UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

# “WE’LL HAVE TO RE-WRITE HISTORY”: POSTCOLONIAL EDUCATION ON THE ISLAND STATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

by

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**Date** April 7, 2016

I dedicate this thesis to my oupa, Isaac Saunders. Your spirit of fighting for equality between people and your belief in the power of education lives on to inspire me every day.

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## Abstract

This ethnographic study examines the relationships between colonialized education, cultural negotiation, and migration within the context of the colonial/postcolonial island of Dominica. Using postcolonial theory, the overarching aim was to gain understanding of how people of the former colonial island relate to the education they received and how that relationship influenced people's interactions with their home. The two-month field study consisted of observational notes and 12 semi-structured one-on-one interviews with Dominican-born citizens who attended secondary school on the island. Participants ranged in when they attended secondary school: some attended prior to Dominica's 1978 independence from Britain; some began before independence, but ended after; and some attended only after independence.

The conclusions of this study encompass (1) how participants feel their education reflected and perpetuated Dominican cultural identity, (2) how participants feel their education impacted their perceptions of the needs to emigrate, and (3) how these notions of cultural identity and emigration bolster or diminish each other. Participants felt their cultural identity was, at most, a secondary thought of the education system or was not represented by the education system at all. Some participants saw emigration as needed in order to use their education to become financially successful; others believed that education was a tool for making emigration possible, but only to gain more knowledge before returning to contribute to Dominica. These viewpoints led to questions of nationalism, transnationalism, and cosmopolitanism, concepts which appeared throughout this study. Regardless of a participant's place on this spectrum of perspectives, attitudes involved cultural negotiation and notions of modernity, and came to be seen as a duality where individuals simultaneously cherished cultural identity while striving to meet standards of modernity that threaten or force adaptation upon said cultural identity.

## Preface

In 2014, I spent the months of October and November on the Caribbean island of Dominica. The island, officially named the Commonwealth of Dominica, is a former British colony that gained full independence in 1978. The physical size of the island is small, being approximately 750km$^2$, with a long north-south and narrow east-west shape. However, there are many physical features that give Dominica a large presence. As one of the Windward Islands in the Caribbean, the island is unofficially known as the Nature Isle of the Caribbean with its lush foliage and fruit trees, abundance of rivers and waterfalls, copious species of birds, and mountainous terrain. It is because of this topography that that indigenous name for the island is Waitukubuli, which means *tall is her body*.

Dominica's population is more diverse than some may think. The demographics include the Negre Mawon, who identify as the descendants of black slaves, the descendants of French and British colonizers, post-colonial immigrants from various countries, and the Kalinago, who are thought to be the only remaining indigenous population in the Caribbean. Regardless of origins, people of Dominica are reputedly friendly. I was welcomed into several homes with the offer of freshly picked fruit and fried home-raised chicken, which can be seen as a testament to people's connection to the land. On numerous occasions, as I walked the hilly roads through the island's villages, people stopped to offer rides to as far as I was going in their direction. On some days, my destination was a far enough distance that I used the public transportation system, which was a 15-passenger van. Each new passenger picked up would enter the vehicle saying "good morning/afternoon" to everyone in the van, no matter how many people there were or who those people were.

During my two months in Dominica, I stayed for two weeks in the southwest region, two weeks in the northwest region, two weeks in the northeast region, and two weeks in the southeast region. I witnessed and participated in National Day, Creole Day, national election campaign rallies, church services, and everyday life. I visited the island's museums, sites, and territory that commemorated indigenous, colonial, Creole history. I discussed the status of the Dominican national identity with historians, teachers, business owners, and artists. Everyone and everything provided me with deep and rich information that contributed to my understanding of the people and the island.

In terms of the field of Island Studies, what I learned is that while Dominica is a special island with its own sense of people, place, and space, and should not be included in generalizations about Caribbean islands, the overarching issues that Dominica deals with are ones that many other islands encounter. Islands around the world have histories intertwined with colonialism. The battle for cultural survival in the face of spreading ideas about modernity is common for many small islands. For these reasons, several people, Dominicans and non-Dominicans alike, recognized the value of my study for islands and encouraged me to pursue this type of research beyond my Master of Arts in Island Studies.

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The number of people I could thank for helping me through this thesis would create a list longer than the thesis itself. The time I spent and the experiences I had while not writing are just as important to my process as the time I spent writing. This balance of work and life made it so that I was enjoyably challenged, instead of despairingly obligated. I would like to thank everyone who made the writing time productive and everyone who made the break time fun. First and foremost, I need to thank the people of Dominica. The people I interviewed and the people who helped show me the *real* Dominica all combined to make my journey one that provided me with more information and perspective than I ever could have asked for, and one that I will never forget.

Dr. Udo Krautwurst and Dr. Jean Mitchell were my co-supervisors and offered me guidance starting from days even before they became my supervisors. They provided me with positive and constructive feedback, but always offering thoughts for my contemplation and never insisting that I take the work in any one specific direction. Their approach ensured that all of my observations were given proper consideration, my conclusions occurred organically, and my final thesis is now a writing product that I can call my own. Udo, thank you for all of the impromptu meetings to discuss anything to do with this process, from choosing an island to framing the research to finding an external examiner. Jean, thank you for all of the positivity you brought to our discussions and for pointing me towards so many scholars' works that helped me explore concepts integral to my thesis. Thank you both for making my research experience so wonderful and enriching.

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Next, I would like to thank Dr. Robin Sutherland and my Writing Centre family. Robin, you have given me so much over my time in the Island Studies program. It started with a job, but blossomed into endless opportunities, learning experiences, and friendship. With all of our chats and squash games, I was able to stay balanced, stay driven, and I got my sh-tuff done. You helped me to develop my leadership skills with our unruly family of writing subversives, and to them I am also grateful for all the fun over the years.

I, of course, need to thank my wonderful girlfriend, Megan. Thank you for being so patient during the times that I locked myself away in the office to hammer away at revisions. You always knew just when to bring me that cup of tea to keep me going. You also always kept me thinking as we discussed theorists and perspectives for all sorts of issues. Your love of learning and for challenging the status quo is always inspiring. You challenged me to think deeper when I did not think I could dig anymore, and this helped make my work as strong as it could be. Your support in so many ways elevated my thesis journey from great to fantastic.

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pocket.  Terri, you have always brought joy and laughter to the conversation, especially in the times when frustration set in and the end was hard to see.  I feel like I could choose to do anything in the world and you would be there to back me up.  No matter where I go, I know you are only a phone call away to tell me to keep going.

## Chapter One – Introduction: "Welcome to Dominica"

*The emerging young generation rejects the idea that the Caribbean is not its own first world but somebody else's third world.* (Best, 2001, p. 3)

### The Potential of Education

Education is the key to success, or so some say. The truth of this point is contingent upon the definition of success. Success within a small island population can mean different things. For some, success is finding a job that will provide income for supporting a family; for others, it means focusing on contributing to island development. Different perspectives create different conversations, and "discourse [on education] is shaped and constrained by social structure in the widest sense and at all levels: by class and other social relations at a societal level, by relations specific to particular institutions" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 64). Using education as a tool to obtain employment and engage with one's community is not unique to islands, small or large. However, in addition to nuanced realities of small island employment and civic involvement, there is a unique connection between island life and education, which is exemplified by citizens who strive to leave their island. These views are common within small island populations, and the Commonwealth of Dominica, located in the Caribbean region, is no exception. How these islanders have connected with educational opportunities and how the education system has connected with them has changed over the years since transitioning from colonial to independent nation status. Whether or not Dominicans feel changes have been sufficient for meeting their visions for Dominica and themselves varies. The changes in education and the resulting social and economic options meet some notions of what Dominica is and needs, while deteriorating other necessities. Some Dominicans more than others acknowledged what Angela — one of the twelve participants who will be introduced in coming chapters — called the "colonial hangover,"

and the sense of the remaining colonial influences seemed to align with the connections felt between a person's education and his/her sense of being a Dominican islander.

Through this thesis, I present my research that explores the topic of colonialized education in Dominica. The process of how this research took place is explained later in this chapter, but, at this point, I provide a general description of this study. Following this information, the key terms used in the thesis are outlined and the purposes of this study are identified. I include not only the final thesis question, but also the original wording that was then adapted so that there may be a stronger understanding of how this research developed and how conclusions were made.

Before I present the research process, I provide a brief explanation as to why I chose Dominica as my study site. I have to admit that Dominica was not my first choice when I was deciding which island to research, and, in fact, I had never actually heard of Dominica until it was suggested to me. As I came to discover, the island met all of the criteria I had laid out: a post-colonial island where I could use English as my primary language of communication, that was not known for racial violence, and that had a population touting an identity/identities other than that of the former colonizer. I also decided that I wanted to conduct my research in the Caribbean because it is a region that I am more familiar with as a result of previous studies and travel. While it could be argued that there are several islands in the Caribbean that meet my needs, I became intrigued with Dominica as I did my preliminary investigation. The history of the island, which includes elements of indigenous people, slavery and emancipation, and European colonization, struck me as rich with influences that could play into the present-day society. In addition, the topography of the island seemed to be so much more than just the land on which people lived, and could be seen as crucial to understanding the issues surrounding

Dominicans' culture and identity, and opinions on migration. The more I read about Dominica, the more it seemed like the perfect place to suit my research goals.

Leading up to the travel to Dominica (and even through the early stages of the research fieldwork), I approached the investigations wanting to know, "How has colonialized education impacted the senses of identity and mobility for the population of the Commonwealth of Dominica?" After engaging with the people of Dominica, there was a realization that this original question was too presumptuous about the Dominican mentality as far as how they perceived themselves. What came to be known was that there were several previously unknown island dynamics at play leading to a multitude of stances that could be influenced by education. Because of these new understandings and after further reading and contemplation, the original question was adapted to, "How has colonialized education impacted the relationship between cultural negotiation and perceptions of the needs to emigrate for the population of Dominica?" The new version allowed for more appropriate consideration of the diverse responses and observations that were collected during this study. In order to ensure clarification of how this question was used throughout the research, the main terms — colonialized education, cultural negotiation, and emigrate — are provisionally defined.

## Key Terms Defined

*Colonialized education* refers to two aspects of formal education systems. The first aspect is of education that is imposed by a colonial ruler, which suggests that the material learned and the ways of learning are decided by non-native powers. The second aspect of colonialized education looks to the legacy of colonialism within a post-colonial education system. The concept of a post-colonial education system is that the government of a former colony, now independent, has the opportunity to remove colonial influence from the local

system. However, even after gaining independence from a colonial ruler, a post-colonial state or system can attempt to decolonize, but has appropriated some traits and cannot rid itself entirely of the debris of colonial influence.

*Cultural negotiation* is the idea that as people of a colonial/postcolonial island engage with societal structures, systems, and mentalities, there is realization that societal pieces may favor the attitudes of the imposing metropole[1] or the local traditions. People's choices of how they engage with societal structures, like education, may adapt personal development and how much a person aligns with colonial or local culture. These options are not to say that people's choices will align with only one culture or another, because there is often little recognition of the distinction by the decision-makers; however, there becomes the possibility for manipulation, intentional or not, of the continuation of cultural traits. Stairs (1994) suggests "The optimistic proposal of cultural negotiation is the potential for evolving cultural identities as a rich range of alternatives to assimilation and cultural loss" (p. 155). This notion was implied throughout as this study unfolded, but with a realistic, slightly skeptical perspective that this *rich range of alternatives* may not be as easily adopted for a small island population.

*Emigrate* in this study means to leave one's natal country and move to another location. What comes into question is duration. One may wonder if emigrate implies a minimum period of time living outside the country of origin, or if an eventual return to the home country negates the use of emigrate. For the purposes of this study, the term emigrate fell under Russell King's (2009) summary of migration, which is "the movement of people from one place or country to another, for a significant period of time such as more than one year" (p. 59). While this

[1] The term metropole is used to refer to the polity that is imposing colonial power upon a colony. In the case of Dominica, the metropole is seen as Britain.

definition is fairly broad, it is appropriate as I adhered to the idea that leaving a place does not foreclose returning or repeatedly relocating.

## Demographic and Descriptive Background of Dominica

A brief overview of Dominica's emergence from colonialism should be provided for context of how Dominica came to experience colonialized education. Dominica's pre-Colombian name is Waitukubuli, which means "tall is her body" in Kalinago, the language of the island's indigenous population. The presence of both indigenous and colonial names highlights features about the island. First of all, two names infer the island was populated before European encounter. In fact, at the time of writing this thesis, there were still approximately 3,500 people who were recognized as Kalinago within the roughly 70,000 person population of Dominica. All Kalinago can claim land within the Kalingo Territory—which was officially known by the colonial name of the Carib Territory during my fieldwork period.

*Kalinago* is how the indigenous people of the island refer to themselves. The name *Carib* was decreasing in use and reputedly poised to be removed from official documents and references.[2] Because of the strategic resistance of the Kalinago people who used their natural surroundings to their advantage to delay being conquered, Dominica was the last Caribbean island to be colonized. During the colonial period, the lush and mountainous landscape aided runaway slaves, both those enslaved on Dominica as well as those fleeing from neighboring islands in seeking refuge (Honychurch, 1995). Official colonial occupation did not take place in Dominica for over a century after the so-called discovery of Dominica in 1493 by Columbus, and still a great number of years after trade between the Kalinago and French sailors began

[2] There are a variety of perspectives as to the reasons for the Europeans using *Carib*, but the most striking to me is the reference to the notion that the indigenous people were actually cannibals.

(Honychurch, 1997). However, this gap of time between encounter and colonial claims did not make Dominica and the Kalinago people immune to outside influences.

Being positioned among the Windward Islands within the chain of Caribbean islands, the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe are visible from Dominica even on a slightly cloudy day. At a time when Dominica was not under colonial rule and being in such close proximity to the neighboring colonized islands that used slave labor, Dominica was a viable option for runaway slaves looking for a place to hide. Inevitably, before any Europeans made claims to power and rule, there were already Kalinago and African cultures shaping the literal and metaphorical landscapes of Dominica. Understanding this historical overview was to grasp the diversity of cultures and backgrounds that Dominica could incorporate when making decisions and developing the island. To fast forward a number of years, I took a quick look at from where the European influence and colonialism came.

As briefly mentioned above, Kalinago and French sailors engaged in a small amount of trade, which saw the creation of settlements on Dominica. These settlements began as resting points for the French during their trading expeditions, but their permanence and stability grew enough that Dominica was deemed a negotiating point when the French were beaten in 1763 by the British in the Seven Years War. None of the Kalinago, Negre Mawon[3], or French-owned slaves had any say in the handing over of *ownership* of the island to the British. With British control, official colonial acts were seen as legal and binding and so, transformations in systems and structures began (Honychurch, 1995).

Looking specifically at education, the British-led government and the Catholic Church[4] formed the first four secondary schools in Dominica during the early 1800s (L. Honychurch,

[3] Negre Mawon is the term used in Dominica to refer to escaped or emancipated slaves.
[4] The Catholic Church was introduced to Dominica by the French.

personal communication, November 5, 2014). While several secondary schools now exist in the various regions of the island, some of the population could still recall there being only those four schools. As of 1964, with a Dominican population of approximately 60,000, only 1,167 students (630 females, 537 males) were enrolled (Fleming, 1964). With all four schools located in the capital city of Roseau, access to education beyond the primary level was limited for the majority of the island population. The island was not overly large and could be crossed north to south end in a little over an hour by car. However, at the time of the existence of only the four secondary schools, there was little to no transportation infrastructure throughout the island.

Access to secondary school education was limited not only by transportation; entrance exams had to be written before students were accepted. This process, however, was not one to which all students were entitled. Being academically fit to write the exams was not always contingent merely upon grades, but also on whether or not the student's family was seen to have power, wealth, and a reputation for intelligence on the island. Due to the education system structure, education and wealth did go hand in hand as attending secondary school required paying school fees and purchasing uniforms and books. A higher level of affluence was necessary not just to attend secondary school, but also often to carry on in education after secondary school.

Prior to the 1970s, the aim of a secondary school student in Dominica was to earn either a Cambridge or London General Certificate, signifying the completion of secondary school and, therefore, the ability to apply to postsecondary education, which was usually acquired in England, Canada, or the United States, because Dominica had no post-secondary institutions. A 1964 report by W.G. Fleming from the University of Toronto's then-titled Ontario College of Education suggests,

> Dominicans regard the familiar secondary-school course as a means of improving their status and of obtaining white collar jobs in business or government service. Those who set their sights on graduation commonly hope for the privilege of attending university and of finding wider opportunities beyond Dominica (p. 7).

This attitude and the behavior of seeking opportunities outside of Dominica did not die when independence was achieved.

Dominica achieved full independence from Britain in 1978, but the lead-up to independence began, as some argue, over a decade before. Historian Dr. Lennox Honychurch believes that the island was mostly independent since the mid-1960s with the evidence being the introduction of National Day in 1965 and the change of status from colony to associated state in 1967, where Britain held responsibility for only Foreign Affairs and Defense. On paper, beginning in the mid-1960s and now being a fully independent state, the Dominican government has had full control over the education system. The query being made here is how Dominican people perceive that education in terms of connecting to their senses of being Dominican and islanders and their needs for finding cultural and economic opportunity.

## Literature Review

To frame this research, I included theories and perspectives connecting to colonial and postcolonial discourse. Without further explanation, the term *postcolonial* does seem to infer that colonialism occurred at one point, but that there is now independence, free of control of any metropole. However, to say a place is free of the control of a colonial power can be ambiguous, because even when formal ties are cut between colony and metropole, the remnants of the colonial era continue to have immense influence upon the activities of the formerly colonial, now independent state. Following Hickling-Hudson (2006), conducting this postcolonial research "refers to thinking that deconstructs the operations of Eurocentrism in colonial and neo-colonial polities" (p. 205). In a discussion on internationalizing indigeneity, Merlan (2009) has pointed

out that the locations of people advocating for indigenous rights are commonly categorized as *colonial settler nations* with histories of colonization, marginalization, and oppression (Merlan, 2009, p. 319). The point Merlan is making here is that these places must acknowledge and consider the indigenous-colonial relationship in order to understand various identities. Hickling-Hudson (2003) explains that, "it is vitally necessary to teach students to critique and think beyond the old modernist categories of culture, race and nation" (p. 391). She believes this postcolonial approach "would help students to learn how to identify the prejudices, divisions and hierarchies of the colonialist/imperialist legacy and how these have come to be the foundations of the continuing and deepening inequalities in globalization" (p. 391). However, while the implementation of Hickling-Hudson's suggestions appears necessary, those in positions to make changes to policy and curriculum must first understand what aspects of the education system are problematic. With this point in mind, in order to observe the consequences of continuing colonialized education on an independent island, the analysis for this study was done through the lens of post-structural theory in combination with the relationship between historical silences (Trouillot, 1995) and imagined communities (Anderson, 2006).

## Theoretical Framework

Derrida (1970/1993) speaks of systems that have never been set structures, despite human desire to recognize a central basis from which the system appears to work. The so-called structures put in place are constantly adapted to fit desires, but while people believe they are creating a new structure, in actuality, they are working with "a central presence which was never itself, which has always already been transported outside itself in its surrogate" (Derrida, 1970/1993: 225). What this issue can suggest about a system like education is that a person or society may choose a set of guidelines, but the alternatives or options for adaptation are ever-

present and can influence interactions with this alleged structure, therefore allowing different options from different individuals and rendering the *structure* as unset. Derrida (1970) warns not to set that central basis because doing so brings violence upon the system and society. He points out that in order to accept and respect an imagined structure, especially in a colonial/postcolonial setting, one must discard reality and buy into a sense of a neutral time and history within the society. Clearly, a neutral history is not the case for any colonial/postcolonial society. Moreover, there will be impacts, official/unofficial, acknowledged/unacknowledged, from various people and groups, regardless of their perceived level of power and authority. However, given that there is, nonetheless, often a push to follow a structure, the acceptance or resistance of these impacts leads to situations where people, as Bhabha (1994) believes with Derridean inspiration[5], are "always disproportionately placed in opposition or domination through the symbolic decentering of multiple power-relations which play the role of support as well as target or adversary" (p.103). While education is often being presented as the savior for people who are seeking such things as opportunity, success, or comfort, it is possible that what is being said of education is rhetoric for a followed colonial structure that does not align with the involved students. So long as the same structure is used as the central basis and seen as the correct path, the people of a colonial/postcolonial setting will be caught in a vicious cycle where their systemic circumstances become the reason the structure is seen to be needed and continued.

To approach this study on education in a postcolonial setting through post-structural theory was to suggest that even while times are often labelled as the colonial era or days since independence, which suggests distinct power and influence, there is a blurring of lines making

[5] I refer to Derrida as inspiration for Bhabha's position not only because I find the two scholars to align in their mentalities, but also because Bhabha references Derrida numerous times throughout *The Location of Culture* and begins Chapter 8, "Dissemination," by stating, "The title of this chapter – DissemiNation – owes something to the wit and wisdom of Jacques Derrida…"

the distinction impossible to fully define. Bhabha, whose work and theories predominantly focus on issues of cultural identity in postcolonial settings, appropriately quotes Fanon's statement that "[in colonial cultures] we find characteristics, curiosities, things, never a structure" (Fanon as quoted in Bhabha, 1994, p. 53). This lack of structure does not mean, however, that people do not continue to try to live and work within structures and, by doing so, imagine unity with others. How these unifications are created was part of what this study looked at, relying on Benedict Anderson's work, *Imagined Communities*, which was reviewed for this aspect of the study's framework.

Anderson (2006) proposes his theory that "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined" (p. 6). He makes this statement because he feels that it is not possible for all members of a nation, even the smallest of nations, to know all other members. Yet, there is often a sense of bonding between complete strangers. This bond without actually knowing a person suggests that most forms of human community are not natural but created out of common and predominant ideas or attitudes within a group of people. The creation of a community then establishes boundaries (a structure, if you will) with aspects of *us/them* or *in/out*. One form of such a community is that of nationalism, where people believe in a togetherness based on characteristics like living inside the same political lines or speaking the same language. Anderson defines nation as "an imagined political community — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (p. 6). In the case of Dominica, an island, there was a very real limitation to the boundaries because of the geographic setting being surrounded by water. However, within those physical boundaries, there were other ways that people found mutual connection. This connection raised the questions of when Dominicans became Dominicans as opposed to an island of multiple peoples, such as the

Kalinago, Negre-Mawon, and French traders, and who or what decided the characteristics that would embody a true Dominican. As Anderson points out, "It would be short-sighted ... to think of the imagined communities of nations as simply growing out of and replacing religious communities and dynastic realms" (p. 22).

With a history of people of several origins encountering the island, the inquiry was made into where and how Dominican nationalism was born, and into what communities began to be imagined within the overarching nationalism. Part of this investigation on the impacts of colonialized education was to find out whether Anderson is correct in suggesting that "[t]he factors involved are obviously complex and various. But a strong case can be made for the primacy of capitalism" (p. 39). It is interesting to think of the different ways that education did/did not and does/does not unify Dominican people given that the English language was stressed on the island as a language of opportunity and success, leaving the Creole and Kalinago languages to struggle for survival. Anderson believes that "Particular languages can die or be wiped out, but there was and is no possibility of humankind's general linguistic unification" (p. 45). It would seem then, based on Anderson's notions, that an education system that imposes a language may be highlighting certain knowledge and not others in order to create a desired community. In this study, participants' feelings on education's connection to identity and place were explored throughout, but it immediately seemed apparent that there was great potential for communities to be imagined within Dominica. Part of what was necessary for this imagination to flourish was for those individuals who had influence in shaping the communities to emphasize some knowledge over others and create silences within the histories told.

Trouillot (1995) has explored the idea of silences in the telling of history, and what is meant by the word *history* when spoken from different perspectives. Trouillot (1995) plays with

the notion that history can be seen in two main forms: what happened and that which is said to have happened. There is the sense that history is a narrative where the so-called facts are subject to the manipulation and magnification by the speaker. What actually occurred at any given point in time can never be fully known, because anyone relaying the events will, intentionally or not, emphasize certain points and observations over others. From this point, as Trouillot suggests, what is left as history is that which is said to have happened. Rather than squabble over which version is the *real* one, one may ask, as Trouillot encourages, whether knowing what happened at an event in history, as opposed to that which is said to have happened, is as important as understanding the reactions and changes that ensued because of said event.

In the context of what people may have learned and now learn in school, what is said to have happened can potentially skew individual and national visions. When Trouillot talks about history being what is said to have happened, he is pointing out that certain perspectives are being silenced. He is not necessarily suggesting that an event is not acknowledged, but that telling the story one way and not another puts the power of the effects of history in the hands of the speaker. It is often said that history is told by the victors, so what Trouillot is showing is that those individuals and groups deemed not victorious also have a tale to tell and paying attention to that side may have further or different impacts on a society. One such impact may be that the type of history told provides the basis for an imagined community, as Anderson suggests. Whether it is intentionally strategic or not, emphasizing a certain angle in the telling of history can make that history fit desired allegiances (Troulliot, 1995) and unity and shape a society in favor of one ideology or another. Whether unity is always necessary may be questioned in theory, but, in the case of Dominica, the sense of community was real in various ways and so, necessary or not, it was something to be analyzed. What was being analyzed here was how education from a

colonial/postcolonial island silenced, and perhaps still silences, some histories and shaped the island(ers).

## Purpose of Study

The framework used to analyze the research done in Dominica to understand what people believed was emphasized and silenced in their secondary school education. By understanding these perspectives, there was potential to see where and how different imagined communities were established, and what impacts these communities had on the fabricated structures of cultural identity for Dominicans. In general, the purpose of the research was to explore the impacts of colonialized education on the relationship between the linguistic, cultural, and personal identities of Dominican citizens and their views on migration. The hope was that there would be a stronger understanding of Dominica's perceived Roots and Routes (Clifford, 1997; Gustafson, 2001; Deloughrey, 2007) where, sometimes with the influence of education, the island population recognize their roots — the island they identify with and call home — but also see routes — the pathways to social and economic options, sometimes leading them off the island. In order to view the qualitative data within this framework, my approach to gathering data and information should be acknowledged and understood.

## Methodology

To investigate the participants' perceptions of the relationships between Dominican citizens and their experiences in a colonialized education system, the most appropriate approach to the research was deemed to be a qualitative ethnographic study. Qualitative and ethnographic approaches were best for this type of exploration, because, to understand how people engage and interact with a system, it was necessary to gain in-depth understanding of their perspectives and influences within the system (Bricki & Green, 2007). Merriam (2009) suggests "The overall

purposes of qualitative research are to achieve an *understanding* of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making, and describe how people interpret what they experience" (p. 14). Stake (2010) believes that "empathy and advocacy are and should be part of the lifestyle of each [qualitative] researcher" (p. 14), but Merriam (2009) also advises those conducting qualitative research to remember that "The key concern is understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspectives, not the researcher's" (p. 14). To speak on issues of the relations between culture, migration, and education on a basis of quantitative research would have risked excluding the nuances of the island context that helped me understand my findings in a holistic manner, removing acknowledgement of my presence as influential to shaping the study, and not showing respect for the humanity of the people in Dominica who informed this study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

In designing my research and considering the key features of qualitative research, I had to ask myself what I aimed to achieve on epistemological and ontological fronts and whether a qualitative approach would be the best avenue to meet my goals. As Marshall & Rossman (2011) declare, "The writer should show that the design and methods are the result of a series of decisions he has made based on knowledge gained from the methodological literature and previous work" (p. 7). From an epistemological perspective, which seeks to understand "issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry" (Steup, 2014), what I wanted to understand was more than just *what* people thought about their culture, migration, and education, because I also wanted to know *why* people held their opinions and beliefs. It was crucial for me to seek out the rationale behind people's thoughts, because otherwise my interpretations of findings would be steeped in my own biases, which would have

risked misrepresenting the people in the study. In terms of an ontological perspective, "which deals with the nature and the organisation of reality" (Guarino & Giaretta, 1995, p. 26), my reasoning was the same as that of the epistemological in that I wanted to know why people behaved as they did and why the social environment was the way it was. I did not want to rely on my assumptions that likely would have stemmed from my own experiences and had little to do with the experiences of the people living in the social environment.

Part of the consequences of using qualitative methods with the mindset I have described was that the potential for generalizability was removed because the reasons for holding certain beliefs or opinions, or for engaging with one's environment could have been different for each person in the study. However, generalizability was not my goal in this study. Instead, I wanted to provide a forum in which people's voices could be presented, and not imposed by a researcher from a distance. I believed it would have been inappropriate to draw conclusions concerning people's viewpoints had I done so after only reading about the history and recent status of Dominica's island society. Reading through documents and texts in order to create a synthesis is certainly a valid form of qualitative research, but, for my study, it would have removed the humanity of those living in the studied setting. This issue is why it is through an ethnographic approach that I attempted to gain understanding of participants' perspectives.

According to Frankham & MacRae (2011), "Ethnography is an approach characterized by uncertainty and contradictions … [and is] defined by ambitious claims (holism, immersion, depth, rapport) accompanied by discussion of the impossibility of ever reaching those goals" (p. 34). They continue on to clarify that this uncertainty does not mean researchers should stop ethnography, and should try "(using analogy, metaphor, dialogue, description, allusion and so forth) to communicate how this place, these people, these practices 'work' (p. 35). I attempted

here to convey how the participants of this study 'worked' in terms of their senses of self and place. There are a number of types of ethnography and I chose to incorporate a combination of methodological elements from *realist ethnography*, sometimes known as *critical realist ethnography*, *critical ethnography*, and *post-structural ethnography* (Savin-Baden, & Howell Major, 2013).

Realist ethnography is generally used to examine the relationship between a structure (in this case, the institution of education) and agency, which was seen in Dominican's daily activities, as well as how that agency does or does not change. The aspect of realist ethnography that I did not integrate into my thesis was the idea of the researcher being a detached observer and being able to report with objectivity. At the very least, even if I had observed my surroundings in Dominica without engaging with any activities or people, I was still seeing the people and place through my eyes, which meant that, much like the lens of a camera, I was only seeing what was within my natural frame. There are many reasons for the limitations of this frame, whether it is because a person being observed is reacting to something that is outside of the researcher's view, or because there is, as Clifford (1990) describes, "a moment of abstraction (or distraction) when a participant-observer jots down a mnemonic word or phrase to fix an observation or to recall what someone has just said" (p. 51). These moments of poor positioning or distraction were unavoidable and so, objectivity could never be claimed, but this point did not mean that what was observed and experienced were invalid.

Using critical ethnography was to seek and understand the status quo and ways of challenging it (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). However, unlike realist ethnography, understanding the status quo did not suggest observing objectively, and I had to be "highly reflexive whilst recognizing both the value-ladened-ness of research and that only a partial view

[could] ever be offered" (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013, p. 200). For example, when people in Dominica provided me with comments that were not of great personal depth and rather sounded like answers they thought I would want to hear, I did not render the comments as illegitimate; I pondered on what about my presence would cause people to offer seemingly scripted responses and how this action may have connected to broader issues of identity.

Including elements of post-structural ethnography was not to compensate for what I felt was missing or disagreeable in realist or critical ethnographies. Instead, I incorporated post-structural ethnography because of its characteristics that I thought to be necessary in my study. Savin-Baden & Howell Major (2013) suggest in their examination of ethnography that post-structural ethnography attempts to present an unfamiliar story, perhaps in an unfamiliar way, that presents a multivocal (and I will add Rodman's (1992) multilocal) perspective of a given culture with respectful and ethical treatment of research participants. Although the Dominican population was not large, there were many different voices to be heard during my fieldwork. Using a combination of the snowball method[6] (Noy, 2008) and random encounters, I welcomed 12 participants who participated in semi-structured one-on-one interviews, but it was because of these elements of ethnography that I did not attempt to present them as representative of the entire island.

## Description of Participants

The participants I interviewed for this study ranged in age, indicated by the fact that six attended secondary school prior to the 1978 national independence, five attended after independence, and one started before independence, but graduated after independence. In terms of gender, there were 3 male participants and 9 female participants. Interviewing more females

[6] To gain the desired number of participants, each confirmed participant was asked if they were willing and able to connect me with other people who might also be willing to participate.

than males was not deliberate and rather it was the result based on the people who accepted my request to be interviewed. For the sake of anonymity, I used pseudonyms throughout this thesis for each participant. In alphabetical order, the participants' pseudonyms and the timeframe in which they attended secondary school are as follows:

Adam – post-1978
Alice – post-1978
Amanda – post-1978
Angela – pre-1978
Diane – post-1978
Janet – pre-1978
Josephine – pre-1978
Lester – pre-1978
Mary – post-1978
Randy – pre-1978
Stella – pre-1978
Veronica – started pre-1978 and ended post-1978

There were also people mentioned in this thesis whom I did not formally interview and their statements that I have included came from my observation notes. I did not ask them specific formulated questions and their statements were made in conversation in a public setting. At least once a day, I took time to write observation notes, sometimes referred to as field notes, by hand in a notebook I carried with me. I say at least once a day, because it was not part of a structured daily routine that I made these notes. In some cases, I wrote at the end of the day and reflected on events I had witnessed. Other times, I took a break from exploring a community to purchase a plate of fried plantains and a Kubuli beer and I sat to write about the people and scenes surrounding me in that moment. On one occasion, I thought I was done observing for the day until the power went out in the village I was staying in and I felt it necessary to write about my experience in the dark, lighting my notebook pages with a flashlight my upstairs neighbor loaned me.

The reasons I kept field notes were more than just being able to look back at my journey with nostalgia. I kept these notes to aid me in being reflexive when I was reviewing interview transcripts. Throughout my fieldwork, I was a traveler and, in discussing Said's *Traveling Theory*, Clifford (2010) asserts that travelers are "following public routes and beaten tracks" (p. 4) and can gain a perspective on how populations, classes, and genders travel, as well as the kinds of knowledge, stories, and theories the traveling can produce. By keeping observation notes, I was attempting to record my own perceptions of a place or activity so that I could place myself when I encountered a participant who discussed the same or similar experiences. In addition, I was able to incorporate some of my observations into my interviews in order to see if the participants found my observation to be common or uncommon, and whether the participants found my observations to be representative of their sense of culture or place. My attempt to connect my observations to the interview participants was not to look for repeated reactions, but instead to see if there was anything new I should have been considering. I entered into my fieldwork with an assumption of heterogeneity among responses because individual responses stem from different experiences and perspectives. I made no direct effort to recruit an inclusive sample because ethnographic methods do not aim for inclusivity but depth (Frankham & MacRae, 2011).

The interviews used to gather data provided the opportunities to gain a fuller vision of the participants' lives as they attended secondary school. Beginning with the aforementioned idea that education is the key to success, the hope in gaining the insight into participants' academic lives, as well as their lives thereafter, was to uncover participants' perspectives as to whether or not education did help them reach life goals. In trying to gain that insight, I analyzed the data (the interview transcripts and hand-written interview notes) by using an inductive process

(Merriam, 2009). This process was where the data was looked at for findings "in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, [and] tentative hypotheses … [theoretical] framework is not tested deductively as it might be in an experiment; rather, the framework is informed by what we inductively learn in the field" (Merriam, 2009, p. 16). By the end of my analysis of interview transcripts, I had created over 20 categories under which to place different statements made by participants, and very few of the statements could be listed under only one category. Once I had worked through all of the transcripts, because many of the categories were distinct but generally connected by topic, I sought to place each category with one of the pillars my study: culture and identity, migration, education. For example, *access to education* and *priority of education* were placed under education, while *race* and *nationalism* were placed under culture and identity. There was often overlap, but this organization helped in being able to see the connections between statements. At the beginning of my research, knowing that I would have to be able to analyze participants' responses, to aid in effectively categorizing participants' responses, I created research questions to be answered.

**Research Questions and Participant Interview Strategy**

With the expectation that participants' responses would not be identical, the data was analyzed against three general research questions that helped organize responses for comparison, which, when answered, collaborated to shed light on issues involved. These guiding questions touch on key elements of the research, and overlap to uncover connections. The questions are:

1) *In what ways do the participants equate (or not) education with culture/identity?*
2) *In what ways do the participants feel a person is or is not a Dominican?*
3) *In what ways do the participants feel that mobility/migration is necessary for success?*

It was thought that they were general and allowed for a range of responses to contribute to discussion within each of the three core chapters of this thesis.

As part of my interview requests, each potential interviewee was provided a verbal and written explanation of what their contribution would entail. Each person was informed that they were to be asked questions pertaining to their perceptions of their culture and identity, their feelings on the necessity to migrate, and their experiences as students in secondary school. Once a person agreed to participate, s/he was given a consent form to read and sign which ensured confidentiality and anonymity in the final thesis. Following this, the interviews began and, with permission from the participant, were recorded using an audio-recorder. If the participant asked not to be audio-recorded, and several did, hand notes were taken to record responses.

The interview participants sought out were year-round resident citizens of Dominica who attended at least some secondary-level education in Dominica. The ideal selection of participants was to be six people who had experience in the secondary-level education prior to 1978[7], and six people who had experience after 1978, with hope that any changes from one group to the other could be easily observed. Graduation was not a requirement; only that enrollment, attendance, and participation had occurred before leaving the institution for other endeavors. While an attempt was made to adhere to this even split, exceptions were made as some participants' years in secondary school spanned over the years of transition from colonial to independent status.

To supplement my understanding of the development of the education system and why participants may have had various experiences, there was also an exploration of official reports and academic papers written about Dominica's education. The documents examined ranged in their times of origin from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, which effectively match the timeframe for this study. When designing this research, the plan was to gather information of the

[7] The year Dominica attained full independence from Britain.

past education system through archived documents at the National Documentation Centre, located in Dominica's capital, Roseau. However, upon investigation, it was found that accessing the desired reports and articles was best done through the Special Collections of the island's oldest public library, which was also located in Roseau. These reports and articles offered both the technical logistics of the education systems, colonial and independent, as well as first-hand commentary from the authors, who were often researchers or educators within the system.

This study focused mainly on people's experiences of the past, but it is not uncommon for people to remember the past in ways influenced by the present. For example, in his own study of Dominica, Trouillott (1988) speaks of Dominicans who claim the traditions of bananas being a staple in the local diet. However, Trouillot uncovers that local people who can recall to pre-1940 remember the banana as simply a fruit snack rather than a staple. Trouillot was writing at the peak of Dominica's banana industry success, so it can be understood that local memory was influenced and changed because of the state of the banana at present. With this in mind, the examination of the current policies on culture helped gauge how much of the cultural memory from participants might have been adjusted because of present circumstances. There was not a lack of trust in the recollection of participants, but an understanding that, even within one's own mind, silences occur and there are different historiographies from person to person. As Trouillot says, "People create their past in tones always renewed to better account for the present" (p. 131).

**Subtopics within Research**

The first area reviewed was that of islands. Colonization took place all over the world, not just on islands, so the issues that were studied within this research could very well be looked at in a continental postcolonial setting. However, there are unique nuances at play for island

societies that can create a certain island mentality that some call islandness (Baldacchino, 2004). Each island is unique in its own way, but, in general, islandness can be seen as "geographical boundedness, historical distinctiveness, flora and fauna speciation and endemism, linguistic nuances, cultural specifics, jurisdictional adventurism" (Baldacchino, 2004, p. 279) that lead to a feeling of identification with the island transcending differences and binding people together. This unification of people should not be confused with homogeneity, and Dominica's diversity within the island setting was given attention. The issue for an island is more than simply acknowledging that the population has differences within it. There was an analysis of how these differences work with or against each other in a physically bounded environment. For better or worse, the sense and understanding of the island, the islandness, is a factor impacting personal and societal development that a continental place is less likely to experience. This sense for the island was especially the case for Dominica, given its small but mountainous and forested terrain, which were features seen on other Caribbean islands, but were distinctive in their combination in Dominica. Dominica's islandness was certainly a topic for consideration when attempting to understand how the people engaged with an education system initially implemented by a colonial power, Britain, which could be said to have its own islandness, but not that of Dominica.

For the topic of education in a colonial/postcolonial place, there was first an examination of parts of discourse. Fairclough (1992), who engages is critical discourse analysis in connection to sociolinguistics, states, "Discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning" (p. 64). What this point means for education is that the way in which it is described and understood shapes how people engage with and use education. For a postcolonial island, such as Dominica, there are

points that can be discussed about education that lead to the continuation or downplay of colonial hegemony. Fairclough suggests "Discourse as a political practice establishes, sustains, and changes power relations" (p. 67). Education is a political practice that has the ability to push agendas by presenting information and knowledge that leans one way or another, whether that has a capitalist, socialist, Eurocentric, or local slant.

In his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (1970/2000) describes education for an oppressed (read colonized) population as a sort of *banking* process, where "the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" and the colonial educator feels altruistic as s/he believes "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 72). Freire is pointing to the sometimes-naïve thought that education is the key to success. Renowned scholar Frantz Fanon, with foci on race, decolonization, and post-colonial studies, believed "The settler [colonizer] makes history and is conscious of making it … the history which he writes is not the history of the country which he plunders but the history of his own nation in regard to all that she skims off, all that she violates and starves" (Fanon, 1961, p. 51). This quotation would suggest that any locals exposed to the education system during the colonial period would be taught the colonizer's version of history and establish a basis to either adapt or refute in a postcolonial era. In most cases, when independence finally occurs, it does not mean the slate is wiped clean for a fresh start.

Hickling-Hudson (2006), who is known for her studies of Higher Education and Curriculum Theory, shows that in the postcolonial Caribbean, "disadvantaging structures continue to perpetuate inequities through schooling" (p. 203). Simply because an independent island has bureaucratic control of the education system does not necessarily mean it is

decolonized. The language(s) used, the content in focus, and the goals of gaining education are aspects of systems that can provide the stage for continuing in a colonial fashion or adapting. Unfortunately, as Crossley and Tikly (2004) point out, "Many existing education systems still bear the hallmarks of the colonial encounter in that they remain elitist, lack relevance to local realities and are often at variance with indigenous knowledge systems, values and beliefs" (p. 149). With a range of scholarly interests including post-colonial education and education in small states, Crossley and Tikly suggest that understanding the colonial/postcolonial discourses in education (what I call colonialized education) can provide a basis for improving educational policy in postcolonial settings. Who decides what should and should not be improved, or how improvements should be made, is not touched on greatly by these two scholars, but Freire's approach seems appropriate, as it encourages the model of education where the distinction of teacher-student is blurred. Students inform the teacher how they need to be taught, and teachers engage students in ways that are accessible for students. Teaching Dominican students about the world is not a bad practice, but doing so in a way that infers that other places and cultures are better-off can be damaging to the island(er) identity.

The old query of which came first, the chicken or the egg, is how one may perceive small island identity. Whether the islanders have to fight to hold onto their identity or their identity is formed through a proud struggle not to conform is up to interpretation. The reality is that it requires great strength of character to maintain a connection to one's island in the face of, arguably, a neo-colonial world. While islands may be seen as being isolated places or as having strong interconnection to other islands, the nature of the connectivity of small islands to the entire world has changed dramatically with the advancements in technology, allowing more than

ever for influences from beyond an island to shape islander perceptions of areas previously only known through pictures and correspondence.

Today, an islander can leave the island or remain there his/her entire life and still build an identity that is "here and there at the same time" (Premdas, 2008, p. 3). However, with or without connection through technology, many islanders believe that they have distinct identities based on their island of origin. Baldacchino, a leading scholar in the field of Island Studies, points to the uniqueness of islanders' experiences in daily lives, believing that island identity can be influenced by "experiential space, or the lived and situation-specific version of space, revealed through the physical and experiential deciphering of space in everyday life and practice, such as journeying to and from work" (Baldacchino, 2012, p. 57). For a small island, specifically Dominica, the nuances of attitudes toward issues such as time and transportation understandably stem from the nature of the physical (infra)structure of the island. No amount of American movies or BBC internet news can alter an island's topography. However, in observing a local islander's attempt to balance the technological connection to the international world and the day-to-day domestic realities of an island, the subtleties of an islander's identity are difficult to know. Cultural Theorist Stuart Hall (1997) stated "Identities are never completed, never finished; that they are always as subjectivity itself is, in process" (p. 47). To a non-islander, a small Caribbean island may be thought of as merely hot and tropical with a relaxed pace, but a local islander, especially on a small island like Dominica, will notice even the small changes, which may alter their connection with the island. Despite a pride and identification with the island, a common occurrence for small island populations is migration.

Migration from a small island is not always a decision with permanent consequences. Return migration does sometimes occur. According to the work of Connell (2007), an island-

focused human geographer, we must recognize that "islands are invariably characterized by migration" (p. 455). Because an island cannot always count on people returning, there needs to be an understanding of why people leave and what the island does and does not have that pushes people to migrate. People who emigrate do not necessarily do so because of a lack of love for their homeland. Connell suggests:

> The life courses of island people, present or absent, are increasingly embedded in international ties. Island states, individuals, recruiters and various international agencies have attached a new and increased significance to migration, remittance flows, return migration and the role of the diaspora, in contexts where 'conventional' development strategies have achieved limited success (p. 456).

The idea that 'conventional' development strategies do not work would suppose that an entity beyond the island has set the standards for what success is and, as long as the bar sought by islanders remains set by non-islanders, there will be a drive to explore the world beyond the island.

There are often dreams that "the return of those with distantly acquired skills has gained them new status" (Connell, 2007, p. 469) while in actuality, "return migration has however often been of unskilled workers and retirees" (p. 469). An example from research done specifically in Dominica stresses that "men with little education sometimes migrate today, as they have for many years, under temporary agricultural schemes" (Seller, 2005, p. 48). Even some men who completed secondary school engaged in this overseas work for a season before returning to the island. The temporary migration has broadened, and "Women who have little or no secondary education often migrate nowadays to work as domestics in the more developed regions of the Caribbean, or to North America" (Seller, 2005, p. 48). What makes migration so impactful for a small island is the balance of resources and labor can be significantly thrown off and mere sustainability, let alone development, can be put in jeopardy. With this balance in mind when

considering education, it may not matter how much a system is allegedly adapted. Looking toward the future is all well and good, but the education needs to meet the present island situation before it can move forward. As Fanon (1961) says, "The *fellah*, the unemployed man, the starving native do not lay claim to the truth; they do not *say* that they represent the truth, for they *are* the truth" (p. 49), and the system must consider the reasons for these realities. If the public does not feel a connection between their educations, their identities, and opportunities on the island, they will naturally explore other options where they feel they can thrive. The developers of an education system must ask what the society's education is teaching the citizens to do and aspire to.

The idea that schools intentionally teach students that they need to leave the island is, arguably, inaccurate. Nonetheless, intentions do not always match reactions. In the context of a colonial/postcolonial island, one can look through history at how and what trends were started in connection to education. The work of Corbett (2000) focuses on rural communities rather than islands and highlights that "the historical process has been much more troublesome to the state in rural areas and institutional practices like schooling fit more readily into urban routines in the productive industrial spaces of the city" (Corbett, 2000, p. 4). To small islands, larger islands or continental lands were seen as the urban areas of which Corbett speaks of. Rural areas and small islands both experience a sense of seclusion and often focus on specific economic sectors. As Corbett (2000) says, "Educational institutions operating in regions which are less economically vibrant tend to educate young people for employment opportunities which exist elsewhere" (p. 7).

After secondary school, many students on small islands, whether seeking further education or employment, will need to venture to larger islands or continental lands where there

are more educational institutions or, allegedly, more employment opportunities. Some believe that "one of the easiest ways to emigration is to continue along the education lines that link the community to the outside world" (Lucas, 1971, p. 366, as quoted in Corbett). The hope is that these students who leave will gain more knowledge and skills and then return to, as Corbett suggests in his allusion to Foucault (1979), *normalize* the island. What can be seen by extrapolating Corbett's work to islands is that island education may not directly tell students to leave, but students are presented with knowledge and information that can only be applied so far in an island society that continues to follow the success standards set out by the non-island, Western countries. Even without an official colonial power in place, it is the former colonial and now neo-colonial powers that become the inappropriate guides to island economic development and, as the predecessor to economic development, educational structure.

These subtopics intertwining in the Dominican context have been shown here as further chapters develop. The silences within Dominica's colonialized education and the resulting imagined communities were unveiled. Understanding these subtopics was necessary to see why Dominican education, or any postcolonial education, created consequences that are not always beneficial for the society or its population's culture and identity. Having outlined the framework and all of these perspectives with which to analyze the data of this research, I provide an overview of the scope and significance of this research.

## Scope and Significance of Research

As was mentioned earlier, initially, my search was for a small island in the Caribbean that has a colonial history, is now independent, and uses English as a language of communication. With those criteria, there were multiple options, but there were features about Dominica that were more intriguing as compared to other islands. To begin with, it was found the Kalinago are

thought by many to be the last remaining pre-colonial population in the Caribbean. Some Caribbean residents think Dominica's neighbour island, St. Lucia, also has some population with indigenous roots, and this notion may be true, but Dominica is the island that officially acknowledges the Kalinago through government policies, councils, celebrations, and a distinct geographic territory. The Kalinago were not specifically the focus of this research, but did play in to the creation of the island(er) identity.

The other feature that placed Dominica in brighter light for this research was the lack of major conflict, past or present, between the various communities or demographics of the island. Dominica appeared to have little racial strife, violent crimes, or a greatly noticeable economic divide. Given that this research presents a fairly unique approach of combining education, culture/identity, and perceptions of migration, as well as few extra societal factors, this study might be used as a foundation to be expanded and extrapolated in future research for other areas. The basis that was created here is admittedly small, but nonetheless a starting point.

Before embarking upon this study and attempting to answer the research questions, thereby answering the overarching thesis question, there was consideration for why this research is needed and its contribution to the academic world. There are existing research connections between post-colonialism and education, and between education and island migration, but little examination done concerning how the colonialized island education system connects to island voices/needs/identities. If there can be understanding of what impacts have been made by colonialized education systems, then perhaps there can be acknowledgement, for better or worse, of which voice is being used to educate an island population. Depending on the voice and perspective used in an education system, there may be a variety of options presented for cultural sustainability and societal development.

The purpose of conducting this research goes beyond expanding the knowledge base of island, postcolonial, and education studies. The aim was to provide a perspective that can be used in decision-making for societal sectors in a variety of settings, island and continental land alike. For example, when small islands or small non-island communities are addressing the issue of population retention, this study may help to consider that 'brain drain' happens not *because* people are educated, but because of *how* they are educated. In the same vein, but on a scale broader than islands, this study can contribute to the conversation on what the purpose of education is in general. The notion of receiving an education in order to then find employment does persist, but then the question of employment becomes, what contributions are the jobs making to individual, local, national, or international stability and sense of satisfaction? Regardless of one's answers to this question, there was a return to that query of *how* people are educated. While education, 'brain drain', and employment are far from new issues in the academic world, by connecting them to culture and identity in Dominica, the significance of my research is found in the possibilities from educating people to look inward before looking out.

## Snapshot of Chapters

Up to this point, there has been a great deal of background information, theory, and literature presented with a general explanation of how it all pertained to or was used in the more specific commentary of the thesis topic. This act was done to guide the reader to the perspective from which I analyzed and wrote about the colonialized education and its connections to Dominicans' cultural negotiation and their perceptions of the needs to emigrate. As can be seen, there were three main aspects within this topic, providing three core relationships that were explored. These relationships created a natural organization of the data analysis, and below, I explain how the three core chapters of this thesis, which are summarized below, were presented.

Chapter Two looked at the relationship between education and island(er) culture and identity. Rather than make suggestions that colonialized education bolsters or berates a local culture and/or identity, the analysis for this chapter sought to explore the phenomenon of cultural negotiation as a result of education. This statement suggests, as was mentioned in the section clarifying terms, that education has the ability to position an individual to choose life paths that may favor traditional culture or colonial culture or, perhaps, a combination of the two. That cultural negotiation occurs was not in question. It was thought that cultural negotiation is inevitable. What was unknown, however, was how cultural negotiation took in Dominica, especially considering the variety of distinctive cultural and geographical influences.

Chapter Three examined the connection(s) between education and the perceptions of the need for migration. Much like cultural negotiation, there was no doubt that out-migration from Dominica had occurred and will continue to occur. This chapter acknowledged the reasons why island migration does, and some say should happen. There are realities to island living that cannot be changed. But at the same time, what was put into question was whether or not the Dominican participants in this study felt their education instilled a sense that the only way to success, however defined, was to leave the island.

Chapter Four presented the observations from this study based on my interpretations of how the participants felt about how cultural negotiation affected the perceptions of migration, and whether Dominican culture and identity can or needs to survive if emigration takes place. For some, migration had been experienced, and they were able to look back at what sent them away from and then brought them back to Dominica. In other cases, the participants' off-island experiences consisted of going on vacation to visit family in North America or England. In all

cases, the participants had firm opinions about the strength and survival of their culture and their Dominican/islander identity.

In the concluding chapter, I more pointedly presented how the findings in the three body chapters spoke to the implementation of silences and imagined communities, which highlighted the postcolonial nature of the Dominican society and what this structure can mean for the health of a small island. These silences and imagined communities were likely not intentional, and may even be difficult to recognize and acknowledge for some Dominicans. As a researcher whose own upbringing was not on an island, let alone Dominica, it was easier to identify and even critique the unique ways of Dominica. For a local Dominican, there may be less inclination to question the influences of education as positive or negative, and rather take on a view that this is Dominica: the Nature Isle of the Caribbean where s/he was born and raised. At the same time, perhaps Dominicans are quite inquisitive concerning the issues of the study, but my personal perspective did not allow me to empathize. As much as tried to understand the perspectives of the participants in this study, I am not an islander, am not Dominican, and am not black, and so, there are experiences that I may never have and, therefore, can never fully appreciate. I have to acknowledge that the lens through which I viewed the issues in Dominica will always have a tint to it such that my critiques may have value, but will be vulnerable in terms of credibility.

## Chapter Two – Culture in Colonialized Education: "I saw it more in extracurricular activities"

Language, social skills, job skills, and how to use them within a small island setting are just a few aspects of personal development that can be influenced by the institution of education (Altbach, 2004). School can be instrumental in how a person establishes his/her identity and relates to a culture. As Woolman (2001) has said, "Schools can play a significant role in mediating the relationship between particular cultures and the nation-state" (p. 27). While Woolman seems to be suggesting education can help connect people to their politicized setting, his use of the words *particular cultures* highlights, perhaps unintentionally, the idea that schools would push for the meeting of some cultures and the country, but not other cultures when they do not seem to *fit*. Such a situation could create an island within the island (a potentially stressful feeling of insularity) and cause some to adapt or adjust in hopes of aligning more with the so-called dominant culture. Impacts of education on cultural negotiation are power relations.

The term *cultural negotiation* was used as opposed to cultural control, because the idea of negotiation suggests education can guide students to the transmission of traditional culture as well as colonial or a new culture. The notion here is "any cultural identity or activity is constructed by multiple agents in varying contexts" (Marcus, 1989, p. 25). In this study, it was assumed that education played a strong role in shaping culture and identity. As Thaman (2001) has said, "Education and culture are inextricably interwoven since the content of all education has value underpinnings that are always associated with a particular cultural agenda, given that no education can be 'culture-free'" (p. 1). In Dominica, because of its colonial history and diverse demographics, there were a number of cultural influences that were investigated for connections to education and strength of swaying local cultural priorities. With a tip of the hat to Said, Rodman (1992) suggests "We can only understand the world from within our culture … if

we understand the imperial contest that shaped and continues to shape it" (p. 645). Thaman (2001) speaks of the colonial education for Pacific islands, showing the European- and American-based schools taught "European and Anglo-American based knowledge, skills and values. This process led to the transformation not only of the structures and processes of [their] cultures but also [their] worldviews" (p. 1). To view a fuller picture of colonialized education in Dominica, there needed to be understanding of the *imperial contest* and how that issue related to the cultural structures and processes that Thaman mentions. This led to seeing the changes in worldviews, which were spoken about more in Chapters Three and Four.

What is introduced and examined in this chapter are the connections between education and culture in Dominica, and how these played into the cultural negotiation of the participants in this study. I begin with a brief discussion on what, if anything, is culture. Next, this investigation shows how British culture helped create the Dominican education system before the education system then began to shape Dominican culture. To form the investigation, I assess the culture-education/education-culture relationships in sections based on features research participants identified as core aspects of their culture. What is presented in the conclusion is the shape cultural negotiation takes as a result of the educations impacts.

## What is Culture?

Culture and identity are concepts that have such a wide range of nuances and complexities that clear definitions for each do not exist. The multifaceted perspectives on the topics are the reason for extensive scholarship exploring how culture and identity are perceived, created, and used within a society, community, nation, or a random gathering. Some hold the notion that culture and identities are fabricated to gain a feeling of belonging (Nagel, 1994). One may question whether this idea requires sameness within the population or if Baldacchino (2005)

is correct, with his allusion to Clifford (1997), that there is a need for "a respect for the dialectic of islands: roots and routes – which does *not* suggest defensive mono-culturalism. Rather, one is contemplating here an openness to diversity and pluralism, with minimal social class and status barriers and tensions" (p. 37, emphasis in original). The ambiguity of culture and identity suggests people, knowingly or not, use what Spivak (1988) has called *strategic essentialism* and emphasize commonalities—a lowest common denominator. This essentialism does not cement people in one social or societal position forever, but creates opportunities for people to either distinguish themselves as part of one group but not another, or to say, 'We're all one and we're in it together!'

I did not attempt to define culture and identity, but declare that, for the purposes of this thesis, I focused on the sense of belonging that is sometimes associated with culture and the role that individuals felt they played—their identity—within the group(s) to which they felt connected. When participants spoke of being part of bigger groups—community affiliation, nationality, family, race, etc—or of their roles and contributions to those groups, I analyzed the responses for whether or not these groups and roles could have been created, as opposed to occurred naturally without the implementation of Spivak's (1988) strategic essentialism. Admittedly, I aligned with the idea that culture and identity are fabricated, drawing arbitrary lines so there is a structure to live and work within, so what I looked for were the lines and to whose benefit was the resulting structure.

There are features some people identify in an attempt to define culture: "the total way of life of a people…a way of thinking and believing…a storehouse of pooled learning" (Kluckhorn as quoted in Baldwin, Faulkner, and Hecht, 2006) or "the products of social life (what individuals think and do)" (Winthrop as quoted in Baldwin, Faulkner, and Hecht, 2006). One

might then assume that, for a small island nation, being surrounded by water would factor into the perception of *who we are* or *who I am*, however, this point was of mixed opinions with the Dominican participants in this study. When agreeing to speak with me, one participant, Angela, chose to step away from her work desk where a fan helped her battle the heat, but she insisted we sit by a large window so we might catch some of the breeze. Despite her particular needs due to the island climate, she still felt confident saying, "Dominica could be part of the mainland, and people would still think the same. The identity comes from socialization and just happens to be on an island." A number of weeks later, upon Angela's recommendation, I interviewed Janet at her farm, an interview that will be referenced more significantly in later chapters. Janet gave her thoughts of Dominica being an island, stating, "A land mass, like a continent, you have a lot more people, you have a lot more sub-cultures within that one culture. The island can hold just so many people, especially this one. It's an island, it's small. That's the most significant thing to me." Whatever the beliefs of what culture and identity are, and whether the geographical setting matters, the understanding taken from the interview responses in this study was that there were ideas and features thought to be Dominican and to make the people distinct from other Caribbean islanders.

Some Dominicans were not as staunch as others about being completely different from other Caribbean islands. Although not suggesting Dominica mirrors other islands, one participant, Lester (a white, middle-aged man who speaks English and Creole, completed secondary school in Dominica in 1970, and was speaking with me in his office of employment) did acknowledge common traits between Caribbean islands. He recognized having been taught in ways that emphasized similarities between Caribbean islands, recalling,

> If you're learning the history of the British West Indies, there are patterns that each, every island will share, whether it is slavery, sugar production, emancipation, or revolts

> by slaves. All the islands had this so, therefore, it feeds into the local history. I studied in a period when that syllabus of localization had not been developed.

These similar histories of colonialism and slavery serve as explanation for the demographics (many islands having a predominantly black population) and for the use of Creole languages, which, depending on the island, include elements of both African and European languages. Yet, even those who acknowledged these general similarities insisted on stressing the aspects of the island population that do, effectively, make them Dominican. As an outside observer, the long lists of cultural features offered by participants looked a lot like the generic features presented above, but one can ponder whether my perception of a lack of distinction meant culture is non-existent, or if islanders' beliefs that they are distinct, in fact, created their culture. Though, rather than delve too deeply into this query, the focus here was on the perceived features of culture and identity that *are* unique to the island of Dominica and their relationship to education.

Of the factors connecting to cultural traits that were described by participants, the three main features deemed Dominican are language, place of birth, and natural surroundings. In every interview, regardless of the participant's age, gender, race, or location on the island, these three topics were spoken of without provocation beyond asking the initial question of what it means to them to be Dominican. The emphatic mention of these issues as contributions to the sense of culture suggested a high level of pride for who these people felt themselves to be and where they came from. However, as straightforward as language, place of birth, and natural surroundings may seem, their origins for signifying culture are ambivalent due to the multitude of perspectives that can be used when discussing culture.

One could argue a person's identification of culture comes not just with a vision, but a purpose, and Bhabha (1994) believes "Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational" (p. 172). Culture crossing nations and languages is not a natural occurrence; it

requires a vehicle. For my purposes, education as the vehicle was the main focus. In order to suggest where education is taking the postcolonial island of Dominica, there needed to be an understanding of the education's origins. By 1967, nearly 80 years after the establishment of a secondary-level education system in Dominica and a time when some of the participants in this study were students, a nun/teacher at the Convent High School in Roseau reported in *Educating the Adolescent in a West Indian Setting*, "It has been said that Dominica – or the West Indies as a whole – has no national culture" (Evenepoel, 1967, p. 51). What was first asked then was what approach was taken to the making and development of education. To say education impacts culture is true, but there should be acknowledgement of how a culture can create education.

In viewing 1835 statements made by British politician T.B. Macaulay in reference to education within the then-British colony of India, it was clear there was a strong opinion of European knowledge of sciences and languages, specifically English, being superior and of better use than any non-European knowledge. Macaulay stated, "[Britain has] to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue" and, for colonized people, "of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to [their] native subjects" (p. 2). Many may scoff at Macaulay's arrogance, but such was the attitude held when the British were creating education systems in colonies. It could be argued this attitude of English-language superiority is still perpetuated around the world, but rather than broaden the scope, the investigation was be narrowed and continued with the focus on Dominica.

## Language

In the decades following Macaulay's statements, the British colonies continued to be claimed and utilized by Britain and, in the 1880s, James Anthony Froude, investigating the status of the British colonies throughout the Caribbean, reported Dominica was in need of more

attention and Anglicization[8] (L. Honychurch, personal communication, November 5, 2014). Froude stated about Dominica, "Here was all this profusion of nature, lavish beyond all example, and the enterprising youth of England were neglecting a colony which might yield them wealth … leaving Dominica, which might be the garden of the world … as if such a place had no existence" (Froude, 1887, p. 142). In trying to convince England that Dominica needed more attention, it was not difficult for Froude to exploit Britain's pride, declaring the British "have refused to consider that others among our possessions may be in a condition analogous to India" (Froude, 1887, p. 153). When Froude's report, portraying Dominica as being British in ownership but not in civilization, met with the British attitudes for education, it took only six years, arguably quick for the time, for the secondary level Dominica Grammar School to be opened in 1893.

O'Donoghue (2009) focuses on colonialism, education, and social change, with case studies from various former British colonies, suggesting Britain's approaches to education in connection to the world show "in some cases [Britain] was as provider of education models, in others as consumer, and in others yet again as both" (p. 787). In Dominica, Britain was both as it had a vested interest in the success of Dominica's economy and this issue was reflected in the Dominica Grammar School. The school began with 25 male students who were being educated for colonial civil services or plantation management positions. As would be expected with a school formed by the British powers, the language of education was English. This fact spoke volumes about the continuation of Macaulay's opinions on education language, which, as will be shown, did not begin to fade in Dominica for nearly three-quarters of a century after the establishment of the secondary education system, and, to this day, have not fully disappeared.

[8] Froude titled his book of observations *The English in the West Indies; or the Bow of Ulysses* (1887), likening the British use of the West Indies, specifically Dominica, to the Greek story of Ulysses throwing away his bow, wasting prime resources and causing success to decline.

The national language of Dominica is English, however there are other languages that are spoken and were spoken in Dominica before British colonialism. In addition to the Kalinago language, there is the Creole language, sometimes called Kweyol and considered to be a Patois language consisting of elements of French and West African languages. Although these languages are still in existence today, they were not exactly nurtured and maintained during the colonial years. Starting from the earliest days of the Dominican Grammar School and carried on while the other secondary schools of Dominica were founded, English language would light the way, or so it was thought. Learning English, or any language for that matter, is not a negative thing in and of itself, but viewing the learning of English and the use of English in education with the idea that English is somehow superior to any local languages can be detrimental to the continuation of traditional knowledge.

The influential voices of Britain maintained the attitude that the British way was the right way and education and its agents (teachers) should follow suit. This idea was reminiscent of social theorist Michel Foucault's (1977) discussion of "The means of correct training" when he states, "it is precisely they[9] that were gradually to invade the major forms, altering their mechanisms and imposing their procedures" (p. 170). Beginning with using the English language and, by connection, the British colonial structure, there was again an echo of Foucault's (1977) exploration of discipline because, like discipline, the establishment of the secondary level education in Dominica was seen as "…an architecture that would operate to transform individuals: to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry the effects of power right to them, to make it possible to know them, to alter them" (p. 172). With consideration of the interview participants of this study, there was no doubt their Dominican

[9] Foucault is not referring specifically to Dominica, but I am attempting to parallel the British colonizers in Dominica with the *they* in this quotation.

opinions and mentalities were complicated by their British-style education. However, how much the English-language education directly imposed colonial views was not clear-cut and this was where one could begin to see origins of education-based cultural negotiation.

There is a thought that parents wish better for their children and want to give their children that which the parents could not have. For many of the youth of Dominica's late-colonial era, these thought-to-be helpful offerings included not just attending school, but attending school in English so as to set the course to what was deemed to be a prosperous life. Trouillot (1988) remarks, "It is a vivid mark of its past history that the official language of Dominica is English whereas the majority of the population speaks a French-based Creole" (p. 30). While Trouillot is correct that the languages do offer important distinctions in the island's history, to say the majority of people *speak* Creole may be an overstatement as the interviews and observations with this study suggested less Creole fluency, and rather a *familiarity* with the language. The difference between Trouillot's and my observations may be due to changes over time between his and my study. The generational differences were seen in the data collected from the interviews of this research project. Former students of the Dominican secondary school system, now adults and some with children of their own, recalled punishments being handed out by parents and teachers alike in response to youth speaking Patois instead of English. Several research participants who were engaged in education around the island's colony-to-independent transition time described the 'do as I say, not as I do' actions of their parents who would converse in Patois with other adults, but then, citing the importance of education, would insist the adolescent offspring communicate only in English.

I met one participant, Adam, at an art show showcasing Dominican paintings and featuring traditional Creole music. He expressed his thoughts of the importance of his

Dominican culture. A few days after meeting Adam, I joined him in the studio he shared with other local artists for creating his own art. In discussing language, he told me,

> Your mother and your father didn't want you to speak Creole because you had to learn the English and learn it properly and speak it properly. Although they (parents) spoke it (Creole), but they didn't really try to make it matter. It didn't really matter. It was just what people spoke when they weren't being formal. Like in all colonized countries I think, there's a certain way that they think is so-called correct, a sort of correctness in the things that you do, so they look in that way and they think and they move in that way. They want you to learn English, to learn English in that correct way because that is what is right and that is what is correct.

This threat to the survival of Dominican Creole was not met without mild subversion. Despite being told to use English only, and with the risk of receiving corporal punishment, some participants said they listened to the Patois being spoken around them and were able to grasp some of the language. Veronica (my first neighbor in Dominica who welcomed me with her freshly-made guava juice) was one such person who took it upon herself to embrace the Creole language. To express her nature, she explained that when she was in school, she was accelerated through one of her primary school levels because of her advanced learning abilities, but was then held back in Standard Four[10] because she was allegedly rude to the teacher, although she said she did and does simply speak her mind. Veronica told me, "They said that Patois was not relevent. But I didn't let Patois get lost. I still speak it." Unfortunately, this rebellious self-teaching and preservation through observation was often not sufficient for all to fully know the language.

Without a better grasp of the language, there is only so much that can be understood about one's history as an individual and not as a subaltern[11]. This point lends credence and explanation to Rodman's (1992) belief within her studies of self and place that "to hear the

[10] Approximately ten years old

[11] In reference to *subaltern classes*, Spivak (1988) states that "the social groups and elements included in this category represent *the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the* 'elite'" (p.79). Here, the *total Indian population* is replaced by the Dominican population and the *elite* is the British colonial power.

voices of those silenced in island conversations requires listening with all of one's senses" (p. 649); this challenge to listen is because of the strain on spreading local languages due to the physical nature of islands. Gradual expansion of language to more places is hindered by the abrupt boundary of the island shores. As Veronica reminded me, "Patois isn't spoken everywhere, it's local." To take an island's local language to a continental land is possible, but it would most likely be used within the enclaves of the island's diaspora. Combine this point with the intrusion of colonial languages in island life and the local language becomes buried, struggling to survive through remnants of symbolic actions and structures.

Janet described, "When we celebrated independence, that's where our national pride came from. We marched and everyone looked forward to that time. I saw it more in extracurricular activities. We had a drama club, so we would do some cultural dance and things like that." During my field research, secondary schools still put forth dance teams to participate in shows in conjunction with the island's November National Day celebrations. One may observe these clubs and conclude the Creole culture has actually been present within the education system for a half-century; this point, technically, would be correct. However, what was realized was this inclusion of cultural activities took place, as Janet described, as extracurricular endeavors. According to reports and my interviews, during the school days of the 1960s up to mid-1970s, the students of this tropical, banana-growing, eastern Caribbean island were given British-written (Fleming, 1964, p. 8) mathematics problems asking them to calculate British pounds and schillings or measurements of snow. The education system in those not-quite-independent days may have been able to point to representation of local language, culture, and identity, but, when looking back at the cultural negotiation of the time, the perspectives

presented to students appeared skewed in favour of the British system, making connections to the local surroundings confusing.

Younger participants, having experienced their secondary level education after the year 2000, expressed struggles in connecting and communicating with the elder generations of Dominicans due to only knowing spurts of Creole passed down by their parents. One example was Amanda's experience when she would venture with her school to visit the elderly residents in the local village to volunteer time and assistance. Amanda was a woman in her mid-twenties and, having graduated from secondary school around six years ago, worked as a tenant service coordinator at a long-term vacation apartment building catering to tourists and people, like myself, doing temporary research or work on the island. In recollecting her days in secondary school, she explained, "We used to go out and collect food supplies and give out to the less fortunate or the older people, or just visit them and pray with them. I loved that part of it. It was cool to actually go out there in the community and visit." However, in terms of students communicating with the people, she said in many cases, "for the older people that we meet, you'd find probably my teacher speaking Patois." Often, the resident only spoke Patois, and the secondary school students, at least two generations younger than the resident, only conversed in English. In my first-hand experience, within the congregation of a church service I was invited to visit, there were people who spoke only Patois, and the English-speaking preacher of the day did her best to provide translations of some key points and ideas, but admitted she only knew a small amount of the Creole language. The unity between Dominicans, young and old, and the transmission of cultural traits have been stilted because of education's long-time emphasis on English.

Several participants mentioned the use of Creole has become encouraged in recent years, specifically around the time of the National Day and Creole Day celebrations, but I suspected it was a case of too little, too late, and speaking of Creole will continue to dwindle to mere tokenism around the holidays. Janet explained with a skeptical tone, "Today there's a big craze: speak Patois, speak Patois, and days of the month of October leading to Independence where they are trying to force us to speak Patois, but *now* [they] realize that we should have our own language?" People had hoped the language would be maintained and perhaps even find a re-growth, but, as it stood, the status of Patois in Dominica was a clear indication of the cultural duality created: definitely English for *at least* proper, professional, or academic activities and *possibly* Creole among friends and family. With respect to the concept of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991), the idea of the Creole language as a core factor in Dominica's cultural community was battling for survival against the English language's position as a vital tool for economic success. But as was pointed out, there were two other features consistently considered core elements of what makes a person a Dominican. Being born in Dominica was something seen by participants as a definite thread that weaves throughout the fabric of Dominican culture, but it should be realized "place as an anthropological concept is as complex as voice" (Rodman, 1992, p. 641).

## Place of Birth: "This is where I born raised"

*Place of birth* as a core feature within the makeup of a culture points to a sense of a national identity. Dominican Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skerrit, believes finding what it means to be Dominican "is about creating the climate and the social infrastructure to sustain a positive conception of Dominica on the world stage. It is about giving Dominicans reasons other than a sentimental attachment, for identifying with their place [of] birth" (Skerrit, 2008). In exploring

the relationships between identity, boundaries, and borders, Jenkins (2015) discusses the differences of boundaries and borders in terms of the effect of the two on senses of place and social belonging. He suggests "symbolic boundaries (subjective) generate boundaries-in-practice (interaction), which then generate social boundaries (objective)" (p. 11). It could be said for small islands, especially one as small as Dominica, the symbolic boundary, like a political border, is actually very real, because it consists of the coastline, which makes the boundaries-in-practice more automatic. However, while the political and economic adherence to the physical boundary is fixed, there is symbolism in the ocean's tide moving in and out, causing clarity of the perceived coastline boundary to become blurred. The ambiguity or porousness of the island borders lends to questioning the definitiveness of place, and, as a result, of national identity. My observations and interviews highlighted a strong sense of pride with the Dominican people for place of birth, but I also witnessed village council meetings discussing concerns of restoring pride within the people of Dominica. Why people sensed a lack of pride was not clear, but the belief, according to these meetings, was there was a gap between the pride stated and the pride shown. This approach to finding the connection, rather than reconstituting any sense of Dominican being, spoke loudly to people's certainty that there was a reality and responsibility to Dominicanness.

I suggested earlier that for some people, belief of living in a culture and enacting that culture's behaviours provides a sense of belonging. Researching issues pertaining to governance, McCrone and Bechhofer (2008) posit "national identity may then lead to social inclusion or exclusion" (p. 1246), lending to possibilities for individuals to be part of the collective community. Being accepted manifests in different forms and "how claims or attributions are received, assessed, challenged or upheld depends crucially upon how identity

markers [such as birthplace] are interpreted" (p.1247). The common response from participants was anyone born on the island was automatically Dominican. Janet proudly stated that being Dominican was her birth right. Lester believed Dominican people adhere to the notion of "'This is my island. This is where I was born'" and said, "This is the focus of everybody's concept of nationalism, of patriotism, of being." In some cases, Dominican lineage, as opposed to first- or second-generation islanders, was thought to strengthen claims of being Dominican. Lester claimed people are without a doubt Dominican if their "immediate parents are Dominicans," and Josephine, an early childhood educator, listed "Parents are from Dominica" second on her criteria for Dominican identity, right after being born on the island. While no one emphasized that Dominica-born children of immigrants cannot be Dominican, it was interesting to ponder the origins of Dominican identity through place of birth.

McCrone and Bechhofer (2008) argue, "most of the time most people take their national identity for granted, as implicit and unproblematic" (p. 1247). Many did not think about the issue of what makes them a Dominican and simply concluded that they were born on the island just as many others, so there was a national bond (Anderson, 2006). However, to say a person is Dominican because they were born on the island seemed slightly arbitrary given the island's history that led to the current demographics. Much like the populations of Canada or United States, an argument could be made to say that to be Dominican means one's origins are, in fact, from *somewhere else*. If one looks far enough into history, even the Kalinago, the indigenous people of Dominica, are said to have travelled to settle on the island from a continental land location (Discover Dominica Authority, 2013). Whether or not it is beneficial for Dominica to take this approach, analyzing the validity of a national identity based on a common birthplace, is dependent upon the goals of the assessor, but the investigation seemed necessary for Dominicans

and me to understand which aspects were being emphasized and which were being silenced. The validity of birthplace as a feature of culture was irrelevant and what was sought, rather, was the way Dominicans were gathering, relating to, and utilizing this notion of birthplace equating to culture.

For centuries before colonization, Kalinago were born in Dominica. Their name for the island is Waitukubuli, but it is unlikely any non-Kalinago newcomers to the island ever asked if living there would make them Waitukubulians. The Negre Mawon have also been born on the island for many generations, but there have been no requests for island residents to be known as Negre Mawonians either. Instead, being born on the island, one is known as a Dominican: a label stemming from the European-given name, Dominica[12]. Perhaps acceptance of the identification as Dominican can be linked to Bhabha's (1994) belief that "identity is gained from a position of marginality or in an attempt at gaining the centre: in both senses, ex-centric" (p. 177). In the case of Dominica, it was colonial power that took the central position of power until, arguably, the mid-1960s. Until this time, the non-British people were rendered as on the outskirts or, at best, secondary in any role of authority. However, at what point the non-British people first decided to make a move for any semblance of power is debatable.

Trouillot's work in *Peasants and Capital* (1988) states, "political heirs of the nineteenth-century Mulatto Ascendancy (though by no means an exclusively light-skinned group even by today's standards) were at the forefront of the local forces against full political independence in the 1970s" (p. 119). Trouillot's study shows that long before any thoughts of Dominican independence arose, there were classes of non-white, non-British people who had found some

[12] According to a caption and a map on display at the Cultural Centre in Roseau, the name Dominica was given by Christopher Columbus, who never actually set foot on the island and instead named it as he sailed by. The name's origin is from the Spanish *Domingo*, meaning Sunday, which was the day of the week it was when Columbus spotted the island.

financial success by way of various economic sectors (often agriculture) but under the rules and criteria of the British ruling class. Around the turn of the 20th century, the "Colored" elite's "near-total dependence on the colonial state apparatus for their own livelihood indicated their inability to formulate viable alternatives for the country as a whole" (p. 120). The financial perks with these positions continued to flow through the families over the years as business ownership was bequeathed unto new generations. Because of this scenario of inheritance, these families resisted independence from Britain for fear of losing the financial stability provided by continuing to allow Britain to hold Dominica's economic hand. Understandably so, it may be asked at this point what this economic situation has to do with birthplace as culture and identity, and, further still, where education ties in. As recently as the 1970s, on the verge of Dominican independence, there were still apparent mixed emotions for some people in Dominica of whether or not to fully embrace identifying with the island on which they were born or the colonial power that attempted to utilize Dominica as a resource. This uncertainty was not to say the people who were reluctant towards independence did not feel patriotism for Dominica, but rather that somehow their allegiances were to Dominica by birth, but to Britain by budget.

A number of participants raised in the late-colonial/early-independence days spoke in ways that left no suggestions of an internal divide and declared their dedication to bringing people of the island closer together. Alice, whom I met at the library[13] while I searched a variety of locations for primary documents, did not attend formal post-secondary education after graduating from secondary school in 1996, but continued to do her own research on Dominica

[13] In the library, the literature I found specifically pertaining to Dominica was all catalogued in the Special Collections section, which required me to ask a librarian to retrieve any books or documents I wished to view. On the shelves, available to all library visitors without the need for a special request were the history books with titles representing the rest of the world—North America, Africa, Britain, Europe, Asia, The West Indies. It is interesting to note the symbolism here that, although Dominica might be seen as special, it could also be considered hidden, and therefore silenced.

and assisted youth with their school research projects. She told me one of her favorite characteristics of her home was she could "feel the togetherness of the people on the island." Alice's sense of unity may be a result of the generation before her, with people like Janet who believed all Dominicans have "a responsibility [to be] part of a building process to build a nation." Janet spent time living in the United States (a point that holds greater significance in Chapter Four's look at Culture and Migration) and she said she "came back so that I could help build this country, do my part." While Janet's views represented a noble and admirable pursuit, to *build this country*, for her, meant avoiding a situation where the "island will be owned by foreigners and we'll either be enslaved all over again or we'll be working for them."

This sense of building together may have brought people together, but perhaps Hall (1991) is correct in saying, "the notion that identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call themselves the same, is nonsense. As a process, as a narrative, as a discourse, it is always told from the position of the Other" (p. 49). To be *called* Dominican, according to the interview responses mentioned earlier, one must be *born* a Dominican, but it may be suggested that to claim to be Dominican is simply to claim to not be British. Making this distinction may not be a conscious effort in Dominica these days, but, as a postcolonial island, it would be understandable to attempt to gain control of one's culture and identity by ensuring they are seen as something other than the colonial power. It is ironic that it is the European-imposed name, Dominica, that has been used by the historically-Othered populations of the island to reach for that centre, but, regardless of how the identification came to be, I saw it as a marker of where a person was born and as a population unifier, regardless of familial origins.

It was mentioned above that the push for local control really took force during the 1960s. This was a time when, as various participants described, the then-island-premier, E.O. LeBlanc,

began a campaign for creating a "Dominica for Dominicans." It was not discovered in my research whether this claim to self-determination was first made under LeBlanc's leadership, or if it had begun earlier and he merely provided structure to the movement. Nonetheless, it was certainly a time when identity markers would have been emphasized. Whether or not this search for identity markers was the reason for the participants' instincts to include place of birth in what makes someone Dominican, the act was a prime example of the strategic essentialism mentioned earlier. When language is not as definitive as hoped for in bringing the population together, then surely a common place of birth will do. If the interview responses were the determinants for identifying cultural features, then being born on the island made one Dominican and some believed that, by association, the birthplace also made all the experiences had in the island living specifically Dominican experiences.

If education was included in the experiences of island living (and it was here) then the colonial factors involved with Dominica's educational development may again suggest place of birth is not as strong a feature as is believed. While education, ideally, would have been complementing the sense of identity found in one's birthplace, as highlighted in the "Dominica for Dominicans" movement, the crucial elements of the education system were glaringly foreign. The teachers themselves were predominantly from either England or from other, larger islands in the Caribbean that had also undergone the colonial experience (Evenepoel, 1967). Stella was a retired teacher who had joined the profession in the late-colonial/early-independence days of Dominica. I learned it was not for a love for island youth's education or a desire to teach that saw her become a teacher; her teacher training was a seemingly sink-or-swim system. Stella became what was called a pupil-teacher due to the fact she, and other Dominican-born teachers

of the day, had barely completed secondary school, or sometimes had not completed secondary school, before being thrown into the profession.

In the early 1960s, because of the economic, social, and physical hurdles to attending secondary school, Stella attended primary-level school in the north end of the island, but could not attend secondary schools in the southern capital city of Roseau. As she explained,

> We had very few roads. We used to travel by boat. There was a thing called a launch and you'd have to take that launch from Portsmouth to Roseau. So it was difficult. Money was scarce. Parents had it really hard … Each village had a [primary] school and then you would reach as far as something called Standard 7[14] and in Standard 7 you would write an exam. If you pass that exam, it is an equivalent to somebody who is going to secondary school and reaches Form 3[15].

In some cases, the non-Dominican teachers would choose students to move on and take on professions without any consideration for students' interests or desires. Stella wanted to be a nurse, but once she passed her exam, she was told she was to become a teacher. She recalled, "You could start teaching and during the course of the time, you'd go to college. Now it's different. You have to go to [teachers] college first."

According to the report, *Educating the Adolescent in a West Indian Setting* (1967), in 1966, 134 of 470 teachers in Dominica were pupil-teachers. Pupil-teachers had, at most, partial secondary-level education if they had not written the Standard 7 exam. Stella recollected, for teacher training, "you had to write exams. You had to write a first year exam, a second year exam, a third year exam, student exam, and then you are well qualified. You could be a principal at that time," but this promotion occurred only after she had begun teaching primary school. Although there may be an argument that, while not an ideal situation, there *were* Dominicans being placed as teachers, the training provided could hardly be seen as emphasizing the national

[14] Standard 7 is roughly equivalent to Grade 8 by today's North American standards.
[15] Form 3 is roughly equivalent to Grade 11 by today's North American standards.

identity claimed with a Dominican birth. At the time of the 1967 report, there was "no provision for full training of teachers" (p. 43), and any local training taking place was done as a guided study with leadership split between University of the West Indies, the British-founded post-secondary institution in affiliation with University of London until 1962 (The University of the West Indies, 2013), and Canadian Teacher Trainers (Evenepoel, 1967). Evidently, not only was content of Dominican education Anglicized, but so was pedagogy. This act did not mean the education was necessarily turning the teachers and students into purely British-cultured people, but it did mean there was, yet again, a stage for cultural negotiation with a firm push toward the colonial mindset. In strongly-toned but ambivalently-worded statements, Stella exulted in pride of being Dominican, but simultaneously believed, "The British way was very good. That is how I taught." Stella's dedication and pride for her island, claiming the culture and setting are very unique, was muted in her suggestion that the British education system was the best system for the Dominican people.

Somewhere among the Dominican attempts to hold on to local identity while also succeeding in the British-based education system, the confusion must have been noticed, evidenced in 1964 when W.G. Fleming, visiting Dominica from Ontario College of Education at University of Toronto, made recommendations that "the possible development of a West Indies substitute for overseas examinations and certificates should be welcomed and encouraged" (p. 43). Theoretically, this change required of teachers an increased content knowledge of at least the Caribbean, if not Dominica specifically, and, to an extent, Fleming's advice was taken. In the late-1970s, efforts began for the Caribbean Examination Council (commonly known as the CXC) to replace the Cambridge and London General Certificates of Education, which were achieved by writing British 'O'-level exams (UNESCO, 1982). This change was only to an

extent because it does not appear much investigation was made into whether or not the major-exam-style of assessment was appropriate; instead, the content was simply localized and the exam title changed. The British structure did not seem to be in question.

It was surprising that while Janet felt Dominican because she had been born there and contributed to the nation, she had never stopped to recognize the British elements that may have influenced her senses of culture or identity. Once those changes from 'O'-level to CXC began, there had been an assumption that education in Dominica was Dominican education. People like Janet had not considered her teachers who had led "students through the minefields of conceptualizing culture often assume that place is unproblematic. It is simply location. It is where people do things"[16] (Rodman, 1992, p. 640). Rodman reminds, "Places are not inert containers. They are politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions" (p. 641). Given participants' lack of acknowledgement for potential influences from a colonialized education, it would seem there had been acceptance for the way things were and perhaps hoped for change, but little question for how it all came to be. This lack of inquiry was not a comment on participants' abilities or interests in examining who they are, but instead a critique of an education system that opted to emphasize one culture and silence the history of another.

In early days of independence, there were apparent intentions of closing the gap between education and Dominican national identity. The 1982 UNESCO-published report, *The Commonwealth of Dominica Education Sector Survey: An Analysis of the Education and Training System and Recommendations for its Development*, illustrates education reform plans focused along three major axes, one of which was linking education with community and

[16] Rodman's words here were actually in reference to anthropologists, but they do seem fitting for the British or British-trained teachers who educate in ways as if a foreign culture can be implanted without regard for the nuances of Dominica.

national development (p. 12). While this proposal seemed promising for bringing island culture and identity to the forefront of education, expectations for structural change were still being aligned with development, which, at that time, was grounded in an agricultural industry with a continued reliance on British markets.

To teach and prepare students for this type of society required emphasizing financial success, and Britain was still setting the bar. The final report from the Educational Planning and Administration Workshops held in Roseau in 1985 declared "There was a marked absence of Government planning" (Dominica National Commission for UNESCO) due, I believe, to the Government's focus on more immediate economic gains, and not a long term plan that considered long term consequences. It was no wonder after nearly twenty years of independence, in 1996, reports by the Project Management Unit of the Ministry of Education were *still* setting goals of providing better local training and upgrading teachers in terms of content and pedagogy. Indeed, teacher development is of great importance for an education system, but, by looking at the pace of change and goals set for the development, there was evidence, once again, a sense of culture in education was taking second place to the perceived need for education to prepare students and teachers to engage with the *superior* British ways. Being born in Dominica may make a person Dominican in title, but education has potential to help or hinder how a person connects with that birthplace. Education can not only influence how one perceives their sense of place, but also sway one's engagement with that place's space.

**Natural Surroundings: "We've got rivers and waterfalls"**

There was a joke in Dominica that if Christopher Columbus were to return to the Caribbean today, Dominica would be the only island he would still recognize. Some took this joke as a sign of slow development. Some looked at it as an indicator of strong natural

preservation. The indigenous name for the island mentioned earlier, Waitukubuli, means "tall is her body." Dominica was often referred to as *The Nature Isle of the Caribbean*, because of its mountainous terrain (a constant leg workout for the unadapted visitor) and its lush foliage. Due to the mountains, the shifting weather patterns in Dominica's vicinity are often slowed around the mountain causing, in my experience, an almost-daily rain shower. This occurrence explained how the surrounding plant life remained so healthy, and also why so many interview participants pointed out, almost as if it were a party line, that they have beautiful waterfalls and 365 rivers, "one for every day of the year." The common reference to the physical features of the island spoke to an engrained sense of the importance of the natural surroundings to the island(er)'s being. One interesting observation was that this mentality was predominant in all participants, but the relevance of the fact Dominica is an island seemed present with some, but not with others.

There were some who held opinions that surrounding natural features could only occur because Dominica is an island. I met Diane at the snackette[17] where she worked in a neighborhood of homes, family bakeries, and small-scale fishing boats. When we began our interview, the first point she made immediately after introducing herself was her connection to the physical feature of the island, with her saying, "I love to be a Dominican, because we are the Nature Isle of the Caribbean." When I expanded my questioning and inquired about the relevance of Dominica being an island surrounded by water, Diane said confidently, "Yes, I would say it makes a difference, because we are the only Caribbean island that has 365 rivers and the other islands don't have much rivers like we have." While the query I was attempting to highlight, the level of significance of island features such as supposed boundedness or insularity, was not quite recognized by Diane, she did have an idea of what being an island meant and that

[17] A snackette is a small, restaurant-like establishment that sells a select few food products and drinks.

idea contributed to the way she saw her culture's shape. Other participants had different views of the pertinent features of an island, and also disagreed with Diane by suggesting being an island had little to no influence on the island's culture.

When asked about whether Dominica being an island mattered to the culture, Amanda said no. She explained, "I've travelled and I feel like I'm in Dominica sometimes. I guess we're a small island and there are other countries which are similar to it. [Being a physical island surrounded by water], it's not a factor at all." The slightly ironic part, which I explore more in Chapter Three, was Amanda had plans for her future that would require her to leave the island temporarily. Her need to move from the island suggested Dominica being an island was significant. The main feature noticed here, however, was from these attitudes, one may suggest the level of pertinence the land plays in the Dominican culture and identity is unclear, but I would argue there was sense of belonging to the land, even if the people were unsure of why.

The history of Dominica is one of engaging with the land (Honychurch, 1995; 1997). Dominica was one of the last Caribbean islands to be officially colonized by a European power. The reasons for this comparative delay vary, and perhaps all are correct, but there is often emphasis put on two reasons. Firstly, it is said Europeans were afraid to plant any flag in the island because the Kalinago, historically known to outsiders as Caribs, had an unfounded but nonetheless effective reputation as aggressive, even cannibalistic people (Honychurch, 1997). Secondly, and more directly related to the land, the terrain was too rugged, and the indigenous people of Dominica knew how to use it to resist anyone trying to conquer (Honychurch, 1997). In another form of resistance during the pre-colonial days, and again incorporating Dominica's land structure, African slaves being held on already-colonized neighboring islands would sometimes escape to Dominica and use the mountains and forests as effective hiding places.

Even without the colonial-era use of the land, Dominica's national slogan seems to still be fitting for the island's essence: Apres bondie, c'est la ter, which is the Creole for, roughly, "After God, there is the land." From the earliest points of its history up to the present day, the natural surroundings play an important role in how the people see their island, as well as how they engage with it. The reasons for engagement, however, seemed to have changed with European/colonial encounters.

It is interesting to notice England's geographic context from which it presupposed an understanding of what should and should not be imposed on any colonial island. As Deloughrey (2007) suggests in her comparison of Caribbean and Pacific island literature, "England's claim to islandness, a suppression of Wales and Scotland, derives from the political establishment of the United Kingdom ... [as] England constituted itself as an island by its expansion into the territory of its immediate neighbors" (p. 7). This self-imposed islandness by England, laying claim to being an island and understanding the nuances of island dynamics, coupled with the establishment of colonial structures and systems, such as education, is reminiscent of a human attaching a false tail to his belt and then telling a dog how best to catch her own real tail. This presumptuous attitude toward islands was not, however, born of England. Even before Columbus left Europe to stumble upon the Caribbean and American lands, reference to Antillia, an area of islands of utopic characteristics, was made in Europe and became "a discursive construction of predetermined islands that were literally mapped before they were found" (Deloughrey, 2007, p. 10). Essentially, Antillia was an imagined island and, real or not, the consensus became that Europeans would become the eventual dwellers of this dreamland.

It may be argued the British sense of how to engage with and utilize islands stems from this notion of Antillia — always believing what was imagined should and would come to fruition

— coupled with Froude's implanted idea that Dominica is the *garden of the world* in need of British use. In the case of the British in Dominica, the island had been exposed to European influence through French settlers, but the belief was Dominica could be made better by the institution of British systems, language, and agricultural business, a plantocracy, as shown by Trouillot (1988) and generalized as a British Caribbean phenomenon by Olwig (1993). The exploitation of agriculture for the European economy was done with fruit crops like bananas and coconuts, bananas becoming the main export around the 1950s, and carried on as a financially successful undertaking until peaking in 1988 (Slinger-Friedman, 2009). Although some may say agriculture within international markets actually aided the island, to have it take place under Britain's thumb certainly caused some long-term drawbacks. Perhaps the British economic system, like the education system, just did not match Dominica well. Trouillot (1988) suggests,

> Dominica was meant to become a custom-made society, one that should have evolved, in space and time, according to a mercantilist schedule attuned to the particular demands of European accumulation. That it was never so, that no Caribbean society ever fitted perfectly the master plans designed in London, Paris, Madrid, or Amsterdam should not surprise us.

Yet, despite Trouillot's comments, the cultural confusion appears to carry on as priorities in Dominica continue to focus on money and development, even in relation to people's embrace of the land. Even with its small size, there was still a sense of multilocality (Rodman, 1992) in Dominica, where "a single physical landscape can be multilocal in the sense that it shapes and expresses polysemic meanings of place for different users" (p. 647). Despite various Dominican histories being rooted in engagement with the land, when the colonial approach to using the land for economic gain was factored in, it was no wonder the sense of building a *better* Dominica was passed on through colonialized education, resulting in a Dominican population that perceived a comradery based on their seemingly nationalist hopes of island development.

Several participants spoke of wanting to contribute to the development of the island, as was shown with Janet. They believed education could be a main factor for individual and island success, but among the opinions on their education, some participants, representatives from both the colonial and independent eras, made it known their secondary school education experiences did not provide a sense of connection to the culture or the island. Josephine remembered when there was a change in the system, and the few agriculture-related classes taught in school were removed from the curriculum and became agriculture clubs in which students could participate. The original agriculture classes were used to prepare students to be able to enter positions on the fruit plantations, and, when the system changed in hopes of creating more inclusive education, as Lester quipped, "they threw the baby out with the bathwater." Lester was able to comment on the movement away from agriculture, because he was raised on a plantation and witnessed the ebbs and flows of the agriculture industry, including the changes in the labor force. He explained that with the adapted education system, "everybody was going to do bookwork, academic bookwork," and farming would be the work of the uneducated.

Agriculture's presence, according to Amanda (the participant most recently a secondary school student) had increased in tertiary education, but this educational path would be available to students only after years of colonialized education shaping their visions of the purposes of education beyond secondary school. Both Stella (of an older generation) and Amanda believed the definitions and standards of success young adults adhered to guide people away from the land, or toward the land only with priorities of economic grandeur. Stella, whose youngest son was in his mid-twenties, opined, "some of them believe that when they go to secondary school or they go to college, they are not supposed to dirty their hands. They need that white collar job. Their hands are not supposed to be dirty. So you find very few, the minority, go into

agriculture." Within the same vein, Amanda expressed her paradoxical opinions that because Dominica is the Nature Isle, it should emphasize agriculture more in schools, stating, "In college here, there's a section where you can actually go in and plant stuff and go out and feed the animals and stuff like that. It's more practical"; "[but] it would be a success, yes, if you could get a white collar [job]." Perhaps there was a time when the land and business went hand in hand and so, culture and business for Dominica could also coincide. However, since as early as the mid-1960s, the divorce began and the duality set in with people still feeling the land was part of who they were, while also feeling the land was not the prosperous path.

For youth, engaging with the land, as Angela remembered, was a form of "punishment for getting bad grades. It's his own land, but it's not a white-collar job. A white-collar job is 'better' than working the land." She believes that for anyone who related to the land in this way, "They have not been emancipated." The disconnect between education and the land was not a new phenomenon for Dominica, as is shown in a 1965 report which provides the opinion,

> One evil … in the field of education, particularly in the secondary school, is the belief … that when you go to a secondary school work with the hand is a disgrace. This false pride is a handicap to the economic and social progress of Dominica. With it goes the deep seated idea that the secondary school is a means of putting you in a higher class of society (Stevens as quoted by Scobie, 1965, p. 39).

It seemed the participants wanted to simultaneously hold on to the sacredness of the land-culture connection while also see development, sometimes through use of the land, which perhaps spoke to a form of multilocality, but occurring within one individual's mind instead of between two distinct parties, as Rodman has described. Even when there was recognition of the contradiction, participants showed their beliefs that, as unfortunate as it was, earning money takes precedence over conserving the natural surroundings. As Stella described, "we have lovely flora and fauna, true, but that doesn't bring enough money and we need money. We need money to sustain

ourselves. We need money to provide. We need money to pay our bills." Money, supposedly, equals a good-quality life, and money in Dominica, according to Amanda, comes from being educated to see "you work in a bank … you teach, you work at the ministry for the government." This mentality seemed to stem from the idea of the colonial days that the best course was to go to school, learn what was taught, pass the exam, obtain the certificate, and then find a government job. The problem was this mentality began in a time when the government work was under the guise of staying close to the land because agriculture was a core industry. The duality of loving the land while siding with those who exploited it was there, but less pronounced than today. This issue carried through the years and was seen in this study's participants, but the proposal of adapting any systems so people could find jobs that really do care for the land was thought to be a long-term approach, and the participants felt they needed jobs immediately. This dilemma is all too common for small islands.

In an investigation of education for sustainable development for small islands, Crossley and Sprague (2014) illustrate, "Early work on education considered the challenges of scale, isolation and dependency, recognising that small [sometimes island] states were not simply scaled down versions of larger countries but have a socio-cultural ecology of their own" (p. 87). Participants attended school where, as they told, they learned about science, computers, and business, all admirable pursuits, but had to discover on their own that, in a small island setting, there are only so many people, and working with economies of scale can be difficult. There was a limit to the number of plantation managers needed in the colonial economy, and there was also a saturation line for accountant positions today. Smallness, particularly for islands, tends to lead

to monopoly provision and economies of scope[18] (Baldacchino, 2004, p. 272), and earning income does not always follow the school to employment route. However, even though this linear approach was not conducive to Dominica's reality, the aim for it was still perpetuated.

Participants discussed working multiple jobs to earn a living income, but maintained the idea that engaging in more training courses would help to acquire a *real job*. Stella explained that her youngest son "wants a government job. He wants something to do. He wants the employment so he can get a salary at the end of the month." Meanwhile, her other son, the second of three, was "working at the airport. He's an air traffic controller. He has his job, but he does other little things apart from the job [like managing tourist accommodations]. You see, he's an entrepreneur. And then he has his little cultivation in the garden. But he knows he has a job." People of Stella's generation have witnessed and experienced *getting by* through multiple jobs by necessity, not by choice, and, because of the hard work with small pay-off, emphasized hopes their children will not seek a livelihood in agriculture. Seemingly, there was a colonially-instilled economic structure adhered to, making people believe they need to *keep up*. One question not many appeared to be asking was whether this drive for financial success, which seemed to move away from the land, was therefore moving away from the perceived essence of the people. The problem, as Janet believed, was "we're independent for, what, probably thirty years… now we're kind of catching our feet still after thirty years to stand on our own feet economically." I believed the real issue was the approach being taken; this approach began in education.

In recent years, the secondary education system in Dominica removed the need for students to pass entrance exams to move from primary to secondary school, and, instead, there

[18] In short, economies of scope, as opposed to economies of scale, occur because the island market for some industries is limited to a small population. The result is that people tend to dabble in multiple industries in order to accumulate the profits and income that would equate to a single industry under the economies of scale model.

was an implementation of a universal education structure. This structure meant every student had the opportunity to attend secondary school, regardless of any socio-economic status. However, when observing this seemingly egalitarian education structure, Hall's (1991) words, "universal is always in quotation marks" (p. 68), were always in mind. The consideration for what *universal* insinuates for an education system at large and for students as individuals had to be made in order to unveil some of the impacts of the education system upon the people.

The use of universal education was a relatively new format for Dominica, but one might argue it perpetuated the colonial attitudes imposed long ago. First, *universal* may suggest an all-encompassing style of education, which is positive in minimizing discriminatory features, but makes an assumption all students can benefit from the same style of classroom and learning. Second, by labeling education as universal, there may be a connotation that the education will place students on par and in good stead with students anywhere, even beyond the island setting, which simultaneously perpetuates the notion of being a globalized society and strained the Dominican vision of being unified through a mutual connection to the island. Rodman (1992) suggests "the people we study in non-Western, less industrialized countries [such as small islands] may have even more immediate and full relationships with place insofar as time-space relations are less fragmented and they retain more local control over their physical and social landscapes" (p. 640). Admittedly, there was a sense of mutual freedom among the people as they felt no restraints when picking a piece of fruit from a neighbor's tree. So I was told, this attitude had been part of the relationship of local friendliness for generations and with consideration to the joke about Columbus recognizing Dominica, it may be true there had not been a great deal of change to the time-space relations in Dominica in terms of *how* the space

was used, but there was an apparent adjustment in the big-picture attitude of *why* the space was used.

The once-colonially-imposed idea of using the land for economic benefits was presented by participants, sometimes reluctantly, as Dominica engaging in international activities was not a negative point. However, observations made and responses received in this study suggested there was still reliance on the non-Dominican world to *save* Dominica by visiting and paying for tours of rivers and waterfalls. Although the participants claimed a strong identity with their island, as a result of colonialized educational priorities imposed over a century ago and remaining in the system's background, the public focus appeared to have shifted from loving the land because of identification with it to loving the land for financial success and a *better life*.

## Summary

For such a small island, there were many features and factors to be considered when assessing the relationship between education and cultural negotiation in Dominica. Shown here is not so much *how* Dominicans have negotiated their culture(s), but what the influences were and where pressure came from in connection to an education system that stems from a colonial base. While all participants had an opinion for what made Dominican culture, it was commonly found that few considered the origins of the importance of these features. And while many held the belief Dominica has emerged from colonial ties, the secondary education structure continued to maintain a British structure, causing many Dominicans to feel, as Janet said of education, like they should "look at white people as better people—more educated, more intelligent than us." In his analysis of working-class students in England, Willis (1977) concludes, "Racism therefore divides the working class both materially and ideologically" (p. 152). Dominica could certainly be seen as part of Britain's working class, given the plantation economy that was established

(Trouillot, 1988), and that working class was definitely split with the British colonizers being the leaders and the Colored elite (Trouillot, 1988) and peasantry (Trouillot, 1989) vying for stronger economic positions. This message of hierarchy that Janet received from her education began long ago and has not gone away.

While emphasis on race was not as blatant among younger participants, there were still tendencies to equate success with values that were implemented by colonialized education, such as obtaining an education to market one's skills to find a *real job* in order to make money and have a *better life* like the people on television or YouTube. Rodman (1992) asks, "How do we decenter this approach so that the 'school of the world' is not dominated by *our* (Western) schools of thought and *our* worlds?" (p. 645). As it was, cultural negotiation was not a phenomenon where Dominicans select features of culture to live by forever. The participants had been raised with a sense of nationalism, which created a sense of unity, but were taught the so-called ideals of rising to the white-collar positions, which took the attention away from the island.

It would seem each participant lived with two contrasting minds, and believed both were correct. The mixed cultural messages became *Embrace Patois, but only English will bring success. Be proud to be Dominican, but the people of North America and United Kingdom know best. Love the land, but, if you can help it, don't touch it*. These messages are obviously very simplified, and I am not suggesting all or any Dominicans consciously hold these attitudes. These messages are, nonetheless, what Dominican people have had to contend with as a result of British colonialism that seems to linger. According to Bhabha (1994), "The very possibility of cultural contestation, the ability to shift the ground of knowledges, or to engage in the 'war of position', marks the establishment of new forms of meaning, and strategies of identification" (p.

162). Dominica was engaged in cultural negotiation and, despite declarations of distinct identity, had not broached real cultural contestation. Although aspects of Dominica's change and development may have created comfort, there were elements of the culture people held as stable, but were becoming tokenized. At the 34th Anniversary of Independence celebration, Dominican Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit declared, "Dominica is today a country with a proud and unique identity!" (Skerrit, 2012). The participants' sense of nationalism illuminated a belief that Skerrit is correct in one sense, but colonialism remains.

## Chapter Three – Thoughts on Migration after Colonialized Education: "Overseas is where the opportunities are"

Flying from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island to Dominica was not simple. I first flew to Toronto, Ontario, spent a night in layover, and then, the next morning I flew to Barbados, a flight hub for journeying to smaller Caribbean islands. By the time the regional plane was prepared to leave Barbados, we were an hour and half behind schedule with no explanation; there was nary a sigh nor grumble from passengers on their way to their home islands. The woman sitting next to me on the plane told me the delay was common. What I did not expect was that, instead of a direct line to the Melville Hall Airport[19] in Dominica, the flight was from Barbados to Antigua for a passenger drop-off and pick-up, and then from Antigua to Dominica.

Even arriving in Dominica long after sunset, I could tell the mountainous and forested terrain was not exaggerated by pictures seen and stories heard before leaving Canada. My taxi climbed the steep hills, brushing against the branches of fruit trees that grew alongside the narrow roads. The airport was across the island from the capital city of Roseau, which is the area I needed to be, and the infrastructure had to be traversed diligently. While on the way to my temporary home, the driver said, "Keep an eye out for a guy in a white shirt. He's a friend who's a police officer and got called on shift. He needs a lift to work." Eventually, we spotted the man standing on the side of the inclined road. He climbed in the back seat, and we continued driving. A half-hour later, the taxi stopped at the building where I would stay the first few weeks of my exploration. This sundry journey was well worth the experiences of Dominica, but I now know anyone considering travel to Dominica has to really want to go; patience *is* a virtue. This experience caused me to think about how and why Dominicans might move, whether it is between Caribbean islands or to larger continental places, and then perhaps return to Dominica.

[19] The airport has since been renamed to Douglas-Charles Airport

This chapter explores the relationship between people's experiences with the colonialized education system in Dominica and those people's perceptions of the need for migration. The overarching premise thus far in this thesis has been that, as a result of colonialized education, the people I spoke to during interviews and the observations I made all evoke a mental duality among Dominicans. They were proudly nationalistic while also seeking island change and development more closely aligned with cultural and economic standards set by the British metropole during the colonial era and so-called developed countries in more recent times. Within this chapter, I present and discuss various interview participants' comments on the issues of education and migration and conclude with the duality being analyzed for its continued validity when considering people's thoughts and feelings about migration.

In this study, I formally interviewed only Dominicans who were residents of the island and, I did not incorporate anyone who currently makes up the Dominican diaspora in other places. This residency, however, did not mean the participants had never left Dominica. I included people who have ventured beyond the island, whether for a short or long span of time, and then returned to their island of birth. The influences and impacts of small island migration are said by some to be unique in comparison to continental or large island migration. In hopes of gaining a general understanding of small island migration, I examine the various approaches to the phenomenon. Next, in an attempt to show a broader consideration for the variables playing into a Dominican's sense of migration, this chapter presents analysis based on three general categories: those who have migrated and have since returned to Dominica; those who feel they want to migrate, but have not yet done so; and those who now have thoughts and hopes for the possibilities of their children's migration. While looking at the variables that emerged from the

interviews done, the question asked was whether or not it was the colonialized education that contributed and perpetuated any perceptions of the needs for migration.

There is a belief among scholars of islands and of Dominica (Connell, 2007; Seller, 2005) that migration is a core part of island life, but the drive behind the act and the features looked for in choosing a new destination can speak to one's self image, as well as the opinions of one's home island. Invariably, the participants in this study had at least one friend or relative who had moved away from Dominica to a larger, more economically developed place, such as Canada, USA, or Britain, and did not show any intentions of returning for more than a visit. But at the same time, while strolling along a small beach (leisure beaches in Dominica generally being small in size and number) I encountered several people who were born and raised in Britain by Dominican parents and were visiting their parents who had since retired back to Dominica. These people had friends, families, and jobs back in Britain and, at the time of speaking with them, felt a tie to Dominica through their familial background, but did not think they would ever leave Britain for good to live in Dominica. In most of the cases where these people visiting Dominica spoke about migration, employment was a factor for why out-migration occurred in the first place, or for why there is reluctance to consider permanent in-migration.

While exploring issues involved with island migration, Connell (2007) stated, "Migration remains, in different forms, a straightforward strategy of moving from a poorer area to a richer one in search of social and economic mobility" (p. 457). This opinion is unfortunately a prevailing one, and perpetuates a defeatist attitude that the *poor* island either remains so while the inhabitants disperse to *rich* places to seek their individual fortunes, or, if the emigrants keep home islands in mind, economic flourishes in the *poor* place occur through remittances. These scenarios equally point to reliance on the world beyond the island. The three general economic

strategies suggested to small islands over the years are MIRAB (**Mi**gration, **R**emittances, **A**id, and **B**ureaucracy), introduced by Bertram and Watters in 1985, SITE (**S**mall **I**sland **T**ourist **E**conomies), coined by McElroy in 2006, and PROFIT (**P**eople (immigration), **R**esources, **O**verseas management (diplomacy), **FI**nance, and **T**ransport), presented by Baldacchino, also in 2006 (Oberst & McElroy, 2007, p. 165). While this thesis is not the forum for analysis weighing the pros and cons of each strategy, what I highlight is that each, in its own way, includes movement of people in and out of the island setting, and look to some form of outside assistance, rather than, as Hau'ofa (1993) said, "any real economic productivity" (p. 4) that might establish more sustainable solutions that could include outside involvement, but not rely on it.

Hau'ofa's (1993) innovative approach to the islands of Oceania brought about a new vision that islands are not small, insular, and isolated entities, but are actually all connected through the sea, making them quite large. He tells his readers, "the idea of smallness is relative; it depends on what is included and excluded in any calculation of size" (p. 6). One's decisions of what to include and exclude when thinking about islands may not change the occurrence of migration, but may influence how or why one migrates. Islands, especially small ones, have limitations and can only support so many people. However, what I believed was in need of change were participants' attitudes on why migration can be valuable. While I did not encounter literature proposing the existence of colonial mandates encouraging colonized people to migrate, the focus should not be strictly on what was officially written, but also on the behavior of the *ordinary people* who act based on perceptions of their best interests (Hau'ofa, 1993, p. 15). These perceptions and the accompanying behaviour, however, can stem from the opinions projected by those in dominant positions, which have influences on "people's self-image and on the ways that they cope with their situations" (Hau'ofa, 1993, p. 3). In this study, education was

looked at as having the potential to be a dominant or authoritative institution and migration as an option for coping with some of the situations Dominicans deal with, whatever they may be.

Connell (2007) provides overviews of areas of island life that might push someone to consider migration. Of the points touched upon, most pertinent to Dominica was the idea that "Problems have intensified with the shift from an older reliance on commodities towards a more diversified but less protected economy, involving the liberalization of trade and the multinationalization of production" (p. 458). Connell shows, "This has been especially challenging for countries producing sugar and bananas, notably the island states of the eastern Caribbean" (p. 458). These problems are indeed real, but the intensity of them may be subject to perspective. Connell is speaking of economies, again, relying on engagement with outside, perhaps continental, places. As was mentioned in Chapter Two, Dominica did well as a banana producing island, but the economic success was heavily reliant upon a preferential trade agreement with European markets that was discontinued in the early 1990s (Slinger-Friedman, 2009). Dominica still produces bananas, along with other fruit crops, but, as Connell says,

> Agricultural work has lost prestige and the relatively limited and declining participation of young men in the agricultural economy is ubiquitous. Changes in values, following increased educational opportunities and the expansion of bureaucratic (largely urban) employment, have further oriented migration streams outwards, as local employment opportunities have not kept pace with population growth (pp. 457–458).

Often, as I sat on my apartment's balcony looking out at the avocado, orange, and coconut trees across the road, I would see men carrying a ladder and an empty sack disappear among the trees and then reappear ten minutes later with the sack full of some type of fruit. While this fruit picking happened, Nathan, the son of the family who owned the unit I was staying in would sometimes come around the corner with oranges, tangerines, bananas, and plantains for me. Usually, as he handed me the bag of freshly picked fruit, Nathan would ask if everything with

my accommodation was fine and if I needed anything. This check-in was part of his way of showing continued hospitality for me, who was renting the unit and contributing to his family's income. However, his intentions were sometimes to initiate conversation beyond the state of my stay.

Nathan's family dabbled in guest accommodations, but began doing so only after their success in agriculture began to decrease. The family, like so many Dominicans in the agriculture sector, did not simply give up on fruit crops and continued to use fruit for partial income, but hoped that Nathan's generation would only have to endure the labor of harvesting until they found more stable jobs. Nathan's older brother migrated to Canada in pursuit of education and employment not offered in Dominica, and, while Nathan did not express wanting to leave his home, he wanted a *real job*. What Nathan wanted to discuss with me were ideas of development, ranging from thoughts of how to bring in more guests for his family's apartments to strategies to bolster the national economy. Despite my allusions to any ideas of revamping and honing in on the agricultural sector, Nathan seemed cautiously more interested in new, more sustainable industries. I say cautiously because Nathan was looking for possibilities for Dominica to introduce industries that could provide jobs and money for people without a need for a long-term investment, but while keeping damage to the natural state of the island to a minimum.

When speaking to Nathan's mother, Stella, she suggested the people of Dominica "need money now," and that, despite the recognition of the connection between agriculture and food supply, the desire for income far outweighs any thoughts of contributing to farming. In a study done on Dominica's use of primary products, Peteru, Regan, and Klak (2010) found that "Most of the young people are less connected to the land and sea than previous generations. Many Dominicans and especially younger ones yearn for greater connections to the globalizing world

and are less content practicing traditional lifestyles" (p. 132). Between Nathan, Stella, and the conclusions of the study just mentioned, I could see it was not entirely a case of people having lost a sense of care for the land (as shown by Nathan's hope for a profitable venture that can be made with minimal harm to the physical island) but there may be a need for a shift in the perceptions of individual and island success coming from practices thought to be found outside of Dominica.

In the first small community I stayed in, down the hill from my house was a family who sold eggs. I took advantage of the proximity and often purchased my eggs there, rather than taking public transit into town whenever I had run short and needed breakfast. After a few visits, allowing the family and me to become familiar with each other, I spoke with Mary, the daughter in her late-twenties, about her education experience. Mary expressed education as helping make *the big bucks* by making a person more marketable. In an echo of the island pessimism Hau'ofa (1993) attempted to counter, that an island's smallness would "impose such severe limitations we would be defeated in the end" (p. 5), Mary believed, "overseas is where the opportunities are, whether it's for a job or furthering education." While Mary did not divulge plans for migration, she displayed her aspirations for financial success and told me television and reading exposure in Dominica has increased the attitude that a person can *make it big* if s/he goes overseas.

Professor of Political Anthropology Laszlo Kurti's response to Trouillot (2001) reminds us that, in some cases, as it is in Dominica, "media waves are … owned by states, and … [p]rimary, secondary, and higher education are also state-controlled" (See Trouillot, 2001, p. 135). With this in mind and Mary's feelings that media plays a strong role in her views on overseas, it seemed the combination of colonialized education and media was perpetuating notions that success is found elsewhere. Dominica's sustainability should not rely on censorship

of media, but I suggest an adaptation to perspective may encourage Dominicans to become involved *as* Dominicans with what they see and read, rather than viewing Dominica as being on a lower level than other places. Hau'ofa (1993) has said, "the rapid expansion of the world economy since the post-World War II years may indeed have intensified Third World dependency, but it also had a liberating effect on the lives of ordinary people/[islanders]" (p. 10). The issues to question here were what a Dominican like Mary would aim to achieve overseas and whether she would leave with any intention of returning. The history of Dominica, in a sense, is peppered with people leaving and coming back.

Looking at the Kalinago before European encounter and colonization, the history books indicate there was ample interaction with neighboring islands, albeit not always in friendly ways. The Kalinago have long been people of hunting, fishing, and agriculture, and are said to have known routes to other islands in the region by using stars for navigation (Honychurch, 1995). While stars do make sense as mapping devices, the Kalinago were not traveling on the water at night just because they needed their natural map. In addition to trade, which may have been more ammicable, the 'Carib Invasion' model of history, "engrained into the consciousness of the entire population of the modern Caribbean through the education system over the last fifty years" (Honychurch, 1997, p. 293), says the Kalinago also ventured to other islands in raids to take resources and sometimes even people, specifically women to become wives. While Honychurch (1997) has suggested this model of history lacks enough evidence to be confirmed and may not be what actually happened, it *is* what is said to have happened, and the effects of this occur regardless of the truth (Trouillot, 1995). From my perspective, these effects include the education system suggesting to this study's participants, and Dominicans in general, that Dominica's development has relied upon places beyond the island from the beginning. This idea

is not necessarily a negative point, but can convey different messages depending on who is identified as being in a place of power when deciding to engage with the non-Dominican world.

Even if the Kalinago did not use raids, they at least had interactions with other islands, which would have inevitably allowed them to observe other island people and bring back to Dominica new knowledge. In a similar way, the first people of African origins on Dominica, the Negre Mawon, brought along with them various histories and experiences from different places that would have shaped the way they interacted with the Nature Isle. These movements in and out of Dominica, even before any persuasion from education, seem to embody interdisciplinary scholar James Clifford's (1997) notion that the roots and routes of a people are "intertwined" (p. 4), and his "view of human location as constituted by displacement as much as by stasis" (p. 2). It should be noted that my analysis in this way of identity and knowledge through movement was reliant upon a sense of locational boundaries, not unlike the political boundaries of a nation-state, which suggested a distinction of people and knowledge *because* of these boundaries[20]. Following this notion, it seemed, again, islander movement or migration does not necessarily have to be detrimental to the island, but the positive or negative effects rise to the surface when there is consideration of the purpose and intended results of stepping beyond the island boundaries. When viewed in relation to education, the nature of migration can be seen contributing to either brain drain or brain churn.

## Left and Came Back

Several people I interviewed had moved outside of Dominica for different periods of time and for different reasons, but it was all viewed as temporary emigration, rather than visiting or

[20] While I have and will continue to find some support in Hau'ofa's (1993) *sea of islands* perspective, which suggests a change in views of island boundaries, I do feel that there should be an admission to some differences in forms of knowledge as a result of the physical boundaries, which are part of why island migration is an area of academic exploration.

tourism. They had since returned to live in Dominica and brought along their impressions of places outside Dominica. What I attempted to do was compare the attitudes of those people who had gone and come back to those who alluded to wanting to leave. I assessed whether the visions of migration were similar, and from where the ideas of migration may have stemmed. Because movement in and out of Dominica has occurred for centuries (even before European encounter) I looked for whether or not education had impacted perceptions of a need to migrate and what the purpose of migration was thought to be. Through this approach I begin presenting and commenting on the education-migration related issues I encountered in the interviews.

When I arrived to speak with Janet, she was standing over a sink in an old stone building rinsing freshly harvested eggs she would later sell to other local people. She explained that the farm we were on was originally owned by her father who had developed the land, along with various other businesses, with hopes of *building an empire* to divide and pass on to Janet and her 15 siblings. Janet said, "[My father] expected us to stay and run part of the business, or he expected us to go and study something that would be useful in the business and come back." For Janet's father, education was not a necessary tool for financial success, but Janet was not discouraged from education. The message was to do what was desired, so long as the path wound back to the family business. However, Janet was one of only two siblings actively contributing to the upkeep of the land for the purpose of any business. That business focused more on tourism and hosting events, and less on the agriculture it was once driven by. While Janet was dedicated to the business and saw it as a great thing for bolstering Dominica's spirit, managing the property was not always her dream and she did spend ample time outside of Dominica after secondary school.

After graduating from secondary school in Dominica, Janet completed a business-focused undergraduate degree in the United States, returned to Dominica, and then went back to the United States to achieve a master's degree. While she explained her education to me, there was an occurrence that brought to my mind the transfer of knowledge and behavior as a result of migration. As Janet elaborated on her feelings about her educational experiences, I began to hear metallic clicking sounds and noticed Janet pushing bullets into a clip before loading her handgun, putting the gun in her purse, and then waving for me to join the egg delivery. I was confused as to why she carried a gun. In my conversations in and explorations of Dominica, both before and after speaking with Janet, the island had a reputation for being safe with seldom a violent crime. Even most police officers did not carry guns because, as an officer told me when I asked, the weapons were unnecessary. While I did not ask Janet, I wonder where her habit of carrying a firearm stems from: a traumatic experience, interacting with a broader *gun culture* while in the United States, or perhaps it was a common business practice in Dominica that was not blatant in my encounters with people[21]. Whatever the reason, Janet did not show signs of her actions being abnormal and she carried on talking, explaining, "[Foreign style education] made me want to go out to know what's out there. It made me want to go out to the Americas. I came back so that I could help build this country; do my part." Janet's secondary education shaped her thoughts of experiencing places outside of Dominica, but she made no mention of any education influencing her decision to return. It was her own sense of nationalism that brought her back to Dominica.

Corbett's (2000) work, *Learning to Leave*, focuses on rural populations being educated in ways where they must make a choice of whether to move in order to put their learned skills to

[21] Janet seemed casual and relaxed throughout the interview, and I was simply pleased to be having such a fruitful interview, so it was not until I returned to Canada that I even considered the possibility of my presence—being an essentially unknown male—being the reason for Janet making her possession of a gun obvious.

use, or stay in the community and live with limited areas of work. A parallel can be drawn between rural populations and Dominicans, both living in places physically separate from larger, more economically diverse places and being shown knowledge that, regardless of the system's agenda, gave options for moving away. Corbett's belief that "the educational system represents an established bridge into other places and other lives" (p. 5) is just as applicable to Dominica. Janet's views of who she is and where she should live changed since her academic days, and she felt changes should occur in the secondary education system in Dominica so that if students desire to leave Dominica, they do so as proud Dominicans and not as belittled islanders looking for bigger and better. She recognized the power relations in education and how the presentation of knowledge is influential to how students perceive using that knowledge. She said,

> What I would change is how our history was taught. How could Christopher Columbus have discovered Dominica when Dominica was already discovered? We will need to re-write history; put us at the centre of our history book. Teach us how to learn neocolonialism in its present form. If I could rewind it, I would change [education] then, but if I can't rewind it—obviously I can't—it needs to change now.

Janet's plea that students be taught about neocolonialism was not so people conform to it, but so they can resist it or work with it in their own way. Hau'ofa (1993) half-facetiously asks, "Is this not what neocolonialism is all about? To make people believe that they have no choice but to depend?" (p. 5). Janet did not want Dominica to *depend* any longer. To her, "education may be presented to, and perceived by rural [and Dominican] students as training for elsewhere" (Corbett, 2000, p. 14). The clarity of which societal body perpetuates this perception was somewhat apparent with analysis of other participants' experiences and opinions of education and migration.

While all participants attended secondary school, not all completed to the final grade, and this occurrence spoke to the nature of the colonialized education received. When I interviewed

Randy, he informed me, in his years before Dominican independence, he had completed only two years of secondary school before leaving school. He stated he felt his education did not connect to who he was or what he would do as a Dominican. When he spoke with me, as a Dominican, he had a variety of occupations. When I arrived at Randy's house, he had just returned home from a morning of working at his job in autobody repair. His homecoming by no means meant he was done working for the day. Our conversation was only able to take place if I would help him with his chickens. Earlier in the morning, before leaving for the autoshop, he had slaughtered and defeathered several chickens, and he needed my help to bring them from the yard where he did the slaughtering into the kitchen where the chickens would be given a final cleaning and then bagged to be sold to local shops. He also informed me he had a limited amount of time to speak, because he would later be going to teach a tertiary-level class on automobile repair. He did not look at his multiple jobs as placeholders until he can secure a *real job*, and his only real attempt at migration was to Dominica's neighboring island, Guadeloupe, which lasted less than a year.

It was Randy's short-lived experience in Guadeloupe that brought to light the notion that colonialized education or the "British system", as Randy called it, was not aiming to prepare students to be globalized, but was training them to engage with the world in a British way. By British way, I am alluding to Willis's (1977) notion that "Though in a determined context [the working class] has its own processes, its own definitions, its own account of those other groups conventionally registered as more successful" (p. 1). Once again, there was a hierarchy of classes and races, both inside and outside of Britain, and Dominicans' roles were not on top. Macaulay's 1835 attitude of the superiority of British and European intellect over the colonies did not appear to fade.

British actions upon both colonial students in the colonies and those students studying abroad in Britain reflected this *British is best* attitude. Around the time of the Second World War, students from Cyprus studying in Britain were deprived of educational materials from their own cultures by "banning the import of textbooks from Greece and Turkey and by forbidding the use of national symbols or the celebration of National Days" (Özmatyatli & Özkul, 2013: 14). When dealing with the colonies outside Britain, the colonial British recognition, or lack thereof, of differences between places in terms of education became most officially spouted beginning in 1923 when the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education in British Tropical Africa suggested a journal, *Oversea Education*, be created for all British colony education directors to share knowledge and information (Whitehead, 2003). After six years of organizing, in 1929, the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies was established and the journal was launched (Whitehead, 2003), essentially starting a *how-to* publication for colonialized education in British colonies. The journal continued publishing new volumes until 1963 (Whitehead, 2003).

*Oversea Education* helped to streamline the British agenda through education in its colonies and, as a result, education's impacts on local populations. The mere existence of the journal insinuated the British education system and the colonialism it represented were there to stay and were appropriate for all of the places deemed to be colonies. It represented the *British know best* attitude. The fact the journal's publication ended in 1963, the timeframe when Britain was releasing many of its territories, Caribbean or otherwise, seemed to be indicative of Britain's lack of interest in education and instead its desires to control through economy. However, relinquishing power did not remove the impacts upon the colonized people, including the way a person could travel to and interact with other places. I addressed this journal here, because it

helps explain how the colonialized education in Dominica contributed to Randy's story and the reason he felt he needed to leave Guadeloupe.

Along with its era of British colonialism, Dominica has strong French influences in its history, but this French heritage is not well-recognized by the French-speaking island of Guadeloupe. Randy said that during his time there he felt segregated because he, being Dominican, was viewed as British. The people of the neighboring island, which was visible from Dominica, once engaged in pre-colonial trade with Dominica, but were later unable to fully connect with Randy because, even without graduating, the colonialized education had taught him that English language and the *British system* was best. He left school because he did not feel connected to the education, but his attempt to disassociate from the British education and place himself in the position of power was not enough. Clifford (1997) suggests the "conscious choice *not* to travel … may be a form of resistance, not limitation, a particular worldliness rather than a narrow localism" (p. 5), and Randy's journey to Guadeloupe could be perceived as staying close enough to Dominica that he was not adhering to the way the British system pushed. However, "the idea of resistance assumes the hegemony of a particular set of values" (Corbett, 2000, p. 2) and, unfortunately, because colonialism was not a market cornered by the British, even Randy's migration to Guadeloupe, which may be deemed resistant to British ideals, was met with colonial conflict.

In surveying postcolonial education, Crossley and Tikly (2004) believe there should be a re-narrativization that allows one to focus on colonialism impacting a web of international relations, and not just a colonial connection between the colonizer and the colonized. Looking through the lens of education and its relationship with students' global interactions, they propose "this re-narrativization then involves a reconceptualization of colonialism not as a sub-plot of

some ‘grander’ (European) narrative, but as a violent event central to the developing new relationships of globalization and global capitalism” (p. 148). While this proposal acknowledges, rather than questions, the continuation of the concepts of globalization and global capitalism (concepts I believe to be perpetuating Western-centric postcolonial and neocolonial systems) it does highlight the violence involved in many current views of colonialism. Even if globalization and global capitalism are accepted as the *correct* or *best* systems, the playing field did not begin in a level state and there are countries—not-so-coincidentally former colonial powers—that take lead roles, leaving smaller places to follow along in an attempt to keep up.

In Randy’s experience in Guadeloupe, his vision of moving even within the Caribbean region was impacted by how he had been shaped by his education, a “system that operates in the process of training and correction” (Foucault, 1977, p. 180). As a critique of Bhabha’s (1994) suggestion that there can be empowerment in hybridity, Sahlini Puri (2004), with her research in postcolonial theory and cultural studies, opines that Bhabha “remains resoundingly silent about situations in which cultural hybridity may be disempowering” (p. 25). This section is not meant to be an analysis of Bhabha, but does trigger a small exploration of how hybridity (theoretically helping people act on multiple cultural stages) still includes confrontation. In Randy’s case, there may have been a resistance against the culturally disconnected education system, allowing for a perception that migration to larger islands or continental lands was unnecessary, but the colonialized education still hindered his ability to present himself to other places with an identity he connected with; he was seen as a subaltern.

Mental duality shone through Randy’s portrayal of migration, because it was not simply how nationalist thoughts and colonial actions exist paradoxically, but how a person encounters a new destination that contributes to thoughts of migration. It seemed if a Dominican was to be

seen as a Dominican, s/he must stay in Dominica. Otherwise, a migrating Dominican may be seen as a product of colonial/British education's *training and correction* that aims to continue globalization and global capitalist structures. Perhaps colonialized education had made it necessary to add consideration in terms of migration where, not only might a Dominican consider moving to use knowledge gained from secondary school, but also needs to consider destination options based on places a British-style education is more fitting and accepted.

**Show Desire to Go**

Although time had passed since Janet and Randy returned from their migration stints, people leaving Dominica had not changed. Unlike older participants who saw education as an influence but not a necessity for migrating, younger participants such as Mary and Amanda referenced education as crucial for being successful overseas. Based on participant attitudes, it appeared education's role of catalyst to leaving had increased, and its ability to determine where is accessible still remained. While Dominica has been fully independent since 1978 and therefore without the formal grasp of Britain, the former colonial power's values and standards of success remained in the minds of the Dominican people. Migration does not have to be a negative phenomenon, but its value depends on how an islander considers the need to migrate. Connell (2007) states, "Even with imperfect knowledge, [island] households are consciously making decisions in favor of the quantity and quality of education of children that boost their chances for migration and thus the supply of remittances" (p. 466). While none of the participants mentioned remittances, there was emphasis on jobs and employment opportunities; essentially, on making money. The idea was there are jobs overseas, and education could be a vehicle for venturing overseas. The students were bombarded by the images of the *greener pastures* outside of Dominica (which is quite green itself) as the values presented in colonialized

education were of a modernity that had not, and perhaps should not, come to fruition in Dominica.

Cultural Anthropologist Charles Piot (1999) defines modernity as "those everyday forms of culture, politics, and economy associated with the rise of industrial capitalism in Europe of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries and disseminated globally by European imperial expansion" (p. 179, footnote). This perception of modernity appeared to be common in Dominica, but to be ill-suited. I am not suggesting modernity can exist here and not there. Rather, I am aligning myself with the critiques of modernity as outlined by Dirlik (2003). He suggests, "Modernity is not a thing but a relationship" (p. 279) and challenges "the complicity of existing discourses of modernity and modernization with colonialism" (p. 279). A notion put forward by Dirlik (2003) is that European and American standards should not outline the criteria for modernity and, rather, attention should be paid to the relationship that binds premodern with modern that allows for the potential of alternative modernities.

Gaonkar's (2001) notions of alternative modernities illustrate, "To think in terms of 'alternative modernities' is to admit that modernity is inescapable and to desist from speculations about the end of modernity" (p. 1). Modernities are not coming to an end and, because of this, "[e]very authoritative vision of modernity in the West … is obliged to dwell and grapple with that twin matrix of change and routine in which the modern self is made and unmade" (p. 3). Gaonkar's position of the made and unmade self, stemming from his work in Rhetoric and Public Culture, created the notion that at one time, British and Dominican modernity intertwined, which is understandable as the British were creating systems in Dominica, but this past does not mean changes to British views of modernity should have been replicated in Dominica. As time, place,

and power in the world altered, modernity in Dominica should have changed to reflect the island realities and not the colonial imaginations; instead, it adapted in the colonial way.

Puri (2004) points out "There has been a vigorous debate from both within and without the Caribbean as to whether the Caribbean can yield a modernity at all, and if so, a modernity monstrous or marvelous" (p. 43). Eleven years after Puri's statement, images of so-called modernity, closer to Piot's definition than any alternatives, were streaming into Dominica via the new technologies that have been acquired. As far as Stella was concerned, Dominica was "at par, almost at par, with the world!" She told me, "The world has all the technology, and we have all the technologies as well," while, across the street, there was a smoldering pile of trash because the island was still in process of developing a more efficient waste disposal system. Unfortunately, the number of people who wanted to learn about island waste management, or any less-than-glamorous industries, was few while the perceived markers of modernity topped the list of priorities.

Perhaps it is only by following the more popular definition of modernity that the Caribbean versions are looked upon as monstrous *or* marvelous, rather than both. One could say Dominica's attempt to keep up with modernity is monstrous, but this was because it did not work for the island, which then makes it marvelous for supporting the point of alternative modernities. In addition, it was marvelous because the people of the island continued to sustain themselves the best they could by using an education that needed adaptation at the least and ousting at best. Corbett (2000) states, "Educational institutions operating in regions which are less economically vibrant tend to educate young people for employment opportunities which exist elsewhere" (p. 7). Several of my interviews alluded to this idea, but Lester clearly echoed this sentiment.

Lester was a student of the colonial era's education system, and then went overseas to achieve his PhD, but he had long since returned to Dominica. His livelihood often required him to travel around the world, so he was well aware of the structures and tones of other countries and societies. In fact, my first contact with Lester came during my first week in Dominica, but, because of his travel schedule, our interview could not be organized until the end of my fifth week. Even then, our interview had to be squeezed into his afternoon while he was emailing people in the places he would be visiting in the following month. He lived in Dominica, but he said that with his education, "I really could go almost anywhere. But I don't want to go anywhere. I want to be here. What good is it for me to be doing seminars up in Oxford University or something for schools? What good is it for Dominica? How does it benefit Dominica?" Lester was an example of someone who had migrated and come back, but rather than me focus on his experiences in migrating and returning, which are similar to those of Janet, I concentrated on Lester's observations of how education impacts students' desires to migrate in more recent times.

Lester told me the young adults who have completed secondary school "find ways of trying to get overseas, particularly the United States, because they have been educated for a work economy that doesn't exist." His observation was in alignment of Connell's (2007) assessment, which says, "migration has become more skill-selective, and the 'brain-drain' increasingly exemplifies patterns of migration from islands" (p. 456). One issue that became clear is that the colonial-minded priority list (seemingly money first and Dominica second) seemed to still be propagated by the education system, even after more than a century since Froude encouraged the island's exploitation. One may suggest this highlighting of the education system is passing off the responsibility and accountability of individual decision making on the system, but a student

cannot be expected to ignore the messages being presented to him/her without having alternatives available. Once again, the origins of these messages from education came into question. After asking about secondary education's role in building identity, Lester replied saying, "You have your patriotism, nationalism that is done through public education and programs on the radio and programs on the television, but more powerful than that is this delusion that in the United States there's this great future for you." In an expansion upon Said's (1978) notion that the expanding West has led to modernization of non-Western locales, Özmatyatli and Özkul (2013) stress, "what is more important is the reaction of the leaders of these societies" (p. 3). If the Ministry of Education was acknowledged as a leader in Dominican society, then its reactions to attempted modernization over the last half-century provided credence to Lester's comments. They not only reflected the discussion of the *extracurricular nationalism* from Chapter Two, but also validated the suggestion that, because students have learned in this colonialized way, they have set aggrandized goals based on partial information that has silenced many aspects of what could be encountered in an act of migration—an act that, supposedly, would be necessary to achieve said goals.

Corbett (2000) states, "Educational decisions are always made in a context" (p. 3) and for Dominicans who experienced colonialized education and expressed to me wanting to leave Dominica, their perceived context was shaped by secondary education. Lester said students are "persuaded that life here is dull and that you can't get very far here" and that "in the United States you will be able to spread your wings and get an income that is much better than Dominica." Although education was not the sole perpetrator of this bleak look on Dominica, it was seen as an authoritative body able to mold perspectives. Of course, I must be aware of how I examine and project reactions and conclusions as a non-Dominican and non-islander.

Clifford (1997) explains that anthropologists have been adopting approaches to analysis that start with historical contact. He proposes, "Contact approaches presuppose not sociocultural wholes subsequently brought into relationship, but rather systems already constituted relationally, entering new relations through historical processes of [mental] displacement" (p. 7). I added the qualification of *mental* to displacement to suggest possibilities of mentally migrating—dreaming of other places—before physically moving. Mental migration is the stage where some of the younger participants stood after completing secondary school and desiring to migrate, but not having yet gone. In relation to Clifford, I observed these participants as products of an education system that has taught subjects relationally, with students in a British-based system introduced to issues based on connecting the local (Dominica) to the colonial (Britain) or globalized (Capitalism). Mary, whose comments were looked at earlier in this chapter, had more to say about the development of her connections with the world outside Dominica.

With the radio tuned to the national broadcasting station that was discussing Dominican politics, Mary gave credit to media and said, "I soaked in the realities of the world through reading on my own and watching television." This same radio station was listened to in all sorts of settings on the island—taxis, convenience stores, construction sites—but, despite national discussion constantly being in the air, Mary's attention was drawn to the portrayals of the big cities of the continental lands. Farrugia (2002) tells us that "inhabitants of small states often unwittingly undermine regional or local initiatives through the ex-colonial mentality that gives greater credence and value to activities and institutions of a foreign origin" (p. 18). Mary did not place responsibility on education for her feelings that success could only be achieved overseas, but she also lamented that she did not feel like she learned much about her own culture in school.

When asked for changes she would make to education, she recognized that "not everyone is academically inclined" and said, "there needs to be a better technical option," by which she clarified as options of trades such as electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and also agriculture. She stated, "the current system of having every child attend secondary school, regardless of national assessment scores, is a good idea," but thought they should have kept the streaming system in the secondary school system. Mary's thought connects to Corbett's (2000) analysis that says,

> If education is to be democratic, then it must be generic so the story goes. The nature of place attachment and the influence of the local economy on schooling in rural communities has been precisely what many rural educators struggle to subvert in the interests of democracy, and what is often called "broadening the horizons" (p. 3).

While Dominica's economy and state of infrastructure changed over the years, causing changes to employment positions, there were staple occupations that were necessary to maintaining a place that uses modern plumbing and electricity. Understandably, especially for a small island, not everyone can be a plumber or electrician, just as there are limitations to the number of accountants needed, but, as Mary described her experience in education, it seemed that the education system did not connect with her version of local culture, and did a limited job in grounding students to their surroundings in a balance with *broadening the horizons*.

The problem had become that people like Mary desired success equated with forms of modernity that exist elsewhere, and, as Fanon (1963) has said, "In order to assimilate and to experience the oppressor's culture, the native has had to leave certain of his intellectual possessions in pawn. These pledges include his adoption of the forms of thought of the colonial bourgeoisie" (p. 49). It was not surprising that, if modernity in Dominica was perceived as monstrous rather than marvelous, the two options Puri points to, people seek out the lavish life they believed is waiting for them off-island. Mary may not have placed the onus on her education for shaping her vision of Dominica in relation to the world, but her claims that it did

not connect to her home, combined with Lester's opinions of the education system, suggested that although education for Mary may not have forthrightly promoted migration, it continued to prepare students to reach for goals that were seen as beneficial for the colonizers, and not necessarily for the island(ers). This idea of students being compelled by education to recognize a better life *over there*, and of migration as the key to that life, was apparent, but it should not be thought of as a homogenous mentality among these young adults. Another interview with a younger participant shed light on a different understanding of education and migration.

Walking from door to door in her best Creole plaid, Amanda was delivering the freshly cleaned and folded laundry the tenants had sent out for washing. It was the Friday before Creole Day, an annual celebration of Creole culture in Dominica, and Amanda was starting her day at work. Every morning, after dressing and feeding her three-year-old daughter, Kimberly, Amanda left Kimberly with Amanda's mother and travelled for half an hour, taking two 15-passenger vans (Dominica's public transportation vehicles) over and around some of the island's smaller mountains, to put in a day of booking reservations, collecting rent, delivering laundry, calling companies to fix internet signals, and tending to any requests guests may have. On that particular Friday, one request, which she happily accepted, was for me to interview her.

Amanda completed secondary school, enjoying her time as a student-athlete representing her country in competitions in the United States. She gave credit to her education for teaching her etiquette, telling me, "If I go out, I'm representing Dominica, which means I can't really do anything that would bring shame to my country, so I think I was disciplined when I used to go out, very disciplined, and I think we learned that from high school." With a taste of the world outside Dominica, Amanda planned to migrate, but with a purpose and with no intentions of

staying away. Talking about the minimal focus in schools on technical or agricultural skills, she said,

> I think it's a bad thing because I do have a few friends who wanted to go into that whole agricultural aspect. But you find that right now it's more focused on, let's say, business or sciences instead of agriculture. And since we're the Nature Isle of the Caribbean, I think it should be up there instead of way down there. I think we should work on that.

Amanda's migration intentions differed from looking for *big bucks* overseas. She envisioned Dominica's needs and intended to utilize her education to contribute to the island. Amanda's mentality was reminiscent of Seller's (2005) study of general Dominican patterns, which suggests, "Migration off the island, characterized by at least the intention to return, has long been integrated into strategies for survival and betterment – socially, symbolically, and economically – for inhabitants of Dominica as elsewhere in the Caribbean" (p. 45). Amanda's intentions mimicked the pre-colonial Kalinago: travel outside of Dominica, obtain what is needed, and bring it back home. She wanted to acquire and bring to Dominica veterinary knowledge and skills.

In an effort to enhance brain *churn*, rather than brain drain, Amanda believed a change in perspective was necessary for Dominican secondary schools. She said, "In every class, there will be mixed students, but with the whole universal education idea, you have more people coming from all over and different levels. I would change the universal education aspect of the country." Amanda was essentially putting the quotations around *universal* (see Hall (1991) in Chapter Three) and acknowledging that responses to education are never universal. Pushing the narrow values that have been in place since the colonial days is not going to work productively for the island. Amanda was an example, however, of a student who did not fully align herself with those colonial ideals in her postcolonial island, and so did not feel that migration is the

answer, but did see how she can use her colonialized education and migration for nationalist purposes.

Amanda's approach to utilizing her education may be seen as more of a move toward neo-liberalism and away from liberalism[22], but it was not thought that this move is disconnected from the elements of colonialism within the education system. Apple (2001) has suggested many countries have created a new power bloc (seen here as the fully independent government in Dominica) that "combines multiple fractions of capital who are committed to neo-liberal marketised solutions to education problems [and] neo-conservative intellectuals who want a 'return' to higher standards and a 'common culture'" (p. 410). He believes that in working with this *new* system, "overall aims are in providing the educational conditions believed necessary both for increasing international competitiveness, profit, and discipline and for returning us to a romanticised past of the 'ideal' home, family, and school" (p. 410). Apple's description highlights characteristics of the duality I witnessed with the participants, which led me to believe that his point of people looking to neo-liberal marketised solutions has merit. However, the liberal education and system that Amanda was moving away from was one that commenced under colonial rule, meaning the use of liberal education was implemented with colonial standards and purposes. Amanda may have been moving away from liberalism, but it was the colonial version of progress that was in place and, therefore, her neo-liberal approach still incorporated elements of colonialized education, which perpetuated Amanda's mental duality.

Dominica provided some tertiary education, but did not have institutions or the personnel needed to qualify Amanda as a veterinarian. She told me she saw animals as a part of the Dominican landscape though, and wanted to do her part to care for her island. She explained,

[22] Equated by Ryan (2012, p. 25) with John Stuart Mill's vision of man as a progressive being

> I grew up being around animals … and I think if you go through Dominica, you would see cows, goats, or a lot of animals. In Dominica we don't have a lot of vets. Probably find a few, maybe five. So, I always wanted to become a vet so I did bio and chemistry [in secondary school] so I could [study abroad and] come back as a vet in Dominica. Here, the government offers scholarships to go to study. I know for sure I will go abroad, study, and come back. I'll always come back because I love Dominica. I think it's free.

Amanda's goals reminded me the persuasions of colonialized education vary between people, and that power relations can be shifted, as Randy attempted, by the postcolonial subaltern. I refer to power relations as being shifted rather than reversed, because the colonial basis had not been removed, but Amanda was trying to engage with colonialized education to bolster the continuation of non-colonial aspects of Dominica. When referring to Corbett (2000), I have been interchanging *rural* and *island*, but by her intentions, Amanda contradicted Corbett's idea that, for rural/island students, "to stay in school, beyond secondary education particularly, may amount to a decision to drop-out of the community" (p. 13). Amanda showed that colonialized education's impacts on perceptions of the need for migration does not have to be a bitter medicine swallowed all at once, but can be taken in parts: accept secondary-level education's subliminal message that success should be sought abroad, but not that bigger is better.

### Parental Wishes for Future Generations

In a 1992 United Nations conference on the environment and development, many participating countries were members of the Alliance of Small Island States and were operating with the World Commission on Environment and Development's definition of sustainable development: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, 1987, as referenced in Crossley & Sprague, 2014, p. 89). For small islands, adhering to this sustainable development requires a delicate balance, recognizing what can and cannot be done within the limitations of island

settings. These possibilities and challenges do not mean there is a low ceiling on island development[23], but rather that island development cannot equate to exploitation, and must be different in form and pace than larger places. While development of any form may be seen as a colonial undertaking, I would argue development as a concept can be finding more efficient functions to ensure sustainable living, rather than financial growth or profit. Amanda aligned with a sustainable approach to help maintain the island ecosystem and provide local food options, lending to a healthy future for Dominica(ns). For interview participants with their own children in secondary school or younger, there were hopes that the children would hold views about education and migration similar to Amanda, and not like Mary.

Alice (the woman from Chapter Two I met while searching for primary documents) was raised by a single mother who "had a lot to deal with." Attending school before the universal system commenced, Alice worked to pay her school fees and had to obtain employment after graduation, rather than a postsecondary education. When speaking with me, she introduced her son, Trevor, who was four years old and Alice's first priority. She was less able to focus on furthering her own education, but paid attention to the education system in Dominica to ensure Trevor was receiving the greatest opportunities he can. She worried the education system was imitating other countries and said it was not good because she did not believe Dominica was considering long-term impacts.

Similar to Amanda's comments on the needs for change in education, Alice said a negative change in the system was the removal of technical education. I suggest this change marked a movement toward a modernity not suited for Dominica. Woolman (2001) states, "The critique of colonial education continues to be significant because this structure conditioned the reactions that led to reform efforts in the post-colonial era" (p. 29). The education reforms in

[23] Development in the capitalist sense can be sought so long as resources are available.

Dominica were seen as mimicking systems and structures from other places, places vastly different from Dominica, like the United States. Alice explained she knew she must instil a sense of home in Trevor, so he might approach his education as Amanda has approached hers. Alice loves her island and only would have left to further her education, but then "would've returned to serve." Because chances of her now leaving are smaller, she focused on immersing Trevor in what she saw as the local culture, teaching him to speak Patois in addition to English; she told me, "Where I didn't go, that's where I want my son to go." She believed leaving the island for experience would be to his benefit, but she would want him to return.

Alice seemed to recognize the relationship between education and migration, and saw that, if one allows, the colonial messages can still push through, but students did not have to give in to this message and could use the system to their advantage. This potential usage of the system suggested, yet again, a duality, but one a person could be more conscious of if s/he paid attention; a sort of 'play along, but don't join the team' approach to colonialized education. While *playing along* did not immediately diminish the proselytizing of colonial/globalized agendas, and did risk a continuing brain drain, nationalist pride was not lost, and there was hope for changes where people can be educated and then be mobile as confident Dominicans, and not as people looking for something better.

## Summary

To begin this chapter, I presented my travel experience and how this brought about questions of how and why Dominicans also travel and/or migrate. In pondering these questions in relation to education, I realized the migration experiences of people I interviewed show that the *why* is because they all were or are searching for experiential growth. As for the *how*, I believe their experiences, good or bad, were a reflection of the ways their educational

engagement shaped them, meaning how they travelled or will travel was as a product of the education to which they did or did not connect. With research foci on processes of social and cultural transformation, as well as postcolonial politics, Commaroff and Comaroff (1992) have opined,

> Colonizers in most places and at most times try to gain control over both the material and semantic practices through which their would-be subjects produce and reproduce the very bases of their existence; no habit being too humble, no sign too insignificant to be implicated in the battle (p. 465).

With education and migration being, arguably, part of the semantic practices for Dominicans, opportunity became apparent for individuals to embrace, reject, or sometimes dabble with what their colonial past had created as potential bases of their existence. If migration is an aspect of Dominican life, perhaps there should be a more conscious consideration of how Dominica is presented to the world; show people that Dominica is not a place that would be stuck in *tradition* if not for the *modernity* of Europe (Piot, 1999), and rather that the island has merely been sidetracked from its own alternative modernity (Gaonkar, 2001).

Connell (2007) may be correct that migration is simply part of island life that should be accepted rather than resisted. Some people I spoke with suggested that leave-and-return migration from Dominica is beneficial, creating a brain churn to aid island development while remaining conscious of physical limitations of an island setting. Colonialized education continued to exist, emphasizing topics and ways of learning that were more useful outside Dominica, but small changes had occurred. The socioeconomic status of secondary school students in Dominica had broadened and, with that, an ongoing evolution in public agency.

Janet's experience with secondary school exemplified education's push for students to emigrate. This push matched the general pattern outlined in Corbett's (2000) *Learning to Leave*, but perhaps Janet's return was indicative of the beginning of a generational alteration to the

views of education's authority. Randy was of Janet's generation and resisted by dropping out and only moving within the region. As an older adult, he continued to rebel by teaching what is practical for Dominicans, and not just colonial ideals. I believe the changes in perceptions for the need to migrate began with those people who migrated as a result of their experiences with colonialized education, and then realized there are more nuances and tribulations to the world beyond Dominica than they were told. This was a realization that helped alter younger generation's connections to education in terms of the enablment and encouragment for migration.

Some younger participants showed a shift in mentality where temporary migration was becoming a tool to move Dominica away from being a MIRAB or SITE island. Some interview responses evoked wishes to decrease reliance on the non-Dominican world *giving* Dominica(ns) anything, and increase the proactivity of *taking* what is best for Dominica(ns). This approach, whispering tones of mental revolution, was not one yet in the spotlight, but its glimmer through the haze of the colonial hangover was not surprising. Fanon (1963) suggested, "The native never ceases to dream of putting himself in the place of the settler – not of becoming the settler but of substituting himself for the settler" (p. 52). With Fanon in mind and an acknowledgement that the postcolonial path is not smoothly traversed, it is understandable that people may not want to *be* the colonizer, but may be unsure of options for reaching self-determination. As Mary showed, there were still people looking for a foreign form of modernity (the version linked to Piot's definition) who would be happy to move to Britain or the United States and only return to Dominica to visit. However, those people who did see other ways to use migration and education, colonialized as it may be, did not desire to entirely decolonize and revert to some sort of pre-colonial condition, but rather to make Dominica a participant in the modern world through

its own alternative modernity (Gaonkar, 2001). The dynamics of the connections between Dominicans and the world, and the role education played in that, were slowly changing, adding complexities to roles of authority and authenticity. Bhabha (1994) argues,

> If, in our travelling theory, we are alive to the *metaphoricity* of the people of imagined communities – migrant or metropolitan – then we shall find that the space of the modern nation-people is never simply horizontal. Their metaphoric movement requires a kind of 'doubleness' in writing; a temporality of representation that moves between cultural formations and social processes without a centred causal logic (p. 141).

When we view Bhabha's words with the *literal* movement of Dominicans in mind, in addition to metaphoric movement, the *temporality* of what migration has represented to individual Dominicans and to the island at large became apparent. The relationship between education and migration took on a tone of post-structuralism because of the slowly but consistently changing visions held by students, past and present.

Corbett's (2000) views may still be valid and island education, like rural education, is teaching students in ways that push them to leave home. The shift occurring was that at least some Dominicans were taking control and recognizing that colonialized education may have still been in place and migration may have still been necessary, but they were not going to accept that there is anywhere better than their island. Clifford (1997) tells his readers, "Everyone's on the move, and has been for centuries: dwelling-in-travel" (p. 2), but the aim is that these people *on the move* will be so because they feel it is right, and not because they are told it is right. This way, it might be more likely they will do as they claim to want and "always come back because [they] love Dominica."

## Chapter Four – The Relationship Between Culture and Migration after Colonialized Education: "Everything outside seems to be superior"

"You want a Kubuli?"

"Ya, that'd be great, thanks. So why Dominica?"

Kubuli is the name of the only beer brewed in Dominica, and Tom was showing me the hospitality any good bar owner does, providing me with a refreshing beverage. Tom was a tall, blond-haired, white man hailing from continental land and had made Dominica his home, spending the last few years prior to my arrival developing a small open-aired restaurant and bar. His response to my question, "So why Dominica?" was intriguing to me, and I wondered how other Dominicans, or other Caribbean islanders, would feel. He told me, "It's the land that time forgot. It's the last real, true island in the Caribbean." Although I had already experienced Dominica for a month before meeting Tom, he was still sure to impart advice on me: "You've just got to roll with things here. Things don't move the way they do in Canada. I've met too many people who move down here saying they want a slower pace and a different way of life, but then they complain when they can't do things the way they do back home." Tom said he chose the location for his bar, because it was at the top of a large hill just outside the nearby village, and there were no other places to go for food, drinks, and socializing without having to trek down the hill in the dark. He wanted a place where both locals and travelers would feel welcome, and this vision had come to fruition so far as I could tell; Dominican people felt it was a place to call their own and travelers felt it was a place to find an *authentic* taste of Dominica, despite it being owned and operated by a non-Dominican.

To the best of his ability, Tom made his bar as local as possible. Building the establishment, he hired only Dominican people to cut the Dominican grown wood and bamboo used for creating the tables, chairs, and bars. During the day, before opening hours, men from

Dominica maintained the bar's property. When the front gate opened and customers flowed in, drinks were poured, and food was cooked by women born and raised a few villages away. Tom's menu had the odd imported product, but he made a weekly trip to "town," the common term for the capital city of Roseau, to, as he said, "hunt and gather" among the fruit and vegetable stalls, fish tables, and poultry coolers for whatever supplies he needed to ensure a number of vibrant dish options for his customers. Due to the diversity of customers, I was able to chat with travelers — young and young-at-heart, originating from the United States, England, France, etc. — about their impressions of the island. I also chatted with Dominicans and immigrants to Dominica about island issues, such as the platforms of the politicians running in the then-upcoming national elections.

With chapters Three and Four having looked at the relationships between education and culture, and education and migration, this chapter examines the impacts Culture and Migration have upon each other. I am not suggesting I looked at the two on a clean slate, but rather looked with understanding I had developed through the lens of colonialized education. I began with the description of Tom's local-focused bar, because the entire setting embodies the elements of the culture-migration relationship that have been disclosed to me, which helped me to organize this chapter. Being born and raised outside of Dominica and not having attended any school in Dominica, Tom was not the epitome of an interview candidate for my research, but his presence and interactions with Dominican people evoked a reality that culture and migration did not work merely through an in-out paradigm that incorporated locals only. With this being the case, it seemed appropriate that in this chapter, the presentation and analysis of the interviews and observations I gathered while in Dominica have been done across four sections.

The first section looks at people's beliefs and opinions of Dominican culture's ability to survive outside of Dominica. As I have shown in the previous chapters, some of the participants experienced living outside of Dominica while some only visited, and the beliefs and opinions given ranged from perspectives gained through lived experience to speculation based on hearsay and television. This section explores perceptions of what it was/would be like to be diaspora. As I show, some people felt Dominica could be lifted from the sea, transplanted to a landlocked area, and the Dominican culture would be unchanged. However, some recognized adaptation was necessary in different places.

In the second section, I analyze participants' responses to aims of migration in conjunction with evidence of changes in what was deemed Dominican cultural practice/behavior. This focused mainly on those people who claimed to want to migrate, whether temporarily or permanently, and how they may adopt traits from various exposures to non-Dominican life. There were possibilities of changes occurring unintentionally or unknowingly, or intentionally in a preparatory way before encountering a new place, or perhaps only in certain circumstances, such as when a Canadian graduate student approached them for an interview. If certain traits, such as language (word choice, speaking pace, distinction of accents) can be adjusted, it may be easier for someone to do if s/he has lived off the island and then returned.

Although it has been established that culture, whether in Dominican or general terms, is somewhat ambivalent in definition, in the third section I explore the idea of the continuation of local cultural attitudes and behaviours by those who emigrated from Dominica and then returned. Because there are no set parameters for culture, I used the features participants expressed as Dominican. I did not declare someone is or is not behaving as a Dominican, because that would suggest I am an authority on what it means to be Dominican, as well as on how people of every

culture in the world behave and think. Admittedly, my observations may be influenced by my recognition of traits as being similar to those of people I have encountered in other parts of the world, but what I was attempting to understand was whether these participants felt local culture was something they could revert back to after having been away, or if other cultures were inevitably integrated into their lives even after returning to Dominica. The latter would only be part of the interaction between the local and international cultures.

What I consider in the fourth section is the occurrence that, as my opening paragraphs of this chapter show, migration for Dominica is not only Dominicans moving in and out of the island; non-Dominicans create homes and make themselves, for better or worse, part of the social and economic landscape. While this slightly broadened the scope of influence upon the culture and feelings toward migration, there was very much an interconnection in the sense that colonialized education plays a role in how these non-Dominicans were perceived and received by the local islanders. Immigrants to Dominica, whether they be seasonal visitors or permanent residents, like Tom, spoke with locals, ate the food, bought the products, essentially lived lives in Dominica, and Dominicans could choose to revere the immigrants as the rich or the smart from overseas, look down upon them as some sort of intruders (although I find most Dominicans far too friendly and welcoming to despise anyone) or simply embrace them as part of the island.

By exploring the issues in the four sections, I continue my investigation of the duality I feel is existent, if not prominent, within the people I interviewed and observed. In this chapter, by using the various lenses of my overarching framework, those of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) and historical silences (Trouillot, 1995), I gained an understanding of how colonialized education has or has not created a setting where transnationalism and

cosmopolitanism[24] can occur, as opposed to any feelings of having to pick one place or another. The concepts of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism are expanded upon in the coming pages, specifically in how it relates to the notion of alternative modernities spoken about in Chapter Three, but for now my thought aligns with the words of Premdas (2008) that people have a sense of showing allegiance to both "here and there at the same time" (p. 3).

### Beliefs of the Survival of Culture after Out-Migration

With focus on the Pacific, Hau'ofa (1993) suggests "nineteenth century imperialism erected boundaries that led to the contraction of Oceania, transforming a once boundless world into the Pacific islands states and territories that we know today" (p. 10). Applying Hau'ofa's description to Dominica's colonial past, I wondered whether or not colonialized education perpetuates notions of boundedness, meaning migration suggests moving between culturally static places, and cosmopolitanism acts as a return to mental boundlessness in a world of boundaries and borders. Robbins (1998) suggests, "Actually existing cosmopolitanism is a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance" (p. 3). At the same time, there must be consideration for Clifford (1997) who says "cultural centers, discrete regions and territories, do not exist prior to contacts, but are sustained through them, appropriating and disciplining the restless movements of people and things" (p. 3), and then questions, "how is 'home' conceived and lived in *relation* to practices of coming and going?" (p. 6). For some people, Dominica is their only home, while others felt they had two homes, here and there, and then there were those who had family overseas and did not think that family would call Dominica home again. These attitudes of *home* spoke to levels of belief, perhaps subconsciously, in borders and boundaries being significant and in transnationalism or

[24] Although transnationalism and cosmopolitanism share some similar characteristics, I am not suggesting they are the same or interchangeable, or that they must be presented together. I place them together here to indicate they both have potential presence in the views of this study's participants.

cosmopolitanism occurring. What I consider is Clifford's (1997) statement, "Stasis and purity are asserted – creatively and violently – *against* historical forces and movement and contamination" (p. 7). Additionally, to show Clifford's point as relevant over time, I find Robbin's (1998) suggestions appropriate:

> now that print-capitalism has become electronic- and digital-capitalism, and now that this system is so clearly transnational, it would be strange if people did *not* get emotional in much the same way [as with fellow nationals], if not necessarily to the same degree, about others who are *not* fellow nationals, people bound to them by transnational sort of fellowship (p. 7, emphasis in original)

In other words, in order to agree that colonialized education has no impact and that culture is unaffected by both in- and out-migration, one must *silence* the features and events that have had and continue to have great influence upon the shaping of the people and society (Trouillot, 1995).

As I mentioned at the end of Chapter Two, in 2012, Dominican Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skerrit, declared at the 34th Anniversary of Independence celebration, "Dominica is today a country with a proud and unique identity!" (Skerrit, 2012). During my fieldwork in late 2014, Dominica was approaching a national election in December. I witnessed Skerrit and other politicians speaking to crowds at campaign rallies. Often, politicians proposed what many citizens had told me was needed for the island: developing the current airport or building a new international airport to increase tourism. While some focused on the airport as a way for Dominicans to share their unique identity with visitors, my focus was on how inimitable the identity was when the majority of tourists I spoke with were from Britain. Perhaps the British visitors were drawn to the island because of comfort with the culture of the former colony. Meanwhile, although participants did not forget the colonial days, there was little consideration

for the culture remaining Anglicized. Apparently, they were not British and therefore had a unique identity, so long as they forgot about or silenced the British influences of the past.

The idea of nationalism in Dominica exists because of colonialism, so even the implementation of nationalist attitudes in education, as opposed to conveying knowledge of place and space, could be deemed colonialized. Here, I consider the political theory and subaltern studies of Partha Chatterjee (1986) who states,

> Nationalism … seeks to represent itself in the image of the Enlightenment and fails to do so. For Enlightenment itself, to assert its sovereignty as the universal ideal, needs its Other; if it could ever actualize itself in the real world as the truly universal, it would in fact destroy itself (p. 17).

Dominicans have played the role of Other in their colonial history and, now independent, have no options of othering anyone on the island without creating intra-island social divide. I am not suggesting anyone need be systematically othered, but if nationalism is part of striving for Enlightenment, which requires an Other, then Dominicans are continuing to othered by reaching for Western (read colonial) standards and approval. I will here continue to allude to Fanon's (1963) belief (first presented in Chapter Three) that "the native never ceases to dream of putting himself in the place of the settler" (p. 52), because it seemed this dream was part of the mentality of the participants. However, the problem arises not with the native substituting himself, but with the native reaching for the same goals that were imposed by the settler. Consequently, history is silenced, as Trouillot (1995) suggests, in an attempt to claim an autonomous identity, and there are assumptions and qualifications made about the world outside that identity. This occurrence suggests that, because the settlers were replaced in position but not in mentality, there is a lack of attention given to the repercussions of colonialized systems lingering within the population today.

Stella's belief that the colonially implemented teaching pedagogy she used was superior came from nostalgia. She recalled her career as her success, and perhaps she was unaware of other views on education. Regardless of where her beliefs stemmed from, she made no mention of Dominicans' complaints during the colonial era about the British-based textbook writers' understanding of Caribbean[25] history (Fleming, 1964, p. 8). Stella was likely not the only former teacher who was either not aware or not acknowledging of disputes in education. This ignorance, this silencing of arguably controversial opinions was what led people to believe there was no intellectual conflict and that Dominican identity exists without ideological violence.

While this silencing was likely not intentional, it allowed Dominicans to create imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) and envision how those communities might interact with the rest of the world. Anderson (1991) posits, "If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past" (p. 6). If Dominicans approach identity and its relationship with the world in this way, and my observations suggested they do, then there would have to be agreement on a social contract, which "is the confirmation of nationhood, the confirmation of civil society by the state, the confirmation of sameness and interdependence across class boundaries" (Trouillot, 1997, p. 127). This was a peace of mind for Dominicans, creating a sense of unity which can be presented to the world. However, as scholar of phenomenology V.Y. Mudimbe (1988) states, "Evolutionism, functionalism, diffusionism – whatever the method, all repress otherness in the name of sameness, reduce the different to the already known, and thus fundamentally escape the task of making sense of other worlds" (p. 72-73). The colonialized education created a setting

[25] The report by Fleming refers to the Caribbean history as West Indian history. As I have referenced Fleming, rather than quoting him, I have taken the liberty of using the label *Caribbean* in order to deter readers from becoming sidetracked by a debate of proper terminology.

where *sense* was made of Dominica and the world, but through colonialized eyes. Cheah (1998) opines,

> …the ethico-political work that nationalism and cosmopolitanism can do at any given moment depends on how either formation emerges or is inscribed within the shifting material linkages and interconnections created by global capitalism at a particular historical conjuncture (p. 31).

Dominica's image to the world stage still presented a colonial basis while Dominicans touted a distinctive identity. This declaration of identity was understandable given that one's agreement with the notion of the colonial basis could be felt as admitting to a lack of autonomy, but evidence was in perceptions of the relationship between Dominicanness and the world, and Angela did touch on the topic.

Sitting in a stone, colonial-era building, but surrounded by artifacts from Kalinago history and examples of traditional Creole dress, I listened to Angela's thoughts on the issues of education, culture, and migration in the island's colonial/postcolonial settings. Angela attended secondary school during colonial times and then continued on to achieve her undergraduate and master's degrees overseas with her focus in history. In addition to time spent in the United States, one of the typical places for Dominicans to seek higher education, Angela's travels also included time in Asia. She, like Janet and Lester, returned to Dominica to do her part in contributing to the island. Angela believed Dominica "has a fragile economy and depends on external factors for survival. It shouldn't, but it does because of the current mentality. Mentally, we still haven't been completely emancipated." Because she was well informed in the change and stasis of Dominica, she said Dominica was in a state of *colonial hangover*, a reference I made in Chapter One, and, "because of colonialism, everything outside [of Dominica] seems to be superior." Interestingly, despite Angela's opinion that the impacts of colonialism still remained, she felt a strength in a Dominican identity that is not British.

Rée (1998) has found "most national traditions are inventions of the past two hundred years" and explains, "it seems to be widely accepted among historians and social theorists that the principle of nationality, despite its trappings of misty antiquity, is a defining feature of 'modernity' as such" (p. 81). I argue while Rée's observations are valid, what must be added is consideration of the *inventions* as for the sake of presenting a united national front while attempting to fit within the so-called modern world. The risk of attempting to *fit in* is seen by Lefort (1986), who warns,

> [The ideological] task of the implicit generalization of knowledge and the implicit homogenization of experience could fall apart in the face of the unbearable ordeal of the collapse of certainty, of the vacillation of representations of discourse and as a result of the splitting of the subject (Lefort, 1986, as quoted in Bhabha, 1994: 147; Bhabha's use of square parentheses).

The Dominican participants were split, but were convincing themselves there was a core Dominican identity that can participate with the world as independent and without colonial contamination. Unfortunately, in generalizing knowledge and homogenizing experience, as Lefort puts it, there was potential for exclusion (Cheah, 1998) and silences (Trouillot, 1995) when defining identity.

Angela defined a Dominican as "an individual with French Creole identity with a sense of independence and freedom." However, she did not feel this identity was simply innate, and said, "the identity comes from socialization." This would speak to the idea of the differences between learning and education, modeling the mental duality which, despite being able to speak more pointedly about the topic, Angela was not immune to. Angela's words suggested Dominicans can learn about what it means and how to be Dominican, perhaps from parents, other family, or community members, but that the education system conveys different messages. The education Angela received, according to her, "wasn't adequate to create a mindset to take

charge of the country, and there was too much looking to the outside." This statement evoked a number of thoughts posed throughout this thesis. First was that colonialized education provided knowledge to students, but only as it fit the colonial view. Angela showed agreement with this in saying,

> In education, the teaching used to show the Carib (Kalinago) and Negre Mawon (runaway slaves) as negative, which reflects the colonial mindset. They should have been seen as positive. The Caribs were shown as aggressive people, but they were protecting the island. And the Negre Mawon were escaping slavery, so why's that a bad thing?

Secondly, *looking to the outside* aligned with the sense of utilizing migration to achieve success. While Angela spoke of Dominicans as she saw them, and not necessarily as she saw herself, she was still describing her perceptions of her postcolonial island as a whole, but stated, "Dominica could be part of the mainland and people would still think the same [Dominican way]." Unintentionally, Angela's responses epitomized the duality created by colonialized education that plays into the relationship between cultural negotiation and perceptions of migration.

Having experienced her own type of migration for furthering her education, it seemed Angela believed there is a Dominican culture strong enough to survive the influences inevitably brought back to the island after encountering other parts of the world. The paradox Angela posed, though, was when she suggested Dominicans are still mentally colonized while simultaneously possessing a sense of independence. I wonder how this connects to transnationalism, and whether there is always an element of this paradox in a transnational individual, it being necessary to have a feeling of a cultural identity with one place while also taking on other places' mentalities. If asked whether or not the Dominican culture could survive after out-migration, regardless of whether s/he returns to the island, it seemed as if Angela would say yes. What she exemplified in her responses, as contradictory as they were at times, was an

echoing of Clifford (1997), who declares, “I do not accept that anyone is permanently fixed by his or her ‘identity’; but neither can one shed specific structures of race and culture, class and caste, gender and sexuality, environment and history” (p. 12), while also believing, “It is impossible to think of transnational possbilities without recognizing the violent disruptions that attend ‘modernization’” (p. 10).

Angela showed she felt there is a Dominican identity, but the elements she highlighted as Dominican (e.g. French Creole) were indicators that are not going to change for a Dominican person and can be carried anywhere. At the same time, she recognized that the violence committed by her colonialized education can be altered, but never removed. Clifford (1997) speaks of diaspora being “seen as potential subversions of nationality – ways of sustaining connections with more than one place while practicing nonabsolutist forms of citizenship” (p. 9). When considering Angela’s answers, I began to wonder if there can be an absolutist citizen, whether in Dominica or abroad, and if not, whether people’s beliefs in the survival of local culture abroad could be valid when there are influences consistently placing culture in flux. Angela defined Dominican culture as she believed it to be, but spoke as if there was a static culture that only changed because of colonial disruption. This type of mentality matches Bhabha’s (1994) proposal that postcolonial people, such as Dominicans,

> Must be thought in double-time; the people are the historical ‘objects’ of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin *in the past*; the people are also the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the people as contemporanetiy: as that sign of the *present* through which national life is redeemed and iterated as a reproductive process (p. 145, emphasis in original).

Although Angela criticized Dominican education as colonialized, if there were resolutions to the issues she highlighted, the history would still be of island people in relation to European

colonizers, which would continue to hold the islanders as both objects and subjects through silencing of certain histories. Perhaps cultural negotiation suggests an attempt to align with cultural aspects that are actually ever-changing. Asgharzadeh (2008), an expert in social theory, reminds readers, "Cultures constantly shift, change, and transform" (p. 356) and "as students, scholars, and researchers we must exercise caution in interpreting various cultural values and avoid any sense of romanticized approach to culture and tradition" (p. 356–357).

### Adherence or Change: Cultural Practice While Planning to Migrate

In assessing what could be discerned from Angela's responses, I posed a suggestion that culture is in flux and, therefore, attempting to speak of anyone adhering to or moving away from cultural practices relies on a set culture, which seems contradictory. However, in this section I examine what Dominican people have told me in reference to their mindsets or actions about culture, and whether or not they felt the need to alter themselves in terms of the cultural practices they saw as Dominican. When I began analyzing the interview responses and my observation notes for commonalities in the vein of culture, one thing I considered was what the opinions and behavior represented as far as the continuation or change of cultural practices. In looking at the Dominican peasantry around the turn of the 20$^{th}$ century, Trouillot (1989) discussed changes in colonial policies pertaining to production in specific territories and stated, "the fundamental agent behind actual transformation was none but the peasantry itself" (p. 712). While I do not think categories such as peasants are appropriate any longer, I do acknowledge there are people in positions of power to make and adapt policies, and then there is still the general public who have power, should they use it, to evoke change. The direction of that change may be reflected in the opinions and behaviours of the people.

Although the people I spoke with and observed touted strong feelings of being Dominican, I often had a sense that people made choices not just to *be*, but as a way to *become*. In speaking about identity, Hall (1997) says, "We are never quite there, but always on our way to it, and when we get there, we will at last know exactly who it is we are" (p. 42). If culture is in flux, as I discussed, then one will never *get there*, but people may align themselves with certain ways of living in hopes they can reach the imagined finish line. Whether there is an inherent idea to create a united cultural front from which to interact with the world, or if there is a feeling of hopelessness for the local culture surviving among the world's vast demographics, there is something to be said for a person's position on the culture surrounding him/her. Angela seemed to believe Dominican culture could survive anywhere, but if the goal was to leave Dominica, as some people declared or alluded to for various reasons, then my query was whether or not they seemed to alter themselves, intentionally or not, in a form of preparation for *over there*.

Reflecting upon my interaction with Amanda, one main thing I noticed was her accent did not sound Dominican. There were other interview participants who intentionally spoke slower or enunciated so I could understand them. I began to recognize these accommodations on my behalf when I heard the same people speak to their fellow Dominicans, as well as when I compared the style of speech to people who did not make accommodations for me. But when I spoke with Amanda, it was clear she was not simply changing for my benefit. I asked her about why her accent sounded so unique, not Dominican, not any form of North American, but also not like any other Caribbean island I know. She told me she had to learn to speak differently for a variety of jobs she had had where she dealt with international clientele whose first language was not English; the clientele understanding the language was enough of a challenge without having to understand a somewhat rare-to-the-world Dominican accent. To look back at my initial

description of Amanda, she was dressed in her best traditional Creole attire, representing herself as a proud Creole Dominican woman, so it seemed that with her adapted accent representing a sort of internationalization, she was, in a way, displaying a sort of transnationalism without having yet left the island for any significant amount of time.

In Hall's (1991) opinion,

> The past is not waiting for us back there to recoup our identities against. It is always retold, rediscovered, reinvented. It has to be narrativized. We go to our own pasts through history, through memory, through desire, not as a literal fact (p. 58).

To complement Hall, I also look at Asgharzadeh's reminder,

> Just as the idea of a universal, totalizing narrative of progress is seen to be unrealistic, so too the idea of a monolithic, unchanging, and unified self or subject is rendered problematic in that such notions serve to mythologize an otherwise fragmentary, unstable, and constantly shifting notion of *self* (p. 338).

Amanda's narrative and her sense of self, which I suggested represented a type of stationary transnationalism, showed how the perception of the need for migration, or interacting with the world beyond local borders (or shores in Dominica's case) can cause adaptation to living a pure culture, if one ever existed, but does not mean cultural identity must be abandoned. Hall (1991) proposes the idea that

> Most of us now live with a sense of much greater plurality, a sense of the unfinished character of [your race, citizenship/nationality, class]. It is not that they have disappeared but they do not stitch us in place, locate us, in the way they did in the past (p. 63).

Hall's point holds true in what Mary and Stella expressed, talking about the increased access to media and technology and how it influenced how Dominicans saw the rest of the world. But, again, there was a mental duality developed through education that showed in how the people put education into practice and how people learned to interact with their surroundings.

Looking at education in Dominica, it was not a case of people recognizing the colonialized education and either rebelling or bowing down. The ambivalent, sometimes strategic approach was what I observed in Chapter Three: people suggested that while they saw colonial influence in their education, they knew it would not change overnight, and so chose to take advantage in the way they approach migration. With various ways people's mentalities have developed after the influence of education, it could be seen that depending on the attitude toward culture, the view of migration may be influenced, and vice versa. Bhabha (1994) states, "Both gentleman and slave, with different cultural means and to very different historical ends, demonstrate that forces of social authority and subversion or subalternity may emerge in displaced, even decentred strategies of signification" (p. 145). I include Bhabha's words here to suggest elements of the power of colonialism, as well as the agency of the Dominican people, appear in people's perceptions of culture and migration, but the people often spoke authoritatively on issues of their home island without acknowledging the influences of colonial or subaltern positions.

It was at the art show where I first met Adam that he expressed his belief in the power of art, saying, "It's trying to get people to be honest with themselves. To be honest with yourself, love where you come from, and share it," and unintentionally convincing me his perspectives on the relationship between Dominican culture and migration would be fruitful for my investigation. In our interview at his studio, he told me he was never strongly connected with his education, feeling that while there is a need for maths and sciences, for what he felt he needed, "High school itself didn't provide." He said it was not well-balanced enough to guide people like himself in developing their creative skills. However, he said he felt with that being the case, "you get a basic education so that it's a start to move on and explore the world." Based

on his care for his culture, Adam struck me as an individual who, if he did migrate, would follow the behavior Lester said he observed in his travels, where "even if they go to Toronto or New York, even if they emigrate, you will see that within their homes there are images related to Dominica and many of them belong to Dominican groups that exist within those places." It would seem, for Adam, education did not prepare him to interact with the world in any ways he saw as pertinent, and he was left to find his own way to present his culture to the world.

Adam believed, "It doesn't matter where you go. You learn to better yourself and you use [cultural knowledge] anywhere." In speaking about his life with art, he rather altruistically said, "I don't have a talent on a whole of being an artistic person or very creative person to have it just to keep to myself" and "when you can pass on that knowledge, people grow from it and and it goes further than you, and it's not just about you. You might just have a link. Somebody else might have the other link. And then when you mesh the links together, it makes something bigger." Adam told me he had only left Dominica to visit other islands for art workshops, and did not feel he could currently leave, because he had a daughter who he was trying raise with what he deemed to be good values. He stated, "I have certain standards for my daughter … I'm going to educate her." When I asked him if those standards would change if she were male, he told me they would be the same, emphasizing that a person, male or female, should "love where [s/he] come[s] from."

Branching off Adam's view of using art to present culture, there seemed to be potential for a mindset that there are ways to use colonialized education to migrate for education while maintaining a sense of Dominican identity, rather than having to adapt. At the same art show where I met Adam, I conversed with the featured artist, Edward, who told me that after attending secondary school during the colonial era, he left Dominica to study art on another island. His

migratory experience was several years ago, and he had since returned to Dominica to become one of the island's most prolific artists in the area of cultural presentation and commentary. He told me he would be setting up a new exhibit to "make people think and educate people about the way they look at art and how they see the Dominican culture around them." In looking at some of his art, Edward pointed out pieces he had done during the years of art school, and how these pieces, which were done overseas, still depicted the Dominican culture as he knows and loves it.

In highlighting Adam and Edward's thoughts, I do not mean to say the only way people of Dominica can adhere to what they deem to be their culture is to be an artist. There is a range of perspectives on how culture and migration intertwine. In addition, whether adjustments are made to better integrate into a new non-Dominican setting, or if people believe in finding a way to project their culture as unique to other places, the perspectives are two sides of the same coin by insinuating there are always "'cultural' borders to be encountered and negotiated as part of population movement" (Lee, 2009, p.15). Colonialized education, as presented in Chapter Two, showed an attempt to erase or at least blur the lines between Dominican and British culture, pushing for British dominance, which created a potential for people to transcend the cultural borders; however, because of the mental duality, there was still an essence of *here and there*. What I explore next are people's feelings about their connection with Dominican culture changing after having gone *there*, outside of Dominica, and then returning *here*, their home island.

## Continuation of Culture after Return Migration

When introducing the concepts being examined within this thesis, I indicated migration does not equate to a shunning of or banishment from one's homeland. Migration, seen as being a longer period of time such as a year or more, can be temporary. I have introduced numerous

participants who have done just that: moved away for years and returned to Dominica to rejoin their fellow islanders. It would seem inevitable that after having lived elsewhere for a year or more, the person in transit would have observed traits or mannerisms from their host country, or, as one participant suggested, their second home. This potential for witnessing other traits made me curious if with a return to Dominica came a reversion to a former self, a blending of the Dominican with the acquired non-Dominican characteristics, or an attempt to interject cultural qualities from other places.

Janet told me she spent a cumulative total of 13 years in the United States before determining she wanted to be in Dominica to contribute to the island's wellbeing. However, even with that decision, when I asked her about her sense of home, she answered, "I have two homes. I could look at it like that. I love the US, but this is where my navel string is tied." In expressing this dual sense of home, I considered the malleability of Dominican culture and identity, and where this stems from. Olwig (2010) states,

> Within the Caribbean the obligation to enlighten the uncivilised became even more acute than in other areas of the non-Western world, because it was linked to the emancipation of slaves. This happened in an Enlightenment intellectual context where freedom meant more than simply being set free from the legal bonds of slavery; it also was identified with the larger notions of a universal right to liberty and freedom as the power of self-determination (p. 418).

Dominica has a history of slavery, which, following Olwig's statement, opens the gates to an exploration of the idea of self-determination, the individual power within it, and how people have or have not maintained their vision of culture after returning to Dominica after migration.

Lee (2009) explains, "Transnationalism can also make it difficult for migrants ever to feel completely 'at home' in any one place, which can in turn provoke identity crises" (p. 14). While I understand Lee's point, and crises can occur, I wonder if uncertainty of one's identity is

a temporary stage leading to a resolution through embracing the history and current possibilities of self-determination. In this context, I am referring to self-determination on a level of individual autonomy to choose one's cultural alignment, rather than be persuaded by the power of a unified, homogeneous group within a diverse society. My connection of self-determination to the relationship between culture and migration is being made using Vrdoljak's (2008) contention that self-determination deals with one's participation and identity within his/her place of living. For an individual, there is no *tabula rasa* where that individual establishes who, what, or how s/he is without encountering, even on a small scale, influences from outside/foreign cultures or economies or religions or just societies at large. This reality may seem to set a stage for cultural hybridity or mimicry (Bhabha, 1994), and risk othering oneself if a person violently ignores influences by imagining a static local culture. However, when determining one's own sense of identity, violence for or against outside influences is not going to make anyone more culturally attuned; there would appear to be options for re-engaging with local culture after returning from migration. Unfortunately, not everything is subject to choice. In talking with Veronica, there was one humorous but seemingly significant statement she made that caused me to ponder the impact of place on culture and an individual's inability to control certain aspects of his/her surroundings.

A month after arriving in Dominica, celebrations were in swing with National Creole Day and National Day, the day celebrating the island's independence[26], and, along with other events, I attended Dominica's National Cultural Gala. In the Botanical Gardens in Roseau, food and

[26] November 3rd is the date of National Day. Originally, this was known as Discovery Day, marking the date that Christopher Columbus *discovered* the island in 1493. In 1965, Chief Minister E.O. Leblanc changed the name of the day to National Day to bolster Dominican nationalism. On March 1, 1967, Dominica was granted Associated Statehood, giving the island government Internal Self-Government. However, in 1978, when full independence was obtained, the government opted to maintain November 3rd as the day to celebrate independence because it had already been National Day for eleven years.

drink vendors catered to the appetites of the people with barbecued chicken, Dominican-style salt fish, and plantains to eat, and selections of water, soft-drinks, local bush rum[27], and Kubuli to drink. On the opposite side of the open event space was a stage where musicians and dancers were performing what I was told were traditional songs and dances. This entertainment included songs in both Creole languages—Kweyol and Kokoy—Kalinago, and English. Within the crowd, I was meeting and conversing with all sorts of people, whether I was just meeting them there or had met them prior. In the month of being in Dominica, I had travelled through and stopped in several of the village communities meeting people from all walks of Dominican life and was encountering many of these people at the cultural gala. One of these people was Veronica.

Singing with the music and dancing from where she watched, Veronica was joyful as she embraced the cultural gala's celebrations. I met Veronica in my first weeks of being in Dominica, because she lived in the neighborhood where I had first stayed. It was in those weeks that I interviewed her, but I describe Veronica in the setting of the cultural gala, because her immersion into the festivities mirrored the connection to her culture she emitted through her responses during our interview. But despite her connection, she, too, had migrated for a time and then returned to Dominica. She told me she spent approximately three years living in New York City and when I asked what made her return, me wondering if it was an allegiance to the island or a conscious longing for home, Veronica told me, "I came back because it was too cold in New York." She said she did like New York and would have stayed if not for the cold. I chuckled at this response, as I am from Canada and understood what she meant about the cold, but, after seeing Veronica outside singing and dancing in the sunshine at the cultural gala, I realized the

[27] Bush rum is cask rum that has been infused with the natural flavors from any type of plant leaves, fruits, or spices.

island's climate was part of what allowed for Veronica to present the cultural identity she thought herself to be.

I recognize the mere act of singing and dancing can take place anywhere in the world, regardless of climate, but the experience at the gala in the gardens seemed to complement Veronica's way of everyday life that required her to live where she does. In being her neighbor for a brief period in a tight-knit community, I came to know Veronica as a woman who would open up her doors and windows while she listened to music, cooked the fresh chicken she had purchased from another neighbor, and made the fresh guava juice (sometimes to share with me) from the guavas she had picked off the tree in her front yard. This way was how she preferred to live, and these experiences were less likely to happen in a place, like New York, that experiences four seasons in the year. In addition, I imagine it would be difficult for a person who was born and raised in a Caribbean climate to be happily accepting of weather that can drop well below zero degrees Celsius.

With Veronica's simple description of New York being *too cold*, I realized that my suggesting someone could be selective in cultural adherence was still categorizing culture and may have been Orientalizing (Said, 1979) places and cultures, siding with *us* or *them*, when sometimes it is not a choice to make; rather, it is a following of instincts. Piot (1999) states, "categories themselves, and the way in which they naturalize an association between term and place, are unstable and shifting" (p. 17). With this point in mind, I looked at Veronica's experience as one where her return to Dominica and out of the cold was a decision to be in a place where she could engage with and adapt to her setting in ways allowing her an increased potential to maintain control of her life. Veronica completed secondary school in 1980 and said it was not school that pushed her to go to New York, but a goal of gaining life experience. While

she was not away as long as some of the other participants who left Dominica for school, I would argue three years is long enough to gain that life experience and be engaged with non-Dominican cultural influences. As it turned out, it was not a matter of embracing one culture over the other; Veronica just missed the sunshine and all that means for her preferences in ways of living.

In analyzing the idea of the variables that can influence ways of living, I once again looked at the responses from Janet, and saw that through her reflections she had suggested various levels of success and ways of participating in the island society heavily influenced by migration. In describing her experience of returning to Dominica after completing her post-secondary education, Janet explained,

> When I came back, I compared myself to the people I went to school with … I went to tertiary education—many of them didn't, or many of them went to tertiary education but as courses and came back. I stayed for a mass of time and developed a master's degree, rather than just basic training. I didn't have anything on them. When I came back, they already had their houses built, they had their families, their children were going to school, and they had proper jobs. Now I was coming back, yes, with a new face and new sense of education, but if I didn't have all this already, which my father left me… I would not have had what they had amassed at that time that I was gone. It gave me a reference point, because there are people there that I can compare myself with in terms of time and place and history.

Inheritance of land was not always the case for Dominicans and, in the way Janet spoke, she seemed to believe establishing a home and family to be part of *regular* life in Dominica and, had she not been given her land and business, she would be behind in the expected progression of life.

Janet's belief she "didn't have anything on [her former classmates]," alluding to the notion of classmates having worked to achieve goals in aspects of island life that she had simply been gifted, lends to a mentality, as Adam told me, where "in all colonized countries … there's a certain way that [local people] think is so-called correct, a sort of correctness in the things that

you do, so they look in that way and they think and they move in that way." Even with Janet's recognition of colonial systems, neo-colonial structures in Dominica, and her experiences in the United States, there were still values she held as being the way of life in Dominica, which suggested a static culture. This side of Janet's story combined with Veronica's natural connections to the island hint that culture is not impacted after return migration and self-determination is not pertinent, but that conclusion would be narrowly sighted and ignore the duality. Perhaps individual self-determination, as I have described, is not only unique from person to person, but is so because of consistent need to redefine oneself—as opposed to reaffirm oneself—with each cultural encounter, foreign or domestic, island or continent.

Clifford (1997) states, "If we rethink culture and its science, anthropology, in terms of travel, then the organic, naturalizing bias of the term 'culture' – seen as a rooted body that grows, lives, dies, and so on – is questioned" (p. 25). He suggests "not that we make the margin a new center ('we' are all travelers) but that specific dynamics of dwelling/travelling be understood comparatively" (Clifford, 1997, p. 24). If dwelling and travelling are considered comparatively, as I have tried to do thus far, then it should also be remembered that the culture-migration relationship does not only incorporate Dominicans who may or may not return to the island after migration. There must be analysis of non-Dominicans who immigrate to Dominica and interject their cultures, as well as their perceptions of and interactions with Dominican culture.

## Immigrants and Local Culture

One afternoon I walked to the supermarket down the street from the apartment I was staying in to purchase food to cook for dinner. My supply of plantains from Nathan had run out, and none of his family was home for me to buy more. As I searched for items in the store (chicken thighs, green beans, bread, eggs, and plantains on my list) I noticed the store's supply of

plantains and vegetables in general was depleted. I inquired about incoming stock. The gentleman at the register told me the store was out of plantains, and he was not sure when there would be more. With Dominica's reputation for growing bananas and plantains, I thought surely there would be somewhere nearby where I could find the fruit. The cashier did not know of any stores that would have them, but asked the woman behind me in line if she had any suggestions. Smiling, she said she did and told me to wait while she paid, after which she would show me where to find the precious plantains.

Natalie introduced herself to me, and we walked down the road as she told me she was a farmer and a fisher. She had taken courses in plumbing, but never pursued the profession as she felt happier working on her small plot of land and out of her boat. Natalie's decision to pursue agriculture evoked the sometimes-forgotten peasantry of Dominica. Peasantry on the island, however, had a different image than unfortunate perceptions of peasants as low-classed, poor, and hungry individuals living under tyrannical monarchs until Robin Hood saves the day. Instead, throughout the late-19$^{th}$ and early-20$^{th}$ centuries, *peasant* in Dominica was often used as an adjective for proprietor, indicating a person was in the business of small-scale agriculture (Trouillot, 1989). In 1884, a commission representing the British Colonial Office reported, "to a very welcome degree, and in a steadily increasing proportion, negroes are becoming prosperous peasant proprietors…appreciably increasing the exports" (Lodbell, 1985, p. 57, as quoted in Trouillot, 1989, p. 711). The complexity with the peasantry was that British representatives wanted to control the peasants such that "institutionalization would curtail the 'independence' associated with that peasantry since abolition" (Trouillot, 1989, p. 714). This tells me the colonial government wanted to ensure control over the local black population for purposes of increasing financial influx for the metropole and decreasing chances of losing power. Trouillot

(1989) said by the time he arrived in Dominica to conduct research, all cultivators, regardless of the scale on which they grew and sold their agricultural products, were known as farmers. Indeed, calling these people farmers may seem appropriate, but what it represents is placing all people within the agricultural business under the same authority. Natalie was indicative of the peasantry remaining. She did not fall under any colonial or colonialized power and worked in agriculture and fishing, because she wanted to and not because any governmental body asked it of her.

Up a steep hill off the main road of the village, Natalie brought me to the back door of her house where she had two bushels of green plantains and a grocery bag of yellow, ripe plantains. After tending to her crying infant nephew in the house, Natalie returned and started packing a bag with both green and yellow plantains. She told me to eat the yellow ones first and to either boil the green ones or give them a few days to ripen and then fry them. I thanked her and asked her the price. She smiled and told me I owed her nothing. She said, "That's what we do here. We help each other out." Even after insisting she take something for her generous provision, she still refused and assured me she would make money at the market. I thanked her again and made my way down the hill and back to my apartment to fry my chicken and plantains.

My pleasant experience with Natalie left me to contemplate how she interacted with me, knowing from my accent I was not Dominican. From my early days in Dominica, I was told by local people that Dominicans are nice and friendly and, with Natalie being only one example, I found the reputation to be accurate. In addition to Natalie's generosity, I had experienced other kindness such as Nathan's offering of fruit, a neighbour's unrequested initiative to contact people on my behalf for my research, and a general willingness to participate in my study. More than

one of those same people who described their fellow islanders as friendly added that Dominicans may even be friendly to a fault, helping others to the point of detriment of their own success. This idea added yet another element to watch for when observing Dominicans interactions with other people, and I specifically paid attention to engagement with non-Dominicans.

Olwig (2010) addresses the suggestion that the Caribbean community at large maintains a trait of openness to strangers, reflecting a "true diasporic society" (p. 421). If one looks back in history far enough, s/he will find, especially for islands, all people's origins are from somewhere else. Following Olwig's assessment, it may be suggested all Dominicans have roots in non-Dominican places while also feeling rooted in Dominica. What I then wondered was if this openness to strangers was because of a sense that everyone is *from somewhere else* and so, everyone, even people who have just recently moved to the island, could be united through their migratory backgrounds. However, for some, colonialism had imposed an attitude that, while all backgrounds are welcome, some backgrounds that have entered the island setting are better than others.

In my attempt to really come to know the physical island of Dominica, and to observe more people and communities, I ironically consulted Tom on how to go about seeing the *real* Dominica. I went to Tom because, in his line of work, he encountered many Dominicans and had taken it upon himself to become familiar with the island he called home. What Tom did was immediately turn to the table next to where I was sitting in the bar to introduce me to Frank, who was a local friend of Tom's and operated his own private tour company. Frank grew up working with his father in agriculture, and still helped his father out from time to time, but turned his focus to introducing his island to people who were just visiting, whether for a week or, like me, for months at a time. Frank and I became more like friends than a mere tour guide-client

relationship and, over the course of a few weeks, he introduced me to more people and places on the island. Of these people, one of them was a man who Frank referred to as his "white daddy."

Frank's *white daddy* was a Euro-American man from continental North America who purchased a plot of land in Dominica, built a house for himself, and then built a number of surrounding units he now rents out to travelers. Frank told me he called the man his *white daddy*, because the man had provided Frank with work in the past such as doing odd jobs around the man's property and also continued to promote Frank's tourism services to the people renting the extra units. Certainly, word-of-mouth advertising was crucial to Frank's business, but the way he viewed the man as his *white daddy*, even if he was using the term in jest, was a reminder that while there may now be an increase in local power and agency in the independent *post*colonial setting, the island had not been *de*colonized; Frank, as well as others I encountered, continued to make themselves the Other in the island they called their own. Bhabha (1994) states, "the subject of cultural discourse – the agency of a people – is split in the discursive ambivalence that emerges in the contest of narrative authority between the pedagogical and the performative" (p. 148). I witnessed all sorts of people working together and, as I showed above, was the recipient of wonderful generosity from Dominicans, which demonstrated Natalie's attitude, "We help each other out," but it was only when the non-Dominicans helped a local Dominican anyone was called *daddy*. Frank's use of the term was not the only time I observed a Dominican referring to a non-Dominican white man as *daddy* after being given assistance of some sort.

Fanon (1963) has opined, "The immobility to which the native is condemned can only be called in question if the native decides to put an end to the history of colonization – the history of pillage – and to bring into existence the history of the nation – the history of decolonization" (p.

51). I have understood the immobility that Fanon speaks of to be a general term for the *native* (the Dominican, in my case) to be free and able to physically move/migrate or live and develop his/her life on the island without feeling compelled to adhere to a system/structure implemented by the former colonial powers. The challenge with this notion is some may view decolonization as a form of wiping the slate clean, but, in a place like Dominica where history involves more than just native and colonist, there would be no easy and clear finish line to indicate full decolonization; extracting all signs of colonialism would require a removal of the majority of the population, most of whom are descendents of slaves. What remained then, at least within the people I spoke with and observed, were attitudes of accepting and integrating all people to the island as equals, as Natalie conveyed by including me in the royal *we*, and of accepting people to the island, but maintaining the colonial hierarchy and continuing to Other oneself. Janet stated, "[Foreign-style education] made us look at white people as better people, more educated, more intelligent than us," and, although there appeared to be a shift toward increased self-awareness and self-determination, there remained a mental duality where, for some like Frank, whether Dominica migrates to the white people, or the white people travel to Dominica, Dominican culture must be consciously perpetuated, rather than just allowed to exist.

**Summary**

The relationship between culture and migration is multifaceted and complex at the best of times, and becomes more dynamic when consideration is made for the idea that the mentalities of people engaging with culture and migration are not one-dimensional or homogeneous. What I have shown throughout this chapter are the various aspects of the culture-migration relationship most prominent and assessable based on the responses I received in my interviews, as well as the observations I made during my day-to-day interactions with the people and places. In this way,

as in all chapters here, I attempted to acknowledge my observations being from when I involved myself with social activities rather than sitting in a corner. I was not present for the educational or migratory experiences of any of the participants, but my very presence, especially being a non-Dominican from Canada, could have influenced how the people presented themselves, or how they contemplated their past. My presence represented only one example of the variables that played into how Dominicans interacted with the intertwining of culture and migration.

As I have tried to show, the elements brought to light through my interview transcripts and field notes showed culture and migration was not limited to Dominicans coming and going from the island and merely deciding whether or not to adhere to a Dominican culture. There were also non-Dominicans who came and went from the island, brought with them their own ideas of culture, and then chose how much or little to immerse themselves in the island setting. This phenomenon did not occur outside the setting Dominicans live in. Piot (1999) says, "Persons here do not 'have' relations; they 'are' relations," (p. 18) which indicates encountering people from other places is not a choice. It is inevitable, whether one emigrates or meets a person new to the island. Although one may decide how s/he would like to react or respond to those encounters, his/her action or inaction will be a catalyst to another person's impressions or actions.

Three concepts I touched upon within this chapter were those of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, and self-determination. After doing my analysis, I have suggested there are elements of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism that do not require physical movement, and rather, one can convey a sense of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism based on what has been established in the mind for what is seemingly necessary for living elsewhere. To view Amanda's alteration of her accent as an act of transnationalism did suggest some traits are Dominican while

others are not. However, if culture is in flux and people are on the move, as Clifford (1997) suggests, then it was possible Amanda's adaptations were cultural evolution and not cultural negotiation leading to transnational or cosmopolitan ends. The urge to identify Amanda as transnational or cosmopolitan—even if just in the mind—may have been brought on by the magnification of boundaries because Dominica is an island, suggesting fixity, therefore having a fixed culture. This attitude seemed to have been perpetuated by the colonialized education system, which was built on othering the colonies' populations and writing them into the history books as being a certain way and in need of *superior* colonial structures to succeed in the world. Self-determination would imply power and autonomy to develop the self, and colonialized education looked to ensure people developed and participated in their society in a colonial way.

Piot (1999) poses a notion of the Kabre[28] people that can be extrapolated to Dominica: Dominicans are "as cosmopolitan as the metropole itself, if by cosmopolitan we mean that people partake in a social life characterized by flux, uncertainty, encounters with difference, and the experience of processes of transculturation" (p. 23). Dominican culture may have come along when, in 1965, E.O. Leblanc began the campaign to make Dominicans feel their island reflected themselves, and not a colonial power; this campaign would have meant establishing what it meant to *not* be another nationality. The irony was that identifying the island this way echoed the Enlightenment, which was itself a Western/colonial concept. The postcolonial mentality created a situation where Dominicans were damned if they do and damned if they don't: if they presented a distinct and set culture and identity, whether in Dominica or abroad, they perpetuated a colonial act of structuring and categorizing. If they did not distinguish themselves from others, then they risked being lumped as just another former island colony. Natalie may have had it right because she did not speak of identity and, instead, spoke of action

[28] The Kabre people are from northern Togo.

(helping each other out) leading me to consider a change in perspective where people in Dominica, regardless of origins, were simply people in Dominica, and the niceties there were not Dominican, but just happened to be common in Dominica. In a similar vein to Hau'ofa's 'sea of islands', Spivak (2012) proposes everywhere can be seen as an island: "we are all islanders." She suggests,

> If we develop island-consciousness, know that the globe is a cluster of islands in a sea of traces, and approach the heterogeneity of the ocean-world with patience, collectively, and bit by bit, rather than all at once, it's maybe the only way to find out why that field, that cluster, floating in the world-ocean, is so uneven a relief-map.

## Chapter Five – Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis, I suggested that education as a tool to success depended upon one's definition of success. I now realize the definition of education can vary also. I have been educated in my fieldwork and found success, but not in a school and not scaled by monetary gain or grades. I gained knowledge of Dominica by talking to locals, and understanding of people because I joined activities not as a tourist, but as a friend.

In this concluding chapter, I offer reflections on my process and findings. To begin, I highlight the positive and negative aspects of my three research questions. Answers were compiled to reach conclusions about my overarching thesis question, so I then provide an explanation of my conclusions. After my conclusions are points on what I would do differently if I were to do the study over again, as well as of the limitations I found during this study. However, while changes could be made and obstacles were met, findings can still be used. For this reason, I next discuss potential applications of this research for Dominican education policy and/or practice. I say potential applications because this study was never intended to be representative of the island population, and further research would need to be done before system changes could be made; this study can provide a starting point for focusing future research.

### The Original Questions

When designing my research and making adaptations, I created a goal: to understand how colonialized education has impacted the relationship between cultural negotiation and perceptions of the needs to emigrate for Dominicans. Seeking better understanding to the relationship was so there might be new light in which to see the results of the revered education. I wanted to know the perceptions of whom the Dominican education system had been developed: the people or the state. To strike a balance of the two is a great challenge, and the repercussions

of an imbalance in the small island setting can be vast. Constantly in the forefront of my analysis was the distinction between people and state (Trouillot, 2001). My research questions—

1) *In what ways do the participants equate (or not) education with culture/identity?*
2) *In what ways do the participants feel a person is or is not a Dominican?*
3) *In what ways do the participants feel that mobility/migration is necessary for success?*

—were meant to be guides to organizing and understanding the participants' relationships to the state as they have been influenced by education. My expectation was that there would be intertwining within the answers found; there were never predicted outcomes of culture and migration being unaffected by education, nor of the two having no impact on each other.

Views of Dominican culture touted common characteristics in many cases, with language and connection to the natural surroundings often being highlighted, but the responses varied in their allowance for migration. Some participants had left the island, returned, and felt they were just as much if not more Dominican as when they first migrated. Some saw migration as a part of Dominican life. There were even rare suggestions that being Dominican means never migrating. The challenge for this study in terms of these posed research questions was whether or not education had anything to do with the opinions presented by the participants.

The answer is yes; colonialized education did and does play a role in how interviewees perceive cultural negotiation and the needs to move off island. However, there was not a chorus of homogeneous awareness of the impacts education had had on participants' lives. Some understood right away the connections I was attempting to make between education, culture, and migration. Others had no difficulty with the three concepts as separate entities, but did not immediately see the potential for relationships between them. I also encountered perspectives that disliked the suggestion that education could be so influential to a person's identity and frame

of mind without that person consciously accepting the influences. Because of this last stance, I must recognize that there were instances when I had to assess and interpret what had been told to me, and aligning some statements with categories or codes was subject to my own perspective, which risked imposing a voice upon the participants instead of merely presenting their voices.

Aware of my subjectivity, rather than present absolute conclusions, I attempted to pose suggestions of what might be understood from participant responses. In asking the participants to define their national culture and identity, it not only allowed me to look for remnants of colonial priorities within Dominica's postcolonial modernity, but also to see if and how living on an island played a recognized role in identity. Depending on one's thoughts on the vulnerability of culture when pit against a foreign version of modernity, the consequences for a small island could be dire. Understanding how the Dominican participants see themselves and their home might open a window of opportunity to understand the current status of the island and the possible future outcomes, depending on the stability of the people and their sense of place.

The biggest struggle with my thesis question and this type of research is deciding when to stop gathering data and where to begin analysing. There were no guarantees that everyone and everything would stay on topic, and it became necessary to decide what was and was not pertinent to the study. Research in Dominica has been done before with Trouillot and Sellers being two prime examples. On the one hand, I tried to remind myself that not every single observation I made needed to be included in my analysis because there has been much work already done that I can use; on the other hand, part of my research proposal was to look for a new way of viewing education's relationship with culture and migration, which, arguably, could mean a new understanding of education as having a link to everything. The latter is an extreme, but nonetheless is used as a point on the spectrum of how widespread to make my investigation.

## My Conclusions

My goal was never to make generalizations about Dominicans, and was only to gain a deeper understanding of the participants involved. I have attempted to heed Rodman's (1992) warning which suggests, "Places in anthropological writing have been equated with ethnographic locales. As such, they could be taken for granted" (p. 640). I have pondered if my tactics and my conclusions remove any sense of individual history and agency from the participants by suggesting they were all impacted by colonialized education. Because all participants experienced the education system, I would argue they were all impacted, but not all in the same way. What Rodman may also mean is ethnographic researchers must be wary of approaching research in ways that suggest, intentionally or not, certain people and places are open to being studied as if they are there for educational purposes of the world. The potential result of doing so could be the Othering or Orientalizing of people being interviewed and observed. When the purpose of my ethnographic research is to better understand various peoples in order to diminish the ongoing hegemony of former colonial powers, perpetuating the divide by emphasizing arbitrary hierarchical differences between *us* and *them* could be counterproductive.

During my time in Dominica, Clifford's (1997) words rang true: "This ethnographer is no longer a (worldly) traveller visiting (local) natives, departing from a metropolitan center to study in a rural periphery. Instead, his 'ancient and settled' fieldsite opens onto complex histories of dwelling and travelling, cosmopolitan experiences" (p. 2). *Travelling* does not necessitate migration, but rather an opinion on migration, creating a perspective that, arguably, alludes to Piot's (1999) concept of people being *remotely global*. Interviewees come from a variety of experiences, not all of which were forced by colonialism, so I do not mean that without colonialized education Dominicans would be living in an antiquated condition. However, with

low expectations of success, I sought out a "pristine space unaffected by history and the colonial/postcolonial order of things" (Piot, 1999, pp. 16–17), but to no avail. Then, with this imagined target as a basis, I built and presented my conclusions based on the people, statements, and settings that I have analyzed.

My general conclusion is that there is a duality within the mentalities and actions of the Dominican participants. *Duality* is a broad term that could include a number of aspects in the space, place, and time of Dominica. I use the term intentionally to allow for the inclusion of several issues that influence the divide(s), whether they be traditional/modern, local/global, colonial/subaltern, past/present, etc. No participants could be placed on just one side of any topic, which contributes to the post-structural setting in Dominica. In some cases, this duality is to the detriment of a person's stability; in other cases, people use it to their advantage to create their own identity and success.

One aspect being looked at here was cultural negotiation: how people connected to culture(s) and developed senses of identity after the influences of colonialized education. It became apparent that participants were not just going the way of the colonial culture versus Dominican tradition. Strictly defining colonial culture and Dominican tradition was impossible, because of the diversity of opinions on culture within interview responses. Bhabha (1994) suggests,

> Such a pluralism of the national sign, where difference returns as the same, is contested by the signifier's 'loss of identity' that inscribes the narrative of the people in the ambivalent, 'double' writing of the performative and the pedagogical. The movement of meaning *between* the masterful image of the people and the movement of its sign interrupts the succession of plurals that produce the sociological solidity of the national narrative (p. 154).

With each element of the participant-proclaimed pillars in Dominican culture, there are nuances that made me ponder the polarized origins of where the notions came from. The difference between education and learning seems to divide cultural survival and economic survival.

I have referred to the Dominican education system as colonialized education, because the colonial influence within what was and is being taught to secondary school students has remained present even after independence. Although the Dominican government had the ability to structure education however it saw fit for at least a decade prior to full independence, the state of the economy was still reliant upon Britain. With the idea that education would prepare students for jobs, it is understandable, although not always advisable, that the Dominican education system would be, at best, an adaptation of the British system, rather than overhauled. When the public movement began in the 1960s to make a Dominica for Dominicans, the institution of education was pushing a Dominica for Dominicans who wanted to follow the British. The result, from what I found, was a dual mentality and, arguably, dual identity.

To think in terms of mentality and identity, it is necessary to consider visions of modernity. Looking at Piot's (1999) definition of modernity, the association is with the culture, politics, and economy resulting from industrial capitalism, with European imperial expansion being the driving force behind the spread of the prevailing perception of modernity. Dominica did long ago fall into the path of European expansion and so, the consequences that are now seen as everyday life on the island, the current form of modernity, should not be looked at as issues that can simply be done away with and replaced. At the same time, this does not mean that change cannot occur. The potential, and perhaps need, for change is why Gaonkar (2001) was turned to for an examination of alternative modernities in order to quell the concerns stemming from the present situations for educated Dominicans.

The current state of modernity in Dominica, colonialized education being a proponent, is one that not only creates duality in terms of culture and identity, but also lends to the ambivalent stances on migration. There is a problem with the approach to brain drain—the exodus of educated and skilled citizens—and the hope for brain churn—the migration of young adults for gaining more education and skills that can then be brought back to the island. The solution must consider more than bolstering people's desires to return. It is not always for a lack of desire that they do not return. There is then a strain on the cultural survival due to such few changes in the way of thinking about the relationships between education and island realities.

While Piot provided a common understanding of modernity, Gaonkar (2001) offered a reminder that, "To think in terms of alternative modernities is to recognize the need to revise the distinction between societal modernization and cultural modernity" (p. 1). Some participants from this study may be seen living with more stability and comfort than others, and a few may even be categorized as living quite well. However, none of these people were ignorant to their surroundings and saw the struggle to keep up as commonplace, with financial stability requiring multiple jobs, and clear opportunities to thrive seldom seen. Based on my observations of the Dominican participants and the multitude of factors within individual perspectives, there is little harmony found between the proud and strong culture that has been claimed and the vulnerable daily lives that are experienced. Many people are finding ways to maintain cultural practices while also utilizing the colonialized education to reach personal goals, but cohesion does not appear to be occurring, and the divide between education and cultural continuation remains.

People's perceptions of leaving and returning as part of life might suggest a lack of importance placed upon boundaries for Dominicans, which could support the notion that the culture can travel with ease. However, the continued references to *over there* or *overseas* has

connotations that suggest feelings of difference from other places, which then means, for better or worse, culture will be impacted and possibly adapted in a new setting, rather than interjected and static in its traits. This realization has created a basis for transnationalism for Dominicans, but then nationalism as a core aspect of the Dominican culture, since E.O. Leblanc's push for a *Dominica for Dominicans*, could be seen as countered, or possibly irrelevant. If migration is part of island life, as Connell (2007) suggested, and culture is an intertwining of roots and routes (Clifford,1997), then Dominican culture, or any small island culture, could be characterized partly by transnationalism, leading me to ponder the strength and essence of Dominican nationalism. I am not suggesting that the pride Dominicans have for their island is not very real, nor that there is a need for change on this front. I do wonder if the sense of nationalism is a natural consequence of the island setting and was bolstered by Leblanc's movement, or if it is something that had to be created as a tool for the Dominicans to separate themselves from the colonial rule of Britain. If transnationalism has developed and become more prominent with Dominicans, the separation from colonial rule is not negated, but perhaps the dynamics of the local culture are changing and therefore calling for a revision in what it means to be Dominican.

As I draw conclusions, I return to my originally proposed framework to ensure its continued validity and evaluate how my findings connect with and fit between the pillars of my analysis. My consideration is for how Dominica was guided into an ill-fitting version of modernity and what the potential results are from a culture with nationalist mentalities, but transnationalist behaviors. My argument has been that colonialized education is a crucial element in forming a cultural duality within the minds of the Dominican people I spoke with, and that this phenomenon has formed an array of opinions on the necessities for, and advantages and disadvantages of migration. The reason colonialized education has these effects is because it has

worked by creating silences in Dominican history and, in turn, people-community connections in ways that may not have existed had it not been for the way they were taught in school.

Silences in history (Trouillot, 1995), intentionally or not, emphasize certain aspects of events or ideas over others. What happened in Dominican history and what was said to have happened by the colonial system can be seen as different. The confrontation that ensues is between the lessons learned by Dominicans through lived experience and lessons in classrooms directed by agendas and goals for an island the colonial power wanted, and not the island Dominicans were living on. Stella was *told* she would be a teacher instead of a nurse as she wanted. Randy felt he *had* to leave school because his education was not connecting with his reality. Evidently, for the Dominicans I interviewed, non-Dominicans had made the decisions about what and how to learn; the pedagogy aiming to bring Dominica into the dominant view of modernity was continued after independence because of an economy reliant on Britain. With the education being as such and feelings of disconnect being present, it is no wonder that encouragement was needed to bolster local connection and ownership of the island. It is then also apparent that the unity that Dominicans feel began as an imagined community.

Even though Dominica is a small island with a small population, there is still diversity within its demographics. However, I observed emphasis mainly on only two groups: the Negre Mawon and the Kalinago. Kalinago and Negre Mawon may be seen as distinct groups with communities indicative of their cultures, but the identities that they hold and the areas in which they live exist as they do because of the events of colonialism. What colonialism did was create a setting where pre-colonial mentality was suppressed, which meant that one could rebel or find ways to live in this setting. Colonialized education taught those ways and the economic politics (Trouillot, 1988) made rebelling with a united front nearly impossible. As a result, in today's

Dominica, as people of all backgrounds tout the uniqueness and unity within the island's population, they are doing so after spending generations in a position of cultural deficit (Valencia, 1997), and now persist in their duality by attempting to bolster tradition while maintaining an imposed modernity.

I am not posing a conclusion that Dominica has a false culture or that the senses of community established are without real benefits to the people's pride and ownership of their island. However, as a postcolonial island, rather than a decolonized island (which I do not believe to be possible) out-migration will continue to be part of life, and the people may always live with this potential duality. It is the way the education teaches and prepares the students to be part of the community that can potentially allow for cultural negotiation and not cultural coercion, which could change whether or not the battle against the perception of cultural deficit continues to be like climbing a sand dune: taking two steps for every one step of progress. In turn, there may be more personal incentive to look at migration as a tool to meet goals for Dominica, rather than a way out, and reinforce brain churn instead of suffering from brain drain.

**If I could do it all over…**

Dominica is not a large island and does not have a large population, but there is much to observe and learn. Conducting ethnographic research could be never-ending; the more time spent in a setting and with people, the more information and data that can be gathered, and the more the people and place can be understood from the observer's frame. Unfortunately, there comes a time when a line must be drawn and the analysis process must begin. This time often occurs when the funding runs low and the flight home still has to be paid for. If I could repeat this project, one goal would be to procure more funding before departing for Dominica to allow for more time on the island talking with more people. However, despite my ambitions, I

recognize that the depth and breadth of my fieldwork was decided upon, in part, so the analysis process would be manageable for a master's degree. In addition to securing more money and therefore time, I would also make adaptations to preparations for interviewing people.

Prior to journeying to Dominica, a list of interview questions was created (see Appendix E). These questions were designed to bring the focus of the discussion to that of education, culture, and migration, but were left open-ended in order to allow for the participants to provide more elaborate responses from their own perspectives, rather than being given only the options of yes or no. In doing preliminary research and learning about Dominica in order to understand the context in which the interview participants live, I attempted to anticipate potential responses to the interview questions so that I might be prepared with appropriate follow-up questions, regardless of the shape the discussion took. Understandably, there was no way I would be able to foresee all the different answers to the questions, but I now recognize that the approach I took leading into the interviews was too narrow. While I knew I would have to be adaptable within the interviews because people interpret the questions differently and interviews can go various directions, I naively thought that all I would need would be the answers that pertained to my questions and that anything else they wanted to say would be superfluous. In actuality, there were several responses and sometimes actions that delved into areas I had not included in my list of questions, but that I immediately recognized as connected and pertinent to my topic. Now having completed the interviews, my thoughts are that the responses I anticipated were too simple and would have reflected a clear distinction between local and colonial perspectives, and I did not give enough attention to the possibilities for issues that problematize the scenario.

Despite my efforts to foresee potential issues, I often felt after the interviews that, had I been more prepared in my anticipation of answers, I may have been able to add more depth to

the some of the topics discussed. I made no prior consideration for participants carrying firearms or selling marijuana (not to me) *while* I interviewed them, but both occurred. I was left able to observe, but unprepared to address the actions in relation to my study. I only witnessed these actions within the two single interviews, but each caused me to contemplate the potential issues that were being represented (e.g. crime, safety, substance use, financial security, community relations) and how, if at all, they influenced or were influenced by the people's interactions with education. These experiences are not to say that, if I could redo my research preparation, I would ponder specifically how to integrate the guns or marijuana into my questioning, but I would place more effort on hypothesizing which aspects found within most societies, island or not, would have indirect but still significant connections to education, culture, and feelings on migration.

## Limitations to This Study

In any study, there are bound to be aspects the researcher either planned to investigate, but could not access the necessary data, or did not recognize as an area that would be beneficial to explore until after the analysis and writing process is underway. Both became issues when the accuracy of statistical data could not be confirmed, as well as when the whereabouts of documentation was unknown. The statistical data I briefly looked for were the numbers of people who had migrated and whether or not there was a population count that factored in people's movements on and off island. I never felt it necessary to utilize statistics for support in my conclusions, but rather to gain a firmer understanding of the context of the island, as well as compare what the government presents to what the public believes to be the pertinence of knowledge of migration. Seller's (2005) research in Dominica shows that the categorization of people's presence on the island is not entirely clear-cut. She offers an example of the population

records of a small village kept by the village's health clinic. The only time a person is completely removed from the list of residents is when they are deceased. Otherwise, a resident is either counted as being in the village, or, if s/he has migrated, is still listed, but is given the label *out of state*, which, as Seller points out, is "significant because it anticipates the person's return" (p. 43). Neither the health clinic's, government's, or any other final population tally is of great importance for my study, but the *way* these statistics are recorded and the (in)consistency in the perceptions of people's presence, although interesting, posed a challenge to my investigation.

No participants argued against migration being an occurrence, and a number of people highlighted brain drain as a problem. At the same time, however, when I asked people what the population is, I received answers as low as 60,000, others saying 75,000, and a few who believed that while the government presented a population of approximately 74,000, the actual number is closer to 70,000. The challenge for my own study was trying to find a way to know whether people had genuine opinions on migration, or if they were spouting the headlines from the island's news. The commonality among the responses is that migration happens and can be problematic for the island, but when there is such ambivalence on the population, I question the basis on which people place migration as a problem. I have analyzed, interpreted, and presented the responses I was provided, but this issue alone can be seen as one of silencing, with a population that is and a population that is said to be. However, measuring the sincerity of participants' feelings toward migration is an issue that I did not feel could be addressed during my study because I expected it would create discussion in new territory, too far off course to be manageable and useful. I chose to accept that what people told me was their honest perspective.

The other challenge in terms of establishing a pre-interview context was in finding primary documentation pertaining to the pre-independence education system. In my preliminary

research online, I reviewed the Dominican National Archives website and saw policy documents listed in the contents. I just could not find the archives in Dominica[29]. It seemed that a person is simply supposed to already know which building it is, as is sometimes the case in smaller places. I appealed to the public library's Special Collections and found some documents and reports on Dominica's education system, which were helpful, but little in the way of past official policy. The found sources were either other people reporting on their own experiences with the education system in the colonial time, or the summaries from various post-colonial era conferences on adapting and expanding the education structure and policies. I read it all without having seen the original government documentation that was being discussed.

While my main focus within this study has been on the perspectives of the participants, meaning that what the government policies state is not as crucial as how the participants perceive the system, I had hoped to find the official stance(s) on education in order to establish the context that the participants were working with, battling against, or simply enduring. I wanted a point of reference that I could use that would allow me to pose more pointed questions in order to focus the discussions while still leaving room for response expansion. In general, I learned about and understand the goals of the colonialized education system, but I was hoping to examine the specific details that were shaping the system and, therefore, the people and the island.

Having written this thesis, I obviously feel that these limitations were not severe enough to question the validity of my findings, but I do acknowledge that, had I been able to present the migration statistics or the colonial-era policies, I may have been able to establish a stronger context for understanding the positions of the government, the creators of the education system, versus the perceptions of the people who experienced that education. The query I now have is

[29] I recognize that not all places have archives for filing historical documents, or sometimes historical bureaucratic documents at all, and so might consider the alleged existence of archives as symbolic of a sort of status of Dominica.

whether or not these limitations are of any importance to the people of Dominica. Certainly, having all of the desired information would be helpful for my research, but when blatant and acknowledged ambivalence was presented, such as in the *guesstimation* of the island's population, there did not seem to be any great concern from the participants for discovering the actual answer. This lack of concern exemplifies the overall reason for my research being of an ethnographic nature: it has been a privilege to experience the people and island of Dominica, but if the people living on the island feel satisfied, then who am I as a non-Dominican to tell them they need change? I do hope that my study has helped at least some of the participants to reflect upon their past education and how it has or has not shaped their positions and opinions within the island setting, but it still remains their decision for whether or not there needs to be change.

## Implications for Policy and Practice

This thesis was never meant to take on a role of proposing specific or official changes for Dominica. It was only meant to offer an understanding of the lives of the participants involved in the study with respect to how their experiences with colonialized education shaped certain perspectives and, therefore, their lives to present. With this in mind, I cannot make any recommendations with reference to particular policies or practice. However, the research I have done can provide a new or at least different lens through which the policymakers and the general public might view the issues of education, culture, and migration. For some, the desire for immediate change, often with the focus on economics, causes rushed decisions without enough contemplation for long-term impacts on the cultural values that people hold.

What is understandable is the drive for Dominicans to seek financial stability. Economics play a crucial role in the ways that people and societies progress at a local, national, and international level. The debate that ensues is which should be developed first, economics or

culture and identity, because the two can at one time be intertwined and at another be opponents in a battle for importance. Ideally, the labels of island resilience or vulnerability, in terms of economics and culture, would not be applicable, because there would simply be island existence.

Based on the responses in my interviews, the approach by Dominicans seems to be that strong economics are needed first and so, people migrate for education or for employment with hopes of returning with skills that can help bolster the economy, alleviate the stresses, and *then* allow Dominica and all of its culture to flourish. Unfortunately, this return migration plan does not always work as hoped, and, in the times where the people are able to return with skills, they find limited options for applications. The island can only have so many accountants.

What might be taken from my research is the idea of reassessing how education and migration are presented and promoted. The Dominican government currently offers scholarships to students for attending postsecondary school overseas, often USA, Canada, or England. So far as participants could tell, however, the government merely hopes that students' sense of national pride will be so overwhelming that they will return after their studies. It is often not for a lack of national pride that people leave for school and do not return; they cannot afford to return home. As a short answer to this dilemma, perhaps there could be an investigation into incentives, such as assistance with paying off student debt, which may not be easily done by Dominica, but invites suggestions for adjusting the relationship between education, culture, and economics. Culture, as I have said, is always in flux, but if the concept of culture can be brought to the forefront in education, then perhaps there can be a stronger understanding of how culture changes in order to embrace the flux, as opposed to imagining a static state, which perpetuates the perception of being in cultural and financial deficit. A change in mentality might not decrease out-migration, but opening up to a new approach that allows Dominica to encourage

and use its culture as part of the economy could increase return-migration and the brain churn; stepping outside of the colonialized box could help Dominica realize what it can be, and not what some believe it should be.

## Potential for Further Research

I mentioned that a challenge in this research was deciding what to focus on with certain topics and issues. There are aspects related to Dominica, islands, postcolonialism, culture, identity, and migration that were not touched on in this thesis. There is more research to be done with my findings being a starting point. Because all areas of study are interconnected, as I believe, the research that could be done by expanding upon my study could be endless.

There are ways my research can contribute to the understanding of small islands and options for future research on islands, as opposed to only work in postcolonial studies that just happens to be focused on an island. Many small islands are now independent and have to deal with the aftermath of colonialism where land and people were used, and sometimes abused, for the gain of a metropole. Unfortunately, despite independence, islands like Dominica maintain reliance on larger places—*larger powers*—for survival and so, are too often treated as poor, little places that, from an outsider's perspective, would perish without metropoles continuing to save the day. With colonial hegemony still playing a role, the small islands tend to feel it necessary to follow the leader, which places a strain on islands' abilities to present themselves autonomously. What I hope is that changes in perspective on what and how islanders are taught and learn can allow small islands to stand on the world stage as individual participants with allegiances to the best choices for their present and future, and not because of the past. Perhaps until these issues are acknowledged more forthrightly, and postcolonial islands make declarations of who they are in addition to who they are not, these small islands will continue to be viewed as significant only

when the *larger powers* say so. Dominica and many other islands I have visited are beautiful, vibrant places and have the abilities to present a commanding presence, but they need to show their strengths. My research, as small as a single thesis may be in the sea of Island Studies, might contribute to new perspectives within small island settings.

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Briefing Script

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Mark Currie and I am a student in the Master of Arts in Island Studies program at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. My research interest is to explore how education on the island during the colonial era and its aftermath in the early post-colonial period has affected the identity and mobility of the people of the now-independent island state of the Commonwealth of Dominica. Your personal insights are the best way to understand how you feel your secondary-level education has affected how you see yourself and your abilities to participate in social and economic activities both in Dominica and the world, you being someone who experienced the education systems of Dominica. Knowing your experiences and opinions can help to shed light on positive and negative developments of formal secondary-level education during the transition from colony to independent status.

If you agree, I would like to ask you questions about how you feel your secondary-level education appealed to your sense of identity as a Dominican, islander, or any other way you might identify as important, and whether you feel your education provided you with the tools to build your life, either on the island or elsewhere, in ways that you saw best, or in ways that a government believed to be best, or both. Essentially, I am hoping to find out from you what you feel your secondary-level education experience provided you.

The interviews can be conducted in a location that you would like so that it is comfortable and convenient for you. There is a very low level of risk expected for you as a participant and the interview will likely be just like an everyday conversation. Before the interview, I will give you a copy of the research consent form which includes information on the research being done and your potential role in the project. If you agree, I will have you sign a copy of the consent form to confirm that you understand the interview process and that you agree to participate. I will also give you a copy of the consent form to keep for yourself. I would estimate that the minimum time to complete the interview will be about 60 minutes and the maximum will be 90 minutes. If I feel like there is more I would like to know, or you feel that you have more to say, and you are willing to do a second or possibly third interview, I may ask you if we can schedule more interview time.

With your permission, I would like to record the interview using a voice recorder in addition to me taking written notes during the interview. There are no correct or incorrect answers to the questions I will be asking and you are free to stop the interview at any time or refuse to answer any question. If you decide to pass on a question or to leave the interview entirely, I will not ask you to explain your decisions.

I will analyse the interviews to develop a thesis that will then be published and shared once I have gained approval from the University of Prince Edward Island. It is my goal to find out how secondary-level education during the late colonial period and early years of independence, in the setting of island and Dominican society, affects a people's sense of identity as well as a people's ability and perceived ability to act at domestic and international levels while remaining a resident of the island. The results will shed light on how education affects people's relationships to their home island. From what you say, people will better understand what needs to be or has been developed in your island education system so the education meets the needs and desires of the people instead of other non-Dominican groups or governments. If you agree to participate, you will be helping me complete my thesis, and also be contributing to and helping to build the academic research on islands, which is meant to benefit islanders and their island communities.

I will consider all of your responses to be confidential and so, your name will not appear on any written record. If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to how the information you provide is collected or handled, you may contact me, Mark Currie (researcher) at mtcurrie@upei.ca, or contact one of my co-supervisors: Dr. Udo Krautwurst (ukrautwurst@upei.ca; 902-566-0306) or Dr. M. Jean Mitchell (mjmitchell@upei.ca; 902-566-0381). You may also contact the University of Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board that has approved this research process (see contact below).

Thank you very much for considering to participate in this research.

Sincerely,

Mark Currie
Master of Arts – Island Studies, UPEI
c/o Dr. Udo Krautwurst
550 University Ave.
Charlottetown, PE, Canada
C1A 4P3

This research project has been approved by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. Any concerns about the ethical aspects of your involvement in this research project may be directed to UPEI Research Ethics Board at (902) 620-5104 or reb@upei.ca

## Appendix B

**Information Letter for Participating in *Schools for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica* Research Project**

**Principal Investigator:** Mark Currie
Master of Arts in Island Studies Candidate
University of Prince Edward Island
Charlottetown, PE, Canada
mtcurrie@upei.ca

**Faculty Supervisor:** Dr. Udo Krautwurst and Dr. Jean Mitchell
Master of Arts in Island Studies Co-ordinator
University of Prince Edward Island
Charlottetown, PE, Canada
ukrautwurst@upei.ca and mjmitchell@upei.ca

*School for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica* is a research study being conducted by me, Mark Currie, in order to investigate the impacts of colonialism on the education, identity, and mobility of people from the island state of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

The purpose of the study is to better understand the way the education system during Dominica's colonial period (pre-1978) carries over into the independent society and connects, or not, with islander identity, or any needs for islanders to stay on or leave the island. I would like to invite you to participate in a voluntary interview that, including the signing of a consent form, is expected to take approximately 60-90 minutes. If I feel that the 90-minute interview is not enough time, or think that further discussion and clarification of points would be good for the study, I may ask you if you would be available and willing to do up to two 30-minute follow-up interviews. If I do ask for follow-up interviews, you are free to say no. From your participation in the study, along with interviews with other participants, I am hoping to learn if your now-independent island's education system can be fully rid of British colonial influences and reflect the learning needs of the island's population in a way that benefits the island and minimizes brain drain.

I would like to talk with participants who have attended and finished/left secondary school in the education system of Dominica and are permanent residents on the island of Dominica. It is not necessary for you to have completed secondary school.

If you do agree to participate in an interview, please know that you are free to decline to answer any individual question and you are free to completely withdraw from the interview entirely at any time. If you choose to withdraw, I will ask if I may still use any of the information you have

offered up to that point. Whether you answer any or all of my questions, your name will not be used in the final thesis, and only my two faculty supervisors and I will be able to see your name or information you provided in the interview.

With your permission, I would like to record your responses to the interview questions using audio recording equipment so that I can later analyse, use, and potentially quote the responses for the purpose of completing this master's thesis research project.

The interview can take place in a location you feel is comfortable and convenient.

Any information you do provide will remain confidential to the best of my ability and I will destroy interview recordings and transcripts at the conclusion of the research project. Before the time comes when I can destroy any transcripts or recordings, only my faculty supervisors, Dr. Udo Krautwurst and Dr. Jean Mitchell, and I will be able to access the information you provide in this interview.

If you have any questions or concerns before, during, or after the study, you are free to contact me, Mark Currie (principal investigator), or my faculty supervisors, Dr. Udo Krautwurst and/or Dr. Jean Mitchell, at any time.

If you would like to participate in the voluntary interview for the *School for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica* study, please tell me, Mark Currie, and I will request that you read and sign a consent form before we begin an interview.

## Appendix C

### Consent to Participate in Study

*This document indicates you have consented to participate in the* ***Schools for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica*** *research study. If you agree, please sign this document on the designated line on the reverse side and return it to the researcher.*

In signing this document, I have read and understand the material provided in the information letter explaining the research project, *School for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica*, and agree to participate in this research project being conducted by Mark Currie, Master of Arts – Island Studies Candidate, University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.

I understand I am asked to be interviewed for a span of time ranging between 60 and 90 minutes. I understand that, with my permission, the interview will be recorded using audio recording equipment. I understand that if I object to audio recording, Mark will take hand-written notes of my responses. I understand that my participation in this interview is entirely voluntary and I am free to withdraw from any individual interview question or to terminate my participation in the study at any time.

I understand that the interviews will be exploring my opinions of the impacts my experience with secondary-level education has had on my identity and social and economic mobility as an islander of Dominica. I agree to have my responses within the interview analysed, utilized, and potentially quoted for the purposes of the research and thesis being done by the researcher, Mark Currie.

I understand that Mark may ask me to do up to two follow-up interviews, no longer than 30 minutes each, in order to clarify or elaborate on earlier responses. I understand that I am free to say no to Mark's requests for further interviews.

I am aware that any and all information I provide to this study will remain confidential to the best of Mark's abilities and according to Canadian university research policy, which includes the secure holding of all interview transcripts and notes for no less than five years after the study has been completed and Mark has received his degree, and then the destruction of the interview recordings and transcripts. Additionally, any information I provide beyond the scope of the research study will remain confidential and will not be used in any reports produced from the study.

I have been provided the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I have been given a copy of this form.

I have been informed that if I have any questions or concerns about the ethical conduct of this survey, I can contact Mark Currie's thesis supervisors, Dr. Udo Krautwurst at (902) 566-0306 or ukrautwurst@upei.ca and Dr. Jean Mitchell at (902) 566-0381 or mjmitchell@upei.ca, or contact the UPEI Ethics Board at (902) 620-5104 or reb@upei.ca.

Signature of Participant:_____Date:_____

Name of Participant (printed): _____

Contact by: Phone _____

E-mail_____

Mailing Address_____

Signature of Researcher:_____Date:_____

Name of Researcher (printed):_____

## Appendix D

### Closing Script

I would like to extend my gratitude and to thank you for your time and support by participating in this research which has the focus of exploring how a colonialized education system can impact the identity and social mobility of people of the small island of Dominica. By participating in this research, you have contributed to my and the field of Island Studies' understanding of how different forms of education can affect a small island population and, therefore, the social and economic health of the island.

Using the contact information you have provided me, when the thesis is finished and published, I will contact you to ask if you would like me to send you an executive summary of the thesis, the link to the online copy of the thesis on the University of Prince Edward Island database, or a printed copy of the thesis. This way, if you would like, you can see the results of the study.

Throughout the study, or after you have been able to review the final results, if you have any questions or concerns about the study or your part in the study, please do not hesitate to contact me, Mark Currie, at mtcurrie@upei.ca, or to contact one of my thesis supervisors: Dr. Udo Krautwurst (ukrautwurst@upei.ca), and Dr. Jean Mitchell (mjmitchell@upei.ca).

Once again, thank you for your cooperation and support in this research.

## Appendix E

*School for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica*

Guiding Interview Questions

1) What does it mean to be a Dominican? What makes a Dominican?

2) Does being on an island make a difference in what is Dominican identity? Why/why not?

3) What years did you attend secondary school? To what level of secondary school did you complete?

4) What did you expect from your education? Did your education provide you with what you expected?

5) In what ways did your secondary school education connect with your needs and wants as a Dominican and/or as an islander?

6) In what ways did your secondary school education contribute to your thoughts of either staying here in Dominica or looking to move elsewhere?

7) Do you view your secondary school education experience as a Dominican education or a foreign-style education imposed on Dominica?

8) If you could go back and had the power, what, if anything, about your education would you have changed? If you could, what would you change in the current education system? Do you feel those changes have been or are being made for the current generation of students?

9) In what ways do you feel your secondary school education prepared you to perceive and interact with your community, your island, and the world?

# Appendix F

UPEI
UNIVERSITY of Prince Edward ISLAND

550 University Avenue
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada C1A 4P3

September 12 2014

Mark Currie
Island Studies

Re: REB Ref # 6005918

**"School for Subalterns: Colonialized Education in the Small Island State of the Commonwealth of Dominica (working title)"**

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that it has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement 2: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to Research Services prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to Research Services not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal from can be downloaded from the Research Services website (http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms).

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

*Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.*

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

James E. Moran, Ph.D.
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board

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