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Andrea Jean Queeley
Florida International University, aqueeley@fiu.edu

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Somos Negros Finos: Anglophone Caribbean Cultural Citizenship in Revolutionary Cuba

Andrea Queeley

"Not all niggers are the same"

These were the words of Caridad,[1] a seventy-two-year-old first-generation Cuban whose Jamaican parents were among the hundreds of thousands of early twentieth century black British West Indian immigrants to Cuba and other Latin American locations. At one time a teacher who gave private English classes to middle- and upper-class Cubans before the 1959 revolution, Caridad would often pepper her Spanish with phrases or commentary in English. In this particular instance, while gazing proudly at the attractive, college-educated daughter of my hostess, she said, ella es una negra de salir.[2] Then, turning to me, Caridad remarked, "You know, not all niggers are the same."

Aside from being taken aback by her use of the term "nigger," I was struck by the sharpness with which her brief comments reflected an emerging theme in my investigation of the revitalization of ethnic associations among Cubans of English-speaking Caribbean origin during the Special Period.[3] Namely, that a prominent element of the discourse around British West Indian[4] immigrants and their descendants in Cuba was that they had a way of being black that was different from non<EN>-West Indians, and that this difference was an elevating one. I was repeatedly told that los jamaicanos were clean, respectful, disciplined, pious, hard working, invested in education and self-betterment, and proud of being black. Regardless of a shared racial identity, they were perceived to be markedly distinct from Haitian immigrants, who were thought to be more likely illiterate, confined to agricultural labor, and devoted to brujería,[5] and from

black and working-class Cubans,[6] who were said to use foul language and were loud, crude, and prone to disorder.[7]

Such self-representations bear remarkable resemblance to those found among English-speaking Caribbean immigrants in a variety of locations across time and space (See Purcell 1993, Gordon 1998, Bourgois 1989, and Harpelle 2001 for examples in the Central American case and Bryce-Laporte 1972, Waters 1999, Hintzen 2001, and Rogers 2001 for U.S. cases). They also indicate a move on the part of people of English-speaking Caribbean origin that situates their experience at the heart of debates about black subjectivity. A perusal of more or less recent titles such as The End of Blackness (Dickerson 2004), Against Race (Gilroy 2000b), Becoming Black (Wright 2004), Modern Blackness (Thomas 2004), Problematizing Blackness (Hintzen and Rahier 2003), and those that speak of transformation, uprootedness, and improvisation (Clarke and Thomas 2006, Fox 2006), indicates that blackness and racial politics appear to be in a moment of transition and/or reconsideration. Scholars are grappling with the basis, usefulness, meaning, and dangers of blackness and its continued status as a category of belonging and an organizing principle in the struggle against racial exclusion.[8] Of particular interest here is how the presence of immigrants who bring distinct cultural frameworks for understanding difference might change, challenge, or conform to existing national racial politics.[9]

One proposal for framing what at times is a disjuncture between the ways in which black immigrants and native black populations interpret and experience a black identity is that black immigrants might be more inclined to participate in a politics of deconstruction whereby class, culture, ideology, and nationality are deployed in the challenge of national racial politics.[10] The politics of deconstruction, they explain, "refers to tactical circumvention of the status quo through participation in diffuse and alternative politics in other arenas of struggle" (Hintzen and

Rahier 2003:3). This political strategy is juxtaposed with a structural politics of race, which also

challenges the white supremacist status quo. However, where the politics of deconstruction

accomplishes this by destabilizing notions of a uniform blackness developed within and

circumscribed by the politics of race in the United States, a structural politics of race presumes a

more monolithic, rigid interpretation of a particular black subjectivity that has been located,

structurally, at the bottom of the racial order, and that must provide the basis for personal and

political alliances. According to those who are suspicious of the attention that the multiplicity of

black identity is garnering and doubtful of its efficacy as a strategy for challenging white racial

authority, disengaging the study of race and understandings of black cultural production from

politics, history, and economics constitutes a denial of the most salient factors that shape black

subjectivity (Noguera 2003; Robotham 2005). Propositions that privilege the diversity of black

subjectivity and that disregard or underestimate the significance of a shared racial identity prove

worrisome as structural factors such as institutionalized racism continue to impact the life

chances of racialized subjects (Brodkin 2000; Harrison 1995; Mukhopadhyay and Moses 1997;

Mullings 2005).

Returning for a moment to Caridad's comments, one might argue that, in declaring that

"not all niggers are the same" and that a young, educated black woman is worthy of occupying a

place denied her based on race, she is engaging in a politics of deconstruction and challenging

the rhetoric of black inferiority. Indeed, in representing themselves as well mannered, diligent,

law abiding, and so forth, people of English-speaking Caribbean origin are challenging the

dominant racial ideology that positions black people outside the nation based on traits deemed to

be a threat to, and thus incompatible with, modernity.[11] At the same time, the self-representation

that they employ in this particular contestation is at least partially rooted in Anglo superiority

and does little to disrupt the civilizational discourse infused in ideologies of racial exclusion. Thus, this case provides an example of a way in which the politics of deconstruction might reinforce the very ideologies of exclusion it is attempting to subvert.

Diasporic identities are by no means monolithic, and I am particularly concerned here with the ways they change over time, space, and circumstances. I propose that, in order to understand the meanings and workings of diaspora, we focus on the ways in which multiple "entanglements" (that is, culture, status, ideology, and so forth) function in relation to structurally positioned black identities, and vice versa. In this chapter, using the case of people of English-speaking Caribbean origin living in Cuba, I argue that we must attend to both the diversity of black subjectivities and the ways in which structural factors such as racial hierarchy and inequality insert themselves into the manner in which people imagine and perform this diversity. It suggests that the politics of deconstruction is a critical strategy for confronting racial inequality and for protecting against assaults on black humanity, but it need not replace, usurp, or submerge structural politics. Indeed, my research indicates that the structural position of "black identity" and racialized subjects is itself implicated in the sort of blackness that subjects reconstruct and perform when engaging in the politics of deconstruction and, as such, must be taken into consideration when evaluating its deployment.[12]

<T1HD>Anything But Static: West Indian Identification across Cuba's Twentieth Century

<TXT>Although there are no doubt continuities in the ways in which black immigrants and their descendants in Cuba have constructed their identities across time, it is in exploring the shifts that have occurred that we can discern the relationship between the structural position of black people and the sort of subjectivities that people of English-speaking Caribbean origin

assert. Cuba presents a particularly interesting case, because it has undergone dramatic social changes between the pre-1959 political and economic status quo and the construction of early revolutionary society in the 1960s and 1970s, to the shock and crisis of the 1990s following the collapse of eastern European socialism, and both the withdrawal of the economic support that funded Cuba's welfare state and the tightening of the U.S. embargo (the Special Period). Though there has been an abundance of transformation between and within these time periods, for our purposes I will focus on those that relate specifically to the racialized social hierarchy and, in particular, on those that help to explain how people of Anglophone Caribbean origin negotiated the shifting terrain of twentieth-century Cuba.[13]

Those who arrived and settled in Cuba in the first half of the twentieth century were preoccupied with maintaining an ethnic identity that was completely separate from the identity of Haitian immigrants and Cubans of color. Doing so gained them access to better jobs in a country dominated by U.S. and British capital, where being able to understand and speak English was advantageous. Their establishing an ethnic community that promoted middle-class respectability constituted an attempt to create a buffer against the prevalent nationalism and the antiblack racism that characterized prerevolutionary Cuban society.

Then, after the 1959 revolution, the situation changed dramatically. The need for the reproduction of such an identity significantly diminished, following concrete advances in the opportunities available to black and working-class people, as well as the imposition of an ideological silence on any claim of original, separate identity. Though racial discrimination persisted, structural changes effectively extracted its teeth, and people of English-speaking Caribbean origin had greater access to social mobility. During the Special Period, circumstances changed again as reforms implemented to arrest the precipitous economic decline and to enable

Cuba to be economically viable in the global market resulted in a worsening of conditions for blacks in general. In this climate, the need for such an identity emerged once again among people of West Indian origin (the first, second, and third generation born in Cuba).

Nearly seventy years after the bulk of these immigrants arrived in Cuba, people of English-speaking Caribbean origin began establishing--in some cases, reestablishing--ethnic associations in an attempt to "rescue their roots." My inquiry into this institutional revitalization on the part of the descendants of West Indian immigrants entails tracing and examining the relationship between the mobilization of English-speaking Caribbean identity and the experience of racialized social inequality. Claims to this particular cultural citizenship are closely tied to the workings of inequality, not only because it becomes a strategy for mediating racism and contesting unequal inclusion in the nation, but also because it consents to a hierarchy of blackness in which diasporic subjectivities simultaneously escape and affirm racially exclusionary practices. Drawing upon ethnographic data as well as research on black Cubans and West Indian immigrants across time and space, I ultimately problematize the mobilization of an identity that is organized against the blackness of the local/national racist imaginary, whether that identity is based on racial mixture, black nationalism, foreignness, or "model minority" status.

<T1HD>Phase One: Establishing Community, Contesting Undesirability

<T2HD>On Hostile Ground: Black and Immigrant in a New Nation

<TXT>Demographers and historians of this period estimate that between 1898 and 1938, more than 140,000 British West Indians entered Cuba. The majority were males from Jamaica who entered the island through the Oriente, Cuba's easternmost province, and Camagüey, the

adjacent province that stretches toward the center of the country (Estevez 1988; Giovannetti 2001; McCleod 2000; Perez de la Riva 1975; Wynter 2001).[14] Though the numerical dominance of Jamaicans is an important characteristic of the migration as is indicated by the persistent use of the term jamaicanos to refer to all English-speaking Caribbean migrants, the immigrants hailed from throughout the colonies as well as from Central America and the United States, in the case of "twice migrants."[15] All were leaving situations of unemployment, land scarcity, and harsh conditions that were characteristic of the postemancipation British colonies, to form "a migratory field that expanded to include new sites of economic dynamism as the decades wore on" (Putnam 2002:11).

Following the prospect of higher wages paid by U.S. industries, West Indian immigrants' arrival and presence in Cuba was inextricably linked to the postindependence transition of the new nation, which was characterized by the rapidly increasing dominance of the United States in the economic, political, and social life of the country (Knight 1985; Pérez 1999).[A] At best regarded as "undesirable aliens" who were a necessary evil in the early-twentieth-century project to modernize Cuba and maximize profits from the sugar industry, the immigrants arrived into a newly independent society in which sociocultural mixture, racial equality, and the struggles of people of African descent were at the forefront of social and political debates. In spite of their central role in the nation's liberation, black Cubans were being subjected to exclusionary practices and racist violence. The nation was confronting the question of "Barbados or Canada": would Cuba belong to the black, backward Caribbean or white, civilized North America (Chomsky 2000)? While the presence of foreigners was criticized by those Cubans moved by nationalism and a desire to secure resources for Cubans, the presence of black foreigners was

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[A] Spelled "Perez" in bib, not "Pérez." It should be the latter (with accent)

that much more reprehensible because of the threat that their blackness posed to the very future of the nation.[16] Thus, in addition to the economic exploitation and poor working conditions inflicted upon West Indians as semiskilled or unskilled laborers, they had to contend with a tremendous amount of xenophobic hostility on the part of Cubans, which at times had lethal consequences.[17]

Historiography has revealed that the terrain of early-twentieth-century Cuba was littered with land mines for people of African descent, regardless of their status as native or foreign. In spite of their differences, their shared racial identity meant that both had to contend with hostility, violence, and exclusionary practices.[18] The fear of a black numerical and cultural takeover of the nation and resistance to the presence and recognition of black people as equal contributors to the nation fueled the maligning of blackness. This was justified and fomented by characterizations of black people as lazy, diseased, sexually available/predatory, brutish, untrustworthy, loud, morally degenerate, prone to criminality, unintelligent, superstitious, subject to violence and savagery, and so forth (see Ferrer 1999, Helg 1995, Martinez Alier 1989, and de la Fuente 2001[B] on historical characterizations of Afro-Cubans). Thus, efforts ranging from the misrepresentation and demonization of African-based religion to the promotion of European immigration and resistance to black immigration were legitimized by the rhetoric of black inferiority, a rhetoric that coexisted with the national ideology of racial equality (Chomsky 2000; Naranjo Orovio 1997; D. Sánchez 1988;[C] Suarez 1987).

Along with the notion embedded in ideologies of racial equality that class, not race, is the basis for discrimination against people of African descent, the conflation of such qualities with

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[B] Is this 2001a or 2001b? 2001a

[C] Bib spells it "Sanchez." Should have an accent

blackness and African cultural practices supports a cultural or behavioral explanation for black people's lower economic status and marginalization within the modern nation. Though, in theory, the route to equal inclusion can be achieved through a shift in personal conduct, one that not coincidentally overlaps with middle- and upper-class status, in practice, education and the adoption of middle-class culture did not guarantee economic security and social legitimacy to Afro-Cubans.[19] With the dominant discourse professing that class and character rather than color is the measure by which society judges and orders its subjects, black subjects, native and immigrant, must prove themselves to be in possession of a character and culture deemed worthy of modernity.

<T2HD>Anglophone Caribbean Cultural Citizenship

<TXT>Archival data as well as interviews of research participants attest to the construction of an English-speaking Caribbean identity that resonates with notions of middle-class respectability rooted in nineteenth-century colonial discourse. In the primary schools, churches, mutual aid societies, recreational organizations, and lodges that they established, immigrants who were in fact rooting themselves in a foreign and, at times, hostile land affirmed their identification as "civilized" blacks and, I argue, defended themselves against the common accusations of savagery and disease. The transcripts of meetings of the British West Indian Welfare [D] Center [20] and lodges in Guantánamo, as well as those from the various lodges and clubs in Santiago, indicate the emphasis placed not only on mutual aid but also on individual self-sufficiency, propriety, discipline, and Christian morality.[21] Indeed, although the religious practices of people from the Anglophone Caribbean were not confined to Christianity, the

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[D] Note refers to it as <u>Welfare</u> Center. Which one is correct?

Episcopal Church played a prominent role in the social and spiritual lives of Anglophone immigrants and their descendants (Chailloux et al. 2001; Charlton 2005; Derrick 2001; Espronceda Amor 1999; Naranjo Orovio and Garcia Gonzalez 1996).

In interviews, these attributes and practices emerged in reference to Anglophone Caribbean culture. Interviewees shared a set of values with their family members that gave importance to being soft-spoken, reserved, well-dressed, respectful (particularly of elders), honest, invested in education, frugal, independent, religious, organized (in the sense of community and personal habits), well-mannered (as exemplified through greetings and mealtime etiquette), and proud of being black. The single most common umbrella trait that people believe distinguishes English-speaking Caribbean people from Afro-Cubans is la crianza, or the upbringing. Both immigrant parents and teachers were notoriously strict, meting out corporal punishment liberally in their efforts to instill the above characteristics.[22]

This was in contrast to that which was represented by some as typically Cuban. Where Cubans were loud, always making some ruckus in the street, anglófonos were reserved and private; where Cubans lacked manners and formalities, anglófonos were respectful, neat, and ordered; where Cubans did not know how to use a fork and a knife and sit at the table for meals, anglófonos were proprietors of mealtime etiquette; where Cubans were devoted to brujería, anglófono religiosity was manifested in their primary adherence to Protestantism and other denominations of Christianity.[23]

Ironically, English-speaking Caribbean cultural citizenship in Cuba was informed by a civilizational discourse that supports black West Indian superiority at the same time that it bars them entry into the circle of "civilization," as blackness is constitutively situated outside "civilized modernity" (see Hintzen 2001). Given the precariousness that this contradiction

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creates, English-speaking Caribbean immigrants in Cuba developed insular communities in which the theme of respectability was prominent in the group's narrative of self identity.[24] Indeed, situating Anglophone Caribbean immigrants to Cuba within the context of English-speaking Caribbean immigrants across time and space reveals a consistent pattern of representation in which West Indians promote themselves and/or are promoted as possessing cultural characteristics associated with economic mobility and respectability (for cases in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and the United States, see Gordon 1998; Harpelle 1993; Purcell 1993; Bryce-Laporte 1972; Foner 2001; Hintzen 2001; Waters 1999).

Such assertions of respectability and the intraracial social relations that it evokes present an opportunity to explore the nuances of black heterogeneity. Emerging from a different set of cultural, personal, historical, economic, and ideological circumstances that includes not only the social milieu of the home country but also their status and experience as foreigners creates a distinct black subjectivity. Furthermore, the move to project this distinction, to make the claim that "not all niggers are the same," that some are good enough to go out with or are advancing, is a challenge to a dominant ideology that insists upon black singularity and inferiority. However, it is critical to look at the sorts of West Indianness that get reified as a way to deconstruct race as well as the ways in which a privileging of diversity, hybridity, and the diffuse configuration of black subjectivities can perhaps unwittingly collude with dominant racial ideology, submerging structural politics and the structural inequalities to which they are a response. Just as engaging in a structural politics of race that insists upon monolithic blackness and thus renders those who do not conform to a certain articulation of black identity invisible is problematic, so too is strategically employing the fact of difference as a means to assert superiority in an attempt to mediate the consequences of structural inequalities.[25]

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<T1HD>Phase Two: The Price of Revolutionary Inclusion

<T2HD>"The Revolution Was Our Affirmative Action"

<TXT>In a 2001 lecture at the Center for Cuban Studies, Pedro Pérez Sarduy--a black Cuban writer, educator, and cultural critic--commented that Cuba did not need an affirmative action program to address racial disparities because the revolution was black Cubans' affirmative action. Indeed, the revolution enacted a radical change in the opportunities available to Afro-Cubans. Prior to the revolution, Afro-Cubans were systematically denied access to more prestigious and higher-paying economic sectors. They were not admitted into certain private schools regardless of their ability to pay the tuition and other fees. They were disproportionately represented among the unemployed, the incarcerated, and the inhabitants of substandard housing. They were subjected to racial segregation in social life and public spaces (de la Fuente 2001a: 260). Because of the combination of systemic racial and class discrimination and widespread corruption, there were few black professionals. However, when their numbers began to rise, black professionals often confronted more obstacles to advancement than working-class and poor black people (see de la Fuente 2001a:153 and Martinez Alier 1989).

Denied their rightful share of the nation since its founding, the elimination of racial barriers to public space and economic mobility held tremendous symbolic and material significance for Afro-Cubans. With the revolution's redistribution of wealth, its massive investment in social programs that notably provided affordable housing and free universal education and health care, and its condemnation of racial discrimination, the lives of black Cubans were radically transformed. By the early 1980s, although black people were still overrepresented in the prison population and underrepresented in managerial positions, as well as

in the Cuban Communist Party leadership, racial differences in health care, education, and employment had been greatly reduced. Indeed, the proportion of black and mulatto professionals had actually become identical to whites' and there were proportionately fewer whites graduating from high schools than blacks and mulattoes (de la Fuente 2001a:309).

<T2HD>Anglophone Caribbeans: Becoming Cuban

<TXT>The impact of the revolution on people of English-speaking Caribbean descent cannot be understated; its far-reaching consequences included community dispersion, social mobility, and assimilation. Research participants, particularly those in Guantánamo, where the naval base was a key source of employment and became one of the stages upon which tensions between Cuba and the United States played out (Miranda Bravo 1998; Lipman 2009),[E] recalled that Anglophone Caribbeans of both the first and second generation left Cuba in the months and years following the triumph of the revolution. Explanations for this exodus ranged from a loss of income to the unavailability of material goods, to fear of political instability and/or disagreement with Communism, to a desire to join relatives who had already left.

The dispersion of community members was not solely the result of out-migration, but also of people taking advantage of educational and occupational opportunities throughout the island. During the early years of revolutionary society, the leadership was faced with constructing a literate, socially equitable, economically viable society. From working in the countryside in the literacy campaign, to attending university so that they could fill the void left by the professional class, to participating in agricultural projects aimed at increasing productivity, young people in particular were swept up in the flurry of social transformation. In

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[E] Bib lists Lipman as 2009.

addition, some adolescents were sent to boarding schools and therefore lived and studied away from home and, as part of the campaign for gender equity and productivity, women were moving into the workforce at greater rates, which was having a profound impact on the home environment (Perez 1995; Perez-Stable 1999; Saney 2004).

In discussing the changes brought about by the revolution, research participants frequently began with "narratives of social mobility." Invariably, those who were adults prior to the revolution and those who came of age during the revolution described their own or their parents' humble beginnings as unskilled or semiskilled laborers and how, graciás a la Revolución ("thanks to the revolution"), all of their children or they themselves were professionals without having to pay ni un peso ("not a penny") for their education. While many participants felt that an Anglophone Caribbean background contributed to this success as it instilled the industriousness, discipline, and order necessary to achieve social mobility, they also credited their sweeping elevation in status to the revolution. Unlike people of West Indian descent in other locations (Hintzen 2001; Waters 1999), West Indian Cubans do not immediately refer to their exceptionality or to the "model minority" profile; rather, they highlight revolutionary social change in their black immigrant narrative of social mobility.[26]

Ironically, the support for the revolution existed in spite of and, in some ways, actually created the dismantling of Anglophone Caribbean institutions such as the English schools, the fraternal lodges, the Protestant churches, and the mutual aid societies. The very opportunities that were allowing Anglophone Caribbean descendants to realize their dreams of upward mobility were the same that initiated a process of disintegration of the communities themselves.[27] Thus, in exchange for being incorporated into the opportunity structure of the larger society, people of

English-speaking Caribbean origin had to give up many of the social institutions that carried and reproduced what they considered to be their cultural specificity.

With the triumph of the revolution in 1959, differentiation based on an English-speaking Caribbean cultural legacy lost its strategic benefits, which was met with optimism by some West Indian migrants because the revolution appeared to be delivering on its promise to end structural racism through the equal distribution of resources.[28] Those who remained in Cuba and who were involved in the revolutionary project of racial and economic justice were becoming fully integrated into Cuban society as unhyphenated Cubans. At a time when unity was a key weapon against U.S. imperialism and the appearance of racial equality had to be maintained in order to legitimize and lend moral strength to the revolution, speaking to difference or persistent racial discrimination in particular was viewed as highly divisive and thus taboo (de la Fuente 1998; Fernandez 1996; Godfried 2000; Masferrer and Mesa-Lago 1974; C. Moore 1988; Perez-Sarduy and Stubbs 2000; Pisani 1992). The extent and terms of inclusion of black Cubans as full citizens of the nation was, therefore, not up for debate.

<T2HD>Revolutionary Racism

<TXT>Unfortunately, Cuba's "race problem" had not been resolved, as initially proclaimed. Recent research indicates that there has been a disjuncture between the institutional order and the underlying social relations and cultural modalities, particularly in the form of racist attitudes and stereotypes of blacks (de la Fuente 2001; Saney 2004). In her work on interracial couples, Nadine Fernandez (1996) found that racial folklore and the media reinforce the derogatory perceptions of people of African descent that are learned through familial relations. When analyzing the role of housing in the perpetuation of racial inequality, de la Fuente (1995)

concludes that the revolution has succeeded in greatly reducing racial inequality in certain areas, such as access to health care and education, but failed in others, such as housing.

Findings about black Cubans' ascension in certain areas and about the persistence of racial attitudes point to a critical facet of racism in Cuba that is quite relevant to the experience of Anglophone Caribbean Cubans. Historically, one of the dominant manifestations of racism has been the resistance to equitable treatment of black people who achieved a higher level of education (de la Fuente 2001a:138). Though the revolution removed barriers that had previously prevented those talented and motivated individuals from reaching their potential, it did not address or perhaps even anticipate the resistance to, and consequences of, having black people assume positions of status and/or authority.

With the triumph of the revolution and the subsequent move on the part of the government to not only include black Cubans as full citizens and beneficiaries of the nation but also to construct Cuba as an "African Latin" nation, the reaction on the part of white Cubans was indicative of this particular manifestation of racism. As de la Fuente notes,

<EXT>Some white workers found it hard to adjust to these changes and resented what they perceived as an official bias toward Afro-Cubans. Particularly difficult was the social and physical closeness that integrated schools, recreational facilities, and mass organizations imposed on blacks and whites. . . . [The] perception that blacks felt as if they were "better" than whites or were "better off" than whites in the island was shared by several white workers interviewed by Fox in 1970, who resented the dismantling of traditional racial hierarchies (2001a:279).

<TXTF>Thus, at the same time that the opening up of the educational system and professions was a windfall for people of African descent, particularly those who were anxious for such an opportunity, the society's hostility toward educated and successful black people in positions of authority was not eliminated, creating a peculiar challenge for those who sought maximum benefit from the revolutionary program.

<T1HD>Phase Three: Utopia Lost, Ethnicity Found in Cuba's "Special Period"

<T2HD>Economic Crisis and Racialized Inequality

<TXT>The collapse of the Soviet Union, the intensification of the U.S. embargo, and the implementation of austerity and reform measures aimed at preventing total economic disintegration wreaked havoc on the lives of all Cubans. With the depenalization of the use of the dollar[29] and the development of the tourism industry, Cuban society divided into those who have access to foreign currency and those who do not, and this division has been racialized (Davidson 1996; de la Fuente 2001b; Fernandez 1996; Hansing 2001; Hodge 2001; Perez-Sarduy and Stubbs 2000). Remittances were estimated to be between 450 million and 1 billion U.S. dollars in 2005, constituting a significant source of foreign exchange.[30] Though there is a question concerning the percentage of this amount that is remitted by Cuban Americans to family on the island, this racialization is in part the consequence of the fact that the majority of those who have left Cuba tend to be of (more) European descent; thus, those people on the island receiving this monetary relief and participating in the dollar economy also tend to be white.[31]

This phenomenon has had repercussions beyond the unequal distribution of consumer goods. With the legalization of certain kinds of private businesses, primarily restaurants (paladares) and lodgings (casas particulares) geared toward foreign tourists and operated out of

individual homes, people of European descent who receive remittances have been able to invest in such money-making ventures. Not coincidentally, it is white Cubans who disproportionately live in houses that can be more easily converted into guesthouses because of prerevolutionary housing patterns that have not been successfully eradicated (de la Fuente, 2001a). The tourism industry, the largest earner of foreign currency, has been notorious for practicing the policy of buena presencia, meaning that one has to have a "good appearance" in order to get a job in a hotel, a travel agency, a tour company, and so forth. A "good appearance" and blackness are constructed as mutually exclusive. Though a few of my informants denied racism or any racial difference in opportunity in revolutionary society, most acknowledged the disparities that had begun encroaching upon the revolutionary gains in the area of racial inequality.

Effectively excluded from the legitimate jobs in the tourism industry, darker-skinned people have come to be disproportionately represented in the most public aspect of the underground economy, in particular jineterismo.[32] In the 1990s, Cuba fast became one of the most popular destinations for the usually white, Western, sex/romance tourist in search of exotic and tropical "adventure" with women and men of African descent (Davidson 1996; Kempadoo 1999). Thus, the most visible workers in the sex industry became those sex workers, pimps and hustlers in the street looking for tourists who come to Cuba to indulge their fantasies of crossing racial and cultural boundaries. Such a situation has served to reinforce the antiblack and racial prejudice that Cubans themselves harbored but only acted out on an individual basis rather than on a systemic level prior to the crisis.

Another relevant social transformation that has occurred during the Special Period is that those who sought to better themselves through education and the practice of a profession have found themselves in a difficult predicament. Individuals who spent years of their lives training to

be professionals earn at most between five hundred and seven hundred pesos per month, a healthy salary in the days before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Now, when converted to dollars, this $20-28 falls far short of an income needed to maintain their previous standard of living. This predicament is particularly salient for those Cubans of (more) African descent who are disproportionately excluded from the dollar economy. Included in this group are those people of English-speaking Caribbean origin whose family came to Cuba seeking "a better life" and achieved a certain level of social mobility by becoming professionals through the revolution.

<T2HD>The Revitalization of English-speaking Caribbean Institutions

<TXT>Though discussions of race and discrimination have become less taboo, and the failure of the revolution to eliminate racism through the removal of formal barriers to equality has recently begun to be exposed, racial solidarity and particularly the formation of race-based organizations is still not an acceptable means of addressing the growing racialized inequality.[33] Thus, black Cubans who feel discriminated against as black people do not organize on the grounds of their race or color. However, with the significant challenges of the Special Period, some did organize as black West Indian descendants. In the early 1990s, Cubans of English-speaking Caribbean descent began to revitalize the institutions that had been so fundamental for sustaining the social, cultural and, at times, economic lives of their foreparents.[34] This process was spearheaded in 1992 by a group of young professionals in Guantánamo, with the formation of the Young People's Department of the British West Indian Welfare Center.[F] The stated goals articulated in the institutional bylaws, as well as by interviewees who participated in this revitalization, were to rescue the cultural traditions of the immigrants and pass these on to future

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[F] Or "Center," as in note 21?

generations. This was achieved through offering English classes, raising funds to take care of elderly and infirm members of the community, sponsoring events honoring important dates or people in the history of the community, revitalizing the fraternal lodges, organizing a cricket team, and so forth. In a time of social crisis, these young West Indian Cubans wanted to emulate and honor the traditions of their parents and grandparents.

However, it is critical to note that this occurred within the context of national reforms that facilitated and encouraged--and an economic situation that necessitated--the development of linkages to individuals and groups outside Cuba. The government's promotion of the tourism industry and of connections with Cubans who had left the island, both representing a radical departure from its former stance of division and distrust, resulted in the introduction of billions of remittance and tourism dollars (Eckstein 1994; Eckstein 2004; Mesa-Lago 1998). One way in which Cubans of diverse backgrounds attempted to tap into external material resources has been through establishing contact with and soliciting the support of distant family and communities in their parents' and grandparents' lands of origin (Behar 2002; Lopez 2005).

Indeed, part of what inspired my own research on West Indians in Cuba was a 2001 newsletter written by a Jamaican Cuban living in Florida. In an appeal for financial and moral support in the wake of the country's economic crisis, the author stated, "Other national and ethnic groupings in Cuba--Spaniards, Arabs, Jews, Chinese--have established solidarity life-lines with their co-nationals and co-ethnics. <u>Black West Indians do not have and desperately need a similar life-line</u>" (A. Jones 2001: afrocubaweb.com, author's emphasis). This call for solidarity along ethnic and, as the piece goes on to say, racial lines appeared to point to already existing or potential fissures in the Cuban social landscape that were not accounted for by official claims of

racial equality and cultural homogeneity. In the least, it indicated the presence and potential

significance of transnational connections based upon common Anglophone Caribbean origin.

Thus, an upside of coming together as black people of West Indian origin in a time of

economic crisis and rising racism included the possibility of gaining access to the benefits that

connections abroad could bring. These benefits included material donations provided by groups

such as that founded by Jones, increased contact with foreigners interested in Cuba's "rich ethnic

past" (Bauza 2002), and, for those in leadership positions, the highly coveted opportunity to

travel. Prior to the 2004 U.S. legislation that further limited educational travel to Cuba, Jones's

organization sponsored two trips to Cuba, both composed of primarily black American travelers

interested in the African diasporic experience. This contact with foreigners resulted in ongoing

relationships that reaped material benefits for a number of those Cubans of English-speaking,

Caribbean descent who were involved in organizing and hosting these foreign visitors.

Educational exchange also had great potential for establishing contacts with foreigners. For

instance, during my 2003 field research trip, while doing archival research and conducting

interviews, I met a group of students from the United States who were visiting the British West

Indian Welfare Center[G] as part of their study abroad program's itinerary. During this event, the

Center's director of international relations gave a lecture about the historical presence of British

West Indians in Cuba. There was also a cultural performance that included a Cuban rasta

performing a reggae song, which was followed by a sit-down luncheon with members of the

Center.[H]

[G] Here and elsewhere, "Center" or "Center"?

[H] ?

In terms of connections with English-speaking Caribbean countries, the associations have facilitated linkages at an individual and institutional level. In the case of those wishing to establish familial connections, they have provided information and assistance for locating family abroad and even applying for citizenship based upon the origin of one's parents or grandparents. Indeed, in an article published in Jamaica's Daily Gleaner, Norma Ming, a Cuban who returned to Jamaica--the land her grandparents had left in the 1920s--to become a naturalized Jamaican citizen, is quoted saying that a committee of Jamaican descendants has been set up to make contacts with relatives (McPherson 2007). In reflecting upon the deprivation that Jamaican and Barbadian descendants suffered during the early and mid-1990s in Cuba, Charlton observes that, "descendants of those original immigrants were again using their ethnic identities to negotiate for their well-being" (2005:418). Part of this entailed attempting to find family outside Cuba, something that had previously been discouraged by the revolutionary government and the social pressure to be fully Cuban (Godfried 2000). In the words of one of Charlton's informants, "Now Kasia proud to know she fadah. She outlooking. Is now dey feel proud again (Now, Kasia [a neighbor] is proud to know that she's West Indian. She is looking for her roots. It is now that they feel proud again)" (3).

English-speaking Caribbean ethnic associations have also been organizers and participants in diplomatic efforts to strengthen linkages between Cuba and the CARICOM states, hosting Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson on more than one occasion. Another concrete manifestation of the desire to "rescue their roots" has been the annual intra-Caribbean migration conference sponsored by the University of the West Indies' Latin American<EN>-Caribbean Center. Each summer since 2000, the members of the leadership of the British West Indian

Welfare Center[I] have traveled to Jamaica to participate in this conference. In a nation where there is a certain disjuncture between the desire and/or expectation to travel and the economic and political limitations on travel, this is a rare opportunity.

<T2HD>Somos Negros Finos: A Claim for Respect

<TXT>One of the ways that this study of black West Indian descendants adds to existing research and contributes to understandings of black subjectivity is to document how ethnic identity is mobilized as a means of safeguarding the material and psychological well-being of educated black people. It is a way of challenging antiblack sentiments, seeking material support, and preparing for an uncertain future. Evident in informants' narratives about the associations, their families and communities, and the current struggles in post<EN>-Soviet-supported Cuban society is an effort to assert a way of being black that does not conform to popular stereotypical notions of blackness. Thus, when Edward, the former president of the Center, describes how the men from his fraternal lodge, most of them West Indian descendants, paraded through the streets of Guantánamo to commemorate Antonio Maceo's birth, he makes a point to say that they were dressed in suit and tie, and that they were not only honoring a black Cuban hero, but that they were also making the statement that black men have dignity and deserve respect.

Similarly, when Melvina, a first-generation Jamaican Cuban, described a gathering of Santiago's ethnic associations that a government institute sponsored, she emphasized the orderly, respectable behavior of West Indian descendants. She remarked that they remained dignified, unlike the Haitian descendants, who behaved subserviently, and those of Spanish origin, who got intoxicated. Such comparisons, as well as the guidelines and expectations around the behavior of

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[I] ?

association members, serve to contest the image of black people, to assert that "somos negros pero no somos igual que todos los negros" (we are blacks but we are not the same as all blacks). In Melvina's view, there will always be racists because of the past, and those who consider Anglophone Caribbean descendants to act like and to want to be whites are also racist. Thus, she both rejects the racist ideology that asserts black homogeneity based on inferiority and refuses to be "whitened" based on her lack of conformity to racist stereotypes.

For those who are particularly passionate about the "rescuing of their roots," those members of the community who came of age during the revolution, the reward for attempting to rebuild their cultural institutions and broadening if not shifting their cultural citizenship is more complicated than actual or potential material gain. Reclaiming this identity is also a route to asserting a respectable blackness in a climate where the struggle for racial equality is losing ground at the same time that the pressure to deny the existence and consequences of racism persists. It represents an attempt to not simply be included in the nation but also to contest the terms under which they, as black people, are to be included.

<T1HD>Conclusion: Deconstructing Race/Deconstructing Inequality

<TXT>At the outset of this chapter, I proposed that claims to an English-speaking Caribbean cultural citizenship are closely tied to the workings of inequality. First, it challenges negative valuations of blackness that legitimize exclusion from and/or compromised inclusion in the nation/modernity. Second, it consents to a hierarchy of blackness in which diasporic subjectivities simultaneously escape and affirm racially exclusionary practices. Asserting the diversity of diasporic identities is a potentially powerful position from which to challenge the

basis of racial discrimination, but deploying a discourse of respectability that is rooted in Eurocentrism as a means of engaging in a politics of deconstruction is problematic.

Shalini Puri's discussion of the relationship between hybridity and social inequality is instructive in this regard, as she makes the point that, in spite of the multiple named identities that emerge from the prism of mixture, "an implicit, unacknowledged, and untheorized elevation of one hybrid identity occurs" (2004:23). She argues that the role of ideologies or "manifestos" of hybridity in the Caribbean and Latin America is precisely to displace the issue of social equality and to replace it with the rhetoric of cultural equality. Thus, the paradox between the reality of racial discrimination and the ubiquitous narrative of racial equality can be eluded. Declarations of the presence and value of cultural mixture obscure the fact that some ingredients of the social soup overpower others, and that different cultures continue to collide and re-create themselves in the context of systemic inequality.

In the case of early-twentieth-century English-speaking Caribbean immigrants who arrived in Cuba at a time when the national rhetoric of equality was so clearly contradicted by campaigns to eliminate black immigration and the persecution of blacks who challenge white domination, they asserted their own manifesto. Rather than an ideology of hybridity in which, in practice, blackness is denied or devalued, they claimed blackness, but one that was elevated via respectability. Having little choice about whether or not they were perceived to be and (mis)treated as a racially inferior "other," some drew upon their connection to a dominant colonial power. Inclusion, however marginal, in the British Empire, could be strategically deployed to access resources and create some social distance from the most maligned classes. Their claims to a more "civilized" blackness is a rejection of ideologies of blanqueamiento,

mestizaje, and folklorization that are based upon the denigration and annihilation of blackness. Such assertions are a refusal to occupy the blackness of the racist imaginary.

With the triumph of the revolution in 1959, Cuban society underwent radical structural change that included the dismantling of racial and economic barriers to education, employment, health care, and public space. Though a combination of factors contributed to the disintegration of West Indian identity and institutions, the widespread social mobility made possible through structural change was critical, as it significantly decreased racial exclusion and its consequences. Even though, as some participants in this project suggest and relatively recent research supports, racism persisted in revolutionary society, I argue that the reduction in the material basis for racial stratification decreased the need to project the diversity of black subjectivities through the lens of hierarchy. This exemplifies a way in which structural factors insert themselves into the sort of subjectivities that people assert.

With the rise in racial inequality that has characterized Cuba's Special Period, Cubans of English-speaking Caribbean origin have mobilized this "ethnic" identity in an effort to garner material resources and, I argue, once again buffer themselves from the psychological assault of the presumptions of black inferiority and pathology that are increasingly unchecked. In their tactical deployment of difference, they are asserting a respectable blackness. However, basing this upon the tropes of civilization necessarily involves acquiescence to a paradigm that affirms the ideology of black inferiority.

In conclusion, it must be noted that these English-speaking Caribbean cultural constructions resemble Puri's notion of manifesto because they likely reflect an idealized cultural construction, one that barely conceals the reality of structural proximity to Haitian immigrants and black Cubans and the elusiveness of social mobility prior to the revolution. Now, as strides

toward racial equality are being eroded and economic insecurity has become increasingly racialized, some people of English-speaking origin whose blackness and cultural assimilation mark them as black Cubans have revived this construction. When turning a critical eye on the representations of West Indian respectability in official documents and the narratives of descendants who participated in this research, the question of how difference is articulated, by whom, and in what ways is it deployed to reinforce within group stratification, emerges as critical in the analysis of black subjectivities across time and space.

<N1HD>Notes

1. All names are pseudonyms. The ethnographic data is based upon field research that I conducted in the eastern Cuban cities of Guantánamo and Santiago between 2001 and 2005.

2. This phrase is translated as either "She is a black woman to go out with" or "She is a black woman who is advancing." The first interpretation signifies that, in spite of her blackness, she is good enough to be taken out in public. The second indicates that she is a black woman

who is leaving blackness. (For discussions of this term, see Fernandez 1996 and Roland 2006: 154). Both interpretations reference a phenomenon within white supremacist racial ideology in which a person might attempt to "treat" the stain of his or her African ancestry with other qualities such as education, occupation, religion, and behavior. Having "treated" his/her blackness, the individual black subject is perceived to be more deserving of inclusion into the nation (see Martinez-Alier 1974, Do Nascimento 1977, Graham 1990, and Wade 1993 for discussions of blackness and racial ideology in Latin America).

3. The Special Period, or <u>El Período Especial en Tiempo de Paz,</u> was the name given to the period after the fall of the Soviet Union. The withdrawal of the significant support that the former socialist bloc provided to Cuba resulted in a severe economic crisis, during which the revolutionary government instituted austerity measures followed by a series of reforms, including the legalization of the dollar and investments in tourism.

4. Regarding terminology, there are subtle yet at times significant differences between terms used to describe people from the Caribbean islands colonized by the British. However, in this piece, I use the terms "West Indian," "Anglophone Caribbean," and "English-speaking Caribbean" interchangeably. In addition, I use the Spanish words that appear in documents and were employed by participants in this research to refer to this population: <u>jamaicanos,</u> <u>antillanos,</u> <u>anglófonos,</u> and <u>ingleses.</u> The Cuban-born are referred to as "descendants," "people of English-speaking/Anglophone/West Indian descent, or <u>descendientes.</u>

5. Literally meaning witchcraft, this term is a somewhat derogatory way to refer to African religious practices.

6. In comparing people of Anglophone Caribbean origin to Cubans, there was often some slippage between race and class.

7. The distinction made between British West Indians, Haitians, and Cubans and its political, economic, and social underpinnings are explored in historical literature that addresses race and black immigration to Cuba (McCleod 2000; Giovannetti 2001; Alvarez Estévez 1988; de la Fuente 2001a; Helg 1995).

8. The "discovery" and declaration of the social rather than biological basis of race by anthropologists in particular has been instrumental in fueling debates about how to understand and interpret human heterogeneity (see Wolf 1994, Baker 1998, B. Williams 1989, and Harrison 1999).

9. Though the issue of black immigrants is of most concern here, Ong's (1996) work on Asian immigrants to the United States reinforces my argument. Also, though I will not be examining the emergence of a "biracial movement" in the United States, activism on the part of people of "mixed" racial parentage to claim distinct categorization has no doubt contributed to these debates about racial politics and black subjectivity.

10. This is not to say that native black populations do not also employ a politics of deconstruction, strategically asserting their diversity to challenge racist notions of monolithic blackness used to justify exclusionary practices.

11. Hintzen makes this argument in his discussion of West Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area. He asserts that they use constructions of "home" and representations of their personal achievement to establish their difference from black Americans and to contest their exclusion from the modern American space based on the alleged link between blackness and inferiority (2004: 298).

12. Indeed, Hintzen and Rahier's volume supports this point as the contributors' social location within the class structure has an impact on the sort of subjectivities that they assert. As

the editors observe, "There is considerable evidence . . . that black immigrants living in inner city communities tend toward accommodation of black American subjectivities. . . . This is much less the case for immigrants such as the ones whose self-ethnographies engage the topic of this volume whose everyday experiences occur outside the social locations of black exclusivity" (2003:6). It is critical to attend to the significance of class in the sorts of black subjectivities that immigrants assert, and to acknowledge that the sorts of racism that poor and working-class immigrants confront might actually quickly create the common, participatory experience of segregation that "informs the production of a black subjectivity rooted in American understandings of racial difference" (2003:6).

13. Given the obvious constraints of space, I have to sacrifice depth for breadth in my treatment of these time periods. However, I do hope that the generalizations provide a fairly accurate assessment of the social climates across time.

14. 1919 census data indicates that Jamaicans constituted 5.5 percent of the 339,082 foreigners in Cuba (11.7 percent of the total population), while 6.7 percent were categorized as born in the "West Indies, excluding Puerto Rico and Jamaica" (1919 Cuban census). It is important to note that there was significant illegal immigration as well as West Indian immigration to Cuba from Central America, and thus the official numbers tend to underestimate their numerical presence (see McCleod 2000; Derrick 2001; Espronceda Amor 1999;[J] Putnam 2002).

15. The second largest group came from Barbados and others were from Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua, St. Martin, and St. Vincent. Historian

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[J] Espronceda Amor, and 1999, as in bib? Yes

Jorge Giovannetti argues for the importance of eastern Caribbean islanders in the particular communities in which they were numerically dominant (2001:60).

16. An estimated 1.29 million immigrants entered Cuba between 1902 and 1935, the majority (781,311, or 60percent) was from Spain and 311,216 (or 24 percent) were from Haiti and the British West Indies (McCleod 2000: 17).

17. See Giovannetti (2001) for details of the 1917 massacre of West Indian workers in Cuba. For descriptions of the poor working conditions and exploitation of black immigrants, also see Estevez 1988, Knight 1985, McCleod 2000, Charlton 2006,[K] and Wynter 2001.

18. The importance of race as a mechanism of division and exploitation in Cuba must not be understated. Indeed, in comparing Cuba with Jamaica, Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil, Helg points to both the extent of race-based mobilization and the state-sponsored violent repression of blacks to argue that Cuba's racial system was more similar to the two-tiered system of the United States (Helg 1997).

19. As de la Fuente (2001)[L] found in his historical analysis of racial equality in Cuba, "the social situation of black professionals [prior to 1959] was in fact precarious . . . although education and 'culture' made this group eligible for middle-class status, their skin color, social origin, and financial situation, as well as white racism, kept them dangerously close to the world of poverty and manual labor that they were trying to escape" (de la Fuente 2001:153).

20. Founded in 1945, this cultural center is the oldest association still in existence and one of two English-speaking Caribbean associations on the island that has nongovernmental organization (NGO) status. It is also the sister organization of the Caribbean American

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[K] Bib lists year as 2006. So does the note

[L] 2001a or 2001b? 2001a

Children's Foundation, a humanitarian organization based in Florida and founded by a Cuban of Jamaican descent.

21. This is based on archival research in the minutes of the British West Indian Welfare Center,[M] fraternal lodges, and the Santiago municipal archive, where notes from other associations are housed.

22. Such characterizations were interrelated with the way in which British West Indians were inserted into the labor force and the presence of other black and foreign laborers (de la Fuente 1995; McCleod 1998; Derrick 2001; Wynter 2001).

23. The civility of English-speaking immigrants is similarly emphasized through comparison to Haitians. As McCleod observes, "Haitians ultimately faced greater discrimination because native Cubans perceived them to be less 'civilized' and more 'barbarous'--indeed, more 'African'--than British West Indians" (1998:15).

24. Respectability, as one half of the opposing principles of reputation and respectability, was proposed by Peter Wilson (1973) in his attempt to theorize the underlying ideology of Caribbean societies. There have been numerous critiques of Wilson's formulation. Jean Besson, in particular, effectively challenges Wilson's gender analysis of respectability and reputation in arguing that the <u>nature</u> of women's involvement in the church, family, and domestic domain constitute aspects of Afro-Caribbean cultural resistance rather than Eurocentric respectability (Besson 1993). Besson's insistence upon taking a closer look at the particularities of the institutions associated with Anglo culture and women's roles in them raises the question of the extent to which, in practice, the signposts of respectability might be delinked from Eurocentrism.

[M] Or "Center"?

It also brings to the fore the varying depths to which, and circumstances under which, individuals, groups, and communities invest in middle class respectability.

25. Here, I am thinking about the way in which cultural explanations for the social mobility of some black immigrants have been used to relieve racism of the responsibility for black poverty. Linking cultural differences among blacks with the greater success of one group implicitly denies the role of structural racism in constraining black life chances (see Lewis 1966 and Rodman 1971 for cultural argument and D. Jones 1993 and Leacock 1971 for critiques).

26. However, the perception that most people of English-speaking Caribbean descent pursued higher education and achieved professional status (in addition to the dynamics around the revitalization discussed in the next section) indicates the maintenance of an ideological link between West Indian cultural characteristics and racial-economic "success."

27. For instance, the implementation of a system of scholarships (becas) in which young people were offered opportunities to study and live in other Cuban cities, the incorporation of women into the formal labor market, and the discouragement/persecution of religion compromised the ability of Anglophone Caribbean Cubans to perpetuate certain cultural practices.

28. In the Costa Rican case, once the notion of cultural superiority was no longer supported by the economic and political conditions, this population either left or moved toward assimilation, replacing Anglo with Hispanic cultural characteristics as symbols of prestige (Purcell 1993:51). The younger generations pushed for citizenship, attended state schools, and came to regard British cultural affiliation as threatening their rightful claim to citizenship. However, unlike West Indian Cubans, Anglophone Caribbean Costa Ricans were justifiably concerned that integration was unavoidably accompanied by marginalization, because there was

no place for black people and their contributions to the nation in a Costa Rican history based on a white settler model (Harpelle 2001:129, 160).

29. Possession of the dollar was legalized in 1993; however, as of 2004, the dollar was no longer accepted in stores. Instead, the peso convertible, a currency that is the equivalent of a U.S. dollar but has no value outside Cuba, has replaced dollar transactions.

30. See Pérez-López and Díaz-Briquets 2005 for an evaluation of remittances estimates.

31. It is critical to note that this dynamic might be shifting because of the more recent increasing diversification in the sources of remittances owing to the growing numbers of Cuban professionals working abroad on missions.

32. Literally meaning "jockeying," this is the common term used to refer to any Cuban who benefits materially from tourists outside official arenas.

33. For more-recent work on racial politics in Havana and Afro-Cuban activism, see de la Fuente.

34. The radical changes in Cuban society have had a mixed impact on people of English-speaking Caribbean descent. For those few who can claim pensions from the U.S. naval base or who have family living abroad willing and able to send money, the dollarization of the economy has not had an immediately devastating effect.