very nationalistic. And then we have athletes going out there, doing well representing Grenada. When you start having people actually representing you, you start feeling like you're existing, and people know that you're existing. So as people start realizing we exist, and as we realizing that, then we start saying ~~–O~~h yeah, we Grenadians and I'm proud to be." Because Alleyne Francique [Grenadian athlete] almost won a medal anyway. I guess if you had this dormant little island that nobody goes to, nobody's heard about, you kind of ashamed of it. You don't want to be explaining, ~~–O~~kay, well this is an island above Trinidad," you know. Once people start learning about you, you start feeling okay. So I think that's very important to nationalism kind of growing, because the world's getting smaller anyway, so.

Nigel: I think generally, we have this way that makes us believe that we less valuable, or our culture is some – for example, the way we speak when we have a visitor around. We always try to talk like them so they don't think we talking like an alien or something. Like sometimes you do it because you want the person to understand you, but like right now I'm not speaking in an American accent at all, but you can understand me. But a lot of them will try to speak with a New York accent, just to be able to – (laughs)

Noga: Do you do a New York accent, yourself?

Nigel: No (laughs).

Noga: But you're still speaking differently with me than you would with your friends, right?

Nigel: Yes, I am, because with my friends I speak dialect, because it's more comfortable. If I'm writing, I can write of course with grammar,

but talking to you I always have to wonder, did I say that right? Because I don't talk like that normally ... But it's an interview, so I want to be clear (laughs).

Nigel: Patriotism is definitely on the rise. I don't know. It's weird. Have you seen the last Independence celebration?
Noga: Yes.
Nigel: That's one of the biggest we've ever had. Everybody was in yellow, green, red. I mean, it was just. Even myself, I feel more, I don't know, I just, yes, I enjoy being a Grenadian now, I'm very proud of it, and I'm very defensive of my island now (laughs). I boast a lot about my island. I guess we are getting to that point.
Noga: So you feel that it's different from in the past?
Nigel: Yes. In the past it was all about leaving, going somewhere better, or lying and saying you're from somewhere else, "I'm from Trinidad, I'm from Tobago." Because they always assume nobody knows where Grenada is. I always grab the opportunity to say I'm from Grenada. And I think people are getting that way.
Noga: Why do you think it's changing?
Nigel: Well, media, you know the Caribbean is like a spot now, everyone want to claim their Caribbean spot. I from Grenada, I from Trinidad, I from St. – you know. And I think Grenada has more to offer. You can do things in Grenada now. People are more aware that people know about the island. For example, I was never aware that people knew about the Revolution, and that it was such a big deal out in the world.
Noga: Really?
Nigel: I didn't know that. I just thought it was a Grenadian thing! I thought maybe people would know about it, yeah, but I didn't think, I mean, people from California, I'm from Grenada, they'll be like, "Oh that's the place of the revolution," and I'm like, "Yeah." So, you know, people getting more aware that people *know* us. So it's more comfortable to say I'm a Grenadian now. And with education, in schools they're teaching national pride.
Noga: How do they teach national pride?
Nigel: Especially in primary school we always always talk about, history is always a big thing in the primary schools. That's one thing they teach.
Noga: History of Grenada, or the Caribbean, or the world?
Nigel: History of Grenada in particular at the primary school level. When you go up to the secondary – I mean they'll teach you all of the history, but in primary school you'd know a lot about Grenada. It's amazing how much our grade six students would know about this Grenadian date, and dahdahdah – I'm like really? You get higher up, you get a lot about the Caribbean and the world, but at the primary

level, they always instill Grenadian history in you. At Independence Day celebrations, I think that primary school students participate most. Even as a child, you always used to have big celebrations. It was always a big deal.

Noga: If you had the opportunity to go abroad, would you? Where, why, and would you return?

Nigel: If I had the opportunity to go, I definitely would since I'll be going to med school here, I have to finish in New York. So I would go to New York, one because I think I love New York, two because my degree ends in New York. I would go, I would stay because I want a decent job. I do want to help out my country and stuff, but. I still have to help *me* out, I want to be a good doctor and I want to be a surgeon, a specialist surgeon. And I think, I want to go somewhere where I can get a job, where I'm not underemployed, you know, where I'll be needed. So I think that is one of the main reasons I want to live abroad. I definitely would come back in my 60s (laughs).

Noga: I'm noticing a pattern in Grenada (laughs). So you'd like to retire here?

Nigel: I would like to retire here, have a house in Lance aux Epines or Egmont. But I think I'm really fast-paced, I like things going on all the time. Grenada, kind of – I feel like if I don't go – I've never been anywhere, well, except other Caribbean islands, so. I guess part of me is just eager to get out into the big world. I guess maybe if I go I might realize I really don't like it. But since I haven't been anywhere out of the Caribbean I really do want to go. I mean you try living on 133 square miles for twenty years.

Noga: I'm working on nine months!

Nigel: (Laughs.) Exactly. So it goes way past feeling, you know, like the national pride and stuff.

Education

Noga: Do you think education is important for a person, and if so why?

Nigel: Education is very important. Unless your father owns Walmart or something, and you're going to have a billion dollars for the rest of your life, education is important – even then, it's important not just for having a good income, I think it improves a person holistically. You have a good view, you can contribute to something, you can understand a conversation. In the Caribbean education is actually even more important, I would say, because we have a high poverty level, and we have little opportunity at all. And with the little opportunity that we have here, the only ones that are going to get it are the educated ones. You really have to make an effort ... You have to be

educated here, it‘s a must. Because there is nothing to do. There‘s hardly any major opportunities …

Noga: I‘m trying to get things going in a secondary school – I chose Valley Secondary School and everyone is telling me that that was a very bad choice (laughs).
Nigel: I think it‘s a good choice because all the troubled children go to Valley.
Noga: Okay, that‘s why everyone is telling me it‘s a bad choice. Why do you think that‘s a good choice?
Nigel: You get more of an authentic Grenadian feel. You see these troubled children come from troubled households, and as general Grenadian households, most of these households have issues with money. It‘s a school where you get more of a real feel. These children are wild, but, you know, it‘s parents who send them on their last five dollars. Or students who can‘t afford books. And believe it or not, that‘s the real Grenadian experience …
It‘ll be good. Don‘t bother with people, people say that because everybody has that – in Grenada, school is a big deal. What school you go to really *brands* you. Valley isn‘t one of those good schools …
Noga: What about Hill?
Nigel: Hill is a very good school, but we don‘t put it in any category because it‘s a private school. Hardly Grenadians go there anyway! American people who came to work here, or rich people who don‘t really fall into Grenadian classification system …
Noga: It‘s interesting, because then there are people who really want me to do my study in Hill.
Nigel: No way. You would *not* get a good, no. It‘s a very good school mind you, but there‘s a lot of foreign students.

History and Revolution

Noga: So what do you think are the most important events in Grenada‘s history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people?
Nigel: History history or like recent history?
Noga: Anything.
Nigel: This is not just for Grenadians, but for everybody, I think the slavery. Ninety percent of Grenadians are Africans. So slavery definitely. Emancipation. Being freed. Being able to be okay, seeing that Grenada is nice, now I could have this, I could have – and it‘s surprising that that‘s actually very relevant, because a lot of the lands people own now is lands they‘ve inherited as far back as since we‘ve first been freed. And families kept those same lands and they kind of passed it on. So Emancipation is still a really big part of it, because people still have their lands from then. And I think Independence

from Britain – we start taking care of our own economic affairs. We're actually a country now. And the Revolution. A lot of people were affected by it, we had people who lost their lives, and people who were damaged, people who were psychologically scarred, like the whole, the war thing, the war part of it, I don't quite understand it but, I mean it definitely is, when you near to that point, that time of year, you start feeling this sadness in the country, people start grieving, they start remembering their lost ones, because there are hundreds of people, it was nothing we've experienced before. You're talking about people having a curfew, and you have helicopters overhead and you're hearing gunshots and you're hearing explosions, you never had it before that and we haven't had it after that. So just that alone. So it's a big big part of it, that part, that event was a big, big, um.

It also said something about us. It said that Grenadians are actually ones to change things they don't like. Because they didn't like the government at the time so they decide they were going to overthrow. And they didn't like how the overthrow went and they didn't like the bloodiness of it, so everybody start demonstrating and people going up, and, it showed that we really passionate, you know, when we passionate about something we very passionate about it. So they loved their Prime Minister, and he was going to be executed, so you have hundreds of people coming from everywhere and getting shot in the middle of it all. So, that just says something about us. We're very, you know.

Noga: And how do you know what you know about the Revolution?

Nigel: The first thing I ever heard about the Revolution was from my mother. During the Revolution she was just about sixteen years old, so she didn't understand much of the politics of it. So I didn't understand that, I just got from her the events of the day, what happened to her, and what was going on. I didn't quite understand the politics of it until about three years ago when I actually read a book written by George Brizan called *Grenada: Island of Conflict*. A book you *should* get. Then I understood a little bit more. I still don't understand, I'm still not clear. But.

Noga: Did you get that of your own volition or was that for school?

Nigel: Just my own reading. That's when I started getting interested in more of what's happening here. I think a huge one, in my lifetime, a huge historical landmark, was Ivan. The hurricane. Nobody can ever talk too much about the impact of Hurricane Ivan. It was just huge.

Hurricane Ivan

Noga: Coming to Ivan. Were you in Grenada?

Nigel: Yes. Unfortunately.

Noga: So in the months following Ivan, how was your life affected? Did you need any help, if so did you get what you needed? And from whom?

Nigel: Well, my needs weren't special needs. It was just the same as everybody else. We needed water, we needed food. And that was it, you know. We didn't need any big, special medical attention, or, fortunately for us, we didn't have to repair our house.

Noga: No? Your roof?

Nigel: It was alright.

Noga: So you were in [your village] at the time?

Nigel: No. We weren't sure about the state of our house, so we left the house, and my family went to the shelter in St. Andrew's and I went to stay with my aunt because she was scared. And I went because I thought her house was really nice and there's nothing that's going to happen to it. It so happened that her house was demolished, and our house that we left (laughs) was, like, untouched. It was so weird.

Noga: Where was your aunt's place?

Nigel: In St. George's. So I stayed with her during the hurricane.

Noga: So as the house was demolished, what did you do?

Nigel: Well. My dad had to fix it temporarily, and then they got it refurbished – you mean at the time?

Noga: At the time, and after.

Nigel: Oh! At the time, it was horrible! We were trapped in a bathroom probably this small or smaller than this (gestures to our tiny meeting room), for like ten, twelve hours. And we were just hearing all these sounds and it was dark, like, two in the afternoon and it was pitch black. It was just horrible. I can't. I can't even. I don't even like too much to talk about it sometimes, but I'll take the opportunity now. I was *scared*. Because usually when these things happen my father around and he very courageous. He does everything and he always, you know, always (mumbles), he was all the way over *there* and it was me and my aunt and I feel like I have to take care of her, and I *scared*. And then, the roof just left – just *gone* (laughs). And, like, we never had, I never had hurricanes here in my lifetime. And I used to always see what happening in Florida and that's all I know a hurricane to be, and I didn't know what to expect and. So then the roof was gone in one room, and then we had to go to another room, and then the same thing happen and then we end up in the bathroom. And like, things was just crashing, and the worst part was actually hearing things crashing and you don't know what's that, what's that. You actually feeling like the hurricane has a personality, like if it's angry with you. Oh my God it was so, *so* horrible, and you're in there and you're hearing and the wind goes somewhere else and it coming back and it trying to take off the roof that's left, and the only roof that was left was the one in the bathroom. So we were there and then the bathroom

started flooding, and then we had to try and put water out the sink. We spent the whole time putting water out the sink. Then the bathroom flooded so much that we had to go somewhere else, go to the kitchen, so we had to come out, in the whole *massacre*, roof gone, flooding everywhere, things flying up and down as if we were outside. Then we go into the kitchen, the kitchen doesn't have anything like a door, so we had to like, behind like, a wooden thing that we had to stand under so that things won't come hit us. (Exhales loudly with nervous laugh).

Noga: For like twelve hours?

Nigel: Yes, like twelve hours. It was horrible.

Noga: And did you find your family afterwards? How did you even reconnect with them? You knew they were okay?

Nigel: So afterwards, no phones, no nothing, no electricity, I came out, morningtime I came out, and there was this huge mob of people, well not mob, but a whole group of people going around to see who, what happened, what they can help. So I walking down, I saw my father coming up looking for me (laughs). I told him I'm okay so he should go look after my aunt and. It was just, like, it was trauma – like, I never thought, it was so bad, Ivan was so bad I never thought that Grenada would be at this stage right now. Like, we have electricity, we have supermarkets, you know. I just never thought we ever going to get back to that. It just looked like a huge, huge landfill. The entire place.

Noga: I was shocked when I saw the pictures. On the anniversary, I saw on TV, they were replaying videos people had taken. I mean I knew it was bad, and I'd read about it, but I hadn't seen those videos. And compared to what I see now –

Nigel: In one year we were back, I was like "What!" It shows that we very resilient. We went through so much. Something always happening in Grenada. Always happening.

Noga: For better or worse, right?

Nigel: True. Always worse (laughs).

Noga: Do you feel that your life is affected by the hurricanes today in any way?

Nigel: Yes. I think the hurricane helped me appreciate the island more. There's a lot of things I used to take for granted, and I don't do so now, like good clean drinking water, electricity, neighbors, friends. Especially neighbors and friends. I don't take them for granted anymore because I mean after the hurricane you're wondering who's dead who's alive, where are they, you can't find them, you don't have a phone.

Noga: And overall, do you think Grenada is a better or worse place now than it was?

Nigel: Grenada is a much better – infrastructurally, we have much newer buildings. The nutmeg trees are mostly gone but. Economically we're going to get better, because we've been showing growth. So yes, we're a better place. And most Grenadians appreciate things now.

Social Class

Noga: Do you think there are social classes in Grenada?
Nigel: Yes, there are social classes.
Noga: Would you tell me what classes there are, and what sort of people belong to each one?
Nigel: There's the really, really, really poor. You're talking about a two bedroom wooden house with a latrine outside. Mother probably mops floors or packs shelves, and a father who does construction. There's the poor but not so poor – probably would have one member of the family with at least a high school education that's doing something. Probably the mother is doing a secretarial job, so she could probably afford a nice couch, or the bathroom would be inside, but it's no big difference from the other person. They're still struggling to make ends meet. So there's those two.

Then there's the middle class. Middle class, both parents probably were educated – and all of these classes are a reflection of your education. For example, you wouldn't have somebody who has a *very* good education, probably has at least an associate's degree, in the first class I gave you. First class is always a case where probably the parents dropped out in primary school. It's almost always the case. So every class, as you increase in class, you increase in probably the education of the person at the head of the household. So there's the poor, the not-so-poor, then there's the middle class, the middle class both parents have higher education, maybe college. Sometimes college. It's getting more popular now. And they have a good job, at least one car. That too is getting popular. So they can afford things, they can probably take a trip to the U.S., you know.

Then there's the rich (laughs). Well now, the upper class. Not rich, but the upper class. To somebody in the first class I gave you will see them as rich, right? Because at least they have two cars, they live in probably Lance aux Epines, probably True Blue, probably Fort Judy. They hold executive positions, they probably doctors, they probably lawyers. So those are the classes we have here. Everybody is aware of classes.

Noga: You think so?
Nigel: I know so. You go to school. From a young, very very young age, you know the classes around you. You have the students who, like, you just notice it. When I was a small child, there was this shoe that parents would send their children to school in. Most of the primary

schools required the boys to have black shoes. And the Indian stores used to sell this black shoe for ten or fifteen dollars EC [about US$4]. It‘s ridiculously cheap, so all the poor people would have it. It‘s a rubber shoe that would *burn* like *hell* in the hot sun, on a hot sunny day. You know the poor ones with those shoes. Right? It is so amazing, even at that age you can notice class among you. Because the richer ones would always come so well kept. They have a little powder on the chest. They always all smell so nice.

Noga: The powder on the chest, I‘ve seen that. What does that mean to you?

Nigel: As a child, you come with all the nice powder on your chest, it means your family probably really taking good care of you, your mother took some time off to powder your chest, make you smell nice, she wants to make you look good, you know (laughs). I‘m just saying that to say that even at a young age you notice class. As you grow older, adolescents, like they try their best to hide their class. So you go to Bananas [nightclub] and you may not see it. Everybody‘s dressed the same, and that just means a lot of the poor people trying to live beyond their means. So we have people in that first class, they‘re actually moving to the stage where some of them have wall houses, concrete houses now with a flush toilet. But it doesn‘t mean they have any more education or a higher salary. It just means they probably decided to live above their means now because, well, everybody wants to have nice things. But they‘re still struggling, maybe even more so now.

Development

Noga: What is development?

Nigel: Development is just getting to a point that is better than where you were. Better in a whole lot of senses. More money is better, better education, we have a health care system that is improved. So it doesn‘t matter if it‘s drastically improved, but as long as there is some improvement, that is development.

Noga: Do you think Grenada needs further development?

Nigel: We definitely do. I may be biased because I want to go into healthcare, but I think healthcare definitely should. If you don‘t have healthy people they‘re not going to be productive. Healthcare, education and tourism.

Noga: What do you think about [the new luxury all-inclusive condominium developments]?

Nigel: I really hope that they do what they‘re expected to do for the country. I‘m a big tourism guy. I think that‘s the only way out, really. We don‘t have much physical resources, and even if we do, it‘s not

enough to sustain a whole country. I have a lot of hope in them, I think they're a good idea.

Noga: How do you see money entering the economy?

Nigel: Well, they attract tourists, tourists spend. It'll create jobs for people in the hospitality and manufacturing industries. It's a whole chain effect ... They need food. They need utilities. Also, they'll come out. They're not going to stay in their rooms. It's all about exposure, too. I mean, it's going to be slow if that's all they're depending on, if they're very self-reliant. But once you get the exposure. You have these foreigners coming, they're rich obviously, and then they'll probably bring their friends.

It was so funny the other day, I was in New York, I was on the highway and the radio was playing. It was popular New York radio, probably the most popular, and they were giving away this grand prize to Grenada. And for the entire week, it's like, call in to increase your chances of winning a trip to the great, fabulous Grenada, the Spice Island Beach Resort. For the entire week. And then finally somebody won – oh, they were going to the Flamboyant Hotel. And it was playing and playing. And I realized, you know, it's exposure we need. Because even if you don't win the prize, obviously you're hearing about this Grenada. And it's no longer just Barbados and whatever it is. A lot of people like to see money come in now. But I believe in exposure, I believe in making a good impression. So you have to invite people to be able to create an impression on the world. Grenada can't afford all these expensive ads in New York and so on, so if you can make an impression by bringing people in – so. I think it's a good idea, even if they don't hire that many people.

Politics

Noga: Do you know who you're going to vote for?

Nigel: Oh yes. I love my Prime Minister, you know (laughs).

Noga: Oh you do?

Nigel: Yup, not many Grenadians do, but I do.

Noga: Okay, why?

Nigel: I don't know, he thinks like me. He's a very modern Prime Minister. He thinks about young people. He puts an emphasis on education, and speaking to him personally, he's like, when you get into med school, *I'll* help you. He was able to speak on a level, like – when I came to his office I was shaking, and he was able to come down to my level and make me feel comfortable with him like if I'm talking to some guy on the street. This might sound real cliché, but this is what it is. This is what he really made me feel. You're talking to the PM you're going to be nervous, and within *four* minutes of talking to him I was just really cool and laughing.

Noga: How did you get to meet him? What was the circumstance of the meeting?

Nigel: I have some friends in his office. So they were always talking about me and my ambitions, and he said, ―Well really? I would like to meet him.‖ So he requested to see me. Asked me about what my goals in life are and so on, and I told him. He said, ―Well you get into med school I'll help.‖ Unfortunately, I didn't get into med school, so you know.

Noga: But do you think he would help?

Nigel: I think he would. I think as time goes by, longer I take to get in, maybe, you know, things would come – I think he's genuine, I get that feeling from him. He wants to see – because he has a certain background where its very si—you know, it'd touch a spot, to have a young guy like me is going to touch some spot in him, because it's like, he grew up like rags to riches kind of thing, he was young [?] and a dream, and when he sees somebody the same way, then he'll try his best to help out.

Noga: How do you feel about the political climate these days?

Nigel: I'm not too much of a political person, I just know I'm more of a pro-government person. I like the government. Because they have a lot of vision, I think, in terms of investments. Sometimes they make mistakes in the people they trust. Like the Capital Bank guy and everything. But all in all, they have good intentions. Yeah, I like the government.

Noga: So coming back [from New York], the climate in your village, around, do you sense tension?

Nigel: It's the same thing you see every five years in Grenada, you know. Every five years. Like my next door neighbor wouldn't talk to me because he knows I'm a government supporter and this election he's very bitter with the government. He doesn't talk to anybody who's not. I find him very funny though (laughs).

Noga: Now? Your neighbor?

Nigel: Yeah, he's not talking to me. And we were friends for like five years. I don't think he's serious, anyway he'll get over it after elections are over. But the climate is the same. Every five years you have this division, and people talking, and then it just calms down right after. I don't see much difference. I mean, I was in Antigua when they were having their elections. I realized in the Caribbean they always have the same kind of template going on when they have elections coming around the corner. It's actually part of Caribbean culture, the way they take politics, the way they campaign, the way the supporters behave.

Noga: So this divisiveness is just standard?

Nigel: There for about six months of the year, when there's heated politics, and after that everybody come back as one. Until the next elections, because they realize there's nothing they can do when the government is there. The government is there. That's why we don't have any riots or nothing, because after elections are done, everybody's – you know.

Noga: Do you think the divisiveness you see now results from seeds sown throughout these last five years? Do you think people have been marginalized and that's also something that happens in the Caribbean typically? Or do you think it's just a short-term flair up?

Nigel: I don't think it's something that happens just every five years. I mean, as the five years progressed, people probably would have chosen sides and so one. But since the last elections you had that strong side (?), it was a very close election, seven seats to eight. And so they come back now with the chance to make things different, as they see themselves being stronger now. As for marginalization, I don't believe in that. I don't think the government – because for example, my family, they're not active supporters of either party. My parents have never voted. They just don't care. Really. My dad might be a little bit more vocal about it, but I've always gotten help from the government. I've never voted because I was never old enough. So, the government doesn't know that I'm a supporter so they're going to help me. I went through my entire undergrad education tuition-free, because I got help from the government. They never asked me, "Are you NNP? Are you this or that?" I don't believe that.

However, being helped, and you get helped by chance, they can't help everybody. So when one person doesn't get help, they say, "Oh, it's because so and so is the case." But I don't believe that. I think the government is a supporter of every – especially young people who are trying to get somewhere further in their academics.

Noga: Are your friends, and people your age, do you think that they're going to vote?

Nigel: Yeah. Probably eighty percent are going to vote. Funny, most of my friends don't support the government. About eighty percent of them don't.

Noga: Is that an issue between you then?

Nigel: No. It's never been an issue. I remember when I was in Junior College, doing my A-levels, I was only sixteen. And my friend was eighteen. And she did not like the government at all. But she could vote and I couldn't. And I remember begging and pleading, begging and pleading, please vote for the government for me, just for me. She was like, "Nope."

Noga: So hopefully you'll be around to vote this time.

Nigel: Hopefully.

Noga: Do you have any idea, your personal thoughts, on who's going to win?

Nigel: I think it's going to be very close. Too close to be able to decide. It could go anywhere. Could you imagine, it was only six people that decided who government was last time. Six votes. So that's how close it is. So it could probably come down to the same thing. I know for a fact that the NDC, the Opposition supporters, remain Opposition supporters. I think it's up to the government now whether their supporters remain, or they gained more, or they lost. I think that's what's going to determine. But I know for a fact that the NDC supporters stayed. Because I was doing the survey. There was a company outside, a Barbadian company came in to do pre-election surveys, and I was one, I was doing some interviews. People were just loyal to their parties. There's not much people I heard say, "Well I used to support NDC five years ago, but now I decide to change." I hardly hear that. So what makes a difference is new voters coming in who were not able to vote before, and so on. I think that's going to make a difference.

Perspectives from Brooklyn

[Note: this section comes from phone interviews conducted while I was in Grenada and Nigel was in Brooklyn.]

Noga: What does a typical weekday look like for you?

Nigel: I do absolutely nothing. It got to the point where I got severely depressed because I'm used to being in school. I'm serious, I got so depressed, there were days that I didn't even see the sunlight because I'm always inside. I mean, some days some friends will say, "Let's go out," whatever, but not everyday, so most times I find myself – a couple weeks ago, when I was studying for the GRE, those were days when I had purpose. I wake up to study and so, and I had a schedule. But when the GRE was done I went back to having nothing to do. It was a nice vacation at first, but now it's starting to get to me. But then, I'll be doing the same thing in Grenada anyway, doing nothing, because I won't be in school either way.

Noga: You don't think you could get a job?

Nigel: Well, when I go back to Grenada I'll try getting a job when I come back, but for now I can't work in the States on a tourist visa.

Noga: Where is this place where your cousin lives? Where are you?

Nigel: Brooklyn.

Noga: And are there a lot of Grenadians around?

Nigel: In this neighborhood, yeah. There's a lot of Grenadians around. Well, yeah, I do get to see a lot of West Indians around, around all of Brooklyn really. It's a very social setting because she's a beautician,

she works at home, see all these West Indians come over all the time. It‘s like being home (laughs)! I‘ll never lose my accent.

Noga: So what is your perception of the Grenadian community in Brooklyn. Is it what you expected?

Nigel: No! It‘s not what I expected. They‘re very Grenadian up here, it‘s almost like they never left home. I expected them to blend more, but then I realized Brooklyn allows for you to maintain your West Indianness, for want of a better word. Like, I was talking to this guy who‘s from Grenada and he‘s telling me, he was in New York since 1981, he must have been a kid, he must have been two years old. And he sounds so Grenadian, such a thick accent, even thicker than mine. I‘m like how is that possible? You been here since 1981? But he‘s around Grenadians in Brooklyn, he lives with Grenadians, it‘s very hard for these West Indians to lose their identity when they come to Brooklyn especially. You could get food, you get breadfruit here, believe it or not, you could get oildown, pea soup.

Noga: So do you eat Grenadian food at home?

Nigel: I eat West Indian food most of the time, whether it‘s Grenadian or Jamaican. I actually prefer it that way.

Noga: Do you do the cooking?

Nigel: I can‘t cook at all, not to save my life. I can only make eggs, so I make my breakfast, but everything else I‘m totally dependent on everybody else around me. But I‘m a very good dish washer so nobody minds (laughs).

Noga: So what are your expenses like? How are you supporting yourself now?

Nigel: To be honest, the only expenses I really have are things that I just *have* to have is a metro card every week, which is twenty-five dollars. Other than that, all my family take care of me, they feed me, somebody might go to the mall and buy me some clothes, everybody‘s taking care of me so I don‘t really feel that burden of money. But if I need money, my cousin she takes care of that. Because she‘s a cousin, but she‘s an adult – she‘s like my parents‘ age. She acts more like an aunt in that kind of way. I feel like I‘m with parents kind of.

Noga: Do you have a lot of other family around?

Nigel: Tons of them.

Noga: Do you see everyone?

Nigel: No, I don‘t. My dad has this really huge family, people he hasn‘t seen in twenty years so it‘s kind of awkward for me to go over and say ―Hi, I‘m— .” But everyone knows that each other exists. But nobody is that really close. Just a few pockets of groups here and there. Everybody is related because my dad has about twenty siblings. Most of them migrate to the U.S. So you have all these little niches everywhere.

Noga: Tell me about some of your positive experiences in New York.
Nigel: Positive experiences. I appreciate being Grenadian more. You go there and you realize all these groups and everybody passionate about themselves. You know, the Guyanese are proud of being a Guyanese. It's a place where you get to actually see it. And New Yorkers are very friendly, you could ask anybody for directions. I didn't expect that from a big city. You can strike up a conversation with somebody on the train or so, you know. In the elevators, they'll say, "Have a good night," stuff like that. It really surprised me. I didn't expect that from here at all.
Noga: When you think about Grenada, how do you feel? How has it changed?
Nigel: I realize now it's a small island. I do. I realize there's a lot more to the world than Grenada, and I feel sorry for people who just can't get out to see. I feel like they're being cheated out of seeing the world, because this is just a small island that's so limited in so many things. But at the same time it made me who I am, and I guess I wouldn't be the kind of person I was if it weren't for this small island. I actually like it a lot more now.
Noga: You do?
Nigel: Yeah I do. I like it more now. I mean, New York could get overwhelming and if you don't have a place like Grenada to go back to, then you know, it could be stressful.
Noga: So the idea at least of being able to return helps the transition?
Nigel: Yes. Yeah. But not return forever though. Just return to breeze off.
Noga: So when you tell Americans you're from Grenada, what are their reactions?
Nigel: Well, the white Americans would be like, either they say, "Oh, that's the place that got bombed up," or whatever, or they think it's in Spain. Like Granada, but I'm like, "No, it's not Granada, it's Grenada." But, you know, for the most part, most people know about Grenada, and I'm very surprised at that.
Noga: Are you?
Nigel: Yes. I didn't think such a tiny island – people know about Grenada. Partly because there are so many Grenadians in Brooklyn anyway, or in New York anyway, they may have come across someone from Grenada.

Noga: Are Americans different from what you expected?
Nigel: Yes, they're different. They are *real* people. They have financial problems, they wear the same clothes, they watch the same shows, they have the same issues in their house, they're just normal people with a different accent.

Noga: And you didn‘t expect that?
Nigel: No, I was very surprised. Especially from the black community, I realized that they live just like we live in Grenada, except, you know, they probably would have a different lifestyle in terms of money, and so on, but you know, we all same people, you know, same struggles. It‘s more about *class* and money rather than nationality. Culture is very similar.
Noga: Do you think that America has classes like Grenada has classes? Is it the same or is it different somehow?
Nigel: Well there‘s a lot more layers to the American class system. Whereas in Grenada you have just poor, not-so-poor/getting by, middle class, and rich, but in the U.S. you have the whole spectrum.

Noga: Have you had any major experiences that you haven‘t yet told me about because I haven‘t asked?
Nigel: Well, I don‘t know if it‘s safe to say, but I went to – it was very shocking to see how liberal New York is.
Noga: In what sense?
Nigel: In *every* sense. You can have people walking around claiming to be an atheist and nobody look at you funny. You can be gay and kiss your boyfriend or whatever and nobody cares, well, in certain parts. It was really new for me. I was like, ―What the hell is this?!" I was really shocked. People mind their business. In Grenada, everybody‘s business is everybody else‘s, you know what I mean? So I‘m not going to go to Grenada with a green mohawk and ten piercings, everybody‘s going to stare. And in New York, it‘s like, whatever. I was like, wow. To a certain degree, you could just be yourself. Whatever individual you are.
Noga: Do you like it when you see that or does it kind of upset you to see gay people and atheists?
Nigel: It doesn‘t upset me at all. It‘s like, wow, it‘s liberating, even to me, because it‘s like, people can do what they want here. You can be who the heck you want to be.
Noga: There‘s a kind of anonymity that you get in a big city, I guess, that you would never get anywhere here.
Nigel: True. Because you see somebody and there‘s very little chance you‘ll see them again.
Noga: You feel you can really explore anything, do anything, no one will know, and just change your identity the next day if you don‘t like it.
Nigel: (laughing) Yeah, I think that‘s in Manhattan though, not Brooklyn. Too many West Indians.
Noga: (Laughs.)
Nigel: I was walking in Brooklyn one day minding my own business, and this guy walks up to me and says, ―Is X your father?" I almost dropped down. In all the millions of people around us he‘d walk up to

me and ask me if X is my father and he's absolutely right. Isn't that weird? That is so strange. I was like, this is really creepy. He just walked up to me in this store, somewhere on Flatbush Avenue in a store and he asked me if this guy is my dad. I'm like, "Yeah, but do I know you?" He's like "Yeah, but you must have been really small." I'm like, "How do you remember me anyway?" It's odd.

And the other day I went to get my hair done, because I'm starting dreadlocks, right. So I went to get my hair done by this hairdresser. And there's this really random hairdresser, I decide my hair needs to be done so I'm going to go into the hairdresser. So I went there and I was waiting my turn, so I decide to have a little conversation with the hairdresser while I'm waiting. And it turned out I picked up on her Grenadian accent, so I asked her, "You're from Grenada?" She's like, "Yes." So one thing led to another, she told me where she was from in Grenada. It happened to be exactly where my dad is from. So I keep pressing, like, "Who do you know there?" And as she's telling me who she knows, it turns out that my little brother is her cousin. In the middle of New York you go into a hair dressing salon, and you find somebody who's that close to you. Isn't that weird? That is weird. She was living a few blocks from me anyway. It's a small world, no matter where you go. Even if it's Tokyo, it's a very small world. It was good in the end because she gave me like ten dollars off! (Laughs.)

Back in Grenada

Noga: So does everything feel the same back in [your village] to you?
Nigel: Yeah. I've never liked it there, you know.
Noga: Yeah, I remember you saying that. It's very rural.
Nigel: Very rural. And not just rural in appearance but the people are so rural. They are so backward, for lack of a better word. They're just so – I'm not a very conservative person. I'm very well traveled, I'm very worldly. A lot of them are so – I just can't take it.
Noga: How does it manifest?
Nigel: The way they talk about certain issues.
Noga: Like?
Nigel: Like, sexuality. It's just so, they're just so – they band together in their ruralness (laughs). I just feel like I don't fit in.
Noga: More so now that you've been away?
Nigel: More so now.
Noga: But was it like that before?
Nigel: It was like that before, I just remember being very annoyed. But now I can just see it for what it is. It's a small community. You know, these people are, they are what they are. I just don't feel like I fit in. But it's easier living there than paying rent here in Grand Anse.

Noga: What‘s your parents‘ house like?
Nigel: It‘s small, it‘s two bedrooms. Well, it‘s just my parents and me. My brother comes over every now and then. So it‘s not that bad. I just got internet connection and so I‘m trying my best to stay with the world and not get cast aside in the back of [my village]. So I just got internet today, so hopefully I feel a little bit more comfortable.
Noga: Do you know how much your family spends on food?
Nigel: No. Because they don‘t budget, they just spend. I will average probably four, not even 400, 300 dollars a month. Because it‘s just my mother and father, and most of the time they cook natural stuff like bananas and tubers and so on.
Noga: So you grow stuff?
Nigel: Yeah they do. Yeah, about 200 dollars, 300 dollars a month. But like I said, they don‘t sit down and plan so you can never tell. If something runs out, ―Oh go to the shop and grab this.” That‘s how they do it. I‘m trying to have them change that though. They‘re just so old in their ways (laughs) …
Noga: So you have land up there?
Nigel: They‘re renting. It‘s their own house, but they‘re renting the land. Sometimes it happens like that in Grenada where you lease the land for ten, fifteen years.
Noga: From whom?
Nigel: Some neighbor down the road. The good thing is it‘s a wooden house. They pay like 300EC dollars [US$110] a year for the lease, so it‘s no big deal. It used to be 100EC every year. Because land, I think in Grenada, I could be wrong, land is leased or rented, and I don‘t think it‘s for profit. It‘s just a legal thing. When someone gives you money for it, because if someone is living on a piece of land for too long, they can make claim to the land as theirs. So you have to give something.
Noga: So there is enough land that they can grow stuff?
Nigel: Yes, flower garden, and a place with corn and whatever it is. And like about five or six dogs.
Noga: Do you work on the land, do you help?
Nigel: Nope.
Noga: Do you have any household responsibilities?
Nigel: I‘m pretty much a very spoiled kid (laughs). But I probably would do the dishes. Aw, I feel so bad.
Noga: So any financial contribution? I mean, if you worked, do you –
Nigel: Oh, I pay my own internet bill now. I probably would help out.
Noga: It sounds like monthly expenses are pretty low.
Nigel: All they have is a cable bill, telephone, and the internet now. And they pay for their land every year. And they have to eat, so. That‘s it.
Noga: Do you get around by bus?
Nigel: Yeah. We all do. Unfortunately. Two-fifty. Ouch.

Noga: So what do you think are key values your parents tried to instill in you, if you had to choose two or three.

Nigel: I think it's very important to them that I probably get an education and get a good job. Not live like them. I think that's most. My parents not that conservative to sit down and say, "Oh, no sex before marriage," and all this. They just want me to work hard in school and be able to have a good job and a good roof over my head.

Noga: Now that you've been to New York, and you see what the culture there is like, particularly among black Americans, do you recognize things more specifically here that you didn't know were North American influence, or did you always perceive the North American influence here?

Nigel: I can't sit down and pinpoint exactly what it is, I just remember saying to myself, "Wow, these people live just the same way." They have to struggle to pay their bills. Especially the West Indians. I go up there and my cousin spank her kids so bad, I say that has to be Grenada. I would not find a white woman beating her child like that. And the child doesn't run to call the police. She actually grew up with that Grenadian mentality that she has to be spanked. There's a lot that is very similar. The environment physically is different, but you know, people are becoming – I can't pinpoint what it is exactly. I just remember feeling okay, it's not *that* different.

Noga: You're a big fan of New York. So do you think that the North American influence here is a good thing?

Nigel: Well, *of course* I love New York and I love North America. Yes, it is. I like it. Because people are getting more and more aware, people are getting more tolerant of different cultures and so on. It's good to have that nice, West Indian uniqueness about you, but we're living in a global environment, and that kind of exposure is good in most ways for Grenadians.

Noga: Do you see any down sides?

Nigel: People say crime and everything, but there's always been crime. I don't think North America has anything to do with it. When you commit a crime it's not because you see it on TV but you have an issue, yourself.

Noga: What about gangs?

Nigel: Oh. Oh. Well. Yeah. They obviously got it from somewhere. The way the gangs are organized, they got it from the Bronx. The Bloods, whatever it is they have. So yeah, these are the down sides. Also, the fact that, I don't like couch potatoes, I don't like people who watch TV too much, that side of it is a little bit. Because when you go to New York, you realize that's what you do. Unless you're down there, you have a couple of friends on the block, but like my cousins, they just at home. And they online and they in front of a television.

We live on like the seventh floor on a block that has big buildings. Nobody's really outside playing. You can't, because it's like a four lane street. So that part of it we have here.

Noga: How do you see the influence of hip hop culture, rap culture, here?

Nigel: Oh yeah, they love it. But they still love their own music. They just able to appreciate all kinds. So they're just making use of everything. They love hip hop. But when you see Carnival come around, nobody wants to listen to hip hop anyway. Nobody neglects soca or anything, it's just that they have more options now. But yes, the hip hop culture is horrible. You see guys with their pants on their butt, and they trying to act all tough and I hate hip hop. So I can tell you, all of that craziness come from hip hop and those videos.

Nigel: Grenadians are very easily influenced. Very. It's horrible. Not just in New York, but you see Jamaican culture, oh Lord. Like the other day I went to a party, and the DJ was – I know he's Grenadian. He's never been to Jamaica, even if he has, probably go for a little vacation. And he's like total Jamaican accent (imitates). And even some of the artistes, when they go sing soca they want to talk like (imitates) talkin' Jamaican. That's so pathetic. I mean, as Grenadians, when I go to New York, they're the ones, if you can't really place a person, tell it said they're from Grenada. You know, like, you can see somebody and say that's a Trini. The way that person talk, behave, the cockiness, whatever. That's a Trini. Everybody has this thing that identifies them. Not the Grenadians. The Grenadians are so neutral, they just blend into every group.

Noga: Really? You couldn't recognize one?

Nigel: Unless they have a big Grenadian flag on their car, that's it. Other than that, it's like, "I can't place that accent. Are you from Grenada?" Stuff like that. Grenadians lose their accents so quickly. Barbadians are known for always sounding Barbadian.

Noga: I thought last time you told me you were surprised at how Grenadian Grenadians up there were?

Nigel: The way they live, right. Like, for example, you see Grenadians around each other, yeah. Yeah. But when you place them in a group, they just want to identify. Like Grenadians don't value what they have. They don't even know there is a Grenadian accent.

Noga: Do you think it's always been that way?

Nigel: Well, I'm just starting to experience it, but maybe. I mean, the Grenadians go to New York and they come back and they try to sound different. I like how I sound. I don't ever want to sound like a black American. They just sound so horrible. That's one thing I don't like – they're very easy to be influenced. Even here.

Noga: In terms of Grenadian citizenship, who do you think, who are Grenadians? People who are born here? Can anyone be a Grenadian?

Nigel: Well, you can be a naturalized Grenadian. You can be living here for a certain number of years, it's not that hard. It's not like trying to get a green card. If your parents are born here, then you can instantly become a Grenadian citizen.

Noga: Would you regard people, children of expats, let's say, British people who have kids here, would you think of those people as Grenadian?

Nigel: No. I mean, they're just born here. Like my cousins in New York, they're born in New York but they're Grenadians. And they say they're Grenadians.

Noga: They do?

Nigel: Yes, they do! They sound American, but I mean, all they know, they know all about breadfruit, they know about oildown, they know about getting spanked. I mean, they're Grenadian. So it's not just about where you're born but it's where your roots and your culture and your history lies. And if your parents and your grandparents and your great-grandparents from Grenada, you're just born in New York. So what? You're Grenadian. That's how I think of it. So you come from London and you have a baby here –

Noga: What would it take for that baby to be Grenadian? Would it be possible, at any point in their life –

Nigel: I mean legally –

Noga: Not legally, for *you* to think of them as Grenadian.

Nigel: Yeah. It is possible. You have to be around us, you have to talk like us, you have to be able to identify – like I have a friend, he's Guyanese. But I'm never going to call him a Guyanese. He's been here since he was two, and all he knows is Grenada. And he can identify with Grenadians. As long as you can identify, and you know the culture, you're part of it and you don't stand out too much, yeah. I mean, you know what is yours. If it walks like a duck and it quacks like a duck, it's a duck (laughs). You almost Grenadian!

Coming Out

[Note: This interview was conducted in a public setting, hence the careful choice of words and body language noted in parentheses.]

Noga: So do you feel like being in New York has changed you in any way?

Nigel: No. No. Because remember, I always told you I just felt like I would like it, I felt like this is what – so no. It's just that it made me realize that yes, I am right when I said Grenada is too small for me, I'm a city guy. But it hasn't changed me because I've always had the same ideas. I'm just more comfortable with the fact that okay, there's other people like me and so on.

Noga: Were you always more liberal in your ideas and more open to differences? I mean, you were using the example before in your village of people being very conservative about things like sexuality. Did being in New York make you more comfortable with those kinds of differences?

Nigel: Of course! You're forced to be comfortable with it. Could you imagine being on the train and seeing people with a hundred piercings, I mean, you can't do anything about it, and eventually it just becomes part of everyday life. So yeah. But I've always been a very liberal person, I've never really cared what anybody else looks like or does.

Noga: Why do you think the Caribbean is such a homophobic place?

Nigel: Church. Because what else could it be? It's church. And also, usually people, they've never been exposed to it because all the homosexuals are closeted so it's not something they're used to. So when you're not used to something you obviously don't understand it, obviously you fear it.

Noga: Do you think it's more of an issue now than it was before?

Nigel: Yes, it is.

Noga: I'm hearing a lot about it. Do you have any theory why?

Nigel: I know why. Because you have one or two people in Grenada who probably will travel, like myself, and get more comfortable with certain things. And when we come back here it's hard for them to go back to being in that closet because they're so used – and so you start seeing the gays surfacing. So people start seeing, you know. Because of course we're not just starting to have gays in Grenada. Of course not. Gays have been around for years. It's just that now for some reason they're surfacing, and my theory is that people are more well-traveled. You have access to cable, the internet, and the gays are getting more comfortable in a gay community, they have it here. So it's hard to keep that undercover when it's becoming active. You have an active support system.

Noga: Do you know people who are out in Grenada?

Nigel: Ummm, yeah I do (laughs). Yeah. One or two. And you want to be their friend, but it's hard because when you talk to them everybody will think okay, you're gay too.

Noga: Oprah had a show on being gay around the world the other day, and they had a woman on from Jamaica.

Nigel: I saw, she's a poet from Brooklyn, was raped in Jamaica.

Noga: Yes. And you know Claude Douglas? He just wrote a book called *Crawling out of the Closet*.

Nigel: I need that book.

Noga: He's selling it. You have to find him. I haven't seen it in stores yet.

Nigel: Yeah, it's an issue now. Because you have one or two people who just don't care anymore.

Noga: Do you think it's unsafe for the people who came out?

Nigel: No. Grenadians aren't violent toward gays. It has never been my experience. But if you're careful, it's fine. What I've noticed is that when you're trying to be really careful and trying to be very closeted, and you make one or two slip-ups and people start to suspect you, but they know you're not out and they know that you're denying out, they're going to give you hell. They're going to call you names and this, that, and the other. But the really out people, nobody cares about them. They're out and they're comfortable with themselves. You say "batty boy" – so what? They know they are and they're comfortable. And Grenadians are picking up on that. The gayest man in the whole of Grenada lives on Lagoon Road and he has his business, nobody talks about him or whatever. So that's the mentality. If you're trying to hide it, trying to be somebody else, they try to out you. But if you're already out, they'll move on to the next target. But they're not violent. I only know about one act of violence toward a gay person, and that's because he was probably going out of his way to be too forward. But it's not like Jamaica. The stigma and the taunting is the same everywhere in the Caribbean, except Barbados, but, yeah. I should know, if you catch my drift. Right?

Noga: Right. (Pause – exchange nods of confirmation that we understand each other.) … So you always saw yourself as a city person, and it was confirmed. I find that amazing. Maybe because I'm not a city person myself.

Nigel: See because I knew what the city was because I'm so well-read. And I just knew okay, this is my life, this is what I should be doing, this is where I should be. By the time I was thirteen, fourteen, I'm like, I need to get out of here. Especially now, since this is the Caribbean and they don't really love me for me. I'd rather go somewhere where they know who I am and still love me. Not love me for who you think I am or what I pretend to be. I mean it's hard. Some people want to go back to their country and they want to love their country, but if their country doesn't love them then – it's just like that woman in Jamaica, she really wishes she could live in Jamaica.

Noga: That's what really killed me in the interview, when she started talking about home and she started crying.

Nigel: Because that's her home. Could you imagine not being able to go back to the U.S.?

Noga: Do you think New York, or anyplace else for that matter, will feel like home to you? Or do you think you'll think of yourself as Grenadian wherever you go, and see yourself as a transplant?

Nigel: New York could feel like home. It has already begun to feel like home. I'm able to go out. My family who I live with they know, they're fine. I mean, I have a friend (facial expression cues that he

refers to a boyfriend). Home is where the heart is. I mean that is cliché, but it‘s true.

Life Experiences

Noga: So if you had to think back, tell me some of the major experiences that have made you the kind of person you are today. Major life experiences.

Nigel: Leaving Grenada and seeing that there‘s a world out there. I remember going to Pride in New York in June and I was so shocked. I mean I never knew there were so many gay people in the whole world, and I was like, whoa. A million gay people, just all over, and everybody having a good time and nobody stoning them or gossiping. That was crazy. That just changed me.

I guess probably getting an education. It made me different from the rest of my family. I liked going to school. I think that was one of the best things I ever did.

Noga: Did any of your brothers and sisters go on to university?

Nigel: No.

Noga: So you‘re the only one in your family. Did most of them finish secondary school?

Nigel: No.

Noga: So you really stand out. Were you pushed into school, or was it all self-drive?

Nigel: It was all self. I loved self. I always knew what I wanted to do since I was really young. I always knew. And obviously if you want to be a doctor you have to go to school. And I always knew. Probably since I was six or seven. I was never pushed or anything. Never. It was always me. And I didn‘t have the kind of parents who would say – my parents not that sm—they didn‘t go to school either, so they wouldn‘t be able to sit down and see what I‘m doing right, if I‘m doing my homework, so it was all my responsibility. Because if I didn‘t take school seriously, they weren‘t going to know.

So that‘s the kind of person who I am. My education made me who I am. I‘m very proud of what I‘ve achieved, despite, you know, people want to judge me for whatever they think I am. I‘m just glad I could use that to free myself, because a lot of young guys they have nothing going for them. They have to stay and take the abuse, they have to stay and they have to hide and pretend. And it‘s very stressful because they have nothing they can fall back on. There‘s no hope of them leaving Grenada. I *know* that there‘s something out there for me.

Discussion

Nigel's reflections on his country are a very useful reminder that the clues we often take as signs of strong nationalist sentiment – pride in local culture, love of country, commitment to stay and contribute – are not necessarily reliable indicators. Nigel often pointed out (for my benefit, as well as his, I think) that a need to see the wider world goes beyond love of country, beyond national pride. Sometimes it is just about where you feel comfortable, he said. Nigel was the only participant who emailed me a thank you note after our first meeting: "It was a rare opportunity to express what my country means to me and I thank you for giving it to me." However, as he pointed out toward the end of our final interview, "Some people want to go back to their country and they want to love their country, but if their country doesn't love them, then …".

Nigel is an astute observer of class in Grenada, though interestingly, he never mentions skin color. When he first describes the upper class as "rich," he rephrases and then notes that someone from the really, really poor class would see those people as rich. He also describes the really, really poor class as living in a two bedroom wooden house, with the father working in construction. Later, he reveals that those conditions describe his own family. However, because of his education and the strong support of his extended family, Nigel has his needs met. He is also able to access educational opportunities and travel abroad. He is the only one in his family to go to university, and he sees himself as well-read and worldly. Nevertheless, he never alienates himself from his less educated parents; indeed, he is very close to his mother and never complains about living with them back in Grenada. Rather, it is the rural setting he finds difficult.

Indeed, Nigel is from a very rural area deep in Grenada‘s mountainous interior. It is a striking setting in which to imagine a young boy reading Dickens, dreaming of becoming a doctor, and hoping for an openly gay life in New York.

When I reread the section of transcript, –Coming Out,” it seems as though I am pressing Nigel to be open with me regarding his sexuality. In truth, in spite of earlier clues, I remained embarrassingly obtuse until he became completely forthright. There had been a rising buzz about homophobia in the weeks preceding our last interview in Grenada, and I thought it would be interesting to talk to Nigel about it because of his recent experiences in New York. After the recording was turned off, Nigel assured me that he was comfortable with our conversation remaining on the record, and said he had planned to tell me that day anyway. In retrospect, if I had known Nigel was gay, I would have employed far greater tact in broaching the subject. Fortunately, Nigel and I were on friendly enough terms that he was not put off by what must have seemed rather pointed and persistent questioning on my part. I especially value this particular exchange as a reminder that beneath the placid stream of conversation and black-and-white transcript lies an undercurrent of subtexts, intentions, misinterpretations, and motivated posturings.

When we spoke in 2009, Nigel had successfully filed for legal asylum in the United States and was living with family while looking for work in Brooklyn.

Working the Spice Trade

Anthony

Anthony, age twenty-two, is an employee at a working estate/tourist attraction in the northern parish of St. Patrick. To begin, a few words about the estate itself are in order: Spiceland Estate (a pseudonym) is the longest continuously-operating plantation in Grenada, and houses the only cocoa fermentary on the island. Dating back to the 1600s, the estate's history follows the turbulent twists and turns of the French and English struggle for Grenada; most recently, it was purchased in 1944 by the first family of Indian descent to own an estate in Grenada. Spiceland has about 400 acres and approximately seventy employees. They grow a variety of crops in addition to cocoa and nutmeg, and since 2002, they also function as a tourist site. There are paths through the grounds, a small zoo, a lovely dining area with buffet lunches serving local cuisine, a museum collection (at the time of my fieldwork, not yet open to the public), and tours of the cocoa processing facilities. They also host weddings and parties.

According to an elderly guide, a man who has worked on the estate for forty-nine years and whose children were born on the estate, farmers bring their cocoa crop to Spiceland and sell it for EC$1.25 (approx. US$.50) per pound of wet cocoa. Spiceland then ferments and dries the cocoa, selling it for EC$3.00 to the Cocoa Growers Association, with whom they have a contract. The Association will receive approximately EC$10.00 (approx. US$3.72) per pound of processed cocoa when they sell it to their international buyers. [Note: 150 lb. of wet cocoa becomes about 100 lb. of dry

cocoa.] When the cocoa drying trays are full, visitors can witness the Grenadian employees as they "walk the cocoa" every half-hour, turning it with their feet as they ensure the cocoa dries out evenly under the hot tropical sun. The pungent smell of fermenting cocoa fills the air.

I had the good fortune to meet Anthony in the fermentary one day during a driving rainstorm. The sound of rain on the metal roof was deafening and the tours disbanded, leaving the employees with a moment of free time. Anthony was so enthusiastic about the estate, his new job there, and the area in general, he seemed like the perfect connection for me to learn more about life in the north. Young men from rural areas had proved a particularly challenging demographic for me to access, and I had been curious about this particular region for awhile. It has a distinct reputation in Grenada – the keeper of African-influenced traditions, isolated, rebellious, and proud.

I asked Anthony a few questions and out came a flood of commentary. He told me that "Gairy is king" in these parts – as is Bishop. I told him that after speaking with students at St. George's University, I had started to get the impression that the younger generation did not know much about the Revolution. He laughed and said, "That's 'cuz of where they're from." He spurted out stories about men hiding in the mountains for nine months, ambushes, a nearby bridge accidentally getting blown up and limbs in the trees, Bishop and his cohort sucking mangos and plotting the Revolution, American helicopters sending missiles down on Pearls Airport. He proudly proclaimed that the Revolution started in nearby Mango. He was the first young person I had met who demonstrated this kind of passion for anecdotes about the Revolution. And true to his

word, he later facilitated a meeting between me and a well-known former revolutionary from the area.

Anthony and I met in the estate‘s dining room on a Sunday for a recorded interview. He was exceptionally fluid with his commentary and needed little prompting during the two-and-a-half hours. Anthony‘s stories did not sound rehearsed or dramatized in the way life stories, repeated often enough, can be. Perhaps the interview was a different kind of speech event for him; clearly, he embraced the opportunity wholeheartedly. This is not to say that he was not conscious of the picture he was painting. On the contrary, much of his speech seemed directed toward creating a particular image of himself, especially vis-à-vis his community. Indeed, I never met anyone more engaged with his village, nor heard a more heartfelt account of the ways in which a deep sense of place articulate with personal experience.

Anthony was born in St. Vincent to Grenadian parents. They moved to Grenada when he was four or five, and he and his father first lived together on River Road in St. George‘s. River Road is a location that carries heavy symbolic weight in Grenada – it is the token place cited when indicating a devastatingly impoverished and crime-ridden part of the country. (This is now also the site of the new US$40 million cricket stadium gifted to Grenada by the Chinese.) After about five years, they moved to their current residence in Mango (a pseudonym), where he now also lives with two younger siblings. He completed secondary school in Sauteurs, the capital of the parish, and then went straight to work at Spiceland Estate.

Noga: Can you tell me a little bit about where you live now. Describe your house, describe the area.

Anthony: I live in a nice village, Mango, right? It's kind of peaceful, now, but not always. My house, not too big. It is good enough for me and my dad, my little brother and also my little sister. We're comfie. We don't have everything we need, but we surely got enough. Sufficient. Making ends meet.

Well, to speak about my community on the whole, well, my community is one of, not the largest community in size, but power-worth. People with mind and just education-wise, lot of high people from there. For example, number one, the commissioner is from Mango. Then, you have the officer in charge of public works, he's also from Mango. Then we have teachers, a number of teachers, a number of doctors, even got a couple of lawyers. About two or three. So the community, for education-wise, we have right surroundings.

Noga: Are those people still living here?

Anthony: Yeah, so we have the right surroundings for education-wise, but there's always delinquents (laughs). Now, to say for my community, whether it's safe? If I were to invite people to my community, now, I would not say it's really safe, alright, because of the gang violence and stuff that's going on right now throughout Grenada. My community is highly involved in that.

Noga: Why do you think it's on the rise?

Anthony: For one, the teenagers, most of them have nothing whatsoever to do. I'm telling you I have lots of friends, right, and people kind of judge me, _cuz of the friends that I keep sometimes. _Cuz to people, they might seem like delinquents. But to me, I know my friends, and I know what they're capable of doing and stuff. And on and off, always I'm bugging them, "Get a job, do something positive, don't go the wrong way." But then again, there's always other friends, and I'm not always there with them, because I have a job, they're home. They sit on the road and –

Noga: Did they finish school?

Anthony: Most of them did not. That's why I urge them to get a job, whatever it is. Out in the field. Doesn't matter. As long as you bringing in money. Money's not all, but.

Noga: Do you think there's opportunities? If they wanted a job, could they get one?

Anthony: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Loads of opportunities. Loads. But. The kind of life they're into is the BET life. Black Entertainment Television, that shows the rap videos and hip hop.

Noga: Is that what you call it, the BET life?

Anthony: Yeah, BET life, just call it gang life, right. It's sort of high. _Cuz, these guys, the rapsters wearing their Jordons, the Michael Jordons, whatever clothing, whatever. These guys they want it, they

don‘t work, so they rob. They beat people and take what they want from them.

Noga: Within the community?

Anthony: Within the community. Well, they also go out of the community and do that, but it‘s mostly that they stay in, and whenever there is an activity in my community, people come in, that‘s when they do their stuff. Because, for the past year, normally our community, number *one*, you can say almost number one in Grenada for having events.

Noga: Like what?

Anthony: It‘s a hot spot. Cultural, for one. Because nearby we have a drumming group. We have a number of old folk groups still existing in the neighboring community, there‘s still have a Tambu Bamboo cultural kind of thing.

And throughout the year, there‘s annual stuff, like concerts, cultural things. Like just gone February was a Saraca. And stuff like that. So every year.

Noga: So when outsiders come in for those activities, you don‘t feel they‘re safe anymore?

Anthony: Not any—they‘re not safe. I‘m telling you. We had more than ten, eleven activities, and in each and every one of them, they had to be stopped by the police because of violence. Bad image. Bad image.

Noga: Where is this BET culture coming from? Is it Grenadian, is it New York?

Anthony: It‘s New York. Mainly the big cities in the U.S.

Noga: Have most of the people participating in this lifestyle been to New York?

Anthony: Never. That‘s the thing about it. The majority in these guys, who actually in the gangs, they have never ever been anywhere. I‘m telling you that because the majority of them, they don‘t even have primary school education. I‘m telling you, they left primary school like, a young age.

Noga: It‘s not mandatory? It‘s not enforced.

Anthony: (laughing) Nah nah nah, it‘s not enforced. Here in Grenada, life is kinda hard. So for a poor family, like husband, wife, four, five, six kids, husband, wife doesn‘t have proper education, and they are working out in the field, cannot provide. Out of those four, five kids, they have maybe two boys who are big enough, about eleven, twelve, thirteen, and they‘re not really doing anything constructive in school, like, they‘re slow in learning. Once in awhile they like to just move them from school and put them into the field. Let them work, and stuff like that. But most guys, when you take them from school, they don‘t work. And still they live in the house.

Noga: When you say work in the field, which fields?

Anthony: For example, there‘s the Agricultural Division. What we do here at Spiceland Estate, the cocoa thing, there are jobs. You can go

out in our fields, harvest cocoa pods, and not only that – do vegetables, and a whole bunch of other stuff.

And then for example, many of the farms here in Grenada, many of the farms, many of the fields, many of the estates – the construction _partment. I will not, nah. I'm not too fond of it. One, well, I wouldn't say I *worked* construction, just a part-time job. I worked with this guy, has a company. And would you believe we were being paid, they say forty-five EC [US$17] per day, helper. So we're getting that per day, right? We're supposed to be receiving our salary every Friday. The first week, no money. Second week, no money. Third week, still no money. And then the boss coming round, trying to pretend like, "You're gonna get your money" and *tch*. Just beating around. I waited up to five months. And I *still* did not receive half of my salary. So I left. That's what's going on right around here in Grenada right now in the construction department. Most people saying like, "The young guys, they don't want to work." But it's not that they don't want to work. When you get to work, you working *whole* day, this blazing hot sun, concrete and all these things, and you're not getting paid. That will not motivate you to go back (laughs).

Noga: This is all over the country, all different contractors? It's a problem everywhere?

Anthony: All different contractors. The *only* contractors I never actually heard have that problem are the HUGE companies, the big big companies that are doing huge things here in Grenada, and it's mainly foreigners working with them. But local contractors, they're a no-no for my part. I'd rather work in the fields.

Noga: What other fields are there besides Spiceland?

Anthony: There's the River Antoine Rum Distillery. You can get work there. There's also a nightclub in La Poterie, it's called Moonlight City. There's also a huge farm behind it, it's run by a local guy. He wants guys, but they are not willing. And it's like, "Guys, you're working from seven to twelve, and you're getting approximately forty EC [US$15] per day. Seven to twelve. Not even the whole day. While some people working 8-4 and getting thirty, thirty-five dollars." So, it's kinda hard. Kinda hard.

Noga: How much do you get paid working here?

Anthony: Not enough. I'm telling you, surely, not enough. Not nearly enough.

Noga: What hours do you work?

Anthony: I work nine to five. I'm telling you, for the work we're doing right now, to them, it may be simple _cuz it seems like we're just talking, but they don't know the effort we have to put. I mean, you can have groups coming in here, ten, twelve, thirteen persons, and not even *interested* in whatever you have to say. And it's like your duty,

for me, I don‘t feel comfortable when I‘m doing my job giving tours, and you‘re not interacting with me. *Nah*. It‘s like I‘m not sending the right vibe, so you‘re not connecting, so which means I‘m not doing my job. So I like to involve people. And it‘s kind of hard because sometimes there are these people, ahhhh, they hard to crack. My God, no (laughs).

Noga: Foreigners?

Anthony: Yeah, foreigners. You‘re just like (sighs with frustration). But then again, I have to do it, ‗ɑz I have to pay my cable bill, and my electricity bill, and my dad pays the water and provides groceries and stuff. So I have to keep occupied. But what they‘re giving me here, if I had to live on that (laughs). In about three years time, two years, I‘m going to starve. Not enough.

Noga: Is it on par with construction wages?

Anthony: Well yeah. Well, less. It‘s less. I‘m serious. No lies. It‘s like sometimes, I just want to quit. You know why I want to quit? Because what they‘re paying us, it‘s not even – sometimes we get tips, right? And the tips, if you add it up for a month, it‘s more than what we‘re getting paid.

And it‘s just stressful. Because sometimes the working conditions are not good. I mean *no* disrespect to *anyone*, I don‘t hope *any*one feels *any*way, but in our department down there, where we work, in the boucan, that is basically the fermentation house, right? Now we have some people working there, no disrespect again, they‘re not educated. So that interferes with our work, *intervenes* with our work. When we‘re out on tours, you have people in there, foreigners, we touring them, and then you have workers there, we standing right here with the foreigners, and they cussing one another right here. And then, this is a business, right? This is not just a tourist attraction, that‘s what I think sometimes. And we‘re there. The utensils that are used, certain times they insert things like – fermentation boxes, you gonna store some tires, some old rims. I mean, you cannot do that! Because people are passing and then what you hear us saying, it looks different. Then when you speak about this, it‘s like, ―Oh, that is you guys‘ department, you have get this cleaned.‖ So they want us to clean, do a whole bunch of other stuff, plus tour, for what they paying us.

Noga: Do they give you lunch every day?

Anthony: You have to buy your lunch (laughs). They say staff is discounted, but like another thing is, we‘re different departments. The restaurant is up here, we are down there. So like, it‘s two separate people. Whenever we come up to get our stuff, there‘s a discount for us, but still, we are not treated equally. Because we pay less money for our lunch, and the amount of food we receive, even a four- or five-year-old will be whining after that. Will be complaining surely, alright, for men like us and what we do.

Noga: So how much is a lunch for you?
Anthony: Now, me and other tour guides, we normally pay twenty bucks.
Noga: Oh, that's still a lot. [Note: visitors pay a fixed price of EC$40, or US$15.]
Anthony: Mm-hmm.
Noga: So if you're making 40 a day or so, that's half of your salary?
Anthony: Good. Right?
Noga: So you live with two siblings and your dad? And your siblings are in school?
Anthony: My sister is in school, but that's college-level. She's eighteen, seventeen. Then I have a little brother who is not in school. He *left* school (lowers voice), on his own, at fifteen, sixteen.
Noga: Why?
Anthony: B-E-T (emphatic). I'm his big brother, right, I may not have much, but whatever I got, going to buy a pair of shoe, I'm gonna still say alright, I'm gonna buy a pair of shoe for him. And I know BET, I know what they like. What they want, it costs like over four and five hundred EC [US$150-190], for shoes and stuff like that. That's what they like. And over a period of time, I've been buying my little brother, my sister, and me, clothing, shoes, everything.
Noga: But how can you afford to?
Anthony: Well, with my tips, working hard, doing some other work, like normally I burn CDs and stuff, and sell, and sometimes I burn DVDs, yeah, yeah. So. Like with me, in my community, as I said, it's a really high-class one, and I don't really want to see my little brother and my little sister like, I don't want to see people treat them without respect, like they got no owner, and they have nothing, and right. So I don't mind not spending on me, and spending on them. Small problems.
Noga: So the way you look brings respect in your community?
Anthony: Much respect. Sometimes I even get tired, because it's like, I go down to court to play basketball, and from the time I leave my home, that's over by the gas station, walking across, smallest kid, three, two, whatever, they gonna call me. Up to the oldest person. They gonna call me, because, everybody's like AJ, AJ, AJ, AJ. If you want CDs burned, check AJ, AJ [calling him by his nickname].

And I know how it is with us, right. I got a computer, right. Most people, they don't really know about computers, right, because they're not really *advanced*. So they come to me, and it's like, let me give you twenty bucks to burn a CD for me. And I'm gonna look at them, eh, and – I cannot really take the money. Why I cannot take the money? One, it's like, a blank CD is one dollar. And, I mean, it won't take me long to burn a CD, about five – pull up the tunes, let it burn, about ten minutes. It's no biggy. Just because they don't know, because they actually think burning a CD is more complicated than

that. It's like, aww, dawg, I'm just going to burn you a CD, it's no problem, hold your money. And that's how I do it for *most* people. So that's how *most* people know me. If I'm out on the street, you want two dollars, you want a dollar, you could have the last five, last five, I'm gonna give 'em half, but it has to be to do something constructive though. Yeah, I'm not just going to give you my money, and just give you – nah. I gotta know what vibe you're on. If you're positive, then I'm gonna link you up, no problem, no problem.

But it's tough, it's tough. Living. In Grenada now, I used to be paying what, thirty cents per egg. This is the last time I went, I normally do not make groceries whatsoever, I picked up three eggs, big block of cheese, and some other stuff. And I went to the cashier, and when I *saw* what my groceries came up to, I said, "You've got to be mistaken." And she was telling me, "No, no no." She was showing me the whole list. And one egg now is one-twenty-five EC [US$.50]. For a single egg. If you have a family of three, even a family of two and you're not really employed, in a nice institute, it could be trouble for you. Most kids nowadays do not eat green figs, and the natural vegetables, bluggos and breadfruits. That's out fashion, that's out of style. Now what we want is what's cooking up there (gestures to buffet). I'm not going to lie, I don't like figs, I don't like these things, too.

Noga: … Does your family have land? Do you grow things?

Anthony: We don't grow things to sell, like surplus. All we do is subsistent. Normally, my dad grows cabbage and lettuce, and always we got seasonings. All the seasonings. But only about twice, my dad grew stuff and actually sold it. He did great, 'cuz he got a contract with a restaurant in Grenville. We supplied them for a couple months, but he just said that it was kind of strainful. Because of the whole water situation, you have to pay, and, you know, water is high in Grenada. My God, water, electricity, yeah, a lot of money. You gotta water crops. By watering crops you're making money, but still, you're wasting water, have to pay.

Noga: So what does your father do?

Anthony: My father does maintenance at a resort. He's been there a long time, three, four years now. Yeah, so that's why, we've been a little bit *bright*, because he has a permanent job. Before, when he used to be doing construction and all these things, that's what we used to be hearing, *maaan*. I'm telling you. I can remember, back in primary school. When we came from St. Vincent, we left St. George and we came up to Mango, it was mainly me and my dad. We lived together for about three years, both of us alone. I'm telling you, if I was going to do anything foolish, I would have done it already. Nah, it was tough. I'm going to school, right, no books, no pen, no bag. One exercise, like this, a pencil. Now I'm wearing some nice sneakers, but

back then I was wearing some slippers. I was going all the way from home, to school, like that. I always used to be positioned in the first five, from since primary school. I was good in my studies, good in my work. No problems. But it used to be hard for me. Sometimes looking at the other kids, sports, school trips, fairs, dinners, all these things. It was not like I was not allowed to go, but I had nothing to go. I was just home. And again, everyone had electricity back then, but I didn‘t have any. I didn‘t have TV, phone, nothing. Mmm. That used to dig me. That used to dig me. I used to go to school, come home for lunch sometime, coming home knowing that there is no lunch home. But still coming home. Ahh. When I think about these days.

Noga: Hard times.

Anthony: I made it, I made it a little bit. Going home from twelve to one, just home.

Noga: Did you walk to school?

Anthony: Yeah. Not that long, but it‘s a little walk. When I went to secondary school it was a little different. We used to be getting like five, six EC [US$2] per day, right, to go to school at that time, buses were like a dollar per child. And I paid a dollar up, a dollar down, and I had four dollars. So in order to make it through the day, I had to skip the first break. _Cuzthe first break was at ten-thirty. But I couldn‘t purchase anything then. Because if I did, when it was twelve, I could not get lunch. So I had to sit down and just skip that. And then I bought lunch, whatever the money could buy. It was tough.

Noga: Where were your siblings?

Anthony: They were with my mom. She was in Sauteurs, by her mom. They were all up there and then, I don‘t know what happened, we got a piece of land from our grandmother … There was already a house there, but it was kind of old and needed some repair. But we stayed in it. It was old, but what can you do. We didn‘t have any money. And we lived there for a year as well. Until I went to secondary school and things started to change a little bit. We moved a little bit lower down, in front, built the next house, and we‘re just there from ever since. Right now things looking up, a little bit.

Noga: What would you add to your house? What is it that you think your house doesn‘t have that you would like?

Anthony: Hmm. I love so much things (laughs). Really, we‘re currently rebuilding again, some expansion, but it‘s not huge. It‘s board, and part of it wall [concrete] … We‘re currently starting up, the plans and things are already laid out. Work will be underway shortly. We also have family overseas. Well, so to say. Well, they are our family. Because it doesn‘t seem like – we‘ve got a brother who‘s in America. He‘s in New York.

Noga: An older brother?

Anthony: Yeah, a bigger brother, but you wouldn‘t know that.

Noga: You don‘t know him?
Anthony: No. And I don‘t want to know him.
Noga: Why?
Anthony: Not nice. I mean, they been over there long enough, they‘re permanent, legal. They come and go back, doesn‘t bother me, I don‘t speak to them –
Noga: Wait, them? It‘s your brother and who else?
Anthony: Bigger brother and bigger sister, but by different mom. Yeah, they‘re up there and I don‘t bother with them. Whenever they come to Grenada, here, here is what, five US, or ten US. I know money, I‘m not saying, I appreciate it. But I know money, I‘m not stupid. Don‘t come present me with that and feel you can buy me over with that. When you‘re up there and we‘re here, we‘re struggling, right. You‘re not even finding out, not even calling to say, well, ―You guys have this, that?‖ Nah. So I‘m not their *fans*.
Noga: Do you know what they do in the States?
Anthony: Well, my brother does construction, he‘s been doing it for a very long time. From since the time he got up there. He‘s been there a long time. Normally he comes, he comes, he comes every time for Carnival, get his rentals, his buddies, they‘re drinking things like Alize, Hypnotic, the big boys drinks. I just look at all of them and say, if I could give up that, to spend on my little brother and sister. I guess we‘re different (laughs).
Noga: What about your mom?
Anthony: Me and my mom, we‘re good. We‘re good, we‘re good. Despite that she and my dad are not together, but now we‘re good. Because, although she didn‘t used to be with us, but when I was going to secondary school, she used to supply me with money, whatever she had. She always liked me. I‘m the bright one, so.
Noga: So your sister is at MacDonald College?
Anthony: No, she‘s at T.A. Marryshow Community College, but that‘s the branch up at Sauteurs, multi-purpose.
Noga: What‘s she studying?
Anthony: Well, she says she‘s doing some business stuff. I try to help out sometimes, but she doesn‘t want me to intervene _cuz she has some friends that also help out with her work and stuff like that.
Noga: Why didn‘t you go to TAMCC?
Anthony: First off, you could say the money. The money was not there. All I really wanted to be in life, in the beginning, was just somebody kind of important. And I‘m not saying that I lost the chance, but, I‘m going to be somebody important in a different department now. The department I wanted to be, was like, medical. And, mmm, because of how things went with me in the past, yeah, a lot of chances got ruined and blown away and stuff like that. So right now I‘m currently thinking about the police. Mainly the police. It‘s a good source of

income, and also the crime rate down here is not that high. My life is not really at risk. I'm thinking about it.

Noga: Do you ever feel unsafe in your community?

Anthony: Well, to me, I don't feel unsafe for myself, because I know what my community is about. I'm there. But there are times when I overhear people speaking, visitors, and they come into Mango, talking to their friend, "Tch, guy, I don't really trust here, I don't want to stay here, let's make a turn, let's move." You understand? And if them guys come around, I want to know, well, who guys they talking about? But not knowing it's the same guys in Mango, who in gang, robbing people. Well, some of them, we *were* friends. Yeah, we *were* friends. That was before, I didn't know that. But when I found out, just have to hold my ground, keep my distance, 'cuz I cannot get involved in that. I got things to *do*, that is not for me. So some of them, they kept me enemy, they even tried to disrespect me. When I say disrespect me, like when they see me passing, they won't say something. It doesn't really put me out. It's not true. It doesn't bother me. They can just spit their words, say what they want to say, I don't get bothered. I don't like to fight. I don't even want to think about fighting. Because, to be honest, whenever that rage enters me, I don't want to stop. And don't feel because you said something to me and did not hit me, I'm not going to hit you. I *will*. So that's why I avoid it. So for now, I kind of have a strain on my anger. It takes a lot to anger me. A lot. A lot.

Because, we haven't met up in a few encounters *besides* that, like, where, I normally play music, right? Birthday parties, anything, people get me to play music. And I was playing this music once in town, there's a disco, it was a birthday party. And a couple of the guys come in there, and they were in their gang and stuff like that, and that was a birthday party. So we said to them well, alright, they came inside already, but this is a birthday party and you're supposed to have an invite. But you're in here already, so just staying, 'cuz we're trying to avoid things. And they came in there, started to break bottles, wanted to fight with girls, all kind of thing, so we ended up in a little confrontation. A little fight, and the police had to come. I ended up where I actually *hit* someone. The reason why I hit him is because they were on my friend, about five, six of them. When I tell you *on* my friend, he was on the ground and they were hitting him with bottles, stamping him, big pieces of board, all kind of stuff. So I, I don't know, I shocked, I panicked, grabbed some bottles, and just started to pound at them. So I bust one head. And when the police came, I said it just how it was. I wasn't touched. And to make everything clear, I haven't got a police record, never been to a police station for any questioning or anything whatsoever. Never. Clean, clean sheet. My rep is good.

I like to be around people who I can learn things from. That's how I came up on some of the history of the Revolution. _Cuzthe sides that I heard from, I'm telling you, these are the sides to hear from. Because these guys were actually *in it*, they were *there*. And they knew everything. One guy's right here, as I told you last time, [names deleted]. The *main* guys behind the whole plotting of the Revolution, these guys they were masterminds, they call them. Masterminds.

Noga: And so they've told you?

Anthony: Yeah yeah yeah. We – well, not we. *I've* heard it from their mouth. Because we actually, when we normally, from basketball on the court, we finish around seven p.m., then we chill out on the road, and normally we meet the same guys, and we just be like, [shifts to heavy dialect – first phrase incomprehensible] –And, how they feel the Revolution time? Back in the Revolution I used to beat up people" (laughs). And then they will start up *every*, every, everything. So we just jooking them, because we want the history, but we don't know how to ask them (laughs). _Cuzwhen you get them going, wow, they go.

There's this one guy, [name deleted], he was a soldier, and he was telling us during the Revolution, after the bombing down where the stadium is there now, where a couple people got killed, what happened after that bombing, they blamed them for the bombing. They were the ones that got the blame, but it was not them. So he said what happened is that soon after that, they got the message that the guys were coming up for them. Because they said the bomb was placed. So what happened all up here, they went up in the bushes hiding, up in Mt. Rich. But Mt. Rich and Mango guys were feuding, heavy. So Mango guys left Mango, head for the hills up Mt. Rich side. But they were feuding, so they could not really entered. So the armed guys, the army, took them, brought them to Pearls, the old airport where the station was, they took about eighteen, nineteen of the Mango guys on a boat (laughs). And then there's this rock in Grenville, an island, that's where they brought them. And the kinda things they did to them was like, their testicles? Some guys, they cut it, open, and *add* salt and pepper to that. You hear about this?

Noga: I heard about that.

Anthony: And, do you know where this guy currently resides? Mango. I've been with this guy, normally, I'm with him, he's sitting here I'm sitting here. He's an older man. Yeah, we just talk. He showed us all that. They had them in a jail at Richmond Hill, they say that that was the worst treatment ever. For example, they had a plan to run away from the prison.

Noga: This was the People's Revolutionary Army that went after them? So we're talking somewhere between '79 and '83?

Anthony: Somewhere between there, right. They said that while they were in prison, that they tried to escape, and there were a couple guys that got harsh treatment, that were placed in dark cells. One, [name deleted], he was placed in a cell for almost a month without any light. For years after, his eyes were always down like this squinting, had trouble seeing. He said he was in there for almost a *month*. And they tied their food with strings and dropped it down to them. They eat their food from strings. Sometimes their hands were tied behind their back and they had to eat like that.

Noga: But these were people who helped also plot the Revolution to begin with?

Anthony: These were guys with Maurice Bishop.

Noga: So why was the PRA persecuting them?

Anthony: Well, two sides, right. Because what happened, right, all of them were on one side, but in and between everything, they went against each other. They divided up.

Noga: As things started to deteriorate.

Anthony: Yeah, they divided up. So mainly Mango stayed for theyself, because Mango felt that they had enough ammunition and everything to do everything on their own. So Mango guys, they were not into the army. But they were with Maurice still. I was looking for this book to give to you, but I haven‘t found it as yet – but when I do, surely I‘m going to give it to you. It‘s a book about the Revolution.

Noga: Which one?

Anthony: It‘s just a small one. What‘s the name? I had it a long time ago and I was looking for it this morning. I just forgot the name, but that‘s where I actually read, and I saw so many things. If you actually got onto this book, it‘s gonna be good. It tells you about Maurice Bishop, also about when he came to Mango, also about this great singer, Peter Tosh. He‘s from Jamaica, a reggae star. A big star. He used to be with Bob Marley. So he and Bishop, and the guy down there, [name deleted], all of them, and the Mango guys, they were in Mango, in this place there right where I live. They spent the majority of their time there. That‘s where they used to chill out.

Noga: Did your father know them?

Anthony: Yeah, my father knew them. _Cuzmy father always boast (laughs), when I tell him, well, you know the song Star? You been with this man and them. The kinda things they did together you won‘t believe. Because they were like, Rasta men, some of them. And you know what Rasta men do (laughs).

Noga: … So what you know about the Revolution, you read a book, and the rest you heard from people talking –

Anthony: That were actually in it. Actually in it.

Noga: Have you heard about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that started in 2002?

Anthony: Well, no, not really, no.
Noga: Do you follow politics?
Anthony: I'm not really into politics, but you have to follow them around ‗cuz I'm living in the country, they're running it, I want to know, I want to make sure everything is good.
Noga: How do you follow it? What are your sources?
Anthony: My sources? … I look at lots of [television] programs pertaining to that, like ―Beyond the Headlines." ‗Cuz I want to learn a little bit more, know what's going on in my country. I don't want to be left behind.
Noga: Are you going to vote?
Anthony: (Drums on table.) Mmmmm, I'm not sure. I'm, I'm I'm. Alright. Like this. I'm not into NNP, I'm not into NDC, I'm not into no other political party whatsoever. What I want is just someone (laughs), right, that can, well not to say provide, well *provide*, right. But just, give us a little. Because for example, my community, sporting-wise, the facilities, arrr (sound of distress). It's a *shame*. It really is a shame. You know why? Heard of Alleyne Francique? The 400 meter?
Noga: Oh, yes I have!
Anthony: (Laughs.) He came out also from our parish. And this guy, the only thing they did when he went to the Olympics was put up a poster, a signing board, in our community. I mean, Mango always producing some of the top athletes in Grenada. I'm telling you, the next cricket player they're checking out to represent West Indies from Grenada is Dennis George, from right here. And we don't even have a playing field. We have a basketball court, which is controversial, and that's why a lot a lot a lot of the guys in Mango are into gangs right now. Because the majority of them, they love basketball, they prefer to play basketball to cricket or football. But our basketball court, there is a problem. It is on the Roman Catholic Church grounds. We respect them, they do not respect us. Alright? Example. Whenever there is a ceremony at the Church, we know that it will not be respectable to go and play basketball on the court, we will disturb them, we don't do that. We play basketball mainly in the eveningtime, when we come from work. But for example, we wanted to organize a sort of 4-on-4, 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Simple. We don't even want a DJ, so will not be disturbing the peace. Just a little bar, no big set of alcohol or anything like that, just a little refreshment bar so who come to support they can purchase something there. And that will contribute to our club. We have to go through a whole set of drama, everything is proceedings. We have to write a letter to the Church Council three weeks before the function. Even though it is a one day function we give it to them. The Board has to meet and discuss and say whether they think we should have it. Finally, they give us the court up until

nine. Originally, our thing was starting like seven p.m. We just had to laugh. What we could possibly accomplish? That‘s the only court. And that‘s what we like.

Noga: How often do you play in a week?

Anthony: Well now, it‘s not about a week anymore. Month. Once a month, once three months. And, it‘s just because of the whole attitude to how they got the court. _Cuzthere was this point in time, when I was just completing secondary school, I used to captain the team since Form Three and up, so I was good. On an afternoon, when you saw the turnout, guys who came out to play ball, wow. I used to be angry, because if you lost you‘d be out a long long long time. Large turnout, number of guys coming to play basketball plus a whole set of girls and other people, right, spectating and everyone is there having fun. Now, if you go to the court now, you‘ll see what I mean. It‘s a dump. It‘s a dump.

Noga: What is there to do then if you don‘t have basketball?

Anthony: Well exactly, we don‘t have a playing field. So what else is there for the kids to do? We don‘t have a library. Nothing like that. What can we do? What can they do? Nothing.

Noga: So people just hang out.

Anthony: Yeah, everything, everything is about chilling in Mango. Mango people develop the kind of mentality, like LA, NY, major cities all over the world. They just want to chill, relax, hang out, take a couple drinks, buy some nice clothes, sit by the street, maybe, you never know, some nice lady passing in a vehicle might just see you, admire you, pick you up, take you back wherever she is from, probably get married and live a happy life, a free life, that‘s the life most of the guys on the block seek. And that‘s what they think. I‘m telling you. No no no, I‘m being serious. That‘s what you see. Most, most. If you observe carefully, and if you haven‘t done that as yet, do this. Look at the major beaches. If you notice the amount of locals that‘s there, and if you notice the age range and appearance, you‘re going to see what I‘m talking about. _Cuznormally the guys go to the beaches to hang out, get girls, the malls, yeah, that‘s their normal thing.

Noga: How many people do you think live in your community?

Anthony: Wow. Ooh. Well, can say it‘s a large settlement, roughly hundreds, hundreds. Not sure. But I‘m giving it close to 1,000.

Noga: So for you, a typical weekday? What do you do before work? Anything? Or do you just wake up and come to work?

Anthony: Well, unfortunately, I do not have any other mouths to take care of (laughs). Wake up in the morning, say my prayers, thank God for guiding me through the night safe, guide me through the day. Look at the ESPN, check out all the scores from the NBA, make sure my Los Angeles Lakers are on top. Have some breakfast, shower, come up to

work, from work, get back home, take a shower, go to the court, take a sweat, from the court chill out on the street about two, three hours. Go home, take a shower, about nine, ten, just take a little stroll out back on the road. Normally there are some activities going on, not major activities, but something's going on the street. My time for sleeping is about twelve, one.

Noga: Do you travel outside of your parish?

Anthony: A lot (laughs). Yeah, I don't like to hang out places where you can find *any* and anybody. I'm not being any highty-tighty person or anti-social or anything like that. But I prefer to hang out where I'm safe. So if I'm in clubs like Karma, Bananas, Kudos, sometimes Aquarium, that's basically it.

Noga: How do you get around?

Anthony: Most times, we have this friend with transportation, and a license, so all we have to do is fill it up and we're off.

Noga: How often do you go clubbing in town?

Anthony: Mainly on weekends. In a month, probably about three times. If it's worth it. If it's just an average dance, nah. But if there's an artiste, something extra to the outing, we'll do that.

Noga: You talked about different groups of friends. Are these people all from your community or do you have friends from school, work, or – who do you hang out with?

Anthony: Hanging out, mainly at the clubs and stuff, both of us alone – me and Z. Both of us. Whenever it's clubbing, it's me and him. Never been to the clubs without anybody but him. It's us. Limes like in Grenville, I'm gonna go with a couple close friends from home. But it's not to lime, to say lime, I don't lime in Grenville. I don't like Grenville. Grenville is too violent. Don't like Grenville. So, whenever I go to Grenville, it's to get something – I get it, the most time I'm going to idle in Grenville is twenty minutes. I don't like Grenville. Something about Grenville. I don't really lime with my work, my teammates. They're not my type to lime.

Noga: But you met Z here?

Anthony: No, no, me and Z is from way back. Waaay back. Since little boys. Who else do I lime with? That's it, I don't really lime. Just once or twice clubbing, that's it.

Noga: Do you have family outside? So your mother is still in Sauteurs?

Anthony: My mother has a house in Sauteurs … she housekeeps, babysits, that's what she's been doing for the last couple years.

Noga: Do you have any other extended family you're in touch with?

Anthony: My grandma, also lives in Sauteurs. I've got a couple uncles in Mango. An aunt in Barbados. The majority of my aunts and uncles by my dad's side, they're in England. About eight of them. My dad is the only one here in Grenada.

Noga: If you had the chance to leave Grenada, would you?

Anthony: Depends on where I'm going.
Noga: What would be your top choice?
Anthony: To be honest, for most people in Grenada here, it's about the money. So, whenever you ask them, "If you get a chance to travel, where would you go?" "England." "Why?" "Cuz the money's more." But me, no no no. US of A.
Noga: Really? Why?
Anthony: Certain things up there, kind of calls out to me. I just want to explore a little bit more. I don't really want to live over there, I don't want to live over there. Nah. I just want to spend about nine months, back, or spend six months, back here. Just back and forth. Not permanent. I'm the kind of person who always wanted to travel. But the kind of places I wanted to travel, it's kind of weird. Like Africa, Sahara desert, safari, all those things. It's kind of weird.
Noga: Why do you think it's weird?
Anthony: I mean, for me. Well, I'm a Grenadian, you don't hear most young men speaking about these kinds of things.
Noga: What draws you to Africa then?
Anthony: I don't know, this may sound kinda funny. Nature. It may sound funny, but it's just, awww. Every time I look at it on television, or any other really nice place in the world, it just calls out to me, I just want to be there. I want to experience it offhand. Whatever. Cuz it seems nice.
Noga: Do you enjoy the nature in Grenada? Do you hike?
Anthony: Nah. I don't take in much of the nature. Sometimes I even look at places on TV here in Grenada, and I don't even know them. Tourist attraction places.
Noga: Why not? Why wouldn't you go?
Anthony: Time. If I have more time from work, I would have been doing much more. I haven't got any time. It's like, I don't know, I'm just connected with Mango. Other guys, they be like up on my case, like, "You have something in Mango? You have gold in Mango?" But no, it's like, they want to go out and lime, hang out certain places. *Surely* I don't feel comfortable there. I'm telling you, because places like, I won't say low-class place, but locally-managed and run place, operations, nah, that is not my thing. Not at all. Local people don't know how to deal with people, for one.

Right in Mango, there's a shop. And they were having this little cook-up and they were sharing food and everything like that. What happen is that I went into the shop to buy a Coca-Cola. On my way into the shop, this guy was eating his food, but he was standing a little way in the door. So I said, um, just like that, "Hey boss man, can I have a little excuse here please?" He moved, I pass, but I didn't realize he was standing right behind me. So as soon as I received the Coke from the shopkeeper and I turned, I knocked off his food and it

fell to the ground. As soon as, before the food hit the ground, I was like, ―Sorry, sorry, *sorry*, Sir, I could buy it back for you" – me not knowing it was free food. I mean I was so polite, I even offered to buy it back. And the guy was like, ―I feel like boxing you." Alright? He was like, ―I feel like boxing you, I just feel like boxing you." I said, ―I sorry," he said, ―I just feel like boxing you, I don't care what you have to say." I say, ―You know what, don't worry." I just walk. Yeah, and as I walking, I hear him talking about feel like hitting me, pelting a bottle. I ain't turning back. I'm not turning back.

Noga: So you avoid – ?

Anthony: Yeah yeah yeah, and that's something most of the guys in my community do not know how to do. They have a lot of pride (laughs), they have a lot of pride. Because I tell you about the thing in the disco? The guy came up, he actually jooked my mouth you know. And for what? God knows what. I have no idea. The guy just walked into there, and they normally call me AJ? ―You, AJ, boy, I don't like you." Jooked my mouth.

Noga: Where was this?

Anthony: Home. In Mango. Alright. And that's some same guys from my area, we went to school together, we were like this. But because I choose a different path, they vex.

Noga: You think people resent the fact that you don't hang out all day and got a job?

Anthony: Yes, yes, yes. Call that envy and grudge.

Noga: Let me ask you this. Where have you traveled outside of Grenada? Anywhere?

Anthony: Never.

Noga: Only St. Vincent?

Anthony: I never went back to St. Vincent. I was supposed to go up to Barbados, my mom got a sister up there. My little brother and little sister went up there, and I was supposed to go, but I just kind of opt out of the trip. I wasn't feeling like it anymore.

Noga: Why?

Anthony: At the point in time, I wasn't working, and I didn't have my own money, I was kind of big. And I *know* people. So don't feel because you're giving me a trip, and I'm coming up to Barbados, and I got no money, you're gonna have to be buying me stuff, and, after a period of time, family, no family, you will not be pleased. So, I say let me just stay here, save myself the embarrassment.

But, one day, I was thinking at the end of this year, I was gonna go Jamaica for a week, just go for myself, just go. Book a hotel, just take a week off. I'm still thinking about it, heavily. Financially, yeah I can get there financially. Just a little bit more effort. I think I'm gonna head up there.

Noga: Do you have any idea how much you spend on food in a week?

Anthony: A food budget for the week, I'm not lying, normally we come to work here. Before work in the morning, it's like bread, mainly sausage, and the bread, two-fifty. Normally, four of us, so two breads, so that's five, two sausages at two dollars each, so that's nine dollars every morning. I come to work here, I spend fifteen, twenty dollars for lunch. Get back home in the evening, my dad has to cook – normally he'll just buy the meat and stuff, because groceries they last throughout the month. Sometimes we go a long time without cooking. So normally, just things like meat, and gas, things you have to buy. How much we spend on average per day? Morning nine, nine and ten, nineteen, twenty, twenty-five, about fifty per day. And that's for the week. So that's 250, only for food. [Note: It should be EC$350, or US$130, for a seven day week] And I did not even include things that you need, like for hygiene.

Noga: Tell me about Independence Day. What do you think about it?
Anthony: To me, it should be something that we should be proud of. We should be happy and treat it with a little bit more respect. _Cuzover the year, not only Independence, but the major cultural events, I find it's foolishness right now. Because everything is a dance, everything is a party. When you should be having more things like art. Long ago, we used to be having on Independence Day, cultural concerts. These things were in my community, and they were actually free.
Noga: Oh? So they did them all over the country?
Anthony: No, just for us. We invited other groups from all around the island, right, to party. It was such a success. I mean, a huge success. Well, when I say success, I mean, they made a little bit too much money, and you know what happened? Greed. And then, everything upside down. But nowadays, Independence, you don't have any cultural shows. Where's the spirit, where's the love? All we have now is a DJ. And for someone that plays music on a DJ, to hear them say that, all they have is a DJ, all they have is Jamaican artiste, hip hop, whatever playing. And buy drinks, spend all their money, and sing for Independence.
Noga: So that's what happens in your community?
Anthony: That's what happens now. Nothing to do with Independence. Nothing whatsoever. They're just using it as an excuse to make a party. But for me, Independence should be much more than that, it should be something that we pay a little bit *more* attention, have a little bit more respect for. If we show some respect for Independence and put it on a high-scale, present it a little bit better, like more cultural shows, let the politicians come out and travel around, greet the people, speak with the people, meet, interact, do all sorts of stuff. Cultural things that we had before which are dying out, put them back on that day. Nah, right now, nah.

Noga: So you wouldn‘t go to the Stadium?
Anthony: No way. Nah nah nah, I‘m not going to the stadium.
Noga: Why?
Anthony: Because then, it becomes too political. For example, the majority of the people that went to the stadium from my community were supporters of the New National Party because they were the only ones that the government provided transportation for. So they had buses. That‘s what happened. If you were NDC, or no one know what you were, you‘re not getting on the bus. Too political. I don‘t want to get tangled up in that. Like I said, I‘m not sure I‘m even going to vote. Voting right now, mmm. We don‘t need an election right now. I‘m not an NNP, but. I don‘t see any reason for election right now. The guys on Opposition side, I‘m not too fond of them, knowing the kind of things they did, and hearing the kinds of things that bigger heads from Mango tell us, what these guys did, because they were also around during the Revolution. And they were like *bullies*. They have a reputation that‘s not good at all.
Noga: Looking back at Grenada‘s history, are there any political leaders that you do admire?
Anthony: I did not really learn that much about Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, but to me, he was a hero. And not only the older folks‘ hero, but everyone. It was said that the kind of things he did, as a leader, right now the current leader‘s saying that that is impossible, but he did it. I hear the older folks speaking, and if not for Gairy, probably they would have passed on a long time now. Because they had nothing, and he gave them, little how it is, they got a little piece of land. I‘m tell you, the majority of people, that‘s how they got lands. Shared out land for them, do your thing, do your stuff. So I never really followed him or anything like that, but from what I‘ve heard, only good things. So I admire him a little bit.
Noga: What about the Mongoose Gang?
Anthony: Nah. Try not to, I don‘t really, this Mongoose thing, I don‘t really want to listen to them.
Noga: Do you think it didn‘t happen?
Anthony: Well, some people, from my point of view, I heard it was true, I heard it was lie, I heard some people bending the truth a little bit, so I never really got a *real* update on that. I‘ve heard about it, but I never really got the *factual* part of it, so I can‘t really say anything about that. Not factual.
Noga: Mango seems to have more cultural events than most parts of Grenada, deeper traditions, like Saraca and some of the other things you‘ve mentioned. Why?
Anthony: As I said earlier, Mango has some high people in Grenada, and they know what it‘s about, they know what it takes to make things happen. And their parents before them, used to be doing the same

thing for the cultural part. Supporting the culture. So right now, most of them, they used to be doing it because it was passed on to them by their parents. But because of greed, and other things right now, that kind of slowed it down. Like I'm sure you heard about the drum festival. That *originated* here!

Noga: And now they're traveling around the island?

Anthony: Yes, because why? The same situation where I told you about the court, that's the same problem they're having. Same problem. The first time they actually had that drum festival, some construction was done on the court, ~~_~~cuz it wasn't covered around, so they had a little bit of construction. So seeing we the guys played basketball there, and they were also making the facilities better for us, we assisted them. We tagged along, we placed up blocks, we mixed concrete, we did everything, complete the court, everything like that.

And then, I heard the leader of the group, I heard him speaking with a couple other people, and it was like, the kind of response they getting form the Council from the Church is not good. They want them to have it at seven, but they have to finish before eleven, because of disturbing people in the neighborhood. Everyone, *everyone* was so happy, was so very happy, about this drum festival. It brought everything for us. Foreigners, busloads of them, big coasters, they came up, on the court while the drum festival was going on they came out, they observed the surroundings, they even gave us income. They spent money there, I mean who wouldn't like that? Plus, they're saying, ~~"~~Wow, nice community." Also, we advertising.

But then the Council, the good almighty Council, and you know what actually hurts me about the Council? It's a bunch of old people who do not support anything whatsoever. When they were younger, they so happened to get the opportunity to go to England, and they worked off all their life, came back here, and right now they're living on their pension, and they feel they're high and mighty. They feel like they own Mango.

Noga: So they own the biggest public space?

Anthony: They own the most popular, the hard court. That's the most popular place in Mango. And it's very tough to get to.

Noga: So did you go to the Saraca?

Anthony: Nah, I stayed home. I prefer to look at basketball than going out to these things nowadays, because it doesn't really, like, everything the same. You go out, all you hear is music from a DJ, and what, just interacting, socializing with people. It's not like before, they used to have the traditional dancing and stuff, like in the middle of the road, they beat the tambu, the bamboos on the ground, and they made a ring, and they going round and around. And they dance.

Noga: And they prepared food too, right?

Anthony: Yeah, yeah. After you finish dancing, then you go to the pasture, and then the food is on the ground with the banana leaves.

Noga: They don't do that anymore?

Anthony: No. What they do now is they still cook large quantities of food, but now you're being served in a disposable plate. There's no more dancing because the DJ is playing all night, 24-7. So no clapping or singing. So now you hear the DJ music, eat your piece of food, and go home. I can eat food home.

Noga: I would have been so disappointed! Everyone is telling me, "You need to go to a Saraca to see the traditional Grenadian –"

Anthony: No no no, it's not like that anymore. It's not like that. I'm telling you. It's not like that anymore. Normally I don't eat from anybody normally, but when I went out to the before-Saraca, I ate a little bit from everything, little bit of soup, no problem. But not now.

Noga: Tell me about church and religion. Are you affiliated with any religion? Do you go to church?

Anthony: Well, it's been a couple of years since I've been to church. But actually, I'm Roman Catholic, I was communed and confirmed, so I'm ready for my reach right now, no problems (laughs). But I just kinda left out the church thing after that. Because, the only reason why, and it's sad to say, the only reason I actually went to church was because my mom, she used to be the one pressuring me to go to church. Just do that for her, commune and conform and everything. Yeah, I went and I did it. And as soon as I had enough, I said "Mommy, I can't handle that again." She tell me, "Cool." 'Cuz, the people in the Church, they don't like anybody. I mean, you're in a church, my God, someone steps in from behind, walking on the tiles, everyone turn back. Look at you _til you sit, after you've been seated everyone over one another shoulder whispering, "You see what he wearing, you see what she wearing." Yooo, I can't live like that. This church down there, the Catholic church, it's about *fashion*. I'm telling you. I'm being serious and honest. It's about fashion. You have to look good to be accepted in the Church. And that's a sad thing. I didn't want to be part of that.

I pray. And I ask for forgiveness, I ask for guidance, I ask for everything. And yeah, I find that's fair enough for me.

Noga: Do you believe in God?

Anthony: Yeah, yeah, of course, of course. Most people – only once in my entire life I ran across someone who did not believe in God. Only once. Since after that, that's why I think Mango is the way it is today. _Cuz, there was this young lady, when I was going to [secondary] school, she also went there, but I was in a form higher than her. Same Sunday, I came out the street in Mango, as we always do, just chill, and this young lady together with a next girl, and a man, they came. They stood, they opened their Bibles, and they started to speak. So we

were just there, listening, listening, next thing it was like, ―There is no God." That's how they started up, right. They started saying all kind of awful things, which I do not even want to repeat. All of a sudden, the man hold up the Bible in the air, with a lighter below, light the Bible on fire! And he burnt the Bible right in Mango Junction. And I was so disgusted, right, I was like, ―Come on, yo. All of us here, the man burn the Bible, yo, that's curse for us, that's disrespect, that's yo, I" – (great emotion, turmoil, in his speech). And they were all like, yo, they don't trust these guys, these guys can do horrible things to us, they can spoil us, right. And, that's how we left them, man. But they actually burn two Bibles. They burnt the Bibles there and they just roll out.

Noga: No one touched them?

Anthony: No no no. Well, they burned it. What remained stayed there. The breeze blew, the rain fell, and went away with the pieces. No one touched it.

But religion-wise, I'm more fond of the Seventh Day Adventists. I think they practice what they preach a little bit better than the Catholics (laughs). They have a set of rules I'm not sure about with them, but to me, they're a people together. They're like a family. They look out for one another. It doesn't matter about what you're wearing, what you have, they always bring you in. But with the Catholics, nah, you're not going to find that. They're not welcoming you unless you wealthy.

Noga: Would you ever switch?

Anthony: Well actually, my dad is a Seventh Day Adventist, so it's not hard. It's not hard.

Noga: Are you tempted?

Anthony: I'm not really tempted. But I've been to a few ceremonies, and I'm not too tempted to switch. But I'm more fond of them.

Noga: Do you know anything about Spiritual Baptists? Shango Baptists?

Anthony: Well, there is a Baptist church right down by us there, but I'm kind of scared of them. So I don't go close to them. Because I've seen certain things in my lifetime, that if I tell you now, you may not even believe me.

Noga: Tell me.

Anthony: Alright. We were in Mango, this group of guys, brother, they own a farm. They went to Guyana and bought this devil's book. Brought it back here and read it because they wanted a tractor and two vans. So they did their stuff, but they're not too intelligent, so they made mistakes. [unintelligible sentence]. Now, the guys read the book. Whatever happened happened. The spirits were angered. I was home, and the guys live in [name deleted], over there, right? I was home, and everybody was like, ―Yo! You had demons, you had devil, over there!" I was like, ―What devil, what demon?" You understand?

They said, —No, truly, you have devil over there!" So we left and went over there, and standing in the road, the house is a little distance from the road, I actually saw a refrigerator in the air! When I tell you in the air, it was moving out from inside of the kitchen to the gallery. It was like, it was *moving*. Actually, somebody was underneath there. And it just came over. This is the gallery stand right there, from the kitchen he came out, throw the refrigerator outside. When I tell you outside, *outside*. And as soon as I saw that, that was it. Just move. And ah, wow!

And the same guys, I saw them a couple days after. _Cuz where my school is, there's this big Baptist lady there, she's a *big* Baptist lady. So they brought them to her so she could remove the spirits, and I saw these guys up there, and one of them was wearing a jumper. I'm telling you this guy was bigger than me, and the jumper was as small as could fit this little girl there. And he had on the jumper and the jumper was actually choking him. And he was just like in a *cage*, a real man, a live man, in a cage (voice cracks). And if you look at his hair, like they took a lawnmower and passed it in his hair. And I actually saw these guys, eh? And I cried. _Cuz I was scared. I was just passing the school and – he called me because he knew me. I was troubled for the whole day. The entire day I was troubled, _cuz I was thinking about, he called *me*. So he probably – I don't know, I don't know – and I actually saw the thing. Whooo (exhales, as if to clear the air). Bring back some memories. Wow. Mmmm (exhales again, eyes are watery, visibly moved by emotion).

Noga: What happened to him?

Anthony: Well, actually, they brought him to a bigger Baptist guy in St. David's and he removed them. Now they're back on their farm, doing good. They learned their lesson.

But religion in Mango, it's not going to help against the gang violence. Certainly not the Catholic religion. Because the guys that are up in the Catholic churches, I mean some people may side with me, some may not, but these guys, nah, they are no good, man, they're scumbags. All they want is the girls in the church. I'm telling you, that's all they want. Well, that does not apply for me, right? They gonna see a young lady from a church speaking to a guy on the roadside? Wow. That is it for her. Nonononononono. You're not allowed to speak to these young guys, they're not good, they cannot give you anything, lalalalathis. And then, —You want a cellphone?" That's what the bigger guys are – yeah buy the girl something, why not? Buy her expensive cellphone, then you have her for your own, man. You have her coming to your home and doing your washing, your clothes, and yeah. The girls in our community, they're not really into us (laughs). And the reason for that, again, is because of the guys, in the high, the bigger men, they spoil it. They spoil the young ladies.

Well, they are no longer young ladies. I'm telling you. They're not young ladies. And I'm so glad they're not into us, _cuz surely I wouldn't want to be with someone like that.

Noga: So they've gotten attached to these older men from the church?

Anthony: Attached? More than attached. Hooked! They're like links, on a chain. I'm telling you, because these guys supply them. They got cellphones, clothing, shoes, little money in their pocket. Then a young man like me struggling, I have to fend for myself, still my family. How can I maintain that? How can I keep up with these guys spending their money? Once a girl is doing that, she's not the right person for you, most definitely. _Cuz you know what she's all about. But still. So them church guys, that is their vibe. Before church, the same guys that normally go up and read from the Bible on the altar, they sit down in the shops and drink, they drink, ahh (groans). They sit down and drink, they all talk about some little girl, some woman they probably paid and ting. I'm telling you. I'm not lying. That's everyday thing happening in my community. I know what I'm speaking about. Nah. That's not good enough, man. Trust me, that's not good enough. These girls, you have to have a little bit of money to maintain them. Tough.

Noga: Is there an expectation to provide certain things before you can get married or have a long-term relationship?

Anthony: Yeah. But currently I'm good. Yeah, I'm good, man, I'm good. I want to do some things in life first, and then, maybe what happen, happen.

Noga: Would you consider continuing your education?

Anthony: That's something I thought about. There were a few subjects I did not get, and I was supposed to go back and do them over. But because of the timing again, go to work and everything, I don't have enough time to do that, _cuz then I have to go to classes and stuff. Classes normally start four o'clock, I finish work five. That what holds me back this past year now. I've been thinking about different ways in which I could get some classes and do my thing. Because I need that.

Noga: Why? What would you study, what would be your goal?

Anthony: Well, what I wanted at first changed. Now I'm just there, but if I had to go into any institution right now, technical, it would be electrical. Air conditioning and stuff like that. I have a little experiences with the electrical part, not so much experience with the whole electrical part. Never been to any classes or stuff like that, but just experience offhand with things I have at home. I love to open, so I open up my computer and everything else. So it's like that. And I wanted to work with NAWASA too, the water company.

Noga: What's your perception of SGU and the people who go there?

Anthony: High class. It's good. Actually, I got the chance to use some of the facilities for approximately three weeks for a basketball training camp, back in high school, I was in Form Four. Yeah, we went down there for three weeks. Well, it's life. It's the basic university life that you see in your college movies. Educational-wise, I got a friend, we went to school together, he's currently taking some classes down there, and he tells me it's good. It's good. I says, "Well, it's good for you 'cuz you're bright." He tells me, "No-no-no, we handling that just like how we used to do it in high school." He tells me it's good. So I say, "Yeah, maybe sometime." You never know, you never too old to learn. As long as I haven't got any sickness or anything, give it a shot, no prob.

Noga: What do you think about all the new developments that are coming up? There's going to be one in the north, I guess, in Sauteurs. They're going to do a port –

Anthony: Loving it. I'm loving it. It's about time. The country people, that's how they refer to us (laughs), the country people. It's about time. Because the people in the country are way behind with technology and all these things. Trust me, they are way behind. We need to step up so then, that can also uplift the country. The whole country as a whole. 'Cuz if the countryside people get to understand economics and all these other things, it's gonna be a better place. Then the youths, also, we need some facilities for sports and stuff like that. But that'll come. But what's going on right now, it's good. Create some employment for some of the guys, I think, down in my area, because I already told them about the project in Levera, that's the hotel, then the one in Sauteurs, the port, and then the one in Grenville, the market and the bus terminus. I told them, I ain't got no strings, if I had links, most definitely I'd have been hooking them up.

But there is this one guy, he's my friend, he's just about a year older, and I admire that guy. No high school education. Drop out from primary school. But I hang with that guy and people wonder why. He's a smart guy. He told me that he was building a house. Normally, when a young guy like that tell you he's building a house, it's a little shack, just to get their groove on and stuff like that. But he knew that I could not have assisted help-wise, because of my work. Finally, there was about a month that had gone, he told me, "I finish the house." So I was like, "The house ready?" He said, "The house what I tell you I building." So like good, but me now, I not knowing what type of house the guy building, I say, "Well, you did that fast, man." He say, "Well, go across by me and see what's taking place." When I went over there and I saw the house, I looked at the guy and I say, "You sure that's the house you built?" That's more than a house, you know! This guy is about twenty-two, you know. It looked like *professionals*. It looked like it was constructed by a group of well-

trained men. But it was just him. He dug all these holes, he did everything for himself. There were times he told me like, when he had to place some boards upright and he had to hold it up at the angle to pound and – now I'm giving this guy *anything, anything* he ask me for, I see what his vibe is. He don't mind working, and he know he have to provide for himself and everything. Nah, I'd give this guy anything, anything he want, he could get it from me. I'm telling you. If the boys in the gang could have seen like that, it would have been different. But for them, it's all about *money*. Some of them want to sell some cocaine, sell a bit of guns here and there, make some fast money, buy some nice ride, lot of music, nice rims, and get all the girls. That's the life of an average Mango youth.

Noga: Are drugs a big problem now?

Anthony: Huge. Huge. Just looking at me, I smoked, right? But not drugs. I don't do drugs. In my community, drugs is a big thing, ‗ɑuz we have ladies, about thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-five, thirty-four, thirty-three, around that age, they are doing drugs. They are prostitutes. I'm telling you, I'm a guy, it could be I was trapped on a planet for a zillion years without no female companion whatsoever, and they were the first ones I came across, no effect on me whatsoever. And they got so much *nice* kids, going in high school, secondary school, and the ladies just taking drugs. And the little boys, eleven-, ten-year-old wanna-be gangsters, with a little money in their pocket, selling a little bit of drugs. Little boys, their daughters, old as them, and little boys paying them for sex. We have that happening in Mango right now. We got these main two girls, and whenever fellas want a fix (makes a noise to indicate sex) with them girls. One time, they give them five bucks EC, ‗cuz that's how much the drugs cost, five EC, and they do whatever you want them to do, five EC, then they get their drugs to smoke.

Noga: What about HIV/AIDS?

Anthony: Not so much in my community. It's kind of clean for that. Got sense. I mean, it can happen, but the majority of the guys, they don't go through that unprotected.

Noga: How do you think Hurricane Ivan has affected your community?

Anthony: My community, didn't really affect it. I mean, a couple of trees fell, couple of roofs blew. But didn't really affect it. Everything is just as it used to be. No major changes. The people are just the same way. A few weeks after the hurricane, I could have said that the hurricane actually did us a little good. You know why? It brought everyone together. A few days after the hurricane we started to cover back the roofs. Everybody. When I say everybody – who even thought they were invincible and rich, their roof went. The same sort of people they were looking down on for how long, the people didn't even hesitate, they didn't have to come because they were *ashamed* to

ask. And people just went and said, eh, whatever. And then, they were nice for a couple a weeks, but then, they back to their normal selves right now. Everything is back to normal.

Noga: So the problems you see with gangs and drugs didn‘t start after Ivan?

Anthony: No no no. It‘s been there. What happened, why it was not really showing off for a little while, you had the guys involved in things. They had a skills training center in Seamoon, the majority of the guys they were down there. Everyone was occupied. Everyone was occupied. At a point in time, you passing through Mango and there‘s no one on the streets. And people are surprised because there are always guys hanging out. But at that point in time things were really really really nice. We had fêtes, no fighting, no stealing, no nothing for a couple of months. That‘s when you were enjoying the nature of the place. Normally on moonlights, friends get a cooler, get some drinks, go on the court, have a couple drinks, just old talk until morning, and then go to work.

But we don‘t really do that anymore, because the majority of the guys cannot be trusted. Trust me, they cannot be trusted. Set of back-biters. Me and Z, that is how we see. Anything. We gonna share almost anything. We good. We don‘t have any problems. We big enough, I mean, in any relationship that‘s running, friendly, personal, whatever, and there isn‘t any dispute, I think people fear, they hiding something, so they‘re pretending. Because I think you should have falling outs here and there. But it‘s up to you to be a man and accept defeat, or you‘re wrong, or whatever. So with us now, that‘s how it is. If I‘m wrong, I don‘t ashamed to say I wrong. I‘m wrong, I‘m human, I was not the first person that was wrong, so that‘s no problem for me. And that‘s how we just go by. Just say, look, sorry for that. And that‘s it. But other guys, they got pride. Sorry *what*? They mashing you, pushing you, throwing things on you.

Noga: Sounds like pride and respect are important in your community.

Anthony: And we have a lot of wannabes, that‘s why. Wannabes, but wannabe in the wrong way. That is not the right way to be a wannabe. I mean, if you want to be somebody positive, look for a good role model. But then again, all these guy‘s role models are rapsters. That‘s the way they go totally wrong. To me, I tell them, rapsters a bunch of shit. The majority of them are the biggest set of wannabes you can find in the whole world. They can have all the money they want but they‘re still wannabes. Because music is message – you listen to the music and what they‘re saying, they don‘t know what they‘re about. Because if you‘re speaking good today, tomorrow you‘re still speaking good, but you‘re singing a song that‘s spitting out bad, what does that say, you‘re pretending. And we hate pretenders. We don‘t like pretenders in Mango. Nah nah. The majority of the rapsters – you

have a few of them, I'm not saying all of them, you have a few that are good, they help people, they speak positively, they try to influence kids to do things good, the right way, the correct way. But then some again, you don't care, man, as long as you making the paper money, it doesn't matter how, you could sell cocaine, you could sell whatever, you could steal. As long as you making the paper, and your pocket heavy and you have a nice ride, you good. That's what them guys wanted, a nice ride, a nice house, and automatically, they going to be getting a lot of nice girls. Fantasy life.

Noga: Why do you think American rap culture has such a hold on people here?

Anthony: We've been exposed to the outer world right now, and what we knew before was just like, simple things. They could not have really act upon that. But right now, the world is just presenting itself, openings, and they see naturally more. What I can't understand, what I telling them is, guys, what are they seeing more of? It's not the right thing. I'm not saying what I see more of is the right thing, but I'm telling you. I'll say, "Alright, good. You waiting here, you want the white lady to pick you up, take you back to America and get married." I say, "What you know about America? What you know about England? What you know?" We got to know nothing. We reach up there, we just live in a house, giving white ladies what they want, they going to give us money.

Noga: And how often does this happen? Where does this idea come –

Anthony: (laughing) Well, it happened, it happen, majority of Mango fellows, it happens a lot.

Noga: It does?

Anthony: It does happen a lot, sad to say in Mango.

Noga: Who are these white ladies coming through?

Anthony: Let me see on how many occasions (pauses to count). Maybe about six guys from Mango left because white ladies came down here and they hooked up with them and took them back.

Noga: Who are these white ladies?

Noga: Well, there's one whose name is [name deleted], he went to England with this lady, but she was an older lady than him – much older. But mainly, it's not young ladies. It's older ladies, you can say in their 60s, late 50s, being with guys in their early 20s. So the guys are not really into the ladies, they just want the opportunity. But I tell them, "Guys, make all your opportunity, don't got to depend on anybody, you're willing to marry somebody who doesn't mean anything to you, just for what, a piece of paper? You could dead today or tomorrow."

Noga: So these ladies are tourists?

Anthony: Yup. Tourists.

Noga: Who just happen to come through and start hang—

Anthony: No they don't hang out, listen what happens. Normally, when the guys are in Mango, they're advertising. They sit on the block and they chill out, they just relax. So normally when the tourists around, they going to pull up, ask for directions, what you may have. The guys are so, I don't know where they get that intelligence from. They know how to speak to people. And they just engage in conversation, then you see the door opening (laughs), and the same fellow later is coming back, and then next thing you hear, "Yo, look what the lady bought for me." One time, bought him expensive pair of sneakers, 5-600 dollars, brand new phone, brand new IPod, everything. And when the time come, they go. They go.

Noga: Do they come back?

Anthony: Yeah, but different.

Noga: How?

Anthony: Cuz when they get up there, they get married, everything is hooked up with them, they want a divorce. They are legal. They get a divorce, get married to someone else, come back here and live happy life. Pass in pass out. So the majority of the guys, they know that these things happen. So they kind of depend on it. They rely on it a little bit too much.

Noga: Six seems like a really high number for a small community.

Anthony: Yeah, trust me. The guys that normally get to go, normally, it's guys like me. But, no, not like me! Could never be like me. I'm not like them!

Noga: You mean like your age?

Anthony: Yeah, my age, my appearance, how I roll and stuff, how I move with people. But nah, nah. Six is a high number. And that's what I know of. Just last year, December, this white lady from England, one of my friends, she bought a ticket, sent him a ticket to come to England plus 500 pounds, through Western Union, right, to get stuff, to buy clothing. And he did not go. He took the money and just passed it up. He said he didn't want to do it cuz the lady old. She kinda old. Very old (laughs). So he was kinda embarrassed. So these are the kind of things we have to deal with.

Noga: … What about all these new developments in the south? As I understand it, there's about seven new condo-type projects coming up. I don't know if you've heard of them. There's the Four Seasons, Prickly Bay –

Anthony: I heard of Prickly Bay –

Noga: And Grand Harbour, all of those, right?

Anthony: Mount Cinnamon, too.

Noga: Yeah, de Savary's project. They're going to sell off these condos and then people will be able to come in for a month out of the year. And then the rest of the time they'll put it into a rental pool and rent it out for like 500 dollars a night to tourists. How do you think that's

going to affect Grenada to have such an influx of foreigners coming in, and wealthy foreigners, like a lot, I guess, of really wealthy older white British women (laughing). There's one possible impact I hadn't considered.

Anthony: Affect Grenada in a bad way?

Noga: I don't know. Do you think it will be good?

Anthony: Well, I think, if the people that actually coming in – can't tell what type of people may come in, but as long as they are positive people, it'll be good for the country. Foreign currency, living in your land, paying taxes, they helping out. Plus the local vendors with their spices. They're still going to get a little bit of sales. Plus they're going to be advertising. So they come in, love Grenada, head back, "Yo, I've been to this condo in Grenada, you should really check it out." So could be a positive.

Then it could be a negative because of the whole homosexual thing. The gay stuff. I'm not fond of that. For example, you can have rich guys coming in, staying in the condos, coming here and flashing money in front of the guys, and then you have them influencing them, and then guys start doing that for money, and then when the rich guys go back, they come back to their community and they start practicing it with other guys, and it can go on and on.

But that doesn't necessarily have to happen. But it could. That could be a negative. Plus, you could have people that don't care, it doesn't matter, they don't care. They just do things, no matter what the consequences are, they just do things cuz they feel they got money, just come and feel like they can run Grenada. All that can happen, but I'm looking on the positive side.

Noga: One question, I didn't ask earlier – do you think there are social classes in Grenada?

Anthony: There are. The classes are those right on top of there, who have the majority of things they want. What they haven't got is because they don't want it as yet. Then you have those right underneath them, trying to pretend with them, the real pretenders, to kind of eat them out for them to be up there one day. Then you have just the average people living here in Grenada who work everyday, honest, hardworking to achieve what they want. And then those underneath them. Basically, we have four classes of people.

Noga: Who belongs to these classes?

Anthony: The higher class people, you can find the bigger families here in Grenada, [names deleted]. They have gas stations, supermarkets, lot of stuff. They're the families where the breadwinner can provide for them. As long as they have a steady flow of income of over 1,500 coming in per month, high class families, they're good. But the average size family, but, I consider myself to be not average. I still consider myself under-average. But, it's not because I'm under-

average I have to act like it and be like it. I just put myself up on average. Like, we, just working, every day of our lives, honestly, save a little bit of money here and there whenever we could, ‗cuz it‘s not too often you could save money. And the people beneath us, these are the ones I‘m really sorry for. There are a few of these types of people in my community. My community is upper class, because the majority of the people in Mango, yeah, they got it. They got it.

Noga: So the cutoff is 1,500 per month?

Anthony: Yeah, even 1,300 or 1,200 a month, they live on that. I don‘t get that (laughs).

Noga: That would be comfortable?

Anthony: Yeah. Normally, well, my dad, maintenance, they normally get paid 1,000, 1,200 per month. So that‘s why I put myself back up on average. But still, we still have a lot of need for money. Lots of things to do with money. But we‘re good for the time being. But my community, high class. High class. Teachers, doctors, lawyers, who works in pharmacies, who works in big industries, even Huggins [a large local company]. We have lots of guys in Mango working in big companies. But also, we have lots of them out on the streets.

Noga: So you have a real mix.

Anthony: Real mix. And those in the community, also those working, we‘re around the same age, so we‘re the ones normally mingling together and moving up. Sometimes I know they feel ahou [ashamed]. ‗Cuz we‘re working, I mean, we‘re just a little bit better off, and I *know* sometimes they are offended. Because there are situations, like, to go certain places, it‘s not like they cannot go. But because they don‘t have the knowledge, they cannot really conversate with people and stuff like that. So we cannot really take them with us because it would be sort of an embarrassment. And sometimes they get offended by that, but it‘s not us. I mean, you cannot conduct yourself, you cannot handle yourself, why would we want to bring you out to come and embarrass us?

Noga: What kind of places?

Anthony: Places like restaurants, like here. No no no no. These guys have no etiquette, no manners, no nothing. I don‘t mind chilling out by the road, and let‘s eat some chicken and chips with you ‗cuz that‘s where we can be ourselves, but they always want to be their stuff. They don‘t understand that there are laws, rules, and regulations you have to go by. There are some laws that are ridiculous, and we know they are, but they still are laws and you have to go by them. But these guys, no no no, if the law is not nice enough by their side, nah nah they not going to obey, trust me. They‘re not going to obey. But, my community? High class. Definitely.

Noga: And you feel comfortable hanging out with those members of your community, too?

Anthony: And that's another thing, right? Like people normally tell me I should hang out with more positive people. But they don't know. Some of these guys been through a lot. Some were kind of slow in primary school, so people kind of push them around, and they never really had their parents to force them to go to school and stuff like that, so they're kind of neglected. And these guys, don't expect them to show any love. They not going to show you love just like that. They have to see that you mean something to them for them to to actually give you some love. So the people in the community now, they don't give them boys love, 'cuz they see them as just delinquents. The guys tend to take that on a little bit too much. That's what I say to them everytime, "Yo, not because somebody call you a stupid doesn't mean you're a stupid. It's up to you to say that you're not stupid or not." So when people normally say about them they's delinquent, and them is thief, and them is this and that. And then, they'll be like, they would do that, they would do this, and then they'll say, "Well they're saying it already, so?" I say, "They're saying it but it's not true, you can still win." But, sometimes, well, you can bring the donkey to the well, you cannot make it drink water. I just try my best to vibes them up, put them on the right track, if that doesn't work out, what can I do? I'm only one person.

If I had money – I know some people say this, when they get money they tend to switch and stuff – but I always say, if I get money, why switch? If I had money, I would open something that we could have actually run, all of us, all them dogs, all them boys. Yeah. 'Cuz I was planning on opening a little parlor, but in my parlor I would like to get some little clothing, T-shirt, two pair of sneakers. Not anything too muchy muchy. Just to start off with. Because mainly it'd be like burning CDs and DVDs and selling little white T-shirts and vests and stuff like that. If I got into that financially, bam-bam set that up, get one of the guys, "Yo, this is a job. There's no friend in that. I'm paying you to run my business." Right, and I give them a work. They come by me, I show them how to use my PC, they could burn CDs, they could do everything. So, that's your job. From there, you ought to make something. See what you can, learn what you can. Because I'm here, but I'm not only doing tours. I'm in the kitchen there sometimes learning to cook different dishes and stuff. Because you never know, sometime I leave here and then, there's a vacancy open for a chef or something. I may not meet the requirements, but, give me a try. And then, I get through. You got to always keep your mind open.

Noga: What about the museum project [referring to plans to open a museum at Spiceland Estate]? Is that happening or is it too busy now?

Anthony: It's really too busy now. But this lady, [name deleted], she's also here to help in that part. But I don't see it happening now. It's

supposed to be happening since last year. Currently they're trying to locate a few more things, lay them out, each and every one.

Noga: What's your vision for the museum? What would you like it to be like?

Anthony: You been to the one in St. George already?

Noga: Mm-hmm.

Anthony: I mean, it's not much in St. George, but the last time I've been there, that was a long time now, but it felt like a museum. Because you were actually in there, and the whole scenery, it was nice. But this one here, I'm not connecting with it. It's just something that's not clicking with me and the museum there. Like sometimes, nature calls, and I just feel this way. But I never really got it toward the museum. They should do something else. Yeah, rearrange something inside of there, make it feel more like a museum from the time you enter, not just an old building with things just labeled out in glass.

Noga: What would make it feel like a museum to you?

Anthony: They need to add some more of our history. Not only on the estate here, like a few of the stencils. Nah, bring big paintings, huge paintings, of how it was before, our families and farms, houses, the big drumming. All them drums and them. Get some drums. More things. I just want to see it more equipped and factual. Factual. I don't want to see anything that maybe there's a doubt that it should be there. Nah, I want everything to be factual. Like the dolls they got there, I don't see anything wrong with that, but, nah, come on man, that's from India. Because the owners of the estate were originally from there. Yeah, but that's from India! You're a Grenadian. I mean, that's part of your history, and you also bring that to us, we congratulate you, we thank you for that, because you add it to our history also, but more things about Grenada. The only things that actually showcase Grenada in that museum is the part that they're going to be doing on the Revolution. Everything else is just based on the family, the family, the family. Nah, come on, man. We're in *historic* St. Patrick, the most historic parish in Grenada. Look at that, you have the Carib stone high up in Mt. Rich. Ever been there?

Noga: No. I don't know where it is –

Anthony: You don't know where it is? Just in Mt. Rich up there. And sometimes when tourists ask me where is a nice place to visit up north, and they probably think, well, ~~"~~He's a tour guide, and he lives in Grenada, and he doesn't know." But I cannot direct them to these sights. Mainly, it's not safe. Mt. Rich, the Carib stone. Mt. Rich has one of the biggest gangs here in Grenada.

Noga: So I shouldn't go trying to find the Carib stone?

Anthony: I'm telling you, Mt. Rich is a rough place. It is said that the majority of the people there, unlike Mango, unfortunately, not educated. So that's why they tend to do a lot of dumb things. They

act before they think. That's why you have the majority of the gang members from Mt. Rich, plus the guys that normally kill and steal and all these things are from up there. I would not advise anyone to go up there because, how it is situated, they build a little building so you could have access to the Carib stone. Mt. Rich people so delinquent they mashed it up, throw stones, well, you're going to see. They break up all the glass windows and now it's just there, abandoned. And the Carib stone is down in the water, in the river, just there like nothing! I cannot recommend that, nah. It's not, nah. Trust me, it will not be safe, I think, for you, as a lady – alone – to be going – there (pauses between words for emphasis). Telling you.

You have the Carib's Leap in Sauteurs, well, they did something there. But before, there was nothing. It was just, what? If I was a tourist and you'd direct me up there, and said that that was historic, and I drove up there, and I just what? Looking over the cliff? Nah, that's how it was before. I'd really like to see them do something in Mt. Rich. Also, just up in Hermitage here is the Slave Pen. That's nothing. I mean, it's good, no no no, don't get me wrong. When I say it's nothing, it's nothing *now* because it's not being utilized and stuff. But I been there a couple years ago, and there was just the Great House, the slave pen, everything was there, and it was just for them to preserve that.

Noga: There's a movement to preserve it now. Do you know the Willie Redhead Foundation? They write articles for the paper sometimes.

Anthony: Which paper? *The Informer*? *Grenada Today*? *The Voice*?

Noga: I read all the papers, I'm not sure which one.

Anthony: You read all? Alright, alright (laughing).

Noga: They usually publish in more than one, though. They've been the most vocal group protesting Peter de Savary's project on the Lagoon ... That's how I found out about them ... they are dedicated to preserving Grenada's built and cultural heritage. So they've got all their different projects going, and one of them on the agenda is the Slave Pen and the Great House.

Anthony: Trust me, that would be great. That would be *so* great. I've been up there and like I said, sometimes I connect with nature. And I was up there a couple years back, I was feeling it. This would be the ideal place for the tourists. Where it's situated, there's not a house around. So no locals, no, nobody like that. Just on the hill, well-situated, overlooking down to Mango, the beach. But that's a place they should really work on. Slave Pen, Mt. Rich.

I'm not so sure about the sulphur springs at River Sallee. The Baptist people and them kind of messed it up. I only been there twice. The first time I went it was great, the holes were all over and the water was coming up all over, and the water was warm, and also sulphur and stuff like that. But over a period of years, the Baptist religion, the

people, they started going there and having their little things, and yeah, it was unattracted. People didn't bother much about it because they Baptist people were there.

Noga: I saw signs that they had been there. I figured it was them, anyway.

Anthony: Candles, and stuff like that.

Noga: Yeah, candles and chalking.

Anthony: Yeah yeah, and people not fond of that. They don't trust that.

Noga: So are those the kinds of things you'd like to see developed?

Anthony: Yeah, just start with the small things. Then eventually, it's going to come up big. You gotta start with the foundation. The foundation got to be the strongest part of your house. So if they preserve the majority of the historic things here in Grenada and showcased it more, Grenada will be the number one tourist attraction in the whole world. Because now, I look at some of the tour guide books, and come on. If I was a tourist in Grenada, mmm, there's not much to do. Mainly the beaches, some industries, some estates. You have loads of estates here, like there's one in Morne Fendue. Been there?

Noga: It was closed.

Anthony: Exactly, see what I mean? It's been closed a long time.

Noga: So you think tourism is the main thing for Grenada's development?

Anthony: I'd say tourism, number one. Right now, agriculture is a major part in any part of the world. But for me, it's tourism, tourism is the goal. That's where we make the majority of the money, the quicker income, and as long as we utilize it in the right ways, we going to receive much more.

Noga: Would you put money into agriculture too?

Anthony: Yeah, you can put some money into agriculture, but I'm telling you, it's going to be hard for the Grenadian public to actually turn back right now, because the majority of our goods, um, on Spiceland Estate here we produce a lot. We supply the local market this and that. But we don't have enough to supply Caribbean countries. For example, here in Grenada, we grow hundreds and thousands of bananas, and we actually have to purchase some from St. Vincent. We have to purchase some things that we have better here in Grenada – mangos, from Trinidad. Trinidad doesn't have any fertile soil at all. What is that? We purchasing tannias, well, all the provisions, mainly buying them from Trinidad and St. Vincent, and come and sell them here in Grenada. Where are we? In a concrete jungle? No. Lots of land. Lots of land. But the youths not into land. Not into land at all.

Noga: Why?

Anthony: _Cuzthe whole idea of, well, some of them, too labor intensive. Unlike overseas where you have your orchard fields and apple fields, and you have machines, yeah, we have the donkeys. Everything is done manually. That puts a strain on everything. I mean, I wouldn't

like to be going out to the field with a cutlass. I mean, you get corns (laughing) and they hurt, they hurt. Yeah.

Noga: So where is home for you, and what makes it home?
Anthony: Home is Mango. And what makes it home? It's just different from the other communities. Although it has its negative side to it, but on an average night, just an average day, can be one of the best place to live. _Cuz it's, it's, it's advanced. It's advanced. Trust me. It's advanced. You have any new technology that comes out, yeah, we got it in Mango. Yeah, so all the good stuff, it's there in Mango. It's just that we need a little bit more. Just a little bit more. We need some institute, we need some playgrounds, we need some, that's all we need. That's the only problem I have with Mango now. But other than that, I'll build my house in Mango any day. Any *any* day. I'll live in Mango for the rest of my life any day, no problem.
Noga: If you could live anywhere in Grenada – ?
Anthony: Mango. No, Mango. Trust me, I've been other places in Grenada, and I've spent weeks and days and stuff, and nah, nah. I mean, they say there is no place sweeter than home. But Mango is just it. The other places – what Mango gives me – they can't cut it.
Noga: How do you think it's different from other communities?
Anthony: For example, as I said advance-wise, so we have things like credit unions, and gas stations, and all these things, right? So it kind of helps us to know what is going on more in the country, in the world, everything. Unlike some people who live in La Poterie and Roseau, and stuff like that, they don't even know how to operate a cellphone. They don't know how to do simple things. But we in Mango, we are advanced to that, we exposed to it, so it's different in that way.

But also, in a kind of sharing way, nah, the other communities, they're up on us. Like after Ivan, when they were distributing what they call the rations and stuff, like in Mango, nah. Mango people didn't really depend on it, right, because as I said, they up there. But the little bit that was distributed was distributed to supporters of the New National Party. Now see, that made a lot of people sick. Because I mean, I had, right, but I was looking at people who did not have anything whatsoever. When I tell you anything, I mean anything. There was no electricity, and *tch*. That used to piss me off. *Agh*. Knowing I home, _cuz nothing much happened to my place in the hurricane, and I'm home, I'm eating, still no one has electricity or anything, but I'm eating and I'm having a warm meal, and I'm still going to sleep in my warm bed. And then, there are people in the hurricane shelter, right? I mean, they are kids. And that's the only reason why I does feel hurt, eh? _Cuz they got kids, when I say kids I mean kids like three and four and five. I mean, what I could stand, they cannot withstand. Surely. That's the only thing. Our

community, we need to bring back the love. That is all. As long as we bring back the love, everything's going to be real good. Real good. _Cuzthe people, they're educated, they smart, yeah, so it's just about love. That's all Mango missing is some love.

Noga: And how do you think – ?

Anthony: To bring it back? Through sports. Through sports. That's the only way the love can come back. _CuzMango people, they got love for sports. Doesn't matter whatever sport it is, they got love for it. And as long as there's a local team involved, they're going to support. So that's how we actually, and that's what we was trying to do. Bring them back together through sports. We try with the basketball, they denied us. *Tch*. And we just, I mean they say it's better to try and fail than fail to try, but we tried on more than one occasion and *tch*. We're not the type that normally gives up, but *tch*. I just say, see me, guys, the way I have to live, other things to be done, we just forgot about that.

Noga: That's too bad.

Anthony: Yeah, it's rough. It's rough. It's rough. Yeah, it's rough. But I really like to see my community back up there because it hurts me. Because normally, sometimes, I'm not saying that that's a bad thing, but six p.m., normally before you had lots of people outside playing in the playing fields, on the court, hosing the sand, people doing long jump, high jump, whatever, everyone is just around socializing. But six, seven now, you're not going to see anywhere whatsoever, in the streets. And that's sad. Also scary. _Cuz You being a foreigner (short chuckle), you passing through a place like that, there's always guys somewhere around. And the kind of mentality they got, yeah. Would not really be safe for you. Yeah, so.

We just need to bring back some sports, and when the sports come back, I said that I didn't want any major role to play, but. I want to be the president of the whole club. I speak to all them boys already and I told them nah, I want to be the president. Because we were under this guy there, and we went and played a couple basketball tournaments elsewhere and we won some money, and no one know what happened with the money. And the money was supposed to go into the team account and stuff like that, and no one know what happened with it, and so we kind of broke up with the group for that. We currently trying to form back, yeah, and I tell them, "Yo, I want to be the president." I tell them, it's not because of the power, it's just because of the vision. And most people will *not* sit down and conversate with them. Right? People could take a chance with me, _cuz they know what I stand for, what I'm capable of, they gonna chill with me and yeah.

Noga: Bring people together.

Anthony: Yeah, bring people together, all the time. All the time. There is just some people hard-headed, can't move them, doesn't matter what you do. But normally that's my thing.

Noga: So how do you see yourself in ten years?

Anthony: Well, I always wanted to live a kind of bachelor life. So I see myself ten years from now, God's willing, with my own house, fully furnished, with everything that I want to be in there. I always wanted a DJ set. So I'm going to have that below my house, my little place, have a nice little car, nothing too fancy but then again nothing too old, right? And I just want to be doing, like, I said I was looking to the police, so that's where I see myself. Like, just working. Average. Just living everyday life, maintaining me, myself, and everything else. Ten years from now. I want to see myself like that five years from now. Trying to put a little *accelerate*.

But we still enough time. Because I was, I wasn't always a good boy. No, I'm telling you. There were times in high school when I was a real jerk (laughs). It all happened – I don't want to blame anybody – but I always blame the principal and some of the teachers for that. Because as I said, I was the captain of the basketball team. And that was a big thing. Because basketball in Grenada here, on the college level, it's high. And we normally win that tournament. So everyone is into that. And there were times like when I reached to school late, or when I do something wrong, I'm not penalized. So, I'm free. I do whatever I want. Just got to my head. And then, when the basketball season was over, then they wanted to penalize me for coming to school late. And I didn't like that. I said, "Yo, I play basketball all year, I doing that, I doing that, now I not playing." Yeah. So then I just, I stopped play basketball. I used to run for them, Intercol. I stopped. I just decide well, I not doing anything for them whatsoever because they ain't nice. I say, "Well if you guys like me so much, even though I was doing things wrong, and I playing basketball, you supposed to punish me. Don't let me play." I told them that in their face, and I said, "Well, all I care about is winning. I ain't playing basketball, I not running," and from there, they started to give me *real* pressure in school. It didn't matter what I did, I was watched closely, and they were treating me differently to other kids. They pressured me, yeah, they pressured me, boy. I make it, yeah, I make it. No hard feelings. I made it. Fortunate. I made it. Here I am. Just here, chilling, living life still. Yeah. What can I do.

Discussion

Anthony spoke articulately and passionately about every subject we chanced upon during our meetings together. Anthony's abiding love was clearly for his community, in spite of the tensions and troubles he describes, and he went out of his way to facilitate additional interviews with other members of his village. At our last visit in March, 2009, he was still working at the Estate. Anthony said that things had improved in his village in spite of the poor state of the economy. There was less violence, though there was a rise in theft.

When my husband met Anthony, he thanked him for helping me out. Anthony laughed and said, "No worries, no worries – I'm a good guy." His words echoed in my head until I realized that this description of himself as a good guy encapsulated the underlying theme of his narrative. In many ways, it is the key to his self-image. He depicts himself as a positive person in his community, someone who can bring people together, empathize with delinquents, and organize community-building events. He gives many examples of his strong set of values; he would never buy a woman with trinkets, he is not too proud to admit mistakes, he will walk away from a fight, he takes care of his younger siblings, he does not take advantage of people who do not understand how inexpensive it is to burn a CD, he will not participate in the hypocrisy of the fashion-oriented Catholic Church. This image fits well with his aspiration to join the police force. Only at the very end of the interview, perhaps sensing its closure, Anthony confesses he was not always a "good boy." Still, the behavior he describes occurred in a specific time and setting that had passed.

Anthony shows a particular sensitivity to the corrupting potential of money. He notes that greed ruined a number of successful activities in his community. He also focuses on the ways that money can cause people to believe that they can do whatever they want. This is one of his concerns about wealthy tourists coming to the island, including the story about older British women who seduce the young men of his community. He also talks about the women (*not* ladies) who can be bought by wealthy older men from the Catholic Church. By contrast, Anthony is not impressed by the token dollars his siblings from the U.S. offer him. Also, Anthony turned down a trip to Barbados to visit his aunt because he suspected that needing help to pay for his expenses would sour the relationship. When talking about class, Anthony's ideas about an upper class income are very modest at $1,500EC (US$560) per month.

As a side note, I questioned several other Grenadians about Anthony's tale of wealthy, older British women cruising through Grenada to pick up young men as husbands – a story which sounded very far-fetched to me. No one could attest to the truth of Anthony's version, but it did scratch the surface of a widespread perception that gender roles are currently undergoing a radical revision. The fact that Caribbean women have historically been higher achievers academically has led to a sense that the scales are tipping: increasingly, women are holding good jobs and are having a hard time finding equal partners for marriage. They are now turning the tables on the traditional scenario in which the single, female head of household is supported by a series of ~~"v~~isitors." As Anika once put it, instead of being kept, women are becoming the keepers. They are increasingly in the financial position to are acquire ~~"b~~oy toys," as one other informant put

it. Another version of this phenomenon was offered by a local sociologist in an interview:

> A lot of first and second generation West Indians, Grenadians specifically – as you know, after World War II you had this importation of labor from the Caribbean to England to work in the post-World War II construction industry. So you have people who would have migrated to England in the _50s and _60s, so that first generation children return sometimes with their parents to view their homeland.
>
> I found out that those young ladies that are returning from England in particular, they tend to have this affinity for those type of young men. And I was trying to find out why. And then one of those guys told me, an elderly man who lived in England for about thirty-five years, he told me that because of the race problem there, a lot of the West Indian men up there are strung out on drugs, in London. And the young ladies feel that they are not sexually satisfied by them. The British West Indian young men. And they're coming down here and they're meeting strong, healthy-looking young men. Whether they're working or not doesn't really matter to them. They wanted to be sexually satisfied. They know that there is nothing financially that that young person can do for them.
>
> We had a classic example in my village. One of the most delinquent (laughs), notorious young man – as a matter of fact he's back in prison again as we speak right now – and this young lady came down, British-born to Grenadian parents, came down, fell in love with him. He went up to England for two weeks, she came back down again, bought a pick-up truck for him for about 90,000 dollars. You know? Whenever she comes, they'll live in some guest house.
>
> But I'm saying, basically, it's not really old British white women. I wouldn't agree with that. What I'm seeing are women from Grenadian parentage, born in England, who want to come home, meet people, come back to roots. And all of those things their parents would have told them, what they experienced growing up, they want to experience that as well, too. Their parents are old, they can't take them around to do this, so they'll hook up with a young man who can take them here, take them there, cook different meals, and so so so. And as a result of that, you have a lot of relationships being established.
>
> They still have the stereotype thing. Even in our culture here, a young black man feel, especially if he's athletically-built, what have you, he tend to feel that sexual prowess. You understand me?
>
> Apart from the roots and things like that, too, because another young man who told me once – he's in England again, too – a young lady told him that she really like the size of his penis and what have you, and so so so is the case, and when she went out, she told her friends about this strong young man from Mango, he was from Mango again, and the size of

> his penis. And her friends came down, just imagine, her friends came down. Just imagine, her friends came down looking for him too because they want to experience that as well.
>
> But that kind of aggression that I see with them, so much so now that a lot of the young Grenadian male think that these women are very easy. Once it's Carnival time and Christmas time – because it's a seasonal thing. You come home for Carnival, come home with family, come to visit parents that have retired in Grenada, during those two seasons. So those two seasons, they are actually on the lookout. They will position themselves. It's a kind of, a commercial kind of sex thing. Because apparently they are selling sex in exchange for favors, then. The person may not be paying them British pounds for sex, but at the same time, if I sexually satisfied her and make her feel that ecstasy, you know, I may be able to establish a relationship with her and benefit socially and economically from that relationship. Which includes an opportunity to go to England.

In this version, it is interesting to note that in spite of the power balance favoring wealthy foreign women, this phenomenon is still interpreted as a credit to the sexual prowess and physical endowments of Grenadian men. Anthony's version (whether his own interpretation or a shared community myth, I cannot say) emphasizes both the corrupting power of BET culture and desires for flashy displays of wealth, and the idea that the men are unable or unwilling to achieve this through their own efforts. The idea of a wealthy white woman driving through Mango and opening her car door to whisk away a man on the street struck me as a kind of *deus ex machina* – an improbable solution for an intractable problem.

On the whole, Anthony perceives his community as being very high class and advanced. Important positions in the work force seem to define these qualities more than achievements in higher education, although education is also important to Anthony. Citing the presence of credit unions and a gas station, Anthony argues that people from Mango gain greater exposure to the world than some of the neighboring villages.

Anthony is also proud of his community for its role in the Revolution and the fact that key players continue to live in Mango. Anthony expressed a real passion for his parish's historical heritage, along with the hope that it would be preserved and developed for visitors. This love for his village contrasts with most of the SGU students with whom I spoke; the latter tended to focus on the national level more than their hometown or home parish.

Denisha

Denisha sells spices in the newly-constructed Spice Market in downtown St. George's. She is twenty-three years old and has a seven-year-old son. Most of the spices that Denisha sells in the market come from her family land. Her brother brings her herbs from his leased plot of land, and the cocoa grows in her yard. Cocoa balls are the basis for a favorite local beverage, "cocoa tea," and consist of hard balls of cocoa ground together with cinnamon, nutmeg, and bay leaf. Denisha sold little bundles of four or five balls, made from scratch, for a few U.S. dollars.

One day I bought lemongrass from her (she told me that burning it would keep the mosquitoes away), and we struck up a conversation. In the year that followed, Denisha recognized me each time I entered the market and steered me toward her stall. We cultivated a relationship over jars of homemade seasoning and spice packets, and eventually I asked her for an interview. She readily agreed, and I offered to meet her at her home in the country – a lovely but remote area which she referred to as "behind God's back."

Denisha lives in a rural, hilly part of Grenada. It is not particularly isolated if one has transportation, although the small size of the island does not diminish the challenge of windy, mountainous, and potted roads. The public bus routes are accessible, but because most run directly to town and then require a transfer, they do not provide easy access to different parts of the island. Denisha and her family live in a beautiful, lush valley. The only houses visible on their short stretch of road are her parents' small house, her sisters' smaller wooden cottage just across the street, and a larger house belonging to

a neighbor. The valley is enclosed by steep embankments, and a river filled with boulders runs just below the sister‘s cottage, which is perched on pilings just off the side of the road. Rains regularly swell the river into a dangerous rushing torrent that the family fears. Shortly before Hurricane Ivan hit the island, Denisha had finished building a new wooden cottage on the land just behind her parents‘ house. All that remains are the concrete posts, but she is still making her monthly payments to the lumber company. She and her son stay with her parents or her sister. The parents‘ home is built of concrete blocks and has a galvanized roof. The land behind it is covered with banana (or –fig”) trees.

The first time I visited Denisha at home, there were five children running in the yard – Denisha‘s, her sister‘s, and the neighbor‘s children watched me curiously from any available vantage during the interview. Denisha is one of nine children, eight surviving. Some siblings still live with her parents; others have married and moved to her mother‘s family land in a nearby village. The older sister who lives in the valley has three children, and we sat in her home. The living room was just large enough for two chairs, a crib (with a five-month-old baby sleeping in it), and a small television. The kitchen was at the back, separated by a carefully hung curtain, and I could see a small gas cooker and mini-refrigerator. The walls were made of thin boards, behind which were two bedrooms. The house does not have running water or a bathroom. On later occasions when I dropped by, I was able to appreciate the effort that had been expended to tidy the place for my first visit.

Denisha is very warm, personable, and articulate. Only in the course of transcribing the interview did I even notice the grammatical errors she made in her efforts

to speak Standard English to me. Most of the Grenadians I met who did not attend secondary school, like Denisha, spoke in a heavy Grenadian dialect and were far less fluent in codeswitching than she. Her experience in the tourism sector showed in subtle ways in her manner, dress, and speech. This seemed to be a source of some pride for her, and may partially account for her role as the sole breadwinner of the family. In spite of extensive explanations on my part (and a long Human Research Protections Program consent form from my university, which she painstakingly read aloud), I suspect that she did not entirely understand what I was doing in Grenada. She lacked the larger context to ground my research project, and I think she also had a lot of experience with NGOs and other aid groups. This may account, in part, for her repeated return to the question of what Grenadians need, what the government could do better, etc., even when this was not the question at hand. Probably more to the point, however, is the fact that these issues preoccupy her on a daily basis as she and her family struggle to make ends meet.

Topics: Education and employment; rural community; Hurricane Ivan; development; Revolution, Independence, and politics.

Education and Employment

> Noga: Where did you go to school?
> Denisha: [Name deleted], that‘s the primary school for this area. And from there I went on to do Skills Training at New Life Organization – NEWLO – in St. John‘s. To learn a skill.
> Noga: So what kind of training did they give you?
> Denisha: You had pretty much a choice, but I did hospitality arts and sewing. But. I like the sewing but maybe just little things for myself, I‘m not really into any big sewing. But I‘m really into hospitality arts, I don‘t know, because over the years I accustom to dealing with

people, I get accustomed to, you know, yeah. I really have an interest in that area.

Noga: So did it help you with what you're doing now in any way?

Denisha: Yes. The institution helped me relate to people, how to approach them, how to present myself. It was just a wake up call for me. It was really good. It's a nice place. And I would encourage any young person who just leave school and don't know what to do to try it.

Noga: How old were you when you went to NEWLO?

Denisha: Normally the program takes in from sixteen – I was sixteen at the time. It's eighteen months, a year and a half.

Noga: And why did you decide not to go to secondary school?

Denisha: Well at the time, it's not like I didn't decide to go, but at the time I didn't have the financial help to finish the five year period in school. So I had to get something that I could have gone to get a skill but in a shorter time.

Noga: *That's* what I've been hearing. Because I always thought secondary school here was free but –

Denisha: No, no no (exhales laugh).

Noga: There's a lot of expenses.

Denisha: Mind you, my mom have nine kids, I'm the fifth out of nine. There was always like five, six of us in school together. My mom is really a stay-at-home mom, she used to do the selling and stuff. So it was really hard. So that's why I went there.

Noga: Do you think your son will go to secondary school?

Denisha: I'm praying to. I hope that I'll have a job then and be able to upkeep him. But if ever when the time comes around I would like him to pass Common Entrance [exam] and get a secondary education, but I don't want him to get a school that is very far. _Cuz what normally happens, even though the child pass for secondary school, and you cannot afford it, you still have to let the child go for a year at least. You cannot get a transfer at the same time.

Noga: And they just assign you wherever?

Denisha: Yeah. I think what they should look into, you know, if a child is from a certain area, you don't take a child from St. David's and put them in a school in St. Andrew's. You know? Let the children in that village stay in there so it would be easier for everyone. According to where you live, look for the nearest school. Because my sister went to seek the Common Entrance last year, but there's [two schools in the parish], but the other up there is closer. Even though she has to walk and get a bus, but it's closer. So I don't know why they put her so far [in the other one]. _Cuzdown there, it's harder, she has to go all the way to town. I think they should really look into that. The children from the rural areas, you leave them there.

Noga: So you say your mother is a stay-at-home mom. Does she do any income-generating work?

Denisha: There's a work they call, they do the contract, right? It's a work they do probably twice, three times a year, sometimes four, cut the bushes. She's in charge of a group to do a certain area. But that's not every month. It's not a monthly basis. It's whenever they decide they should cut down the bushes, you know? But it's not every month. [Note: Denisha is referring to a national debushing program. As a governmental source of income for the rural poor, it made headlines as a political football before, during, and after the election as parties alleged that the program was being used to win votes.]

Noga: And what does your father do?

Denisha: My father is a painter, but he don't work everything – whenever someone just finishes a house, if he get, you know, he go. But he really plants the garden, garden work. A farmer. He's a very good painter. Whenever there is work, he goes out.

Noga: And now, I know you support yourself and you work in the spice market. So the season is how long for you?

Denisha: From October to April. So six month.

Noga: Wow, so it's ending soon.

Denisha: Yeah, ending next month. And after it ends next month, that's it until October.

Noga: There are a lot of new developments coming. Do you see tourists passing through here?

Denisha: They do pass, they do.

Noga: But not enough to make a business right here, or – ?

Denisha: Yes, they do, yeah. It's just that I really don't have the help, right? If the business in St. George was much better and the money was flowing, I could have opened a little parlor just on the bank there because the land, my dad gave it to me. I have the plan and the deed, everything. But you know, there is a good place to open a little business. I always say one day, even not the spices or whatever, I want to do something. Because it's close to the road, you know?

Noga: What would you sell in the parlor? In your dream, what would it look like?

Denisha: I want to open a little business. For some reason, I would like to still remain with the spices, but I want a variety of different things. So if sometime if you don't get the spice to sell, you could buy a cold drink. Probably a bottle water, something.

Noga: Are there any parlors in your village now?

Denisha: No. Well, they have little shops, but people don't have much businesses around. I buy in town, which is much, much cheaper than the shops here.

Noga: So what other kinds of jobs are you looking for in the off-season?

Denisha: Well basically, I sent off about five applications this year already, but I didn‘t get any call. But normally I say I‘ll call them back. If I could get a decent work where I could get a salary, I‘m willing to really put the market on hold. And look for something. Because at the end of the day, it‘s not something you could always rely on. Season, off-season, you know? I wouldn‘t get a permanent work which I could get a whole year and then when the season on, leave it out. No, I wouldn‘t do that. And then they‘d be paying NIS [National Insurance Scheme] and stuff, and once you have benefits, you know? Right now, I‘m really looking for something I can settle myself.

Noga: So what are the applications you sent out?

Denisha: Basically for housekeeping. Well I have a passion for that, and I think I‘ll do good in that field. Housekeeping, or probably waitressing. Anything to do with cleaning and thing like that.

Noga: So you applied to hotels?

Denisha: Yeah. But I didn‘t get any answers as yet ... Well I did apply for work in a nursing home in St. Paul‘s, it might be for two weeks. I might hang in there still, just to get the experience. But I‘m starting on Thursday. Someone is going on holiday. So even though there is cruise ship in, I‘m going to go for the experience. So sometime again, whenever – that‘s my second time there. Whenever someone go on holiday I always fill in their space. I get paid, and it‘s not far.

Noga: How much do they pay?

Denisha: They pay like fifty dollars. And it‘s not from eight to four. I pay five dollars for bus. And it‘s just basically cleaning, it‘s not hard. Making up the rooms, seeing that the people okay, they get their medications. It‘s not bad.

Noga: I thought I saw a job for housekeeping in the newspaper.

Denisha: Oh my God, it‘s a joke, the position is already filled. To get a job you have to know someone. But you know what I always believe, even though, like, I get a work somewhere? Even though they might start you off with like 500 or whatever, it will grow. You just have to hang in there. Eventually it will build.

I don‘t get the interest anymore with the tourists. So I think it‘s better. Maybe they can recommend me. I take the opportunity. Honestly, if they will keep me, I‘m willing to give the spices up and stick in a job. I always thank God it‘s only one kid I have. Normally I get clothes from my relatives, friends, and I cherish that.

Noga: Family in Canada – do they help?

Denisha: We do connect, but not very often. We don‘t go asking. If they feel it‘s okay and they want to send something, more Christmas time, they will. If they come, they bring something.

Denisha: I grew up selling spices with my mom, right? Back in the day, things used to sell. People used to come and buy a lot of spices. But

since after Hurricane Ivan 2004, that was September the seventh, that was it. You find after for that four years, September will be four years, and every year – well, a lot of people came right 2005 to see the place. And 2005 was a good year.

Noga: That's surprising, right after the storm.

Denisha: Yeah! That was a good year. Because a lot of people came and they really gave us their support. They'd buy, and even if they didn't buy, they gave you money, they gave you whatever help. But after that, it's going down. Most of the people that really travel now, come to Grenada, most of them been here already. A lot of them have family living here, so when they come they don't really need.

But what I find is really selling in the tourism sector is clothing, when they come they buy more clothing, probably to go on the beach, than they really go to spices. Or they more go on tours, see different places. Basically, if there is four cruise ship in for the day, can bet all the buses will be going out. For me, it's not that they're not getting spices, you know, but most of the time when they go on tour, wherever they go on tour they get spices there.

Noga: Yeah, they have them up in Grand Etang –

Denisha: Yeah. They get them up there too.

Noga: So if they get whisked away out of town, then you never see them.

Denisha: When they come back, it's just back to the ship.

Noga: And the things that you sell, where do you get them from?

Denisha: Most of them is from home, like the chocolates and stuff is from home. But some of them, according to the things that they ask for, like if they have them in the supermarket or other places, I buy them. They always ask for different things.

Noga: So on a typical day, what time do you leave home?

Denisha: Well, on a morningtime, before I used to go very early, because sometimes people come very early. They're traveling, they get an early flight, they want to come and pick up their last minute shopping. But normally I leave home now, because school, when I started sending my son to school, normally I leave home after seven in the morning so I'll be down before eight. But then on Saturday I go down very early. I leave home a little after six. It's a different market, you know.

Noga: And how long do you stay?

Denisha: At least eight hours. Sometimes a little longer, sometimes six, five hours.

Noga: So what would you consider a good day in terms of how much you sell?

Denisha: A *very* good day for me will be like 200 EC [US$75]. Yeah, that would be a very good day. And sometimes you will have a good day, like you'll go down on a Monday and you'll have a good day like 200 EC. But then Tuesday you might make forty [US$15], Wednesday

you might make none, Thursday you might make ten [US$3.75]. So at the end of the month, it‘s not really a salary. Because then you‘re putting out paying the buses every day, paying your fees for selling, because you got to pay to sell. The fees are two dollars every day, and my bus is seven.

Noga: So at the end of the month, in season, do you know on average how much you manage to bring in?

Denisha: Well, to be honest with you, in season, when there‘s – well, the spices, I don‘t know how to explain it to you, but in season, sometime I make like 1,000 [approx. US$375], could be 800. And when it‘s off-season, I don‘t go down everyday because everyone has the same thing. Could be like 1,000. _Cuz you have days that are going to go over a hundred, days you make less.

Noga: And in terms of your expenses, your living expenses?

Denisha: Ho. Well, to be honest with you, presently I‘m the only one that is working. I consider it is a job, because I‘m the only one that is really working so. I‘ll have to support my mom in whatever way I can, my two younger brothers and sister, and my son and myself. Honestly, normally, how I really sa— I don‘t really have a savings. Because if I should go to town today, and there is something missing like sugar, I‘ll get that. And then probably buy back something so the business wouldn‘t bust. And then another day, I may need a soap, or a Colgate. It‘s basically just to get little things.

Noga: And do you have any idea how much money you have to spend to buy food and groceries?

Denisha: Is very expensive. Probably for the month, what I spend for my son going to school and just myself, not even food, it costs me like 300. Just to probably get little supplements, Colgate, just things me and my son need. And in case my sister needs something, probably a little cream, I have to get it for her. My mom run out of something, you know. But for the food part, we get the provision from the land. We try to mix it, _cuz we can‘t go shopping. Normally I don‘t make groceries like how someone will go with a shopping list, buying, no. If I go to sell and the day is good, and I can probably get some meat I get some meat today, tomorrow I get some sugar (laughs). It‘s crazy.

Noga: So you grow a lot of stuff?

Denisha: Yeah, but not right here. Down on the mountainside.

Noga: Walking distance?

Denisha: Yeah. Walking distance.

Noga: So is that what your father does?

Denisha: Yeah, my brother also does the same thing. My brother live just on the corner, he does the same thing.

Noga: Is that also part of your father‘s land?

Denisha: No, he's leasing a piece of land on the corner. It's a nicer place to plant, it's close down to the river so you can get the water and everything.

Noga: What do you grow, what do you eat?

Denisha: To be honest with you, we don't have a special diet, which is bad. Sometime you may get up in the morningtime, it's not like you have a schedule, like I'm going to make soup today. It's just like, everyday whatever is left. Whatever is left. If there's rice, it's going to be rice. If there's some provision, that's it. If there's no meat today, no meat today. Whatever's left.

Noga: So when you say you grow provision, that's like yam – ?

Denisha: Provision, yeah, is, like you see a lot of fig tree, breadfruit whenever it's in season, you get yams, fig, bluggo, plantain, dasheen.

Noga: So you've got all that growing?

Denisha: Yeah, but most of them is seasonal. You have to know the planting time. My dad knows. What moon to plant, whatever.

Noga: What do you do when not working?

Denisha: I'm just at home. If I have chocolate seeds I'll grind them and make chocolate. But I'm really getting fed up of home. I've been doing it so many years. After the season close I'm just home again for six months. It's really boring.

Noga: I saw there was a sign as I drove in, "Home of [village name] Cultural and Sport' –

Denisha: Yeah, not far from here there's a playing field. It's not as big as La Sagesse, not as developed, but people go up there and play windball and cricket. Can go fly kites.

Noga: During those eight hours a day that you're sitting in the market, what is your experience?

Denisha: A part of it I like. I like meeting people, talking to them, getting to know different people. But some of them, after that, it's just boring. So I might bring a book and read, or a puzzle. I like it. The problem I have – I love the job I do, but I need a job where I can get a salary. That's it. So at the end of the month you can budget, saying look, I can do this, I can do that. But I just like meeting people, and I think I'm very good at that area. People tell me that. I'm not boasting myself. I think if I should get the opportunity to work somewhere in the same field, like tourism field, I think I would do good. But I don't mean to say I'll have to sell spices.

Noga: What do you think of the tourists that you meet?

Denisha: Well, some of them, I never really meet anyone been rude. I don't know. You have some that will just say, "No thank you," but I think it's how you approach them that says it all. I don't have no problem. Just sometime, if they say they don't want any, you cannot

force them. Sometimes you don‘t know if they have any money as well. But I just like chatting with them (laughs).

Noga: Do you chat with the other people selling?

Denisha: Yes. I do have an open relationship with.

Noga: Is it competitive?

Denisha: Well, it‘s very competitive. Sometime you will find some people in their mood, but I try to be open with everyone. At the end of the day, whatever happens, whenever I go I pray over my stuff, I say, ―God, I‘m here, you know my needs, I‘m the breadwinner,‖ you know, and I pray before I really open up my stuff. There‘s no day I ever really went and don‘t sell *anything* at all. Even though it‘s ten dollars, whatever, I say thank God.

But it‘s very competitive, but I don‘t make that a problem. I just approach the people and if they‘re willing to come, or they want to come back a later time I tell them, and they come.

Noga: How did it come to be that you‘re the breadwinner?

Denisha: Because I‘m the only one that really has a – my sister had a job before, she used to work at the True Blue restaurant. She used to live in Grand Anse, it was closer. But now with transport, it‘s very hard for her now. It‘s very hard. And then my mom suffers high blood pressure, so to get down to the market, that‘s the work she‘s been doing *all* the years. So it‘s very – the *heat*.

Noga: She used to work in that market too?

Denisha: Yeah.

Noga: Selling spices just like you?

Denisha: Yeah. When I was smaller, on holidaytime, I‘d go with her.

Noga: Do you ever take your son with you?

Denisha: Sometime, but I try to leave him at home because he‘s very costly (laughs). He needs everything he sees. I try to bring him something in the evening, fine.

Rural Community

Noga: How would you describe the area?

Denisha: Well, to begin with [the village] is on the whole a very historical place. Very close, not far from here, there‘s a place named [deleted]. That‘s lower down. If you heard about, back in the days with the Caribs, there‘s a place named [deleted], that‘s a French name, you know where the Caribs and stuff had their – there‘s also a stone that they have carved on. Up here, in a sense, is a very historical place. A lot of people know of the place. It‘s a very cultural place, back in the days. Now, they‘re trying to build it back up. But back in the day, it was a very cultural place.

Noga: And what kind of people live here? Mostly farmers – ?

Denisha: Yeah, mostly farmers that really live around. Lot of people have land up in the mountainside, they plant. Lot of cassava, make farine, and all that stuff. Lot of farmers. They do have people who work out, but there's a lot of people that do a lot of farming.

Noga: So people who don't work out, how do they make a living?

Denisha: Well, some people are fortunate in that they may have relatives away who send foodstuff to them, or, you know. Some people may have relatives away. Some people may be able to do a little job, probably wash for people, do something, you know. But basically, it's not just our area, the whole of Grenada before, it used to be little communities like up here that people just at home. But now, a lot of people been losing their jobs. But it's not just the cry of me, I could imagine – I always say thank God I have *one* son. I don't want any more (laughs). It's very hard. Actually, the work I'm doing in the market, I wouldn't say it's no job at all, but, you know. Both parents are not really working. Yeah, it's very hard.

Noga: Is it a safe area?

Denisha: Well yes. For that. We don't have no problem like people stealing and things. It's just quiet. In the evening, after seven in the night, it's just dead. Buses finish run.

Noga: So what do you do after seven in the night?

Denisha: Well if there's moonlight, probably I may go for a walk. But only on a moonlight. There's not so many streetlights around. Or we may sit outside, have a talk, look at news, and go to bed.

Noga: Do you go to bed early?

Denisha: Yeah, _ɑz normally it's very kind of very lonely quiet up here. And I don't really go out very often. I do sometimes, but. I don't have enough to go here, go there. Whatever I have is just for food.

Noga: What would be a fun thing, a treat to do?

Denisha: I love going on the beach. The fun thing for me is if we can take an evening off, go to Grand Anse Beach, and after probably go to Rick's Café and give the kids an ice-cream. But we don't do that very often, you know, but whenever it's possible. You have to look at the transportation fee with the kids. That's it.

Hurricane Ivan

Noga: So you told me once that you had your own little house that you built, and I saw the posts. And you're paying that off still. So how is it for you now staying with your relatives. Do you still hope to have your own home?

Denisha: I hope to have my own home still, but not just right now because I really had thought that if the tourism business would have, you know – the only way I would be able to have my own home is if I get a monthly job. It's much harder now to get a home. Yeah. A lot of

people are dishonest, they get the material and they don‘t want to pay, because they don‘t have strict agreements. So they get very strict now.

Noga: You‘d said you had to put money down?

Denisha: Yeah, first. And then the monthly payments.

Noga: So how did you get all that money to put down?

Denisha: Well, I got help from friends away, everybody sent, and then I make up and yeah. To make the down payment. You see before, let me just give you an example. The cost of my house then was 8,500 EC [US$3,200]. They had asked me to bring 2,000 and I would have balance the 6,500. But now, whoever have to go in, you‘ll have to bring dead half, no matter what amount. So if I need to go back again, I‘ll have to come up with double and put 4,000.

Noga: And what kind of house does that money buy? What are the facilities that that house gives you?

Denisha: Okay, you‘ll get a size of a fourteen by sixteen ply, 5/8ths ply. Just two bedroom, like this size (gestures to her sister‘s house), this is a fourteen by sixteen. Two small rooms, a kitchen. The pipe is outside, but she has to put up a sink. No inside toilet or bathroom.

Noga: How about your parents‘ house. Was it affected by Ivan?

Denisha: Yes, the whole roof came off. The whole roof came off. But they were lucky as you see, some of the galvanize bend back, it‘s kind of twisted and stuff, so they was lucky to get back galvanize from different places around. Maybe some of them not even ours (laughs). When the rain come, we do have little leaks, you know? There was a program the government had when they were fixing roofs, not houses, only for the roofs. A lot of people came and looked, but I haven‘t heard nothing of the program again. Could have give you a ply roof, give you a better roof and strap it down. But. I don‘t know what become of that program. I don‘t know.

Noga: So you managed to find, and rebuild the roof yourselves. And the walls?

Denisha: The wall wasn‘t there with Ivan (she points to a fence outside her parent‘s house.) With Ivan, we had a very bad slide from up where my house was, so got a little help and we tried to do our own thing to put up a wall. So in case something should happen again it wouldn‘t really – but it‘s not finished as you see, it‘s just a preventive.

Noga: And how about your sister‘s place?

Denisha: This came after. She got help from the Mennonite church she went to. They‘re not so far. I don‘t know much about them, I only know they use this thing on their head, but I have some cousin down the road that goes to their church. They‘re open to everyone. When it happened, how she got this house, right? She didn‘t build as yet, we was all living together. But she was putting up her pillars, the pillars was done. But she used to go to the church. And that house had to give to an elderly lady in the church, but her children decided that they

would have build back in wall. So she was very lucky enough that there was material enough, and there was a crew from Canada – I think it's Canada – some young guys came and they was lucky enough to put it up. She was *very* lucky (laughs). But there's a lot of form they bring to the Ministry. People came, they look, time and time again, they look. I don't know what become of the program. Every time you call, they tell you they run out of materials, call in two months time. You call back again, something came up.

Noga: Before then you were all living together.

Denisha: Yes. Together. All.

Noga: And were you there during Ivan, or did you go to a shelter?

Denisha: At the time of Ivan I didn't stay, I went to a shelter that's lower down. A school. Mostly everybody in the community went. We was afraid of the water because when the rain falls very heavy, the little stream there behind the house come down very heavy. Even though the rain fall very heavy and I see it's building up, I don't stay. Probably I go over to my sister's. It's flat. Not slope like here.

Noga: How do you learn about what's happening in Grenada day-to-day?

Denisha: Normally, the television, I depend on. The news and the newspaper. And people normally gossip, so (laughs).

Noga: How closely do you pay attention to all the political stuff that's going on, the election news?

Denisha: I do pay attention, right? But I don't know so much from way back. But, as from 1995, yeah?

Noga: Why 1995?

Denisha: The New National Party came in, so I can tell you from there. All government they do have their weakness and their strengths. But to be honest with you, I think the NNP administration, they do a lot of good work, but there still are some areas where they could have done better. For the roads, they did a lot, farm roads and everything like that.

But after Hurricane Ivan, that's when things started. Before that, from 95 to 2004 it was all running smoothly. The schools, the hospital, you know, they do a lot of work. But since after Hurricane Ivan, that's when I think it really started. And all this things come from – like where they get help to build back houses, that's where it really started. Because there's a lot of people who *had* homes – and who did not have any home at all got the homes. You know? And they also had a group from Guyana that was building homes with toilet and bathroom. And there's lots of people who got these homes who didn't have a home before. You understand? So there's where all these things started from. People getting like three bedroom house and very stronger than this one.

Noga: How were those people chosen?

Denisha: Well, like in a community, they will put one person who they think supporting their party. So at the end of the day, the people that they put there who support the party, they would try to get a family member or someone who they think also supporting the party – they was not really looking. But I don't think that was a time to really look at whoever you support, you know?

So that's when all the things started after that. You know, you could ask other people and they will tell you that things were running smooth but after Hurricane Ivan, they got so much help from different places. And I don't say they don't give. But the people that was, you know – if you look around, even lower than where I live, there's a lot of people who live in a smaller apartment than this. So I think it all started after Hurricane Ivan. That's where the division come in. And there's a lot of people still angry, you know? A lot of people lost a *lot* of stuff.

Noga: I heard that the NDC had even said, after Ivan, *don't* give aid to the government because they're going to squander the funds and they're corrupt. You need to give money through the NGOs, through the churches, through other organizations. They said the government is going to misuse the funds.

Denisha: I think that was a better thing to do. When you think about it, when you give donations to the NGOs and other groups, I think these people would have done an honest job. These are the people who *know* the people. Because when you look at it, the people in Grenada, you have a list of people that really need assistance. The NGOs and the groups know exactly who really need what. It would have been easier for them to just know, well, right, that family really need that. I think it would have been better that way. But the churches and stuff, they still play their part, apart from all the help the government gave, they still went out of their way to get friends and everybody else to supply whatever they can.

Noga: Was there was a community effort here? Did neighbors help?

Denisha: Yes. Well, after Hurricane Ivan, well, it was not the first major hurricane, we had one in '52 [she refers to Hurricane Janet, which hit Grenada in 1955]. But after that it was strange to a lot of people so everybody came out and they help one another to cover back their roofs, you know. It was good, a lot of community effort.

Noga: So what did you do immediately after Ivan?

Denisha: Well, just a few days after – everyone was just trying to stay put because there were lines down and everything. And then men came together, who had the power saw, cutlass, cut the roads, the trees. That was the first thing we did. And then when we came back at home, everything is wet, in a mess. So we try to wash – there wasn't really water but there was water in the river. Wash clothing. But most of them we had to throw because they were so, you know. And just

immediately after all the roads cleaned up we started getting help. People start passing around. Giving food and clothing and stuff.

Noga: Was that government people, or church people?

Denisha: All different people.

Noga: How long did it take before you got electricity back?

Denisha: Wow. To be honest with you, it took almost a year. Almost a year in that area. Because it's a rural area up here. People in St. George's and other places – yeah. We used lamp or candle. We cooked everything outside. At the time, we didn't really have gas. Most of the time we cook outside in the day. If we need hot water in the night, or so, then we use inside.

Noga: Now, how do you cook?

Denisha: Gas stove. But sometimes when we don't have – sometimes the gas finish and for a whole week you *just* can't find the money to really get a new one. So, you still have to use outside.

But I still say, the thing that always keep me going, there's a lot of people that is paying rent, and it's very costly for them. So I say, at the end of the day, a lot of people wish that they only had to find food. Although it's hard for us, but you know? That keeps me hanging in there, because there's a lot of people have to pay a lot mortgage, you know?

Noga: Are there still lots of cocoa trees around here?

Denisha: Yeah there's a lot, but a lot fell in Hurricane Ivan. A lot of the nutmeg tree fell down too. There are more trees, clove as you see – well, some cut down because my sister had to build her home here. So, they fell in Ivan. Clove trees and. It was more cultivated. But a lot of the trees fell down.

Noga: Did anyone in your family used to sell the cocoa and the nutmeg?

Denisha: Yeah. My mom used to sell some at the market, and there was a place where you could have gone sell the cocoa when it's green. There's a pool where you could have sell your nutmeg.

Noga: Oh that's right. You told me there was a station up here.

Denisha: There's an old one up there. It's closed down now, since Ivan. There's two, one right up there, and one low there. They're closed down now. Because a lot of people don't have nutmeg as before.

Noga: They take a long time to regrow.

Denisha: See, a lot of people just don't bother after Ivan to plant back. See what happened, there was a program after Ivan also where they had a lot of nutmeg trees and all those stuff. But then again, they had problem with distributing them. There were some people who get so much, and, you know. They didn't share it up properly. So a lot of people didn't get plants to plant back.

Noga: So this area, there hasn't been much replanting.

Denisha: No. A lot of people plant but more short crops.

Noga: How do the farmers who were surviving on nutmeg and cocoa –
Denisha: Exactly!
Noga: It used to be decent money –
Denisha: Decent money, yeah. It used to be good money. They used to get a backpay, yeah, at the end of the year.
Noga: What are they doing now?
Denisha: And that was the only thing they used to survive from, you know?

Development

Noga: So what do you think development is?
Denisha: Well, in my opinion, development is something that will make someone or people more independent of themself. As long as you have that, then I think you're on the right track. Like Grenada, as I told you before, there's a lot of things that people who came here many years ago, if they come back now it's like a whole new place to them. A lot of people even get lost in the city they don't know. They're not thinking that Grenada will reach the world standard, that they will see good streets and everything, terminus, mall.

Noga: What about all the new developments? Do you think that will bring any opportunities?
Denisha: Well, there's a program with the government, they call GREP [GTEP, Grenada Training and Employment Project]. But you see, that's the thing again. For some reason, they do have these programs, and then you always find yourself that whoever works in the Ministry, they will always get someone of their family – before you know of the program, it's already filled. There are no more forms. You do find there are programs where you graduate, and after they get you a job. But. Before you hear of the program, that's it. It's all full.

I think they should go around to the villages, they know the people who are home, and really look that they just have – because you find people with jobs already doing the program. Even teachers, I can tell you, who want to do a different skill, probably, hairdressing, whatever, and they're doing the same program. So they should really look for people that is home that don't have any job at all. To try to teach them.

But sometime, by the time you hear of a program, it's already closed. Or they say that they have everyone they need already. And they should never give one who already get the opportunity for whatever free course, to give them again. They should start looking into that. I would love to, I would grab the opportunity. Because I'm home, really, I mean in the market, it's like I'm actually home, too. So if there's any opportunity which I can get, you know, I will take it.

But I think they have that program – three times I was not lucky enough to get in.

Noga: In your mind, if you see yourself happy, what are the things that you really want?

Denisha: Oh my God, my house! Just imagine, just having a wooden house, hoping that no bad things would happen again. That's it. I need a bathroom and toilet inside, oh! That's all for me. A little home of my own. Try to meet my little daily expenses.

Noga: What do you want for your son?

Denisha: I want him to get a good education so he'll be able to, when he gets older, to get a decent job to help himself. Or maybe even to get a scholarship. Depends on how well he do, you know? _Cuz I might not be able to afford, but, I'll be pushing him all the way.

Noga: Would you like him to have the chance to go abroad?

Denisha: Oh yes, even myself! It's just a dream of mine. I always say, if I get the opportunity. Because they even had this program, I think Canada, where you could have get the opportunity to go overseas to work in this apple farm. Somewhere, I'm not sure. But you could have gone for six months and come back. And I was just praying for the opportunity. But knowing the person that I am, if I have the opportunity to travel, to work, save money, have my home, you know? Then probably help out my son, _cuz I don't want any more kids. And also help my family, they mean a lot to me and I know they struggling. I always wish that something good could happen where I can travel.

Noga: Where would you like to go?

Denisha: Well first of all, I don't have a visa. I have some relatives in Canada. But first, if I get the opportunity to travel, I'd like to develop myself. Like, able to go to school for a little while, probably to learn more about the computer, and then settle in a work and take it from there (laughs).

Noga: Would you like to go to the U.S., or you prefer Canada, or the UK …?

Denisha: I prefer the U – I don't know, nothing wrong with the U.S., like America. But I want a place more like home, somewhere Canada, the UK. More back like home.

Noga: What makes you see Canada or the UK as more like home?

Denisha: Because I have relatives out there and, I don't know, even look at it on the news, it's more of a Caribbean life, it's quiet. I don't hear anything much up there. Don't see any much problems. It's more quiet. I don't know if they have any fast life or anything like that. Probably in the future, I may meet someone who wants housekeeping work overseas. But I still look beyond that, if I can develop myself. I'm looking forward to that. I'm just hoping and praying.

Noga: Would you leave your son with your family?

Denisha: Yes, that‘s not a problem. As you see – I have no problem. If I get the opportunity to travel, he‘s not a problem. My sister, she‘s his mom, his grandmother is his mom. So that wouldn‘t be a problem for me to worry.

Noga: What do you think life is like in Canada or the U.S. or the UK? How do you imagine it?

Denisha: All around has its up and down, but when you look at the medical health, these people gives not just us aid. Other people also. And they‘re very caring when it comes to health. If you go to the General Hospital and anyone from Canada, wherever, you feel that warmness. It‘s not because they‘re out of their country and they‘re trying to prove something, you know. You feel that sense of caring. I know that they care especially for children a lot. You feel that. If you interact with somebody else from the country, you don‘t *feel* that. You feel that they accept you. I don‘t know, I‘ve been selling over the years and meeting people, maybe I feel that, you know.

Noga: If you had the chance to go away, would you want to come back?

Denisha: Yes I will, but, believe me. If I have the chance to go away to develop myself, I would take full advantage of it. Number one. So then in the future, well you never know, I may have a family you know (laughs), but in the future if I should come back, and in Grenada, I should come back more developed. I should be able to have my home, maybe placed in a better job, maybe open a decent business. Something I know definitely, doesn‘t matter what, that I could survive from it. But I would like to develop myself educationally. To start, to begin it. So that I can be able enough to help my son and my family.

Noga: So if you had chance to go to the community college here, would you go? Would you consider that useful in any way?

Denisha: For me, if I get the chance to go to college here it would be good, but then again, I still have to get a job. For transportation. I still have to get a job. But if I get the opportunity, I know I can‘t afford the classes and stuff, but you know I would like to – but you see, I would like to if I got the opportunity to go to there, but provided I would get a job when I‘m finished. But you know, the opportunity I see like with traveling, it‘s not because I just want to *rush* out and get out of Grenada, you know?

I will try my best to develop myself here, but I think if I get the opportunity to travel, I think it will be much more better. More advance, you know? Yes you may do classes over there, but down here, it‘s whatever you pay that‘s what you get. Nothing beyond that.

Revolution, Independence, and Politics

Noga: What do you think are the most important events in Grenada's history in terms of forming Grenadians as a people? That is, what are the important historical events that affect Grenadians today?

Denisha: What I find over the years, what our people really getting to realize that apart from all the Revolution and everything that has happened, within that time, what I have learned of lately and I'm seeing it, is our Independence. That is a major thing. You know a lot of people, most of the men that did all this, some of them are all freed now, and a lot of people put that behind them. And every year, the Independence, you see that the people embrace that. So that is something that is building up very strong. So apart from that, all the chaos, you know. Well, the majority, I don't know if they really mean it but (chuckles), apart from all that has happened, come right back, I think a lot of people have forgiven. To move on with your life they have forgiven. But there are still a lot of people that think that they shouldn't forgive them, but. A lot of people now are embracing our Independence.

What is happening right now in Grenada, the problem that's affecting everyone, is the cost of living. And the thing that is bothering me the most is that the salary is not going up. Then you find the Prime Minister and the Minister are increasing their salary in one year, and they always need more with their salary. But you find the people are busting their tail, you know, all they're asking for is that – nothing wrong with their wage but they have other means, you know. And the bus fare, sometimes you have to take four buses for one day, you know? So as long as that is rectified, everything will be alright.

Noga: So this last Independence Day, what did you do?

Denisha: I went to parade, yeah. We got free buses.

Noga: What did you think?

Denisha: It's nice. The first time I went – I always look at it on TV, but being there it's nice.

Noga: This was your first time? Why this year?

Denisha: Because of free buses, cuz normally it's a holiday and you can't get down there.

Noga: So this is the first time they ran these buses?

Denisha: Yeah.

Noga: Was it interesting?

Denisha: It was good to see the military parade and everything like that. I've seen it on TV but just being there and, you know, people just proud of Grenada no matter what.

Noga: I went to the stadium, too. It was quite an event. Did you listen to all the speeches?

Denisha: And everything like that. But to be honest, based on history, I'm not going to say that if NDC win election that they wouldn't do anything better, but there's not really *left* to do. All what Grenadians

ever wanted for all the years was a proper hospital and good healthcare. Doesn‘t matter we don‘t have everything free, but we have very good hospital, the roads, all this done. You understand? Schools, and all we have little things. I think the New National Party did a lot for the time in office. They did a lot. But all the people are asking for – maybe if they come and they will open some factories, that will be good. I think what Grenada really need now, apart from all the politics and the jobs, we need factories. There are so many things we can *do*. I think they should get investors to come in and get land to do other things, try to get people to come in to get lands, give them the opportunity where they can come to do really good business so they can employ the people. There are so many things we can make.

Noga: What kind of factory would you have in mind?

Denisha: If we have a factory, we can make soaps. If they have the facility we can make a lot of food, like with breadfruit and mangos, oh my God. In season you see them just spoiling by roadside. There are a lot of things that whenever they come they come in abundance. A lot of fruits. In the market it might be expensive, but if you can just take a drive-by to the farms, there are so many fruits. Even tomatoes, everyone plants. You see, the majority of Grenadians do farming. So when you find that everything is on market at once, these are perishable goods. There‘s nowhere to sell them. Even when the tourist season close, the hotels don‘t buy so much because don‘t have much people to feed. So if we have place where people can plant short crops, a lot of people will get back into more planting. People can sell it, earn a better living. All we export is spring water. I think there‘s a lot more we can do. That‘s what we really need.

Noga: So in terms of the government, you‘re happy with what they‘ve done?

Denisha: Well, there are a few things I‘d like to see happen in Grenada. Starting with the people. Pretty much everyone is in need, but there‘s some people that really can‘t help themself. So in terms of, I think it‘s very robbing for a child don‘t have to get a secondary education because of their parents are not working. And they have the potential to do better. So I think they should have a program where they can get transportation moneys. Things that can help them to go to school. I would like to see that happen. Even the food programs. They should have even in school, even though children have money for lunch they have a program where they can get lunch.

Noga: Do they have anything like that?

Denisha: Well they used to have it before but not anymore. [The People‘s Revolutionary Government ran a school bus program during the revolutionary period.] Yeah, where, on a morningtime you will have like a breakfast when you get to school for nine, they will give you milk and bread or something, you know? So now you find, a child

don‘t have any breakfast or any lunch, he‘ll have to stay home. And a child cannot learn if they don‘t eat properly.

Noga: What else would you wish for Grenada?

Denisha: Well, let‘s see. The food program. Everybody trying to have their little home, and everything like that. But basically I‘d like to see a lot of people working. They can have places with shift work, so even at night. There was a program with this man called Mr. – he had this company, can‘t remember the name, but that was a very good company for Grenada. He had twenty-four-hour shift work. Like twenty-four hours. Oh, they had a call center. And there was always a shift for someone. That was sometime before 2000, around there. I don‘t know what happened to that.

You see, what really happening is that, just imagine, sometime in one secondary school you will find three, four hundred children. And every year almost a hundred from every school is graduating. Some could go onto college. Some cannot afford it. And then everybody‘s just at home. You find every graduation time there is more and more. Some who is lucky to travel, you know. So for the people that cannot travel, all that we need here are jobs.

Noga: Did any of your brothers or sisters finish secondary school?

Denisha: Well, two of them reached Form Four, but they didn‘t complete. Because of the same financial problems.

Noga: Do you think that the hospital and healthcare now are adequate?

Denisha: I think they are not doing enough. Coming to the healthcare, right, I think they should try to help people that can‘t afford a lot of expenses. My son had an operation done when he was five. Sometimes, you have to do an X-ray, and the money they are asking for, you don‘t have it. You have to pay before you get the results.

Noga: How did you pay for your son‘s operation?

Denisha: I had some friends in GrenSave, that‘s an organization here, Save the Children Fund. So they took care of that for me. But it‘s ridiculous. If people have jobs, they would be able to have probably a medical plan. But as long as you don‘t have a work, you cannot – but there‘s a lot of people I can tell you that, they cannot afford the basic things like – even *myself*, not just people. There are times I can‘t even afford Colgate, these are things they should give to people. Especially Stayfree [menstruation products] again, they should be able to help. Even in the health sector, you know how they‘re giving out condoms, I think they should also look into that. Should give it in the community. Because sometimes at the end of the month, there are people that can‘t afford these things. And these are things that you really need. These are things that you really need.

Noga: Any other things you would wish for Grenada?

Denisha: I will wish that whoever comes in power, that they‘ll do good and represent us, and do a good job not just for theyself, but always

remember the people who put them there, always remember the needy. The people that really need.

Noga: Are you going to vote?

Denisha: I have a right to, I will.

Noga: Do you know for whom?

Denisha: I not so sure as yet. I would say NNP government is doing a good job, but I believe that if we Grenadians put them there, they should try and do something better for us. _CuzI can tell you, if the government will go back into power again, and they are still slacking around, I don't think they'll get another chance again. You see, what is happening in Grenada is that the people that is more on the democratic side [National Democratic Congress], the people understand that it's not that they don't want to help the people, it's that they're not getting the resources because they're on the opposite side. They're not getting the resource that they supposed to get in office to help them. So that will make them look like they're not doing anything for them.

I will like to see that more help is given to the needy. I don't know if you heard of so much of the crimes and violence here lately, and that's not something we're accustomed to. And most of the cases, when you look into them, it's all because of financial problem.

Noga: Do you know a lot about the Revolution and that period?

Denisha: Not really. Most of my friends that I know of, my age group, they don't know much about what happened earlier on. Because, I don't know, for some reason, people not talking the truth about it. So, just whatever we know, we just know with it.

Noga: So your family wasn't involved in some way that you know of?

Denisha: No.

Noga: Was it ever taught to you in school?

Denisha: Yes they do, but not much. They tell us more about the Caribs and the Arawaks, and all these things. Slave trade, Columbus. They don't really talk these things. You see over the years, these things was more secretive. The people that could tell you more about it, they don't talk about it.

But I would never like whatever happened then to come back again, with these politics, I don't think we need that (laughs). We don't need that at all.

Noga: Do you think there's a risk of that happening?

Denisha: Well, it could be, you know. If you look at the news recently and you see what happen with the police officer and the spying and stuff. We have a history for that (laughs).

Noga: What do you think of the goals, the ideas of the Revolutionary Party – before it got all terrible?

Denisha: Well then again, it had its good and it had its bad. Because I heard they had good programs where they were helping people and everything like that, until it got out of hand.

I believe, you know, Grenada as a Third World country, that the government should always focus – apart from developing here, yes we do, we have to, too – but should always try to help. Because we're already a Third World, you know. Try to help us in whatever way. And try their best to educate our children so they can go out and represent us. So they can come back and help us.

Noga: What does it mean to you to think of Grenada as a Third World country?

Denisha: Our poverty. If you do a survey, you go all around, not just here, but you go all around in places, it's either there is one person is working, nobody is working, one person is working. Probably if you have family away, probably only Christmas time, you *may* get a barrel. [Note: This refers to a package of goods sent from relatives abroad, especially during Christmas, packed in a large barrel.] And you find now, the people that have good jobs, it comes like if they're not working, because the kind of houses they want, the kind of things they have to pay for a car, it's like they don't have no money again. There's a lot of people that are barely surviving even though they have a job because of whatever they choose to do.

But I think, all we need here – people in Grenada, what I understand, from my, I don't believe that we Grenadians have this mentality to be this rich and famous people. Whatever we get we satisfied. Whenever we not happy it's because it's really bad. You know, as long as you have enough to eat, drink a little, that's it. Grenadian people are very understanding. We just need the basic things.

Discussion

Denisha had the greatest economic struggles of all the people with whom I spoke. Her answer to my question about food and groceries reveals her family's degree of financial hardship. The precariousness of their situation is alleviated by one essential fact: they own fertile land. Although Denisha was not sure how her family acquired this land, the fact that most poor Grenadians do own some piece of land – most often thanks to Eric Matthew Gairy's Land for the Landless redistribution program – is essential to

maintaining a basic quality of life. Denisha and her family have also received aid from NGOs and government programs, and she emphasizes the need for the administration to take care of the people who are just ~~–at~~ home" without employment.

Denisha's involvement with government aid programs have given her first-hand experience with the problems surrounding its distribution. Her stories about post-Ivan assistance being directed toward NNP party supporters is a frequently heard accusation, and she points to Ivan as the time when many divisions arose. She has more faith in the ability of NGOs to know who actually needs aid and to distribute it more fairly. In her discussion of Independence Day, she also reveals the way that partisanship infiltrates the countryside. Normally a bus holiday, the NNP sponsored buses to bring people from the villages to the stadium. While Anthony would not attend because he perceived that the buses were for NNP supporters only, Denisha seized the opportunity to participate and did not see the event as being politicized in a negative way. I also heard stories of families who kept T-shirts in the colors of both parties on hand, ready to don whichever one would get them a free bus ride to an event in town.

Denisha's story also reveals the economic hardships and obstacles that arise from seemingly small expenses or insignificant policies. For example, Denisha draws attention to the way in which students are assigned to a secondary school without regard for geography. Bus fare becomes a running theme in her commentary, proving a major financial hurdle for basic access to education that supersedes the more commonly heard complaint about the cost of school uniforms and books. Indeed, the bus routes themselves can be difficult for people who live in rural areas because they often run directly to the main terminal in St. George's, requiring a second fare to catch another bus

to the actual destination. This is time-consuming, as well, for very often the destination is closer to the point of origin than St. George‘s.

Denisha speaks passionately about her hopes to develop herself, particularly through educational or training opportunities in Grenada or abroad. This expression is one that I heard repeatedly among Grenadian youth, and it resonates deeply with the ubiquitous language of national development. For Denisha, self-development is the key to having a home, a better job, perhaps even a business, and having enough steady income to help her son and her family. It seems significant that she chooses this language of development over other options which might, for example, directly emphasize training, or a good job, or financial relief as her aim. Instead, she has internalized the idea that these things will flow from a kind of necessary change she must make within herself. Once *she* is developed, the rest will follow. This paradigm clearly fits with her definition of development in a national sense, in which she emphasizes changes that will grant greater sovereignty. For herself and her country, development is the key to independence.

Grenada's Secondary School Youth

This section is dedicated to the thoughts and experiences of five fifteen- and sixteen-year-old boys attending Form Four (out of five) in secondary school. These students participated in a six-week afterschool creative writing workshop that I taught, as well as recorded focus group meetings. First, a few words about their school.

Valley Secondary School has a reputation as a relatively new institution which has been used to accommodate students who perform poorly on the Common Entrance Exam, or perhaps did not even pass it. This exam is administered in the final year of primary school, and based on the students' scores, they will obtain entry into one of their top five secondary school choices. Valley does not have the prestige of the older, venerable institutions, such as Grenada Boy's Secondary School; thus, most students would place it at the bottom of their list. While many acknowledge that this system is flawed since it effectively sorts the highest and lowest performers into different schools, efforts to reform the system are slow. Grenada already passed a law for universal education some years ago which is intended to abolish the Common Entrance Exam altogether, but so far this has only been implemented in Carriacou. In some cases, students who fail the exam repeatedly may eventually be allowed to move directly into a school like Valley. This process does not spare students who fail the exam one or two times from the humiliation of entering a marginalized grade within the primary school (primary school is normally considered to be grades one through six. Students who fail the exam become part of a grade seven, or even grade eight). If eventually moved into secondary school without

passing the exam, however, they often have difficulty with basic reading and writing skills, and the schools lack staff with training to deal with their needs.

This particular school has also been plagued by reports of gang activity and violence, leading to heightened security measures and an even more problematic reputation. As I learned through casual conversations and interviews with university students, most Grenadians would not choose to send their own children to this school. A Grenadian college student conducting a class project on secondary schools told me that she was afraid to go there after witnessing a fight break out in a class she was observing. Numerous people warned me away from working there, and more than one were keen that I turn my attentions to Grenada‘s sole private secondary school instead. Regardless, I made an appointment to meet with the school‘s principal. She was very forthright about the school‘s problems as a magnet for underachievers, although she had no safety concerns. She was worried that I might not find enough students to participate in the after-school creative writing workshop I had volunteered to teach. She said each form has a few ―sparks,” but that they are often overworked because they are called upon to participate in all of the school‘s extracurricular and national contests. (This assessment turned out to be entirely accurate, as the boys who ended up participating in the workshop were all members of Young Leaders, Cadets, 4H, Junior Achievement, and debating club programs.)

The principal was very supportive of my endeavors and handpicked the students. On the first day of the workshop, about twelve boys and girls filed into the library. I quickly discovered that they had absolutely no idea why they were there, and most had no particular interest in taking the class. After conveying the entirely voluntary nature of the

workshop, we ended up with five committed fifteen- and sixteen-year-old boys. They participated in the six-week workshop, meeting after school once a week to read short stories, talk about fiction elements, and try their hand at short writing exercises. After the workshop, these same boys participated in a recorded focus group session. Although I presented these two activities as separate and voluntary, I was surprised by their excitement when I told them about my research project. They were even more keen on participating in the focus group than in the workshop and quickly obtained consent forms from their guardians. It seemed to me that they particularly loved the idea that their little group could have a forum in which they could speak for their school.

I begin this section by introducing the five boys through their own writings. I have reproduced the exercises as they were written, bearing in mind that they only had about ten to twenty minutes for each assignment and most of them write quite slowly. While the challenge of teaching grammatical Standard English to students who mostly converse in Grenadian English is apparent in their writing, these brief vignettes are also very expressive in surprising and revealing ways.

Portraits

Dwayne is sixteen years old and lives near the capital. In many ways, he seemed to be the leader of the group. He speaks with solid authority, and the teachers trust him with extra responsibilities like locking up the classroom after-hours and leaving the keys with the school guard. He is outspoken about his Christian religious convictions, and once, when I was jotting down student brainstorms on a blackboard, he admonished me

for writing –Bible" at the bottom of the full board. In our first writing exercise, he described himself as follows:

> a young boy, a young-leader student, a secondary school student, brought up to help others when there falling – a young man who speaks of God, who shows Gratitude to others, a child who respect his elder's and parents – A child who is enthusiasism a his cricket, who is interest in hiking, camping, etc. – A child who has a dream of becoming a soldier, a child who accomplished his fears, and a young man who read's needlessly etc.

In another exercise designed to encourage stream-of-consciousness writing practice, I showed the students a spice necklace purchased from the downtown market. These necklaces are ubiquitous in tourist hot spots throughout the island. All of the sellers I saw during my time in Grenada were poor, elderly women. They painstakingly assemble by hand a string of cloves, nutmegs, turmeric root, and decorative beads, and they sell for about US$5. Grenadians will sometimes purchase them as well, and they are commonly used as air fresheners. Only tourists wear them around their necks. Dwayne wrote the following about this necklace:

- Obiya, someone being spoil, who is physically challenge, who maybe disowned by family.
- Culture, nutmeg, spice, bids, clove, that big plate of food home, sleep after eating, watch tv, do the usual, talk to my girl, feel happy, pray, listen music, polish my shoes, think bout my future, do my school work, what am I going to do tomorrow, where I'm going to go tomorrow.

Finally, the students were challenged to create a list of advice for young men in the model of Jamaica Kincaid's short story, –Girl." Kincaid's story is a one-sentence dialogue between a mother and daughter. The mother talks for most of the 650-word story, giving a litany of advice and warnings, while the daughter's two brief responses go unnoticed. Nowhere does Kincaid specify that this is a mother and daughter, nor that the

setting is in the Caribbean. In the past, my American students typically surmised these aspects of the story immediately, in addition to concluding that the mother is overbearing. The Grenadian boys, on the other hand, first guessed that this was a teacher and student, and described the teacher as someone who really cares. I asked the boys to write their own version, entitled ~~–B~~oy." This is Dwayne's brainstorm:

Young man you must:
- Not smoke
- Not drink
- Not watch pornography
- Not play in the dust
- Not fight with person's
- Not curse people
- Not pelt stone without eye's
- Not stayout late at night's
- Not do irresponsible thing's, etc.

When you do these negative stuff you become like a delinquent.

Young man you must:
- Respect your elder's
- Show love to your family
- Lend a helping hand at home.
- ~~Sweep the~~ be responsible
- Make friends
- Do your chores
- Show gratitude to people when they give you something.
- Read your bible every morning. Pray also.
- Go to church every Sunday
- Join positive groups. interact with people.
- Wash your white clothes on a Saturday
- Wash your coloured clothes on a weekday
- Polish your shoe
- Have confidence in everything you do.

When you be a part of these listed items you too can higher your standards and be a person who can set an example for others.

Claude is sixteen years old. He and his parents were born in Grenada and live close to the school in a community he describes as quiet, peaceful, and respectable. He has lived in a number of different parishes all around Grenada in rented residences. He lives with seven people – his grandmother, aunt, cousins, cousin-in-law, and ~~–o~~ne other." His aunt is working with the government, and other maintenance comes from away, notably from his father, who works abroad. Claude was the most thoughtful and serious member of the group, and his peers respected his carefully articulated answers to the focus group questions. His demeanor is shy, and he usually speaks with his hand over his mouth – a habit which his buddies occasionally try to break by grabbing his arm. In this short writing exercise, Claude draws a portrait of himself:

> A young tall man, son of a traveling Business man, a well spoken person, a secondary student, dreaming about being the best computer specialist. lonely at times and offten wishing his dad was home. Confused about life but never shows. A fomer young leader and involved in numerous school activities. Moody at times and mostly found deep in thought. Thoughtful of others and a cheer bringer. Lives with family members and hopes that life will run his way.

During one of our creative writing classes, I gave the students a writing exercise designed to focus on the interplay between setting and characters. I brought in a collection of glossy brochures available in local real estate offices. They feature stock photos, layouts, computer-generated images, and descriptions of the new luxury condominium/resort developments planned for Grenada's southern coast over the next few years. I showed these brochures to the students, who were amazed to learn that these were coming to their home island. I assigned them this task: ~~–I~~magine someone who either lives *or* works at this establishment. Write a list of concrete character traits and

desires. You want to give an idea about who this person is, their past, their dreams, their likes and dislikes." Here is Claude's list:

- loves giving jokes but hates maked fun at.
- Six feet two inches
- brown in skin tone
- Very skilled in multiple areas
- well spoken
- not to deep voice
- well dressed
- always in deep thought
- not likely to speak his feeling
- lives by himself
- just moved from home
- was very intelligent
- loves classy shoes
- Rather shirts than T-shirts to ware
- Never seen wearing shorts other than his boxers
- Heart melts in the sight of puppies
- Never backs down from a challenge.
- Well groomed
- seems rich because of his dad
- faster order out than cook
- likes juice but don't like fruits
- likes danger
- specialist with women

Last, here is Claude's short story, modeled after Kincaid's ~~–G~~irl." Note how the rhyme develops as he progresses.

> Boy!!
>
> Always brush your hair before bed and brush it even more during the day. When eating out with a girl talk softly so that your food don't fall out of your mouth and always have a mint or two to freshen up after. Wash your hands, shine your shoes, and never hangout with people you consider fools. Wear white t-shirt once it's white and never wear shades once it turns night. Act all kool even at that point your not and when in the mids of girls, don't phart. When on a date don't be late and be back in time before her parents close the gate. Never bost and be a good host. Never

> move to close with a girl on the first night out. When to have your car, always keep it neat and never spend to much on a chick your not yet close too. Dress your way and not like the others in order to stay fresh in the sight of others. look good out as well as home and always say hello when you answer your phone. Never answer private calls and when getting a cold always have halls. Don‘t sit in class and pick your nose, bite your fingers, or pull tread from your cloths. Call your girl friend and never forget when to call or a gift to get. Ask her how was her day and show affection give her the love and all your attention. Be sweet and share with her jokes always ask her how is her folks.

Jason is fifteen years old, and lives with his parents and siblings in a nearby parish. He describes his village as a nice, quiet place with very nice people. He was born in Grenada, as were his parents, who ―basically, they do their own work." Prompted by a friend, he stated that they are ―self-employed." They own their residence, and have family scattered in New York, Trinidad, Barbados, and Canada. In our first writing exercise, he described himself as follows:

> A young boy, the son of a farmer, a former delinquent boy, a choir dancer, a primary school pupil and secondary student, brought up in a respective home, to respect the properties of others – a young boy who expressed thanks for every piece of food he received, who abused/whipped every time, but he was also very handsome, I changed when I got handcuff by the police.

How does Jason imagine a person who lives or works in one of the new luxury resorts coming to Grenada? He created the following list:

> 16 years old
> beautiful
> generous
> neat
> careful
> quiet
> brown skin, black hair
> wonderful figure

great responder
also a good conversation holder
good moltivator
love to eat poultry dishes
mostly wear high heels
wonderful singer
great speaker
sometime full of anger/always angry
a lover of babies

Finally, here is Jason‘s short story, ―boyz”. His sentences are closely modeled after Kincaid‘s (although many of his lines remain quite general).

> This is how you treat a young lady, this is how you talk to a girl, this is how you should sit, don‘t smoke, don‘t disrespect young girls or even your elders, learn your school work. Learn how to (?) with young girls. Speak when you are spoken too, shutup when someone is speaking, don‘t learn how to cook so the young girls will not showoff on you. Keep your room clean, don‘t play in the road, keep your self clean so that the girls will not think that you are a useless bastard, wash your cloths, don‘t drink, refrain from gang violence, stay home, clean the yard, feed the animals, this is how you will find a girl, this is how you should treat the girl, this is how you should eat. This is how you should behave when you married and this is how you should live your life.

Felix is sixteen years old, and lives with his mother, siblings, and nephew. His father is in England. He was born in Grenada, as were his parents. His mother takes care of the family, and they own their residence in a rural area he describes as beautiful, with really nice people. He also has family in New York, Germany, and St. Croix. He described himself succinctly for our first writing exercise: ―a small boy, a former helper, a great runner, a secondary pupil and a interesting person, brought up to respect love and care, but very aggressive.” In our focus group discussions, Felix was often shy with his answers, echoing his peers or using the option I gave them to ―pass” for many of the questions.

The character Felix created for the luxury resort exercise has the following traits:

- the person is tall about 6 feet
- fair skin
- has two children, boy and a girl
- takes care of them by their self
- dresses very nice
- T-shirt well fitted in the pants
- colours cloths they like to wear red, blue, and misc coloured cloths
- always wear nike shoes
- always eat can food like tuna, bake beans and lots of the junk food
- house properly keep clean
- loveing to their children

Finally, his short version of ―Boy" focuses on himself, under the heading ―Things a boy could do."

- Lime late in the night because parents don't worry much cause I can handle my self
- I can play any sports
- I play marbles
- Cooking is very great for me
- Love to dress up a lot
- can check any girl I like
- I can read when I feel to read
- And I love hikeing through the bush and on top of the mountains.

Dylan is fifteen years old. He and his parents were born in Guyana, and he now considers himself to be both Guyanese and Grenadian. He has lived in five or so different locations in Grenada, and they rent their residence in an area he describes as friendly but boring, with not enough to do. He lives with his parents, sister, and aunt. His father is a machinist at a factory. In addition to Guyana, he has family in New York, Barbados, and Trinidad. Dylan was the most talkative of the group. He spent far less time considering his answers than Claude, though often both of them dominated the conversation. Dylan is eager to portray himself as a big-dreaming go-getter, and he

expressed a hyperactive earnestness in both the creative writing class and the focus group discussions.

For the luxury resort exercise, Dylan was the only student to clearly choose someone who might work, rather than live, in the development. He writes:

> There was a poor old man named Mr. James. Life for Mr. James was not too good at first. Mr. James lived in small house that wasn‘t very sanitary. When was lunch time for Mr. James, he had nothing but two fish and some rip plantains, sometimes he had nothing. When he went out he had no shoes on his feet, little stiches on his cloths to cover the holes in them. But all Mr. James could think about was a development in the society here there could be job for him and the unemployed person where they could get job to get money so that there would be meals at lunch, breakfast and dinner.

Note that unlike Felix‘s fair skinned family that eats canned tuna and beans, and Claude‘s character that likes juice but not fruit, poor Mr. James eats fresh fish and plantain.

Last, here is Dylan‘s story ―Boy”:

> Boy, squat down anywhere you like to play because you‘re not a girl, this is how to bully someone and this is how not to be bullied. Have drinks at times. Drink sampain and brandy, not tea and other things that girls would be drinking, have alots of fun at party, behave bad if you have too. Even kneal down to play marbles and get your skin all cut up because only girls worry about cutting up their skin. Don‘t comb your hair, if you don‘t have too. And when you grow up like about 14-16, wear brand name boots like Reebok, K-Swiss & Nike and good clothes so that girls would be more attracked to you, drink more brandies & beers. And get a girlfriend and love from the bottom of your heart. When you reach ages 18 & over be a gentleman, be less playful than when you were five.

Focus Groups

Our group met in an empty Lower Form classroom, with the boys tucking themselves into too-small chairs after running around to help find their peers so we could start. The classroom had a large blackboard, fluorescent lights, small beat-up desks, turquoise wall paint marred by graffiti (including a faint swastika), and windows with no screens or glass, covered by wooden slats. There were often other students milling about the corridor outside, and frequently giggling faces pressed against the window slats to see what was going on inside with the white lady. I picked up chalk and an eraser from the main office; otherwise, I had no further contact with any of the teachers or principal. The boys called me Miss, politely raising their hands to answer questions even after I indicated that was not necessary in our small group.

After the creative writing workshop, we rearranged the desks and sat in a circle around the voice recorder. Over the course of an hour or so, I went through a list of prepared questions, adding follow-up questions and an occasional improvisation (―What is colonialism?"). The boys created a fairly formal ambience and did their best to answer the questions without digressing. Often they asked me to repeat the question again before answering, though I have omitted this from the transcript for brevity's sake. When answering a question, the boys typically spoke one at a time, raising their voices toward the recorder and speaking in their best Standard English. Wind rushing through the wooden slats in the open windows created a howl that occasionally obliterated a student's words. On the whole, however, I was able to identify each speaker in the transcript; occasionally, a background remark is noted as ―Voice." They frequently echoed each

other's answers, and sometimes commented in polite Grenadian fashion that they agreed with their friend before elaborating their own view. Disagreements were also politely and formally expressed.

Their serious responses contrasted humorously with their "off-the-air" behavior when a peer was speaking. The boys spent much of their time teasing each other about their answers in hushed voices (spoken in heavy Grenadian English and full of local slang), kicking each other under the table, and giggling. Not all of the boys attended each section, and sometimes one or two would wander in late, or wander out early. On the whole, however, I was impressed by the seriousness with which they engaged the project. They generally policed each other to keep the banter under control, and hastily explained the project, consent forms, and participation protocol to each other when a reminder was needed. I also think it is significant that they willingly stayed after school to participate not only in the creative writing workshop but in these focus groups. Some of them returned home in the dusk.

Topics: Secondary school experience; employment and ambitions; education; history; development; politics; Hurricane Ivan; national culture and identity.

Secondary School Experience

> Noga: Tell me about your experience as students at Valley. How's it been? Challenging, easy, frustrating?
> Dylan: My experience at Valley, I start from Form One, right. My experience was relatively okay _ɑɹz, as a foreigner, they wouldn't cut you out of the scolding and thing, right, but you'd be accepted.
> Noga: You were admitted right into Valley?

Dylan: Yeah. But, my plan, my parents' plan, was not to stay for a long time. Was just to stay for a couple of months and go to another school.

Noga: Why?

Dylan: Because Valley is not such a good school. I mean, you have bad students and good students, and then you have some of us here is good students, but Valley is a kind of a school, you wouldn't really want to stay for five years. Some of the teachers slack. But the other schools, they're more in front of Valley. And I really want to do good in exam and thing, so I really want to be right up there and things, so.

Noga: So you're still hoping to transfer?

Dylan: Well, maybe it might be too late right now, so I might have to do the rest myself.

Noga: At Valley.

Dylan: Yeah. _CuzI in Form Four, and I going into Form Five just now, so. It might be a little too late. But if it was Form Three, Two, so, I might have would have take a chance for. Yeah.

Claude: Well, at first, I was not supposed to come to Valley. But I took a chance to come here because it was closer to home. But at first, well, as he said, my parents didn't, my dad, he's away, and he didn't really want to send me here because I was supposed to go to GBSS [Grenada Boy's Secondary School]. But the name at first wasn't that good, right. But when I came here and really looked at it, it wasn't as different as any other school. It was relatively okay. There's been incidents, but I'm not saying that other schools would not have that type as well. The work, school work wise, it hasn't been that stressful. Other than that, I think this school is okay.

Dylan: When I say Valley is a really bad school, I ain't talking about fighting and conflicts and things, _ɑɪz I know that all schools have the same thing. Right? What I really talking about is, I have big plans for the future, right. So the other schools would be more *ahead* with the schoolwork, _ɑɪz, you know Valley is kind of below every, all the schools in Grenada, according to the schoolwork and thing, and the other schools more above. So I really want to get people to push me into the right direction, you know? The teachers in Valley kind of slack.

Felix: As a primary school student growing up, I always wanted to come to this school. _CuzI find it was really beautiful and the people inside here was really nice at first, when I came here. And I enjoy my whole life coming up from Form One, coming up to Form Four, I enjoy it. But I settling in Form Four now, the teachers started to slack a little bit on the schoolwork. They didn't really take the time off to come and sit with us and give us some extra classes, because mostly, some of the times they miss out, and some of them stay home and relax or do something. That is basically it.

Noga: During regular classes, or extra classes?
Felix: Sometimes.
Dylan: Sometimes.
Noga: So when you talk about slacking off, you mean not preparing for lessons, or – ?
Dylan: Yeah, like sending the work for us. Like Spanish, sending work we do not understand.
Noga: Like not coming to class?
Dylan: Yeah. Like sending up work on a piece of paper. (Voices echo agreement.)
Claude: Might just send a piece of paper right just up, and just say, just do this, and just expect us to do that. Like Spanish, for the main example.
Dwayne: As my friend said, as a primary school student growing up, seeing your friends go to school wearing the long sleeve and the green pants, looking fresh, I always wanted to come to Valley. That was my first choice on my Common Entrance list, and eventually I passed for Valley, I was so happy to come here. Came through Form One, Form Two, Form Three, it wasn't such a big challenge. But now that we're in Form Four, it's kind of getting difficult. Teachers not coming to class, as he said, but we holding on still. We always here for one another, help one another do our work. But, the big big challenge hasn't started yet. That's Form Five. So, so far the challenge is going on good.
Dylan: The challenge for me started early, because, we have to do some of the work by weself at home, reading and thing, right. But I need a teacher to really *guide* me into the right direction. You know, teachers that could come and sit down and help you. Just ‗cuz we in Form Four, just when we get into Form Five, we got our SBAs [school-based assessments] and CXC coming up soon. I could go home every night and study and thing, but I need a teacher to come and help me and show me – ‗cuz Spanish class, we speak English. We don't speak Spanish. And none of my parents speak Spanish, right. So I would like a teacher to come and help us so. A kind of *burden* is on me right now. ‗Cuz, I don't really want to drop Spanish. I want to do Spanish. But – on top of the other subjects too. But there's nobody to really show me. Well my father will show me some of the rest, but Spanish, and French, and thing. I need a teacher to come and *help* help us, ‗cuz we in Form Four. Help us to better our studies, yeah.

Noga: And what is the social scene like here? Academics aside, what is the social life of Valley? (Quizzical looks, voices: "~~s~~ocial?") In terms of friends, groups, fights – ?
Claude: Well, as far as I see, the people here is not that bad, alright? I mean, most of the time, you meet somebody, they might say hello, or might greet you. But other than that, sometimes yeah, there does come

up with conflicts. And I guess, one of the reasons is short temper. Meaning, that something might come up and they act on it right away instead of really taking time to think about it. That might happen sometime. But other than that, everything seems okay.

Dylan: Well, the whole of Grenada, Grenada's a nice place, you know. People just come, just greet you *nice*, you know? Easy to cooperate with, right? At Valley, the teachers and everything, they okay. If you need a friend to talk to or anything, you got the teachers, right? The social life is okay. Yeah, I think so far so good. Social mean like conflict and thing? They have a little bit of conflict in school, some I could talk about (?).

Dwayne: Well, so far in Valley, social problems have kind of died down a little bit. Persons learning to sit down and speak with one another and settling their conflicts and stuff. But despite that, there are teachers who are willing to talk to us and stuff, tell us about the conflicts, how to act with one another, how to behave and stuff, so the social problems getting to a more higher level in Valley school.

Felix: As my good friend say again, we have some good teachers in this school. And they also came up with two good ideas. We have two counselors there already, and they are really helpful to the students in this school. _Cuz they sit down and talk to you, find out what's your problem, what is your situation home, and really sit and talk about everything you need to talk about.

Noga: It sounds like you all help each other quite a bit. What are the main challenges, if any, that you feel you face in finishing secondary school?

Dylan: Well, as I say again, the teaching level in Valley. You'd find the other schools, well, I never went to any other school before, but I think that the other schools are more developed in some cases. I mean the structure of our school is far better than any other school in Grenada right? But teacher-wise, I believe that they are far better.

Noga: Do you all agree? Or are there other obstacles?

Dylan: And the conflicts are like, as you said again, like the teachers not coming to classes, you know. We didn't get nobody to really – teaching-wise, getting people to guide us in the right direction. Teachers supposed to be like, exams coming up soon, pushing us (voice echoes: —Pushing us"), exam coming up soon, teaching us. _Cuz I know some things we didn't do as yet ... If you look at the syllabus, a lot of things we didn't do. They're waiting to Form Five –

Voice: (echoing) Push us.

Dylan: – to push us in it. For example, when we had, like coming to the third term, _cuz we have three terms in a year, first term, second term, third term, which is right now, in Form Four, they're like, at the end of

the second term they're like pushing the tests on us, pushing the exam, the classwork, class assessment, just for the ending.

Noga: All at the end.

Voice: Last minute.

Dylan: They like, soon as the school open, they teaching us to be committed to the work, but I think teachers nowadays is really *mo-ney*, you know (laughs)? Right? So, they're really pushing us in the right direction. Yeah, those are some of the conflict that we face.

Noga: How many times a day would you say you go to a class and there is no teacher there?

Dylan: Well, maximum, maybe three. Maximum.

Noga: Out of how many blocks?

Dylan: Well, eight classes. Sorry, nine periods we have a day for Form Four, _cuz CXCs coming up just now so we gotta move up, right? But some teachers, they wouldn't be here. An example, again, English teacher. She doing something like you with the English material. English literature thing, right. She would go to class, she in school, so she go to class, and send work for us to do. Yeah. And I am bad at English, I could admit it, right? And I need help. And I think I'm benefiting from this same creative writing –

Voice: Creative writing.

Dylan: Yeah, you know.

Noga: So one to three times a day you go to class and there's no teacher, you're just given an assignment to work on on your own.

Dylan: Yeah, like out of the eight classes, you got like three miss …

Noga: Any other challenges aside from the teaching level?

Dwayne: Well, another set of challenges, like the extra-curricular activities, which most of us as you know take part in. Because we are fulled up, five days a week, extra-curricular activity, ninth period. It's kind of stressful and stuff, so you have to make time management. That's a challenge that we also face. But we also cope with it. So, it's a big challenge.

Employment and Ambitions

Noga: So what are your personal goals for after secondary school? Graduate, then what?

Dylan: My personal goal is to go to university, University of Guyana, or maybe, United States of America (laughs). Yeah, so. Go to university for my study, get my degrees, and to become a doctor. Well, there are a lot of doctors, so I'm not sure what kind of doctor as yet.

Dwayne: My personal goal after I graduate is hopefully to choose a career path. I not too sure yet, but I like construction. Not too sure, but my personal goal is to become a soldier, or an officer.

Noga: In which army?

Dwayne: Either Grenada or England. But, I'm not so sure if I want to go to college, because you can get free access to schools in the army and stuff. (?) scholarship, and you get paid for that also, so I'm not so sure yet.

Dylan: Well, doctor, right? I want to become a lot of things, right? But I just call a doctor because, you know, that's what I wanted to become but. After growing up, I heard about a lot of things. Architect, pilot –

Voice: Plumber.

Dylan: Yeah, plumber, and some of this extra work, so you get a quick piece of money and thing, right? Electrician and thing, right? So some of those things are still in mind, still have in mind. And if I ain't be successful and become a doctor, I could become something else.

Voice: Fisherman.

Dylan: (whispering) Not fisherman.

Felix: Well, after I graduate, I'd like to go to college about two years. And, probably further my studies and become an architect.

Noga: Would you like to go to TAMCC [T.A. Marryshow Community College in Grenada] or somewhere else?

Felix: Like TAMCC, yes.

Claude: Well, after secondary level, I will also go to college for two years, not sure whether it's TAMCC or if it's away, it's according to my dad. Further studies, maybe university, and then want to become a computer specialist. Because technology has always been one of the main things that I found, so.

Jason: After secondary school, I'd like to go to college for two years, further my studies. If possible, I'll go in university. And from that, I'd like to become an architect or an electrician.

Noga: So what sort of job do you think is the best sort of job to have in Grenada, and why?

Claude: I'm not too sure, right, but from what I'm seeing, there's been a lot of construction going on, especially in the urban areas. So maybe work like drafting, technical drawing, constructor, all those things dealing with building. And also technology too. Those two.

Dylan: I want to emphasize that, what would be a major job, because people get sick every day, they need doctors. But at the same time, you need mechanics, architects, electrician, soldiers, right? (Voice echoes: "Yup" for each profession Dylan names.) And you need, (whispers to Claude) what you want to become again? Yeah, you need computer specialist, 'cuz all those things do occur. So I don't think there would be a *major* aspect, right.

Dwayne: In Grenada, I think the most important jobs are the professional jobs.

Voices: For example?

Dwayne: For example, the doctors, the policemen and women, the contractors, the lawyers and stuff, and the teachers.

Jason: I will not say you have any major jobs in Grenada because they both need each other. If, well, when you get married, so you need a house, you call construction. And you'll need an electrician to wire the house.

Claude: In my point of view, like he said, I agree with him. All jobs have their major type. When needed, they are needed. So, each time, maybe today construction, maybe tomorrow you might need a lot of (?), all of them have their time.

Felix: I agree with him too.

Voices: Yeah, yeah.

Dylan: Both of them, all three of them, sound *excellent* (laughs). I mean that, the people who work on the construction sites, contractors, you need contractors to build houses, but if the contractors get sick, you need doctors. If a piece of construction fall on them, I mean, some materials might fall on them, need doctors. If the doctors do something wrong, and the contractors decide to sue the doctors, you need lawyers. And if one day the doctor is driving home, and if his car, the engine go bad, you need mechanics. All them coincide.

Dwayne: I agree with all four comments under major jobs and not major jobs.

Noga: How do you see yourself in ten years?

Jason: In ten years? So I'm twenty-five? OK, well, a man who is working, for his own money, and basically should have his first kid, I should say, and married I think. Yeah. That's it.

Claude: Either an entrepreneur or employed in a large-scale company, living in a dream house overviewing the beach and thing like that, having a family and maybe having two kids by that time –

Voice: What? Twenty-five? (Laughter.)

Claude: – married, settled down. And you know, basically, I want to have a life where I have money store away, so I could have it if anything happen, I have money put away.

Felix: In the next ten years, I see myself as a true businessman, working for good money and in my dream house, and having about two children at the most.

Dylan: In the next ten years, I want to become the most successful doctor in the whole world, right. And I want to have a nice girl and thing, one child, yeah.

Voice: And that is it. (Laughter.)

Dylan: Why you cutting me so far? (More laughter.) Yeah. House, things. Real money supposed to come in and thing.

Noga: If you had your choice, where would you live in Grenada, and why?

Jason: More like St. George's area. In some ways it's a bad thing, _cuz they kind of back up the sea and thing, and you never see if the sea might come back up and take its place. And it's kind of like a place where, like, get better interaction with people and thing.
Noga: You mean in town or Grand Anse?
Jason: Grand Anse area. More places to go and hang out, and thing like this.
Claude: I think the place is called Blue Harbor.
Noga: Where is that?
Claude: Down in the Calivigny area, across the bridge.
Noga: Oh, like Egmont
Claude: Yeah, Egmont side. Or Lance aux Epines area.
Voice: And go with a big house and thing?
Felix: I would like to live in Lance aux Epines.
Noga: Why?
Felix: _CuzI find it's a really beautiful place, a lot of big houses.
Dylan: I don't know. I ain't really sure about these places, Lance aux Epines, and Egmont Point or whatever you just called. I ain't sure about these places, _cuz I only lived basically around St. George's.
Voice: Say –Mama Cannes" [a village].
Voice: Say –on the beach."
Dylan: I ain't really sure about no nice area. What that place called, with the big houses over there?
Voice: Westerhall Point?
Dylan: Yeah
Voice: Calivigny?
Voice: Westerhall Heights?
Dylan: Yeah, by in Westerhall Point down there, where you have some big houses. And when I become a successful doctor and thing, I want a big house just like that, living maybe right in the same area.
Noga: In Westerhall?
Dylan: Yeah.

Noga: If you had the opportunity to go abroad, would you? Where? Why? Would you return?
Jason: I would go to New York. I would go there because they have, like, a more modernized place and thing. Get work. Interact with the technology. I might come back if over there is not kind of interesting, I might come back to Grenada.
Claude: New York, England, Canada. Or maybe, since China is so high tech, maybe something like that. I would come back because I would miss my little island.
Felix: I would like to go to England, because little Grenada ent have much to offer, so. I'd like to go abroad to get some money, and then come back.

Voice: Definitely come back.
Noga: Come back at what age? As soon as you had enough money, or to retire?
Claude: As soon as I have enough money, and I think that that will last me for a time? Until maybe set up my own business down here. Yeah, I will return.
Dylan: I would like to go all over the world. Did you say New York?
Noga: Anywhere.
Dylan: Well, all over, but I would like to go to America, because some of my family is there, right. If I had a chance to come back, I would never come back. (Laughter.) No, just jook. No, I would like to go up there and just work for a period of time, you know, get some money, real money and thing, billions (laughs), and then maybe when it's time to retire, which is in like a hundred-so, when it's time to retire, right, because I believe in working for money, pushing yourself, when it's time to retire come down to a nice Caribbean island – not Grenada, or well, it might be Grenada, but some Caribbean island, and just relax. Under the sun.
Voice: On the beach.
Voice: Yes.
Dylan: Yeah.

Education

Noga: Do you think education is important for a person, and if so, why?
Dylan: Education, as I say, is the key to success. And if you don't have education, you cannot become a doctor, you cannot become an architect, you cannot become electrician. You need education. So, why I think you need education is to – you know, like, without education you can't become. What you want. So you need education to become.
Dwayne: Definitely, education is the key, as he said, the key to success. Because most of us here, we have spoke of our careers, which sound like *professional* careers. And, to get involved with professional careers you need to have an education, ‿ɑɪz. You're one level higher than the unskilled people, or workers, and stuff, so education is the key.
Claude: Well, as far as I see, from the time I was small to now, the world has become more and more high tech. And you really need to educate yourself on things in this world, nowadays, and I think without education, if not speaking about job-wise alone, just everyday life would become a problem.
Dylan: Well, education, not only what you want to become, but, education is like reading other things. Educating yourself about other things. ‿Cuzif you don't know like, say for instance, what Obama is going

through right now, you know. Or Hillary Clinton, or all the rest of them politicians, right. So you got to educate yourself about the other things. _Cuzif not, for example, somebody coming and having a conversation like right now, right, and somebody ask you a question, you don't know, _ɑuz you're not educating yourself about the other things, right. You don't only educate yourself about the school work and things, you know, _cuz if you don't educate yourself about other things, you might be an idiot (laughs).

Felix: Well, education is the key to success, for sure, yes. Without education, you wouldn't have the knowledge you need to understand things and to know certain things. With knowledge, yeah, you need education to get the knowledge, it will help you to understand the culture of your people, the languages they speak, the dances they did back in, when, the old days, and the things we used to do for fun, and all the other stuff that make them happy.

Dwayne: Just wanted to say that education is definitely the key, _ɑuz if you don't know how to read or write or spell, cat or dog, mouse, whatsoever, how you expect to get a professional job, or probably a domestic work. Because you need education in order to do those things. There's a point – not every time education always falls into certain areas, but education is more of an important need for people to learn. So, education is the key to success.

Noga: Let me ask you about school fees. What do you pay and for what?

Dylan: Well school fees is, I don't know what they do, right, but maybe it's for the buildings, furnitures for us, but it's raising a lot. Like, (voices consult) 75 dollars per child per term [approx. US$30], and there are three terms a year. We have about (voices consult) 500 students.

Noga: Does that include books, uniform?

Dylan: All that is separate. Basically, to keep the building. We have to buy our own uniforms and books.

Noga: Can you buy food on campus, do they give you food?

Dylan: We have to buy food. It's mostly for the teachers, and the building. The only thing we may be getting out of this is the desk and paying the teachers to come to class.

Noga: Is there any food program for people who can't afford to buy?

Dylan: Yeah, yeah yeah. But you have to pay a fee of two dollars.

Noga: So you have to qualify for that program though?

Dylan: No, you could go and pay two dollars if you can't afford the five dollar lunch. (Voices mumble disagreement.)

Claude: You have to be qualified for it.

Dylan: Maybe if you tell them that your mother, or something, are really, the amount of money –

Noga: So normally you pay five, but you could pay two.

Dylan: Yeah, but not for the same lunch, a different lunch. That's for the, providing the food, some other people providing the food for the unfortunate children. For the food served in the cafeteria here, we have to pay five dollars.
Noga: Do you have time for a few more questions?
Dylan: Yeah, the questions going sweet.

Noga: Let me read you a list of things, and you tell me what is the most important for getting on in Grenada today. Money, the type of people you know, hard work, the position of a person's father, education, luck, the area where you live.
Dylan: Education.
Felix: Education.
Claude: Both money and education.
Noga: Okay, what's the relationship?
Claude: Well, with education you could do certain things. For instance, have education to open a particular business. But without financial aid, that won't be able to happen. So both of them have a relationship that balance each other.
Dylan: Education is the most important one. _Cuzyou can have money, but once don't have education, all the money might go to waste. So education is like the major one, and then secondary, finance.
Dwayne: Education is like the main topic, and the other factors that you listed are like subtopics. So education is very important.
Jason: I'll say education, _ɑuz with education you could gain money.
Dylan: With education, you can call your shots, meaning, you cannot be fooled.
Voice: Right.
Dylan: Like, money-wise. If you're in a business, and you're not educated, people will want to fool you in a lot of ways. So once you're educated, it's not easy to be fooled. So. Yeah. You must be educated.
Felix: I agree with you.
Voice: Call the shots.

History

Noga: Switching now from questions on education, let me ask some questions about history. This is not a history exam. It's just as interesting to me to know what you don't know as what you know. So, no pressure. You can always pass. I would like to know what you know about Sir Eric Gairy. When was he in power? And what was Grenada like then? Do you know anything about him? Was he a good man, a bad man?

Dylan: I mean, I'm a Guyanese, right? But, past reading of novels, and newspapers, I've read that, what I've read, it didn't sound like he was such a bad fellow, he didn't sound so bad. I can't remember the date that he was in power, but it was so bad he was killed.
Noga: You say novels, do you remember what you read?
Dylan: I say newspapers, books, when I say novels I mean books.
Noga: Like what books? Schoolbooks?
Dylan: Yeah, like history of Grenada.
Noga: Was this assigned in school, or you found it on your own?
Dylan: Well, not this school, right, but you know, like they have a primary school book, a red book, I was looking through it one day, and I decided to read it. Yeah, so I don't think he was such a bad fellow.
Dwayne: Gairy, right? I can't really remember if he was Prime Minister or Governor-General, but, I knew that he was a political leader in Grenada at one time. That's all I know. And, he wasn't a bad guy, he was a good guy.
Claude: As I said, I live with my grandma, right, so most of the time I hear things from them. Well, I think he was a prime minister of Grenada. From his ruling, other people decided to overthrow him because maybe they didn't like the way he run the country, or something like that. So that way, they decided to overthrow him. And he was killed, I think he was innocent. I ain't think they should have done that, but.
Dylan: He wasn't killed (laughing).
Claude: Oh gosh. Sorry sorry sorry. Sorry sorry. I'm not a kind of (?) does take up in politics. Some books tell you that Eric was a bad fella, some books say he was a good fellow. Newspapers and thing. And you could go on the internet and find maybe, find some of the things. _Cuzthe internet has everything. So I don't really take it on.
Noga: You don't really take a side?
Claude: I don't really take a side. Sometimes you bored, you just read things.
Jason: I'll skip that.

Noga: How about the Revolution?
Voice: Oh my God.
Noga: What was it? When was it, if you know? Why did it happen?
Voice: 1974?
Voice: Could you repeat the question?
Voice: Pass.
Dwayne: I think it started in 1974 when they killed Maurice Bishop on the fort. With his colleagues, I can't really remember how many colleagues. I quite heard a lot from my aunties and stuff, sitting and quarrelling home, having conflicts, talking about the Revolution. So far, what I've heard, that Maurice Bishop he was a good political leader. He was someone you could always look up to. He was a good

speaker. And, I heard them talking about the bodies and stuff, traveling on the trucks, police running from American soldiers, thiefing people's clothes and wearing it. That's all I know about the Revolution.

Noga: So you heard that from your aunts?

Dwayne: Yeah.

Felix: Well, Maurice Bishop was, yeah, he was a good leader. And he was also locked up in jail. And the children from the secondary schools went, left their schools, and went to let him out of the prison.

Claude: Also on that day, there was a lot of bloodshed, too.

Dwayne: Yeah, on that same fort where he was killed.

Noga: Anything else about the Revolution before Maurice Bishop was executed? Anything about what the Revolution stood for, what they were revolting against? Principles and ideas of the Revolution?

Voice: (whispering) I forgot, what they were fighting for?

Voice2: (whispering) Independence?

Voice 3: (whispering) I'm not sure, but I think they were fighting for provision, or something like that?

Claude: Well, I think they were, well, the man was ruling, and the others didn't like, didn't really like the way he was running things, and they decided to overthrow him. I guess, because they were trying to overthrow him, Grenada I guess had a bond with the U.S. at that time, so they came to the aid of him.

Voice: Rescue.

Claude: And the others tried to overthrow that, that came, like, a little war, or something like that, which caused the Revolution, yeah.

Dwayne: Well, I'm not quite sure what they were really fighting for, but I'll give my view. Um, I think that they were, like the opposition, didn't like the way Maurice Bishop ruled Grenada, which was with (?) Bernard Coard and his colleagues, I think that they tried to overthrow him, but they didn't have enough power to overthrow him _ɑɪz, as my friend said, Grenada had kind of had a bond with the United States, which was first done by, um, Maurice Bishop. So, they didn't have enough power to throw over Maurice Bishop. So I think that they were fighting for, Bernard Coard and the others, were fighting for Maurice Bishop's position.

Noga: So you mentioned the American Intervention, Invasion, Rescue Mission – it's called a bunch of things. What do you know about that? Do you think it was a good thing or a bad thing?

Dwayne: I don't think that the intervention was quite a good thing because a lot of innocent people got killed for no reason and stuff.

Claude: I agree, they came for a good reason, but somehow their intervention could have caused a little more friction between both parties, I could say that. Them coming caused those that rebelled to take a (?) of force, and that caused a lot of innocent lives to be lost. So

it could be bad in some cases, but it was for a good purpose, good reason.

Dwayne: I think that it's also bad too because I may have, we all may have families which have died which we haven't met, or so, and stuff. Killed our prime minister of Grenada, who was our leader.

Noga: The Americans?

Dwayne: Yeah. So I think that wasn't such a great intervention. Was a bad one.

Jason: I would say at some points in time it was good, and at some points it was bad, because innocent people was killed for no reason at all.

Dylan: I'll say again, I don't really deal with the political. (Laughter.)

Noga: So, how do you know about these things? You mentioned you heard from family, you mentioned the newspapers, you read a primary school textbook that had some history. Any other sources?

Dwayne: I've read a book, which was done by the PBC [Presentation Brothers College] Young Leaders about the intervention and stuff, so I also got a little information about the Revolution from that book.

Felix: I heard mine from my parents, mostly have the information from my parents.

Claude: I got information from my aunt as well as grandma, and my uncles as well, because they were caught up in the same Revolution, they were right in the heart of it, so I got some information from them as well. And news.

Dylan: I think that if you check on the internet, you would find some stuff. You'd find some things about the Revolution. So both internet, parents, newspapers, books.

Dwayne: I just want to make one comment on the question before this one. I also think that the Intervention was a bad thing because my mom, my two aunties could have died, and I didn't think that I would have been born as yet. So, it was a bad thing.

Noga: And last question, are you taught any of this in history in secondary school?

Dylan: Yes.

Claude: Yes, but I didn't really hear most of it because I don't do history.

Noga: So it's an optional subject?

Voices: Yes.

Jason: I'll say yeah, and I find it kind of interesting, but I'm not doing the subject.

Dylan: Social studies.

Noga: They teach this in social studies?

Dylan: Yeah. A little bit.

Noga: In what Form?

Dylan: Form Four.

Dwayne: As he said, social studies. But there are time where we will have the normal class and we intervene, and a topic came up of the

Revolution, and she collaborated, and stuff, and she spoke to us on it, and also learned a little from each other.

Noga: So it wasn‘t part of the fixed syllabus, someone asked a question then the teacher taught it?

Voices: Yeah.

Claude: It wasn‘t a part of the subject, but because the talk came up – well, we read about a similar event that happened, and we end up talking about that.

Noga: So Form Four social studies, and history, if you choose it as a subject?

Claude: Yeah.

Noga: You will learn Grenadian history, you will learn this stuff? Or general history?

Claude: This, and general.

Dylan: Well, we don‘t do history, so we wouldn‘t be able to tell you. Well, I believe it‘s everything.

Noga: So none of you are doing history as a subject?

All: No.

Noga: What is colonialism?

Dylan: Colonialism? You have a dictionary? What‘s colonialism? I really, don‘t (laughing).

Voice: Crazy, you know boy.

Voice: Colonialism? I didn‘t really come across that word.

Voice: Ummm ...

Noga: No one knows the word? Sorry – ?

Voice: Come on, they must teach you something in dat book ...

Claude: (hesitating) It deals with, it has something to deal with some race? Colonialism?

Dylan: (interrupting) Just give it a little bit hint, see if we could –

Claude: (continuing) Race, color ... um.

Noga: How would you describe, historically, what you know about Grenada‘s relationship with England and/or France?

Dylan: Oh! I know that England was the ruler of Grenada, Guyana, well, most, maybe most of the Caribbean countries. England was the ruler, was ruling the country. That relationship, you know, ‘cuz they queen was our queen. So we had a little relationship, but now we become independent, so we don‘t need a queen, right.

Claude: From primary school and so on, we went through the history books and so on, and Grenada was once ruled by the French, before –

Dylan: By the French?

Claude: Uh huh, because some of the places in Grenada have French names. And after the English took over, which they inhabited for a long time, I could say, until we decided to become independent

because we were once governed by the queen, under the queen's command. Yeah.
Dylan: (speaking in background) British Guyana.
Felix: Pass.
Dylan: So with the um colonialism thing, right, can you just give a little hint so we maybe could guess?

Development

Noga: Let me ask some questions about development. Grenada is often called a developing country. What do you think development is?
Dwayne: I'd say development means, for the country? It's providing new jobs. Providing more tourist attractions and sites, more stuff for the country. Building more infrastructure and stuff so that people can get employed, so I'd say that's what development means in terms of Grenada being developed.
Claude: Better standard of living.
Jason: I'd say, as he said, it's standard of living.
Felix: Pass.

Noga: Sometimes Grenada is called part of the Third World. Do you know what that means?
Felix: No.
Jason: No.
Dylan: Third World?
Noga: Third World. Have you ever heard that expression?
Claude: I think, I'm not to sure if it's like, maybe, um, certain countries, could be like, it deals with development or something like that? Maybe um, some countries develop maybe better, maybe classified into different groups.
Dwayne: I think the Third World means Grenada been left out of all the action and stuff. For example, you have America with, there are large sources (?) American, Canada, England, more bigger countries, they have a lot of money, which is what a lot of value here in Grenada. And whereas, but. It's a kind of resources thing. Like, Grenada is more Third World. America has certain technology that Grenada don't have and stuff.
Noga: So who is First World, then?
Dylan: Nobody knows, only Jesus. (Laughter.)
Claude: Maybe the First World could be those that are the most developed countries, I guess.
Dylan: So the Third World is basically the undeveloped, like how you have rich, in-between, and poor. We could say, like, most Caribbean countries are just poor. And more the developed countries like England, Canada, the United States and so, and Japan, yeah, they

would be more developed than the Caribbean. So we could call that the First, is it? First World. But I'm not really sure.

Noga: Why do you think some countries are rich, or more developed, and why do you think some countries are poor, or less developed?

Dylan: It has to do with the financial part of it, right? Because, I mean the countries might have some, a good resources and thing, right? And the money would be really downgraded, downgraded or whatever. Or low in value. So, the United States and England, the money is really higher than the Caribbean, right? So maybe they have a better – give me a word, give me a word –

Voice: Advantage.

Dylan: Advantage, yes, than the Caribbean, you know, because of um, the –

Noga: You think their currency is stronger?

Dylan: Yeah.

Claude: I would say um, the resources, how they use it. Like the gold, diamonds, and all those things like that, down to the oil and bauxite and so on. Countries determine their wealth and so on, is determined by their resources, the way they use it. A country might have bauxite and minerals, like gold and diamonds, and they might have, say, some factory where they might use that resource to produce a product, and by selling it, they could increase their income.

Jason: I would say the resources and the things they manufacture for export, that would bring up their financial.

Felix: Mainly the resources and the financial.

Dwayne: I'd say maybe it's the resources. Whichever country has the most minerals, the most whatsoever. If for example, Guyana has gold and Grenada don't have gold, Guyana will be richer than Grenada in terms of money, and resources. So Grenada will be left out of that batch.

Noga: What if I told you that many of the countries in the world with rich resources are poor? How would you explain that?

Dylan: Yeah, some cases, maybe that's true, ɑ͟ɯz I'm not sure, what's some of the resources America has? Because Guyana have gold, Guyana have bauxite, Guyana have diamond, and the money is less than, devalued than, American money, and Grenada. But I mean, if we should take in consideration the gold, and stop exporting so much of gold and thing, maybe the money would come back to a reasonable level. ɑ͟ɯzCuzGuyana has some resources, Grenada don't have them, and Guyana is really poor, in financial areas, not resources, right, ɑ͟ɯz we have much more resources than Grenada.

Voices: Pass.

Claude: As I said earlier on, that could be determined by how they use the resources.

Noga: So like Grenada‘s nutmegs. Grenada‘s nutmegs are actually worth a lot of money, right? That‘s a tremendous resource. Why isn‘t Grenada rich?

Dwayne: Before Ivan, Grenada was very rich. But since Ivan had passed in terms of nutmeg, nutmeg you make a lot of monies, and that thing, they used nutmeg to make gas and oil. (Laughter. Dwayne proceeds, cautiously.) I‘m not so certain, not so certain, but I know they use it to make pain reliever and stuff. And these things make a lot of money. So. Grenada *had* resources, back in the, but not in the present. They don‘t have much as in the present.

Felix: Pass.

Noga: Do you think that Grenada should put more attention to agriculture? To replanting?

(Felix and Dylan both start to speak at once.)

Dylan: I think yes, they should put a great effort in agriculture, because I mean the world is getting to an expensive place, ‘cuz the cost of living rising, we‘re importing from away, from the other Caribbean islands, like lumber and rice, it‘s getting real expensive. So instead of importing so much of expensive stuff, you could just plant a few plants and thing. If you get the same food, rice, I don‘t see why they don‘t plant rice up here. And that would be much cheaper than importing rice from the Caribbean, and – I ain‘t sure about the other things that is imported. I know lumber, from the forests of Guyana, yeah. I think people should start agriculture, and *will* have to start agriculture because of the raising cost of living.

Felix: I would say yes. It would be a great deal for us to plant back some of them stuff in Grenada, ‘cuz as Dylan said, the cost of living is rising, and we have to plant something to get food because, in this world, we might not get a chance of getting some of the ... (trails off).

Dwayne: I‘d say agriculture will be one of the most popular thing that will come back in Grenada because the cost of living going up. We can plant sugarcane here, which can make sugar. Bread price going up – instead of eating bread all day, could eat some yam, some pudding too, some whatsoever, and all that will come from agriculture.

Claude: I think so. The Caribbean soil is rich. Most of the things grow, not much of them could grow in other climates. I think they should go back to the agriculture, and that will also raise, develop the economy.

Jason: I‘ll say Grenada should go back to the agriculture, because further past, before Ivan, agriculture was the main thing bringing up Grenada‘s financial needs, bringing the income of money to Grenada.

Dylan: I think they should go back to agriculture in the sense of keeping healthy, right. Because when you plant your okra, your yam, you‘re planting healthy food. I mean, you import a lot of Busters and a lot of nonsense, right, which is carbonates, could kill you. You could stay

healthy by doing your agriculture, planting your foods. Except for technology, a lot of machines keeping people alive and thing, if it wasn't for that, a lot of people would have died, not being healthy, not having the right nutrition. So I think they *should* go back to agriculture.

Noga: Now when I asked you all how you saw yourselves in ten years, and what you wanted to be when you grow up, none of you said you wanted to work on the land. None of you said you wanted to go into agriculture.
Dylan: Yeah, I mean agriculture is a very good thing, right, but I don't want to do agriculture.
Noga: Why not?
Dylan: Agriculture is like working hard, I mean I like to work hard in some cases, right, but not *burning* yourself out in the sun, you know? Agriculture's not really what I'm looking at, you know? But if I could get some of the cabbage and thing, the plants, yeah I would eat it, but if I had to grow it in the sun, and now these days the ozone –
Voice: Yeah.
Dylan: The sun getting real intense, hot, you know, you don't really want to go outside and plant.
Dwayne: Despite my future career, I'll be doing my own little agriculture in the backyard and stuff, you know? Or I'll go to the market and buy some cabbage, some green pepper, I can plant that behind my house. So agriculture will be a big part of my life despite my career.
Claude: Well, in terms of agriculture, one of the main reasons why not much people choose that occupation is because not much of them are skilled in that area. We have agriculture in our school, and plant some beans and stuff like that.
Noga: You have it in school? Do you all participate or it's voluntary?
Dylan: No, it's class, it's a class.
Dwayne: It's a subject area. It's up to you to do agriculture.
Noga: Are any of you doing it?
Voices: Yeah.
Noga: Four of you are doing it. Jason, you're not doing it.
Dylan: It's very irritating. That's why I don't like to work in the agriculture area. _Cuzit's very irritating to see that the plants that you are planting dies, or somebody stole some of the fruits, you know? And I as a person, a little hyper sometimes you know, not so hyper, but a little hyper, and so it's bad to see you producing your stuff and somebody just steal it. Or, plants dies. Like our plants outside, you have a look at it, it's dying, right. So if you go out into the sun, and make a big sacrifice, you're going to plant some plants, and someone steals it or it withers up and dies, that's in some cases, wasting time.

Instead of going inside, reading a books, reading a Biology book, to become something *better*, than having to go outside and plant.

Noga: Do you think Grenada needs further development? Why or why not? And if yes, what would be the most important area to develop?
Jason: I'd say yes. The way I'd like to see it develop is technology.
Felix: I would say yes, and as Jason, say, I'd say technology.
Dwayne: I'd say yes. I see it in the job sector, providing more job opportunities for young persons who just leave college. They have persons who just leave college and still can't find a job. So I'd say the job sector.
Dylan: I believe that, as Jason say, I didn't think you should have, like, well you should right, but I don't think you should have so much development in the technology area and in the jobs, you should have all-around development, agriculture, technology, jobs, all the things, all-around. So you're not developing this area and you loose out in the other area, so you should develop everything.
Noga: And what do you mean by technology?
Claude: Information technology.
Jason: Being more computer literate and thing.
Noga: How do you feel about the development of the tourism industry in Grenada, and how do you feel about the tourists who visit?
Dylan: And as I said, that's one of the areas we should develop too, _ɑɹz Grenada is a place a lot of tourists come and see the different sites and thing. The government should push more to develop the tourism industry. We will accept any tourists that come–
Dwayne: Except the gays.
Dylan: We don't have no bad behaviors or anything, you know, we accept them.
Voice: Pass.
Voice: Pass.
Dwayne: I feel kinda happy but left out in a way. The reason why I say that is because our mall, our own Grenadian mall, Esplanade, the tourists can walk in there with the underpants out and security can't say nothing. But if someone like me do that, they'll send me out with some boot (?) or something. So I feel kind a left out in a way.
Dylan: I see it like Dwayne too, in some areas. Not like in mall thing, like if you walk around in mall with your underpants come on, you ain't supposed to expect better than that. But in some areas, better treatment in some cases. Like tourists come, better treatment toward the tourists. Like, you'd see a lot of people rushing, the taxi person rushing the people, trying to show them around Grenada, show them this part, this part. But if you come, it's like, you a normal Grenadian, even if you not a Grenadian, like he's a normal Grenadian you know, but once you see like the color, or maybe, right, _ɑɹz a lot of light-

skinned persons come, like they get attracted, and then they just want to rush to them and, you know, showing them around the island. But if a normal, dark-skinned person or Indian person come, they would like – yeah, they should get the same attention. I ain‘t saying to pay no attention to them, but I mean, you could give the same attention to the other persons. Tourism means you have to come with a boat, you could come with a plane, I mean you could come from another country and you wouldn‘t see the persons rushing to you. Just once you see a big ship, well, maybe they think they might get some money, right?

Claude: The tourist industry, the development of it is a good thing. Because although the tourists, it only looks at the tourists when they come here for a good time, still they come and invest in our country, meaning they spend, and they bringing foreign exchange. It‘s good for the economic structure and development of the country. Maybe it might it have little negatives in and between, but still it‘s a good thing.

Noga: I showed you in the class all of these brochures of the new developments that are coming. What do you think of the fact that they‘re coming to Grenada?

Claude: To me, all of the new developments are making a place where we can to grow more modernized. At least, for once, Grenada might be more noticeable dot on the map.

Jason: I‘ll say it‘s a wonderful thing, get a tourist attraction, and make Grenada a more modernized place. And that‘s it.

Felix: Well, I find it a good idea, yeah, but also it‘s a bad idea because they‘re destroying some of the trees which prevent the breakdown of the wind, slow down the winds.

Dylan: Pass.

Noga: If you could have anything you wanted, what three things would you wish for Grenada?

Claude: An increase, I wouldn‘t say increase, but more modernized structures.

Noga: Like buildings?

Claude: Buildings, and stuff like that. A better-looking environment. Maybe modernized but clean. Sometimes when something comes modernized, it could have a negative effect, although it looks good. Could cause pollution in some way. Although modernized, still safe to the environment. And just a higher standard of living, an increase in life expectancy or something like that.

Dylan: The three things I would like Grenada to have – I don‘t want to be selfish, right, for the whole of Grenada, I would like to see the government pay more attention to the education part of it, right. _Cuz I mean that, the schools, everything is rising, right? Down to even the fees we have to pay to come to school, rising. That shouldn‘t be so.

You should pay a little money, but it shouldn‘t be so expensive. Some people‘s going through some real financial burdens, right. So you should like give a free program, or some people should – like in the old times in Guyana, they had free education, but now it‘s stopped. But they should have something like that, like the more poor people, ‗ɑz that‘s why some people is getting really juvenile delinquent. Because you can‘t go to school because of financial problems, your mother don‘t have enough money, so you know, I think the government should sit down and think about some of the ways they can improve the educational, yeah.

Another thing, they should more scholarships to the Grenadian students, or maybe any students in Grenada – not Grenadian students, any students, ‗ɑz I‘m not Grenadian – yeah, so it would better themselves. ‗Cuz it‘d be really difficult for you to pay to go to Cuba and do what you got to do, and study.

Felix: More agriculture practice.

Politics

Noga: Do you follow the election year politics that‘s going on right now –
Voice: Uh.
Felix: (cutting in) *No*.
Noga: – NNP, NDC, all of that, and if you could, would you vote?
Jason, Claude: (starting to speak at same time) –
Claude: Okay, to me, right now I‘m not really into the politics thing. But if I would the age to vote, I think I would refrain from voting.
Noga: You would refrain?
Claude: Yeah, I‘m not too much in the politics thing. Whatever happens, happens. Once I‘m living my life ... (trails off).
Felix: No, I would never, no, I wouldn‘t take part in politics and I would never vote.
Noga: Why?
Felix: Because I ent really like politics, ‗ɑz it‘s a whole pile of confusion between the two parties. And ‗cuz sometimes conflicts.
Jason: I will say *no*, because I believe no party is for good, everybody does make their mistakes, and basically, well, I wouldn‘t really vote, ‗cuz I don‘t really like politics, a whole set of confusion and things.
Dylan: (laughing) Well, if I had a chance, I wouldn‘t take part. Nah, I wouldn‘t take part. But if they want to debate, or something, ‗cuz that‘s the point of watching news. ‗Cuz when you watching news, you would get more up-to-date about what‘s going on, right? So, that‘s why, um, that‘s why, in debating, like, we in the debating team, right, we would, in debating the politics or anything, yes, I‘d debate, but if I had to vote, I don‘t really would like to voice, ‗cuz you know, nonsense, it‘s nonsense and thing.

Noga: Do you think that if there's a change in the political administration in the next election that it will have any effect on you or your families?
Voice: Pass.
Voice: Pass.
Voice: I pass too.
Voice: That's serious case.
Claude: If there's a change between parties, maybe it might have certain changes in the country. Could be for the better, could be for the worse, but here with my family, I'm not sure.
Jason: I will pass.
Voice: That's serious case.
Voice: Serious case, right.
Voice: Yeah.
Jason: That's serious case.
Noga: What do you mean?
Dylan: No, because, the whole part of not taking part in politics, _cuz, there are some people, right, there are some people which are NDC, NNP, right, and if I were to say that, well, okay, that turning from NNP to NDC would be a good move, then there would be somebody out there and thing, maybe, woulda check _n' kill me (mumbling. Others laugh).
Noga: Maybe woulda what?
Dylan: Miss, I have to pass. That is a matter not to get into.
Noga: So is that question too politically charged?
Dylan: Yeah, I guess so, yes, yes, yes.
Voice: Yeah.
Dylan: _Cuz if you support – you watch the news? GBN and thing? If you watch the news, advertisements and things, you'd see a real problem in both sides. NDC doing this and that, and there are a lot of NDC and NNP people around. And if we should answer one of those questions and thing, I don't know what will happen. I don't know ... (trails off).
Noga: So you prefer to stay out of it, completely.
Voice: Yes.
Voice: Definitely.
Voice: We don't want to get into those things.
Noga: What kind of backlash, though, would you expect, I mean, if you did get involved? What is the concern? That it would affect your schoolwork? Your friendships? Do you know what I mean? I'm not saying to take a side – not at all – I'm just saying, people that do, what's the problem with that?
Jason: Basically, this might affect a friendship, because you voting for different parties, right, it's just like if you be in different, different, how should I say, different *gangs*. Because I be in this gang, and you know like the gangs now, they don't really like each other, so every

time they meet they might fight, and all kind of thing like that. So basically I don't (voice trails off).

Claude: In the case of different parties, I think favoritism would be one of the key areas of that. Say, I'm NNP, you're NDC, you have to do something for each other. Since I'm the one doing it, and you are NDC, since we not in the same party, there might be a little grudge between each other, so I might lose here, I might want to ask to see education (?), I might more, _cuz I with the NNP people, I might mentally block you off.

Voices: Yeah.

Claude: So the same thing as he said, same thing with the gang. It's the same gang-related kind of thing with parties and so.

Dylan: I believe that it would affect the friendship among people, _cuz, I mean, if you're friends now, and say for instance, say Claude and Felix. Claude could be NNP and Felix could be NDC, right. And NNP is in power right now, right? And if NDC wins, Claude will feel bad, other things might happen, so they might not want to talk to each other. They will not be friends again.

Noga: Do you think belonging to a church makes a difference to a person? If so, what sort of difference? Do you think the type of church makes a difference?

Dylan: The questions a little bit tough, not like last week.

Jason: I would say belonging to a church ain't really a personal thing, because there is only one God and, there is a sense going to a church, you could stay home and serve God. Basically, church ent really matter. (Long silence, Noga repeats the question.)

Claude: Well, the church has different policies. Some policies are the same to the country, as well, so I guess maybe going to church and following the rules of the church can make you a better person in turn with the country, because in a church, if you're in the church, you wouldn't steal, you wouldn't profane other people, and in turn, following the church rules is the same as following the country's. So maybe you wouldn't get in trouble as ordinary people may do. And also, the church is a way to keep in touch with the creator, and so on. Going to church could give you a peace of mind. From the whole week you been working, and just have a time, to like, fellowship with the members you know, take it light for a day.

Voice: Sunday.

Dylan: Well, I think the churches is important, because they need to be in contact with God, right. But in some cases, I don't believe you must go to church to be a Christian. Or you must go to church to serve God. I mean yeah, you go to listen to the pastor, or fellowship, but at home you could have the little Sabbath – when I say Sabbath I mean a Saturday and not Sundays, right. So yeah, you must go to church to be

in contact with God, you pray, you have the devotion, you read your Bible, you have a little discussion among the family members. So, not really going to church to be in contact with God.

Just one problem I have with the church vibes, it's a little bit discriminating against other churches. The Seven Days will discriminate against the other churches, the other churches would discriminate against the other churches, so really kind of mix-up vibes. Really mix-up. So, if you kind of grow up with your grandmother, and your grandmother grow up in an Anglican church, or a Catholic church, or a Pentecostal, it would be, you have to go to the church _cuz your grandmother going to force you to go to the churches and thing. But I believe that. And then you'll hear somebody say this church is not good, this church is a better church, so I believe that it's a whole mix of vibes. So if you would just stay home, and, I mean yeah, you go to church and thing, but if you stay home and have your little devotion and thing, yeah that's good.

Felix: Well I believe church is a good thing because you get closer to God and you learn a lot of things from the Bible, and we also (?) needs to the church, to get them to change their ways, and to get them to understand what's going on in their country better.

Dylan: And the next problem I have with the church, yeah, it's a lot of things. _Cuz, at a point in time, not in Grenada, in Guyana, the only thing the pastor was talking about was money. Every time the collection basket coming around, talking about money. Yeah, you should give money – it's to God, right? (Dylan asks his friends.) You should give it to the church, right. But I don't think you should force a person to give if they don't have, you know? You should just pass around the basket, and if they have they will give, they should give, but if they don't have, you know, you just leave them alone, don't talk bad about them and thing. _Cuzthere's a problem. You hear church nowadays just talking a lot about money.

Noga: Do any of you go to church on Sundays, or Saturdays?

Dylan: My problem going to church is transportation. _Cuz where I living, as I said before, it's boring. It's dead (laughs). There isn't any church around where I living, so it would be impossible to walk to town to a church. Somedays my mother and sister and auntie does go to church with my father's friend.

Noga: What church?

Dylan: I ain't sure the church name. I don't take part in them thing.

Noga: Would you go with them?

Dylan: Some days, on Sundays, I don't really go with them.

Felix: I do go to a church. Catholic.

Jason: I go to Pentecostal.

Claude: Seven Days.

Hurricane Ivan

Noga: Hurricane Ivan.
Voice: Oh shit.
Voice: Mm-mm.
Noga: You can always pass. In the months following Hurricane Ivan, how was your life affected? That‘s the question.
Claude: It was a bit tough, you know. Used to, your original way of life. Not be able to wash clothes in machine because there was no current, you know. We had to go and draw water to take a bath. All things like that. Everything was affected. The way you had to eat. You know, because, maybe certain foods what you‘re accustomed eating you couldn‘t eat that time. Some places were destroyed, so some places you couldn‘t go. The area around where I live, some changes might have been made.
Noga: Like what?
Claude: Because of the destruction, you know. Such as landmarks such as trees and so on. Favorite places, you know, it was a kind of big change in the whole way of living. Everything changed that time.
Noga: Was your house affected?
Claude: Yeah, well, where we stayed, we had a downstairs. Water came at the top, but downstairs was okay.
Dwayne: During the months after Hurricane Ivan, things were both devastating and kind of happy at point in time because the whole was damaged, badly. No current, no water, had to go in the ravine to the river to wash your clothes and stuff. And the happy part is that you get to eat more local stuff. Persons who wanted to go in their oranges, while there‘s nothing wrong with it and stuff, but after Ivan, you didn‘t need no authority to go and say I‘m going to go and pick up one by the river _cuz you know everything come down. You get to eat real breadfruit and ketchup and thing. Real ration, so it was kind of devastating.
Noga: You got ketchup in rations?
Dwayne: No, at home.
Felix: Well, it was really hard because we had to stay home a long time before school could open again.
Noga: How long was it before school opened?
Felix: About two months?
Voice: Approximately that, yeah.
Felix: Yeah. And well, as he said, we had to do a lot of work after. My house was affected really bad. So we had a lot of work to do, and man, it was really bad.
Dylan: I wasn‘t here for Hurricane Ivan, but all the things I‘ve heard, is really worrying. Just worrying about if another hurricane like that supposed to come, it‘s very worrying. _Cuz all the houses flying up in

the air, zinc, animals flying in the air, like, what my friends say they have to eat, like some of them was eating bait for a couple of days. It‘s so, it‘s so stressing. Like, ketchup and breadfruit, it‘s not so delicious.

Dwayne: Fried breadfruit is very delicious.

Dylan: Yeah, it‘s not so delicious. It‘s not like the food you accustomed to eating, fry rice, chicken and thing, you know. And the state of the house. Persons living in low areas, they would have to face a lot of floods. It would be really nasty to stay in some of those unsanitary conditions.

Noga: So it sounds like you all had damage to your homes to some degree or another.

Voice: Entirely.

Noga: Entirely. So, after Ivan, did you get any help, did you get what you needed, and if so, from whom?

Dwayne: The only thing that we got help with was the food, the ration you should say, but not with the rebuilding back of the house because the government had set up a program to build new houses for people and the persons in charge who passed in the community, they build other houses for other people, and for some reason, my mom didn‘t get a new house. So.

Noga: Do you know how you managed?

Dwayne: We managed quite well. We got the materials back and we put it back together, and we build a new house now.

Noga: In the same spot?

Dwayne: No, she buy a piece of land.

Claude: Some of the things we got help with was mostly food stuff. We got stuff that people donated from away. Also, the church helped as well. In such a way that they gave food stuff as well as clothing to those that needed it, like some of those people whose house was totally destroyed. Yeah, we got some stuff.

Felix: We got a few help, as they say with the food, and we got a little bit of help from my uncle with the roof. He supplied us with some zinc and some materials.

Noga: So how long were you all without electricity?

Dwayne: About a good month and some.

Claude: Some of the places were without electricity for a longer period of time, according to the location.

Noga: And so when school started up, was it just the same as before? Or were things different in any way?

Dwayne: Things were totally different because you know, everything have been, the road have been cleared, trees started growing back, cutting up trees and putting by the side of the road. After Ivan, everything was, you watch it and it was like shocked to see it, but when school opened back it was a different scenery.

Dylan: Pass.
Noga: And the school environment, in terms of the classes, the teachers, the education, everything was the same after Ivan as before?
Jason: I'll say no, because we have people sleeping here because of their house had been damaged and things.
Noga: People were sleeping at the school?
Jason: Yeah. Camping and thing for a long time until they got their house fixed back. You never know if they had any disease or any bacteria or thing. I find it wasn't nice.
Noga: Any other differences that you noticed before and after Ivan? (Silence.) Alright, then today do you still feel that your life is affected by Hurricanes Ivan and Emily in any way, and if so, how?
Claude: No. I find that despite of all that happened, things really come back as normal. I guess things turned to the better, you know. Some of the building structures that didn't have a strong foundation, people took that into consideration, so I think things turned for the better. People be more prepared next time.
Dwayne: I'll say no because I think that Ivan took place for a cause. I say that because people have been living very badly and stuff. They not going through, going through their time and their struggles, their battles, and whatsoever with Christ, God in their life (?), everything happen for a cause. So I say, it's not affected.
Felix: Pass.
Jason: Pass.
Noga: So just following up on what you said, you said you think that things are better now in terms of infrastructure, do the rest of you agree, are things better, or worse, or both, depending?
Dwayne: Both of them.
Noga: Why?
Dwayne: After Ivan and stuff, government they finding ways of funding a lot of money to people, providing more jobs and stuff, building more houses. But after all of that, they didn't think of cost of living going up. Some of them trying to decrease it, trying to provide more job, but not helping with the cost of living.
Dylan: It's difficult to decrease the cost of living.

National Culture and Identity

Noga: What do you think culture is?
Claude: Culture, in my point of view, is all about the beliefs of the people. Tradition. Basically, culture could be things passed down generation to generation. Different traits, different ways of doing stuff, that could be considered as culture. Down to the clothes we wear, the things we eat, the songs we sing, everything like that, that's culture.
Voice: Pass.

Voice: Pass.
Voice: Pass.
Noga: What is Grenadian culture then?
Jason: Pass.
Claude: In my words, Grenadian culture is a variety of things. As I said, the food we eat, we have a national dish, that is a part of our culture. Things passed down from generations, like the different stories, folk songs, dances, or the different clothes. All that is Grenadian culture.
Voices: Pass.
Noga: Who do you think can be Grenadian? Do you have to have been born here? Or, do you see it as being very open?
Dylan: Well, I see it as being a little bit very open. I mean, you're not a Grenadian, right, but all the Grenadian people so nice they'll treat you like a Grenadian. If you're born here, your nationality would be Grenadian, but I born in Guyana, so my nationality is Guyanese, but you come here, they treat you like a Grenadian, treat you nice.
Claude: As he said, technically once you're born in a country you're, like Grenada, you're Grenadian. Once you're born here. But in my opinion, once you come in and you fit in –
Voice: Grenadian style.
Claude: – blend in with everything the Grenadian style, get familiar with everything, once you could go (?) _cuz consider you as Grenadian. You're in the country so you are therefore a Grenadian.
Jason: I'd say once you are born in a country, you must expect your nationality to be like the country you're born in. Like I born in Grenada, I'll be a Grenadian. But if I go in another country, I'll expect them to treat me like if I'm born in the place. So if I stay there, I expect like to be more accustomed and get, to be able to relate like to the culture, and even more, of the country.
Dylan: But, you have some disadvantage not being a Grenadian. I mean, like if they're giving away scholarships, right? I mean, they'll treat you like Grenadian, right? But if they're giving away scholarship to a university or away, right, they would mostly give it away to Grenadian people. Like, if I have to go against somebody from Grenada, to get a scholarship, it's most likely to give the scholarship to a Grenadian. _Cuzthey would say that, you know, I would be maybe in the last ten, you know.
Claude: I'm not so much on his side, I'm not too much about that, because to me, a scholarship is like a little bonus for your performance. So maybe you do very well in some subject area, or a profession, some skill, you could get a scholarship to go study for a doctor's degree.
Noga: And it wouldn't matter whether you were Grenadian or not?
Claude: It wouldn't matter if you're Grenadian once you reach a standard of getting that scholarship, it would be accepted.

Dylan: Just to come against Claude's comment, I have to do exceptionally well to get a scholarship over a Grenadian. _Cuz, I mean, you wouldn't to, I mean in America, you wouldn't go to school and expect that they would give you a scholarship in front of a United States national, right? They would more likely give the person from the United States. For you to get a scholarship, you got to do real excellent.

Noga: So there's a higher standard for – ?

Dylan: Yeah, higher standard. As a foreigner, to get a scholarship in another country, you have to do real well.

Noga: As citizens of Grenada, what kinds of things do you think your country should do for you?

Dylan: Well, if I were a citizen of Grenada, I think they should have more employ—jobs, you know. I mean, you have to be qualified. But as a citizen, you expect better.

Claude: As he said, I would back him up there. Seeing as CSME, there's a little bit of competition between Grenadians getting employed and people coming in from other countries. Maybe one thing they could do is like, if somebody from St. Lucia, Trinidad, Barbados would come and apply for a job, and a Grenadian would have the same qualifications as that person, since he is Grenadian, and they would want to boost the economy and so on, I think they should give the Grenadian first preference to that business. They could put a person on standby.

Dylan: As I said, you have to do exceptionally well to get a job over, same as the scholarship, you have to do exceptionally well to get a job over the Grenadian. As CSME say. That's why I think the government should sit down and chat and get a better something to develop the education standard. _Cuz, Guyana right, I don't want to be boasting, right, but Guyana have a better educational standard than Grenada. And United States has a better standard than maybe Guyana. And so it go on, right. So if Grenada it's low in education, right, and another country has a better educational standard, you learn fast, you learn better, right, and say you get qualified, and the person come over here, and a Grenadian that is applying for a job is not so qualified, what you expect, right? The person that is qualified might get the job over the Grenadian, in CSME case, right?

Noga: And you think that's fair?

Dylan: Well, I think it's not so fair. I ain't think it's so fair that a person come in from away to come and get the thing, right. But if the Grenadians think it's not fair, right, they should do something. Or tell the government to do something to better the educational standard so they could be more qualified so if anyone want to come to apply for a job from away, they would be more qualified. It all got to do with the

educational standard. _Cuz, a businessman wouldn't want to employ an unqualified person over a qualified person, _cuz he wants the business to run productively. So, he going to want to qualify the qualified person, so if he could get somebody to come over – and maybe, sometimes, the person that is coming over, right, could get, he could say, well, okay, maybe the business man might ask you how much you might like to work for, I ain't sure, right? But the Grenadian might say, alright, 500 dollars. And the person from away – and he's qualified more than the thing, and – but the bossman say, why should I employ a man from away? And the Grenadian say $500 right. And the other man come now, with the qualification and everything, and the bossman don't want to employ him over a Grenadian, and then the man from away might say, aw, well, give me a 350. This is a less amount of money than the 500. So the bossman might take into consideration and say, well he's a qualified person, and he's lacking money, and he would like to employ, right?

Noga: So this is like the situation with the Chinese, right?

Dylan: Yeah, similar situation. The Chinese build things faster. They might work a little cheaper than the Grenadians. And you have some lazy construction men, workers. So once the Chinese come and they get a little bit amount of money, and they wouldn't quarrel over it, and you see a normal, a man from Grenada would quarrel over his salary and thing.

Felix: I agree with Dylan, *a lot*. Yeah.

Claude: What Dylan said is true about Grenadian workers and the Chinee people. As he said, they work faster and so on. But from my observation of Grenadian, especially construction workers, some of them charge according to the time they take to complete the job, and some of them linger a bit, hoping to further the time spent to complete the job, hoping to get an increase in money spent. And those people who come in, they don't practice that behavior, so I guess the government has noticed that also so they take those others into consideration, so. I think it's all about applying yourself.

Dylan: I don't want to sound like I'm coming down on Grenada, I just using Grenada as an example. I mean, they have other countries, a Grenadian would maybe go into another country and do better.

Noga: So it sounds like you all are saying that the country in which you are a national should give you employment. That's a right as a citizen.

Dylan: Yeah, open the job areas.

Claude: One point, not only employment, as well as standard of living also come into it. Someone from away might come in and decide to buy a piece of land, and offer to pay a certain amount of money. A Grenadian might offer to pay the same amount, but because that person comes from away, they might consider selling it to the foreigner than the Grenadian. It could be that maybe they think that

the Grenadian might not put that land to full potential, or something like that, that could be one reason, but I think as Grenadians they should at least give them a chance, for first preference.

Noga: One last question, turning it around. As citizens of Grenada, what kinds of things do you think you should do for your country, if anything?

Claude: Be devoted. Meaning, maybe you realize that most of the young people, most of the things they think about, as soon as I leave college, maybe go to university. Not down here but somewhere else. Or maybe, okay, I wouldn't really stay down here for long. I might just study and move on, migrate, go live in New York, or some fancy places like that. One thing Grenadians could do for their country is take up the opportunity down here and build the country, build the economy, stay and develop the country. Because by them just, you know, running to the fact that okay, I live on enough (?), find a better standard of living, is not really helping down here develop any faster than I would like it to, so.

Dylan: They could, what the Grenadians could do for the country is that, what they could do is buy more local stuff. Well, I mean regional you know. Like local as in Grenada, in things that made in Grenada, agricultural things. In the case of students, what students should do is get educated, get qualified, so as an example as I used before, if they be qualified, they won't let somebody from away come and steal their job from them by not being educated, be qualified. Be qualified so any punk want to come and play, stealing our jobs from us, we qualified too. Only time we wouldn't be employed is if the bossman won't, if the person put the money in his eyes, _ɑɪz money is the root of all evil, so (laughs nervously).

Claude: (speaking over chuckle) Favoritism.

Dylan: Yeah, favoritism. Or sometime, he have a daughter, the daughter have a son away, and the son come home and want a job, he might give the person job. That's the only case. Once you become educated and qualified it would be difficult for outsiders to come in. And the government too should better the education so the students can become more qualified.

Claude: One thing I notice is, I think in terms of education down here, I think that education down here is fairly well, but the fact that most Grenadians are not really higher education level is because they're not really applying themselves to it. That could be one of the reasons. There are much more other distractions.

Noga: Like?

Claude: Some of them, say students, one reason they're not getting the education they really need is some of them spend more time with TV, video games, more idling than applying themselves to the education.

And in that case, it makes the country look as it's not really high in education because most of them don't really take it seriously and they don't grasp the opportunity when it's there, causing them undermine (?) the education level in the country.

Felix: Pass. They said everything I wanted to say.

(Noga repeats the question.)

Jason: Get educated and do things that will help the country to develop more and, like, go out there and inform young children (pauses) about what they could do to help their country be more developed.

Dylan: Yeah, what Claude say, I don't agree. He said that Grenada's education standard is not bad, but he don't know that because he never maybe went away to another school or something. Cuz if you were in a school maybe away, I ain't saying all these thing, right, but Guyana, and maybe other places, right, if you go and you look at the educational standard, you would see it's in front of Grenada's standard. And the playing video games is all over. Children from anywhere play video games. But it's the guidance from the parents, right, if the parents don't guide them and tell them, okay, time to turn off the game and pick up your book, they would continue playing. It's guidance. Once the parents guide them. Same, right in Grenada too, you have some parents would guide you more than some other parents. It's all about guidance. Leading children in the right direction.

Discussion

These five secondary school students, the brightest "sparks" of Valley, share an earnest desire to get ahead in life. Though their personal circumstances differ by degrees, none of them come from privileged backgrounds. They maintain a foundational belief in the power of education to help them achieve their goals, and repeatedly express frustration at the perceived low educational standards of the school, teachers, and country. They are circumspect about their own school, though, quickly pointing out that every secondary school has its issues. Mostly, they crave guidance; they want to be pushed by their teachers. Their comments on education are striking. While at times they repeat drilled mantras like "education is the key to success," they also express a deeply

felt connection between who they are and what they learn: ―You need education to become," says Dylan. Though they did not use the language of development outside of the nation-building context, the notion of self-development is echoed in this idea that education is what propels the individual to reach their potential, to become better. When asked what is most important for getting on in Grenada today, they chose education and, secondarily, money, over the type of people you know, where you live, family position, or luck.

These students are savvy about certain social and economic issues. They believe in the importance of agriculture, both as a foreign exchange earner and as food security. They have absorbed the message that eating locally is important for the economy as well as personal health. They share a concern about the rising cost of living. They believe that the government should safeguard employment opportunities for locals over foreigners who might have better training or be willing to underbid Grenadians. They are critical of the cost of education and worry about lack of local training opportunities making Grenadians uncompetitive with the opening of the CSME and influx of other Caribbean workers. They perceive that Grenada will be at a disadvantage, and blame the government for poor educational standards. One of the students also mentioned that land should not be sold off to foreigners. Also, Claude mentions the importance of Grenadians remaining ―devoted" to their homeland and staying to develop the country instead of looking for opportunities abroad.

When it comes to subjects that might prove divisive – namely, religion and politics – the students are uniformly and strikingly hands-off. While they all believe that a connection with God is important, they do not think that going to Church is necessary.

Although some think it is useful, Dylan points out a problem with the "vibe," with different churches "discriminating" against the others. This group of friends each belong to a different church, and they were quite careful in their comments. The discussion about politics prompted an even more overt sense of caution, culminating in a tense effort to end the conversation by passing. The students insisted that they would not vote, even if they were of age, and would not engage in politics in any form. When I pressed them to explain their reaction to my questions, Jason finally explained their reticence in terms of gang involvement, with Dylan elaborating that different loyalties could affect their friendships, and Claude noting the problematic fallout of favoritism. In all of the interviews I conducted over three years in Grenada, I never encountered such a tense and emphatic reaction to any subject matter as I encountered with these students and the topic of politics. If they are at all representative, to say that Grenadian youth are alienated from politics is a dramatic understatement.

While these students expressed thoughtful observations about the local economy, they seemed to lack a broader understanding of global economic affairs and historical context. They have an intuitive sense of Third World versus First World, but generally had a hard time considering how a country that was rich in natural resources might not be well off. When I pointed out that Grenada used to have valuable nutmegs, Dwayne commented that Grenada was very rich before Ivan. Only Claude noted the importance of locally turning a resource into a value-added product for export. They also seemed to be unfamiliar with the term "colonialism," though interestingly, Claude had absorbed the notion that it had something to do with "race, color." With a few hints, Dylan noted that

England and Grenada ~~h~~had a little relationship, but now we become independent, so we don‘t need a queen.”

The conversation on Grenadian history revealed the most dramatic gaps in knowledge and a state of general confusion. Just about everything they said was mixed-up in some fashion. They weren‘t sure if Gairy was Prime Minister or Governor-General, and Claude thought he had been killed. They did, however, mostly think that he was a decent leader. They had the dates of the Revolution wrong, and said it started with Bishop‘s death on the fort. They guessed that the revolutionaries were fighting for independence, or provision. They are very unclear about who was trying to overthrow whom when, as well as the timing and purpose of American involvement. Dwayne seemed to think the Americans killed the prime minister. None of the students had opted to take history as an advanced subject, so their scattered knowledge was based on what they had picked up from conversations with teachers and relatives, as well as books that they came across. Clearly, this lack of formal education has left the students without even a basic framework for understanding Grenada‘s recent history.

IV. Conclusion: Public and Personal Worlds in Focus

This dissertation focuses on both public and personal worlds in order to better understand the complex dynamics of the human worlds (Linger 2005:2) within which Grenadians live. I argue that there are two master narratives which comprise the dominant public ideologies circulating about the nation and its people. These arise from a range of different sources which, taken together, tell future-oriented and past-oriented stories about Grenada. These are differently received by Grenadians, who make meaning from these narratives in light of their lived experiences. The Personal Worlds section endeavors to provide the reader with access to these processes as they manifest in personal narratives that move between autobiographical moments, dreams for the future, and evolving opinions about the nation and their place in the world. The person-centered focus privileges an in-depth exploration of the ways that Grenadian youth absorb, reject, or reinterpret aspects of the master narratives, while focusing on the issues that are most important to the speaker. By retaining their individual voices, the transcripts highlight the unique and creative ways that Grenadian youth make sense of their world. While I emphasize depth over breadth with this approach, there are a number of trends which emerge within these interviews, as well as countless informal conversations with Grenadians over three years of fieldwork. In this conclusion, I would like to consider a few of the common threads which surfaced in the course of this research project. The following observations are necessarily generalizations, a point which is underscored by the preceding inclusion of transcript excerpts by individuals who may contradict these

assertions. Nevertheless, having described separately both public and personal worlds in Grenada, it is also important to consider the wider trends that emerge from their interface.

"Low Self Esteem":

The Problematic Paradigm behind Nationalism, Culture, and Development

Grenada's National Strategic Development Plan, prepared by the Agency for Reconstruction and Development, specifically cites "low self esteem vis-à-vis national identity" (ARD 2007a:29) as a challenge to the social environment. An objective of the Cultural Capital program is "to promote cultural identity and enhanced perception of self" (ibid.:38) leading to the "anticipated result" of a "heightened show-case of national identity" with a verifiable indicator of "increased level of participation in national events and increased display of national cultural products" (ibid.:56). These excerpts reveal an interesting mix of concern for poor self-perception among Grenadians and an interchangeability of cultural and national identity. While the apparent homogeneity of the country would seem to promote solidarity based on traditional criteria for nationalism such as shared territory, history, ancestral heritage, and religious values, many Grenadians are preoccupied by the perception that they lack cohesion and pride as a people.

There is a fairly standard list of evidence that Grenadians cite as proof of a weak national identity. It might include these typical assertions: they enjoy eating Kentucky Fried Chicken more than traditional dishes; they do not know nor respect their national symbols; they lose their accent when they move abroad (purportedly unlike other

Caribbean peoples). These statements draw attention to dominant ideas of culture and the ways in which they are equated with national identity. Following Louis Dumont (1970), Richard Handler argues that ―in modern culture nations are imagined as ‗collective individuals.' Each nation or group is imagined to be bounded and apart, and internally homogenous" (1991:66). Further, drawing on C.B. Macpherson's (1962) concept of ―possessive individualism," there is ―an almost mystical bond uniting the agent with the things he acts on" (Handler 1985:210). By extension, the nation becomes a possessive individual, most importantly owning its distinctive culture and history (1991:66). This particular nationalist ideology has become globally hegemonic, and it is readily apparent in Grenada. While Grenadians' conflicted sentiments about their history have been discussed at length, I would like to turn here to the problem of culture.

Grenadians' perception that they do not own their own distinctive culture fuels the dominant local wisdom that they have a weak national identity. This notion directly reflects the long and problematic history of determining what ―counts" as culture in the Caribbean. As Sidney Mintz observes in his overview of the history of anthropology and its subjects, three categories of society emerged: ‗real' non-literates or primitives; ‗civilization' or today's ‗West'; and ancient great societies (1996:291). In the anthropology of the 1930s, the Caribbean emerged as a special, fourth category: peoples without culture (ibid.:305). This partially accounts for the historical neglect of the region by anthropologists, but even in the climate of today's renewed interest, this problematic perception of culture persists: ―While fourth world people have found in the cultural heritage movement, and the notion of culture upon which it rests, a platform to argue for

political rights, other people have been defined as being without culture and history by this same cultural understanding" (Olwig 1999:384).

As the idea of creolization and creole culture developed, it was accompanied by another line of thought which maintained that this new culture was a corruption, or dilution, of the "purer" cultures of Europe and Africa. The many anti-racist efforts to trace survivals and retentions in the Caribbean unintentionally strengthened the negative implications of this analytical framework. The notion of impurity, corruption, or "second-best" devalued the creations of creole culture and created an undercurrent which is alive and well in the region today. For example, St. George's University undergraduates in a "Caribbean Perspectives" class were asked to write an essay on the question, "Is there a Caribbean culture?" Many responses focused on whether or not the region had a culture at all, rather than whether it was possible to characterize a regional culture beyond that of the individual islands.

As Caribbean peoples themselves internalized a particular notion of culture (along with the questions about whether or not they had one), there have been conscious efforts to valorize what is perceived as local culture. Many of these efforts have focused on a static, trait-based view of culture: "cultural worlds are popularly depicted by consumer habits and preferential tastes: ethnic food, music, pictures, and ancestral costumes" (Khan 2001:145). While this narrow view of culture may be dismissed by anthropologists, its popular conception persists in the public imagination. The result is an attempt to valorize a limited sphere of material accomplishments, while giving short shrift to the underlying adaptive and dynamic aspects of different cultures and value systems. One example of this phenomenon is the intense focus on carnival. Virginia Young uses national carnival

in St. Vincent as evidence that the people possess a national culture, the backbone of national identity in her analysis. She cites a newspaper columnist, who writes ―Too much Carnival' – some complain – but the fact may be that Carnival is all the culture we have left'" (1993:172). Young contends, ―the certainty of those public figures that ‗we Vincie' share attributes, styles, and beliefs is a far cry from the idea of culturelessness of Caribbean societies long propounded by many commentators" (ibid.:173), entirely ignoring the double-edge to the columnist's statement. Yet it is precisely this specter of ―culturelessness" and inauthenticity that renders the culture concept problematic still today. This is not to deny the symbolic import of carnival nor to undermine its role in the region; it is simply to note that cultural products such as these are made to carry a heavy symbolic load. Further, many of the traits which are seen as defining culture (for example, food) are often haunted by the question of authenticity – is a combination of Indian, African, and European elements a new creation, or a copycat dilution?

This problematic framework that surrounds local notions of culture becomes transposed onto ideas of national identity and is magnified by the dominant development paradigm. National identity becomes something that is weak or strong, something one has or does not. It is viewed within a value-laden paradigm that arouses anxiety on the part of a people who have too often seen themselves as deficient in the competitive arena of culture. Rather than embrace the willingness to mix foreign influences into their own taste for food, music, and language, for example, these ―dilutions" are viewed as evidence that they do not sufficiently valorize Grenadian culture. At the same time, efforts to narrowly define Grenadian culture are often seen as artificial (e.g., historically, there is no traditional ―national dress") or unimpressive (e.g. many traditional food dishes

are quite plain, featuring the starchy vegetables still known as "provision" from days of slavery). These anxieties are directly translated into the concern that Grenadians lack a national identity, particularly when compared to Trinidadians, Jamaicans, Bajans, or Americans. This comparative and hierarchical framework strongly echoes the development paradigm, in which Grenadians must also struggle daily with the value-laden labels of "undeveloped" or "underdeveloped" or, at best, "developing." These overlapping and pervasive frameworks for assessing themselves as a people and nation all too often leave Grenadians criticizing themselves as "less than" or behind.

While these issues are an undeniable part of Grenadians' concerns about their viability as a postcolonial nation on the world stage, I perceive this omnipresent framework as evidence of a shared value system arising out of a historically-disadvantaged position rather than proof – as it was so often offered – of Grenadians' inadequacies in the arenas of nationalism, culture, and development. Rather than looking at so-called indicators of national identity, such as "increased level of participation in national events and increased display of national cultural products," the research presented in this dissertation argues for an examination instead of different national narratives about Grenada and its people, and how they are propagated and differently, or similarly, understood by Grenadians. Thus, it is especially important to explore the implications of co-existing past- and future-oriented narratives and their appeal to different generations.

A Generational Divide

Concern about the perceived low status of Grenadians' national identity is frequently articulated by the local intelligentsia, a group of people mostly in the forty-plus generation. Their views are also useful to compare with the voices of the youth. As Trouillot notes, "all societies produce a formalized discourse about themselves within which there is a scholarly component" and "anthropology needs to abandon its contempt for local scholarly discourse" (2003:136). The following condensed excerpts are taken from interviews with Grenadian intellectuals, people who occupy important positions within their communities, the community college, and St. George's University[6]. They reflect here on nationalism, national identity, and today's youth.

Sociologist:

> I'd argue that in the _80s, you never really had a great sense of national identity. What you have is a growing sense of patriotism – you've probably seen that growing with each Independence Day celebration. This could signal an attempt to understand who we are.
>
> I think it's a very weak nationalism, comparatively, if you think of an island like Barbados, even Antigua.
>
> What you'd have to have is a crisis and attempt to overcome it, and still a prolonged period giving people a belief in that sense of dignity and prestige and equality. You have to develop that confidence in the whole system, that in fact I'm equal and feel some proudness of this society in which I'm living ... Remember, when I speak of equality, I mean a perception. Because reality doesn't exist. But if there's an issue, the expectation all of us can expect some justice. Not a situation where the elite are treated differently by the law. [April 7, 2008]

[6] All interviews were conducted in confidentiality, and the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

Economist:

> I think philosophically the idea [for development under the Revolutionary period] was simple. Look, it's a small country, the government can't do everything. You need to organize the communities in such a way that they can assist in their own development. Look, there's a road that needs to be built, a school, the government would give you the wood, the board, and we would say "Look, John Brown, could you come and give assistance to this community for three hours on a Sunday morning after Church."
>
> I'm not sure it would work now. Simply because people's mindset would have changed radically. It has become a much more individualistic, and I must say selfish, in the vulgar sense of the term, society, where you look out for yourself. It's a less accommodating society, national identity would have changed to some extent sociologically.
>
> Central to development of Grenada, to my view, is how you use your people. You hear politicians talk well, people are our human resource and blah blah – they're not using it. Admittedly, it's an extremely difficult resource to manage ... Unfortunately, the politics in Grenada have become very very very divisive. That would make it more difficult to do that kind of nation-building by bringing people together. You first of all have to heal those wounds, the mistrust that would have developed. [April 2, 2008]

Country-Based Intellectual and Former Revolutionary:

> [The youth today] like a lost flock of people that have no national consciousness. They just pattern their life like the American youth and lead a very fast life. What excites them now would never excite our generation.
>
> ... I think a lot of those conscious people before used to go on the block and hold decent conversation, who used to emphasize on educating their brother, used to look out for their brother. Everybody become selfish, everybody stay within themselves, everybody concerned about their immediate family and people don't share interviews, people don't share their education, people not committed to organization, community work anymore, to help a village, to do volunteer work. For that to come back, I think the government should make a deal with students, we will assist you with books, we will pay for your education, give scholarships, and then you need to come back and give to the community ...
>
> ... You have youths in the village that don't know one another. Because there is nothing common to bring them together. There is not a youth group where we were sitting and meeting together, and discuss problems that confront us in the village, discuss problems in agriculture, nothing. No organization. So they're like foreigners. We had that even

before the Revolution, during Gairy time. We had groups, we had clubs. We had community leaders.

I don't know what cause [the change]. People just get selfish. Government have to set a policy, have to get the church involved, Chamber of Commerce has to get involved, the NGOs have to get involved ... they need to invest in the youth.

Youths walking the street now with half of their pants below their knees. Just seeing bandits as an achievement in life. Being radical and rebel as an achievement. That shows me very poor and low self-esteem. And the businessman will say that is not my business. The Indian in the society who controls all the commerce in the town, "Is not my business." Next thing you hear somebody saying youths who isn't given proper direction pick up some gun and stick up the Indian and his wife, and you have the most hideous crime in society. Unless it become our business it's difficult to solve this problem. Youths is being left. OK, I spend a lot of time home and before I used to spend a lot of time on the block. I used to be chatting with youth, lecturing, involved in community groups, spend my time playing cricket, football, assisting. I just look after myself now because I spend all my time walking in the village, and then no one else want to take up the mantle of leadership.

... Days when guys used to come out in secondary school and read *Soul on Ice*, read *Black Skin, White Masks*, by Eldridge Cleaver and them guys, Malcolm X, and you go and you chat, you understand? You read a little Marxist, and you feel you bright, and you go on the corner and you decide to display your little intellect, you understand (laughing)? You don't get it, nah, people don't engage in *positive* debates ... You go and you don't get nobody to hold, there is no intellectual brainstorming anymore. So the youth now different, different. [April 20, 2008]

Political Scientist:

But after that [Revolutionary] period, basically everything crumbled. And they [Grenadian youth] had access, again, to the whole North American culture. That's a big factor here. I can tell you that. Even the eating habits. Look at the mall, Kentucky [Fried Chicken]. Grenadians eating out in restaurants is a recent thing. You had people going to restaurants as a family outing, as a special thing. Not a habitual thing. Most people used to pack their lunch.

... I think it was the whole abruptness of the change. It was a very sudden cultural change. For example, people during the Revolution were motivated by this national spirit. And that was rapidly replaced by this capitalist spirit ... For example, most of the debushing. That was self-help, we used to call that self-help during the Revolution. People used to come out of the village and clean up their own village ... Post-Invasion, that work became paid. So people tend now to start developing more

capitalistic values. There's a guy wrote a calypso, he said, —All them big time communists turned capitalist." And that was this rapid change ... I think we have more individualism today than in any time in Grenadian history. People are more focused on themselves. Those that are engaged in collective work would do so as a means toward an end.

... I will say that some islands have a stronger national identity. Trinidad, Jamaica, Barbados. Grenada is not as strong. There is a national identity in Grenada but it's not as strong. It's aroused periodically – Independence time, you see them with flag, all kind of paraphernalia. Unlike Trinidad, where there is this nationalist spirit at all times. For example, the way a Trinidadian will boast about Trinidad and Tobago. You will find a Grenadian doing it, but not very often. Grenadians, especially this generation now, tend to gravitate toward things that are foreign. You go to Trinidad, and they have maintained a lot of things that would aid in the whole national identity. They take pride in all the national symbols, the flags, the birds, everything.

Even the way they treat their people too as well. National identity would also manifest itself in the way we treat one another. For example, you may have a sportsperson here who rose to national prominence. Yes, we know him, we give him accolades, and what have you. But the way the Barbadian, the Jamaican, and the Trinidadian would make a fuss over him or her, you wouldn't find that happening in Grenada.

I should also say that it has a lot to do with the different types of people in the islands. Trinidadians, for example, express themselves more than Grenadians. What, in terms of the public demonstration of their national pride, Grenadians are not very good at that. You take a Trinidadian, you send him to New York, spend twenty years there, he returns with the same Trinidadian accent. Send a Grenadian, when he comes back, totally different accent. For example, you have this school here [SGU], and you have Grenadian students who have never been to the States adopting American accents. I've seen it here, I've listened to it here all the time. It was more obvious when the school was much smaller, because you feel kind of, let's just say, overrun ... I know language is environmental, but the Trinis, the Bajans, the Jamaican, they tend to retain a lot of their culture, more than would have Grenada.

[N: So the relationship between national identity and culture for you is – what?]

Let's give an example. Trinidad has more North American fast food outlets than Grenada. But at the same time, they still retain their whole cultural thing, you still get the Indian foods on the street.

[N: So strong national identity means strong cultural identity.]

Of course.

[N: So you don't think Grenadians have a strong cultural identity?]

Personally, I don't think so. [April 8, 2008]

These scholars convey a shared pessimism about today's youth, weak national identity, and a rise in individualistic values within a divisive social setting.

As in many conversations with the forty-plus generation, reflections on the past by the local intelligentsia are also tinged with a nostalgia for the highlights of the revolutionary period, or even earlier days, when Grenadians came together to develop their communities. This nostalgia is encapsulated in the locally-published book by Grenadian author Claude Douglas, *When the Village was an Extended Family*. For those who grew up in close-knit villages without television, or who participated in the community-building efforts of the revolutionary period, the past often becomes idealized. As Douglas writes, "In the 'old time days', there was a human touch that forced villagers to rise above the narrow confines of individualism to a higher and broader plateau of altruism" (2003:23). Grenadians are depicted as an extended family that has now grown apart, riven by the violent demise of the Revolution and its unresolved crimes, and further split by current political antagonisms. The late twentieth-century tendency to nostalgically seek utopias in the past (cf. Özyürek 2006, Trouillot 2003, Boym 2001) is evident among the older generation of Grenadians as they recall a social cohesion based on communal village life.

This trajectory of the Grenadian people as moving from united to conflicted is precisely the opposite of that seen among the post-Revolution generation. For today's youth, there is little nostalgia for a past that they have not known personally and about which they have not been taught. The youth see the divisive after-effects of the failed Revolution, and turn their vision instead toward the promise of a brighter future. While those over forty yearn for a nostalgic island paradise of simpler days, the younger

generation believe that the utopic potential of their island will be realized in the future when development provides a quality standard of living for all and new opportunities to satisfy their ambitions. Under the umbrella of development, they focus on the promise of national improvements that will further their individual goals, which many also believe will ultimately serve the nation. In stark contrast to the demise of the Revolution, Hurricane Ivan, the major historical event of the younger generation's lifetime, demonstrated Grenadians' capacity to come together under duress and help each other. In some ways, it has become the youth's strongest image of Grenadians' potential as they move from a conflict-filled past to a people united as one family working toward developing their country. The idea of development thus epitomizes Trouillot's characterization of "North Atlantic universals" as concepts that are ambiguously defined but irresistibly seductive (2003:36). It speaks to the youth's personal ambitions within Grenada's post-revolutionary individualistic and capitalist society, while projecting a utopic vision of the nation's potential into the future.

While the older generation describes a movement from social cohesion to fragmentation, the youth imagine a trajectory where a people historically divided come together as a unified family. These two opposing trajectories differently attract the pre- and post-Revolution generations, thus fueling the generational divide and partly accounting for the alienation the older generation expresses feeling from the youth. It is important to note that while both narratives about the nation and its people are ubiquitous within the public sphere, they are differently internalized by different generations. The tendency for the older generation to focus on the Island of Conflict narrative, and the youth to gravitate toward the Isle of Spice narrative, reflects the different degrees of

cognitive salience that each story holds for people with dramatically different life experiences. Further, by focusing on different narratives oriented toward opposing timeframes, Grenadians are able to manage the cognitive dissonance which arises from competing images of the nation and its people. These different emphases, held by different generations, only reinforce the reality that the greatest divide in Grenadian society today is likely that between pre- and post-Revolution generations, a proposition with which most Grenadians would likely agree.

A Future without a Past

While the interviews make clear that there is a wide degree of individual variation, there are some overarching trends among the youth that have important repercussions. The youth gravitate toward the future-oriented narrative of development, while remaining ignorant of their nation‘s history. They feel alienated politically, but are personally invested in the promise of development. They are mostly uncritical of the development paradigm and evaluate Grenada‘s economic weaknesses in an ahistorical framework. It is this combination of factors that might best account for the local perception that Grenadians have a weak national identity, rather than any lack or inadequacy in the arena of culture.

It may seem natural for youth to be attracted toward a future-oriented narrative that carries the promise of greater personal opportunity. It is important, therefore, to look past this generalization into the finer contours of how this narrative is defined. First, the ubiquitous use of the language of development reflects engagement in a global

conversation that has positioned Grenada at the lower end of a hierarchical spectrum. Rather than speak of improvements, opportunities, or greater independence, for example, the language of development imports baggage that has become widely internalized among Grenadians, also accounting for hierarchical echoes in assessments of national identity and culture. Second, the youth perceive development as focusing either on infrastructure or education. The latter was most important to my study participants, though this may reflect a bias in that particular population which was mostly comprised of students. In the countryside, the overt symbols of modern development, such as the stadium or cruise ship port, were generally received more positively. In either case, these aspects of development represent greater opportunity for individual advancement, whether it be new jobs in the tourism industry or training for better employment. For the youth, individual development readily translates into national development, without reference to the village-level or community development so important to those in the pre-Revolution generation. This reflects the dramatic post-revolutionary shift from socialist aspirations to strongly capitalist and individualistic values. Third, the youth‘s primary investment in their country as an economic entity is accentuated by a correspondingly weak investment in their nation‘s politics or history.

Grenadian youth are not taught their nation‘s history. While there is disagreement about why this is the case, with some blaming a government conspiracy and others noting deficiencies in the education system, the fact remains that the little the youth do know about Grenada‘s past comes from personal communications and anecdotes. While one might expect a strong tradition of informal and oral histories on a very small island, many youth described a reticence to raise the topic with their elders and a feeling that the

subject is taboo. At the same time, the anecdotes that the youth recounted hearing from relatives or teachers were typically haphazard, emphasizing dramatic moments of violence or fear without grounding in a broader historical context. Thus, actors, motives, leaders, and dates were frequently scrambled, leading to a sense of conflict without clear purpose. Many in the younger generation remain ignorant of the sociopolitical conditions that led to Grenada's dramatic periods of unrest and Revolution, nor do they understand the ideologies and aspirations involved in the nation's struggles. The ongoing emotional turmoil generated by the demise of the Revolution, however, prevent this period of Grenada's history from being entirely ignored by the youth. Instead, there is the sense of a lacuna when it comes to their past; the youth realize that there is something that they are missing. Few, however, seem genuinely motivated to fill in the historical blanks. Further, the ongoing manipulations of history in a highly partisan political climate seem to make the youth even less interested in learning about the past. Instead, the past becomes an unwelcome obstacle to moving forward, a preoccupation of the older generation and a distraction from the youth's motivated focus on national development.

This combination of factors may account for Grenadian youth's tendency to criticize Grenada's economic progress without reference to the nation's historical legacy or the more troubling aspects of the development discourse itself. Many of the youth with whom I spoke did not understand why Grenada was struggling economically. They blamed mismanagement of resources, lack of government transparency, laziness and lack of entrepreneurial spirit. Though some traced a certain detrimental mentality of dependence back to the days of slavery, none cited the economic legacy of slavery or the sociopolitical problems that persisted post-emancipation. Though many spoke of

becoming independent of foreign aid and loans, I never encountered a reference to a postcolonial framework in the youth‘s assessments of the nation‘s economic struggles. The net result of these speculations was an internal focus on Grenada‘s weaknesses as a nation and a people, with little grounding of their struggles within a wider field of historical and current global power relations. This was furthered by uncritical acceptance of the development discourse itself, which arouses anxiety about Grenada‘s weak position in the hierarchy of developing and developed nations. Given the youth‘s dominant investment in their nation as an economic entity, coupled with political apathy and frustration with the economy‘s weaknesses, it is understandable that many youth would appear to their elders as alienated or lacking a strong national identity.

Conclusion

Grenada does not have a single hegemonic national narrative propagated by a single source, and Grenadians from different generations are engaged with negotiating multiple and contradictory narratives in individual and creative ways as they make sense of their nation in light of their life experiences. I argue against replicating the emic perspective that national identity should be viewed as weak or strong, absent or achieved, instead focusing on parsing the ways in which ideas about the nation are differently internalized and expressed. By maintaining a double lens on public and personal worlds, the analysis reveals the continuous interplay between individuals as agents and subjects in the making of their identity as Grenadians. While each unique voice reveals the complex and dynamic meaning-making processes at work in the construction of an

individual's sense of self within and apart from a national identity, certain overarching trends also emerge which expose the structuring frames of Grenada's sociocultural life.

By maintaining dual foci, this dissertation aims to convey a nuanced and dynamic view of Grenadian identity, while avoiding a number of appealing but simplistic conclusions. In the face of local perception that Grenadians have low self esteem regarding their culture and national identity, it is exceedingly tempting for the well-intentioned anthropologist to argue that this is not actually the case. The "moral optimism about humankind" that permeates anthropology (Trouillot 2003:135) is only magnified by the knowledge that whatever scholarly work is produced about this small island will easily and quickly make its way back to the people about whom it is written, thus fueling local debates. Without trivializing this concern among Grenadians, I have tried here to demonstrate that the root cause of this issue may be misconstrued in popular perception. A lack of culture is not the problem, but rather narrow and static ideas about what culture is and how it should be valorized and manifested. Of greater concern is the younger generation's primary identification with their nation as an economic entity, and their uncritical, ahistorical investment in the development paradigm coupled with political apathy.

While I highlight problems with development discourse throughout this dissertation, I also try to avoid demonizing it. The idea of development, albeit ambiguously defined, does bring Grenadians together in their hope for a brighter future. Though I have critiqued the hierarchical framework that it imports, as well as the way in which it divisively highlights problems within Grenadian society, I also attend to the ways in which it serves as an uplifting rallying point for younger and older generations.

In spite of economic hardship and vulnerabilities, Grenadians work hard in their belief that a better future is possible. That this belief is expressed through development rhetoric complicates the picture, but should not undermine the ideals at the root of this vision.

It is also tempting to argue that multiple and dynamic nationalist narratives allow Grenadians greater agency in creatively constructing a national identity outside of hegemonic nationalist imperatives. However, as Daniel Segal warns, –we should be wary of thinking that a _weak nationalism‘ is somehow outside of nationalist hegemony or socially liberatory" (1994a:235). Not only does closer analysis reveal the strength of both master narratives, it also becomes clear that different versions hold different appeal for different generations – and that attraction is not weakened by the co-existence of multiple narratives. Further, without obliterating individual agency, it is clear that these narrative threads extend beyond the boundaries of the nation. Grenada as the Island of Conflict and Isle of Spice only exists within dynamic fields encompassing both historical legacies and contemporary global power relations. These fields influence national narratives, which in turn influence Grenadians, who formulate responses based on the factors most salient in their life histories. These responses ultimately have the power to influence the ever-evolving national narratives, which will also continue to take shape under political, economic, and environmental pressures that transcend the island‘s boundaries.

This ethnography of Grenada describes its unique history and particular national ideologies, and invites the reader to listen to the distinctive voices of its people. As these multiple angles come to light, however, it is clear that a kaleidoscopic view of Grenada has much in common with the situation of many other small, economically vulnerable,

postcolonial nations in the twenty-first century. There are shared questions that these nations within the Caribbean, and beyond, must answer: How to deal with the emotional and economic legacies of a painful and violent colonial past? How to understand the struggles for independence, and convey these to new generations? How to build a better future while negotiating the inequalities of globalization? How will past and future be linked – or severed – as each nation writes the story of what it is, was, and will be, and who are its people? Grenadians live with these questions every day as varied responses fill public spheres and private homes. As the older generation passes on, the post-Revolution generation will undoubtedly find new ways to answer these persistent questions as they struggle to realize a better future for their country and themselves.

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