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Siblingship in Afro-Caribbean Kinship: The Garifuna of Belize

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THE GARIFUNA OF BELIZE

by

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B.A. Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University, 1971

M.A. Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University, 1973

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines siblingship in the Garifuna village
of Hopkins, an Afro-Amerindian community in southern Belize. It
is based on intensive interviews with individual informants and
comprehensive genealogical and demographic data that I collected
during fieldwork there in 1987-89.

In this study, I describe variations of Garifuna siblingship
and changes in siblingship over time. I consider relationships
between individual siblings and investigate sibling groups acting
in solidarity or disunion towards other Garifuna social units and
the outside world. I evaluate sibling interdependencies from
childhood to old age in ordinary affairs and at times of crisis.
In addition to looking at differences between full-siblings and
half-siblings, I also examine how more distant kinship ties and
affairs between unrelated persons are sometimes expressed in an
idiom of fictive siblingship.

Garifuna siblingship is analyzed in terms of gender roles, economic status, and property ownership and in relationship to parenting, godparenting, marriage, inheritance, emigration, employment, child fosterage, personal kindreds, social networks, and household composition. Through examination of siblingship in patterns of emotional and economic support, domestic and political authority, affective bonding, child rearing, food sharing, and job seeking, I elucidate the factors that activate and strengthen or weaken such relationships.

Garifuna siblingship is a cultural-symbolic ideal as well as a behavioral practice, and this study assesses the relationship of cultural values to actual behavior. Siblingship ideals are related to broader Garifuna ideals about egalitarianism and individualism and to non-Garifuna cultural influences from outside the community such as churches, schools, and government agencies.

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North Stann Creek

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HOPKINS

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Bay of Honduras

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CAYES

BARRIER

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N

X Newtown Site

lagoon

savannah/lagoon

Freshwater Creek

lagoon

farms

Boiler
False Sittee

HOPKINS

farms

farms

road

savannah/lagoon

False Sittee Point

Sittee River
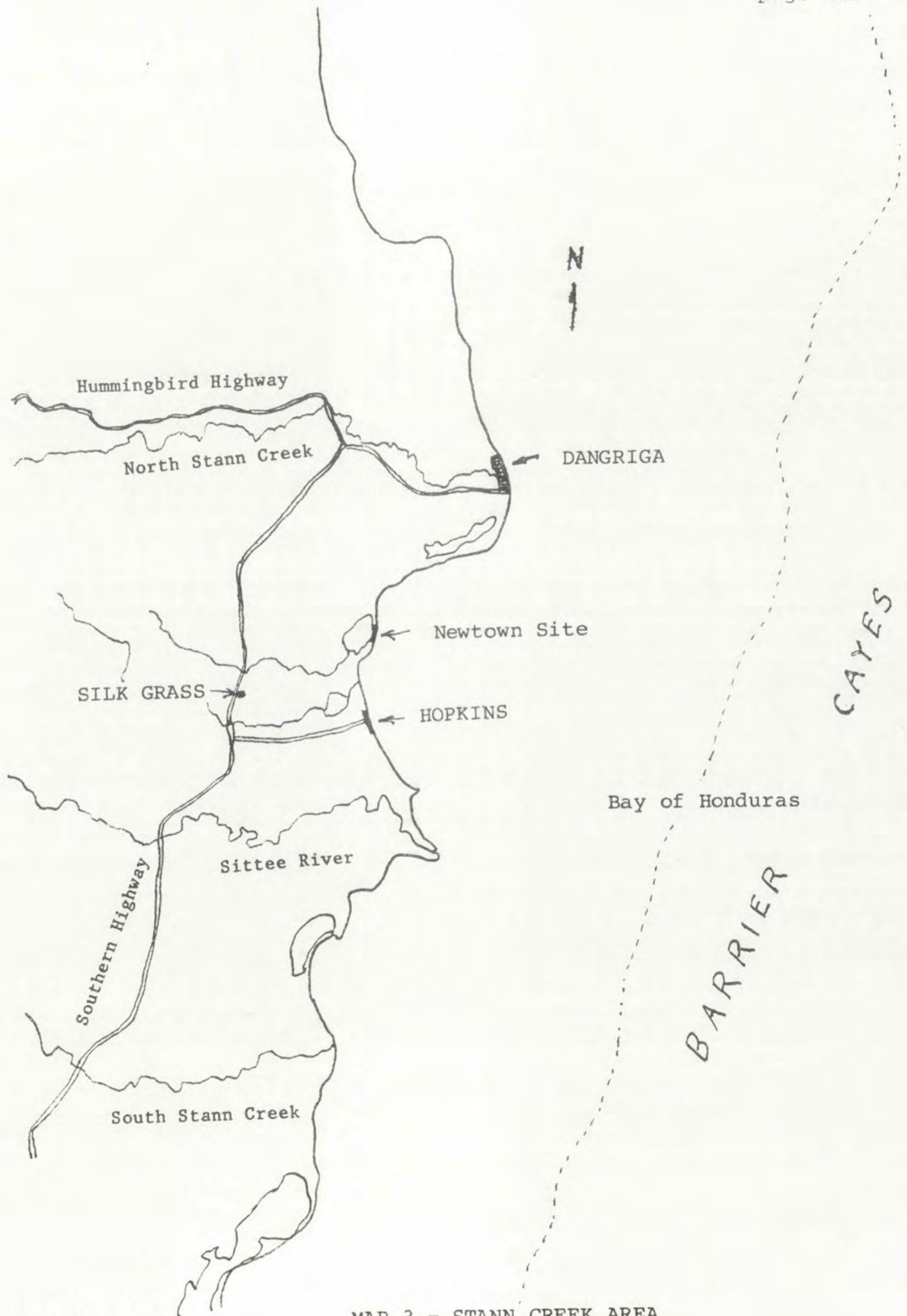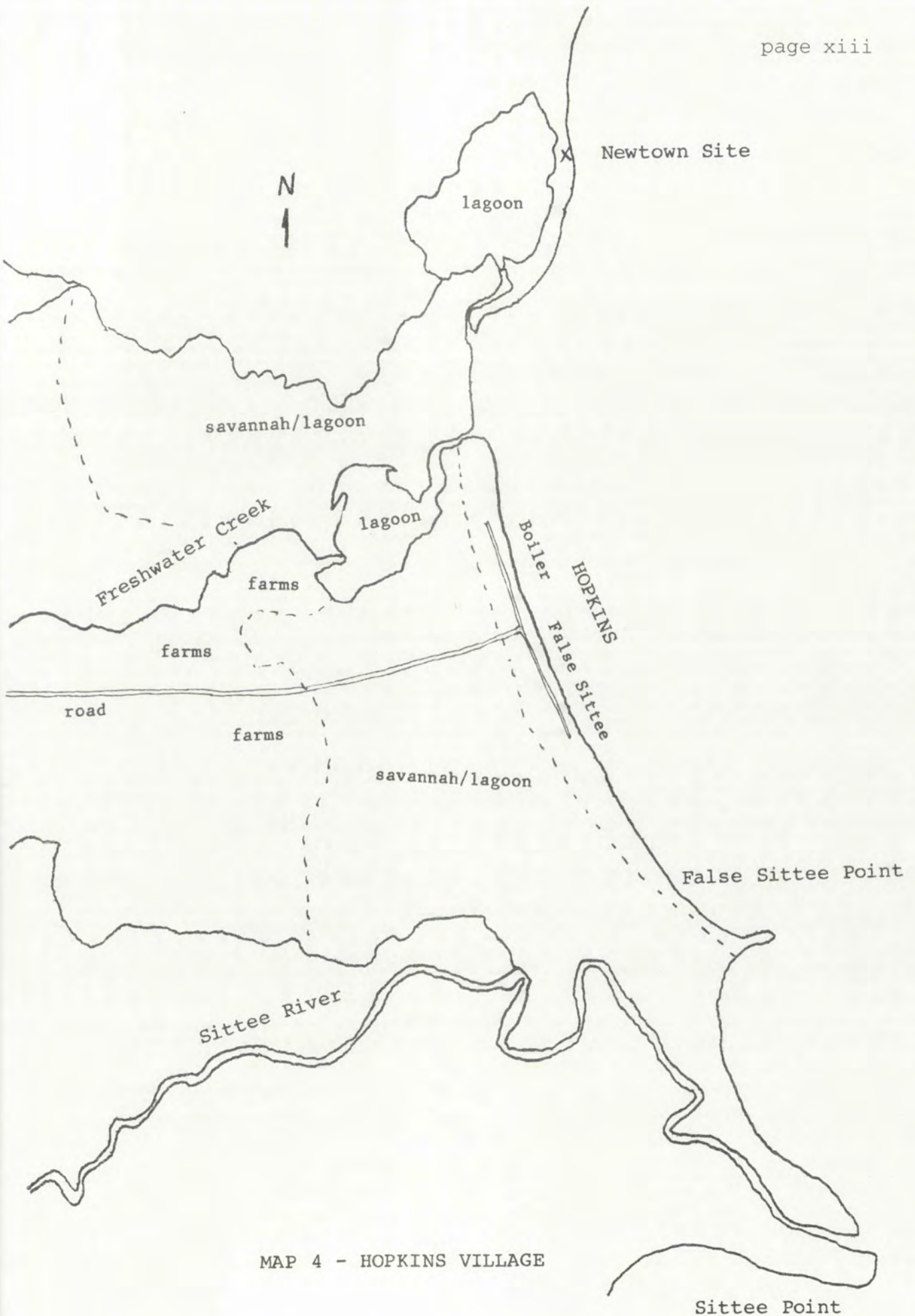
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THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

This study examines siblingship as a major component of social life in the Garifuna village of Hopkins, an Afro-Amerindian community in southern Belize. It considers relationships between individual siblings and investigates sibling groups acting in solidarity or disunion towards other Garifuna social units and the outside world. Sibling interdependencies are evaluated from childhood to old age. In addition to looking at differences between full-siblings and half-siblings, I also discuss how more distant kinship ties, and even affairs between unrelated persons, are sometimes expressed and conducted in the local idiom of siblingship. Garifuna siblingship is a cultural ideal as well as a behavioral practice.

Most studies of Afro-Caribbean domestic organization have emphasized the matrifocal quality of families and households, in which women in their role as mothers are the foci of both economic and emotional relationships (Gonzalez 1970, R. T. Smith 1973). The features usually stressed are strong mother/child ties, strong female domestic roles, weak conjugal bonds, and weak husband-father roles related to the generally low position of men in the regional class-race hierarchy. One consequence of this model is a portrayal of adult males as often peripheral family members with minimal participation in child-rearing and other domestic responsibilities.

From this perspective, sibling bonding is merely a consequence
of connection to a common mother. Field investigations,
including my own, confirm that children of different mothers by
the same father are often less friendly and cooperative towards
one another than children of the same mother by different
fathers. Kerns (1983:129) and Gonzalez (1988:93) both state that
Garifuna sibling ties usually weaken significantly after the
death of the mother.

However, many of my Garifuna informants insist that their
relations with their brothers and sisters remain strong, even
after their mother's death, and sometimes increase in importance
as adulthood and old age extend responsibility towards and
dependency upon brothers and sisters for help in child care, job
seeking, food sharing, health issues, and other important
matters. Indeed, in a few cases, a mother's death or her absence
actually seems to increase the solidarity of a sibling group, as
an elder sister or brother assumes the role of family head.

Further, a great many Garifuna children are raised by persons
who are not their biological mothers and yet form "sibling"
attachments to other children in the same household who are not
their actual siblings. Although matrifocal theory might
encompass such cases by expanding its definition of "motherhood,"
it disregards important aspects of childhood socialization and
role modeling. Other Garifuna, children and adults, who have
never shared a maternal caretaker call each other "brother" or
"sister" in many contexts as well. Garifuna siblingship is an

autonomous and pervasive undercurrent of the whole society.

Even in childhood, siblingship is much more than sharing a
common mother. One of the characteristic features of the
Garifuna kinship system is the frequent interchanging and
overlapping of parent and sibling roles. Elder brothers and
sisters often have significant parenting responsibilities towards
their younger siblings during childhood. Patterns of familial
dominance and dependency learned as children may continue into
adulthood, but sometimes a more successful younger sibling usurps
the eldest, becoming "like the mother" or "like the father" to
the rest of the sibling group. When sibling age ranges are
great, generational boundaries sometimes shift so that younger
siblings grow up in the households of adult brothers or sisters,
merging into the sibling group of their nieces and nephews, or
children of older siblings grow up within the sibling group of
their aunts and uncles.

Therefore, this account of siblingship will also investigate
Garifuna notions of parenthood and responsibility for children.
These topics are continuously discussed and gossiped about in
Hopkins, where many children move from one care giver to another,
and child support remittances from emigrants are critical to the
local economy. Indeed, one might characterize domestic
organization in the village as child-focal as much as it is
matrifocal.

Also, the Garifuna marriage-mating system becomes an issue
because sibling bonds often compete with marriage ties and other

obligations to outsiders. A spouse's siblings may be rivals or co-conspirators. For example, a woman may quarrel with her brother's wife about the drain of resources away from his natal family or, according to circumstance and personality, may treat the wife as a "sister" in solidarity against other rivals for resources or even against the brother/husband, who might exemplify male irresponsibility to both of them.

An account of gender roles is crucial too, not only for understanding marriages and matings, but for discussing relations between sisters and brothers and among siblings in gender exclusive networks. Hopkins women sometimes raise their brothers' children as their own, but the reverse almost never occurs because of different expectations about gender responsibilities towards children. Male fishing partnerships and female cassava-processing groups may unite same-sex siblings, but whether these unions threaten or complement male-female sibling cooperation varies. Thus, a careful analysis of Garifuna siblingship inevitably branches into gender, parenting, marriage, and almost every realm of social experience.

Studies that attempt to go beyond mere description to causal explanation of Afro-Caribbean domestic organization usually look to economic variables in a wider socio-economic context (cf. R. T. Smith 1956, Davenport 1961, Safa 1964, Gonzalez 1969). In Hopkins, village politics and domestic economies intermesh with the national and international systems, affecting village factionalism, economic stratification, and demographic change.

For example, almost every large adult sibling group in Hopkins has at least one member who migrates to pursue employment or education elsewhere. These absentees generally ask a brother or sister to act as "agent" for their interests at home and sometimes to care for their children as well. The other side of this arrangement is that when villagers travel or emigrate they usually follow outside-linked personal networks built more on sibling ties than on relations of marriage or friendship. This study analyzes sibling relationships in emigration, where one sibling prepares the way for the others in foreign lands or special employment domains such as school teaching and police work. Additionally, authority and leadership configurations that first arise in childhood sibling groups endure in the adult environments of political organizations, economic co-operatives, labor unions, etc. Garifuna siblingship can only be thoroughly comprehended within a wider socio-economic context.

Through examination of siblingship in patterns of emotional and economic support, domestic and political authority, affective bonding, child rearing, food sharing, job seeking, etc., I assess the factors that activate and strengthen or weaken such relationships. My research reveals that Garifuna siblingship is both a more complex and more important part of social life than the Afro-Caribbean matrifocal model implies and previous researchers describe.

Many who might agree with Pehrson's (1954) suggestion that "sibling solidarity" is the "fundamental kinship bond" and the "basic point of reference" in bilateral kinship systems

apparently feel that matrifocality, child fosterage, unstable marriages/matings, and non-nuclear family arrangements somehow disrupt and minimize the significance of siblingship (cf. Irish 1966:fn 6). Instead, I will show siblingship to be as essential to the Garifuna, and other Afro-Caribbeans, as to any other bilateral peoples despite the complications of their unique system.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous major ethnographic studies of Garifuna communities relevant to my own research are by Taylor (1951), Gonzalez (1969), and Kerns (1983). In addition, unpublished dissertations have been written by Munroe (1964), Sanford (1971), McCommon (1982), Palacio (1982), and Foster (1983). Taylor and Foster collected data principally in Hopkins village[1]; Munroe, Sanford, Palacio, and Kerns[2] worked in other communities in Belize; and Gonzalez and McCommon worked mostly in Guatemala and Honduras respectively.

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[1] A few present inhabitants of Hopkins claim familiarity with Taylor's (1951) book, although no copy apparently existed in the village in 1988, and objected strongly to his portrayal of themselves. However, after discussion, I believe that they were upset more by Taylor's old-fashioned exotic specimen approach to ethnography stressing traditional historical aspects rather than by substantive mistakes of detail. Several villagers own or have seen copies of Foster's (1986) brief account of Garifuna spirit possession and say that it is accurate.

[2] Kerns includes some data from Hopkins collected by a research assistant.

With the exception of Gonzalez, these ethnographers touch only tangentially on Garifuna siblingship. Taylor's (1951) book is a detailed ethnographic description of "Black Carib" culture, covering everything from basketry techniques to ancestor rituals but without much interpretation related to broad theoretical concerns. Munroe (1964) conducts a psychological study of couvade practices; Sanford (1971) stresses child fosterage; McCommon (1982) looks narrowly at female mating-strategies from an evolutionary biology paradigm; Palacio (1983) investigates the important role of food exchanges in social life, and both Kerns (1983) and Foster (1983) are principally concerned with ancestral rituals although they include a wealth of other ethnographic detail. Foster (1985) also has published a statistical analysis of Garifuna systems of mating and household composition using Hopkins 1977-79 as his data base and making comparisons to other Caribbean societies drawn mostly from M. G. Smith (1962). Other anthropologists, who have made relatively brief field studies of the Garifuna, focus mostly on ethnicity, ritual, music, and dance (e.g., Cosminsky 1976, Jenkins 1983, Wells 1980).

Gonzalez, not only in her principal ethnography (1969) but also in her many journal articles (see bibliography) which refine and extend her early theoretical formulations, is easily the most prolific and most important anthropological researcher of the Garifuna. Her work focuses largely on interpreting Garifuna family and household organization within a wider socio-economic context including a historical dimension. Her theoretical

approach has evolved sometimes in harmony with and sometimes in counterpoint to other Caribbeanists, notably R. T. Smith, the dominant figure of Afro-Caribbean kinship studies generally. Both Gonzalez and R. T. Smith regard "matrifocality" as the key concept for understanding Afro-Caribbean family systems.

Table 1 - GARIFUNA FIELDWORK SITES

GARIFUNA VILLAGE	PRINCIPAL FIELDWORKERS
Barranco, Belize	Palacio
Dangriga, Belize	Sanford, Mertz
Hopkins, Belize	Taylor, Foster, Moberg
Punta Gorda, Belize	Munroe, Cosminsky
Seine Bight, Belize	Kerns
Livingston, Guatemala	Gonzalez
Sambo Crique, Honduras	McCommon

LIMITATIONS OF THE MATRIFOCAL MODEL

Also called "female-headed," "absent-male," and "consanguineal," the matrifocal family type is generally agreed to have the following characteristics: 1) strong mother-child ties that endure through life; 2) strong[3] female domestic roles, especially in household economies and child-rearing; 3) weak male-female conjugal bonding expressed in unstable "common-law" marriage and frequent divorce or separation; and 4) weak husband/father domestic roles in which men are often absent from

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[3]The characterization of roles as "strong" or "weak" is a convention that probably should be abandoned due to it's imprecision and potential for argumentive reaction.

the household due to temporary migrant labor or permanent separation from the wife/mother. The matrifocal family is understood in the context of a developmental cycle of domestic groups in which other domestic forms, including the husband/father-dominated neolocal household, are stages or variants linked to the usually more stable and more common matrifocal form (R. T. Smith 1956:112-115). Gonzalez (1969) emphasizes that the pattern is not always an orderly cycle determined by birth, maturation, and death but is more often an unpredictable oscillation between unstable forms linked to fluctuating social and economic factors.

While scholars still dispute the exact nature and underlying causes of matrifocality, most acknowledge that Afro-Caribbean domestic systems are generally "matrifocal," in the sense of a matrifocal quality to relationships even when the formal structure is nuclear, where women in their role as mothers are the foci of economic and emotional relations in the family and household (Gonzalez 1970, R. T. Smith 1973, Tanner 1974). The major opponent of Caribbean matrifocal theory, M. G. Smith, is disturbed mainly by exaggerations of the structural importance of grandmother-mother-daughter matri-lines (M. G. Smith 1962:243). He argues instead that variations in mating relations (sexual pairings) affect family and household forms more directly than mother-daughter ties. Matrifocal theorists have responded by incorporating mating system analysis without changing their essential approach (cf. R. T. Smith 1978:341).

Variation in Afro-Caribbean family forms has been explained by some (Goode 1960, Blake 1961, R. T. Smith 1963) as the result of conflict between matrifocality and a nuclear family cultural ideal. This explanation suggests that most Afro-Caribbean people, especially men, aspire to marry stably and to live in neolocal, patriarchal households. Occasionally, these men do establish strong husband-father authority and, perhaps, an independent nuclear family household. However, this action is often no more than the temporary pursuit of an ideal that cannot be maintained because of the weak male economic role in the regional class-race hierarchy (R. T. Smith 1956, also see Liebow 1967 on Afro-Americans in the U.S.). Consequently, male-dominated nuclear families usually revert to more matrifocal units, and the adult male becomes marginal or permanently absent. But the matrifocal model fails to account adequately for what happens to these numerous "marginal men" who are between conjugal unions or in old age, and it exaggerates the image of adult males as peripheral family members with minimal participation in child-rearing and domestic responsibilities.

While the matrifocal model[4] was a major advance in Afro-Caribbean studies, it now risks misleading further research in

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[4]Some useful refinements and elaborations to the matrifocal model have come from analyzing developmental cycles of domestic groups (Fortes 1949, 1958; Otterbein 1970), relating domestic groups to diffuse domestic functions (Bender 1967), deriving structural patterns from individual decision-making (Horowitz 1967) and tracing networks of interpersonal relationships (Bott 1957, Mitchell 1973).

the same way the nuclear family ideal once distorted family
studies generally. The naiveté of nuclear family models, in
which variants were once seen as "deviant," "degenerated," or
"disorganized," was largely overcome when social scientists
looked more carefully at domestic groups, roles, and
relationships outside the nuclear family and "discovered" new
forms like the matrifocal family. Similarly, the Afro-Caribbean
literature on matrifocality describes numerous "outsiders" to the
matrifocal model and generally treats them as deviants:
childless couples, single person households, apparent lesbian
couples (M. G. Smith 1961:474), all-male households of migrant
workers or "shipmates," the large number of women who never
become a "matrifocus" in any household, and the ubiquitous
"unrelated" nonkin household members often disguised in surveys
by fictive kinship claims.

I suggest that siblingship, including fictive as well as
actual and classificatory "brother" and "sister" ties, unites
many of these "deviant outsiders" in groups and networks that are
misunderstood from the matrifocal viewpoint that considers
siblings only in relation to their mother. I also suggest that a
more careful examination of sibling ties will clarify how some
adult men and childless women participate in child rearing and
other domestic functions. Speaking of Afro-American family
studies in general, Stack states:

> The cooperation between male and female siblings who
> share the same household or live near one another has
> been underestimated by those who have considered the

female-headed household and the grandmother-headed
household as the most significant domestic units among
the urban black poor. [Stack 1974:104]

ECONOMIC EXPLANATIONS

Matrifocality in the Caribbean has been said to result mainly
from the economically insecure position of adult men in the
regional class-race hierarchy (R. T. Smith 1956, 1973; Cumper
1961; Safa 1964; Otterbein 1965) and from other economic factors
such as migrant labor that draw men away from their wives and
children (Gonzalez 1969). Recent research supports this view but
tends to emphasize more the strength of female roles and to
define matrifocality as an adaptive response to conditions rather
than as merely the underdevelopment of the male role. Some of
these researchers view matrifocality positively as offering
"financial and psychological security to the female _and_ to the
male" (Gonzalez 1970:242), fostering "relative egalitarianism
between the sexes" (Tanner 1974:131), and facilitating female
response to economic opportunity and providing support for the
elderly (Cosminsky and Scrimshaw 1982). Others see it as serving
the interests of those who control the political economy
(Blumberg and Garcia 1977) and in relation to sexual
discrimination in employment (Kerns 1982:27). R. T. Smith
(1978:345) and Gonzalez (1984) have partially repudiated their
earlier economic explanations as too simplistic, but both still
stress economic analysis as primary to understanding Afro-
Caribbean family organization.

Many studies predict a shift from matrifocal to nuclear family households if men can improve their economic and social status outside the domestic domain (Cumper 1961, Davenport 1961, Horowitz 1967). This notion derives from the view of many Euro-American historians and social scientists that the nuclear family arose from, and is somehow ideally suited to, modern industrial society (Goode 1963). The positive correlation of matrifocality with Caribbean economic underdevelopment and North American urban poverty would appear to support indirectly such a conclusion. However, as R. T. Smith (1978:354) points out:
Marked changes in the economy and status system of West Indian societies over the past twenty years or so have not resulted in direct and significant changes in kinship and family patterns.

A more precise approach to this issue is to analyze how specific economic variables, such as occupation and income stability, influence gender roles and domestic arrangements, e.g., how male/female outside income affects male/female authority within the household. However, current discussions of male/female subsistence activity, wage labor, etc. and the consequences for domestic organization still treat men primarily as spouses, fathers, and sons and consider women mainly as wives, mothers, and daughters. They neglect how siblingship and wider kin and nonkin relations compete with marriage ties and parent-child bonds in gaining and distributing economic support.

My understanding of how economic factors influence individual lives has been enriched by Carol Stack's (1974) discussion of

kinship relations in an Afro-American community in the United States. She describes how persons with regular employment could only accumulate sufficient wealth to rise in status if they strictly limited their exchanges with less successful kin. Stack also reports how families in deep poverty rely upon close kin networks (usually including siblings) in order to survive from day to day. Palacio (1982:131-132) finds much the same thing in the Garifuna village of Barranco where persons of higher rank and greater wealth tend to limit food giving and other exchanges with their poorer kin and neighbors in order to maintain their status, whereas among poorer villagers, such exchanges are indispensable for daily survival.

In so far as family organization is economically determined, I suggest that sibling ties react to economic conditions in ways similar to related shifts in mating patterns and household authority; e.g., if a husband-father assumes more domestic responsibility and authority because of his improved economic position, as some have predicted, his own and his household members' ties with outside siblings could be expected to decrease. A corollary would be that poorer households and families might rely more on sibling ties for mutual support and have less stable conjugal bonds and weaker father authority than wealthier households and families. However, it is also important to ask whether wealthier persons support their siblings more than was previously assumed and whether poorer persons are more likely to attempt to activate ties with wealthier siblings.

Similar questions can be asked using sibling groups as the central foci for analysis. Garifuna sibling groups are not corporate entities, but the people of Hopkins recognize that they sometimes act in unison and have informal leaders. We can ask whether wealth among siblings, especially hard-to-divide wealth such as interest in a village shop inherited from a parent, strengthens sibling solidarity. Or, does sibling conflict increase in these cases because outsiders, such as spouses, make demands for a larger share of the resource? Also, do the eldest brother and the eldest sister of large sibling groups have enough authority to achieve more economically and politically because of the backing of their sibling group, and does a younger sibling who gains great wealth thereby rise to "family head?"

DOMESTIC AUTHORITY AND GENDER ROLES

Although my study extends economic explanations of matrifocality to include siblingship, I believe that non-economic factors are equally crucial to understanding Afro-Caribbean family organization. Domestic authority, for instance, goes far beyond responsibility for and control over household economic resources, and broad cultural values concerning gender, age, skin color, etc. inevitably influence social relations in the domestic sphere.

Brothers and sisters may co-operate in ways that support matrifocality in opposition to husband-father authority or limit the dominance of the "matrifocus." On the Caribbean island of Montserrat, Moses (1977:145) contrasts an "egalitarian" household

in which a brother lives with his sister and her baby and helps with child care and cooking to the "male dominance" of conjugal households. I suggest that the strength and importance of siblingship is partly based in opposition to parental as well as spousal authority, instead of, as the matrifocal model assumes, only in shared ties with the mother. Thus, a sister or brother may seek sibling support against abuse or neglect from a spouse, and siblings may co-operate or disagree in patterns of domestic conflict with a parent or in such matters as inheritance.

In families without fathers or with absent fathers (or absent mothers), siblingship may expand further into the parental sphere. Mertz (1976:81-82) stresses the importance of Garifuna older brothers as role models and disciplinarians for their younger brothers. I found this to be important even in households with resident fathers and when the older brothers are not adults. Older sisters have similar importance.

With few exceptions, descent in the Afro-Caribbean region is bilateral in a jural sense but has a strong matrilateral bias in practice. Personal kindreds[5] tend to include more and have closer ties with relatives on the mother's side. Even on

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[5]By kindred I mean an individual's circle of relatives accorded cultural recognition. Kindreds are ego-focused and usually defined by the individual in question; however, we also can speak of kindreds of infants and children, meaning the relatives that recognize a relationship with the child. An individual's kindred basically coincides with his/her potential personal kinship network, but in a network we go beyond a mere category to actual behavior, thereby also transcending the ego-focus.

Carriacou where M. G. Smith (1962) found "patrilineages," he also
found that:

> Approximately one in every six resident dependents of
> female household heads is a sibling or descendent of a
> sibling of the head; but kin of these categories are
> almost entirely absent from homes with male heads
> [p. 40].

Household residency, however, is only one indication of
unilateral bias in kindreds.

Although I agree that Garifuna kindreds and kinship networks
are more often matrilaterally biased, I discovered that for some
men a patrilateral bias is evident, even when the individual was
raised by his mother. Ego's gender partly determines his/her
kindred in societies, like the Garifuna, in which gender roles
are sharply divided and male networks are to a large degree
autonomous from female networks. Since full-siblings have
identical biological kindreds and an ideal bilateral system
recognizes this, contrasting the cultural recognition of kindreds
with actual kinship-based networks for siblings can show how age,
wealth, and especially gender affect kinship.

A related issue is the extent to which the mother's brother
role may complement or conflict with the husband-father role in
terms of male authority and responsibility towards women and
children. This could occur between two men or between two roles
held by the same man. The matrilineal literature on Africa
addresses this issue (cf. Richards 1950, Schneider & Gough 1961)
and shows how structural tensions between competing kin-networks

relate not only to unstable marriage, but also to open recruitment of talent and manpower, strong inter-group alliance, resilience under stress, and scope for individual achievement (Douglas 1969, Colson 1980). These qualities apply to Afro-Caribbean matrifocality as well, viewed as a flexible adaptation to economic underdevelopment and racial prejudice.

Both matrilineal and matrifocal systems are able to adjust readily to adverse conditions and rapid change in the wider society. I also believe that many modern African matrilineal societies, coping with underdevelopment, migrant labor, militarism, etc., increasingly resemble Afro-Caribbean matrifocal systems in their domestic organization. Understanding Garifuna siblingship may have worldwide relevance.

MALE/FEMALE DIVISIONS

Male/female opposition is another important feature of domestic organization. Schlegel (1972) argues that female autonomy in matriliny is enhanced by dividing male authority between spouse and consanguineal kin. Similarly, I suggest that in matrifocal systems the division of male domestic roles may be as important as their overall weakness in understanding the strength of the female position in the Afro-Caribbean system.

In questioning the validity and usefulness of the matrifocal model, Olwig (1981:60) points out that a strong female position does not necessarily correlate with a weak male position and that a father's weak role towards his own children does not exclude

other paternal relationships. In Hopkins, not only do men sometimes act with authority and responsibility towards step-children and younger siblings at home, but some (e.g., male schoolteachers) also serve as important male role models with diffuse authority and responsibility towards all village children.

Sexual divisions occur at nearly every level of Garifuna life: productive labor, domestic roles, social networks, relationships with the non-Garifuna world, etc. —even in different male and female speech related to the historical amalgamation of Arawaks and Caribs (Taylor 1951b). A corresponding division exists between male and female ethnographers who have done fieldwork among the Garifuna and who generally acknowledge that their data collections are unbalanced towards their own sex. The matrifocal model, stressing strong female roles, is more extensively developed by female ethnographers like Gonzalez and Kerns. Whereas, male researchers have emphasized subjects like male couvade practices (Munroe 1964) and "the effect of father absence" (Mertz 1976). McCommon (1982), a woman, analyzes "mating as a reproductive strategy" exclusively from the Garifuna woman's perspective.

Although no blatant gender-bias exists, the skewing of data on sexual lines has left some significant interpretive gaps. For example, Gonzalez (1969) states:

> It matters little to the (household) unit as a whole whether its male members occupy the role of brother-uncle or husband-father [p. 15],

and, not surprisingly, she therefore never systematically investigates the role of brothers or of uncles in domestic organization. Similarly, Foster (1985) seems to challenge directly the matrifocal interpretation of Garifuna households when he states:

> A fundamental feature of the system of household composition in Hopkins is the tendency for the removal of daughters and daughter's children from female-headed units and their accretion in units headed by men and based on couples [p. 54],

but he fails to evaluate why "male-headed" units accept child care decisions made by women.

Interpretive problems surrounding Garifuna gender roles and male/female divisions rise to a peak in the topic of "household headship." For example, Palacio (1982), who is Garifuna himself, states, "Within the household men, women, and children perform these tasks (food activities) in their respective roles as household head, housewife, and helper" [p. 174], confirming the Garifuna male ideal that men "head" households and women "manage" them, but "housewife" scarcely fits the self-image or behavior of most Garifuna woman. I discuss this problematic issue of household headship further in the section below on methodology.

SIBLING CHILD-CARETAKING

Weisner (1982, 1987, 1989) contrasts what he calls "sibling caretaking societies," in which older children take over much of

the responsibility for raising their younger siblings, to "parental caretaking societies." He suggests that patterns of child-to-child interaction and dominance learned in childhood sibling groups may extend into adult social relationships. The Garifuna practice sibling child-caretaking, and I have found Weisner's general point of view helpful.

I have avoided the huge psychological and psychoanalytic literature on childhood siblingship both because it is too specialized (stressing personality development, sibling rivalry, incest taboos, etc.) and because, like matrifocal theory, it tends to distort siblingship vertically in relation to parents and neglects horizontal sibling interaction (Irish 1966).

KINSHIP IDEOLOGY AND FICTIVE KINSHIP

I will delineate ways in which siblingship possibly competes with (or complements) marriage and other social ties in cultural ideology as well as in practical action. Schneider (1968) and others have placed increasing emphasis on the ideological-symbolic character of kinship systems. Biological reality is not always a sound foundation on which to base analysis of siblingship or any other kinship form. This is especially apparent in Afro-Caribbean family organization in which acknowledging paternity is often postponed and manipulated by all parties and in which many "sibling" relationships are half-siblingship or biologically uncertain. Even the mother-child relationship is potentially alterable at the cultural level

through child adoption and fosterage, practiced widely by the Garifuna (Sanford 1971, 1974). Garifuna ideas about parenthood and child fosterage are important topics in my research.

The Garifuna sometimes describe themselves as "brothers" or "sisters" without necessarily being biologically related. Rather than treating this issue only as a problem to be resolved by careful methodological separation of full-siblings, half-siblings, fictive siblings, etc., I make it a research focus for considering siblingship as a cultural-symbolic category that is potentially manipulable as personal relationships transcend biology.

Stack (1974:58-61) describes the use of a siblingship idiom (e.g., "going for sisters") to conduct close friendships among Black Americans in the United States. She concludes, "Anyone in the community with whom a person has good social dealings can be classified as some kind of kin" (p. 58). Fictive kinship is used not simply to underscore intimacy but also to define specific qualities of relationships. For instance, again among Black Americans, Liebow (1967) describes how persons intimate in man/woman nonsexual friendships adopt fictional kinship claims to clarify the nonsexual character of the bond. Among the Karo Batak of Sumatra, however, Kipp (1986) found that sexual lovers cast each other as siblings to call attention to the kind of "love" that both lovers and siblings share, although actual brothers and sisters must avoid each other.

Invoking fictive claims to siblingship can be one-sided and specific to single interactions. For example, on the island of

Provencia, Peter Wilson (1973) records someone asking him for a loan of money:

> "Mister Pete! You know, we here on the Rock (Provencia),
> we is all one family. Now you respects the island and
> you is like one o' we. Man, you an' me is like a
> brother.... Can you len' me five peso?" [Quoted in
> Wilson 1973:144]

Wilson indicates that the idiom of borrowing on Provencia is almost always drawn from kinship —real or fictive (p. 143).

Among the Garifuna, one hears sibling metaphors used to evoke sentiments of peer-oriented solidarity, whether at the level of extended kin, village residence, political party affiliation, or the Garifuna people as a whole. Sibling ideals evoke a sense of egalitarianism and shared interests entirely different from metaphors of parenthood, marriage, or common descent from an ancestor.

Kinship ideology is also related to some of the economic issues discussed earlier. In cases when someone pursues a nuclear family ideal that is hard to attain because of limited economic opportunities, I suggest that alternative ideologies are invoked to explain or justify the failure of the idealized nuclear family and that such ideologies may actually contribute to the instability of the preferred ideal in some instances. A nuclear family ideal that emphasizes the autonomy and economic independence of households is likely to conflict with other ideals of extra-household sharing and co-operation among siblings.

HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND KINSHIP CHANGE

Gonzalez (1988:154) believes that matrifocality and consanguineal households are relatively new to the Garifuna, in contrast to Helms's (1976, 1981) position that present configurations are largely a continuation of Island Carib traditions. For Gonzalez, the new factor is male labor migration, whereas, Helms argues that only the ideal of the nuclear family is a new development and that core groups of consanguineous women are the stable foundation of both past and present kinship-residential systems.

Earlier accounts of Garifuna kinship are extremely sparse and somewhat unreliable. For instance, Conzemius (1928:193) insists that a Garifuna father "will never abandon the mother of one of his progeny," a noble sentiment, but not the experience of the many Garifuna women, including one of my informants in her 90's (dating from Conzemius's era), who remembers never receiving any child support from the father of her firstborn. I do not take sides with either Gonzalez nor Helms on the historical question, although I find the latter's argument particularly superficial as it seems to come down only to recognizing a purely structural congruence, more a proof in geometry than ethnology. However, my data does support a few generalities about contemporary kinship change which I discuss below.

METHODOLOGY

My ultimate methodological objectives were: a) to describe
systematically the variation of Garifuna siblingship and changes
in siblingship over time; b) to record other variables, such as
economic status, property rights, child care responsibilities,
and demographic patterns, that might elucidate how sibling ties
are activated, strengthened, and weakened; c) to report Garifuna
cultural ideas concerning siblingship and their relationship to
behavior; d) to collect precise quantitative data, such as
biological genealogies, household memberships, personal incomes,
and age/sex demographics that provide a firm basis for
generalizations; e) to evaluate the uncertainty and ambiguity of
collected data; f) to record in detail personal life-histories
and specific events of sibling interaction to illustrate my
analysis; and g) to observe the broader context of Garifuna
siblingship, including non-Garifuna influences from outside the
community, such as incentives to emigrate. I lived in Belize for
16 months in total (Jan-Mar 1987, Jan-Mar 1988, Aug 1988-Jun
1989) and conducted the following:

1) Scouting Survey of the six communities in Belize with major
Garifuna populations (Barranco, Dangriga, Georgetown, Hopkins,
Punta Gorda, and Seine Bight) in order to select one (Hopkins)
for long-term intensive study. This initial survey consisted of
personal visits to each community, except Barranco which is the

extremely isolated physically, and interviews with several residents at each site. This inquiry helped me understand inter-community contrasts that indicate how representative my final selection is of the total Garifuna population. It also began revealing personal networks that connect the villages. I also consulted with various government officials and previous researchers about the prospects for fieldwork.

I chose Hopkins over the other villages for intensive fieldwork because of its: a) intermediate demographic size; b) relatively undiluted Garifuna population; c) reputation for being more traditional (e.g., the Garifuna language is spoken more); d) stable, mixed farming and fishing economy (not in decline as in Barranco and Seine Bight); e) not being a government-sponsored settlement (i.e., Georgetown was eliminated partly for this reason).

Hopkins is not a "traditional," "typical," nor statistically "average" Garifuna settlement, although these adjectives may fit it better than other villages. Rather, Hopkins is representative of the Garifuna as a people who have persevered in their self-identity while adapting to strong pressures from the non-Garifuna world. Inhabitants of other Belizean Garifuna settlements regard Hopkins as having greater self-determination over its economy and communal affairs compared to their own villages. Despite heavy out-migration and intense factional discord linked to national politics, the people of Hopkins have maintained a strong sense of community and obvious pride in their village.

2) <u>Review of Government Censuses and Other Documents</u> that indicate how representative my target community is of the larger society and describe wider demographic patterns, e.g., population increase and emigration, that relate to the local community. Unfortunately, in the case of the 1980 National Census, the actual census forms completed in the field had been shipped to Barbados for analysis and were unavailable.

I also hoped to review official government records to cross-check informants' verbal reports of basic information like birthdates and genealogical relationships. I located and examined some recent government records, but Hurricane Hatti in 1961 destroyed all prior birth and death registrations. Fortunately, the Catholic Church's baptism records survived, and I was permitted access to them. Often, written accounts disagree with verbal ones, especially regarding paternity designations, and I have had to weigh the possible reasons for the disparity. My knowledge of specific paternity discrepancies was kept confidential.

3) <u>Household Survey and Village Census</u> of Hopkins to record demographic characteristics, household ownership, conjugal relationships, standard of living, etc. The purpose of the household survey is to provide a concrete framework for observing and describing behavior and to anchor the more diffuse framework of extra-household personal networks and informal groups that perform functions such as child care and food sharing. The household (co-residence) unit provides a methodological point of

departure but is not central to my final analysis. Methodologies that treat households as static entities and as the most basic domestic unit have contributed to the neglect of inter-household sibling ties.

Most surveys consider households as having a single head, an approach that derives from methodologies that rely too heavily on standard census data and on accounts of legal ownership and inheritance of property. The matrifocal model implies that almost every household has a single dominant matrifocus who is often also the household head. Sibling ties sometimes run counter to both of the above assumptions. For instance, a house may be owned or co-owned by a nonresident sibling who is not immediately involved in domestic affairs but who retains an important interest in the household, or, in another instance, two adult siblings may live together in the same household and share or divide domestic rights and responsibilities. If these are two sisters, they are not simply a pair of independent matrifoci but may collectively (or alternately) share significant child care and other responsibilities. Similar patterns can exist among sibling-linked households in compounds or neighborhoods.

My household survey differs from many similar surveys in that I do not place much emphasis on categories of household headship (e.g., male-headed vs. female-headed). In Hopkins, and I believe in other Afro-Caribbean communities despite most household survey reports, the concept of household head is so problematic and situationally specific as to be virtually useless for demographic

accounting and cross-societal comparisons. Even in households of single adult women with their children, absent men may have recognized claims to being the household heads due to their providing spouse or child support and, perhaps, also because of legal ownership of the house itself. When more than one adult is actually resident, the problem of assigning headship is worse.

Men and women have different viewpoints about household authority, and even in cases in which everyone agrees on whom to call the "head," the reality may be highly problematic. For example, in one Hopkins household, a 70-year-old grandmother lives with four of her grandchildren: two girls, ages 13 and 6; and two boys, ages 15 and 10. The two oldest and the two youngest children are separate sibling pairs; their mothers are sisters (daughters of the grandmother). People always refer to the household as if the grandmother were the head although she has been an invalid for several years. The 13-year-old girl manages the household budget and takes primary responsibility for preparing meals and sending the other children off to school, as well as caring for her grandmother. Her older brother and younger cousins assist her. The mother of the two younger children visits several times a week and pays most of the household expenses, but the money actually comes from her husband who is not related to anyone in the house; her sister also helps out. Two older brothers of the two older children in the household live nearby and occasionally drop in to check that things are alright and to beg food from their sister. So who is

the "head" of this household? This is not an atypical case.

Of course, anyone who has made a household survey of an Afro-
Caribbean community is aware of the problems indicated above.
One can define "household head" with relative precision if enough
operational rules are stated, but the result is always largely
arbitrary and is therefore almost useless for accurate
statistical comparisons with surveys done under slightly
different rules of assignment. Rather than proposing and
defending a new absolute standard of household headship, I prefer
to sum up my household survey without this category. Instead, I
believe that the whole complex of issues to which "household
headship" is relevant (e.g., domestic authority and dependency
relationships) is better approached through the analysis of
gender/age roles, property rights, child care responsibilities,
etc., without necessarily referring to structural categories
based on household headship.

I began my household survey with a preliminary sample shortly
after my arrival in Hopkins to get a rough approximation and to
introduce myself to the villagers. Throughout my stay, I
continually added to and corrected my initial survey data until
it included the entire village, filling in the gaps made by
people who could not be interviewed with information from
neighbors and relatives.

Since people were continuously arriving and departing, I
define "a 1988 resident of Hopkins" as someone who: 1) was born
before the first of January 1989; 2) lived at least six months of
1988 in the immediate environs of Hopkins, or resided within two

miles and maintained a house in the village (three residents);
and 3) excluded myself and two U.S. Peace Corps volunteers who
were assigned there.

4) _Intensive Interviews_ of individual informants. I conducted
all interviews myself in English but used a field assistant (a
native of the village) to help clarify and translate from
Garifuna during some interviews, especially when the informant
spoke little English. I speak only a few words of Garifuna.
Most villagers speak some Standard English, and many are quite
fluent and enjoy speaking it with outsiders. I did not use a
tape-recorder during interviews but took notes openly. In this
study, informant statements displayed between quotation marks
were actually spoken in English and are not translations unless
so stated.

Initially, when the interviewer and informant were strangers
to each other, discussion was mostly about two topics: 1) the
basic household survey data (age, sex, residence, occupation,
household history, etc.); and 2) the broad question, "Who are
your relatives?" intended to elicit the informant's personal
kindred. Often the informant asked for clarification, "Do you
mean just my close family, the ones I see?" or, "Do you want only
the living ones?" My reply was always to ask them to decide for
themselves who they considered to be their relatives. My only
clarification (for those who spoke little English) was for them
to ask themselves, "Who are _niduhenu_?" (The Garifuna word means
roughly the same as "my relatives" in English but also can be

more narrowly "my cousins" or more broadly "my people," including all Garifuna everywhere.) A few informants protested that they had too many relatives to write them all down, but I insisted that I enjoyed writing and had brought plenty of paper. One old woman listed 126 relatives by name before she got tired, plus another dozen more great-grandchildren whose genealogical relationship to herself she recalled but not their names.

From this first collection of kindreds, I began deriving family genealogies, personal networks, and sibling sets. The sibling set is the most important analytic unit in my study, but I did not begin collecting data directly about siblingship until later.

In my sample of sibling sets, I tried to gather a stratified representation, including not only the largest and most important sibling sets in the village but also examples of individuals who have no siblings and of sibling sets that have almost no interactions because of childhood separation or mutual rejection as adults. Many of the sibling sets have members living away from Hopkins, but I was able to interview some when they made visits. Whenever possible, I interviewed at least two siblings from each set.

After my work was better known in the village, I began asking about more sensitive issues, such as: a) economic income, b) conjugal relationships, c) paternity disputes, d) reasons for emigration, e) church attendance, f) political allegiance, g) child support. I did not use a formal schedule of questions but

raised each topic generally and tried, as much as possible, to let the informants explore the issue on their own terms. As a consequence, I had to listen to much that was tedious and repetitive, but I also gained important data that I otherwise might have missed. For instance, all the information I received about illegal activities and other extremely sensitive issues, like incest and spouse abuse, was given to me spontaneously. Often, especially in my last months in the field, my interviews were practically indistinguishable from casual visiting. It made sense to people that my interests in their lives were mostly the same as their own —genealogical connections, economic pursuits, love affairs, political disputes, family responsibilities, and so forth.

I asked some questions to elicit normative ideals, e.g., "Is the father of (XXX) providing as much child support as he should?" and "How much should a sister help a brother if he becomes ill and his wife leaves him?" Other questions (to which I already knew the correct answers) were designed specifically to test the truth of informant's accounts —not because I was particularly concerned about being lied to, but because what a person chooses to keep secret or present a slanted public account of (to the whole world, not just to the nosey anthropologist) reveals a great deal about cultural values and personal aspirations. Except when I might casually bring up certain omissions, I did not challenge informants' accounts of things unless I had exceptional personal rapport with them.

5) <u>Participant Observation</u> of community events and in personal interactions to collect basic data and to test the correspondence of informants' accounts with behavior. I investigated how claims of loyalty and responsibility towards others are matched by practical support in political and economic matters and compared actual conduct to expressed ideals. In areas of controversy, I adopted a position of neutrality. Acting as a non-participating observer, in certain contexts, sometimes improved my access to information, as when members of local factions tried to convince me of the justice of their respective sides, an effort that probably they would not have made had I been perceived as a confirmed ally or opponent.

As a participant in village life, I, of course, never became a true Garifuna, but I played a role that made sense to the local people in their own system of ideas. I was interested in aspects of their lives that were in the forefront of their own concerns. I "paid" for the information that I received, not by direct gifts to informants, but by service to the village as a whole. I brought with me books and supplies for the primary school and made many emergency trips carrying the sick and injured to the Dangriga hospital in my 4-wheel drive vehicle. Only by personal participation did I begin really to understand Garifuna notions of reciprocity, obligation, and responsibility.

ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

ETHNOHISTORY, MIGRATION, AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Ninety-nine per cent[1] of the residents of Hopkins call themselves "Garifuna." Strictly speaking, the word _Garifuna_ is an adjective, properly used in English in "the Garifuna people" or "a Garifuna tradition." The collective noun form is _Garinagu_. However, since the anthropological literature is already a bit muddled by the well-meaning effort to replace "Black Carib" with "Garifuna," adding a third form seems unwise. Also, non-Garifuna Belizeans now use "Garifuna" generally as the principal word of non-prejudicial reference. In this study, I use "Garifuna" as an adjective and as a singular or plural noun.

Many Garifuna also refer to themselves as "_Caribs_," but this term offends some because of its disparaging use by outsiders, especially Creoles. "_Black Carib_" is even more offensive. In Honduras and Guatemala, local Garifuna also commonly call themselves "_Morenos_," a word in general use in Spanish-speaking America for dark-skinned persons.

Modern Garifuna descend principally from Island Carib Amerindians and escaped African slaves who merged into a distinct people in the mid-17th century on the island of St. Vincent in the Lesser Antilles (Taylor 1951a, Gullick 1979). There, they

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[1] Seven of the 823 Hopkins residents in 1988 were non-Garifuna: three women (1 Creole, 1 Swiss, 1 Anglo-American) and four men (3 Creoles, 1 Amerindian). All seven except one Creole man had a Garifuna spouse in the village.

came into contact with the Spanish, French, and British who
alternately held claim to the island. In 1797, the British Navy
forcibly resettled most of the Garifuna to Roatan, the largest of
the Bay Islands just off the north coast of Spanish Honduras.
The British permitted a few lighter-skinned "Red Caribs" to
remain on St. Vincent. The exiles soon moved over to the nearby
mainland and rapidly dispersed along the Central American coast.
[See Map 1.] By the 20th century, their settlements extended
eastward as far as Bluefields, Nicaragua, and westward into
Guatemala and Belize.

Along the way, the Garifuna absorbed a few Europeans, Miskito
Indians (_whaika_), and others into their population. Children
who are raised by a Garifuna mother usually grow up to be fully
Garifuna, regardless of the ethnicity of the father.

Taylor (1951a) and Hadel (1979:562) give the year 1802 for the
first recorded appearance of "Caribs" in British Honduras, but
significant numbers probably did not arrive there until several
decades later. Garifuna immigration into Belize from Honduras
and Guatemala has continued sporadically up to the present day
with relatively little reverse emigration. The majority of
Garifuna in Belize have Spanish surnames (e.g., Castillo,
Martinez, Rodriguez, etc.), which informants say were acquired in
Spanish Honduras when Garifuna children took the surnames of
their Ladino godparents.

During World War II, some Garifuna, including several men from
Hopkins, travelled to the U.S., U.K., and Panama to work. A few

enlisted into Colonial units of the British military which performed non-combatant duties. After the war, Garifuna migrated in increasing numbers to other parts of Central America and the Caribbean, and today large numbers are emigrating to urban centers in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. In 1974, about 80,000 Garifuna lived in scattered settlements along the Atlantic coast of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (Davidson 1976:89). [See Map 2.] No accurate estimate[2] of immigrants to the U.S. is available, but they number in the tens of thousands.

Within Belize, the Garifuna comprise around eight percent of the total population[3]. Although the Garifuna speak a language primarily Amerindian in origin[4], their genetic inheritance is overwhelmingly African, and, to an outsider, they are not easily distinguishable physically from other Afro-Caribbean peoples[5]. In mixed communities, they are differentiated from other blacks

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[2]Jenkins (1983:431) estimates that about 25% of all Garifuna now live in the U.S., but this is highly speculative. Gonzalez (1979:259) estimates that 10,000 live in New York City alone, including those born there.

[3]Ethnic distribution of Belize in 1980: Creole 39.7%, Ladino 33.1%, Maya 9.5%, Garifuna 7.6%, Mennonite 3.3%, East Indian 2.1%, Others 4.7% (Hartshorn et al. 1984:27, table III-2).

[4]Combining Arawakian and Carib origins with borrowed vocabularies from French, Spanish, and English (Taylor 1948, 1951b; Hadel 1975).

[5]The 1980 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean placed the Garifuna within the "Amerindian" category (CARICOM 1985 v3:37), lumping them in Belize together with the culturally very different Kekchi, Yucatec, and Mopan Maya peoples.

primarily by language and Spanish surnames, but food, dress, and house construction are still distinctive among older inhabitants of conservative villages like Hopkins.

Many Belizean Garifuna, including the young, still attend ancestral rituals, like the _dugu_ (cf. Foster 1986), and enjoy their unique traditional music and dance (Hadel 1973). Nominally Catholic, the Garifuna of Hopkins routinely alternate traditional rituals that commemorate the dead with memorial funeral masses and other Catholic rites conducted by a priest from Dangriga who is relatively tolerant of Garifuna traditions.

Garifuna history is a record of repeated migration, sometimes forced, other times voluntary. Their Carib-speaking Amerindian ancestors originally moved to the Caribbean islands from South America, conquering and absorbing the Arawak-speaking islanders, whereas their African ancestors were brought to the New World against their will. After the forced resettlement to Central America from St. Vincent, migration along the coastline was mostly voluntary, although economic and political pressures from other peoples were important motivators.

The first Garifuna who visited Belize, when it was British Honduras, may have been smuggling contraband from Spanish Honduras. Later, many Garifuna fled from Honduras and Guatemala to Belize in order to escape persecution. Some of the older inhabitants of Hopkins recall paddling across the Bay of Honduras "in small boats" away from a "massacre" of Garifuna by the Honduran military in the town of San Juan in the late 1930's.

Each November 19th, "Garifuna Settlement Day," a Belizean national holiday, commemorates and reenacts not only the arrival of the first Garifuna to the country but also more broadly their extensive history of finding refuge on distant shores. On this date in Hopkins, the entire village walks down to the beach to welcome several boatloads of refugees, portrayed by other villagers, who are said to have come from the original Garifuna homeland of distant St. Vincent island or from just across the Bay of Honduras.

Although they have great affection for their home villages, the Garifuna regard themselves as a fiercely independent and highly mobile people. More than most peoples, perhaps, they are prepared to pack up and move, temporarily or permanently, to distant and strange lands. A few spend most of their lives at sea as crew on foreign ships; others take on the duties of police officer or school teacher who routinely transfer from village to village.

The lure of better employment and education opportunities is undoubtedly the primary motive for modern migration, but a sense of wanderlust and a willingness to experience new environs are distinctive features of the Garifuna character as well. Men migrate more than women, but a great many women also travel, especially to the United States.

Of the 103 Garifuna born in Hopkins who migrated as adults to the United States by 1988 [Table 2], 57 are men (55%) and 46 are women (45%); the youngest is twenty-two and the oldest sixty-six.

Table 2 - ADULT IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

(Former and current residents of Hopkins 1988.)

Age	Men	Women	All
20-29	8	11	19
30-39	17	18	35
40-49	20	9	29
50-59	8	4	12
60+	4	4	8
Total:	57	46	103

The first to go were mostly men, but today women and men are migrating in about equal numbers. Gonzalez (1975) finds a similar pattern of U.S. migration among Guatemalan Garifuna.

In the regional class-race-ethnic hierarchy, the Garifuna are near the bottom, below the much larger Creole and Spanish[6] groups in Belize (cf. Cosminsky 1977). In Guatemala and Honduras, they are looked down upon by the Ladino majority. Among the other major ethnic groups in Belize, only the "bush Indians" (i.e., non-Hispanicised Amerindians) and the recent mestizo refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala have less status and power in the national system, which is still largely dominated by the Creole elite that gained power under the

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[6] A Creole is anyone born in Belize of African heritage, other than a Garifuna. The Belizean Creole language is distinct from but similar to Jamaican Creole. Spanish means someone of mestizo (Indian-Hispanic) or Spanish origin usually from Belize, Mexico, or Guatemala.

colonial system. Even in the so-called "Garifuna Capital" of Dangriga, the majority of businesses are owned by minority Creoles, Spanish, and Chinese.

However, the Belizean Garifuna, have made significant advances towards higher status in two special areas: education and police work. British colonialism introduced a European-type school system administered by Catholic and Protestant missionaries. The Garifuna are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, and the Catholic Church, especially the Jesuits who have great influence in Belize education, recruit many young Garifuna to become schoolteachers[7]. Intelligent and hardworking, Garifuna teachers are also said by school authorities to be well suited to the hardship of living in isolated, impoverished communities. Thus, teachers sent to small Amerindian villages and other poor rural communities in Belize are likely to be Garifuna.

The colonial government of British Honduras also felt that Garifuna made excellent policemen. They are physically sturdy, but, more importantly, they could be assigned to police non-Garifuna communities where they were outsiders and therefore supposedly more loyal to the government and less susceptible to local bribes and factionalism. The modern Government of Belize continues to recruit Garifuna in disproportionate numbers into the police force and the newly-formed Belize Defense Forces

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[7]Sanford states that Methodists, who started the first schools in Dangriga, as well as Catholics, recruited Garifuna boys "to be taught English and otherwise educated to be useful ambassadors of Western civilization in their home villages" (Sanford 1974:510).

(BDF)[8]. Until recently, police and BDF recruits were mostly men, but today more women are entering, although they have restricted duties.

Before new ideas of Afro-American and Native American ethnic pride reached Belize, mostly through returning students with international experience, the Garifuna downplayed their black African (i.e., slave) origins and were ambivalent about their Amerindian heritage. Older Garifuna in Hopkins still recall with pride the "white skin and straight-hair" of their island ancestors, and some look down upon the local Maya "Indios" who, they say, owe what little "civilization" they now have to the efforts of Garifuna schoolteachers. One informant regretted how much "We change our colors" from her ancestors.

However, younger Garifuna today have more contact with other peoples and have been exposed to new ideas of ethnic pride, anti-colonialism, and civil rights. In Belize, pro-nationalism may be tempered by respect for cultural pluralism more than in most of Central America (Holm 1978). Belizean Garifuna tend to see themselves as slightly more advanced than their Honduran and Guatemalan relations.

As a consequence of recent events, two changes in Garifuna ethnicity have developed: On the one hand, many young Garifuna now take pride in their African heritage and are attracted

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[8]Belize became officially independent in 1981, after several years of transitional internal self-rule. Defense is still largely in the hands of Great Britain which maintains about 1800 troops in Belize. The United States pays part of this expense.

strongly to contemporary forms of Afro-American culture, such as
Jamaican reggae music and U.S black celebrities in sports and
entertainment, like the boxer Mike Tyson and the actor Eddie
Murphy. Some Garifuna, especially those who emigrate to the
United States, are merging into a generalized Afro-American
identity.

On the other hand, a unique Garifuna identity is being
maintained not only in the home villages but is also being
strengthened and expanded, even among emigrants to the U.S.
Exposure to international ideas about ethnic pride has led to new
institutions that promote traditional Garifuna ways, such as the
annual "Miss Garifuna" contest (won most frequently by the "Miss
Hopkins" candidate) that showcases punta dancing and "speaking
Garifuna in the right way," and new forms of expression combining
traditional and modern elements, such as the wildly popular
"punta rock" music that is enjoyed by other Belizeans as well.

HOPKINS VILLAGE DESCRIPTION

Hopkins village lies on the coast of southern Belize facing
east across the Bay of Honduras, eight miles south of Dangriga
and four miles north of the mouth of the Sittee River. [See Map
3.] More than 800 people lived in the village in 1988, making it
the largest of the four main Garifuna villages in Belize:
Hopkins, Seine Bight, Georgetown, and Barranco. The two southern
district capitals, Dangriga (Stann Creek District) and Punta
Gorda (Toledo District), also have large majority Garifuna

populations[9], and there are several smaller Belizean
communities in which Garifuna live intermingled with non-Garifuna
but where they have lost much of their ethnic identity --including
Silk Grass, the nearest community to Hopkins by road (seven miles
inland). Many Garifuna also have migrated to Belize City, the
largest city (over 50,000 inhabitants) and commercial center of
the nation.

Table 3 - POPULATIONS OF PRINCIPAL GARIFUNA COMMUNITIES IN BELIZE

Village	Population	Census Year	Reference Source
DANGRIGA	6661	1980	(Hartshorn et al. 1984:32)
PUNTA GORDA	2396	1980	"
HOPKINS	823	1988	(Robey)
"	764	1977-79	(Foster 1985)
"	718	1975	(Kerns 1983)
SEINE BIGHT	467	1975	"
GEORGETOWN	246	1975	"
BARRANCO	250	1980	(Palacio 1982)

Dangriga (formerly Stann Creek Town), the administrative
center of Stann Creek District, is sometimes called "the Garifuna
Capital," but many Garifuna, including those in Dangriga, agree
that Hopkins village is where "the real Garifuna people" (their
expression) live today. It is the last remaining village in

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[9]Sanford (1971:20) estimates Dangriga to be about 80%
Garifuna; Cosminsky (1977:227) gives a figure of around 70% for
Punta Gorda.

Belize in which the Garifuna language is spoken in almost every home. Even in the more physically isolated villages of Barranco and Seine Bight, Belizean Creole has largely supplanted Garifuna in daily speech, especially among the young people.

Before 1970, a visitor to Hopkins had to travel by boat along the coast. That year, the government completed an unpaved 4.2 mile road running east-west linking the coastal village to the north-south inland Southern Highway. Most passenger and freight traffic now moves by motor vehicle. However, the road often deteriorates during the wet season (July through January) to the point that high clearance and 4-wheel drive are essential. Sometimes the route becomes completely impassable, even by foot, for several days due to high water in the lagoon and at creek crossings.

Travel to other communities is both difficult and expensive, but most villagers manage an occasional trip for marketing or visiting. Remittance checks received in the mail must be cashed in town banks, so it is essential for some villagers to travel regularly to Dangriga.

Three villagers now own pickup trucks and sometimes hire out to transport passengers and farm produce. One is a foreigner from the U.S.; the other two are Hopkins natives who worked in the U.S. for 15 years and 30 years respectively. Nobody who has lived most of his or her life in the village could afford to buy and maintain a vehicle.

Fish catches, of course, and some passenger traffic still go

by boat. One truck-owner drives to Dangriga four times per week on a regular schedule, providing mail service and cramming amazing numbers of paying passengers into his small vehicle[10]. Sometimes, private transports from outside communities include Hopkins on their routes when the roads are in good repair, but there is no regular bus connection to the national public transport system. Thus, village migrants working in the local district citrus and banana industries or farther away have a difficult and expensive time visiting home. Daily commuting to jobs or high school at Dangriga from Hopkins is impossible.

The village proper extends 1.5 miles north-south along the beach on the sandy ridge that separates the sea from the inland wet savannah/lagoon area. [See Map 4.] Neither the sandy-soiled village site nor the water-logged savannah adjacent on the west are suitable for major agriculture, so village farmers must walk several miles inland to reach their croplands on the other side of the savannah/lagoon. Today, most farmers travel down the main dirt road to connecting footpaths, whereas, before the road was built, travel by small dory up Freshwater Creek was the best way to reach the farms. As a consequence, formerly choice farm plots near the creek are today less valued than those closer to the new road. The new road also greatly eased the difficulty of getting produce to outside markets, thus increasing the potential for cash farming.

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[10]One-way passage to Dangriga costs $3.00 BZE on a regular transport. A specially-chartered vehicle or boat runs $40.00 BZE (round-trip) or more depending upon road and weather conditions.

The government-maintained Hopkins Community Center building and the Health Center, where a live-in nurse from the National Health Service resides, are near the center of the village across from the road juncture leading to the farms and the outside world. Surveyed house lots, 80' x 100', run in two or three rows parallel to the public beach corridor and also are linked by a packed clay road running north and south to the village ends.

Residents officially lease village lots for $2.50 BZE/yr. from the national government and must maintain an inhabitable house on them to keep "ownership" (i.e., the right to lease). When a leaseholder dies, inheritance rights to the lot (recognized by the government land office) are often in dispute, and lot "owners" who migrate must be careful to have a resident agent (often a sibling) watch out for their interests in case they wish to return or to pass on their land rights to their children.

Only five village lots are owned outright by individuals instead of leased. The government officially allows leaseholders to purchase legal title, but the current fee of $1,000.00 BZE is prohibitive. Everyone envies the five lot-owners who had the foresight and ability to purchase their house sites when the price was only $85.00 BZE in the 1960's. Two residents, World War II veterans who were given land grants upon demobilization from the British Forces, own large stretches of vacant beachfront land just south of Hopkins, but they have never used this land for anything.

Each occupied lot has at least one house, and some have a second dwelling which an offspring or sibling has built alongside

the primary owner. Most houses (*muna*) have a separate kitchen (*gusina*) alongside, but some of the newer cement block houses now have internal kitchens with butane stoves. Each house is divided into a general purpose room and a sleeping room.

Some house-builders still work with traditional pole-and-thatch construction, but sawmilled boards and "zinc" (galvanized) roofs are the present standard. However, those who can afford to do so are switching to the more expensive concrete foundation slabs and cement block walls. The continuum: thatch -> board -> cement block is a reasonably good index of relative standard of living, adjusted for house size and quality of workmanship. The village does not have electricity or safe drinking water. Residents use shallow (4'-9') wells or rain-fed cisterns which often are polluted and may dry up during the Spring dry season.

Hopkins is named after Bishop Fredrick Charles Hopkins who drowned in a boating accident off the coast of northern Belize in 1941 during a severe tropical storm. The same storm devastated the Garifuna village of Newtown located six miles south of Dangriga (see Map 4), forcing the nearly 300 refugees to resettle two miles south at the Hopkins site on slightly higher land. Almost the entire village of Newtown moved en masse, maintaining the coherence of households and community leadership. Thus, although Hopkins village was officially founded in 1941, its origin as a community extends back to the settlement of Newtown in the 1890's. Most villagers think of Hopkins as a continuation of Newtown.

When the Newtown refugees first arrived at Hopkins, however, they found several Garifuna families from Honduras already living there. The exact date these earlier settlers arrived is uncertain, but they were already harvesting cassava from their gardens in 1941, indicating that they had been on the land at least several years prior to this. The oldest of these Honduran settlers recalls fleeing from troubles across the bay in the late 1930's, first landing in Dangriga before moving to the Hopkins location. Like many Garifuna coastal settlements, the site probably first was used as a temporary fishing or smuggling camp.

The original settlers of Newtown also originated in Honduras; many arrived via Dangriga. Current residents who were born in Newtown report ancestors who came from the Honduran communities: La Ceiba, Limon, Rio Esteban, Rio Negro, San Juan, Tela, and Trujillo. This large number of departure points is evidence that supports the oral tradition that Newtown was settled by single families and adult sibling groups arriving independently, instead of by a single wave of related migrants such as founded Hopkins.

The abrupt arrival of the Newtowners in 1941 to join the smaller group of recent Honduran immigrants created an enduring dichotomy in the village social organization. The northern, more densely populated sector of the village, called "Boiler[11]," is

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[11]The origin of the name "Boiler" is unknown. One resident suggested that it had something to do with the boiled dough balls, characteristic of Boiler households, given to school children for lunch in the past. "False Sittee" derives from False Sittee Point that juts into the sea south of the neighborhood and north of the real Sittee Point at the mouth of the Sittee River.

primarily of Newtown origin, whereas the southern sector, named "False Sittee," derives more from the Hondurans. New immigrants from across the bay and elsewhere have tended to join the southerners, partly because of the greater availability of land there.   Both sectors are increasing in population[12].

The people of Boiler and False Sittee certainly see themselves as members of the same community —Hopkins village, but inspection of daily events reveals that strong tensions divide the village in twain in almost every aspect of social life outside of the immediate households. Children's play groups at the primary school, adult socializing groups, competition for the Miss Hopkins title, membership in formal and informal organizations, and participation in political elections reflect the two primary factions.

Each side, of course, describes the other side in somewhat unflattering stereotypes, but both sides agree about a few differences: 1) Boiler people live closer together and are more likely to have more than one household built on the same lot (confirmed by my census); 2) it is quieter and more private in False Sittee, a factor several ex-Boilerites mentioned as reasons for their moving south; 3) it is easier for youths and outsiders to find empty lots on which to build in False Sittee, although the newest settlers there are labeled "squatters" because their

[12]The census numbers displayed in Table 2 confirm a steady increase in the population of Hopkins in the 1970's and 1980's, but since these figures do not include emigrants and migrants, the rate of increase hasn't been calculated.

lots have not been officially surveyed yet by the government; and
4) Boiler votes more for the UDP (United Democratic Party) in
national and local elections, while False Sittee votes mainly PUP
(Peoples United Party). This important political dichotomy
extends beyond elections to competition for patron ties and
outside resources derived from national and international
development programs. In recent years, each side has had turns
of ascendancy in alternating control of the Village Council. The
most common complaint about change in Hopkins is that the village
has become "too political." The formerly more amiable
Boiler/False Sittee rivalry has evolved into bitter factionalism.

Every two years, villagers elect seven persons to the official
Village Council which then votes one member to the powerful
position of Council Chairman. Council members are unpaid but
have considerable economic as well as political power. As formal
representatives of the village to the outside world, they oversee
government funds for local public works projects such as road
maintenance, manage and collect fees from the only village
telephone, and have authority to raise money through activities
such as dances and lotteries. The Village Council system
replaced the former Alcalde system (one appointed leader) in 1959
when the colonial administration began preparing Belize for
eventual self-rule.

When party politics first penetrated the village in the
1960's, Hopkins initially was predominantly PUP, but one major
local party leader grew dissatisfied and crossed over to the

opposition taking along his personal network of relatives, friends, and neighbors from the Boiler sector of the village. Personal attachments and rivalries are more important than political philosophies in determining party membership, and some of the strongest loyalties and enmities within village politics are partly sibling-based, e.g., alliances between sibling-in-laws or hostilities following mistreatment of a sibling.

The bipolarization of national politics at the local level is largely due to local factors, such as the Boiler (UDP) vs. False Sittee (PUP) dichotomy, and connected to personal intimacies and antipathies. However, the increasing politicization of the village as a whole is due to the impact of national independence and the rising importance of party patronage as the new political parties compete with semi-autonomous government bureaucracies, which have their own system of patronage, for the control of limited resources.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Hopkins village is fully integrated into the world market system. It produces agricultural and fishing exports and provides local labor to foreign-owned agribusinesses, while increasingly importing basic commodities, like food and clothing, and purchasing small quantities of foreign consumer goods, such as rum, cigarettes, radios, and outboard motors[13].

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[13]Historically, outsiders have sometimes accused the Garifuna of smuggling contraband in their boats and being involved in other illegal activities. Although such issues are relevant to

Some Garifuna born and raised in the village have moved elsewhere in Belize to teach school or to serve in the national police and defense forces. Both careers require frequent changes of job location. Many more have left to work for the big citrus and banana companies in the Pomona Valley inland from Dangriga or for the more distant cocoa and sugar industries in central and northern Belize. Others have emigrated to the United States to seek better jobs and education.

Some of these migrants and emigrants have broken off contact with their birthplace, but many are sending home support for children and other dependents who remained behind. Indeed, more cash comes to the village from these outside remittances than is earned locally. People are secretive about the size of these remittances, concealing them or stating a lower amount to persons who might wish to share them or exaggerating the amount to impress other persons.

A few former emigrants, after working many years in the U.S., have returned home to Hopkins. Others are planning the same, sending money to their "agents" (often siblings) in the village to supervise building expensive cement houses for their "retirement." Although not everyone who hopes to return to Hopkins someday will actually do so, maintaining village contacts provides emotional as well as practical security to brace up the uncertainty of emigrant life.

Before the United States' 1980's amnesty program for illegal

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an accurate description of the local economy, I choose not to discuss them in the interest of protecting confidentiality.

immigrants, most Garifuna in the U.S. lived in constant fear of
sudden deportation. Today, although some have gained legal
residency through the amnesty, many have not; and even those who
now have "papers" still feel insecure. When U.S. President
George Bush took office in January of 1989, a rumor spread
through Hopkins that he might revoke existing amnesties and try
to deport everyone.

Compared to the other three rural Garifuna villages in Belize
(Barranco, Georgetown, and Seine Bight), Hopkins has a relatively
strong mixed economy including significant farming. Statements
like, "in Hopkins, we live by farming" and "we love our
plantations," declare pride in their community being more than
just a residual population entirely dependant on outside
remittances and migrant labor. Hopkins residents contrast their
village to Barranco and Seine Bight in this regard. Chibnik
(1975) confirms that farming has recently increased in Hopkins
and the surrounding District.

Although subsistence farming is still important to many
households, the majority of the food consumed in the village is
purchased at stores and markets in Dangriga town or at the four
small shops in Hopkins that import goods from the outside. The
largest village shop grosses about $200 BZE per day; the others
are much smaller operations. Two licensed "clubs" legally sell
alcoholic beverages, and numerous households sell an occasional
drink of rum and homemade foodstuffs.

Non-Garifuna peddlers of clothing, furniture, vegetables, etc.

occasionally pass through Hopkins, and villagers who travel return frequently with things to sell. Barter and reciprocal gift-giving are still major forms of exchange, but cash money is now the principal medium of transaction[14]. Almost every man or woman in the village has worked for a wage at some point in his/her life.

Young people without skills or capital find it increasingly hard to earn an satisfactory income without leaving the village. Even small-scale farming is now difficult to take up because rights to the best land have already been allotted. One young Hopkins man, after several years of fruitlessly applying at the Dangriga Land Office for a farm plot, today walks nine miles each way to his new farm on the parcel of land that he eventually acquired through a Mennonite missionary project. Until his tree crops begin producing in 4-5 years, he must continue to work part-time for more established farmers. Only a few fortunate young farmers have inherited land or temporarily taken over farm lots from absentee owners.

Most Hopkins farmers do not legally own the standard 10-acre farm plots but lease them from the government which manages the Garifuna Reserve area west of the village. Rights to farm land, like rights to village lots, are potentially transferable and inheritable despite being leased from the government. Jamaican

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[14]In 1988, $1.00 US = $2.00 BZE or slightly more on the black market. In Hopkins, a pound of rice typically cost $0.75 BZE, a bottle of Belizean beer $2.00 BZE, a well-made coffin $200 - $300 BZE, and a new house $1,000 - $20,000 BZE depending on size and materials used. Migrant agricultural labor pays a wage of $1.75 - $3.00 BZE per hour.

and American foreigners also have been able to lease large sectors of the Garifuna Reserve land directly from the national government.

Men outnumber women about 2:1 in holding leases to farm lots. Women and men farm, but mostly men plant beyond subsistence and sell regularly into the foreign export market. Citrus (oranges and grapefruit) is the biggest cash crop. Like their Amerindian forebearers, women still grow plenty of cassava, which is important not only for household consumption but also for sending traditional foods like cassava bread (_ereba_) to relatives in towns and overseas, thereby maintaining networks of exchange that may return gifts of cash money and items not found locally.

In a good year, fishing is more lucrative than farming, but it requires more capital outlay as well as more risk. Major export species, like spiny lobster and grouper fish, are government-regulated with limited catch seasons. Smaller fish for village consumption can be caught close by, but serious fishing for the export market means a trip out to the cayes. There, Hopkins fishermen intermingle in temporary camps with men from other Garifuna villages (including some Hondurans and Guatemalans), although each small boat with a crew of 1-4 works independently. Who works together as partners is a matter of great importance since not only do fishing partners share financial rewards but they also depend upon each other in a dangerous environment. Fishermen from Hopkins have died in storms and from lightning strikes and have been permanently crippled by work accidents.

Only men, not women, fish out at the cayes. Father/son or brother/brother are the most common fishing partnerships, but sometimes non-relatives from as far away as Honduras are chosen. If a dispute arises between partners from different villages, it is relatively easily settled by simply ending the partnership. Quarrels among relatives, although perhaps less likely, are more troublesome and enduring. Honduran and Guatemalan partners are also more easily dominated because immigration laws require them to work with Belize citizens. Occasionally, the boat-owner is an absent partner entitled to a share of the profit, but absent boat-owners often complain of being cheated, even by relatives. Fear of being cheated or having one's gear and catch stolen or confiscated discourage some people from fishing, and farmers also worry about garden theft.

Some villagers hunt game to sell, e.g., paca (*gibnut*), peccary, and armadillo. Others raise and locally market a few pigs and chickens, but neither hunting nor animal husbandry are major income sources.

Many men in the village are carpenters or shipwrights, and some are quite skilled. Other men call themselves "masons," which usually means merely having some experience in concrete slab and cement block construction. Because of the recent building boom in Hopkins caused by emigrants sending money home to build retirement houses, local construction labor is presently an important source of income. However, since these new houses are generally built in stages over several years as partial

payments arrive, the work is intermittent, and full-time carpenters and masons must also work in Dangriga or elsewhere outside the village. Fishing, hunting, carpentry, and masonry are all nearly exclusively masculine occupations. Timber cutting, which was at one time the principal male wage employment and the foundation of the early colonial economy (Bolland 1977), has almost disappeared from the Stann Creek District.

Garifuna women traditionally have had fewer opportunities than men in wage employment and often receive lower salaries (Kerns 1982). This disparity is decreasing a little bit today because of new women-hiring industries like a garment factory at Belize City and a banana-packing business at South Stann Creek village and because the government now admits women into the national police and defense forces (for mostly clerical duties).

Most women living in Hopkins receive cash income from husbands and sweethearts or from absent relatives who send support home, but some women have home industries like baking bread and sweets or performing skills like sewing to earn income. Children help out by hawking their mother's products door-to-door. Selling lottery tickets or rum by the drink is an additional source of petty cash for women. Men have similar means of earning casual money: clearing lots, repairing houses, cutting firewood, and more skilled tasks like tailoring. Firewood and cocoanut oil, which is very labor intensive to produce, are always easy to sell in town.

Twelve teaching positions for men and women at the Catholic primary school and a few other minor part-time salaried jobs,

such as telephone operator, are available in the village, but most steady wage employment requires migration elsewhere. Absent workers usually travel distances that permit only occasional weekend or holiday visits back home.

However, recently the banana-packing company in South Stann Creek began sending a large transport vehicle to pick up workers in the morning and return them in the evening. The salary is only $1.50 BZE per hour and work is irregular, but this new wage opportunity has had considerable impact upon some households, especially for young women who make up the majority of the banana workers. Persons who otherwise would have had to leave the village to find work are still resident. Although most banana workers leave their young children behind in the village with day-caretakers, mothers sometimes take their children to the workplace, usually paying the busy cook there (a Hopkins woman) a little extra to help watch the children.

Teaching, nursing, and police work are among the best paying opportunities open to Garifuna men and women in Belize. Hopkins does not have a resident police officer, a fact of justifiable local pride, but seven ex-policemen live in the village and many who left to become police are currently stationed in other villages. Eleven of the twelve current teachers at the primary school were born in the village. The one exception, a woman, is married to a co-teacher.

Teachers and police earn a beginning wage of at least $200 BZE per month that rises to around $500 - $700 BZE per month with

increased training and experience. Persons with long experience and administrative duties, such as school principals, may make over $1,000 BZE per month. These professions pay significantly better on the average than other occupations and convey higher status as well. A rare lucky fisherman might make $2,000 BZE from a single week's catch, and a prosperous citrus farmer with considerable land can make $20,000 BZE in one year, but most fishermen and farmers make considerably less.

The Garifuna are strongly egalitarian in ideology and ridicule anyone who "acts like she is queen" or "wants us to think he is better than the rest of us." Yet, rank, status, and considerable economic differentiation exist in the village. Economic wealth tends to concentrate in the hands of middle-aged men and women who have either saved from many years of hard work or who have many children "sending something home." Wealth can be displayed by purchasing ostentatious imported goods, like elaborate boom-box radios, or sponsoring expensive funerals and commemorative celebrations of one's deceased ancestors.

People speak of individuals and families as being "higher" or "lower" in status especially if someone marries "far below her/his type." "Higher" status is conferred by such qualities as income, education, and owning important property like a boat or a shop and is behaviorally expressed in innumerable ways such as, "She drink from a glass instead of a bottle." The importance of economic differences to kinship and sibling relations is discussed below.

GARIFUNA KINSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The Garifuna display many of the classic features of Afro-Caribbean matrifocality: 1) Mothers are the principle foci of economic and affective relationships in the home and have primary responsibility for child care; 2) Ties between mothers and their children are exceptionally strong throughout life; 3) Conjugal bonds are weak and fragile, and separation is frequent; 4) Jural bilateral descent tends to have a de facto matrilateral bias; 5) Fathers are often absent, and many give little or no child support; and 6) Numerous households have no adult male regularly present. Although nuclear family households, monogamous marriage, and paternal authority in the home are ideals expressed by many, most households are nonnuclear, legal marriages are rare, and women more than men have immediate day-to-day authority in the home.

However, this summary of matrifocal features only describes parts of the total kinship system. As discussed earlier, it misses or distorts important aspects of family life, such as siblingship. Also, Garifuna kinship has unique qualities that, although they may not directly contradict the matrifocal model, give it a distinctively Garifuna character. The next sections discuss various aspects of Garifuna kinship generally and provide background for the specific analysis of Garifuna siblingship that follows.

PARENTHOOD

The Garifuna love and desire children, and men and women take great pride in having many offspring. Reduced infant mortality due to improved health services and education has increased the already high birth rate so that mothers commonly have eight or more living children (i.e., large sibling groups). In Hopkins, the highest number of births reported by a mother is 18 of which 12 survived to adulthood. One woman in another Garifuna village is said to have given birth to 26 children (many were twin births), most of whom died very young. Acceptance of modern birth control techniques has been limited so far, but this is changing rapidly today[1].

Men highly value fatherhood as an ideal. Pregnancies represent sexual conquests (for the women also), and very few Garifuna men would admit to having no children. A man can usually claim paternity somewhere, perhaps in a distant village, since men often travel, and paternity claims do not necessarily entail paternal obligations. A few men "adopt" children by other fathers as their own by providing economic and emotional support

[1]Birth control pills and injections are readily available for private purchase in Dangriga, and recently a no-fee family planning clinic opened there. In some cases, mothers and grandmothers have insisted that their daughters and granddaughters begin using birth control, recognizing that, if a baby comes, the burden often falls mainly on older kinswomen. Most Hopkins men strongly oppose birth control and may forbid or sabotage its use. Consequently, women tend to prefer monthly injections rather than daily pills partly because the pills can be difficult to conceal. Also, the Garifuna generally perceive injections to be the most efficacious mode of Western medicine.

while they are living with the mother and children, especially if these men are out of contact with any offspring that they may have elsewhere. More often, the step-father merely tolerates the children, or the mother sends them to live with other kin. Sometimes, if a married woman becomes pregnant by another man, the husband will claim paternity (which may be uncertain, in any case) and name himself as the "father" at baptism and birth registration. Public opinion may or may not accept such a claim.

In Hopkins, 34 children (7% of all children) under age 18 live with stepfathers (see Table 4). Less than one third of these are said to have been "adopted" by the stepfather. The slightly higher ratio of boys to girls (19:15) in this sample likely results from some mothers sending adolescent daughters to live with other relatives to remove temptation from the step-fathers.

I found 194 dependent children living with both "mother and father" (40% of all children). Several in this category are said, in common gossip, to have been fathered by other men but I have not adjusted my census figures to reflect such opinion and can give no accurate quantitative estimate of these children.

Although disputed paternity cases are much debated, they only become scandalous because of the sexual liaisons they reveal. Legitimacy of offspring is not a major concern. Paternity may be at question either because the father chooses not to acknowledge the child as his own or because no one is absolutely certain who is really the biological father. Men who are not living with the woman often wait until after the baby is born before accepting any paternal responsibilities.

Table 4 - CHILD FOSTERAGE, SAMPLES

Residence of Dependent Children (age 0-17)
[M = Mother, F = Father, Z = Sister, B = Brother, hZ = half-Sister, etc.]

Sample 1: **Hopkins Village 1988**[*]				Sample 2: **Other Reports**[**]			
Residing with:	All	Children Female	Male	Residing with:	All	Children Female	Male
M & F	194	101	93				
M & step-F	34	15	19				
M & MZ	8	6	2				
M & MM	66	25	41				
M & MMM	7	5	2				
M only	58	30	28				
MM only	57	35	22	MM	36	22	14
MM & MZ	31	13	18				
MMM only	1	0	1				
MZ only	8	4	4	MZ	20	13	7
MF & step-M	1	1	0				
				MZD	5	3	2
				MMZ	2	1	1
				MB	3	3	0
				MhZhZ	1	0	1
F & step-M	5	2	3				
FM	5	1	4	FM	20	9	11
FZ	3	1	2	FZ	10	3	7
Z	3	1	2	Z	7	4	3
				B	2	2	0
Adopted	3	2	1	Godi	5	3	2
TOTAL:	**484**	**242**	**242**		**111**	**63**	**48**

[*]This sample includes all dependent children (age 0-17) residing in the village in 1988.

[**]Reports of past child fosterage cases in Hopkins that have now ended and of past and current cases involving residence outside the village. This is not a sample in relation to a precise base population; it is essentially a random sampling.

Table 5 - CHILD FOSTERAGE, ANALYSIS

Residence of Dependent Children (age 0-17)
[Samples same as Table 4]

A. <u>Sample 1: **Hopkins 1988**</u>   **B.** <u>Sample 2: **Other Reports**</u>

Residing with:	All	Children % Female Male			Residing with:	All	Children % Female Male		

Residing with:	All	%	Female	Male
M	367	76%	182	185
F	199	41%	103	96
M & F	194	40%	101	93
M w/o F	173	36%	81	92
F w/o M	5	1%	2	3
w/o M or F	117	24%	60	57
M's kin	98	20%	53	45
F's kin	13	3%	4	9
Sibling	3	<1%	1	2
Non-kin	3	<1%	2	1
Total:	**484**	**100%**	**242**	**242**

Foster Children Only

Residing with	All	%	Female	Male	Residing with	All	%	Female	Male
M's kin	98	84%	53	45	M's kin	67	60%	42	25
F's kin	13	11%	4	9	F's kin	30	27%	12	18
Sibling	3	<3%	1	2	Sibling	9	8%	6	3
Non-kin	3	<3%	2	1	Non-kin	5	5%	3	2
Total:	**117**	**100%**	**242**	**242**	**Total:**	**111**	**100%**	**63**	**48**

C. <u>**Child Residence / Households** (Sample 1)</u>

Households	Hh	Ch	Ch/Hh	%Hh	%Ch
Total	159	484	3.0	100%	100%
w/o Ch	50	0	0.0	31%	0%
w Ch	109	484	4.4	69%	100%
w Ch, w F	38	185	4.9	24%	35%
w Ch, w/o F	71	299	4.2	44%	65%

In disputed cases, the mother's designation of the father is usually accepted in public opinion, especially if the "father" remains silent on the matter. Sometimes the issue can be settled by the senior female kin of the reputed father inspecting the baby for physical resemblance. Other times the question is never settled. If a baby grows into an attractive, intelligent child and a successful adult, potential fathers (and paternal relatives) are more likely to acknowledge paternity.

EXAMPLE:[2] When Junior Anaya was born, paternity was in dispute. His mother, Elvia Anaya, claimed that the man she lived with, Gus Donoso, was the father, but there were rumors that another man, Macario Diaz, was the actual father. Gus Donoso raised the boy as his own, and Macario Diaz never publicly acknowledged paternity. Elvia and Gus had no other children together and called the boy "Junior" stressing his relationship to his public father (Gus) although he took his mother's surname. However, as Junior grew older he exhibited a strong interest in and ability for playing the guitar, a talent for which Macario Diaz and not Gus Donoso was famous. Junior was well-liked and respected for his musicianship, and Macario Diaz's other acknowledged children came to regard him as a "brother." However, public recognition of this sibling tie came primarily after the deaths of both "fathers," illustrating that siblingship is partly autonomous from and not simply derivative of parenthood.

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[2]All examples use pseudonyms for the individuals mentioned.

One major motive for denying or hiding paternity is that male schoolteachers who father children out of wedlock face dismissal or other sanctions from the Church-run school administration. The local Catholic and Protestant churches officially condemn sexual relations outside of marriage, but local priests and missionaries (who regularly visit but do not reside in Hopkins) have little influence on actual practice except for those under their direct supervision like students, school employees, and lay church workers. On the surface, schoolteachers and church workers appear to have more stable and monogamous nuclear family households than other villagers, but they also may have more hidden secrets about their personal lives. Several school teachers who have left the village are now openly named as the fathers of local children.

Maternity designation, of course, is less problematic. A woman conceivably might have a baby in secret, perhaps going away for a time, and transfer maternity rights to another woman who desires the child as her own, but I never heard of such a case in Hopkins, where such secrets would be hard to keep. Instead, if a woman does not wish to keep her baby or can not raise it for health or economic reasons, she may find a kinswoman to adopt it or to raise it as a foster child.

Child fosterage is very common among the Garifuna (see next section below). Full adoption, the non-reversible transfer of all parental rights and responsibilities, is relatively rare. Currently, only two families in Hopkins have adopted a total of

three children —twin girls in one case and one boy in the other. As mentioned earlier, sometimes stepfathers are said to "adopt" children, but I do not count these cases as actual adoption since the relationships would immediately terminate if the natural mother separates from the man. Child adoption and fosterage are principally the concerns of the "mothers" involved. In Hopkins, the few children who are said to be fully "adopted" in a non-reversible sense either have deceased natural parents or were completely abandoned by parents who live away from the village.

The Garifuna considered it a tragedy for a woman to be unable to bear children, however, infertility does not necessarily preclude motherhood. Three older women in Hopkins who have no biological children of their own have raised a total of eleven children between them: three, three, and five respectively. One of the eleven is a grandson of the woman's common-law husband; the other ten are children or grandchildren of sisters and brothers (so I postpone further discussion of these cases until the siblingship section). No women over 40 years old in the village has escaped child-rearing responsibilities altogether.

In Garifuna terms, a woman is a "mother" if she gives day-to-day care and nurturance to the child, whereas a man is recognized as a "father" principally by his willingness to acknowledge paternity and provide some kind of child support, usually financial payment. The man's role is more limited and specific than the woman's, although the emotional bonding and commitment may be equal.

The emotional intensity of fatherhood for some men is dramatically illustrated by the fact that the only two homicides that have occurred in Hopkins both involved fathers acting protectively (jealously?) towards their daughters. In one case, the father killed his daughter's boyfriend; in the other, the boyfriend killed the father in a fight. The surviving father went to prison for several years; the surviving boyfriend was executed by the government after a trial.

It is important to recognize that although women and older girls perform most child care and domestic duties, Garifuna men are not simply the weak fathers that the matrifocal model implies. Hopkins men provide occasional child care and discipline not only as fathers but as elder brothers, uncles, grandfathers, and village elders. Even Gonzalez, who gives sparse attention to male roles apart from economics, states: It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the [Garifuna] man in his role as brother or son, though also looked to as a source of cash by the women, is called upon to help with domestic duties. [Gonzalez 1969:56]

In walks through the village, I accompanied older men who frequently stopped along the way to correct the behavior of children or to chat with them about school and other things. These were often grandchildren and godchildren, but other times they were unrelated children. Of course, an adult's interest in communicating with or disciplining an unrelated child will be strongly influenced by his relationship with the parents, but some men, older men especially, assume a kind of general

paternalistic attitude towards all the children in the village. I found this especially true of older men who had been school teachers or policemen.

Hopkins people are conservative about raising their children. Most parents say that they are raising their children "just like my own mother and my own father." They decry the behavior of current youth as lacking "respect," and they fear drugs and other new temptations for their children, but only a few parents (usually school teachers or missionary influenced persons) say that Garifuna parenting should make any adjustments to the modern world.

CHILD CARE AND CHILD FOSTERAGE

The Garifuna say that children ideally should be raised by both parents. However, many times the father does not reside with the mother, and sometimes the mother finds it inconvenient or impossible to have her children live with her and places them in child fosterage with caretakers. I define child fosterage to be cases in which children live apart from both biological parents and receive primary care from other adults, kin or non-kin.

My census data on child residence (Tables 4 and 5) reveal that 59% (285 out of 484) of Hopkins children, age 0-17, live without their father, and 23% (117 children) live apart from both parents. In terms of households, 35% of the households with children present are also households with at least one foster

child, and since foster care households tend to have slightly more children, 38% of all the children presently are either in foster care or live with another child who is in foster care.

Most cases of fosterage are temporary, although some last for an entire childhood. I do not have the data to extrapolate quantitatively, but the percentage of children who at one time or another live in fosterage is much higher than my census count for a single year, very probably exceeding 50%[3]. Consequently, the number of persons who have been or are being raised in the same household as another child of their generation who is not a blood sibling is very great and the potential for establishing "classificatory" or "fictive" siblingship equally large (see Garifuna Siblingship section below).

Garifuna child fosterage happens for many reasons. Women often send their children by previous fathers to live elsewhere when they begin a new conjugal relationship. After the new union stabilizes, the children may return to their mother's home or they may continue in fosterage. Other children enter foster care because the mother dies or is unable to provide adequate care due to mental illness, alcoholism, or other problems.

Child fosterage also may occur even when the mother is capable and willing to raise her children, if she has conflicting responsibilities. Women as well as men must leave the village to

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[3]Palacio (1987:117, fn 7) reports that fully 60% of the children in Barranco live in "kinship fosterage" and that 32 of the 43 households with children had foster children. See Appendix B for a comparison of my data with others who have reported quantitatively on Garifuna child fosterage.

find steady work, and mothers who receive no support from the fathers of their children especially need to earn income: "It is the woman who must support the children when the man go off." Her parents may help out, but a new mother is expected to take as much financial responsibility for her children as she can and as soon as possible if the fathers do not. I learned of several cases in Hopkins in which parents who initially allowed their grown daughters to come home during pregnancies, afterward, forcibly sent them back to town either to get money from the fathers or to find work for themselves.

Often women who migrate leave their children behind because they can not combine new employment duties, such as long work shifts at the garment factory in Belize City, with child care responsibilities or simply because it is cheaper and less trouble to leave children with relatives in Hopkins. In particular, emigrants to the U.S. commonly leave their children behind in Hopkins. Later, usually when the child is about age fourteen and has completed primary school in the village, the parents send for him/her to join them in the States.

Emigrant parents are obligated to send remittances home to provide for any children left behind, and the foster parents encourage older children to write or telephone their parents to remind them about sending back support. Emigrants to the U.S. are presumed to be much more wealthy than the Hopkins foster parents, who are therefore entitled to make a good profit for these child care services.

Grandmothers and aunts, more likely maternal but also paternal, are the most common alternate placements for children. [See Tables 4 and 5.] In some instances, older sisters take in one or two younger siblings to raise. Only a very small number of children are placed with non-blood relatives in Hopkins, and these are usually considered "adopted" rather than fostered. Older children from the village sometimes go to live with non-kin care givers in towns in order to attend high school or trade school but this form of child care may be limited to providing room and board without necessarily establishing a strong foster child-parent relationship.

In cases in which the mother can not or does not want to care for her child, she herself may make the alternative arrangements, or other kin may decide. The mother sometimes brings the child to its father, the father may take the child on his own initiative, or other paternal and/or maternal kin may intervene. In several cases in Hopkins, the child's maternal grandmother brought the child directly to the paternal grandmother. Women always make the final decision about who will raise a child, but the father of the child can trigger the decision by pressuring and promising financial support to his mother, aunts, and sisters to take on the responsibility. The natural parents of a foster child are expected to maintain an interest and show responsibility by periodically sending some form of child support, most commonly "raw cash" and boxes of groceries.

EXAMPLE: Florinda raised her sister's daughter's son, Amando, after his mother's death, because she was his only relative in

the village and his father, a boyfriend his mother had known in town, had avoided any responsibility from the beginning. Florinda raised Amando along with her own son without any "father." Later, when Amando found himself the father of twin girls whose mother wanted nothing further to do with him or the children, Amando brought the one-year-old girls to his "mother," Florinda. However, Florinda realized that she was now too feeble to raise children and sought other mothers for the girls. She placed one with her friend and neighbor, Lupe, who had recently completed raising four children of her own. Florinda told Lupe that Amando would send support, but Lupe says that she never believed this but took pity on the child. Florinda sent the other girl back to Amando who was living in a town in the north and who had apparently convinced his new girlfriend to be the child's "mother."

The girl left with Lupe thrived, but her sister developed many health problems. Amando showed up one day at Lupe's house wanting to exchange the twins (now about three years old). Lupe accepted the sick twin but suggested that he bring Florinda with him to discuss the matter before receiving the healthy one. Florinda had been hearing reports from Amando's elderly female neighbor, Florinda's maternal cousin, that the sickly child was often left alone and physically abused by the stepmother. Eventually, Florinda and Lupe told Amando that both twins would stay at Lupe's until Amando paid Lupe for all of her child care expenses, a requirement that all parties knew Amando would never

meet. (Amando did pay Lupe $2.00 BZE one time, and now that the twins are teenagers, he sometimes gives them a little pocket money when he sees them.)

Village opinion now accepted that Lupe had adopted the twins as her own children, although one of her adult sons grumbled that the support he was sending to his mother would go to someone else's family. This case illustrates one way "adoption" comes about and underscores how decisions about child fosterage are generally made by older women once the natural parents refuse responsibility or show themselves to be unfit parents by being abusive or failing in child support.

Largely because child fosterage is primarily a decision made by women, women usually end up fostering their own consanguineal kin, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc., whereas men more often foster their affines, their wives' children, grandchildren, etc. A man may have enough authority in the home to prevent his wife/ girlfriend from bringing her kin into the home but he rarely has sufficient influence about child care matters to bring in his own consanguines. Children in the care of paternal relatives usually live with paternal aunts and grandmothers, separated from their fathers. In the samples displayed in Tables 4 and 5, maternal kin outnumber paternal kin in child fosterage: 98:13 in one sample and 67:30 in the other. Other children are fostered by siblings or non-kin (see Tables).

Older children sometimes take the initiative in finding a foster home for themselves. A few even run away from their

mother's house, perhaps because of problems with a step-father, and find a relative who will take them in. Only very rarely will another adult openly give shelter to a child against its natural parent's wishes, but if a child has a reasonable excuse to want to live elsewhere, a compromise can usually be worked out, especially if the foster household does not expect child support payments. This is especially true in cases in which a child was "loaned" to a relative by its mother who later wants the child to return home against its wishes.

Only rarely will a man's wife/sweetheart consent to raise his outside children and only if the other mother is completely removed from the picture. In the five such cases in Hopkins, the mothers are deceased or living outside of Belize. People tend to avoid situations where a child might have "two mothers" unless the two women are already kin related or close friends (perhaps godparents, see below); having "two fathers" who are unrelated and unacquainted is fairly common. Children are indebted to everyone who cares for them, and "parents" wish to avoid rivals for the potential support that the child may provide later as an adult.

If children are raised by someone other than a natural parent, they may call that person "mother" or "father," but only rarely are the natural parental relationships completely denied. A foster mother is more likely to be called "auntie" and referred to as "my other mother."

Another kind of fosterage is directly related to the education

system.   In order to attend high school or a trade college, older children must leave the village and find room and board in one of the towns.   Mothers from Hopkins with several high school-age children have moved to Dangriga or Belize City specifically to set up temporary households for the time span it takes their children to finish school.   Sometimes the father stays behind in the home village, a reversal of the usual "absent father" configuration but one which results in structurally similar domestic arrangements at both ends.   A few of these town households take in additional school children from the home village for a fee, but unless the child is related to the care giver (and sometimes even then), people fear such boarders will not receive good care.

Foster children are not merely burdens on their care givers. Older women who live alone may actively seek out a foster child for companionship, and women with very young children may wish to "borrow" an older child to help mind the younger ones.   Women with many children sometimes say that they feel an obligation to send one child to live with their aging mothers or any childless sisters or aunts, but several informants also mentioned refusing such requests.   Children are useful for running errands, selling household produce, etc.   Girls are said to be more useful workers, but many grandmothers seem to prefer young grandsons for companionship.   Older children, in some cases, become "apprentices" to relatives who are school teachers or policemen and are quite useful workers.

The redistribution of children tends to flow: 1) from

households with many children to households with few or none, 2) from poorer households to wealthier ones, 3) from young mothers to older, more experienced "mothers," and 4) for older children, from more rural households to more urban ones because of education and apprenticeship opportunities.

The complexities of Garifuna parenthood and child care are evident in the frequent switching back and forth between different surnames for children. Birth, baptism, and school records commonly give different last names for the same child, and family members may abandon or resume using an absent father's surname for the child according to his record of child support.

EXAMPLE: I discovered a baptism record from the early part of this century with this note from the priest attached,

> "[The father's] friends and relations declare that his
> name is {Surname 1}: but he declares it is {Surname 2}.
> [The mother] {Surname 3} is a widow, and her maiden name
> was {Surname 4}, but in the court register at the child's
> birth she is called {Surname 5} consequently her child
> has the choice of five names for his family title." [All
> parties are now deceased.]

Two children in different households in Hopkins are called by neither their father's nor their mother's surname but by that of their maternal grandmothers who are raising them. Ultimately, such children will make final name selections for themselves as adults and occasionally might even make up entirely new surnames (to the despair of anthropologists trying to collect complete genealogies).

KINDREDS AND KIN-BASED NETWORKS

Garifuna genealogical knowledge is broad but shallow with few distant ancestors remembered unless someone still alive in the present once knew them in the flesh. Descent and inheritance are ideally bilateral, but when the father is unknown, unacknowledged, absent, or non-supporting, a strong matrilateral bias often develops. In such cases, unless the father's kin make special efforts to keep in contact with the child, perhaps sending occasional economic support or helping with child care, the normal tendency for domestic networks to link through women tends to insure a matrilateral bias in the offspring's personal kindred during childhood. However, although domestic networks, food sharing, child care, etc., are mostly female-linked because of sex-role expectations and the sexual division of labor, other important networks are built with both male and female connections, or even predominantly with male-linked ties as in the case of fishing enterprises. Garifuna children tend to have more contact with female kin than male kin; adult women do too, but male youths increasingly join networks with other males as they enter the adult world of political factions, wage employment, social drinking, etc.

Consequently, in cases where fathers are actively in contact with and help support their children, unbiased bilateral kindreds are fairly common, and SOME MALES MAY EVEN DEVELOP PATRILATERALLY-BIASED KINDREDS AND KINSHIP NETWORKS, especially as adults. This feature of Garifuna kinship is overlooked by

those focusing on the matrifocal model.

Men link with domestic networks through their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, sweethearts, and wives, but they tie into other networks, such as job-seeking and co-working, necessarily more through male kin (and male friends) when these networks center around male-dominated activities. As described further in the section on gender roles below, the Garifuna have a strong sexual dichotomy in their social life and belief system.

Given an equal choice, men tend to prefer male paternal kin over male maternal kin. Even within social networks in the village, boys and men are more likely to "go about" with their father's brothers' sons than their mother's brothers' sons and are more likely to seek advice from an uncle on their father's side than their mother's.

In reply to the interview question, "Who are your relatives?" several male informants reported the names of paternal relatives before maternal ones, and, when listing members of a relative sibling group, often gave male names before female. Female informants always listed maternal relatives first.

In a father's temporary absence, a mother who has a discipline problem with an older son will more often look to a father's brother than her own brother for help. "He listen to his [paternal] uncle because his father tell him to," remarked one mother about her 11-year-old son who was constantly in trouble at home. Gonzalez (1988:161) agrees that Garifuna women only call upon other male kin to discipline sons if the father and father's

brothers are not available.

Child-rearing issues that are considered "men's business," such as discipline of older boys and masculine sex-role modeling, are primarily concerns of the father and close male paternal kin as long as the father has an established position within the family. In some cases, older brothers are the most important male authority figures and role models for boys.

If a boy grows up without a father or interested paternal kin, then his mother's brothers and maternal grandfather have much more importance in his life. EXAMPLE: Balthazar never lived with his father or received any support from him or other paternal kin. His mother, Sandra, bore six children by five different men and raised all of them without a "father" regularly present in the home. Her two brothers lived close by and were the most significant male adults towards her children, although they had families of their own and were clearly "mother's brothers" and not substitute fathers for the children. As Balthazar grew older he developed closer relationships with these uncles and with other maternal male kin. When Balthazar wanted to move out of his mother's home, one of his mother's brothers helped him to build his own house even though Sandra did not support the move.

Although his new house was close to his mother's, Balthazar began spending more time at the other end of the village in the company of his mother's mother's brother. This elderly man taught him traditional basketry skills and was delighted to have

Balthazar around since his own ten children had shown little
interest in basketry, their father's primary occupation and joy.
Balthazar's mother did not encourage this interest since her best
hope for financial support from her eldest son would be for him
to seek wage labor somewhere else. This example illustrates not
only the importance of matrilateral male kin for boys without
fathers but also how mother's brothers and other matrilateral
male kin may establish relationships in adulthood independent of
the mother's influence.

The relative balance of matri- vs. patri- kinship relations
among the Garifuna is more a matter of gender than descent.
Elizabeth Bott (1957) and Sylvia Yanagisako (1977) describe
analogous situations in England and among Japanese-Americans
respectively in which gender differences in personal networking
strongly affect urban bilateral kinship systems. Robert Dirks
(1972) describes a small Afro-Caribbean community in the British
Virgin Islands from a similar perspective, although all three of
these anthropologists indicate that male networking is more
separated from kinship relations in their examples than I found
among the Garifuna.

Although my points here run counter to most other descriptions
of Garifuna and Afro-Caribbean kinship systems, I do not wish to
overstress them. A patrilateral tendency exists in certain
contexts, but Garifuna domestic organization is still matrifocal
overall, largely because domestic networks link through women.
If there are disagreements in the anthropological literature

about how much weight to give competing matri- vs. patri- or female vs. male structural features, they reflect a corresponding dichotomy in Garifuna experience.

INHERITANCE AND DESCENT

Garifuna inheritance reflects and reinforces gender-biased networks since sons usually inherit their father's property and daughters their mother's property. Many goods, such as boats, stoves, carpentry tools, cooking pots, and storage containers, are gender-specific in use, so transfer along sex lines would be expected. However, other important properties, such as houses and rights to village and farm lots, also tend to pass down along gender lines.

Garifuna property ownership is highly individualistic, and shared property often causes conflict. Ideally, only individuals inherit property, but siblings of both sexes sometimes must share hard-to-divide things like shops, farm plots, and village lots. When collective ownership does occur in a traditional context[4], it is almost always among siblings.

There is a tendency to primogeniture when property is hard to divide, but an overriding factor is which offspring provides the most support for the parents in their later years? A younger son or daughter who takes most of the responsibility for looking

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[4]Government-sponsored farming and fishing "Co-ops," a Mennonite missionary-initiated collective farm, and a local woman's economic development Co-operative founded with foreign funding have recently appeared in Hopkins, but these largely represent outside values and incentives.

after elderly parents may inherit the family house and lot for him/herself alone. In Hopkins, written wills are becoming increasingly common, especially among women, according to the male villager who assists in their preparation.

In the Garifuna kinship system, descent is ideally bilineal, traced through both parents. At its greatest depth, descent is mainly relevant to certain rituals that are enacted by descendants towards an ancestor (Foster 1983, Kerns 1983), but it also provides the template for drawing connections to persons whom one wishes to claim in daily life as "my relatives" (_niduhenu_) set apart from the rest of society. It is not an absolute standard for relatedness because many actual descent ties are ignored or forgotten.

Although people can readily define genealogies with reference to well-known ancestors, when they introduce a relative, they tend to stress ancestral sibling connections instead of descent from a single ancestor. They make statements such as, "We are descended from two brothers," "Our grandfathers were two brothers," and "Our grandparents were children of two sisters," tracing descent to sibling pairs without specifically reporting the next ancestral generation above. They rarely say, "We have the same great-grandmother," even when they may know her name.

Defining relationships in this way has the potential to eliminate any questions of half-siblingship in that generation. However, some speakers will clearly specify descent from "two sisters [with] one mother, one father," as one woman proudly

explained for me the apex of the four generational descent tie to her closest friend. Another informant stressed, "Our grand-parents were children of two brothers, same mother." Specifying that ancestral siblings have the same parent(s) clarifies and enhances, not subsumes, the sibling tie which remains the focal point of reference. In a sense, siblingship often eclipses descent in defining one's relatives.

Descent also relates to the Garifuna conceptual category of "_rasa_," "race," or "blood," which means having the same ancestor (male or female). In the broadest sense, "race" can refer to the Garifuna people as a whole, but it is most commonly used to designate a shallow descent segment, usually close kin with the same surname (evoking a common unspecified ancestor) like "the Martinez race" or "the Givara race" (patrilineal) or the descendants of a single living ancestor as in "Alejandra's race" and "Miz Dominga's race" (matrilineal or bilineal). Such expressions come up in conversation, for example, when someone makes a categorical statement about a group of related people in the village, such as, "I don't want none my children marry that Givara race; they too bossy," or "Alejandra's race always get along with everybody." However, descent categories never define corporate groups among the Garifuna[5].

When one man wished to stress the closeness of two half-

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[5]Kerns (1983) suggests that attendance at ancestral ceremonies defines a kind of descent group but these are non-corporate.

one blood." Consistent with my discussion of kinship networks above, male informants tended to stress father-son biological connectiveness more than female informants, whereas both sexes had strong regard for the biological closeness of half-siblings with the same mother.

The Garifuna kinship system is formally bilateral and recognizes "blood" ties in both directions, but "mother" and "father" relationships are culturally perceived as biologically variant. Some men insist, "It is the man who makes the baby;" some women believe that the woman is more important. Both men and women agree that mothers bear more of the physical burden in having children. A child has a "blood" tie to both parents, but one side may overshadow the other, according to some, "Whosoever has the strongest blood gets the resemblance." Gonzalez's (1969:48) Guatemalan Garifuna informants told her that the body and blood of a child come from its mother and the soul from the father, but this is not a common belief in Hopkins. The Garifuna have as much confusion and ignorance about the biological facts of human reproduction as people in the United States, and their idea of "blood" transmission from parent to offspring is unclear, but it is predominantly bilineal and not gender linked.

MARRIAGE-MATING SYSTEM

The Garifuna believe in an vigorous, unrestricted, and long-lasting sex life. Men and women commonly enter into multiple conjugal relationships, usually serially monogamous but sometimes

simultaneously with multilocal residence by the man.

Most girls and boys become sexually active in their teen years, despite great efforts by parents to restrain their daughters. Since only girls become pregnant, the sexual affairs of sons are of less concern. A woman who was caring for her 17-year-old daughter's first baby remarked, "The boy's mother just tell me, 'Not my problem.'" Older villagers complain that young girls today are getting pregnant much too soon (as early as age 14) compared to the past. "Children are too terrible now in breeding," grumbled one woman.

A double standard for sexual behavior more readily condemns women than men for promiscuity. Among male peers, one's reputation can only be enhanced by each new sexual conquest, but a woman who behaves the same way risks hurting her reputation, especially if her affairs are too public. However, a woman who has many casual relationships is regarded more as "stupid" than immoral because she is said to be wasting her fertility and sexual favors without building long-term security. Some villagers accept the Catholic Church's position that sex outside of wedlock is a "sin," but they mostly regard such sins as inevitable.

Legal, church-sanctioned marriage is an expressed ideal for both men and women, but most conjugal relationships are common-law or casual. Often a couple waits to get married until after they have lived together for a few years and already have several children. People say that it is a good idea to first "test out" the relationship and also to have enough time to save sufficient

money for a "proper" wedding. One Dangriga couple (the woman originally from Hopkins) celebrated an exceptionally large wedding in 1989 because so many of their children and grandchildren attended. The bride and groom had lived together for thirty years before their marriage.

The last marriage to occur physically in Hopkins was three years earlier than my fieldwork and between a couple in their 40's with adult children. Two young couples from Hopkins married more recently, but both were living and still live in outside communities. One of these couples has already permanently separated. Marriage was more common in the 1950's and 1960's, although members of some families (mentioned by surname) are said to almost never marry.

Couples who are more likely to marry have either been together a long time or are young, upwardly mobile types like schoolteachers or government employees who marry partly to establish their respectability (especially in the eyes of high administrators who control promotions). Sometimes parents and siblings attempt to discourage marriage to persons of lesser social standing. In several cases, fathers have apparently hastened the marriages of daughters by promising financial help to the young couples.

Village women candidly admit that most Garifuna women want formal marriage more than the men do and that the final decision to marry is more often made by the man. A major worry for women is that a man who promises marriage in the future may change his

mind (or was never serious in the first place). However, legal marriage is no guarantee of stability or support for either mate. Wives and husbands often permanently separate or live apart for long periods because of domestic disharmony or pursuit of divergent interests, such as job opportunities or responsibilities to others. Several women who left their husbands and returned to Hopkins ostensibly to provide care for a seriously ill parent or sibling no longer have any regular contact with their husbands.

Legally-married women take their husband's surnames, as do some women in common-law relationships. They usually abandon the surname upon separation, but occasionally a woman keeps it, just as if she were widowed although the ex-husband is still alive. This allows her to retain the respectability of being a "married woman."

For the Catholic Garifuna, divorce is impossible, but either the man or the woman easily can initiate separation whatever the formal state of their relationship. When parents split up, the children always remain with their mother unless she is clearly unfit or voluntarily gives them up. Shared domestic property, such as furniture or a house built by the man on a lot owned by the woman, is often disputed but usually goes to the woman. However, village or farm lots never transfer ownership between spouses. If the husband built the house on his own lot, his ex-wife and children might continue to live there after the separation, with the children ultimately inheriting everything,

but the wife never will own the property herself and usually will move back to her own people as soon as the children have grown up.

The Garifuna rarely take domestic matters to court, but in one case a Hopkins man attempted legal action to gain compensation for the house he had built for his sweetheart on a village lot she owned. Although their relationship had been brief and she had broken with him immediately upon completion of the house, the court allowed her to keep the house without paying compensation and banned him from the premises. Sanford (1971:68) reports a similar court case in Dangriga.

Women with wealth are more cautious than men with wealth about choosing a mate who might squander their assets, whereas wealthy men often explicitly show off their assets to attract women. Men tend to prefer women younger than themselves as mates, and one explanation people give for a man leaving his wife or long-term girlfriend is his desire to switch to someone more attractive and more "fertile" because of her age. A woman's infertility may cause a man to abandon her (and vice versa), but some childless couples have lifetime relationships.

The Garifuna of Hopkins do not have a kinship-defined marriage preference system. Conzemius (1928:193) says that a cross-cousin preference existed among the Garifuna, but, although this might have been the case in the past, this is not true today.

Occasionally, Garifuna men establish and substantially support two separate households, spending time regularly in both. One

house is usually for the "wife" and the other for a "sweetheart,"
but such situations qualify as <u>polygyny</u>[6] because of the
relatively equal investment.

I recorded three clear cases of polygyny in Hopkins: one in
which the man was recently deceased and two on-going
arrangements. People also told me of similar cases in which men
maintain separate households in different villages, but since
these men live long periods with one and not the other family,
these are more a form of alternating serial monogamy. In all
three Hopkins polygyny cases, the two households are located far
apart within the village. The man with the most distant dual
residences rides a bicycle to commute daily. The "co-wives" in
these cases do not get along well, although most of the children
(half-siblings) do.

Men in the village respect these polygynous men for having
more than one women, and women respect them for being good
providers to both of their families.

Marriage may confer certain advantages (i.e., stability and
respectability) in certain contexts, but Garifuna society assigns
no essential role to it. Women can obtain sex and child support
without having to marry, and men do not need wives to gain sex
and domestic services. Sweethearts, parents, and siblings can
provide for these needs as well as spouses.

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[6]Bigamy, marriage to two spouses at the same time, is a
crime in Belize, and a Hopkins villager mentioned one case in the
Stann Creek District in which the bigamist actually went to
prison.

INCEST TABOOS

The Garifuna incest taboo extends to anyone with a common grandparent, but even second cousins are considered a little "too close," not necessarily in the eyes of most of the community but principally because the Catholic priests and the more devout villagers have concerns. If a priest sanctions a questionable relationship by marrying the couple, public acceptance follows.

Second cousins occasionally do have sexual relationships, and in one case in Hopkins (the man's mother's mother is a maternal half-sister of the woman's mother's mother) they have cohabited for many years and raised a large family. Marriage or sexual relations between full- or half-siblings are strongly taboo, and this prohibition may also be informally extended to and deliberately evoked among fictive siblings [see Siblingship section].

Other sexual relationships are also said to be "too close" not because of the blood relationship of the principals but because of affinal connections. For example, village gossips objected to one relationship because the girl's father, who separated from her mother, is now married to her boyfriend's older sister, i.e., her step-mother is also her sister-in-law. Gossip also arises if one sibling marries or has sex with the former mate of another, but this is usually a minor matter and left to the principals to decide if acceptance or jealousy result. There is no cultural prescription for or against levirate or sororate after a sibling's death.

GENDER ROLES

   Garifuna gender roles are not particularly rigid, but village social life is highly sexually dichotomous. Men and women spend most of each day among relatives, friends, and workmates of the same sex.

   Wives and husbands are usually apart, except at mealtimes and working together at their farm if they have one. Even in these cases, women oversee the meal preparation without adult male help, and, in farming, men mostly clear and burn while women do more of the planting and weeding. A husband and wife often have separate sections in the same garden with different sex-specific crops. Cassava, in particular, is perceived to be a woman's crop, although anyone can eat it.

   If the man is a fisherman or migrant worker, he spends almost all of his working time away from the village, often separated from his wife/girlfriend for weeks at a time. Women who commute to the nearby banana packing industry or travel further to work are likewise drawn away from their husbands/boyfriends. Couples generally do not work in the same wage employment at the same time, even when work for both sexes is available. However, school teaching is one job area in which men and women regularly interact, and it is not unusual to find a husband and wife pair teaching in the same school. The Hopkins school has two such couples on the faculty. [See Economic Context section, above, for more on sexual divisions of labor.]

   Boys and girls mingle together socially at the village primary school, but play groups at recess tend to be sex specific (except

among siblings, discussed below). Boys and girls share the same classrooms but are usually physically divided in the seating arrangements. However, sometimes teachers deliberately intermingle the sexes in classroom seating in order to cut down on socializing during class, since boys and girls are less likely to talk with each other, taking practical advantage of existing sexual segregation instead of reinforcing it.

In the village, some houses and yards appear to be almost wholly female territory with any adult male household members absent most of the time. Other households have special areas, such as the shady space beneath the house, where only men and boys hang out, and various cliques of men have particular areas where they gather to drink or socialize in public places like the small shops, the Fishing Co-op headquarters, or outside the community center building. Female cliques have similar but less public areas, usually households of older women, at which they gather for collective activities like cassava processing, baking, or just gossiping.

In Hopkins today, traces of separate traditional male and female languages still exist. Taylor (1951b) describes this aspect of traditional Garifuna culture and sees it as rooted historically in the union of captive Arawakian women with Carib males centuries ago. Today, everyone in the village speaks basically the original female dialect, because children of either sex learn to speak first from their mothers. The "natural man's word" is still occasionally heard, especially from older village

men and especially when males wish to sound particularly manly, such as in greeting other men prior to an exclusive masculine activity like hunting or social drinking.

Some sex-specific activities are said to be "dangerous" to the opposite sex, such as baking cassava bread for men and deep-water fishing for women, but the people who warn of this also recount examples of individuals who have crossed over the sex line without harm. Although men who do women's work (and vice versa) are sometimes ridiculed, they also gain a certain degree of respect for their uniqueness and daring.

Garifuna gender roles are complex, and it can not be soundly argued that one sex has a higher valuation than the other. I do not agree that there is "a bias in favor of females in this culture" (Gonzalez 1988:156), although I do agree with Gonzalez that many Garifuna women have very strong roles (but many do not). Some Garifuna women assert that they can do anything that the opposite sex can, whereas other women and most men believe more in mutual dependence between the sexes with some degree of gender role segregation.

Garifuna women are quite aggressive verbally and in physical fights when they are children. "Girls like a lot of trouble," said one woman proudly. She and others insist that girls fight more (with each other) than boys do, but others disagreed. Physical fighting only rarely crosses gender and declines rapidly after adolescence, but verbal aggressiveness is well developed at all ages. In Hopkins, a woman in her late-sixties has the

reputation of having the "strongest" and "baddest" mouth.

I agree with Kerns (1983) that much of the strength of Garifuna women stems from their participation in the traditional ritual system. Indeed, Garifuna women are associated with traditional Garifuna culture generally and Garifuna men are more involved with the English-speaking world outside the village (a topic that I discuss further in the Impact of Outside Values section below).

Kerns (1986:185) suggests that Garifuna men cooperate less in groups than women do and that women form more stable groups. She points out that this is consistent with the nature of most male work, which is self-employment or wage labor, and with the lower male acceptance of responsibility toward kin (Many Garifuna men would dispute this). One could add that it is also consistent with gender differences in parental roles: fathers mainly give advice but mothers more actively mediate when children have problems.

Although Kerns' point that there are gender differences in groups is valid and her observations pertinent, she does not acknowledge[7] that Garifuna men sometimes form very strong groups and act collectively, especially when such groups and actions arise in opposition to other male-led groups (e.g., village political factionalism, see Moberg 1991).

Sanford (1971) and Palacio (1987) have explicitly mentioned a

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[7]Male groups are perhaps less common or less important in the village in which Kerns did her primary fieldwork, compared to Hopkins.

high degree of hostility between Garifuna men and women. For Palacio, the conflict is especially between younger men and older women because of economic conflicts. Although I did not find such sex-generational conflict in Hopkins as a general pattern, I do agree that male/female tension and conflict are endemic there.

The flip side of cross-gender conflict is same-gender solidarity, and Garifuna women say that there is sometimes "sympathy" between women just because they are the same sex. EXAMPLE: A group of woman from Hopkins travelling together to the U.S. to visit relatives there needed visa extensions. They had many frustrations at the Immigration Office until, "We met a policewoman [i.e., a woman] like ourselves," who helped them get their extensions. They believed that this non-Garifuna in a foreign country had special "sympathy" for them because of their gender (and perhaps she did).

From female informants, the most common complaint about males is their failure to give adequate financial support to mothers for child rearing. A persistent conversational theme among women is that men are less willing today than in the past to take responsibility for their children[8]. However, most men deny

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[8]Like most people in the world today, the Garifuna frequently complain that adults behaved better and children had more "respect" in the past than the present generation does. Hopkins may have undergone real change in these matters, as so many informants insist, but prudence suggests avoiding this conclusion. Other factors such as nostalgia and esteem for one's parents/ ancestors inevitably color informants' comparison of the past with present behavior. Complaints about social breakdown often come in the same breath with assertions that life is "better" today.

this, claiming in defense that some women unfairly "try to trap the man" by paternity claims or just "eat" the support money sent instead of spending it on the children.

What is at stake is not so much whether men give economic support to women, but to whom they give it when they have it to give. A woman resents her husband/boyfriend giving any money to his mother, sisters, support for outside children, etc., but also resents it if her own brothers, sons, or the fathers of her children neglect her.

On the one hand, Garifuna men and women maintain considerable independence between the sexes accompanied by occasional conflict. On the other hand, both sexes acknowledge a powerful mutual interdependence that goes beyond the obvious facts of sexual attraction and reproduction. One way this is expressed is in the relationships between fathers and their daughters and mothers and their sons. Despite an overall matrifocal quality to Garifuna kinship and considerable male-female differentiation, daughters sometimes feel closer and more loyal to their fathers and mothers more so to their sons.

Although almost everyone, male and female alike, would agree that girls are more helpful than boys in the home, many young women nevertheless say that they hope to have more boy babies than girls. "Sometimes I feel like I want no daughters," said one young mother who had recently given birth to her first daughter following two sons. Parents try to control their daughters but permit their sons more freedom. Older boys "just go and come" and "just go walk about the village" while their

sisters stay at home helping with cooking, cleaning, and care of younger siblings.

Garifuna culture stresses that fathers have more need for and more right to the attentions and services of their daughters and that mothers have corresponding needs and rights with regard to their sons. One informant even insisted (incorrectly) that Belizean national law recognizes this in child custody cases and states that fathers should receive custody of at least one daughter and mothers of at least one son because they need the services of the opposite sex in the home. However, child custody decisions in Hopkins never go to court.

Several ethnographers have described a Garifuna type of couvade (Coelho 1949, Monroe 1964). As practiced today in Hopkins, the Garifuna couvade is not a formal system of paternal taboos and ritualized behaviors, but many fathers do take some precautions at the time of birth. They "take it easy" for one or two weeks following the birth, refrain from fishing or heavy farming, and do not travel outside the village.

EXAMPLE: One Hopkins father, whom I interviewed while giving him a ride back to the village, was returning home in a hurry because word had reached him that his young baby (about 2 weeks old) became very sick after he had left to resume fishing. The father remarked that he did not really believe in such "superstitions," but when it came to the life of his child he did not want to take any risk. The child recovered after his return.

The Garifuna also believe that quarreling between the father

and mother during pregnancy can harm the baby in the womb, and they name several examples of children in the village who had physical or mental infirmities for this reason. A mother who is too harsh in condemning her daughter's pregnancy also endangers the unborn grandchild.

GODI (GODPARENTS)

When a Garifuna infant is baptised in the Catholic faith, the parents select a woman and a man to serve as _godi_ (godmother and godfather) for the child. This designation establishes a special bond between godi and the natural parents as well as between godi and the child. Godi may be younger or older than the parents. In Hopkins, godi are said to be "like second parents" who ideally should share parenting responsibilities for the child (including financial support such as school fees) and be willing to take the child into their own home if the natural parents should die or become seriously ill while the child is still dependent. Because of the latter purpose, godi pairs are often married couples or in stable conjugal relationships. However, although some orphans in Hopkins have been taken in and raised by their godi, it is more common for orphans to move in with non-godi relatives, notably siblings of their deceased parents or their own older adult siblings when available.

The Garifuna conception of godparents and co-parenting derives, in part, from the Catholic Latin American institution of compadrazgo. The Garifuna do not use compadrazgo today for

establishing status and patronage ties with higher ranked co-parents, as occurs elsewhere in Latin America. However, they may choose godi who are in good positions to help the child, such as schoolteachers or persons with more wealth than others. A 28-year-old male teacher at the Hopkins school already is godi to eighteen children.

One of the oldest villagers who came originally from Honduras states, "Over there, we Garifuna used to pick Spanish people to be our children's godi, now we take our own people." Others remember their grandparents saying that godi formerly often were non-Garifuna with whom one wished to establish a special patronage relationship. In Hopkins today, almost everyone of all generations has godi who are Garifuna, usually close friends or relatives of the parents including many uncles and aunts.

Older villagers remember that it was a common error in the past for the church record keepers to write down the wrong surname (the godi's) for the infant at baptism. Since the formal birth registration was usually made at the same time as the baptism record, the child sometimes officially was given a different surname from its parents. One of the larger families in Hopkins is said to have first acquired its surname this way.

In Hopkins, parents and godparents call each other "compadre" or "comadre" and often use the general form "compi" in exclamations of greeting. The word "godi" has largely supplanted the traditional Garifuna words used by godchildren in reference (*nebenenein*, "my godparent") and address (*nebene*).

Ideally, parents should decide together who they will invite

to become baptism godi to their children, but sometimes, especially when a conjugal bond is tenuous, the father independently selects a compadre and the mother a comadre, thereby creating an unlinked godi pair. Rarely, a godmother will try to "beg" a godchild, usually a girl, from a relative or friend to raise as her own, especially if she is childless. The natural mother may consent to or refuse such a request. In all three recent examples of such requests that mothers reported to me, the mother refused the godi.

Upon Catholic confirmation at about age 9 to 13, the child chooses a single godi of the same sex (a godmother for girls, a godfather for boys) who may be different from their baptism godi. These new godi tend to be closer in age to the child than the baptism godi. At the confirmation ceremony that I attended, two of the godi were only a few years older than their godchildren. Garifuna compadrazgo can adjust to evolving separate male and female networks as the child matures.

Parents strongly influence the selection of confirmation godi, but they are said to be actually the children's choices. Love or respect are the most commonly given reasons for selecting godi. "I pick her because I love her so much," said one girl.

In Hopkins, godis range in importance from a significant addition to their co-parents and godchildren's support networks to a mere courtesy between the co-parents with only a superficial connection to the child. Although many of my informants spoke gratefully of their godi's help in their lives, many more denied

that their godi had ever given them anything of value. However, this latter response may reflect the tendency for Garifuna to assert their independence and stress having "made it on my own."

In a practical sense, the parents tend to benefit more from the godi connection than the child itself, but an assertive godchild can sometimes gain too. "My godchild usually just calls me 'Mary'," remarked one woman, "but when she wants something from me, like a set of hair curlers I had, she begs me and calls me 'godi.'" A man remembered, "I would also stop by my godi's house after school to get something extra to eat before I went home. She could not refuse me [because she was his godi]."

Compi (co-parents) should remain friendly and cooperate with each other for the sake of the child. "You can't never take your comadre as enemy," insisted one woman, an ideal that should continue even after the child is grown up.

In my sample of 132 godi (Table 6), 73% were unrelated to the child. In cases in which kin were selected, maternal kin outnumbered paternal kin by a ratio of 2.4 : 1, and women outnumbered men by a ratio of 1.7 : 1. Since women tend to choose the female godi and men the male, these statistics are consistent with the idea that kinship ties are more important for women than for men. Also in the cases in which kin were selected, siblings of the parents are the most common category (49%), and in four cases (11%) older siblings of the child were selected.

Table 6 - GODPARENT RELATIONSHIPS

(Sample = 66 godparent pairs, Hopkins Village 1988)

A. Godparents/Godchildren (total sample)

Godparents	Godchildren			
	All	%	Female	Male
Sibling related	21	16%	13	8
(of parent)	(17)		(11)	(6)
(of child)	(4)		(2)	(2)
Other kin related	14	11%	9	5
Not related	97	73%	44	53
Total	132	100%	66	66

B. Godparents/Godchildren (kin-related only)

Godparents	Godchildren			
	All	%	Female	Male
MATERNAL KIN				
Z	2		1	1
MZ	8		6	2
Other female kin	7		5	2
Female Total	17		12	5
hB	2		1	1
MB	4		2	2
Other male kin	3		1	2
Male Total	9		4	5
Total Maternal Kin	26	74%	16	10
PATERNAL KIN				
FZ	2		2	0
Other female kin	3		2	1
Female Total	5		4	1
FB	3		1	2
Other male kin	1		1	0
Male total	4		3	1
Total Paternal Kin	9	26%	6	3

OLD AGE AND SERIOUS ILLNESS

Neither the Belize government nor the local Catholic or Protestant churches provide significant services or support for the elderly and invalid in Hopkins. Indeed, a standard government social security check, available for persons over 70 years of age, pays only $5.00 BZE per month, while transport to a town bank in order to cash it costs $6.00 BZE. Yet, elderly and invalid persons are reasonably well cared for in the village.

Villagers who are unable to fully care for themselves because of poor health or serious injury are usually looked after by relatives. Sometimes the primary care giver is paid for the service by the invalid's children who have emigrated and who might also be paying the same person to care for their dependent children left behind. If a spouse or adult child is unavailable to provide immediate or subsidized care, someone in serious need will most often turn to a sibling or a sibling's son or daughter for help (further discussion in Siblingship section).

In old age, women receive more support from their children and grandchildren than men do. A father's responsibility for children peaks early when they are most dependent, whereas a mother's responsibility is more continuous and more likely to extend to grandchildren whom she may raise herself or at least give occasional care.

People point out several local examples of old men, who previously had abandoned their wives and children in Hopkins in order to run off with younger women, who eventually returned to

the village when old age overtook them and they, in turn, were
abandoned by their young girlfriends. Although Garifuna conjugal
bonds are perhaps as fragile as in other Afro-Caribbean
societies, they have sufficient resilience that spouses who
separate for many years can sometimes reunite in old age —most
often with the man dependent upon the woman who is usually a few
years younger.

Funerals are expensive. Bathing a corpse costs $40-$50 BZE
and a coffin $200-$300 BZE. The funeral service itself is
inexpensive, but the nine-night ceremony that follows around the
ninth day after death generally costs $400-$500 just for food and
drink.   Amounts far in excess of this figure may be spent if the
deceased was highly respected and left behind wealthy relatives.
Children younger than eighteen do not have nine-night ceremonies
at death. Close female kin do most of the work for death
occasions, and male kin, especially husbands and brothers, are
expected to contribute the most money for expenses. Even the
villagers who complain the most about the selfishness of others
acknowledge that in times of death or sickness people always help
out.

HOUSEHOLDS AND VILLAGE DEMOGRAPHICS

Visitors to Hopkins often comment on the large numbers of
young children visible in the village. Teenagers and young
adults are much less evident. This is due to the considerable
out-migration of teens and adults to seek education, wage

Table 7 - AGE/SEX DEMOGRAPHICS (Hopkins Village 1988)

A. Age/Sex by Five-Year Intervals

Age	All	Male	Female
0-5	137	73	64
6-10	156	85	71
11-15	138	72	66
16-20	77	22	55
21-25	53	22	31
26-30	39	10	29
31-35	37	20	17
36-40	25	9	16
41-45	15	5	10
46-50	23	15	8
51-55	28	11	17
56-60	32	19	13
61-65	20	8	12
66-70	15	5	10
71-75	10	6	4
76-80	7	3	4
81-85	9	1	8
86-90	0	0	0
91-95	2	1	1
TOTAL	823	387	436

B. Age/Sex by Ten-Year Intervals

Age	All	Male	Female	M/F ratio
0-10	293	158	135	1.17
11-20	215	94	121	.78
21-30	92	32	60	.53
31-40	62	29	33	.88
41-50	38	20	18	1.11
51-60	60	30	30	1.00
61-70	35	13	22	.59
71+	28	11	17	.65
TOTAL	823	387	436	.89

C. Major Category Percentages

Children & Youth	0-20	508	62%
Mature Adults	21-50	192	23%
Older Adults	51+	123	15%
- -
All Females		436	53%
All Males		387	47%
	TOTAL	823	100%

employment, and other opportunities.

Table 7 displays the age and sex demographics of the village in 1988. The sudden out-migration of residents beginning in the late teens is very evident. The data also indicate that males tend to move away slightly earlier and in larger numbers than females. These are not just recent trends. Observing Hopkins in 1947, Taylor (1951:55) states, "Most of the men and nearly half of the women between the ages of 18 and 50 are away from 5 or 6 months of the year."

If one compares Table 7 to Table 2, which shows the age and sex demographics of adult immigration to the United States from Hopkins, one sees that the relatively small number of men and women in their late-30's and 40's at home corresponds to the peak ages among the U.S. immigrants. However, most emigration from the village, especially among younger adults, is to other communities within Belize.

This demographic pattern is common to all Garifuna rural communities[9], but Hopkins village is a bit exceptional in that more of its emigrants expect to return someday compared to other villages. The older people living in Hopkins today are not just persons who never caught the urge to migrate but are also people who have returned to the village to retire after living elsewhere.

Young couples, especially once children begin arriving, desire

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[9]Appendix C gives examples of similar age/sex demographics from other sources.

to establish their own independent households free from interference by parents and other kin. The neolocal nuclear family household is an espoused ideal, but economic necessity and other factors, such as availability of village lots, frequently interfere with its establishment. Instead, the woman may continue to reside in her parents' household while her boyfriend just visits for meals and overnight stays between fishing trips or migrant labor. In other cases, a couple might successfully form an independent household for a few months or years, only to eventually decide that other living arrangements are preferable.

EXAMPLE: Hernan and Ermita are a young couple in their early twenties who are said to be "almost living together." Hernan recently built a house in Hopkins for Ermita and himself, and they sleep together there when he is not away fishing. However, they do not yet have a full domestic arrangement because she still cooks and eats at her mother's house and he at his own mother's most of the time. Until Ermita begins full management of the new household with more financial support from Hernan, their arrangement is not too much different from many casual conjugal relationships that never develop into households.

Hopkins households (_muna_) principally are units of co-residence and consumption that sometimes overlap in membership with other households within or outside the village. Gonzalez (1984:7) correctly describes Garifuna households as,

> "ephemeral, transitory agglomerations of kin who cluster together when their personal needs compel them to seek succor and subsistence, or when they can be drawn in (even coerced) to help support others."

The overlapping and ephemeral qualities of households are not truly captured in the following quantitative analysis, but the data have descriptive value and can be more easily compared in this form to other sources. Appendix D gives the results of several comparable analyses.

Hopkins' 823 inhabitants in 1988 live in 159 households, averaging 5.2 residents per house. Table 8 gives the full breakdown of household sizes. Of the 33 single-person households counted, 21 are men and 12 are women; of the 21 two-person households, nine are conjugal couples and 12 are not.

Table 8 - HOUSEHOLD SIZE [Hopkins Village 1988]

Household Size	Number of Households	Number of Residents
1	33	33
2	21	42
3	8	24
4	16	64
5	14	70
6	12	72
7	12	84
8	10	80
9	10	90
10	13	130
11	3	33
12	1	12
13	1	13
14	2	28
15	0	0
16	3	48
Total	159	823

Table 9 - HOUSEHOLD TYPES [Hopkins Village 1988]

A. Morphology

		# Hh's
Affinal		
couple only		9
nuclear w children		30
extended		41
	Subtotal	80
Consanguineal		46
Single Person		33
	Total	159

B. Principal Adult Male In Household
(In relationship to principal female)

Husband/Father		78
Son/Grandson		6
Elderly Father (invalid)		3
Father's Brother (invalid)		1
Brother		1
Single Male living alone		21
	Subtotal	110
No Adult Male		
Single Female		12
Absentee Hu/F		8
Other		29
	Subtotal	49
	TOTAL	159

Table 9A breaks down the sample in terms of the traditional anthropological categories of affinal (presence of a conjugal couple) vs. consanguineal (blood kin only) households. Table 9B analyzes household morphology in terms of the principal adult male in each household. If one subtracts all single person households from the sample, then 29% (37 of 126) of the multi-person households have no adult male regularly present in the home and 38% (48) have no adult male present in the husband/father role, although some (eight) of these cases do have absentee husband/fathers who are recognized as household members, even though they are absent more than six months of the year and therefore excluded from my census.

Of special interest is the observation that adult siblings rarely live together outside of their natal home in Hopkins. Since this might be construed to run counter to my main theme stressing the importance of Garifuna siblingship, it deserves discussion.

In fact, adult siblings do not often live together in the same household unless a parent is also present, but they are regular visitors in each others homes. When emigrant siblings return to visit the village they usually sleep in a brother's or sister's house, depending on who has the most space, and when local people travel to Belize City or elsewhere, they usually first look to stay with a sibling. When I asked people the question, "Who do you stay with?" during visits, the overwhelming response was a sibling, a half-sibling, or sometimes a parent's sibling if the

respondent was young. Half-siblings with the same father frequently grow up in different places and may only become close to each other in adulthood when visiting and letters can activate and strengthen the kinship connection. This pattern of visiting should be understood not so much that travellers stay with siblings but more that visiting more often occurs among siblings. People do not generally travel except to find work or to visit relatives. They do not "go shopping" to Belize City unless they have someone to stay with there. If one acquires friends at whose home one is welcome to sleep overnight, one is very likely to start calling them "brother" or "sister."

Outside Hopkins, it is more common to find adult siblings living together, especially during their first year or two in a new environment. EXAMPLE: Four sisters (ages 25, 25 [twins], 21, and 16) from Hopkins are currently renting a house in Belize City together. The three oldest work and the 16-year-old attends high school. This kind of living arrangement would be unusual in the home village. Another EXAMPLE: A woman in Dangriga has two fisherman brothers from Hopkins who regularly stop overnight or longer at her home when they sell their catches in town. They bring her a major part of her household's food supply, and her fish are fresher than those the brother's wives receive later.

When a man is temporarily absent from the village, his wife/sweetheart may have one of her sisters sleep overnight until his return. EXAMPLE: One fisherman's wife's sister spends as many nights at his home as he does, but I count him as a

"resident" because he belongs to no other household and record her as a non-resident there because she eats and works mostly in another household.

Other occasions when siblings are co-resident (and counted as such in the census) are when one moves in to help "babysit" for the other and when one is a dependent invalid being cared for by another sibling. These cases are discussed in the siblingship sections about child care and old age.

Here are two examples of full-siblings who live together in Hopkins— EXAMPLE: Two brothers, ages 19 and 20, moved out of their mother's house two years ago into a new house built by their father, who is separated from the mother and lives and works in another village but plans to return to Hopkins. They still eat some of their meals at their mother's and other times eat at a nearby sister's, but they mostly cook for themselves. Their father gives them money regularly when he visits, support that he previously gave to their mother. Recently, their 16-year-old brother began sleeping in the house too. This is an unstable situation because everyone sees the brothers as just temporary caretakers of their father's house until his return.

EXAMPLE: Two sisters in their 50's share a house in Hopkins built by both together on their deceased parents' lot. One sister is absent for weeks at a time working in the citrus industry. The sisters have separate but adjacent farms, walk to the fields together, and eat together. They will probably stay together until one dies.

Thirty-three households are "single person" units in my

census. Many of these are elderly residents with close ties to nearby households which include them in meals and activities. Others are clearly temporary arrangements in that the single person is awaiting the return of other family members or is preparing to soon follow them. There are only three cases of young persons, all men in their twenties, who live entirely alone in households without absentee members. All three have no full siblings anywhere, which may be a factor in their failure to merge into other household units.

Siblings rarely co-reside, but they do occasionally live in each other's houses or on each other's lots when the owners are absent. I found six cases in Hopkins in which an absent sibling allowed another to build on his/her village lot and two more cases in which the absent sibling also paid for the construction of a new house. In the latter cases, the resident siblings are expected to vacate when the absentee owners return. Rights to empty lots might be lost if no one builds on them, and vacant houses need caretakers.

In summary, STABLE CO-RESIDENCE OCCURS ONLY RARELY AMONG ADULT SIBLINGS, BUT MORE DIFFUSE AND EPHEMERAL MODES OF ADULT SIBLING CO-RESIDENCE ARE FAIRLY COMMON. Indeed, sharing the same roof is something that continues on a regular basis beyond childhood even though this is not effectively captured in standard household censuses.

IMPACT OF ECONOMIC FACTORS

Economic factors influence the Garifuna kinship system by impacting mating-marriage decisions, child fosterage arrangements, household composition, and, in the broadest sense, almost every relationship between two persons in the village involving significant elements of dependency and/or reciprocity, which includes most kinship relations. Rather than attempt to describe a complete catalogue of the impact of economic factors on kinship, I bypass the more obvious issues —such as a couple's decision to delay marriage until they have sufficient savings for a "nice" wedding or the status inequality between individuals or families with different economic resources which leads to envy of those who "think too high of themselves"— and concentrate on a few issues pertinent to my other themes. The central issue of the direct impact of economic factors on siblingship is treated in a later section.

I have found that the impact of economic factors on Garifuna kinship is mediated through differences in gender roles more than any other single non-economic variable, e.g., age, education, religion, etc. Men and women use very different strategies in their economic pursuits.

Although monogamous nuclear families are an expressed ideal, instead of forming a nuclear unit, a wealthy Garifuna man might decide to become polygynous with two households or have only casual sexual relations with women. A poor man needs a stable marriage and home more than a rich one. The old hypothesis that

matrifocal (or consanguineal) households shift to nuclear family
(or affinal) households (Cumper 1961, Davenport 1961, Horowitz
1967) when men improve their economic standing is not borne out.

Similarly, among Garifuna women, wealth does not lead to
stable monogamy. A poor woman is more dependent upon support
from a husband/sweetheart if she either: 1) has many dependent
young children and her own parents do not support her, or 2) is
elderly and receives no support from adult children. In either
case, a woman's best choice may be to settle down with a man who
has a steady income. The wealthier women in Hopkins, who usually
have income from many working adult children, have the least
economic need for a husband/sweetheart, and many do not have a
mate or maintain only casual relationships with men.

The very poor, men and women who are unable or unwilling to
work, either just "get by" in relative poverty, or they attract a
mate who supports them but totally dominates the relationship.
These marriages/matings of extreme dependency tend to be
unstable, but some are monogamous and enduring.

Economic differentiation is increasing within Hopkins, placing
additional stress on a social system in which persons with above-
average incomes receive frequent requests and demands from less
successful kin and neighbors. For someone to maintain or improve
their economic status, they must limit these exchanges or
manipulate them to their own benefit (cf. Stack 1974 and Palacio
1982:131-132).

Child care, in particular, is becoming increasingly an
arrangement involving cash payments from absent parents, and the

cost of child care is increasing. Many villagers have decided that good nutrition and hygiene for infants and children depend upon imported items like infant formulas, disposable diapers, and special medicines. The cost of primary school education (uniforms, books, and supplies) is about $70 BZE per year, a sum many times greater than the previous generation had to pay.

Although there is no fixed rate for child care services and informants are reluctant to discuss what is "fair" payment or even "enough" payment, a few reported to me approximate figures close to $100 BZE per month, per child[10] in cases of absent parents who have good resources, such as employment in the United States. This estimate is presumably near the maximum remuneration that one might expect. The average is much less, and the minimum, of course, would be no support, which occasionally happens. Care givers sometimes must take the initiative to track down the absent parents and demand payment, and, in a few cases, they have dropped off children at the biological mother's or father's distant home or workplace in protest of failed financial obligation for child care services. Nevertheless, child care payments to foster parents from emigrants and to mothers from absentee fathers are how many Hopkins households survive and even prosper.

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[10]The highest (possibly inflated) figure reported to me in 1988 was $500 BZE [$250 U.S.] for three weeks, for four children. Sanford (1971) reports child care payments of $10 U.S. per month for two children (p. 91) and $60-70 U.S. per month for five children (p. 83) made in the 1960's.

IMPACT OF OUTSIDE VALUES

Non-Garifuna ideas and values about marriage, family, and gender roles have considerable impact on the Hopkins community. Catholic and Protestant churches, government agencies, and commercial businesses give incentives or enforce restrictions that influence thinking and behavior in Garifuna communities as they increase contact with European institutions and society.

The Catholic Church has had the most direct influence through religious proselytization and direct coercion, such as expelling students and firing teachers from the public school system that it administers. Teachers, in particular, are expected to live model lives of chastity and stable marriage. Recently, the local Catholic Church liberalized its attitude towards teachers and became less likely to impose severe sanctions. Formerly, the Church actively preached in sermons and in school curriculum that common-law marriage and sex before marriage were "sins," but it now downplays this condemnation, although it has not changed its formal opinion. School curriculum emphasizes the nuclear family of mother, father, and children as an ideal and teaches that it is a basic "unit of society."

Although intended primarily to promote Garifuna traditions of language, dress, and dance, the annual Miss Hopkins and Miss Garifuna Contests also promote strict moral standards representative of Church morality that forbid the 16-year-old candidates to be pregnant or living with a man. At least two winners were stripped of their titles before their year-long

terms expired because they had violated the above proscription.

The impact of outside values has been different for men than for women. In the last century, Catholic and Methodist Churches brought Garifuna boys, but not girls, to Belize City to be taught English and then to return to their home villages as ambassadors of Western civilization (Sanford 1974:510). This contrasts with the situation today in which women do most "church business" in the village and verbalize greater commitment to Catholic principles of morality.

In the Miss Garifuna contests and in other public displays of "traditional" Garifuna culture to the outside world, such as holiday singing and dancing, older women are often the primary cultural brokers either by their training of young performers or by their own performances. When Garifuna traditions are transmitted to non-Garifuna through written English in periodicals and printed manifestos, however, it is the men who dominate and broker the transmission. The English language is still referred to as "The King's English." The National Garifuna Council, the most organized and visible institution that mediates Garifuna traditional culture to the outside world, was founded by and remains in the control of men, although some women recently have become active members.

Many jobs in the export sector of the economy are gender restricted. The first wage-paying jobs that the Garifuna found open to them, when they arrived in Belize in the 19th century, were woodcutting and working on ships, both limited exclusively

to men. Later, Garifuna women found jobs mostly as "domestics" or in agricultural labor, but men received greater wages and monopolized supervisory positions.

Discriminatory hiring practices continue today. Even the church-administered school system which hires and pays male and female schoolteachers equally still promotes primarily men to the top Principal Teacher positions, ostensibly because students and other teachers are more willing to accept male authority. In the local banana-packing industry where men and women today receive equal wages, men cut and load while women weigh and pack.

Occupations involving certain foreign technologies are gender restricted although there are no formal rules of exclusion. Electricians and mechanics are always men, for example. When Hopkins women began grating cassava with a device powered by a gasoline engine, it became necessary for a man always to be present to run the engine. Formerly, cassava grating sessions were all-female major social events, but the new technology has reduced their social importance because of its speed and noise and by the presence of men.

Hunting with firearms is also a male domain. Women as well as men may hunt with dogs, but women make the kill with a machete rather than a shotgun.

The Belize Police Department and Belize Defense Force (BDF), which employ many Garifuna, recruit some women but are largely male domains. The Police Department pays an extra monthly allowance to male officers who are legally married and living with their wives, but not to those in common-law unions. The

Government also appoints unpaid local Justices of the Peace to exercise limited authority in settling minor disputes informally in rural villages. In Hopkins, the two such appointees are men. One woman explained to me that women actively avoid involvement in male-dominated domains like national politics because, "We didn't get a good taste of it."

United States immigration officers sometimes arbitrarily require a married woman to have written permission from her husband to apply for a visa to the U.S.; married men are never asked to do so. One immigration officer told me that he sometimes lectures applicants about the importance of legal marriage. Gonzalez (1979:260) suggests that U.S. immigration laws have perhaps increased legal marriage among immigrants in the U.S.

The Registrar of Births in Hopkins explained to me that people are more concerned now to list a child's father's surname because of its importance for getting a U.S. visa. In the past, children were sometimes registered with only their mother's name. There is no clear line dividing "outside" from "traditional" values, but people in Hopkins have learned that their personal choices about marriage, gender-role, family responsibility, etc. are made in a world of public opinion that extends beyond the village.

GARIFUNA SIBLINGSHIP

WHO IS A SIBLING?:   CATEGORIES AND TERMINOLOGY

This study treats Garifuna siblingship as a cultural category, independent of biology, that labels persons who stand in certain types of relationships to one another and defines, to a degree, the character of these relationships. Although conceptions of siblingship generally imply an idea of shared parentage, that idea may be secondary to other qualities, and parenthood itself is culturally complex. Ultimately, the Garifuna concept of siblingship implies a recognized connection of close blood relationship, but when sibling terms and ideas are extended to others they are not merely metaphorical allusions to "real" siblingship, but indicate strong cultural beliefs that transcend biology. Garifuna siblingship therefore includes beliefs, values, sentiments (idealized and actual), conceptual typologies, and associated behaviors.

Even though their language contains no single term that can be translated accurately as "siblings" (nor does everyday English), the Garifuna recognize that two persons with the same parent(s) stand in a special category and relationship. They distinguish four types of siblingship based on parental differences: 1) full-siblings who have the same father and mother, 2) half-siblings who share only one parent, 3) classificatory siblings who have no common biological parent but who are closely related by blood and upbringing (i.e., they are raised together by a

common "parent" who might be actually a grandparent, aunt/uncle, older sibling, etc.), and 4) _fictive_ _siblings_ who call each other siblings but do not share either a biological or a surrogate parent. This last type of siblingship arises most often in adulthood.

In the Garifuna language, 1) _nibirugu_ means "my brothers and sisters of the same father and mother;" 2) _Nisani bougudi_ refers to half-siblings on the father's side, meaning approximately the same as the local English "my father's outside children[1]." However, no equivalent expression for half-siblings on the mother's side exists, just as, in local English, one never hears "my mother's outside children," although it would be understood. Classificatory and fictive siblings have no special Garifuna or local English words of collective or individual reference.

People in Hopkins sometimes address brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law in purely sibling terms, but this is fairly rare and does not warrant designating a special category of "affinal siblingship." In-laws have their own set of kinship terms (see Appendix A). I prefer to consider in-laws who relate to each

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[1]In the Garifuna kinship domain, the local English expression "my father's _outside_ children" implies birth outside of wedlock, but if the father is unmarried, it can mean simply birth outside of the father's primary conjugal relationship. Thus, "outside" is not the same as "illegitimate," a word that is used in Catholic baptism records but not by most Garifuna. Public opinion usually labels children as "outside" after the father marries or has other children within a stable common-law relationship. It sometimes happens that the father lives with his sweetheart and outside children, while his regular children are raised by his wife alone or with a step-father.

other strongly in sibling terms as special cases of fictive siblingship. Such relationships are independent of the affinal relationship and may endure after that bond is broken. I also avoid the unnecessary jargon of referring to brother/sister pairs as "cross-siblings" and brother/brother or sister/sister pairs as "parallel-siblings" (cf. Marshall 1983).

Garifuna kinship terms indicate sex and seniority among siblings. I recorded the following terms of sibling address and reference in Hopkins:

SPEAKER	ADDRESSEE/REFERENT	GARIFUNA TERMS
younger sister	my elder sister	*nibugana (nitu)*
younger brother	my elder sister	*nitu (nibugana)*
younger sister	my older brother	*nati (nibugana)*
younger brother	my older brother	*nibugana (nati)*
older sister	my younger sister	*namulelua (namu)*
older brother	my younger sister	*namulelua (namu, nitu)*
older sister	my younger brother	*namulen (namu)*
older brother	my younger brother	*namulen (namu)*

The principal Garifuna terms (first in column) can be used in either address or reference. The terms in parentheses are less common variants used primarily in address. [See Appendix A for a complete list of Garifuna kinship terms.]

The parenthetical occurrences of *nati* and *nitu* reflect the use of these forms reciprocally between two siblings to indicate mutual respect, i.e., each sibling refers to the other as

"elder". *Namu* is the diminutive form of both *namulelua* and *namulen* and conveys nurturance and endearment as well as seniority. The English expressions "my brother" and "my sister" are also often used in reference and sometimes in address in Hopkins but not usually prefixed with a seniority designation, i.e., not qualified by "elder" or "younger" in English.

In Garifuna as in English[2], forms of sibling address are potentially the same towards full, half, classificatory, and fictive siblings, but actual practice differs somewhat. Among full-siblings, traditional Garifuna kinship terms are still frequently used, although proper first names are increasingly common; English terms are also heard. Among half-siblings and classificatory siblings raised in the same household, the terms of address are usually the same as among full-siblings. Among half-siblings raised in different households, the terms of address may be the same as among full-siblings, but there is a greater tendency to use proper names.

Fictive siblings also sometimes use the Garifuna terms, but men are more likely to address each other with the English/Creole-derived forms: "brot'er," "bra," "bro," or "brid." Women and men rarely use the English terms "sister" or "sis" in

[2]The people of Hopkins do not use Spanish kinship terms in ordinary conversation, but they very commonly do use Spanish variants of proper names, e.g., a man named "Peter" will also be called "Pedro." They do not use Spanish kin terms like "tio" or "tia" and "primo" or "prima" such as Gonzalez (1960) reports for the Garifuna of Livingston, Guatemala. Many villagers would understand these terms, however, because of their familiarity with the Spanish language.

addressing either fictive or real sisters; instead they use either a Garifuna term or a proper name. Among women, English expressions like "my dear" and "baby" or the Garifuna expression *numa* (my friend) correspond to the colloquial use of "bra, "bro", etc. among men. The slightly greater tendency to use English sibling expressions to address males reflects the Garifuna cultural perception that men more than women cross over into the non-Garifuna (i.e. English-speaking) world outside the village.

When fictive siblings address each other with Garifuna terms, they tend to use the "elder brother" and "elder sister" forms, *nati* and *nitu*, to show respect as well as friendship, and the "younger sibling" forms, *namulelua* and *namu*, to stress authority, nurturance, protection, or special endearment. The relative age of speaker and addressee influences the appropriate choice. If the age difference is very great, other fictive kinship terms, such as "auntie" or *nirau* ("my child"), might be used. Much older adults, such as grandparents, sometimes call very young children *nati*/*nitu* or even *nuguchu*, "my mother," to soothe them or to tease them.

Also, mere casual acquaintances sometimes greet each other with *nati*/*nitu*, *namu*, or the English forms, "bra," "bro," etc., using sibling terms to evoke no more than a friendly sense of shared Garifuna heritage. When such casual friendships grow stronger, proper names may replace the sibling terms and the sibling idea expanded beyond mere terms of address. The line

between fictive siblingship and friendship is imprecise and complicated.

The patterning of Garifuna kinship terms and proper names is exceedingly complex and nearly impenetrable to precise semantic analysis because of the Garifuna people's love of word-play and variation for its own sake. One villager warned me, "We Garifuna people always humbug people's names."

HALF-SIBLINGS

Although the kinship terminology is the same, the Garifuna recognize that full-siblings are biologically closer than half-siblings and consider them more likely to get along together as well. A Hopkins man explains, "Half-brothers and half-sisters never get along nicely with each other, even if they are raised in the same house. They do not fully appreciate each other because of the difference between the fathers or between the mothers. They are always having some kind of misunderstanding with each other."

People say that full-siblings raised together in the same household are usually the closest (most intimate emotionally and behaviorally), but they can give examples of half-siblings who are equally close and almost indistinguishable from full-siblings in their behavior towards each other. EXAMPLE: Tobias grew up in his mother's and step-father's household along with seven younger half-siblings. He kept his biological father's surname and acts deferentially towards him, but his "close kin" are his

maternal half-siblings and their families. He is the "eldest brother" in this sibling set —in childhood as the leader and disciplinarian, and now after most of them have emigrated to the U.S., as their "agent" who receives support money from the absentees to look after their elderly parents and watch over property interests at home. When his step-father died, Tobias was the primary organizer of the funeral even though most of the deceased's children returned to Hopkins for the ceremony. His four half-sisters and three half-brothers treat him with high regard.

The relative closeness (intimacy) of half-siblings is determined by several factors: A) Sharing the same mother is more apt to unite half-siblings than sharing the same father, because children tend to stay with their mothers more than with their fathers. Thus, half-siblings with different fathers are likely to live together, whereas half-siblings with different mothers are more likely to be separated. Co-residence in childhood, not some jural matri-principle, is the essential factor. In cases in which the father takes the child from the mother to be raised by his own mother or other female kin, the child may develop closer bonds with its paternal half-siblings (and classificatory siblings) than with the maternal half-siblings who remained with the mother.

B) Two half-sisters or two half-brothers share gender-specific tasks and interests and therefore spend more time together, which often leads to greater intimacy. C) Similarly, two half-siblings near in age are usually in the same school and play groups and

therefore are likely to be closer than two with a wider age disparity. However, sometimes older half-siblings have very close relationships with much younger ones when certain children (generally the youngest boy) become the foci of special nurturance and attention. Such a child is sometimes called the "prize boy" or "prize girl" of the family. Two women reported feeling more loving and trusting towards their much younger half-brothers than to their own full-siblings.

D) A fourth factor that influences half-sibling relations is the quality of the relationship between the variant parents. When different mothers of children by the same father get along well or badly their children tend to follow their example. Likewise, friendly or hostile feelings between two fathers with offspring by the same women can affect the children's relationships. Mothers are more important than fathers in this sense because mothers generally mediate family problems whereas fathers mainly just give advice. Half-siblings sometimes override negative parent variance, however, and become close "like real brothers and sisters."

Of these four factors, residence, sex, and age, and parent variance, CO-RESIDENCY IN CHILDHOOD IS THE MOST IMPORTANT DETERMINANT OF CLOSE BONDING AND COOPERATION BETWEEN HALF-SIBLINGS. Co-residence, sex, and age partly determine the relative intimacy of full siblings as well.

EXAMPLE: Wesley and Delfino are half-brothers raised separately by different mothers and members of large full-sibling

sets. They are the same age and are both good fishermen, so at one point they tried to be fishing partners. They fished together for several catches until Delfino discovered that Wesley was stealing things not only from him but also from Delfino's sister who had trusted Wesley and given him access to her home for Delfino's sake. Delfino was so angry with Wesley that he went to the police, and Wesley served six months in prison for theft.

The affair was more scandalous because of the close kinship relations involved, and people in Hopkins said that it never would have come to the police if the two men had the same mother. The father was deceased, and the mothers had never gotten along well and so could not successfully mediate. People also gossiped that Wesley stole from Delfino because their father had given more support to Delfino's mother than to Wesley's mother when the men were growing up.

Rather than creating a feud between the two families, however, both sides have treated the matter more as a tragedy for everyone involved, especially once it was revealed that Wesley also stole from his full-siblings and his own mother. Today, Wesley and Delfino occasionally fish together, but Wesley is not welcome inside Delfino's full-siblings' houses. This example illustrates some of the tensions and conflicts that can arise between half-siblings who are raised in separate households but who live and work in the same community.

CLASSIFICATORY SIBLINGS

Classificatory siblingship[3] arises most commonly when two persons who are close in age and have a blood-kin relationship are raised together in the same household by the same "parent". For example, the children of teenage mothers are often raised by their maternal grandmothers along with their younger aunts and uncles. All the children in such a household tend to address and act towards one another as siblings and to recognize seniority according to chronological rather than generational age. An older girl may sometimes call a younger girl "*naufuri*" or "auntie" who is genealogically her mother's sister, but if they are living together in the same household, they will have responsibilities and relate to one another more as siblings. One 14-year-old girl introduced me to a 8-year-old girl whom she was minding as "my sister who is really my aunt," giggling at the incongruity apparent to her of having responsibility, as the eldest sister must, for someone who is from a senior generation.

Similarly, but without a generational difference, a woman may raise some of her siblings' children along with her own, so that

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[3]In using the term "classificatory" here, I diverge somewhat from the usual anthropological idea that classificatory kin are persons assigned to a kinship category by some sort of jural-semantic rule of classification that equates them with the "real" kin who define that category. Instead, I mean "classificatory siblings" to imply a cultural and community recognition that goes beyond mere "fictive" siblingship. Fictive siblingship arises more situationally and more by individual choice and initiative. I do not intend to imply a jural rule of sibling classification in the Garifuna kinship system.

they "grow up like brothers and sisters" although they are biologically first cousins. When children of two siblings (full or half) are raised together, they are most often the offspring of two sisters, occasionally of one sister and one brother, but never of two brothers unless they are placed in the home of a third sister. This reflects that women make the final decisions about child placement. Thus, GARIFUNA CLASSIFICATORY SIBLINGSHIP TENDS TO HAVE A FEMALE KIN-LINKED BIAS.

In Garifuna childhood, the idea of siblingship is most frequently extended to close consanguineal kin in an every-day behavioral context, defining them as classificatory siblings. In adulthood, other fictive sibling forms arise that extend beyond actual blood relationships and beyond the domestic sphere.

FICTIVE SIBLINGS

Fictive siblings are unrelated by kinship or only distantly related. Except in a very few unusual situations, however, Garifuna fictive sibling ties do not extend to non-Garifuna, because fictive siblingship implies some type of "blood" relationship even if simply being of "the same Garifuna race." It also implies relative closeness in age. A man in his 50's might have a fictive sibling as much as 20 years older or younger, but if someone in their 20's were to address him as "brod," it would be considered disrespectful.

Longtime residents of Hopkins think of themselves as having some kind of kinship connection to most of the village, excluding recent arrivals, either through known or supposed consanguineal

and affinal links. When someone wishes to distance himself socially from another villager, he might derogatorily refer to the other's "race" (i.e., genealogical segment) as being entirely unrelated to his own (e.g., "he nothing to do with my people") or as having a "mongrel" connection to a Creole ancestor. When someone wishes to stress closeness, however, he might declare a blood connection that has no basis in biological fact.

When two persons from different extended families decide to act towards one another as fictive kin, they stress any "blood" connection that might be conceivable, such as having ancestors with the same surname or from the same village of origin. However, if the two parties also are related through marriage, any "blood" connection must not be "too close" because of incest prohibitions. If no relationship by blood or marriage is conceivable, fictive kinship is still a possibility but less likely.

Garifuna fictive kinship generally takes the form of siblingship unless the age difference is extreme, in which case fictive cross-generational references might be used, such as uncle/nephew, grandparent/grandchild, etc., but these are less common and less developed than fictive siblingship. SIBLINGSHIP IS THE RELATIONSHIP THAT IS MOST SYMMETRICAL AND THEREFORE MOST CAPABLE OF EVOKING AN IDEA OF EQUALITY.

In childhood, unrelated children who live under the same parental care, such as adopted children or school boarders, often treat each other as fictive siblings. Adult friends, workmates,

and members of shared-interest groups like church congregations and political factions also may relate to one another as siblings. Men are more likely to extend fictive kin ties to other men with whom they work and socialize, often in other villages when they temporarily migrate; whereas, for women, fictive kinship is most important in local women-centered networks of mutual support that assist in everyday tasks and at life crises. Jenkins mentions the importance of fictive kinship in what she calls "ritual kindreds" (1983:433) among Garifuna women who organize funerals and ancestor rites.

Fictive siblingship is on a continuum with the mere courtesy use of sibling terms, but it is distinct enough in Garifuna belief and practice to be treated as a special form of siblingship. It has the special quality of extending roles learned in childhood to new acquaintances. As with any actual kinship relationship, its importance for the two parties in the relationship varies in proportion to their personal investments in it and recognition by the community.

Sibling terms of address may be used incidentally in casual friendships, but a friendship is significantly reinforced and warranted if siblingship is evoked regularly by both parties. The Garifuna idea of siblingship is sufficiently flexible to allow degrees of respect and affection on either side

SIBLING IDEALS: EGALITARIANISM, INDIVIDUALISM, AND SHARED INTERESTS

The Garifuna idea of siblingship implies not only shared

"blood" but also shared interests like common property, cooperative labor, mutual aid, and joint responsibility towards parents. Ideally, siblings have the same inherited past, the same upbringing, the same personal kindreds (or overlapping kindreds in the case of half-siblings), and the same future prospects. As adults, their personal networks inevitably diverge but always retain a common core of close kin, and their private interests never entirely escape their common birth.

Although traditional sibling terms indicate sex and seniority differences and older siblings should be respected, a central quality of the Garifuna sibling idea is egalitarianism. Siblings are social and economic equals at birth, and the status improvements or declines of their respective lives never fully displace the initial equivalence of their common heritage. Indeed, as each sibling becomes a public success or failure, the reputation of the entire sibling set may be affected.

Ideally for the Garifuna, siblings should recognize their shared interests, "love" one another, and help each other in times of crisis and in everyday needs, like exchanging food and borrowing items. Unless past disagreements have severely damaged the relationship, two siblings generally have the right to borrow each other's personal property, such as clothing and tools, without express permission and to call upon each other for help when cooperative labor is needed. This can cause friction, especially when a spouse is inconvenienced, and siblings often quarrel, but still the ideal is that the "love" that siblings

have for one another should prevail and smooth over any problems.
"Brothers and sisters should be at peace; they should be in
harmony," explained one villager. Another stressed that siblings
have a special "unity, the power of union," whatever their
individual differences, and independent from familial obligation
imposed by parental authority.

Siblings do not have a precise jural right to use each other's
property, but siblings have a greater right than any other
person. Should similar rights be granted to a friend or
neighbor, he/she is then said to be "like a brother/sister."
Godi or co-parents (see Godi sections) have a somewhat analogous
but weaker relationship.

EXAMPLE: One of the larger fishing boats in the village has
the name, "Three Brothers," prominently painted on its bow. Only
one of the three actually uses the boat, because the other
brothers currently live away from the village, but their equal
rights to use the boat are clearly displayed in the name. The
boat originally belonged to their father.

EXAMPLE: One woman described how she often can not find
something in her house when she looks for it, like her big
cooking pot, but does not worry that it might be lost or stolen
until she first checks nearby at her sister's house where it
usually turns up. "I always say, 'Maybe it is at my sister's,'
before I worry." She and her sister routinely enter each other's
kitchens and borrow items even when the other is absent.

Borrowing between brothers or between sisters is much more

common and more acceptable than borrowing between a brother and a sister. Siblings of opposite sex are suspicious that something loaned will more likely benefit a sibling's boyfriend or girlfriend.

The kind of "love" that Garifuna siblings should have for one another is not especially different from the "love" shared between parents and children or between other close kin, but the combination of this "love" with egalitarianism and special shared interests is unique in the Garifuna kinship domain. Cooperation and shared interests are unusual features in Garifuna social life.

Other observers of the Garifuna have commented on their extreme individualism, relative lack of teamwork, and strong suspicion of each others' motives (cf. Gonzalez 1988:93,160). Groups such as economic co-operatives, political factions, neighborhoods, and whole villages are unified by converging personal self-interest much more than by mutual trust or pursuit of some common good. Individualism, egalitarianism, independence, and self-reliance are the dominant cultural ideals. Hopkins residents often make statements like "nobody rules me," "I am as good as anybody," and "I can handle my own self" to describe their ideal self.

THE SIBLING IDEAL OF SHARED INTERESTS CAN MOLD SELF-INTEREST INTO UNITY WHILE PRESERVING INDIVIDUALISM AND EGALITARIANISM. It can be extended beyond the family to school, church, work, politics, etc. In church congregations, school assemblies, and political gatherings, public speakers attempt to evoke unity and

egalitarianism by expressions like "my brothers and sisters" if the speech is in English (as is usually the case in church, school, and politics) or sometimes with traditional Garifuna sibling terms. Also in the Garifuna language, the word _niduhenu_ (my people, my relatives) can evoke similar sentiments, but it is more encompassing and more often used towards larger assemblies, even where strangers are attending.

The concept of Garifuna siblingship merges individualistic egalitarianism with collective pursuit of shared interests and becomes an important resource as individuals manipulate the ideological-symbolic dimension of kinship.

SIBLING CHILD CARE

In Garifuna childhood sibling groups, the older children, especially the eldest girls, often have considerable responsibility for raising their younger brothers and sisters. The Garifuna fit Weisner's (1977) category of "sibling caretaking societies" in which child care is more the responsibility of older children in sibling groups compared to "parental caretaking societies" in which adult care predominates. The contrast implies more than a simple transfer of responsibilities. In either case, parents retain ultimate responsibility, but in sibling caretaking societies, children, not other adults, share the responsibility and a hierarchy of care is established. Thus, child-to-child socialization increases, and certain children learn adult roles earlier. Likewise, many Garifuna women and

some men learn child care skills before having their own children. Larger families tend to have more sibling child care without necessarily more work for the parents, compared to small families. Weisner found that sibling caretaking often correlates with high instances of child fosterage and child lending (Weisner 1987:248), which holds true for Hopkins.

A Garifuna mother begins training her oldest daughter to help out as soon as she is old enough. Hopkins mothers estimate that most girls can be left "in charge" temporarily of a household by age 14. By the time the eldest girl enters her late teen years, she may be fully "like the mother," capable of providing all immediate child care needs. The people of Hopkins often use the expressions: "like the mother" or "like the father" when discussing sibling group relationships. Sanford (1971:133) and Kerns (1983:134) both mention cases of older sisters acting as "mothers" to their younger brothers.

Of course, sons and younger daughters help out in the home too, but they rarely supplant the eldest daughter as the primary sibling child caretaker until after she moves out. Even then, the older sister might take one or more of her younger siblings with her into her new household to remove the burden from her parents and to provide a babysitter for her own new children.

Thus, the youngest daughter in her parents' household might become the "eldest daughter" in her elder sister's household and straddle two cross-generational sibling groups. Similarly, a boy might move in with an adult sibling in order to attend high

school or to work as an assistant/trainee in school teaching or police service, but he does not normally take on child caretaking responsibilities towards his nieces and nephews the way a sister might.

Boys help out relatively little with household domestic chores unless there are no older girls in the sibling group or unless they are the only ones at home at that moment. Older boys often "mind" their younger brothers and sisters if an older sister is unavailable, but they rarely prepare meals, feed infants, change nappies, or work the long hours that their sisters do. A boy who "minds" a younger child is merely expected to watch it and perhaps to discipline it, but to defer to a more experienced child care provider when necessary. He learns the adult male role of protector instead of the female role of nurturer.

As a boy approaches adulthood, however, he begins taking greater responsibility within the family, especially if he is the eldest son. Youths as young as 17-years-old may have primary responsibility for disciplining their younger brothers and sisters, including giving lashings for misbehavior, especially if there is no older adult male regularly present in the household.

EXAMPLE: In one such case in the village, the oldest brother assumed the "father" role of disciplinarian towards not only his two full-siblings but also his ten younger half-siblings even though their biological father was often physically present in the home. Although the stepfather/father was acknowledged by all to be the household head, he deferred most day-to-day disciplinary responsibilities to his stepson who was around the

home more.   The first father had moved away to another country. As adults, the younger siblings respect their half-brother and look to him for leadership in family and community matters.

Since sibling caretakers have less authority than parents and tend to be more rigid about rules and expectations, they are more likely to rebuke and punish their charges than the parents in some families. Sibling caretaking may lead to increased sibling interaction and solidarity, but it can also increase sibling rivalry, bullying, and dependency —characteristics that may endure into adulthood.

EXAMPLE: Two brothers told me of their resentment towards their older half-brother who had punished them more than their father had when they were children. In adulthood, they refused to acknowledge him as a real "brother," and suggested that he had been cruel to them because he had no mother (she was deceased). After he moved away from Hopkins, they did not keep in contact with him and did not travel to his funeral when he died.

Worthy of special note is the unique status of the youngest brother in many Garifuna sibling groups. Parents and older siblings tend to indulge the youngest boy in the household, generally giving him more attention and tolerating more misbehavior from him compared to the rest of the children. This "prize boy" role is, in a sense, an inversion of the eldest daughter's role. In Garifuna cultural perception as well as behavior, the eldest sister is hardworking and responsible, whereas the youngest brother is carefree, spoiled, and often

irresponsible (although this last characteristic may change in adulthood).

Siblings close in age attend the Hopkins primary school together. Today, school attendance is mandatory by law from ages six through 14 in Belize. Formerly, children were officially required to remain in school until age 16 (although many did not), and they could bring siblings as young as one-year-old with them into the classroom to babysit if no other child care was available. "I remember the babies being put behind the blackboard to sleep during class," remarked a 36-year-old woman. In the past, the village school played a greater role as babysitter than it does today, although some people cynically still think it is mostly good for only that.

When children begin going to school every day, they are accompanied usually by an older sister or brother who also watches out for them during school recess and after school when they are most vulnerable to bullying and other troubles. "My older sister took me to school to prevent me from getting beat up," said one woman, "always she look out for me." If a child has no older sibling attending the same school, a parent or another adult might accompany them until a neighbor child or someone else takes on the responsibility of being a "big brother/ sister."

Play groups during and after school tend to take three forms: segregated all-girl and all-boy "gangs," or sex-integrated groups of older girls and their younger male as well as female charges whom they are minding —typically younger brothers and sisters.

Garifuna boys and girls generally experience more direct
nurturance and authority from female figures in their earliest
experiences outside the home as well as inside it. Older boys
also "mind" their younger brothers but are less likely to have
direct responsibility for their sisters.

CHILD CARE AND CHILD EXCHANGES AMONG ADULT SIBLINGS

Not only do the Garifuna often care for their younger brothers
and sisters, but, as parents, they frequently send their own
children to a sibling's house to be cared for or to help out.
When adult siblings reside nearby close by, this child exchange
may be for relatively brief periods, but in other cases in which
the siblings live in different villages or when one has emigrated
to the United States, it is a type of fosterage including payment
of child support. This pattern of sharing children among parents
in sibling groups is correlated with sibling caretaking societies
generally (Weisner 1987:240).

EXAMPLE: Selma, a woman in her 50's, has no children of her
own but has raised five —two children each of two sisters and
the granddaughter of her common-law husband. The first two came
into her care when an elder sister emigrated to the U.S. who did
not want the burden of children initially. She left her two
oldest children with Selma and her two youngest children with
another sister who shortly followed her to the U.S., reuniting
the two youngest with their mother. The two older children, both
boys, remained with Selma for seven years until they left on

their own around age 17.   Their emigrant mother sent Selma
regular support payments from the U.S. during this time.

   After the boys departed, Selma missed having children in her
home and begged another sister for a child.   This sister first
sent an older daughter to stay with Selma and did not pay child
support, but when the mother decided to follow the oldest sister
to the U.S., she took the daughter along but left her youngest
son, age five, with Selma.   Once employed in the U.S., she sent
Selma regular child support payments.   In addition to this boy,
Selma is now raising her husband's daughter's daughter who was
abandoned by her mother who resides in another country.   Selma
has "adopted" this girl as her own and has never received any
support money from either parent.

   EXAMPLE: Lucy is another woman who could not have children.
When she learned that she would be childless, she says that her
brother (and her only sibling) promised her a child to console
her.   She ended up raising three of her brother's children,
because, when her brother and their mother separated, the mother
insisted that he take responsibility for half of their six
children.   Lucy only received sporadic financial help from her
brother, but now has a good income sent by her oldest "daughter"
who emigrated to the U.S.   This woman also sends a little money
to her biological mother to acknowledge the care she received
during her earliest years.   This example illustrates that women
do not usually foster their brother's children unless they
receive payment or can "adopt" them as their own.

When a couple with very young children needs babysitting help, it can usually turn to nearby kin or neighbors. However, if the couple has recently moved to a new community, such as happens regularly when one or both are schoolteachers or police officers, they may take an older girl from their home village into their new home temporarily as a babysitter. This girl commonly is a younger sister or a niece of one of the couple. Sending a child to live with an uncle or aunt "to help with babies" may benefit the child as well as provide extra help.

EXAMPLE: Daisy moved to Dangriga to attend high school. She lives with her half-brother, his wife, and two infants whom she helps babysit. Indeed, Daisy who helped raise five younger siblings is training her older sister-in-law in child care. This particular case is somewhat unusual in that Daisy and her half-brother grew up separately with different mothers who disliked each other and tried to keep their children separate. However, when the children met in the village school, they chose to act towards one another as real brothers and sisters, and Daisy and her half-brother that she lives with feel that they are "close family."

EXAMPLE: Two years ago, John sent his then two-year-old daughter, Joanna, from Belize City to Hopkins to live with his sister, Roxanne, because the child's mother (separated from John) did not want her. The mother felt that Joanna interfered with her relationship with her new boyfriend, the father of her new baby. At age three, her mother took Joanna back for a trial reunion, but she became sick there, so her father brought her

back to Roxanne. Joanna is now four and is treated as a "sister" by Roxanne's six other children (ages 15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 1). She might never have contact with her half-siblings who stayed with her biological mother; her "two mothers" have never spoken to one another.

John found a common-law wife and now has a stable home and job in Belize City with a new baby of his own. Conceivably, Joanna could return to her father's home if the stepmother agreed, but this has not happened. Instead, Roxanne's oldest daughter, Maria, age 15, recently moved to her uncle's to attend high school and to help out with her "aunt's" new baby. As the oldest sister of a large sibling set, Maria has more child care experience than her uncle's young wife. Roxanne says that the idea of Maria moving to Belize City originated with John who first discussed it with their brother Roland and then proposed it to his two sisters, Roxanne and Berta. Berta lived in Hopkins and often had Maria helping out with her own young children. Berta and Roxanne agreed to the plan and together visited Belize City to talk to John's wife who would be the primary care giver (and receiver of help) for Maria.

This example is typical not only of child fosterage among adult siblings but also illustrates the frequent town —> Hopkins transfer of younger children and Hopkins —> town transfer of high school aged children. However, it is unusual in that women only very rarely send children to be raised in their brother's households, and I never discovered a case in which a child

younger than 12 years was placed in fosterage at an uncle's household.

EXAMPLE: Roxanne also has a younger brother, Roland, who left his mother's home to live with another sister in Dangriga to attend high school when he was age 14. Two years later, when this sister emigrated to the U.S., Roland moved in with John in Belize City to finish school there. The sister left her three children temporarily with Roxanne.

Given the high incidence of absent fathers and matrilateral bias in personal kindreds, I initially had expected to find more cases of men who made investment in their sisters' children. However, this does not occur significantly among the Garifuna, even when brothers take great interest in their sisters' welfare. Men are more likely to invest in stepchildren who live with them and are just as likely to take a special interest in a brother's child as a sister's. Mother's brothers sometimes are called upon by their sisters or asked directly for help by a niece and nephew, but the initiative in these relationships is usually not the man's.

SIBLINGSHIP IN THE MARRIAGE-MATING SYSTEM

Garifuna men say, "The first thing a man does to get a woman is befriend her brothers" or, at the very least, avoid becoming their enemy. Women have similar thoughts, knowing that if a man's sisters oppose a relationship, rivalries and conflicts will arise. Siblings may actively try to prevent each other's

attachments to persons of whom they disapprove and may subtly try to encourage contact with those of whom they do approve.

Brothers, especially the eldest brother, say they have a duty to "protect and control" their sisters. In practice, however, men have very little actual control over their adult sisters, and often the women in a sibling group act more aggressively than the men to interfere in their siblings' lives.

Male-female relationships, whether casual acquaintances or stable marriages, inevitably entail moments of anger, distrust, and jealousy that others who know the persons well and who have their trust (e.g., most siblings) can help soothe or aggravate. Parents can intervene too, but most parents are at a disadvantage in discussing intimate relationships with their sons and daughters because of parent-child reticence about sexual topics; whereas, siblings of the same sex are often each other's primary confidants in such matters.

Brothers and sisters take great interest in each other's conjugal relationships, not only for reasons of sentiment, but because outside spouses, partners, and sweethearts are potential rivals (or allies) for family resources and support. Garifuna men tend to be more concerned about their sisters' consorts than their brothers', and women tend to be more concerned about who their brothers see. A psychoanalytic interpretation might connect this pattern to repressed sexual jealousy, but the primary reason is more pragmatic and influenced by cultural perceptions of gender roles.

Garifuna men and women see themselves as needing many non-

sexual attentions and services from persons of the opposite sex to complement their own gender role: e.g., women should prepare meals for men, and men should provide protection for women. They receive such attentions from parents and older siblings in childhood and ideally then switch dependencies to conjugal partners in adulthood and to their children and grandchildren in old age. But the transfer of cross-sex dependency to spouses and offspring is always tenuous and often interrupted or revoked. Therefore, individuals are strongly motivated to retain close connections to their opposite-sex siblings and thus are especially concerned about rivals for their siblings' attentions. Sibling relations have the advantage of being unaffected by conjugal and cross-generational tensions.

Although Garifuna brothers and sisters do not formally negotiate and arrange each other's marriages, they sometimes act as informal intermediaries between courting couples. When a marriage is announced, the bride's siblings and the groom's siblings are expected to attend and, provided that they approve of the marriage, share some of the expense. Normally, the father of the bride has the special place of honor at the wedding, but because so many fathers are absent or alienated from their children and because so many marriages today are between older couples with deceased parents, the highest honor often passes to a brother, usually the eldest brother. At one wedding in Dangriga, the bride's well-liked older brother appeared, after being absent from the district for several years, and received

more public attention and honor than the groom or anyone else.

Gonzalez (1960:149) reports that her Guatemalan informants
state, in the past, widows customarily married one of their
deceased husband's brothers, and conversely widowers married an
unmarried sister of their dead wife. She adds that, although
such arrangements still occurred in the 1950's, they no longer
are thought to be desirable. In the mid-20th century at Hopkins,
several persons had stable conjugal relationships with siblings
of former partners without scandal, but no such cases of
secondary sibling "marriage" exist today in the village. I did
learn of one recent case where a woman moved in with her brother-
in-law immediately after her husband's death. The village
generally disapproved of this action, however, and gossiped that
the second relationship had actually begun before the first
brother's demise. This couple soon emigrated.

I also discovered one case in which two men married each
other's sisters. The two were close childhood friends and as
adults continued to hunt, fish, and drink rum together. They met
each other's sisters while visiting at their respective natal
homes. Both couples have stable common-law marriages with
children, and the two women are now themselves very close friends
—"like sisters," they say. This example shows how affinal ties
can unite different sibling sets, although they are more often a
disruptive influence. There are also numerous cases in the
village of men and women marrying the sister/brother of a best
friend.

EXAMPLE: One case that villagers regard as unusual, but not

scandalous, is the marriage between a man and his "sister," who is close kin laterally but biologically unrelated lineally to him (see diagram):

$$\bigcirc = \triangle = \bigcirc = \triangle$$
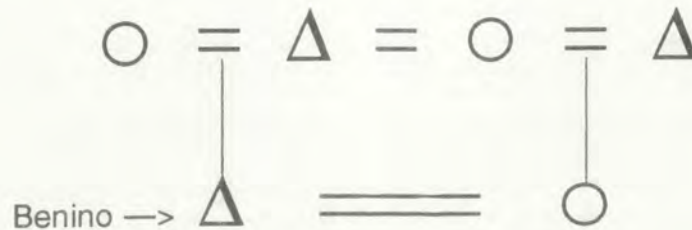
Benino —> $\triangle \Longrightarrow \bigcirc$

The man, Benino, has no full-siblings and was raised by his mother's mother until age 19. At that time, he stayed briefly at the household of his half-siblings on his father's side, who he thinks of as his closest relatives. His father was deceased, and the mother of Benino's "brothers and sisters" also had another daughter by a different father. This girl is a half-sibling to Benino's half-siblings but is biologically unrelated to him, and she is the woman that Benino eventually married. The intermediary half-siblings actively encouraged the relationship because it strengthened close family ties without violating any incest taboo. One important reason that this matter caused no scandal was that the priest gave his blessing by marrying them.

Speaking of the Garifuna in general, Conzemius (1928:193) states, "The children of two brothers or of two sisters are considered related to each other as brother and sister," i.e.,

parallel-cousins are classificatory brothers and sisters. He also reports that the Garifuna have preferential bilateral cross-cousin marriage. If these generalizations were valid in the past (Conzemius gives no supporting data), they are _not_ true in Hopkins today. The Catholic church and local opinion forbid marriage between all cousins, and I detected no general categorical distinctions between parallel-cousins and cross-cousins.

However, based on separate analyses of archaic kinship terms remembered by older informants, Gonzalez (1960) and Taylor (1965a) both suggest that preferential cross-cousin marriage may have formerly existed among the Garifuna. Taylor further hypothesizes that there "may well have been a shift from patrilateral to bilateral cross-cousin marriage" (1965a:292). My own research does not evaluate this issue directly, but I mention it here because it forms the background to Gonzalez's remark that, among Guatemalan and Honduran Garifuna in the 1950's, "cousins of the opposite sex address each other as siblings," whereas cousins of the same sex still sometimes use the traditional terms for cross-cousins (Gonzalez 1960:145). She suggests further (p. 146) that this pattern may reflect the use of sibling terms to acknowledge the present prohibition on marriage between cousins, i.e., extending the sibling incest taboo to include cousins. Essentially, the cross-cousin/parallel-cousin dichotomy (defined by male/female differences between parents) would be superceded by a direct male/female dichotomy among all cousins.

My own observations do not confirm or refute Gonzalez's account, but I find it suggestive of a broader interpretation that: SIBLING FORMS OF ADDRESS CAN EVOKE A SIBLINGSHIP IDEAL THAT DE-SEXUALIZES MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS. In Hopkins, men and women sometimes address and relate to each other in sibling terms as a way of enhancing male-female intimacy without sexual connotations and tensions. I discuss this further in the next section on male-female relations.

The prohibition on incest between cousins surprisingly was extended in another dimension in one case: Some people disapproved of a man for having sexual relations with two women who are cousins to one another (their fathers are brothers) but unrelated to him. In this case, however, the man is a controversial public figure with many rivals and enemies, and I interpret the case, not as defining another specific incest taboo but as illustrating how people creatively manipulate the proscriptive vagueness and ambiguity of their kinship ideas.

MALE-FEMALE RELATIONS

Garifuna male-female relations are fraught with tension in a social world that is both highly sexually dichotomous and cognizant of powerful mutual interdependencies between the sexes —not to mention confronted by competing gender values from the non-Garifuna world which are at least equally ridden with ambiguity and contradiction as native values. In the kinship realm, husband-wife and brother-sister represent two alternative

ways of ordering male-female relations, kinship ideals that are bases for ordering non-kin social relations as well. It can be argued that the Garifuna brother-sister model is more successful in mediating cross-gender tensions. "[Garifuna] women learned to live in a world in which men made better brothers and lovers than husbands, and were appreciated as such," (Gonzalez 1979:257).

Brothers and sisters can be intermediaries in boyfriend-girlfriend relationships, but Garifuna spouses/mates rarely influence sibling relations except negatively as competitors for family resources. A man will go to his brother, not his father or mother, about problems he has with his wife, and a woman's sisters are generally her closest confidants. In non-sexual matters, siblings of opposite gender are equally receptacles of confidences and allies for action.

Because siblingship de-sexualizes male-female relationships, it provides special opportunities. For example, young female teachers who often must take their first job-posting in a small rural school among strangers often take along a younger brother not just to help out at the school but to give them a male protector. Husbands and fathers, of course, also can play the male protector role, but brothers are perceived to be more dependable in many cases. When the proprietor of a large village shop died, his widow turned to her brother to become the shop's protector. He proclaimed that any thieving from his sister's business would become his affair too, an effective threat as it turned out.

A pending male-female relationship can be unambiguously

clarified as non-sexual by either party evoking fictive
siblingship towards the other. One young man explained to me
that he lost all sexual desire for a young lady, whom he was
courting, when she began addressing him as "*nati*" ("my older
brother"), a nominative of respect so he would not be offended.
This male-female couple was able to continue a degree of intimacy
by stamping a fictive "brother-sister" overlay on their
interactions.

Siblingship eases the cross-over to gender-exclusive
occupations. Only a few women hunt but never in the company of
their spouses or boyfriends. Most women who hunt say that it was
a brother who taught them when they were young (usually around
ages 15-18). Fishing is even more a man's domain, but one woman
described how she frequently went fishing with her brother before
she was married; now she never fishes.

EXAMPLE: Ricardo, who lives in Dangriga, is perhaps unique as
a Garifuna man who bakes and sells cassava bread. This is
normally a female-only task and traditionally dangerous to males
for supernatural reasons. Yet, other Garifuna are not only
willing to buy cassava from him but they profess to admire him
because they say he is supporting his mother and younger brothers
and sisters who are attending high school. They stress that he
is making a sacrifice rather than a profit because he is denying
himself opportunities to advance in normal male ways in order to
improve the prospects of his siblings who otherwise would have to
drop out of school.

SIBLING GODPARENTS (GODI)

Parents most often pick non-relatives to be godi for their children, in order to enlarge and strengthen their networks of friendship and support; but some villagers do pick relatives —especially siblings. Table 6A shows that, out of a total sample of 132 godparents: 73% are not kin related, 16% are sibling related, and 11% are kin related in other ways. Of the 21 cases of sibling godis, 17 are siblings of the parents and four are older siblings of the child who were already young adults when chosen. This pattern indicates that although people tend to avoid choosing relatives to be godi for their children, when they select relatives, they tend to pick close kin (i.e., siblings) instead of more distant kin.

In the cases in which parents choose their siblings, men are more likely to pick their brothers and women their sisters (Table 6B). Maternal kin are selected more often than paternal kin by a ratio of 3:1, and female kin are more often selected than male kin by a ratio of almost 2:1, consistent with the idea discussed earlier that kin-based networking is more important to women than to men.

Several informants said that people in Hopkins have recently shifted towards selecting closer blood relatives as godi, compared to the past, and that today more people choose a brother or a sister instead of another relative or a friend. The reason they give for this development is that people today are less willing to trust persons outside of their immediate family and

less desirous of adding new obligations towards people who are not already in close alliance with them. From my own observation, this may be true for some people, but others, especially those who travel a lot and wish to establish strong bonds beyond the village, seem equally or more likely to choose non-kin godi for their children.

People with high status who might be expected to help their godchildren the most, such as school teachers, government employees, and wealthy ex-immigrants who have returned from the U.S. are extremely popular as godi among both relatives and non-relatives. As previously mentioned, one schoolteacher in the village already is godi to 18 children, although he is not yet 30 years old.

I asked the people who had chosen one or more siblings to be godi for their children, whether or not this really changed their relationship with their siblings or did it merely confirm already existing rights and obligations to help out with each other's children. A few said that it changed very little, but others insisted that it greatly added to their relationship with their godi siblings. One women mentioned that she had chosen her only half-brother to be "my compadre" in order to show that she loved him as much as her full-siblings. Another woman stated that although she calls one of her brothers "godi" all the time, he only sends her help because he is her brother not because he is her godi.

When siblings are appointed godis, they almost always try to reciprocate the honor, that is, when one sibling names another to

stand as godi for a child, that godi will then later invite the other to become a godi to one of his/her own children if he/she has any. If a sibling godi does not return the gesture, offence might be taken. Other kin-related godis are mostly one-sided relationships because of the generational difference, e.g., uncles and aunts might be invited to become godi to one's children, but they would not be expected to reciprocate to their nieces and nephews.

EXAMPLE of three brothers: The middle brother (Edward) is godi to only one of his younger brother's children, but all of this boy's brothers and sisters call Edward "*godi*" instead of "*iau*" (uncle). They call the eldest brother "*iau*;" Edward's own children call both of his brothers "*iau*;" and the eldest brother's children call both the two younger brothers "*iau*" as well. Recently, however, Edward was asked by his elder brother to be godi to one of his children. This boy now calls Edward "*godi*," and his brothers and sisters are starting to use this new title of address towards their uncle as well, although they have not yet given up calling him "*iau*" too. This example shows that "*godi*" may supersede "*iau*" as a respectful title of address and that a godi relationship towards a child may bring the adult into a new relationship with the child's whole sibling group.

The bond between co-parents resembles the sibling bond in some aspects. When persons of the same-generation exchange godi ties, they enhance a relationship that often is already cast in sibling terms. Structurally both relationships are linked by equivalent

descent links to a single person, siblings ascending a generation to a parent, godi descending a generation to a child.

SIBLING SOLIDARITY AND LEADERSHIP

Siblingship is important to the communal and political life of the village both as a structural bond for cementing small groups and alliances and as a basis for achieving leadership of wider groups and factions. EXAMPLE: The three men who founded the National Garifuna Council are related through siblingship. Two are full brothers and the third is the son of their father's full brother.

Child-caretaking responsibilities, learned and practiced within sibling groups, influence later adult relationships of dominance and dependency. Siblingship is both an important metaphor and model for cooperation among supposed peers and the principal kinship ideal that is sometimes violated when local factionalism splits families. Everyone in the village would agree that Hopkins is "more split" today than before national political parties brought increased factionalism in the 1970's and 1980's (cf. Moberg 1991). The most common complaint that informants made to me about the current political situation in the village is that politics "separates brothers and sisters," even though they could only give one or two specific examples of such sibling fractures when asked.

The Garifuna have very strong ideals of individualism and egalitarianism, and village leadership is largely informal and

dependent on individual charisma and learned abilities to
persuade, coordinate, and establish authority among "equals."
They recognize no inherited political status, although belonging
to a "good" family can be an asset. Thus, individuals must rise
through their own efforts to become community leaders.

In Hopkins, important male/female leaders tend to be the
eldest brothers/sisters of larger sibling groups. Table 10 lists
25 men and women from Hopkins, some of whom are now deceased, who
have been "leaders" in the village. This sample includes not
only the people who have held formal leadership positions, such
as Council Chairs and Co-op Presidents, but also other people who
initiate and lead community action at special times, such as
preparing for major festivities or responding to natural
disasters. It includes half-siblings only when they were raised
together and includes four sibling pairs (two male and two
female), i.e., cases in which a sibling set produced more than
one community leader.

In this sample (Table 10), eight of the 18 men (44%) and three
of the six women (50%) are the eldest brother or the eldest
sister in their sibling sets, which average 6.5 siblings in size.
These numbers display only a tendency for eldest siblings to
become community leaders. Many other factors, such as experience
as a schoolteacher or police officer (also listed in Table 10),
can enhance leadership abilities and opportunities. In the two
cases in which two brothers from the same sibling set became
leaders in the same community, the younger brothers only assumed
leadership _after_ their older brothers emigrated from the village.

Table 10 - SIBLING GROUPS, LEADERSHIP

Leaders in Hopkins Village, past and present.
- • = ego's position; B = brother, Z = sister.
- / = division between different fathers.
- * = Alcalde or Council Chair.

Sibling pairs are marked with a parenthesis {.

SIBLING GROUP, <—Age

```
MEN:      B Z Z Z Z Z B • B Z Z Z B
          • Z B B                                      teacher
          B • Z Z
          B • B Z Z Z Z                    *
          Z Z B B Z B •                    *           teacher
          B • Z Z B Z B B Z Z B
          • B Z Z Z Z Z Z Z                            police
          Z Z Z Z Z • B B Z B
          Z • Z B B B B B
        { • B B
          B • B                            *           police
        { Z • B Z Z B Z                     *
          Z B B Z Z • Z                     *
          Z • B                             *           teacher
          • Z Z / Z B Z B B B B Z B B       *           teacher
          B B B B Z B Z •
          B B B • B Z Z
          Z B • Z B


WOMEN:    • / B Z Z1
          • B B / B Z
          B • Z                                         teacher
        { B Z Z • Z B B
          B Z Z Z • B B
        { • Z B B Z
          Z • B B Z                                     teacher
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1This woman is also the eldest half-sister of sixteen siblings on her father's side. After her mother's death when she was a young child, she was raised with many of them by her grandmother.

EXAMPLE: Bertrand is elder brother to Edward and has been an important leader in the community due, in part, to his intelligence and strength of personality. When Hopkins was severely hurricane damaged, Bertrand helped lead the emergency relief and rebuilding efforts, although he held no formal office in the village government. Initially, Edward had a much more limited social role in Hopkins because he worked as a policeman during most of his 20's and 30's away in non-Garifuna villages.

However, Edward returned to live permanently in Hopkins around the same time that Bertrand moved away to work as a supervisor of agricultural workers. Partly because of his status as an ex-policeman, Edward became an important leader in the community immediately upon his return, and even held the office of Council Chair for one term.

Bertrand maintains a nice house in the village where his wife and children still live. He visits several times per month, but he takes no active role in village affairs right now. Edward looks forward to when his elder brother will return permanently to Hopkins, but he is ambivalent about how much Bertrand's presence will enhance his own leadership and how much it might eclipse it.

Sibling groups are not in themselves the major bases for political factions and loyalties. Friendship, neighborhood, and generational solidarity are probably equally important in determining allegiance. But siblingship contributes more than the amassed backing of adult siblings (and perhaps affines) to an

older brother. It also influences adult leadership indirectly
from past sibling child-caretaking practices. Large families
have greater internal organization and opportunity for dominance
and dependency to arise and become learned behavior. Large
sibling groups (including co-residential classificatory siblings)
provide a training ground for individuals to learn and to
practice leadership skills in a peer or near-peer group setting.
The eldest brother and the eldest sister have greater
responsibility towards their younger siblings and learn how to
"take charge" at an early age.

In the sample cases (Table 10) in which leaders arose from
relatively small sibling sets, the future leaders often played a
dominant role in childhood interactions towards nearby nephews
and nieces who perhaps were classificatory siblings. Also, it is
probably not just a coincidence that the two current male leaders
in the village with the smallest sibling set bases (three for
each) have cemented a strong political alliance between them that
negates the potential advantage that other leaders who belong to
much larger sibling sets may have.

Female leadership is somewhat different because of different
gender role expectations. Women in Hopkins are not leaders in
the political parties, but they do head up temporary committees
for other purposes, such as those that organize "church business"
or village-wide celebrations. They do not generally take over
leadership in formal organizations unless they are paired with a
male co-leader. The traditional leadership titles, "_abuti_" and

"captain," signify males only.

In the 1989 Village Council election, both political factions ran only male candidates for the seven contested positions. In the previous election, the losing side had nominated one female candidate, and afterwards some believed that her nomination had cost them the election (although she was controversial for other reasons besides her sex).

In contrast to the brother pairs mentioned above, in the two cases in which two sisters from the same sibling set became leaders in Hopkins, the younger sister did not wait until the older one left the village to assume leadership. Rather, both sisters co-operate closely and even share leadership at times with apparently little friction.

In the late 1980's, one of the major national political parties organized a woman's "Co-operative" in Hopkins for the purpose of supporting candidates in elections and promoting local economic development. Superficially, this group might appear to be little more than a woman's auxiliary to the male-dominated party because its membership is predominantly wives of party members. However, the essential working core of the organization is four women who do things relatively free of direct male interference: two sisters and a mother's sister/sister's daughter pair. The sister's daughter is married to a brother of the two sisters. In addition, the primary leader in the Co-op has recently involved two of her father's sisters' daughters in Co-op activities who are also connected to the Co-op core by being married to two brothers who have a third brother married to

one of the Co-op sisters [see diagram]. Although ostensibly an organization independent from family loyalties, sibling ties are major factors in its recruitment and solidarity.

⊕-primary leader   O-core members   ⊙-new recruits

brothers
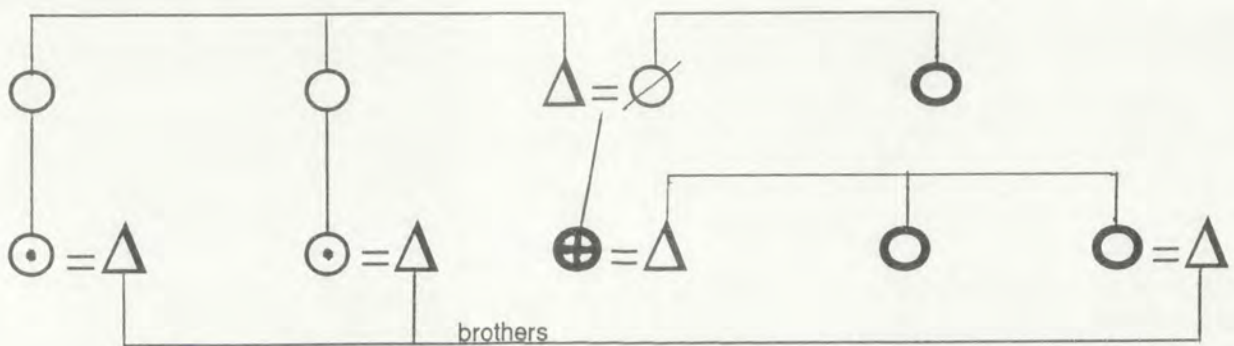
Although I have so far discussed how siblingship influences political loyalties and leadership, it is probably even more significant for its determination of local political antipathies. Many of the strongest hostilities between members of opposing factions have their roots in one man's feelings about how his sister was treated by another. Male rivals tend to be from the same age generation so the honor of sisters is usually involved more than that of mothers and daughters.

The Garifuna cease almost all physical fighting around ages 15-16, but verbal threats and tense confrontations that might potentially explode into actual violence still occur.   When they

do, it is often a brother or a sister who is called in to try to calm down or to back up each disputant. If the dispute is serious and enduring, entire sibling groups may mobilize to protect the honor of one of their members or react aggressively towards an outsider who has offended. People are most concerned about the honor of themselves, parents, siblings, and children and less protective of spouses or girlfriends/boyfriends, with whom they are more likely to fight.

EXAMPLE: A young man, who alleged that two brothers beat him outside a dance party, went to his father's brother for advice since his father lived a day's journey away and he had no adult siblings locally to back him up. The uncle advised him to file an official complaint with the police in Dangriga, and he did so. The police picked up and jailed the two brothers overnight and released them with a warning about any further problems, causing public embarrassment for the men and their family. Although the alleged attackers remained quiet after the police intervention, their three sisters sought out the plaintiff's uncle and verbally insulted him in public in retaliation. This appeared to settle the matter in everyone's eyes, at least for the moment.

EXAMPLE: Another man told me that he moved away from Hopkins for several years because the brothers of his girlfriend's father threatened to beat him up if he continued to see her.

EMIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Historically, Garifuna migration has often been spearheaded by male siblings groups. When the British forced the Garifuna into

exile from St. Vincent in 1797, "Two brothers shared the leadership of one faction among those deported," (Gonzalez 1988:31), and later, "Individuals, and according to tradition, sets of brothers, some with their wives, ventured out to Belize and down the Mosquito Coast" (p. 61). Citing Beaucage, Davidson (1979a:468) reports that the Honduran village of Punta Gorda, a Garifuna settlement on Roatan Island, was founded by "two brothers from Rio Esteban" on the coast.

When people first leave Hopkins to look for work, they are at a disadvantage unless they have outside support networks. Their ability to speak English or Belizean Creole may not be very good, and they do not yet know very much about finding employment and dealing with businesses and government bureaucracies. Even if they enter relatively structured programs designed to train new recruits, such as the school system, police department, or BDF (Belize Defence Force), they still need help making applications, preparing for qualifying exams, finding living accommodations, etc. Advice and support from someone already established in the non-Garifuna world may be critical in competition with others. In many cases, siblings and the siblings of parents are the primary support.

Men and women told me how, upon first leaving their natal village to look for work, they stayed with a sibling (or an uncle or aunt) in Belize City or one of the agribusiness communities. People also receive help from friends and other relatives, but siblings and parental siblings are mentioned most often, and they

are also often the principal role models that young people imitate when they make the decision to migrate. "I follow my sister to Belize City, and she help me get on (get a job) at the garment factor," said a 22-year-old woman who now spends equal time between Belize City where she works for a wage and Hopkins where her two children stay with their grandmother. "My sister, she send for me, she tell me to come," she added.

Recent immigrants may invite their younger siblings to join them, not simply to be helpful but also to have their companionship and assistance in the foreign world. Parents may pressure their own siblings and their older children to help out the younger ones.

Just as, during school years, older siblings act as culture-brokers for their younger siblings, easing the transition from the traditional home to the foreign school environment where a new language is spoken; later on, they may resume this role in providing access and a smooth transition to the world beyond the village.

Men and women from Hopkins can generally find wage labor without too much difficulty in rural areas on the banana, citrus, and cocoa plantations in central Belize and in the northern sugar cane industry. Having friends and relatives already working in these industries is a definite advantage to a first-time migrant laborer, because they can help him/her with things like finding a place to live and getting a good starting position.

In more specialized and higher status areas of employment, such as the school system, police service, and public health

service, having an established inside contact can also be an advantage, even though these employment spheres hire on merit and have formal entry requirements accessible to anyone. The advantage comes not just from nepotism or insiders pulling strings to get a friend/relative hired ahead of others but from the opportunity to get a toe-hold in the system and gain familiarity with the hiring process. Information about how to get a job for yourself is often more valuable than direct efforts by others to have you hired. Many school teachers and police officers began working in their respective systems as a kind of un-paid "apprentice," most often to a parent or an older sibling.

A policeman explained to me that, formerly, becoming a police officer was more a "family matter" than it is today, but police can still introduce their younger brothers and sons to police work by having them accompany them on the job. Even though all recruits must pass a qualifying exam and train at the national police academy, a young man or woman who has spent time hanging around a police station running errands and helping out with paperwork has a great advantage over someone totally green to the job. Likewise in the school system, many future teachers got their start as teaching assistants to older relatives, working for free or for only a small wage. Several school teachers described to me how their father or an older sibling invited them to be their assistant. Palacio (1987:108) also reports that many Garifuna teachers began teaching by working with an older sibling/relative.

EXAMPLE: Six of eight Marquez brothers are police officers. Allen, the oldest was the first, and one-by-one he encouraged and directly assisted his younger siblings to follow him into police work. In each case, the younger sibling first lived and worked with Allen or another older brother at their police posting until they were officially admitted to the national academy. People say that the Police Service now will always give preference to recruits from this family because one of the brothers has been killed in the line of duty.

Two other brothers are not police officers. One worked for a time as an electrician, a trade he learned from an older brother who switched to police work, before entering the BDF. The other is presently farming in Hopkins after living two years with Allen in another town in order to attend high school. The solidarity and mutual help within this sibling set does not derive from the parents. The father was absent and non-supporting most of the time, and the mother was relatively passive. Indeed, several of the brothers "ran away" from their natal home in order to pursue outside careers with the help of their siblings.

In salaried positions connected to government agencies family patronage is being replaced by political party patronage, but kinship factors still count heavily in local appointments. EXAMPLE: Maxfield was awarded the job of watchman at the Hopkins Fish Co-op, one of the very few salaried positions in the village that does not have certification requirements, because of his brother's influence in the political party that oversees Co-op

funds.   He replaced another man who was the brother of a wealthy shopowner who belonged to the rival party that had recently lost control over the Co-op.   Neither watchman themselves had any power within the party patronage system but gained their positions solely through fraternal help.

Siblingship is also important for those who emigrate from the village.   Immigration to the U.S. is mainly a personal decision and a private endeavor in keeping with the Garifuna ideal of extreme self-reliance and individualism.   A common motive for U.S. immigration is "to go and get something for themselves."   Some villagers have successfully entered the U.S. on their own, but a more common way to emigrate, especially today, is to have a "sponsor" already living in the U.S. who has achieved legal alien status.

Being a "sponsor" may mean simply signing official papers for the U.S. and Belize Immigration authorities, but it might also mean providing the financial means for the trip and financial support in the U.S. until the sponsored party can find employment.   Occasionally a spouse or sweetheart is the "sponsor" but more often it is a sibling, parent, or a sibling of a parent.

In a sample of 52 immigrants from Hopkins to the U.S. (Table 11), 17 (33%) were sponsored by a sibling (or received the most financial help from a sibling if there was no official sponsor). 14 (27%) received the most help from their spouses, 13 (25%) from other consanguines, two (4%) from affines, and six (11%) from non-related individuals —friends or employers.   One of the latter moved to the U.S. to work for the sister of her former

Table 11 - IMMIGRATION, HELP FROM OTHERS

Sample: 52 Adult Immigrants from Hopkins to the United States.
Who sponsored their immigration or gave the most financial help?

			SPONSORS						
			Sibling		Parent	Consanguine			
IMMIGRANTS		Spouse	Z / B		M / F	M's/F's		Affine	Not-Rel.
Men	28	6	4	5	0 3	3	1	2	4
Women	24	8	5	3	0 4	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	**52**	**14**	**9**	**8**	**0 7**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**6**

CATEGORY SUBTOTALS

Siblings	17	33%
Other Consanguines	13	25%
Spouses	14	27%
Other Affines	2	4%
Not Related	6	11%
TOTAL	**52**	**100%**

employer in Belize. In several cases, it was an entire sibling set who collectively paid for one of their members to travel first to the U.S. and later "sponsor" the others or their children to come later.

EXAMPLE: All six Azuela sisters and their three brothers remain in close contact with one another and regularly assist each other, even though their parents are dead and only three sisters still live in Hopkins. Five siblings live in the U.S., and one lives in a distant part of Belize. The emigrant ones left behind, at various times, several of their children to be cared for by their aunts, and four emigrants are building retirement houses in Hopkins. The non-emigrants act as "agents" for the others, overseeing the house construction and watching over the farm and village lots of the absentees. All three who live in Hopkins have travelled to the U.S. and stayed for long periods with their siblings there, and all six of the emigrants have visited their natal village.

The Azuela family began their emigration from Hopkins to the U.S. by pooling their limited resources to send one brother, Morgan. One-by-one, the other two brothers and four sisters followed Morgan, although two sisters eventually returned to Hopkins. In each case, Morgan "sponsored" his sibling with the Immigration authorities. Even though he is the middle brother in age, people say Morgan is now "like the father" of the family, just as the second oldest sister is said to be "like the mother" because of her leadership. In this family, the eldest brother

and eldest sister gave up their childhood roles of sibling dominance largely because of competing loyalties towards their new spouses, although they otherwise remain close to their siblings.

Another example of the role of siblingship in migrations is the case of the voluntary removal of refugees from Hopkins to the settlement of Silk Grass, seven miles inland, following the coastal devastation by Hurricane Hatti in 1961. Silk Grass[4] is a government-sponsored settlement founded to encourage agriculture. Initially about 25 adults made the move from Hopkins but only 11 stayed: a pair of brothers, a five-member sibling group, a couple and a woman without siblings in Hopkins and one man who does have a brother there. The others returned to rebuild in Hopkins. Of the dozen or more adults who chose to return to the coastal site, most had siblings who had remained there, whereas of the refugees who settled permanently in Silk Grass, only one had siblings back in Hopkins.

EXAMPLE: The woman without any siblings who remained in Silk Grass is an interesting case in that she is, by far, the most frequent traveler between the two communities and spends probably as much time in Hopkins as at home. When she visits, several times each week, she stays at her "mother's" house (her mother's brother's wife who fostered her as a child). She does have classificatory "brothers and sisters" who are the children of her

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[4]Moberg (1991:218) counted 242 inhabitants of Silk Grass in the mid-1980's of which he says about 10% were Garifuna. The majority are Creoles.

mother's brother and treat her like the "eldest sister" because she helped raise them. She spends most of her time in their company.

From a kinship point of view, the migration to Silk Grass was completed by two full sibling sets, and in the cases in which sibling sets were divided by the initial exodus, almost all eventually reunited.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP, INHERITANCE, AND OTHER ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Property rights for the Garifuna principally apply to individuals, not groups, but siblings may inherit property jointly when a parent dies. Some inherited properties, such as village lots, houses, and shops, are inherently indivisible, and the ten-acre farm plots cannot be legally subdivided because they are government-leased. Since the Stann Creek District Land Office in Dangriga does not pay careful attention to actual land use, it is often convenient to continue to maintain a house lot or farm plot in the name of the deceased leasee, while occupancy and productive use pass on to living family members. Consequently, land disputes among siblings or among the heirs of siblings are very common and not easily resolved.

EXAMPLE: After one man died without a wife or children, his three sisters jointly began paying the annual lease fee on his vacant lot so that no one else can apply for the site. All three women have their own lots, but they did not want to give up what they regard as their family's right to the empty lot since one of

their children might someday want to build in Hopkins. When and if this happens, there may be an argument, but until then the sisters have decided that it is easier to share the resource.

Although siblings rarely hold property together in joint ownership, and when they do it is often a source of tension between them, joint inheritance of indivisible property forces them to share. People say that, compared to non-relatives and more distant kin, siblings are better at sharing, or anyway they say this is ideally how it should be.

EXAMPLE: Large fishing boats are significant capital investments, and the two largest ones in Hopkins are both owned by fraternal partnerships. The partners of the one christened "3 Brothers" (discussed in an earlier example) are evident in its name, and the other one is owned by two brothers and their father.

The culturally-idealized obligation for siblings to help each other is perhaps fairly weak, but siblings co-operate for reasons of self-interest. People say that a brother or a sister (or a mother) can be trusted when other relatives, notably spouses and fathers, cannot be trusted.

EXAMPLE: A brother and sister who jointly run a village shop do not allow the brother's wife or the sister's boyfriend to handle any of the shop money, even though they are always around the premises and help out in other ways.

Brothers are more likely to give money to their sisters and brothers as "loans" or in direct exchange for something, whereas sisters are more likely to exchange food and child care services.

Exchanges between brothers and sisters most often involve the brothers giving money, food, or labor, such as house repair or farm work, to their sisters in exchange for meals and other domestic services, largely mirroring exchanges between spouses or sweethearts but without the sexual element and only very rarely with co-residence.

The help that siblings give each other, however, is not seen as a duty or obligation like that ideally and legally owed between spouses. Instead, it is both in ideal and in reality more a casual exchange of services which happens when the giver is not busy with other obligations or when a contractual arrangement has been made similar to those made with non-kin, such as agreement to pay a specific wage.

EXAMPLE: One man in the village described how he had built his new cement-block house mostly with the help of his younger brother to whom he had daily paid cash for his labor. He explained that he needed a dependable helper because concrete and cement work cannot be interrupted once each construction stage is begun. He was willing to pay his brother more than he would have done if he was just exchanging "favors" with his brother, in order to make him more dependable. "A brother will help (without pay)," he elaborated, "but he will go to work when he feel like it and go off when he feel like it, except if he's being paid."

Another man commented on sibling obligation this way: "A brother will not sacrifice to give to his sister. He will give what he can afford, not squeeze himself to give her." He further

explained that you should "squeeze" yourself more if an elderly parent or a minor child was in need.

Obligation between siblings are independent of the parents, but sometimes a parent, especially the mother, is the one who successfully invokes them. When a young adult first earns money outside the home, parents may encourage them to send support home not just as a filial obligation to them but specifically to support their younger siblings. EXAMPLE: A young woman who left Hopkins to teach school in another village regularly sends money home to her mother to pay the school fees and other education expenses of her younger brothers and sisters.

Sibling ties are about equally important for both poor and prosperous sibling sets, but for different reasons. The two most prosperous sibling sets in Hopkins are bound by common interest in shared inherited property. Poorer sibling sets are held together more by shared poverty and the need to borrow and exchange limited resources.

OLD AGE AND DEATH

Siblings spend more time together and have close emotional bonds during childhood, when they are raised together, compared to after they become adults. In adulthood some sibling ties remain strong, but others may disintegrate almost entirely. However, sibling ties tend to strengthen again in old age. As mentioned earlier, I disagree with Kern's (1983:129) and Gonzalez's (1988:93) generalizations that sibling groups fragment

after a mother's death. Some do break up (and some never were together in the first place), but the dependencies of old age can also strengthen many sibling ties, especially when sweethearts, spouses, and children separate, emigrate, die, or provide unreliable support. Apart from childhood, old age is the time when brothers and sisters are most likely to live in the same household or in nearby households and/or eat meals together.

EXAMPLE: 81-year-old Emilia moved in with her half-sister Victoria two years ago, after she had decided that she was too old to live alone. She is still spry enough to walk several miles to cultivate a small farm, however. Victoria and Emilia had not lived together since they were teenagers in their mother's house. All of Victoria's children left Hopkins long ago, but she is fostering four grandchildren. Now that her husband has recently died, Victoria relies even more on her sister for companionship and help.

EXAMPLE: Fidel was a "cayman" who spent most of his life fishing on the cayes or across the bay in Honduras. When his common-law wife died, he found a new girlfriend but moved back to Hopkins. He had no house or income, and his girlfriend had no family in Hopkins, so he moved in with his wealthy younger brother who supported the couple until Fidel's death. His girlfriend then moved back to her village of birth. During his entire lifetime, Fidel scarcely gave anything to his brother but could still call on him when he needed help in old age.

When children are young, their parents can only speculate about what support they might provide later. Older persons know

fairly well what to expect from their adult offspring. Those who are disappointed by their children or who have no children often turn to their siblings or to their siblings' offspring for help and companionship in old age. This is especially true for older men because they have fewer opportunities than older women to establish obligations from younger generations. Older women may continue to raise children in fosterage after their own child-bearing years are past and instill in them a sense of duty towards their foster "mothers."

Seven current residents of Hopkins are bedridden invalids or too elderly or sick to fully care for themselves. Table 12 displays who the primary care givers are, the persons who spend the most time feeding them and seeing to their other needs, for these seven plus eight recently deceased invalids.

Table 12 - PRIMARY CARE GIVERS TO INVALIDS (Hopkins 1988)

Relationship to Invalid	
Daughter	6
Sister	3
Half-Sister	1
Brother's Daughter	3
Sister's Daughter	1
Sister's Son's Daughter	1
TOTAL	15

In all cases, the primary care givers are women. In some cases,

other relatives, especially sons, send money from the U.S. to the primary care giver.

EXAMPLE: Nicario came to live with his brother's daughter after his wife died. She welcomed Nicario into her crowded home and cared for him until his death, even though her own father had been able to reside separately in his own house during his last days.

EXAMPLE: When Rudolfo became seriously ill, his girlfriend in Dangriga deserted him and his three sons were no help. He had no daughters. He moved back to Hopkins and is totally dependent upon support from his sisters. He first moved in with the sister who had the most space, even though her husband objected. Later, this sister separated from her husband and moved away to stay with one of her sons, so Rudolfo moved in with another sister.

Palacio (1984:29) reports a similar case of an old Garifuna man living in another country whose children refused to support him after his wife died. His sister went and brought him back to Belize to live with her and fed him until he died shortly thereafter.

The obligation to tend for an ill or dying person is not specific to certain kinship relationships. "Even an enemy will bring something to give a sick person," insisted one man.

Siblingship is not the only kinship relation that may strengthen with passing time. As people mature and become more predictable to one another, the elements of speculation and risk in relationships tend to decline. This may mean the breakdown of

some relations when the parties give up hope for improvement that may have sustained them so far. In conjugal relationships, old age also can reduce sexual jealousy because women feel that men are less likely to be attracted to younger women (and less attractive to them). Gonzalez (1983:102) has remarked, "Later in life, women say, spouses become like siblings or mother and child. They trust each other, and over the course of time their affection has deepened."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF GARIFUNA SIBLINGSHIP TYPES

Garifuna siblingship can be subdivided into four types: 1) full-siblings who have the same father and mother, 2) half-siblings who share only one parent, 3) classificatory siblings who have no common biological parent but who are closely related by blood and upbringing, and 4) fictive siblings who call each other siblings but do not share either a biological or a surrogate parent.

Half-siblings may be "like real brothers and sisters," (i.e., equivalent to full-siblings) or considered as virtual non-kin. Co-residency in childhood is the most important determinant of close bonding and cooperation between half-siblings. Sex, age, and the quality of the relationship between the separated parents are other factors.

Because children tend to stay with their mothers, half-siblings with the same mother are more likely to be closely bonded to one another than those with the same father. Although paternal half-siblings usually grow up in different households, they may still become very close, especially in adulthood when the need to extend personal networks can activate these sibling connections.

Classificatory siblings arise most commonly when two persons close in age with a blood-kin relationship are raised together in

the same household by the same "parent." All the children in such a household tend to address and act towards one another as siblings and to recognize seniority according to chronological rather than genealogical age.

When children of two siblings are raised together, they are most often the offspring of two sisters, occasionally of one sister and one brother, but never of two brothers unless they are placed in the home of a third sister. This reflects that women make the final decisions about child placement. Thus, Garifuna classificatory siblingship tends to have a female kin-linked bias.

Fictive siblings are unrelated by kinship or only distantly related. Garifuna fictive sibling ties generally do not extend to non-Garifuna, because fictive siblingship implies some type of "blood" relationship even if simply being of "the same Garifuna race." It also implies relative closeness in age.

Fictive siblingship may develop in childhood when unrelated children live under the same parental care, but fictive siblingship is more common in adult relationships. Fictive siblingship is on a continuum with the mere courtesy use of sibling terms.

The number of Garifuna who are raised in the same household as other children who are not blood siblings is very great, and the potential for establishing classificatory or fictive siblingship is equally large.

IMPORTANCE OF GARIFUNA SIBLINGSHIP

Siblingship is a fundamental principle of Garifuna social organization that affects individuals at every stage of life. In childhood, siblingship centers around co-residency and becomes an important basis for peer socialization and learning parenting skills. In adulthood, sibling relations (including fictive siblingship) interlink households and villages, organize groups, provide access to employment, and maintain ties with emigrants.

Siblingship ideals influence extended families, political affiliations, village solidarity, and Garifuna ethnicity as a whole. Garifuna siblingship evokes sentiments of egalitarianism, shared interests, and peer-oriented solidarity entirely different from cultural ideas of parenthood, marriage, or ancestral descent. The sentiment of sibling bonding is not especially different from other close kinship ties, but the combination of close familial feelings with egalitarian ideals and special shared interests is unique in the Garifuna kinship domain.

The Garifuna conception of siblingship implies ideas of shared parentage and close blood kinship, but sibling terms and ideas can be extended to others who are not biological siblings. Garifuna siblingship also entails shared interests like common property, cooperative labor, mutual aid, and joint responsibility towards parents. Siblingship is the kinship relationship that is most symmetrical and therefore most capable of evoking an idea of equality. It can effectively mold individual self-interest into collective unity while preserving individualism and

egalitarianism. Thus, Garifuna siblingship provides a conduit
for collective action within the family and also outside of it
through the extensions of classificatory and fictive siblingship.

BEYOND MATRIFOCALITY

Siblingship is far more complex and more important than the
Afro-Caribbean matrifocal model implies and previous researchers
describe. Although matrifocality is a major characteristic of
Afro-Caribbean kinship systems, it provides an inadequate
framework for analysis of parenting responsibilities, child-
focused networks, marriage-mating systems, gender relations, old
age dependencies, godparenting, property ownership, transfer of
wealth, community leadership, and the extension of kinship into
the modern world of wage employment and emigration. My
discussion of Garifuna siblingship touches on all of these issues
and demonstrates how they outstretch the matrifocal model.

Parenting Responsibilities: Garifuna sibling and parental
roles overlap. Elder brothers and sisters often have significant
parenting responsibilities towards their younger siblings during
childhood and learn adult roles earlier. Childhood patterns of
familial dominance and dependency continue into adult
relationships, but sometimes a younger sibling usurps the eldest,
becoming "like the mother" or "like the father" to the rest of
the sibling group.

When sibling age ranges are great, generational boundaries
sometimes shift so that younger siblings grow up in the
households of adult brothers or sisters, merging into the sibling

group of their nieces and nephews, or children of older siblings grow up within the sibling group of their aunts and uncles. Garifuna women sometimes raise their brothers' children as their own, but the reverse almost never occurs because of different expectations about gender responsibilities towards children.

In families without fathers or with absent fathers (or absent mothers), siblingship may expand further into the parental sphere. Older brothers become role models and disciplinarians for their younger brothers. It is important to recognize that Garifuna men are not simply the weak fathers that the matrifocal model implies. They provide child care and discipline not only as fathers but as elder brothers, uncles, grandfathers, and village elders. A more careful examination of sibling ties clarifies how some adult men and childless women participate in child rearing.

The strength and importance of siblingship is partly based in opposition to parental as well as spousal authority, instead of, as the matrifocal model assumes, only in shared ties with the mother. Thus, a sister or brother may seek sibling support against abuse or neglect from a spouse, and siblings may co-operate or disagree in patterns of domestic conflict with a parent or in such matters as inheritance.

Child-Focused Networks: Not only do the Garifuna often care for their younger brothers and sisters during childhood, but, as parents, they frequently send their own children to a sibling's house to be cared for or to help out there. When adult

siblings reside close by, this child exchange may be for relatively brief periods, but in other cases in which the siblings live in different villages or when one has emigrated to the United States, it is a type of fosterage with payment of child support. Child support remittances from emigrants are critical to the local economy, and village life is considerably child-focused.

Marriage-Mating System: Brothers and sisters take great interest in each others conjugal relationships, not only for reasons of sentiment, but because outside spouses, partners, and sweethearts are potential rivals (or allies) for family resources and support. Siblings may actively try to prevent each other's attachments to persons of whom they disapprove and to encourage contact with those of whom they do approve. Siblings of the same sex are often each other's primary confidants in sexual matters.

Models of Afro-Caribbean kinship that center on the conflict between matrifocality and a nuclear family cultural ideal are insufficient for understanding the Garifuna, because they neglect how siblingship and wider kin and non-kin relations compete with marriage ties and parent-child bonds in gaining and distributing economic support. A spouse's siblings may be one's rivals or co-conspirators, either quarreling about the division of resources between the natal and conjugal families or uniting against other rivals for resources, or even allying in gender solidarity against the sibling/spouse.

Gender Relations: In the kinship realm, husband-wife and

brother-sister are the two primary alternative ways of ordering
male-female relations, ideals that are bases for ordering non-kin
social relations as well. The Garifuna brother-sister model is
more successful in mediating cross-gender tensions because it de-
sexualizes male-female relationships. Sibling relations have the
advantage of being unaffected by conjugal and cross-generational
tensions.

Garifuna men and women sometimes address and relate to each
other in sibling terms as a way of enhancing male-female intimacy
without sexual connotations and tensions. A pending male-female
relationship can be unambiguously clarified as non-sexual by
either party evoking fictive siblingship towards the other, and
siblingship can ease the cross-over to gender-exclusive
occupations.

Garifuna men and women see themselves as needing many non-
sexual attentions and services from persons of the opposite sex
to complement their own gender role. They receive such
attentions from parents and older siblings in childhood and
ideally then switch dependencies to conjugal partners in
adulthood and to their children and grandchildren in old age.
But the transfer of cross-sex dependency to spouses and offspring
is always tenuous and often interrupted or revoked. Therefore,
individuals are strongly motivated to retain close connections to
their opposite-sex siblings and thus are especially concerned
about rivals for their siblings' attentions.

The tendency for Garifuna domestic networks to link through
women often creates a matrilateral bias in personal kindreds

during childhood. Other important networks are built with both
male and female connections, however, or even predominantly with
male-linked ties. Garifuna children tend to have more contact
with female kin than male kin; adult women do too, but male
youths increasingly join networks with other males as they enter
the adult world of political factions, wage employment, social
drinking, etc. For some men a patrilateral bias is evident, even
when the individual was raised by his mother. Siblingship,
including classificatory and fictive sibling ties, unites many
"deviant outsiders" in groups and networks that are misunderstood
from the matrifocal viewpoint.

Old Age Dependencies: Siblings spend more time together
and have closer emotional bonds during childhood, when they are
raised together, compared to after they become adults. In
adulthood, some sibling ties may disintegrate almost entirely,
Relations between other siblings remain strong, however, even
after a mother's death, and sometimes increase in importance as
adulthood and old age extend responsibility towards and
dependency upon siblings for help in child care, job seeking,
food sharing, and health issues. In a few cases, a parent's
death or absence actually seems to increase the solidarity of a
sibling group, as an elder sister or brother assumes the role of
family head, in contradiction to matrifocal theory.

Some sibling sets do break up (and some never were together in
the first place), but the dependencies of old age strengthen many
sibling ties, especially when sweethearts, spouses, and children

separate, emigrate, die, or provide unreliable support. Those
who are disappointed by their children or who have no children
turn to their siblings or to their siblings' offspring for help
and companionship. This is especially true for older men because
they have fewer opportunities than older women to establish
obligations from younger generations. Apart from childhood, old
age is the time when brothers and sisters are most likely to live
in the same household or in nearby households and/or eat meals
together.

Godparenting: The bond between godparents and parents
resembles the sibling bond in some aspects. When persons of the
same-generation exchange godi ties, they enhance a relationship
that often is already cast in sibling terms. Structurally both
relationships are linked by equivalent descent links to a single
person, siblings ascending a generation to a parent, godi
descending a generation to a child. When someone is appointed a
godi by a sibling, he/she almost always tries to reciprocate the
honor.

Ownership and Exchanges of Wealth and Services:
Although Garifuna rarely hold property together in joint
ownership, when a parent dies siblings may be forced to share
hard-to-divide things like shops, farm plots, and village lots.
This is often a source of tension, but people say that, compared
to non-relatives and other kin (notably spouses), siblings are
better at sharing and can be trusted more. When collective
ownership does occur in a traditional context, it is almost

always among siblings.

Exchanges between brothers and sisters most often involve the brothers giving money, food, or labor, such as house repair or farm work, to their sisters in exchange for meals and other domestic services, largely mirroring exchanges between spouses or sweethearts but without the sexual element and only very rarely with co-residence.

Sibling ties react to economic conditions and are important for both poor and prosperous sibling sets, but for different reasons. Prosperous sibling sets may be bound by common interest in shared property and heightened concern for their family's reputation. Poorer sibling sets are held together more by shared poverty and the need to borrow and exchange limited resources. Poorer persons attempt to activate ties with their wealthier siblings who often must choose between sharing their success or limiting their exchanges with siblings (and others) in order to accumulate sufficient wealth to rise in status.

Siblings rarely co-reside unless a parent is also present, but they do occasionally live in each other's houses or on each other's lots when the owner is absent, and they are regular visitors in each other's homes.

Community Leadership: Siblingship is important to the communal and political life of the village both as a structural bond for cementing small groups and alliances and as a basis for achieving leadership of wider groups and factions. Authority and leadership configurations that first arise in childhood sibling groups endure in the adult environment of political

organizations, economic co-operatives, and labor unions. Garifuna siblingship is both an important metaphor and model for cooperation among supposed peers and the principal kinship ideal that is sometimes violated when local factionalism splits families.

Large sibling groups provide training grounds for individuals to practice leadership skills in a peer or near-peer group setting. The eldest brother and the eldest sister learn how to "take charge" at an early age, and adult community leaders tend to be the eldest brothers/sisters of large sibling groups.

Siblingship is equally significant for its determinacy of local political antipathies. Some of the strongest loyalties and enmities within village politics are sibling-based, e.g., alliances between siblings and siblings-in-law or hostilities following mistreatment of a sibling. Sibling groups are not in themselves the major bases for political factions and loyalties. Friendship, neighborhood, and generational solidarity are also important in determining allegiance.

Wage Employment and Emigration: Almost every large adult sibling group in Hopkins has at least one member who migrates to pursue wage employment or education elsewhere. These absentee villagers generally ask a brother or sister to act as "agent" for their interests at home and sometimes to care for their children as well. The other side of this arrangement is that when villagers travel or emigrate they tend to follow outside-linked personal networks built more on sibling ties than on relations of

marriage or friendship. In several cases, an entire sibling set has collectively paid for one of their members to travel first to the U.S. and sponsor the other siblings or their children to come later.

In a similar manner, one sibling often prepares the way for the others in special employment domains. Many schoolteachers and police officers began working as apprentices to older siblings. Just as, during school years, older siblings act as culture-brokers for their younger siblings, easing the transition from the traditional home to the foreign school environment, later on, they may resume this role in providing access and a smooth transition to the non-Garifuna world beyond the village.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have strived to push beyond the matrifocal model to a broader and deeper analysis of Garifuna social organization, stressing siblingship, in part, because it is the most flexible and adaptable part of the traditional kinship system. Garifuna siblingship has special qualities and advantages with regard to gender, economic, and political relationships that have enabled the Garifuna to adjust readily to adverse conditions and rapid cultural and economic change.

Understanding Garifuna siblingship has relevance worldwide as societies with traditional bilateral and matrilineal kinship systems, coping with underdevelopment, migrant labor, militarism, and other challenges, increasingly resemble Afro-Caribbean systems in their domestic organization. Garifuna society may be

shifting to non-kinship organizing principles of ethnicity, politics, gender, and non-Garifuna ideals, but siblingship will remain a core cultural resource for understanding and activating the community.

Appendix A - GARIFUNA KINSHIP TERMS

my mother	*nuguchu*
my father	*nuguchi*
my grandmother	*nagutu*
my grandfather	*naruguti*
my daughter	*nisani wuri / hinaru*
my son	*nisani wuguri / eyeri*
my child	*nirau, nisani, nubuiduri*
my elder sister	*nitu / nibugana*
my younger sister	*namulelua*
my elder brother	*nibugana / nati*
my younger brother	*namulelua*
my cousin (my relative)	*niduhen*
my mother's brother	*niaurite* (address: *iau*)
my father's sister	*naufuri*
my mother's sister	*nuguchu-hana*
my father's brother	*nuguchi-hana*
my brother's son	*nirauhana / nibase*
my brother's daughter	*ninibu / nibase*
my sister's son	*ninibu / nirauhana*
my sister's daughter	*ninibu / nirauhana*
my wife	*ninauna, na weiriau*
my husband	*neiyerite, na weiriei*
my partner	*numari*
my father-in-law	*nimedemuru*
my mother-in-law	*nimedi / naguru*
my sister's husband	*nibamu / nigatu*
my brother's wife	*nuguyon / nigatu*

Appendix B - CHILD FOSTERAGE, Other Sources

<u>Sanford 1971</u>. Dangriga, Belize.

(p. 76):   106 households, mostly Garifuna, some non-Garifuna.

	Households		Resident Children	
Mother present*	82	77%	370	89%
Mother absent	24	23%	44	11%
TOTAL:	106		414	

* "Mother present" means that at least one mother of a resident child is present; such households may include other motherless children. "Mother absent" households have no mothers of any resident children.

(p. 81):   145 Garifuna foster children residing with:

MM	59
MZ	18
MB	2
FM	6
FZ	5
FB	2
Sib	5
Other relative	37
Godparent	1
Not-related	10
TOTAL:	145

<u>Palacio 1987:117, fn 7</u>. Barranco, Belize.

60% of all children are in "kinship fosterage."
Of 43 households with children, 32 have foster children.

Appendix B cont.

<u>Kerns 1983:117</u>

Residence of dependent children (age 0-16) in three Garifuna villages.

Reside with:	Children	
Both parents	497	60%
M & step-F	41	5%
M only	101	12%
Subtotal w parent(s)	639	77%
MM	100	12%
MZ	13	2%
Other maternal kin	26	3%
Subtotal w M's kin	139	17%
FM	29	3%
FZ	8	1%
Other paternal kin	16	2%
Subtotal w F's kin	53	6%
Total Children	831	100%
Total Foster Children	192	23%

Appendix C - AGE/SEX DEMOGRAPHICS, Other Sources

Palacio 1982:9,33

Barranco 1980

0-20	146	63%
21-50	38	13%
51+	66	24%
Total	**250**	
Female	143	57%
Male	107	43%

Kerns 1983:61 [1975 Census]

	Seine Bight	Georgetown	Hopkins
	254 48%	169 69%	501 70%
	118 32%	51 21%	159 22%
	95 20%	26 10%	58 8%
	467	**246**	**718**
	242 52%	132 54%	373 52%
	225 48%	114 46%	345 48%

Palacio 1987:104 Barranco 1980.

Age	Male	Female	Ratio	All
0-5	28	31	.90	59
6-15	40	47	.85	87
16-20	2	2	1.00	4
21-50	14	24	.58	38
51+	23	39	.59	62
Total	**107**	**143**	**.75**	**250**

Gonzalez 1984:6 Livingston 1975.

Age	Male	Female	Ratio	All
0-6	25	29	.86	54
6-17	93	127	.73	220
18-54	43	102	.42	145
55+	36	70	.51	106
Total	**197**	**328**	**.60**	**525**

McCommon 1982:80 Sambo Crique, Honduras 1980.

Age	Male	Female	Ratio	M-full	M-absnt	F-full	F-absnt
0-10	191	206	.93	183	8	200	6
11-20	107	138	.78	86	21	119	19
21-30	67	91	.74	31	36	63	28
31-40	53	63	.85	39	14	56	7
41-50	39	41	.95	20	19	34	7
51-60	27	40	.68	18	9	37	3
61-70	16	16	1.00	13	3	15	1
71+	13	24	.54	13	0	22	2
Total	**546**	**619**	**.83**	**403**	**110**	**536**	**73**

Gonzalez 1969:55 Livingston, Guatemala 1956.

Age	Male	Female	Ratio	M-full	M-absnt	F-full	F-absnt
0-10	223	236	.94	213	10	226	10
11-20	139	209	.67	109	30	188	21
21-30	108	138	.78	72	36	115	23
31-40	93	134	.69	72	21	113	21
41-50	77	111	.69	59	18	102	9
51-60	73	82	.89	49	24	77	5
61-70	30	55	.55	27	3	55	0
71+	19	35	.54	19	0	35	0
Total	**762**	**1000**	**.76**	**620**	**142**	**911**	**89**

Appendix D - HOUSEHOLD TYPES, Other Sources

	Sanford 1971:65	Gonzalez 1969:68	Gonzalez 1984	
	Dangriga	Livingston 1956	Livingston 1975	
	158 households	362 households	123 hh	av.sz.
Consanguineal	49.4%	45.3%	53.7%	4.2
Affinal	50.6%	54.7%	30.8%	5.7
Couple Only	-	(13.5%)	9.8%	2.0
Single Person	-	none reported	5.7%	1.0

Sanford: couple only = affinal, single person = consanguineal.
Gonzalez: couple only = affinal, single person = consanguineal?.
        [In Gonzalez's 1984 sample, single person and consanguineal
        are separate categories.]

Palacio 1982:24

Barranco, 64 households.
        46.9% Extended
        26.6% Conjugal
         1.5% Single Person
        25.0% Sibling (not defined)

Kerns 1983:122

Seine Bight, 242 households.
        44% Extended Family
        45% Nuclear Family
        11% Single Person

McCommon 1982:87

Sambo Crique, 197 households.
        51.3% Consanguineal (including single person).
        48.7% Affinal (including couple only).

Foster 1985:52

Hopkins 1977-79, 131 households.
        34.5%   categories corresponding to Consanguineal/Extended,
                excluding single person.
        38.9%   categories corresponding to Affinal/Conjugal,
                excluding couple only.
        16.7%   single person.
         9.9%   couple only.

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