Red, White and Afro Caribbean: A Qualitative Study of Afro-Caribbean American Identity During the Olympic Games

Ashley Gordon,
MSc in Media and Communications

Other dissertations of the series are available online here:

Red, White and Afro Caribbean:
A Qualitative Study of Afro-Caribbean American Identity During the Olympic Games

Ashley Gordon

ABSTRACT

The Olympic Games is a global media event that provides a unique context for the study of diasporic identity. This dissertation aims to answer the research question, 'To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean American identity reconstructed during the Olympic Games?' A qualitative study was conducted using data from semi-structured interviews with 12 self-identified Afro-Caribbean Americans that watched the London 2012 Olympic Games. Data from the interviews was analyzed using a phenomenological approach that incorporated thematic clustering. The data was interpreted within the scope of pre-existing theories and concepts on diasporic identity and media events. The themes that organically surfaced during this process suggest that Afro-Caribbean Americans engage in a sense of American belonging during the Olympic Games, though in an obligatory fashion that is seemingly constructed through national media consumption. Further, data suggests that their identity as Caribbean Blacks takes on heightened personal meaning, with the platform of the Olympic Games serving as a space of equality in which all participants have an opportunity to succeed.

INTRODUCTION

Some criticized NBC, the official United States broadcaster of the London 2012 Summer Olympics, when it chose to cut a depiction of the Windrush ship arriving to Great Britain in 1948 from its television broadcast of the opening ceremony (Harris, 2012). The Windrush brought the first major wave of West Indian[1] immigrants to the United Kingdom and was included in the ceremony in recognition of Britain's multiculturalism (Harris, 2012). Rewind to the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics, NBC also faced criticism from viewers when it chose not to broadcast in real-time the sprinting finals that included a highly anticipated sprint

---

[1] A collective of Caribbean islands comprised of three main island groups: Bahamas, Greater Antilles and Lesser Antilles ('World Atlas').

from star Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt. In 'Diaspora Peeved at Olympic Blackout' (2008), writer Janet Silvera reported that one viewer of the Games thought the network missed a business and marketing opportunity to reach out to Caribbean-Americans. Yet the viewer, in his own admission, resorted to 'creative Internet links on Bahamian and Antiguan online broadcasts' (Silvera, 2008: para. 8) to view the event.

Certainly, the Olympic Games conform to an old-world structure that places national identity as the overriding indicator of viewer allegiance. This is evident in the nation-fixed athletic teams that act as representatives of national publics. This structure may very well have guided NBC, at two successive Games, to only display events and presentations that showcased the American public's perceived interests and character. However, conflict arises when this structure collides with the realities of diasporic people, who often straddle their sense of allegiance and belonging between two lands and other imagined communities.[2] In the case of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora,[3] members often negotiate between their identities as Caribbean and American, as well as their rather abstract identity as Black. Still, as the viewer who explored creative avenues to view the Jamaican team in the 2008 Olympic sprinting competition demonstrates, this conflict has not prevented the diaspora from tuning in to this global media event throughout the years.

> Sustained interest in the Games in spite of a disparity between the event's essential frames and the multifaceted identities of its diasporic viewers suggests a transformation of viewers' sensibilities while watching the event unfold.

Existing academic literature addresses the multi-layered experience of being that is shared by Afro-Caribbean Americans and other diasporic communities. In conceiving of 'hybrid identities', Hall (1989: 225) suggests that identity in contemporary society has shifted from revealing 'what we really are' to 'what we have become'. It has become a process – something that is continuous and multi-layered rather than rooted in one ancestral homeland. That is, the experience of the Afro-Caribbean American is one that ebbs and flows through senses of belonging to multiple communities. Furthermore, a wealth of literature also exists on 'media events' (Dayan and Katz, 1992; Couldry and Hepp, 2010) prior to and into the global age. Couldry and Hepp (2010: 11) suggest that in the global age, media events like the Olympics

---

[2] Used in the vein of Anderson (1991) to refer to a community that exists because of its members' sense of belonging to it (in this case, the elusive Black community).

[3] Use follows three core elements (Brubaker, 2005): a body of people (1) *dispersed* across state borders that share a real or imagined (2) *homeland*. They (3) *maintain a boundary* with Others by resisting assimilation to some degree.

should be thought of as transcultural phenomena rather than 'phenomena that refer to a territorialized national media culture'. Clearly, literature pertaining to both diasporic identity and media events acknowledge modernity's effect on society. Yet, the literature is lacking a qualitative study that investigates the ruptures and continuities that may be availed when media event theory is studied in tandem with diasporic identity.

Thus, the aim of this dissertation is to answer the following research question: To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean American identity reconstructed during the Olympic Games? To begin this exploration, the following chapter will include a review of relevant literature pertaining to diasporic identity and global media events before outlining the conceptual framework for the study. The literature review will be followed by an explanation of the chosen research design and methodology, which included interviews with 12 self-identified Afro-Caribbean Americans who watched the London 2012 Olympic Games. Results and interpretations of the subsequent data will then be shared. All being well, the data will aid in answering the posed research question. Ultimately, the final insights on the research topic and question will be addressed alongside recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a rich body of literature pertaining to both diasporic identity and global media events. In the interests of continuity and brevity, this review will examine those theories and concepts that speak to the unique diasporic sensibilities of Afro-Caribbean Americans, as they are the subjects of the subsequent study. Further, it will also offer a brief yet critical examination of relevant theories and concepts regarding media events. Through this literary review, the gap that exists in theoretical understanding of the relationship between diasporic identity and the reception of media events will be highlighted.

Caribbean identity: a story of colonialism, slavery and hybridity

The Caribbean identity is rooted in a colonial past. According to Hintzen (2002), the story of its identity begins with numerous people from around the globe settling in the region, only joined by a small remaining group of indigenous people.[4] For this reason, it is difficult to nail down the when, where and who that make up the Caribbean. The region is 'extremely

---

[4] The Caribs and Arawaks were the earliest settlers of the Caribbean. However, few survived conquest, overwork and disease during the rise of Western civilization (Cohen, 2008).

pregnable' (Hintzen, 2002: 475), which is to say that others have consistently inhabited it while it struggled 'to maintain its own sense of integrity and the notion of definitive character'. This is due in part to the diversity in size and history among the island countries. With the exception of Barbados, which counts Britain as its only colonizer from the seventeenth century until its independence in the 1960s, most of the other territories passed through an assortment of European colonizers' hands in a well-known search for resources and power (Hintzen, 2002). Cohen (2008) described the cocktail of Caribbean inhabitants as including African slaves from West Africa, white settlers, planters and administrators from Europe, indentured workers from India and traders from the Middle East. In particular, the 'Afro-Creole' – commonly referred to as 'Black' in the region – are proof positive of an ancestral history that included the enslavement of populations of people transported from West Africa to engage in plantation labour throughout the West (Hintzen, 2002). These are the facts that influenced Caribbean cultural identity about which there is little to no argument.

The divisiveness that sprung from slavery and colonialism resulted in the production of a broad and all-encompassing cultural identity that unified a fragmented people. This approach to cultural identity focused on the ancestry that a now fully actualized African diaspora shared and less on the colonial past that disconnected the region's cultures and histories. Hall (1989: 223) referred to this approach to identity as a focus on the 'collective "one true self", hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "selves", which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common'. This approach served as a resource of resistance, identity and ultimately, healing, at a time when the Caribbean diaspora was in need of a sense of fullness – even if it was only imagined.

Yet Hall (1989) argued for a second approach to cultural identity, one that conceived of cultural identity in a way that found the differences – those things that separated a Haitian from a Jamaican and a Jamaican from an Antiguan – as equally important in fully understanding cultural identities. In mentioning his own visit to the French Caribbean for the first time: 'I also saw at once how different Martinique is from, say, Jamaica: and this is no mere difference of topography or climate. It is a profound difference of culture and history. And the difference matters. It positions Martiniquains and Jamaicans as both the same and different' (Hall, 1989: 227). He resolves to an argument that acknowledges 'hybrid identities' (Hall, 1989) as those identities that spawn from a history of travel, migration, colonialism, slavery and the mingling of culture and tradition. It's Hall's celebration of the dimensions of Blackness among the Caribbean diaspora that lift out what colonialism sought to bury.

Nevertheless, I argue that there is danger in an over celebration of hybridity in postcolonial theory, a point made by Easthope (1998). In a critique of Bhabha, a hybridity theorist, Easthope suggested that the major error in hybridity theory is in its privileging of difference. He wrote about the necessity of some 'provisional identity' (Easthope, 1998: 147) in order to attain some permanence and fixity in society. Failing to consider this approach was to suggest a 'binary opposition between the full subject or no subject at all' (Easthope, 1998: 147). Accordingly, I suggest that rather than viewing cultural identity in two separate approaches (and studying them as such), studies of identity should focus more on the provisional aspect of identity and the ways in which short-lived, real-world occurrences may privilege one aspect of an individual's hybridity over another.

Transnationalism and the imaginary

In discussing the effects of 'transnationalism', we move past the macro approaches set forth by some theorists to characterize cultural identity and into the implications of everyday diasporic realities and activities on identity construction. Transnationalism (Lucas and Purkayastha, 2007: 244) is used here to refer to the socio-cultural phenomenon in which individuals' and institutions' activities result in 'a type of consciousness marked by multiple attachments and a sense of being at home in more than one place'. Lucas and Purkayastha (2007) argued that identification with multiple nation-states and cultures makes 'transnational consciousness' diasporic by nature. Thus, 'transnational consciousness' (Lucas and Purkayastha, 2007: 245) refers to the 'juggling of traditions, memories, behavioural norms and feelings of belonging' to more than one culture and place.

To fully understand how society came to include identities that transcend the nation-state, one must understand Anderson's (1991) concept of 'imagined communities', which put the nation at the centre of identity construction. Anderson argued that the nation as we perceive it is altogether imagined. Its boundaries are manmade and man prescribes membership to it. Thus, its boundedness and membership is manufactured or imagined in the minds of the community's members. With globalisation, however, the legitimacy of the nation-state was put into question (Castells, 2006). Castells defined 'globalisation' as the growing interdependence among nation-states in the processes of economy, societies, institutions and cultures, among other things. No longer did national identity reign supreme in addressing an individual sense of belonging. As a result of globalisation, migrant groups could cling on to both a homeland and an adopted home through a heightened 'transnational consciousness'.

However, this very well may be a moot point in the case of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora. I would argue that the migrant group's sense of fixed identity was always a weak

one. Tomlinson (2003: 273) wrote of the relationship deterritorialization[5] and identity share: 'We may live in places that retain a high degree of distinctiveness, but this particularity is no longer – as it may have been in the past – the most important determinant of our cultural experience.' Certainly, the Afro-Caribbean American – as a member of the Black community – has always faced an uprooting from locality. Following colonialism and slavery, where Black people live or belong cannot be localized. Thus, arguments that stress globalisation and the resulting affect of 'transnational consciousness' on diasporic imagination tend to overlook the unique historical context from which Afro-Caribbean American identity derives.

Nonetheless, 'transnational consciousness' does affect migrant and diasporic sense of belonging. The literature seemingly addresses the everyday experience of diasporic people and the resulting sense of belonging in two ways. Vertovec (2004) discussed the bifocality or dualism that comes with being a migrant by first suggesting that migrants feel a sense of being 'here' and 'there'. In this 'here' and 'there' notion of identity, Vertovec (2004: 977) stated, 'Migrants adapt themselves while maintaining strong ties of sentiment, if not material exchange with their places of origin.' Thus, the migrant shows a commitment to both their homeland and their adopted home. Yet there remains a second outlook on identity in relation to diasporic people that addresses the subject's experience as one that is 'neither here nor there'. Zavella (2011) wrote that migrants might feel that they are not at home anywhere, but rather that they are in between places, languages or cultures. Addressing this in relation to Mexican Americans, Zavella (2011: 16) discussed these migrants as living in 'social or cultural borderlands' that include boundaries between their cultural realities at home and in public – a boundary that is disregarded in private settings.

Ultimately, Vertovec (2004) recognized the difficulty in measuring the dualism that exists within diasporic groups, but stated that it is visible in social practices and individual narratives. It is these very same dispositions and orientations that Vertovec (2004) stated impact an individuals' sense of self and collective belonging and patterns of consumption, among other things. With all this in mind, the argument can be made that by investigating reception and patterns of consumption during global media events (a mode of cultural reproduction), a deeper understanding of individual and collective sense of belonging by transnational communities can be attained.

Media events: a space for identity formation

---

[5] Used in the vein of Appadurai (1990) to refer to immigrant communities and the resulting markets that spring up from their displacement (e.g. companies distributing international phone cards to assist these groups in staying connected to a homeland).

Before addressing literature pertaining to global media events, it is necessary to explore the trajectory of analytical thought on media and its relationship to identity. Media have become a resource for the exploration of cultural identity for many reasons. Barker (1999) argued that television, with its texts and images, provide yet another space for identities to be reimagined. He cited Thompson (1995) when noting that as people appropriate television's messages and meanings, they habitually integrate them into their lives and their sense of themselves as situated in time and space. He claims these appropriations are a part of an ongoing 'identity project' (Barker, 1999). This is relevant to the reality of diasporic people because television, as Barker (1999) expressed, is accessible to almost everyone in modern industrialized societies and provides a platform for users to engage in mediated contact with the ways of life of others – and even the many facets of one's own identity.

In terms of specific broadcasting, the 'media event' is arguably useful in relation to discussions of identity construction as they often offer an unusual environment by which viewers are bombarded with cultural messages and texts over a short period of time. To revisit the original conception of the term, Dayan and Katz (1992: 9) referred to 'media events' as a genre of programming that 'integrate societies in a collective heartbeat'. They listed criteria for events that could be included in this genre as such: Ones that interrupted routines, led to the suspension and pre-emption of regular programming, were often shown on multiple channels simultaneously, happened live, took place in remote locations outside of media, electrified large audiences, promoted group viewings and celebrated reconciliation (Dayan and Katz, 1992). As examples, Dayan and Katz (1992) cited the moon landing, wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana, John F. Kennedy's funeral and the Olympic Games as media events that transfixed the world. One can see where 'media events' then summon up internal dialogue about one's sense of belonging and identification with a particular group. Arguably, the moon landing drew up feelings of national pride and thus

national identity in Americans, while Prince Charles and Lady Diana's wedding exuded British culture and placed the United Kingdom on the world stage.

Yet globalisation – as it did our sensibilities of national identity – threatened the conceptual framework of media event theory as created by Dayan and Katz (1992). In revisiting his theory after 1992, Dayan (2010) found that the original theory focused on celebratory themes among media events but that new tensions in the world opened up the genre to include live broadcastings of disruptive events featuring disaster, terror and war which worked to divide people rather than join them in a collective heartbeat. Further, new media in the global era

made media events capable of integrating societies beyond the national context (Dayan, 2010). They also led to the disintegration of the shared viewing experience as technology made it possible to view such events anywhere, at any time. Dayan's (2010) greatest concern, however, was in the banalization of the genre as media morphed every news event into a major, must-see media event. This led to disenchantment on the part of the viewing public.

In attempting to reconcile the issues in media event theory brought on by globalisation, Couldry and Hepp (2010: 12) redefine the genre as, 'certain situated, thickened, centring performances of mediated communication that are focused on a specific thematic core, cross different media products and reach a wide and diverse multiplicity of audiences and participants'. This definition takes into consideration increased media products and transcultural audiences not available or considered by Dayan and Katz in 1992. Couldry's concept of the 'myth of the mediated centre' (2003) was used almost as a Band-Aid for the original assumption that societies are marked by common values. Understanding that the event is mediated in different ways based on regional and national sensibilities, Couldry (2003) argues that the media works instead to 'construct' the myth of a mediated centre or social centre of society during media events like the Olympics.

Though Dayan (2010) and Couldry and Hepp (2010) address many of the issues concerning media event theory as it was originally conceived, there remains a gap in addressing the fact that transcultural audiences – namely, diasporas – existed prior to the global age. As such, the alluded to celebratory reaffirmation of national identity that often occurs during media events could be challenged from the theory's conception. Further, emphasis on addressing the inclusion of transcultural audiences in the newer conception of the genre suggests the rupture in the original theory was only made prominent as a result of a densely mediated global era. I would argue that media event theory from its development neglected to fully examine how diasporas reconcile the celebratory nature of media events at the national level prior to and after the global age.

The Olympic Games as a global media event

The Olympic Games is a sporting event that falls into Dayan and Katz's (1992) television genre of media events. It is one of several mega-events, which Roche (2003: 99) defined as 'short-lived collective cultural actions' that have 'long-lived pre- and post-event social dimensions'. With the invention and popularity of television, the Olympic Games and other sports mega-events were transformed into media events (Roche, 2003). This enabled these events to become truly global in size and appeal. In modern times, the Olympic Games

provide a unique context in which to address issues of globalisation and transnationalism. Giulianotti and Brownell (2012) touch on this very idea. 'International sport and sport mega-events enable us to elucidate the question of how social links, networks and communities are maintained across national and transnational layers' (Giulianotti and Brownell, 2012: 200). In other words, they offer a context for the study of how collective and individual identities are negotiated and renegotiated in an arena which forces them to collide with one another.

This collision of identities occurs because events like the Olympics tend to 'promote idealized visions and Disneyland geographies that are granted enough popular legitimacy to dampen popular support for oppositional civic groups and to motivate self-censorship by potential critics' (Giulianotti and Brownell, 2012: 203). This is evident not only in the strict delineation between national teams, but also in the narrative built around the athletes through media coverage. These narratives, distributed by the local media, 'flag' (Billig, 1995)[6] national values and ideology and give these national frames legitimacy though they go against today's transnational societal layers. What the structure of the Olympic Games and the accompanying media narratives don't do is account for the multi-layered sense of belonging that may exist among diasporic viewers. Giulianotti and Brownell (2012) stated that though mega-events follow global standardized models, the cultural content would have very unique local and national characteristics, in terms of official and public discourses, symbolism and values. Bolin (2010) addresses concerns surrounding the nation-state as a basis for cultural identity in relation to the Eurovision Song Contest.[7] He noted that 'although there may be different opinions on which song is best or which performance was classy, tasteless, etc., one thing is uncontested: the fact that there are nations, that they can indeed compete, and that songs stand in for the respective nations' (Bolin, 2010: 131). I argue that for these reasons, the Olympics Games provide a unique context for the exploration of how identities are negotiated in nation-fixed contexts.

Conceptual Framework

---

[6] Billig (1995) discusses 'banal flagging' as the repetitious activities practiced in society that works to sustain imagined nationhood. He gives the example of children reciting the Pledge of Allegiance daily in the U.S. school system.

[7] The Eurovision Song Contest is an international televised competition. An estimated 180 million viewers watch the competition every year and a record 43 European countries participated in 2008 and 2011 ('Facts & Trivia,' n.d.).

Consequently, the conceptual framework for this dissertation includes theories of diasporic identity and media events that help to understand the identity negotiation process as it occurred among Afro-Caribbean American viewers of the 2012 London Olympic Games. In general, there is little existing literature that has sought to address celebratory global media events and their impact on diasporic identity in the manner of this study. Fletcher's (2011) inquiry into British Asians' ethnic identity during national cricket events at English stadiums comes closest. Yet his exploration did not investigate this phenomenon in relation to media event theory.

As a starting point for this study, Hall's (1989) concept of 'hybrid identities' was adopted to address the multi-layered aspect of the Afro-Caribbean American identity – namely, their national, cultural and ethnic identities as American, Caribbean and Black. This is adopted in this manner as it moves inquiry in this subject area past discussion on the validity of hybrid or essential identities and into what shape multi-layered identities take in a particular media context. It also allows for the flexibility to discuss the nuances that may occur at the individual level within identity formation that may ultimately say something about the diaspora's identity as a whole.

Specifically, Lucas and Purkayastha's (2007) 'transnational consciousness' joined with Vertovec (2004) and Zavella's (2011) ideas around transnationalism and migrancy will be employed to address the realities of Afro-Caribbean American identity outside of global media events. This is a necessary step, as it will lay the analytical groundwork to investigate the ways, if any, that those same participants' identities are reconstructed during the consumption of global media events. Further, this diaspora's postcolonial history (see Hintzen, 2002; Cohen, 2008) will be used to contextualize modern-day sensibilities as they pertain to ideas of home and belonging. Overall, media event theory (Dayan and Katz, 1992; Hepp and Couldry, 2010) and Couldry's 'myth of the mediated centre' (see Couldry, 2003; Couldry and Hepp, 2010) will be used in tandem with the above concepts to explore any ruptures or continuities that may exist in studying it in relation to diasporic identity.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to attain a qualitative understanding through one-on-one interviews of the ways, if any, that diasporic identity is transformed by global media events. Existing literature has analyzed the hybrid and collective identities of diasporic communities. Likewise, literature has addressed the spectacle of global media events and their effect on societies (e.g. focusing on disaster and terror events in recent studies). Still, a focused

exploration of diasporic identities in relation to celebratory global media events that moves beyond validating hybridity is lacking. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how Afro-Caribbean Americans negotiated their identities during the London 2012 Summer Olympics. With hope, the data from this study will move past the 'big picture' ideas and address the underlying motivations and attitudes of diasporic people that media events bring to light. Further, the hope is that this research will add to literature that suggests how diasporic people make sense of their place in the world. It follows, then, that this research will attempt to answer the following question:

> **RQ**: To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean American identity reconstructed during the Olympic Games?

Additionally, sub research questions to consider include the following:

> **RQ$_1$**: To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' identification as American reconstructed during the Olympic Games?

> **RQ$_2$**: To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' identification as Caribbean reconstructed during the Olympic Games?

> **RQ$_3$:** To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' identification as Black reconstructed during the Olympic Games?

In examining the London 2012 Olympic Games, this dissertation seeks to provide insights as to how the national frames of this particular media event may or may not affect a diaspora's overall sensibilities. Still, it is worth noting that other media events were considered as a case for this study. The London 2012 Olympic Games, however, was a fairly recent media event that had a vast range of participants (far wider than, say, the World Cup) from various countries. With the greatest variety of nations with Afro-Caribbean populations, this media event provides the backdrop for a promising study.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A phenomenological research approach was adapted to frame the design of the study and semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate methodology to address the research question. Phenomenology, according to Flood (2010: 13), is an 'interpretive, qualitative form of research that seeks to study phenomena that are perceived or

experienced'. It could be argued that other quantitative methods such as questionnaires or surveys may have been equally informative in an investigation of diasporic identity in relation to media event theory. However, this dissertation was designed with the intention of unmasking underlying values and motivations that inform the way a media event is received by an individual. This runs in complete opposition to quantitative methods like questionnaires and surveys, which 'reduce evidence derived through dialogue with subjects to numerical representation' (Schroeder, 2003: 174). Thus, phenomenological research was chosen as the superior qualitative approach to address the research question as it is interested in capturing subjective meanings or insider understanding of what a lived experience feels like among individuals (Finlay, 2009: 475).

In terms of choosing a specific qualitative method, interviews were selected as the most appropriate methodology. Alternative options such as participant observation and ethnography were not possible in the case of this study as it revolves around an event that occurred in the past. Further, if the London 2012 Olympic Games were occurring at the time of data collection, these qualitative methods would be difficult to do justice as they require the researcher to collect data in 'natural' or everyday settings (Hammersley, Martyn, Atkinson and Paul, 2007: 4), Participant observation and ethnographies take place over an extended period of time – months or even years – because of the time needed to reach a certain comfort level with participants. Treating the London 2012 Olympic Games as a case study was a consideration, but this would have put the media event as the focus of this dissertation whereas the study seeks to provide an understanding of Afro-Caribbean American identity in the context of a global media event. Lastly, media diaries would have been most useful in understanding individual motivations and attitudes during a media event. However, as stated above, the media event did not occur at the time of data collection. Also, media diaries require a great deal of commitment on the part of the participants (that they would log their consumption of the event regularly) and trust on the part of the researcher (that participants would log regularly).

Fitting the objectives of this dissertation, interviews offer a 'fine-textured understanding of beliefs, attitudes, values and motivation in relation to the behaviours of people in particular social contexts' (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000: 39). The aim of the research question is to investigate how, if at all, Afro-Caribbean Americans' identities are reconstructed during the media event they are viewing. The research question is most applicable in relation to interviewing because it concentrates on individual motivations for giving preference to a certain aspect of their hybrid identity over another in a single cultural context. Ultimately, interviews give the study the intimacy of insights that pertain to individuals but the ability to

record patterns, an argument made by Sjoberg and Nett (as cited in Gubrium and Holstein, 2002).

Following the decision to move forward with interviewing, it was then necessary to narrow down the type of interviews to conduct. Interviews can refer to unstructured, semi-structured and structured interactions with participants (Bernard, 2006). They can also be conducted over the phone, in person, by mail and through Internet software such as Skype and FaceTime. Semi-structured interviews via Skype and FaceTime (depending on the preference of the participant) were found to be the most useful in the case of this dissertation because the availability and timeframe of the participants were limited and as the researcher, I would only receive – in most cases – a single opportunity to attain the information needed to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of study. Unstructured interviews were ruled out as there was no security that all the necessary topics would be fully fleshed out in one sitting. Further, structured interviews, which ask participants to answer identical questionnaires administered orally, were too restricting. Semi-structured interviews require the use of an interview guide[8] (see Appendix A), which allowed for the exploration of unexpected ideas but also assurance that the areas that needed the most probing were addressed. Of semi-structured interviews and interview guides, Bernard (2006: 212) wrote, 'It shows that you are prepared and competent but that you are not trying to exercise excessive control.' Data collection occurred outside of the U.S. As a result, Skype and FaceTime were used as a form of international communication with members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora. Although not the ideal form of communication, the video function of the applications allowed for almost as much intimacy as face-to-face interaction.

As is the case with any method, there are both advantages and disadvantages to semi-structured interviews. Bernard (2006) highlights a great deal of the disadvantages that are relevant to this dissertation, including the effort to obtain the most genuine replies from participants. He writes, 'It takes a lot of skill to administer a questionnaire without subtly telling the participant how you hope he or she will answer your questions' (Bernard, 2006: 257). In addition, there was concern that interviews showcase how a participant feels in an instant, not necessarily how they felt at the time the researcher requested they reflect on. As the interviews centred on the 2012 Olympics, I had to account for personal events that may have transpired in a participant's life that would alter their outlook of the events as they were originally consumed in 2012 (Bernard, 2006). Finally, interviewing can be tedious, with the

---

[8] Used to refer to a 'written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order' during an interview (Bernard, 2006: 212).

responsibility of conducting interviews, transcribing and analyzing data falling to a single researcher.

Still, there remain several advantages that sustain the rationale that semi-structured interviewing was the best approach to this research question. Semi-structured interviews offered the opportunity to attain a great deal of detailed information in a set period of time. Ultimately, distance made the preferred face-to-face interviews impossible. However, to troubleshoot this issue, Skype and FaceTime were used. Through use of these applications, I was able to collect detailed information one would receive during face-to-face interviews such as expressions, pauses in speech and vocal cadences. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions, which allowed for deeper probes on particular questions when the participant was holding back or didn't completely understand a question, an upside to interviews by Bernard's (2006) estimation. Also, questions of identity can be incredibly personal. Thus, open-ended questions allowed the participant to control what they shared and how they described it. It was also these same issues of privacy and the goal of attaining the most authentic data that led focus groups to be omitted as a possible method for this study.

Additionally, measures were taken to ensure that high ethical standards were maintained throughout the course of the study. An oral consent was issued to ensure that the participants and I were in full agreement on how the data collected would be used. As the researcher, I completed an ethics review checklist prior to conducting interviews in consideration of any issues of sensitivity or privacy that may have needed additional attention throughout the course of the interviews. Further, as an Afro-Caribbean American, I engaged in a continued process of 'reflexivity' that started from the review of literature through to interpretation of the data. According to Hsiung (2008: 212), 'Reflexivity is a process that challenges the researcher to explicitly examine how his or her research agenda and assumptions, subject location(s), personal beliefs, and emotions enter into their research.' Thus, I constantly questioned the data, keeping in mind that by nature, I became an active participant in the study's 'knowledge reproduction' (Hsiung, 2008).

Methods and Procedures

In April 2014, a pilot study was conducted using three self-identified Afro-Caribbean Americans to test the effectiveness of the selection process, method and accompanying interview guide for this dissertation. Minor changes were made to the sampling process and research tools following an analysis of the process as it was formerly designed.

Sampling and selection of data

With a reassurance that semi-structured interviews were the best approach for this study, 12 participants (six men and six women, ages 22 to 68) who self-identified as Afro-Caribbean American and that had viewed the London 2012 Olympics were chosen through participant referrals. Following the pilot conducted in April 2014, the requirement that participants be confident in their familiarity with the major athletes and events of the 2012 London Olympics was adopted. In the case of phenomenological research, 'the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa) including even the selection and type of participants' (Hycner, 1985: 294). As a result, it is worth mentioning that though referrals included six additional participants, it was crucial that the participants chosen were limited to those who could fully describe the experience (i.e. the 2012 Olympics) being researched. The sample size was kept to 12 participants as the interviews sought to expose abstract ideas around identity. Hycner (1985: 295) notes, 'doing this kind of phenomenological research for the most part requires that only a limited number of people be interviewed given the vast amount of data that emerges from even one interview'.

Participant referrals came as a result of engaging members of the Los Angeles-based Caribbean Heritage Organization. Through this correspondence, I engaged in 'snowball sampling'.[9] This method is useful when engaging people about personal issues such as family dynamics and identity, which this study requires. Those who may have been reluctant to interview initially took comfort in the fact that someone they know had already been through the process. The participants hailed from Spanish, English and French speaking island nations (Antigua, Barbados, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama). An argument could be made that some chosen participants' countries of heritage are outside the Caribbean. However, since this dissertation focuses on a rather unexplored field of inquiry, it seemed appropriate to only seek to address broad ideas and patterns regarding Afro-Caribbean American identity. Further, as this study concerns self-identification, it seemed fitting to make the single requirement for participation that the participant self-identify as Afro-Caribbean American.

Design of research tools

The interview guide (see Appendix A) included an informed consent that was administered orally and recorded for assurance of the act prior to the start of every interview. Within the consent was a guarantee of anonymity by the researcher. Consequently, all the names in this

dissertation have been changed. The interview guide served as a reference document, thus each interview took on a different structure than the last. Overall, however, the interview guide was divided into four sections: cultural background, media consumption, 2012 Olympics background and 2012 Olympics consumption.

Additionally, the April 2014 pilot study exposed a need for visual aids to help in memory recall of the 2012 Olympic events. Therefore, visual aids (See Appendix B) were used during the course of the interviews to help draw up latent feelings, thus making the answers more informative. Also, interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants to assist in transcription and analysis of the data collected.

A phenomenological analysis was conducted using the guidelines set out by Hycner (1985) in 'Some Guidelines for the Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data'. Following interviews with participants, the interviews were transcribed and the subsequent transcriptions were printed and read individually. After, each interview was analyzed individually to define *general units of meaning* (See Table C1). At this stage, I did not focus on the research question but rather on lifting out data that spoke to the experiences of the participant. Following that, the more critical stage was to define units of meaning from the list of general units that addressed the research question (Hycner, 1985). Continuing along Hycner's guidelines, an independent judge was drafted to look at the general units of meaning of each participant and to create a list of *relevant meaning based on the research question* (See Appendix C). No significant variance between the independent judge and myself was noted. Following analysis of the relevant units across all participants to note patterns, I began *clustering relevant units of meaning* (See Appendix C). These clusters were then organized into five themes that were to be interpreted among all participants: 'Neither here nor there', 'here and there', 'Island recognition,' 'American by obligation?' and 'Black experience' (See Appendix D).

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The interpretation of the data that derived from this study begins with a short communication and analysis of participants' identities outside of the context of the London

---

9 The method involves inviting participants to identify peers whom they believe should be involved in the study. Those participants are then asked to identify individuals who would be good for the study and so on and so forth ('Snow*ball Samp*ling', 2014).

2012 Olympic Games. In particular, this data provides insights on the daily interactions with and within their Caribbean island of heritage and the United States in order to grasp their everyday diasporic sensibilities. This is a necessary step to take prior to addressing how those same identities may have been reconstructed during the Games.

'Neither here nor there'

In asking questions regarding their daily cultural background and media consumption, nine out of 12 participants' answers suggested that their 'transnational consciousness' (Lucas and Purkayastha, 2007) leaned towards a 'neither here nor there' outlook. Participants were asked in relatively similar manners to speak about their personas in their household in comparison to their personas either at work or in school, and their responses paint a picture of difference. The sense of being different from other Americans they encountered came up regularly in their recollection of 'calypso' or 'reggae' music playing, the sound of 'patois' being spoken or the eating of delicacies like 'oxtail', things that did not transfer into their life outside of the home. A 22-year-old Jamaican-American participant noted one particular difference:

> The only thing that remains that I have to let go of – especially after going to college – when I am outside, when I'm not at home, is this particular mannerism where you greet everyone who is in the room. And it's rude if you don't at home but not at school and not out there. (Daniel, August 1, 2014)

Note how Daniel used the phrase 'not out there' to refer to the world outside of his home. This implies that in addition to taking part in the 'outside' world, his 'home' is a pseudo-world constructed within his household. Similarly, a 44-year-old Panamanian-American participant discussed compartmentalizing her home life and outside life so that she didn't have to explain why it was different to friends:

> The first time someone ever either came over to my house or called my house, my mom answered and you know, your mom is really relaxed at the house so she's not trying to put on any airs and they said, 'Who is this Spanish lady?' And I said, 'That's my mom.' And they'd call me Black Mexican because, of course, they're the only Spanish-speaking people they know in California. (Tanya, July 7, 2014)

Similarly, these same nine participants stated that they felt like visitors rather than residents returning 'home' on trips to their Caribbean nation of heritage. This is displayed in the comments of Jade, a 30-year-old Antiguan-American.

> I was going back with memories of my childhood – the fun I had. But the difference was my grandfather wasn't there. My uncle wasn't there. They've gone. (Jade, July 7, 2014)

Amanda, 56, discussed the changes that had taken place in her island homeland of Antigua since she left:

> You still feel sort of strange like a visitor as well because some people have gone; the generation has changed so they don't know who you are (Amanda, July 7, 2014).

In analyzing the data derived from the nine cases discussed, I argue that the participants live in the 'social or cultural borderlands' described by Zavella (2011). They are 'neither here' in the fact that their cultural norms are not shared with the mainstream or the people they come into contact with in their everyday lives. In the case of Tanya, the difference was so destabilizing that it led the participant to compartmentalize that aspect of her identity. Conversely, the participants are not 'there' ('there' being their Caribbean homeland) because in most cases their connections to the homeland have dissolved through the passing or migration of family and friends. In addition, all nine participants reported little to no consumption of media from their homeland, which I would argue directly links to the lack of connections in the homeland that would make that consumption far more essential. The data, overall, suggests that the physical space of the home or household for these participants becomes a replacement for the actual homeland – what I call 'home as homeland'. This is due to a detached connection to the physical homeland. Consequently, while these participants are 'neither here nor there' they still have a sense of home somewhere.

'Here and there'
Of the 12 participants in the study, only three showed signs of a 'transnational consciousness' (Lucas and Purkayastha, 2007) that was both 'here and there'. A theme of adaptability came up among these participants who were keen to express the importance they placed on being able to fit in in both their island home and adopted home countries. Kenneth, a 65-year-old Panamanian-American, discussed how easy it has become for him to move between two cultural realities:

> I tend to be flexible and see their way of thinking and doing. And I adapt myself to that situation once I'm out of my house comfort wise. But once I'm back in the house, I tend to revert back to my upbringing. (Kenneth, July 7, 2014)

In addressing the differences between life in her household and engagement with the outside world, a Jamaican-American who chose not to share her age stated the importance of teaching her sons both Caribbean and American values:

> The difference wasn't that bad even though the boy's resisted it sometimes. 'Mom, this is not Jamaica!' I don't care. You will be going home some time and I don't want you to embarrass me when you go home! (Marlene, July 15, 2014)

In all three cases, the participants discussed frequent trips back to the Caribbean, referred to their island homeland as 'home' and reported high use of media from either their island homeland or the Caribbean in general.

> Once that plane – and it is usually Montego Bay that we go to – once we see Cuba and we start to see the shoreline and the plane turns sideways, to this day, tears. To this day. (Marlene, July 15, 2014)

A Guyanese-American, 68, talked of his regular consumption of Caribbean music and daily pursuit of Guyanese current events:

> Oh, I love my [Caribbean] music. I play my music in the car – my CDs – and I read my papers. I get the Guyana paper, so I read that to keep up with what is going on. (Clayton, July 8, 2014)

In analyzing the data derived from the three participants, I argue that the participants show a commitment both to their homeland and their adopted home, as described by Vertovec (2004). I would suggest that this connection is reaffirmed through the consistent consumption of media (e.g. Clayton reading the Guyana newspaper regularly) from their country of heritage. In all cases, participants expressed that there was also regular contact with family and friends who still lived in the Caribbean, which again, is debatably the perceived purpose for remaining engaged in the daily interactions of that country. Additionally, these participants discussed their adaptability to both U.S. and Caribbean values. Unlike those who leaned towards a 'neither here nor there' perspective, these

participants made regular trips back to their homeland, thus helping to make a solid argument that transnational activities that are limited to new media are rarely enough to keep a strengthened tie to a homeland. The data, overall, suggests that these participants' engage in activities that sustain a deep connection to the homeland while still remaining connected to their adopted home countries.

2012 London Olympic Games

Following that brief introduction to the diasporic sensibilities of the participants of this study, the results and interpretation of how those same participants identified during the London 2012 Olympic Games will be addressed within three themes that organically developed during data analysis: 'American by obligation?', 'Island recognition', and the 'Black experience'.

American by obligation?

Despite the different levels of everyday transnational activity described above, what became apparent among all 12 of the participants was a seeming lack of sentiment in relation to discussing America and the American team during the London 2012 Olympic Games. Though most participants showed a commitment and imagined sense of belonging to America, their responses to questions related to the Olympic Games focused on the necessity of cheering on the American team rather than the desire to do so. After shouting out his excitement in seeing Guyana enter the arena during the opening ceremony of the Olympics, Clayton was asked if he also looked for the US team:

> Yes, I still look for them. I live here so I have to look for them. (Clayton, July 8, 2014)

When a Haitian-American participant, 31, was asked if he shared a deeper connection to U.S. sprinter Allyson Felix,[10] who won gold in the 200m dash, or Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt,[11] who won gold in both the 100m and 200m dash:

> I think Usain had more stiffer competition, but I think definitely Allyson because obviously it's U.S. and you gotta support the team. (Francis, July 6, 2014)

---

[10] U.S. sprinter who holds three Olympic gold medals (Allyson Felix Biography, 2014).

[11] Jamaican sprinter who holds six Olympic gold medals (Biography, 2012).

In both cases, it's worth mentioning the use of 'have' (*I live here so I have to look for them'*) and 'gotta' (*'... it's U.S. and you gotta support the team'*) in reference to support of US athletic representatives and the national team. This implies that as a resident of America, Clayton and Francis felt it essential to support the team. Notice also the use of 'them' and 'the' in reference to the team rather than words that conjure up notions of possession or inclusion such as 'our' and 'my'. In other interviews, the lack of sentiment was detected in their apparent necessity to show support of the U.S. team in absence of their island home nation's presence. One such case was during a 61-year-old Barbadian-American participant's interview. She said:

> I'm an American as well. I would like to see them represent but if it comes to it, OK, I hope Barbados beats America. But if Barbados is not participating, and America is participating, I would want America to win. (Shannon, July 5)

In some interviews, participants pointed to narratives put forth in national media, which implied that their commitment to the U.S. team or its representatives was influenced by media rather than sentiment. In particular, U.S. swimmer Michael Phelps'[12] name came up often. Colton's interest in Michael Phelps came from the media as he stated his interest in watching those athletes with 'history making' narratives. He said:

> I think it's the history that they can make that gets me more invested. Like, if someone is going for a certain amount of medals or if someone wants to break a certain record or if someone is going to be the first to do something. Then I'm much more invested. (Colton, July 8, 2014).

Analysis of the above results, then, suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora feel an obligation to engage their national identity as Americans during the Olympics. This isn't altogether surprising as nine out of 12 participants ultimately were found to align with a 'transnational consciousness' that wasn't all-too American. In the case of the remaining three participants, their 'here and there' sensibilities suggested that they were able to adapt to American values but did not necessarily confirm that that adaptability would transfer to sentimental commitment. In this case, it didn't.

---

[12] U.S. swimmer who has the title of the most decorated Olympian in history, with 22 medals (Biography, 2014).

Dayan and Katz (1992: 23) forecasted that 'the nation-state itself may be on the way out, its boundaries out of sync with the new media technology'. Though participants did acknowledge their national identity as American, they seemingly resisted doing so in a celebratory fashion – as a 'we' or 'our' in reference to the nation. This is where interest arises in the inference of media's role during the event in framing participants' sense of commitment and obligation at the national level. This suggests that where media events used to affirm national values that were shared by a national public, the media work in the global age to sustain the myth of national values. Thus, this suggests that the diaspora is prescribing to a perceived national ideology exclusively constructed by national media. This ushers in notions of Couldry's (2003) 'myth of the mediated centre'. Though the participants acknowledge their national identity, it is done so in order to be clued in to a social centre constructed by the media itself. Shannon's response that her support for the US team is only in absence of the Barbados team is further evidence that instead of a sense of allegiance coming from an internal perception of belonging, it's influenced and/or motivated by outside factors like the media who act as liaisons to a society's social centre.

Thus, in answering the posed research question *(To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' identification as American reconstructed during the Olympic Games?),* the data suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora maintain an imagined sense of national identity in and outside of global media events. This national identity, however, was often displayed during the event studied in insipid and obligatory fashion rather than with conviction and zeal. Thus, I would argue that participants were American by obligation in their reception of the 2012 London Olympic Games.

Island recognition: putting the Caribbean on the map

In contrast, all 12 participants expressed feelings of exuberance and passion when addressing their island homelands and/or the Caribbean's participation in the London 2012 Olympic Games. This went in contrast to nine of the 12 participants' everyday 'transnational consciousness', which were found to be 'neither here nor there'. However, this was less surprising from three of the 12 participants because their everyday sensibilities were 'here and there' in relation to their cultural identity. The data showed that participants found that the inclusion of Caribbean nations in the Olympics was important because it served to address a lack of knowledge on the part of some Americans of Caribbean identity. Daniel saw Bolt's success as useful for breaking American stereotypes of Jamaicans. He said:

> When I tell people that I'm Jamaican, instead of going, 'Oh, good weed and "Cool Runnings"',[13] they'll be like, 'Oh, Usain Bolt. You guys are probably all fast!' I mean, that felt like a big feat for a lot of us, especially on the PR front. (Daniel, August 1, 2014)

Shannon was more interested in representations within the Games that were not often shown in media. She commented:

> When other people from around the world see the Olympics, then they just see Africa and American Blacks. Then they don't know where is Barbados, where is Trinidad and where is Antigua and where is St. Lucia, you know? (Shannon, July 5)

Words like 'us,' 'we' and 'my' as well as 'recognition' and 'pride' were used in reference to the Caribbean region and its island nations. Some participants discussed representations of Caribbean-island nations in juxtaposition to America. After stating that she knew the American team would have a large amount of representatives walk into the arena, Tanya talked about her island home nation's appearance in the opening ceremony.

> Obviously, [I want to see] my little bitty Panama to see the six people [laughs] and see what they're wearing. (Tanya, July 7, 2014)

Similarly, Colton commented on how the media event presented an opportunity for Panama to get recognition that the US already has:

> If I say I am from Panama someone says, 'Oh, where's that?' You know? You kind of want to see that recognition go to that country. No matter what it is. You want to see them do good because the U.S., they're always going to be great at something. (Colton, July 8, 2014)

The statements above imply that participants feel that the American nation has stronger recognition worldwide, thus every moment and context that the Caribbean gets the opportunity to be put on the world stage is important. Ultimately, there was an overall notion that representations of the Caribbean on the world stage were lacking and thus the Olympics became a space to 'put them on the map'.

---

[13] A 1993 film loosely based on the Jamaican bobsled team's pursuit of entry into the Winter Olympics. Today, it is known for its stereotypical representation of Jamaica and Jamaicans (Barone, 2011).

> I would think it would be more important for us to get on the map and for them to know, not just... um... know us as, oh you can go there for the 365 beaches or you can get coconut water. (Amanda, 56, Antiguan-American, July 7, 2014)

Analysis of the above results, then, suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora felt a heightened sense of Caribbean identity during the London 2012 Olympic Games. The majority of the participants' 'transnational consciousness' in everyday life showed signs that there was an understanding of the Caribbean as a distant – almost historical – homeland. Yet, within the context of the Olympics, the overall sense of disconnect dissipated as participants found that the event provided a rare context for Caribbean islands to be seen at the global level. I argue that the participants' responses to seeing the Caribbean characterized outside of stereotypes or a homogenous context solidifies Hintzen's (2002: 475) argument that the Caribbean has struggled 'to maintain its own sense of integrity and the notion of definitive character'. This is due in part to the fact that the region isn't bound by land or language. Similarly, the participants in this study saw the Olympics as a stage in which to address and teach the world that the cultural aspect of their identity does in fact have integrity and definitive character – that it doesn't fit into one box. It could then be suggested that this is why participants brought up stereotypes that they are confronted with when addressing their cultural identity.

Further, in discussing the Caribbean as needing recognition in comparison to a world power such as America, there is an underlining notion that post-colonial struggles persist today. It's alluded to that Caribbean nations do not enter the media event from the same advantage point. Additionally, I argue that Shannon's statement that the world only sees *'Africa and American Blacks'* suggests that the Olympics become a rare opportunity to bring to light the cultural differences that exist between Afro-Caribbean Americans and Black Americans. While ancestral roots have made Black people from the Caribbean and America similar in appearance, the cultures differ greatly. Yet in some cases recognition of these differences are muted or significantly generalized. However, in the case of the Olympic Games, its 'Disneyland geographies' (Giulianotti and Brownell, 2012) apparently benefit this diasporic group. They help to uproot them from the consequences of historical forced migration and the resulting dissolution of perceived shared ethnic and cultural identity with all people of African descent.

Thus, in answering the posed research question *(To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' cultural identification as Caribbean reconstructed during the Olympic Games?),*

the data suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora take on a heightened sense of Caribbean identity when engaging in the Olympic Games. Arguably, this is due to the fact that the Olympics provide a rare platform where representations of their Black identity do not mask the cultural nuances that make them unique.

The 'Black' Experience

Perhaps one of the most pervasive themes among the participants was their ethnic identity as Black. Though it was found that respondents had a heighted sense of Caribbean identity during the event, it was also noted that all 12 participants saw their ethnicity as Black. When responding to questions about specific athletes, 11 out of 12 brought up ethnicity as a shared connection that made them tune into or support a specific athlete regardless of what national team they represented in the London 2012 Olympic Games. When Shannon was asked whether she felt a sense of pride in Bolt's gold-medal winning sprints because he represented a Caribbean nation, she replied:

> Not necessarily because they [Jamaica] are up front. But simply a black man doing as good as he did made me proud. (Shannon, 61, Barbadian-American, July 5)

Tanya brought up US gymnast Gabrielle Douglas'[14] history-making accomplishments and the backlash that ensued on social media:

> It was black people that was trippin' and I'm like, she's accomplishing something. Can any of you even do a cartwheel? So this is what you are thinking about? For real? (Tanya, July 7, 2014)

When asked whose win had the most personal impact during the Olympics:

> The one that was most impactful for me was Gabrielle Douglas the reason being that she was in a sport that traditionally you don't see many Blacks participate in. And no matter where in the world you were from, if you are a Black person, for her to do something out of the box that meant a whole lot more to me than Felix. (Marlene, July 15, 2014)

---

[14] Douglas became the first black woman to take the all-around individual title in gymnastics at the 2012 Olympics. There was backlash on social media by the Black community regarding how she wore her hair during the media event (Samuels, 2012).

In addressing Felix in contrast to Douglas, Marlene implies that there is a stereotype about Black people that the Olympic Games can break by presenting alternative representations. This notion of recasting Black stereotypes was of importance to some participants. In addressing Usain Bolt's win on the track:

> You can take pride in it but it still falls in line with what we are supposed to be, which is good in athletics. (Colton, July 8, 2014)

Analysis of the above results, then, suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora feel a sense of shared experience and understanding – a collective 'we' – as it pertains to their Black identity during the London 2012 Olympic Games. Certainly, this 'we' is uprooted from the nation as it has been from the times of colonialism and slavery and as it is alluded to in Dayan and Katz (1992) original work. Instead, this 'we' refers to people of African descent scattered all around the world. Altogether, questions about the participant's 'transnational consciousness' outside of the Olympics showed no signs that their identity as Black would play a role in their sense of belonging and connection during the media event. However, all 12 participants did, without a prompted question, reject the term African-American in favour of Black as their ethnicity. Participants seemingly found it divisive, often mentioning the fact that all people of African descent are from Africa.

Hepp and Couldry (2010) reimagined the 'shared experience' during media events in the global-transcultural era to include ethnic, subcultural and religious groups, among others. Yet, theorists seemingly overlooked the idea that Black as an identity predated the global-transcultural era. The data suggests that this is perhaps due to the fact that the identity is as much so built on an imagined shared position in the world, as it is shared traits or ancestral background. What I mean by this is taking from Anderson's concept of imagined communities (1991), participants alluded to the idea that Black identity isn't necessarily bounded by territory, but it is bounded by a sense of its members' limitations. Thus, a heightened sense of unity or togetherness is seemingly forged when a member of the community breaks the boundary of those perceived limitations.

As evidence of this argument, note Tanya's comment regarding Gabby Douglas' success during the Olympic Games:

> I like the sport of gymnastics period because I always felt like I should have – I could have – I'm short! I attempted it when I was younger... so when I see other people doing that... I'm like, OK, yeah, somebody else can say I want to do that. Because they

> never – maybe they didn't think they had the chance. And she looks like me. If I had a daughter, I would want her to be as presentable and charismatic and as charming as she was. She was so diligent. (Tanya, July 7, 2014)

Thus, in answering the posed research question *(To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean Americans' ethnic identification reconstructed during the Olympic Games?),* the data suggests that members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora outwardly embrace their ethnic identity as Black by sharing in a collective 'we' experience during the Olympics. They seemingly champion athletic representatives that share the same identity with the understanding that the Olympic Games provide a unique climate in which representations can be recast.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation was to answer the research question, 'To what extent, if any, is Afro-Caribbean American identity reconstructed during the Olympic Games?' A phenomenological study was conducted using data collected through semi-structured interviews with 12 self-described Afro-Caribbean Americans that watched the London 2012 Olympic Games. Ultimately, the data suggested that the Olympic Games act as a societal equalizer for the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora. It becomes a rare space in which all aspects of their identities (national, cultural and ethnic) can be displayed. From the cultural garb worn during the opening ceremony to the democratized athletic requirement of greatness for entry, for the participants of this study, the London 2012 Olympic Games offered a momentary imagined fullness that colonialism and slavery washed away from their home shores so long ago. Thus, in answering the research question: Afro-Caribbean American's diasporic identity fluidly moves through media-constructed feelings of commitment to their national identity and basks in a heightened connection to their ethnic and cultural identities as Black Caribbean people are celebrated the world over.

This dissertation served as an introduction to phenomenological research of diasporic identity during global media events as this is a rather unexplored research topic. As such, there are multiple avenues to approach future research. Insights into the role generational migrancy plays in the overall self-identification process during global media events would be highly enlightening. Also, patterns surfaced during the course of this research that suggested that the specific colonial trajectories of each island nation affect individual diasporic frames during media events. Further, the role of media narratives in global media events

continuously resurfaced during the course of this study, suggesting opportunities for future research. As is evident, the options are endless. As the scope of this dissertation was small, future research would benefit from added participant observation and ethnography.

Diasporic identity is always changing, thus the need for constant updates through research is essential. However, media event theory has been heavily critiqued since its conception in 1992 as theorists question its plausibility in a global age. With any hope, this dissertation will move discussion on and move forward ideas around the relevance of media event theory in today's society.

DEDICATION

This dissertation was inspired by and, therefore, is dedicated to the late cultural theorist Stuart Hall. Hall's examinations of Caribbean history, identity, culture and diaspora continue to cast light on those islands of enchantment.

> Who can ever forget, when once seen rising up out of that blue-green Caribbean, those *islands of enchantment. Who has not known, at this moment, the surge of an overwhelming* nostalgia for lost origins, for 'times past? And yet, this 'return to the beginning' is like the imaginary in Lacan - it can neither be fulfilled nor requited, and hence is the beginning of the symbolic, of representation, the infinitely renewable source of desire, memory, myth, search, discovery - in short, the reservoir of our cinematic narratives. (Hall, 1989)

REFERENCES

Anderson, B. (1991) Extracts, in *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (24-36). London: Verso.

Appadurai, A. (1990) Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Public Culture*, *2*(2), 1-24, doi:10.1215/08992363-2-2-1 [Last consulted 5th August 2014].

Barker, C. (1999). *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Barone, M. (2011) The 10 lamest white savior movies. *Complex*, URL: http://www.complex.com/ [Last consulted 3rd August 2014].

Bauer, M. W., & Gaskell, G. (2000) 'Chapter 3: Individual and group interviewing', in *Qualitative researching: With text, image and sound. A practical handbook* (pp. 38-56). London: Sage Publications, URL: https://library-   2.lse.ac.uk/ [Last consulted 27th May 2014].

Bernard, H. R. (2006) '9. Interviewing: Unstructured and semi structured', in *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (pp. 251-298). Oxford: Alta Mira Press, URL: https://www.dawsonera.com/ [Last consulted 28th May 2014].

Billig, M. (1995) *Banal nationalism.* London: Sage.

Biography.com. (2014) Allyson Michelle Felix, URL: http://www.biography.com/people/allyson-felix-20928869. [Last consulted 10th July 2014].

Biography.com. (2014) Michael Phelps, URL: http://www.biography.com/people/michael-phelps- 345192. [Last consulted 10th July 2014].

Bolin, G. (2010) 'Media Events, Eurovision and Societal Centers', in *Media Events in a Global Age* (pp. 124-138). Routledge.

Brubaker, R. (2005) The 'diaspora' diaspora. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *28*(1), 1-19, doi:10.1080/0141987042000289997 [Last consulted 4th August 2014].

Castells, M. (2006) Globalisation and identity: A comparative perspective. *Transfer, Journal of Contemporary Culture*, *1*, 56-67, URL: http://www.llull.cat/ [Last consulted 5th July 2014].

Cohen, R. (2008) Deterritorialized diasporas. In *Global diasporas: An introduction*. (pp. 123-139). NY: Taylor & Francis, URL: http://lib.myilibrary.com/ [Last consulted 26th June 2014].

Couldry, N. (2003) *Television and the myth of the mediated centre*: *Time for a paradigm shift in television studies?*. Paper presented at the Media in Transition 3 Conference, MIT, Boston, USA, 1-16, URL: http://libguides.scu.edu.au [Last consulted 26th June 2014].

Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2010) 'Introduction: Media events in globalized media cultures', in N. Couldry, A. Hepp & F. Krotz (Eds.), *Media events in a global age* (pp. 1-20). Abingdon: Routledge.

Dayan, D. (2010) 'Beyond media events: Disenchantment, derailment, disruption', in N. Couldry, A. Hepp & F. Krotz (Eds.), *Media events in a global age* (pp. 23-31). Abingdon: Routledge.

Dayan, D., & Katz, E. (1992) *Media events: the live broadcasting of history*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Easthope, A. (1998) Homi bhabha, hybridity and identity, or derrida versus lacan. *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)*, *4*(1/2), 145-151, URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/41273996 [Last consulted 5th July 2014].

Facts & trivia. (n.d.) Eurovision Song Contest, URL: http://www.eurovision.tv/ [Last consulted 23rd June 2014].

Fletcher, T. (2011) 'Who Do "They" Cheer For?' Cricket, Diaspora, Hybridity and Divided Loyalties Amongst British Asians. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *47*(5), 612-631, doi:10.1177/1012690211416556 [Last consulted 26th June 2014].

Finlay, L. (2009) Exploring lived experience: principles and practice of phenomenological research. *International Journal Of Therapy & Rehabilitation*, *16*(9), 474-481.

Flood, A. (2010). Understanding phenomenology. *Nurse Researcher*, *17*(2), 7-15.

Giulianotti, R., & Brownell, S. (2012) Olympic and World Sport: Making Transnational Society? *The British Journal of Sociology*, *63*(2), 199-215, doi:10.1111/j.1468-4446.2012.01406.x [Last consulted 27th May 2014].

Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2002) *Handbook of interview research: Context and method,* URL: http://readinglists.lse.ac.uk/ [Last consulted 4th June 2014].

Hall, S. (1989) Cultural identity and diaspora. *Framework*, *36*, 1-19, URL: http://www.unipa.it/ [Last consulted 23rd June 2014].

Hammersley, Martyn; Atkinson, Paul. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. Routledge, URL: http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=91787 [Last consulted 11th August 2014].

Harris, P. (2012) NBC's opening ceremony mess: The top six cringe worthy moments. *The Guardian*. URL: http://www.theguardian.com/us [Last consulted 5th July 2014].

Hintzen, P. C. (2002) 'The Caribbean: race and creole ethnicity', in *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies* (pp. 475-494). Malden: Blackwell, URL: http://lib.myilibrary.com/ [Last consulted 3rd August 2014].

Hsiung, P. (2008) Teaching reflexivity in qualitative interviewing. *Teaching Sociology*, *36*(3), 211- 226, URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20491240 [Last consulted 5th July 2014].

Hycner, R. H. (1985) Some Guidelines for the Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data. *Human Studies*, 8 (3), 279-303. Springer, URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20008948 [Last consulted 5th July 2014]

Lucas, S., & Purkayastha, B. (2007) "Where is home?" here and there: transnational experiences of home among Canadian immigrants in the United States. *GeoJournal*, *68*(2/3), 243-251, URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/41148158 [Last consulted 4th August 2014].

Roche, M. (2003) Mega-events, Time and Modernity: On Time Structures in Global Society. *Time & Society*, *12*(1), 99-126, doi:10.1177/0961463X03012001370 [Last consulted 23rd June 2014].

Samuels, A. (2012) Gabby Douglas takes two Olympic golds—and hair criticism. *The Daily Beast*, URL: http://www.thedailybeast.com/ [Last consulted 7th August 2014].

Schroeder, K. (2003) 'Foundations of quantitative audience research', in *Researching audiences* (pp. 173-204). London: Arnold, URL: https://library-2.lse.ac.uk [Last consulted 3rd June 2014].

Silvera, J. (2008) Diaspora peeved at Olympic blackout. *Jamaica Gleaner*, URL: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/ [Last consulted 5th July 2014].

Snow*ball Samp*ling. (2014) *T + D, 68*(6), 19, URL: http://search.proquest.com/docview/1537393151?accountid=9630 [Accessed 5/7/2014].

Thompson, J. B. (1995) *The media and modernity: A social theory of the media.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Tomlinson, J. (2003) Globalization and Cultural Identity. *The Global Transformations Reader*, (2), 269-277, URL: polity.co.uk [Last consulted 26th June 2014].

Usain Bolt. (2012) Biography, URL: http://usainbolt.com/bio/ [Last consulted 11th July 2014].

Vertovec, S. (2004) Migrant transnationalism and modes of transformation. *International Migration Review*, *38*(3), 970-1001, URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/27645423 [Last consulted 1st August 2014].

World Atlas. (n.d.) West indies, URL: http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/special/westind.htm [Last Accessed 5/7/14]

.Zavella, P. (2011) *I'm neither here nor there: Mexicans' quotidian struggles with migration and poverty.* Durham: Duke University Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Guide: Diaspora Interview

Interviews with people who self-identify as members of the Afro-Caribbean American diaspora

Informed consent:

You have been recruited as a respondent to the following questions because you identify as Caribbean-American. The questions that will be asked of you seek to provide information on

how you see yourself and your place in the world in relation to other individuals and groups. As such, there are no wrong or right answers to any of the questions.

At any time, you have the right to request that I skip a question that you would rather not provide an answer. Likewise, feel free to add any additional information to your responses that, on first thought, you might find inappropriate to the aim of the research or off-topic. Your privacy will be protected by the use of an alias in paperwork. The interview will be recorded for the purpose of transcription and detailed analysis by the researcher. No one but the researcher will have access to the recorded audio.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Cultural background questions
- Tell me about the atmosphere of your household growing up. Paint a picture. What were the sounds? What media were used? What was the food and conversation like? What role did everyone play?
- Can you now paint a picture of your Caribbean household? In the same manner?
- Was your home atmosphere different from your school atmosphere growing? If so, in what ways? Is it still today?
- Have you travelled to the Caribbean?
- Can you describe the reasons behind those trips and any impressions left on you from those trips?
- During those visits, did you feel like a visitor? Or would you call those visits a visit home?
- What country, city or space would you call home? Do you have more than one home?
- Have you maintained relationships with family and/or friends in the countries you have classified as culturally significant?

Media consumption questions
- How often do you consume media from the Caribbean?
- What type of media do you consume from the Caribbean?
- If you consume media from the Caribbean, how did you come across the resources (TV programs, radio shows) to do so?
- If you consume media from the Caribbean, is it in the presence of other family members? Or individually?
- How often do you consume media from the U.S.?
- What type of media do you consume from the U.S.?
- How do your Caribbean media consumption habits compare to your parents?

2012 London Olympics background questions
- What were the most memorable moments of the Games as a whole?
- During the opening ceremony, when the teams walked into the arena – which were you most interested in seeing? America or that of a Caribbean nation?
- What would you say guided your interest in certain athletes or teams over others?
- Usain Bolt, of Jamaica's national track team, was seeking another gold in the sprinting competitions. Were you particularly interested in watching his meet?
- Would you say that you were particularly hopeful in seeing Bolt meet his goal?
- Though Usain Bolt won the 100m gold, USA champion Allyson Felix was a crowd favorite as she won gold in the women's 200m. Which win would you say had more personal impact?
- Which holds more weight and why? Usain Bolt's title as the "fastest man on Earth"? Or American Olympian Michael Phelps title as the most decorated Olympian of all time?
-

2012 London Olympics consumption questions
- Did you watch the 2012 Olympics? If yes, did you do so in a sitting with family or individually?
- If so, how avid of a viewer were you and what parts of the event did you take in? For what reasons did you take in certain programming and not others?
- Was there any athletic event or single athlete that you tuned in specifically to watch? Why?

Closing
- Do you believe it is possible to watch the Games without being invested in one team or athlete over the other? As mere entertainment?
- Are there any other media events that come to mind that you believe have been as, if not more, influential on you as the Olympics?
- How old are you?
- Where were you born? Where did you grow up? Where do you now live?
- What is your race/ethnicity?
- What is your profession?
- Where were your parents born? Where do they currently live?

Appendix B

Sample: Interview Visual Aids

London 2012 Olympic Games

Swimmer Michael Phelps pictured with the American flag.

Sprinter Usain Bolt pictured with the Jamaican flag.

Left: USA Sprinter Allyson Felix, Right: Jamaican Sprinter Usain Bolt.

US Women's Artistic gymnast Gabrielle Douglas.

Appendix C

Sample: Table of General and Relevant Units of Meaning (C1) and Subsequent Clusters of Meaning (C2)

Table 1 – Name: ████████████████

Units of general meaning	Units of relevant meaning
Cultural background	**Cultural background**
1 Panama has, at that time, had a large U.S. military base, they had their own TV station and we also use to tune into what they called SCN, which is Southern Command Network News and could get all information basically from around the world and the United States through that network.	2 I tend to be flexible and see their way of thinking and doing things. And I adapt myself to that situation once I'm out of my house comfort wise. But once I'm back in the house, I tend to revert back to my upbringing. (In US)
2 I tend to be flexible and see their way of thinking and doing things. And I adapt myself to that situation once I'm out of my house comfort wise. But once I'm back in the house, I tend to revert back to my upbringing. (In US)	3 So I adapt to their way of living and their way of thinking while I'm there. (In Panama)
3 So I adapt to their way of living and their way of thinking while I'm there. (In Panama)	4 I'm a mixture. The reason I'm saying I'm a mixture is because I was born in a Latin country of West Indian descendants. And that, in itself, is an experience that I don't… unless you were born in it, it's hard to understand.
4 I'm a mixture. The reason I'm saying I'm a mixture is because I was born in a Latin country of West Indian descendants. And that, in itself, is an experience that I don't… unless you were born in it, it's hard to understand.	19 A lot of people don't realize that there are a lot of countries in Latin America where they have a lot of African people and they don't… a lot of people don't know that.
19 A lot of people don't realize that there are a lot of countries in Latin America where they have a lot of African people and they don't… a lot of people don't know that.	
	Media consumption
Media consumption	5 I go on the computer and read the newspaper from Panama to keep abreast of what is going on.
5 I go on the computer and read the newspaper from Panama to keep abreast of what is going on.	6 This may sound strange and weird to some people but I go on the Internet and I turn on one of the Panama radio stations and I… Saturday and Sunday…. The whole day I just listen to the radio station.
6 This may sound strange and weird to some people but I go on the Internet and I turn on one of the Panama radio stations and I… Saturday and Sunday…. The whole day I just listen to the radio station.	7 She just waits for me to start streaming and… she goes with it. [Laughs] (On wife listening to Panamanian radio with him)
7 She just waits for me to start streaming and… she goes with it. [Laughs] (On wife listening to Panamanian radio with him)	
8 I will watch, look at the Today Show and then I will watch the news at 6 o/clock and that is as much of my news.	**2012 Olympic background**
9 Certain TV show, I look at. Mostly comedy.	10 I like track and field. And to see that a West Indian was outstanding in that field and a black person that you know is just something that stuck with me.
	11 Usain Bolt, the fastest man. The simple reason is that [interest] in track and field in the United States is dominated by US citizens and to see that, uh, someone from the Caribbean can attain that status, uh, to me, that was important. (Phelps vs. Bolt)
2012 Olympic background	12 I would say, just, trying to have, a family moment. That's… that might not be the right answer, but to me, just eh family gathering together. (Impact of media events)
10 I like track and field. And to see that a West Indian was outstanding in that field and a black person that you know is just something that stuck with me.	13 I'm more partial to the Latin countries because that is part of my heritage also. I can root for the Latins.
11 Usain Bolt, the fastest man. The simple reason is that [interest] in track and field in the United States is dominated by US citizens and to see that, uh, someone from the Caribbean can attain that status, uh, to me, that was important. (Phelps vs. Bolt)	**2012 Olympic consumption**
12 I would say, just, trying to have, a family moment. That's… that might not be the right answer, but to me, just eh family gathering together. (Impact of media events)	15 The countries that pretty much don't have a chance, I always root for the guy that is not probably going to make it.
13 I'm more partial to the Latin countries because that is part of my heritage also. I can root for the Latins.	16 I followed her story because… I don't know if a lot of people really got into what she went through to become an Olympian. (On Gabby Douglas)
	17 I was open to the event and whoever was competing and pretty much whatever the outcome was of, you know, I was watching to see if the person really excel and fulfill their goal.

<table>
<tr>
<td>

2012 Olympic consumption

₁₄ Whenever the Olympics is on and there's… and whatever I'm interested is coming on, I will try to make my best to look at it.

₁₅ The countries that pretty much don't have a chance, I always root for the guy that is not probably going to make it.

₁₆ I followed her story because… I don't know if a lot of people really got into what she went through to become an Olympian. (on Gabby Douglas)

₁₇ I was open to the event and whoever was competing and pretty much whatever the outcome was of, you know, I was watching to see if the person really excel and fulfill their goal.

₁₈ I'm also looking at the Latin side of it to see who is representing the Latin countries.

</td>
<td>

₁₈ I'm also looking at the Latin side of it to see who is representing the Latin countries.

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Table 2 – Name: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Clusters of meaning

I. Neither here nor there

   A. I'm saying I'm a mixture is because I was born in a Latin country of West Indian descendants. And that, in itself, is an experience that I don't… unless you were born in it, it's hard to understand.

II. Here and there

   A. I adapt to their way of living and their way of thinking while I'm there.

   B. I tend to be flexible and see their way of thinking and doing things. And I adapt myself to that situation once I'm out of my house comfort wise. But once I'm back in the house, I tend to revert back to my upbringing.

   C. This may sound strange and weird to some people but I go on the Internet and I turn on one of the Panama radio stations and I… Saturday and Sunday…. The whole day I just listen to the radio station.

III. Island Recognition

   A. I like track and field. And to see that a West Indian was outstanding in that field.

   B. Usain Bolt, the fastest man. The simple reason is that [interest] in track and field in the United States is dominated by US citizens and to see that, uh, someone from the Caribbean can attain that status, uh, to me, that was important.

   C. The countries that pretty much don't have a chance, I always root for the guy that is not probably going to make it.

   D. I'm also looking at the Latin side of it to see who is representing the Latin countries.

IV. American Residence –

   (None)

V. Black experience

   A. A lot of people don't realize that there are a lot of countries in Latin America where they have a lot of African people and they don't… a lot of people don't know that.

   B. I followed her story because… I don't know if a lot of people really got into what she went through to become an Olympian. (On Gabby Douglas) and a black person that you know is just something that stuck with me.

Appendix D

Sample: Thematic Clustering of Relevant Participant Data

RESPONDENT	CULTURAL BACKGROUND+ MEDIA CONSUMPTION		OLYMPIC BACKGROUND+OLYMPIC CONSUMPTION		OTHER
	Neither Here nor There	Here and There	Island Recognition	American by obligation?	Black Experience
Age: ⬚ Occupation: ⬚ Current Residence: ⬚ Island Homeland: ⬚	Music, you know, whether it be Sunday night, just Sundays, I always knew I would hear specific Spanish-speaking music that Keith would have or grandma would have. Or Sundays were always the day... Sunday dinner. And we would have oxtail, pig feet, anything of that sort that was, you know, passed down.		I would say the Panama representative for the fact that, you know, it kind of draws back to how, you know, if I say I am from Panama someone says, oh, where's that? You know? You kind of want to see that recognition go to that country.	There's very few athletes that I've watched, at least with the Olympics, where seeing their story and their journey to get there, where I'm actually invested in that way.	I definitely take pride in that because...It's rough because I take pride but at the same time it falls into a kind of stereotype, you know, so much of the world has that black man are... have to be good at athletics to succeed.
	culture and just going to like... we would have picnics. Panamanian reunions those two things and... those two things helped basically unite so many people that I've noticed just in general.		No matter what it is. You want to see them do good because the U.S., they're always going to be great at something.	African American. Oh so your ancestors were from Africa? Like, no, hey, cool it! There's more there!	You can take pride in it but it still falls in line with what we are suppose to be, which is good in athletics.
	I still carry in myself a love for all types of that I grew up with and understanding that music can kind of set a mood or bring people together. But also a certain type of food or any kind of food can bring people together as well.		Like, OK, like, the Caribbean...OK, there's some pride in that but I've also never really felt a full connection with the rest of the Caribbean as I have with Panama.	It's more powerful because of what he was trying to achieve and achieved than the journey.	He's the fastest man alive but before him was most likely another black man who was the fastest man alive and before that and before that.
	People would, you know, look at me like I'm crazy if I would talk about oxtail, pig feet and how good it is. You know, at home, it's like, that's the norm.		I don't see them as representing the whole Caribbean as you would say someone from Texas is representing all of the U.S.		have to identify as Black/African American. I don't know. I don't necessarily disconnected from the culture but so more than not I identify as black/African American.
	And everyone just wants to cook enough to eat that right. So... it through me off and I'm kind of like, I have to switch back and forth every once and awhile for how I act in both environments.				I'm Panamanian and I'm Black. I have those two things instead of just that one.
	I know eventually grandma and Keith are going to move back to Panama and so I'm going to be out here and they're going to be out there...				African American. Oh so your ancestors were from Africa? Like, no, hey, cool it! There's more there!
	I want to be able to understand the drew of the culture and understand, you know, that I can... there's so much out there that I don't understand necessarily about my family and I want to understand and kind of bring it with me.				It's more powerful because of what he was trying to achieve and achieved than the journey.
	There's so many that are just, you know, throughout all the United States that... everyone that grandma knows is pretty much out here.				
	And the family is so spread apart that I don't even remember...I honestly don't remember anybody's name. I have to be honest. Everyone saw me when I was a little kid. You know, they all know me as soon as they see me and I'm like, huh, hi! Huh, stranger.				
	I don't know a single artist that Keith listens to but I like everything that I hear every time he plays it.				

Electronic MSc Dissertation Series

The Media@LSE Electronic MSc Dissertations Series presents high quality MSc Dissertations which received a mark of 73% and above (Distinction).

Selected dissertations are published electronically as PDF files, subject to review and approval by the Editors.

Authors retain copyright, and publication here does not preclude the subsequent development of the paper for publication elsewhere.