

NARRATIVES OF FEAR AND CRIME IN TRINIDAD

CONJURING AND AVOIDING THE “BAD MAN”:
NARRATIVES OF
CRIME AND FEAR IN TRINIDAD

By
SACHA ANN GEER, BA, MA

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Doctorate of Philosophy

McMaster University

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(Anthropology)

McMaster University

Hamilton, Ontario

Title: Conjuring and Avoiding the "bad man": Narratives of Crime and Fear in Trinidad

Author: Sacha Geer, B.A., M.A. (University of Western Ontario)

Supervisor: Professor Ellen Badone

Number of Pages: 406, viii

Abstract:

Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are equally though differently entangled in the effects of global, regional and local processes of crime, risk and fear as their counterparts from lower classes. A recent rapid increase in violent crime and particularly a five-fold increase in murder rates in under ten years has caused a shift in lifestyle patterns and a re-imagining of social, public and private space in the country.

Upper class groups conjure and employ an image of a classed and raced 'bad man' who is held responsible for increases in crime and gang violence and is the locus for anxieties for fears for personal safety and the future of the nation.

My research shows that upper middle and upper classes increasingly assert, re-create and negotiate their class position with reference to changing informal rules of 'safe' behaviour and movement in reference to this conjured 'bad man'. Home spaces are created and fortified against those construed as 'risky'. Informal rules of appropriate 'safe' behaviour are negotiated and emerge through endless talk of crime. This talk re-imagines and reifies nearly all lower classes as 'risky' and the conclusions of this talk invariably lead to greater attempted isolation of upper classes from lower classes.

National elections in 2007 and 2010 point to a potential long-term shift away from racialized voting patterns, even as racialized and classed stereotypes flourish. Recent successes of an ostensibly non-racial third political party point to new electoral paradigms and indicate that increases in crime and fear of crime supercede more simplistic race-based allegiances. A paradox, between upper class attempts at increased isolation from crime and continued re-imagining of markers of classed and racialized difference on the one hand, and a perhaps historic change in voting patterns away from long held notions of racial difference on the other hand weave throughout this dissertation and point to the ways in which understandings of risk and crime can influence social change.

**For my parents,
Ann and Paul Geer**

Acknowledgements:

First and foremost, I would like to thank those Trinidadians who were kind enough to let me into their lives, to answer my seemingly endless stream of questions, who kept me safe and well fed, and who were so generous with their time and experiences. I respect their desire for anonymity and will not give their names, but those I write about as Marilyn, her husband Joseph, their children Junior and Frankie and their entire extended family made this dissertation possible and successful beyond my wildest expectations. Their generosity of spirit, willingness to accept me as a nearly daily, and always hungry visitor/friend/niece/daughter/sister shaped not only my time in Trinidad, but the rest of my life.

To the woman I write about as Surojini, and her entire family and extended social circle, the time I spent learning about and exploring Trinidad with you and Zorina were both integral to this work and damn good fun. Thank you.

I would like to thank Dr. Mark Kirton at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus for his kind interest and help during my time in Trinidad. Thanks also to Zorina Shah and Elizabeth Solomon for their friendship and generosity in connecting me with others.

I would have in no way been prepared for the field and for the process of writing upon return without the benefit of an extremely strong academic committee supporting and preparing me at home in Canada. Thanks to Dr. Bill Rodman who served as a fearless committee member and provided support and feedback through my comprehensive examination and prior to his well deserved retirement. To Dr. Eva Mackey, thank you for your strong critical eye, your cheerleading throughout fieldwork, and especially your guidance in all matters related to funding. To Dr. Ellen Badone, your support, both as graduate chair and on my committee have been invaluable. Your keen editing eye and quiet strength have helped me immeasurably through the final difficult stretch of this project. To Dr. Aubrey Canon, chair of the Department of Anthropology at McMaster, you are a tireless advocate for your students, and for that I will always be grateful. I would also like to thank Dr. Aisha Khan, the dissertation's external examiner, for her astute critique and kind words during my defense and for taking the time to review this work during what must surely be the busiest time of the year.

To my Sarge, Dr. Douglass St. Christian, there are no adequate words. You have been so much more than an academic mentor. More even than friend, co-conspirator, sister, uncle, brother, and purveyor of fine poutine, you are a teacher in the truest, purest sense of the word. I will be forever grateful that your calling drew me to you those many years ago. I cannot reciprocate your gifts, only promise to 'pay it forward'—to teach and

be in this world in a way that is true to the gifts you have shared and explored with me. With thanks from your Sachista.

This research was made possible by funding from a number of different agencies. I would like to acknowledge the following: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; McMaster University, McMaster Graduate Students Association; the Institute for Research on Globalization and the Human Condition at McMaster; the Ontario Graduate Fellowship for the McMaster Prestige Award; and finally the Department of Anthropology at McMaster University and Dr. Eva Mackey for travel funding for conferences.

Grateful thanks are due also to the staff of the Department of Anthropology at McMaster: Rabia Awan, Christine Cluney, Bonnie Kahlon, Rosita Jordan and Janis Weir for their support, chocolate, and many many laughs.

This dissertation was born in part from many long discussions with my academic peers. I will forever be grateful for the support and camaraderie of Jack Conley, Samah Sabra, Lisa Brando, Meghan Burchell, Natalie Brewster, Vanessa Sage, Stacy Lockerbie, Brandi MacDonald, Ted Baker, Jairus Skye, Alenia Kysela, Sarah Blekaitis Van Geffen, and all the rest.

Next, to family of all kinds. I would like to thank all of my future in-laws, David and Doreen Maddison, Sidné, Laura, and Chris Maddison as well as Ivan and Oscar Maillet for their kind encouragement and support throughout this process.

To my ‘other’ parents, Ken and Brenda Symns, all meh Guyanese and Trini Aunties and Uncles, and the rest of the best chosen family in the world—thanks does not begin to express my gratitude. To Melissa, Christina, Matt, Justin and Shady and all the assorted spouses and children you’ve accumulated and created along the way. Thank you. To Bo (Margaret) Bardos, your support has been a gift.

To my big brother Richard—never a sweeter or more proud brother existed. To you, Pam and Joshie, love and thanks.

To my own parents, Ann and Paul Geer. Your generosity, faith, pride, support and love have made all of this possible. This dissertation is for you. You are my best example of how to be in this world with generosity and an open heart. I hope I can always live up to your example.

Finally, to my partner Drew Maddison. We found one another almost at the beginning of this project. Your love, quiet patience, and unwavering support have changed my life forever. Without you, this dissertation would have been much harder and not nearly as fun. Having you in my corner is a gift and I will always be grateful to you and for you. Oh yeah...and the Cat too.

List of Abbreviations:

CEPEP-Community Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program

COP-Congress of the People

DEWD-Development and Environmental Works Division

DLP-Democratic Labour Party

NAR-National Alliance for Reconstruction

ONR-Organisation for National Reconstruction

PNM-People's National Movement

PP-People's Partnership

ULF-United Labour Front

UNC-United National Congress

UNC-A United National Congress Alliance

URP-Unemployment Relief Program

Table of Contents:

Title Page	i
Descriptive Note	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Abbreviations	vii
Chapter One--Introduction	1
Chapter Two—Methods and Literature Review	41
Chapter Three—A Day in the Life	95
Chapter Four—Government and Elections	129
Chapter Five--2007 National Elections: Risk, Blame and Crime	172
Chapter Six—Learning Safety and Conjuring Fear	223
Chapter Seven—Talk of Crime	257
Chapter Eight—Consuming Safety Safely	291
Chapter Nine—Imagining the Future	336
Chapter Ten—Conclusion	367
References-	388

Chapter One: Introduction

In what follows I explore the often contradictory experiences of upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians. Like others, these groups find themselves located at the nexus of local, regional and global processes. Increasingly, the daily lives of elite Trinidadians are spent thinking about and avoiding a situation of rapidly increasing violent crime. The 10 month span over which I conducted my fieldwork in 2007-2008 saw, for example, a dramatic increase in the nation's murder rate. In the following chapters, I explore the ways in which risk and safety are understood and negotiated by these privileged groups, how safety is spoken about and discussed and how safe spaces are created. I examine how these practices renew, re-interpret and reinvigorate long standing racial stereotypes, leading to increased policing of social boundaries and an increasing isolation of economic and racial groups from each other. These processes lead to a intensification of ongoing physical segregation between rich and poor Trinidadians.

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island republic located at the southern-most tip of the graceful arc of Caribbean island-nations. The islands have coasts in both the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. At its most southern point, Trinidad is only 7 kilometres from the north coast of Venezuela. Unlike most Caribbean nations, Trinidad's economy does not depend primarily on tourism. Significant off-shore reserves of oil and liquefied natural gas, concrete and steel manufacturing as well as light goods manufacturing for the regional market

overshadow tourism's contributions to GDP. Oil and liquefied natural gas account for approximately 40% of the GDP and 80% of the nation's exports but employ only 5% of the population.¹ Prior to the international drop in oil prices in 2009, Trinidad had a high economic growth rate, and a strong trade surplus. The annual budget is based on a 'price per barrel' of approximately US\$75, though during the time of my fieldwork prices for oil exceeded US\$100/barrel, adding to the surplus. The economy continues to grow. The Trinidad and Tobago dollar is very strong in relation to its Caribbean neighbours. At approximately TT\$6 to US\$1, the nation is positioned well. Minimum wage is also comparatively high. During my time in Trinidad, the hourly rate for minimum wage was raised from TT\$9/hr to \$TT10/hr, or slightly more than US \$1.50/hr . After the election of 2010, discussions on whether and how much to raise minimum wage further began. Some argued that the wage should be raised to as much a TT\$20/hr. These reports as well as anecdotal evidence from my informants suggests that most low skilled workers command wages in excess of minimum wage, as much as TT\$12-\$15/hr (Dickson 2010). My informants reported that even unskilled labour for chores such as lawn maintenance and cleaning is difficult to procure and maintain despite those TT\$12-\$15/hr wages. (Dickson 2010).

Trinidad's population is approximately 1.33 million (World Bank 2008) and is comprised of a diverse mix of people. About 38% of the population are descendents of African slaves and identify as Afro-Trinidadian or 'Creole', a term

¹ Tourism contributes only about 4.6% of total GDP in Trinidad compared to 46% of GDP in sister island Tobago (Tourism Development Company Ltd 2010).

that will be discussed in the next chapter. These individuals are predominantly descendents of African slaves, brought to the islands to work on sugar, rice, and cocoa plantations. Slightly more than 40% of Trinidad's population are descendents of Indian indentured workers, brought to the islands after the abolition of slavery to fill the labour void caused by emancipation. Until the census of 1990, Afro-Trinidadians had been the biggest minority group in Trinidad (Tanikella 2003: 161). The remaining approximately 20% of the population identify as racially 'mixed' or as descended from very small populations of Chinese, Spanish and other European as well as Syrian and Lebanese immigrants to the country over the last 200 years (Encyclopaedia of the Nations, 2010).

These categories are problematic and, like most descriptors involving race or ethnicity, are shifting and context dependent. Trinidad's history, discussed in greater detail in chapters four and five, is infused with concerns over race. Stereotypes that began during the time of colonialism continue to this day, and even political affiliation is to a large extent predicated on racial identification. I discuss these issues in detail in chapter four.

Despite vast differences between upper and lower class Trinidadians, and an increasing monetary gap between the two, quality of life is relatively high across all classes. A 2008 United Nations Development Program report shows that 17% of Trinidadians live below the international poverty line, down from 21% 13 years prior, Unemployment rates are low, at just under 6% but the report

indicates that there is widespread underemployment across many major sectors (UNDP, 2008). Literacy rates are also high, at 99% of the total population.

However, the volatility of the global oil market, and more recently, emerging crises in global finance, are placing middle class Trinidadians under increasing financial stress, and there is significant concern among this group that the next generation will see their economic and class status decline rather than improve.

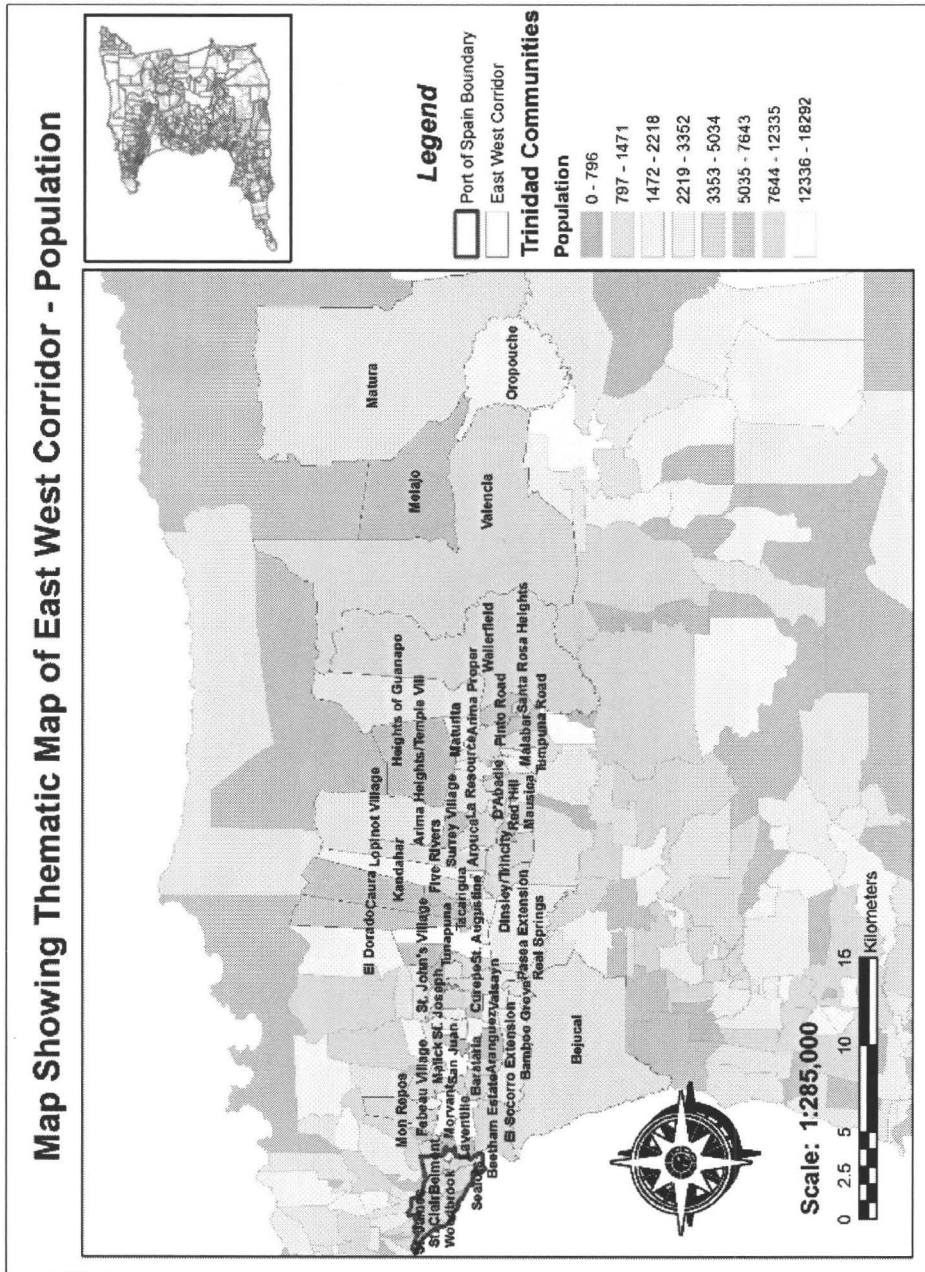
Trinidad's primary, secondary and post-secondary education is all free. Post-graduate education is heavily government subsidized. Government programs provide tuition and living expense stipends for students studying abroad provided the students return and work for the government for a specified period after graduation. Health care is also free of charge. There is a short list of common prescription drugs that are available free of charge to all citizens suffering from common diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, depression and enlarged prostate through the Chronic Disease Assistance Program (C-DAP) (NIPDEC 2010). After retirement age, all citizens are entitled to nearly all of their prescription drug needs free of charge. Even dental care is free, though, as with the medical system, waits can be long and follow up treatment can be difficult to access. Nearly everyone I spoke to for this project circumvents these free processes and employs their income to access private health, dental and primary and secondary education, however.

Trinidad has both large mountain ranges and stretches of arable land which continue to be used for plantations of rice, sugar and cocoa.² A large range of mountains runs east to west in the northern part of the island of Trinidad. Development has, predictably, taken cues from the natural landscape. Port of Spain, the country's capital and the largest city in the country is located at the north western tip of the country, with the ocean at its feet and the mountains at its back. Densely packed suburbs of all income levels and smaller communities expand due east, over 25 kilometres along three parallel routes: a main highway, a private bus route, and an older 'main road'. Running east-west into Port of Spain, this main road is a narrow two lane thoroughfare, flanked on either side with shops, homes and markets. It is difficult to wend one's way through and traffic often comes to a full stop around busy intersections. It was the main thoroughfare prior to the building of the highway and many people live off the main road but do not use it more than necessary as a route to get to the highway or bus route. These run parallel to one another and the mountain range. Suburbs and small towns along this east-west corridor hold the majority of Trinidad's population. A second major thoroughfare, running north to south, connects the smaller, but no less vibrant southern communities to the east west corridor. The southwestern

² I am speaking here of the main island of Trinidad. My research was based entirely among middle class and elite groups here, and did not include informants from Tobago. The history of relations between Trinidad and Tobago are complex and beyond the scope of my discussion here. Indeed, Tobago, which has an economy equally divided between agriculture and tourism, and a population more racially homogenous than Trinidad, is best thought of as a separate case in terms of history, culture, and even crime and safety.

coast of the island is the space of industry. Off shore oil and natural gas operations work from that area as well as the south eastern most point of the island. Population in these regions is much less dense.

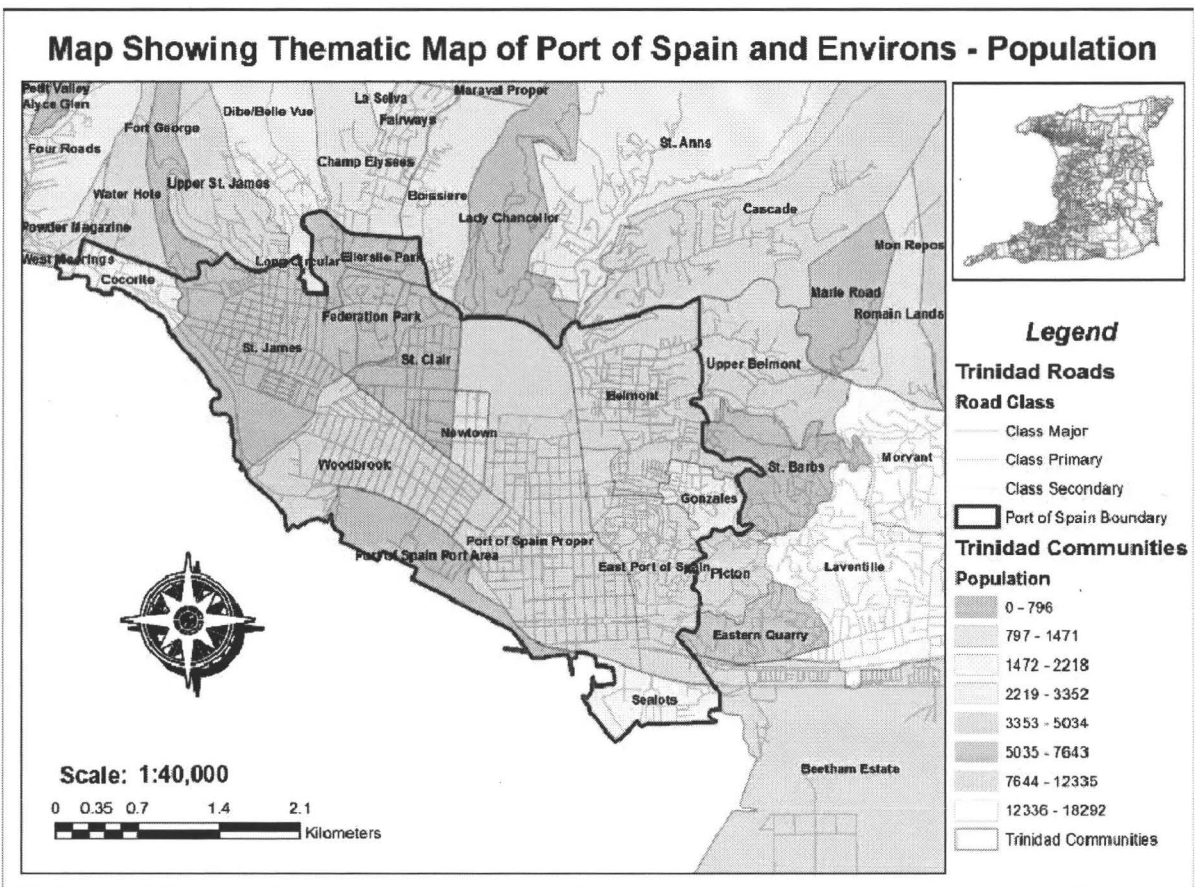
Map 1: Trinidad Population



Source: Map produced for author by GISCAD Geospatial and Engineering Design Solutions, Trinidad, 2010

Map 1 shows relative population density and community names along the east west corridor in the North part of the country. The capital city of Port of Spain is highlighted in the Western portion of the map. With only one exception, all of my informants lived along that corridor. Most Trinidadian professionals are faced with a substantial home to work commute. Along with the centre of government, most major services and business centres are located in Port of Spain. Traffic in and out of the capital along the one major north south highway and along the east-west corridor is intense during rush hours, especially during the school year, when many children are transported to and from school in private cars. Particular areas of the country, especially specific neighbourhoods and communities around the capital Port of Spain, have become synonymous, for my informants, with drugs, gang activity violence and murders. These areas border the city, and also abut several extremely wealthy subdivisions. Most notorious is Laventille which I discuss in detail in chapter 6.

Map 2: Port of Spain Region



Source: Map produced for author by GISCAD Geospatial and Engineering Design Solutions, Trinidad, 2010

In Map 2, the limits of Port of Spain are outlined. In the south east corner of the map lie the communities of Laventille, Morvant, Belmont, Upper Belmont, Beetham Estate, and Sealots. These areas are understood by my informants to be among the most dangerous in the country. They are also the most densely populated areas around Port of Spain, a feature of their class configuration worth bearing in mind. Most murders in the country take place in these areas or involve gangs which originate in these areas (Townsend 2009). Most of the murder victims originated or lived in these areas. None of my informants entered these areas with any regularity, and vigilance was heightened even while using the main routes which border these areas. While Townsend (2009) shows clearly that the increase in the trafficking of illicit narcotics fed the increase in gang violence, importantly all of my informants *believed* that the cause of the increased murder and violent crime rates were related to the drug trade. Also of note are the communities of Cascade, St. Ann's and Woodbrook. Though not the only wealthy communities in Trinidad, these are some of the most prominent, and their location, so close to areas deemed to be extremely dangerous, also plays into constructions of fear and space in Trinidad. These issues will be addressed in chapter six.

The nation is predominantly Christian, but a large minority Hindu, and smaller Muslim community are vibrant parts of Trinidadian society. While there are numerous national holidays for Christian and Hindu holy days, as well as celebrating African emancipation, Independence and most recently, 'Indian

Arrival Day', the calendar year is dominated by two major events, Christmas and Carnival (Miller 1994, Ch 1). Christmas is celebrated by nearly all Trinidadians. Even the large Hindu and Muslim communities celebrate a secular version of the holiday. Carnival is the focal point of the calendar. This pre-Lenten festival takes place over the three days preceding the Christian season of Lent. The build up for the festival, however, begins months in advance. The major celebration is called 'Mas. To 'play 'Mas' is to join a band of several thousand other participants and parade through the streets on the Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday. Similar to famous celebrations such as Mardi Gras in Louisiana, or Carnival in Rio, Carnival is an enormous celebration. Thousands of revelers flock to the streets in expensive costumes made by hand months in advance. There are dozens of large open air parties and concerts leading up to Carnival. Trinidad is a regional powerhouse for music, costume and arts design. Carnival songs will be played at parties throughout the year and are disseminated to the rest of the Caribbean and to Caribbean diaspora communities overseas (De-Light and Thomas 2007: 330-331).³

Carnival also marks the height of the tourist season in Trinidad. Most overseas revelers book months in advance to participate alongside those locals who can afford access to the formal bands and parties. During the weeks between

³ My focus on issues of class and crime preclude a more detailed discussion of carnival in the Trinidadian context. Substantial work on the role of carnival both in Trinidad, and the wider Caribbean, has explored how these festivals play key roles in the historical process of nation making. Such detailed and insightful explorations of carnival include, recently, Scher 2003 and Green and Scher 2007, as well as De Freitas 1994.

Christmas and Carnival, sponsored open air all-inclusive parties featuring soca artists, and smaller 'cooler fetes' in which attendees bring their own beverages, take place nearly nightly. Tickets for these parties, with a heavy emphasis on security and exclusivity can cost as little as \$25US to as much as \$150US. These high prices limit participation to only those who can afford the tickets.

Participating with a band during the two day carnival event can cost anywhere from \$US400 to well over \$1000 depending on the popularity of the band, costuming and additional costs such as professional hair and cosmetics, and additions to costumes.

Trinidadian tourism and official government discourses present the image a glossy cosmopolitan and multi-cultural nation in which different racial groups and religions co-exist peacefully and borrow from and participate in each other's 'cultural' traditions.



Illustration 1: A man in a 'Trini to the Bone' t-shirt stands to watch the Carnival parade alongside overseas tourists. Photo by Author

Caribbean Airlines, Trinidad's national airline, presents a film on each incoming flight detailing the 'unity' of Trinidad's diverse ethnic groups and profiling stereotypically Afro- and Indo-Trinidadian traditions such as Carnival and Diwali as unifying and inclusive. In truth, apart from a few open access events such as Carnival, this conjured 'essence' of Trinidad is available only to those with disposable income⁴. While the notion of a happy, cosmopolitan and racially inclusive Trinidad is true, to some extent, there is considerable tension between Afro and Indo-Trinidadians which is largely glossed over. Calypsonian

⁴Steel Pan bands, most of which have corporate sponsors, are the exception. Highly skilled and competitive steel pan competitions also take place throughout the calendar year but increase during Carnival season. These bands are often from low income areas.

David Rudder's 2006 song 'Trini to de bone' features the lyric 'how we vote is not how we party' referring to the racialized voting patterns but alleging that Trinidadians get along with one another regardless:

All these years I spent abroad in de cold, longing to
be home
Trini to bone, trini to de bone
God I pray that some sweet day, I will no longer
have to roam
Trini to bone, trini to de bone
De problems we have are plain to see
We prove we could stand de scrutiny
All and all, a true democracy
How we vote, is not how we party
There's no place like home some people say
Though some have to leave to make their way
But in their hearts I know their destiny
To come home and big up they country

...

[verse 3]

As crazy as we might seem to be
We still fight to be a family
Indian, African or a Chinee
Syrian, French-Creole and Portugese
We vex with a spirit fiery
Some people say God is a Trini
Sweet women parade abundantly
Now de problem is plain to see (Rudder, 2006)

These lyrics work at once to delineate racial differences and gloss them over as unimportant. As a trope, it is extremely popular. Rudder's song was a huge hit during the 2006 Carnival season and the phrase 'Trini to de bone' has been incorporated into many souvenirs aimed at tourists. Many people told me that basically Trinidadians 'get along' with one another, and separate racial acrimony from day to day living. Trinidad, unlike other nations with two large minorities,

such as Fiji, Guyana or even South Africa, has almost never fallen victim to serious racial violence.

Drugs, Violence and Crime:

As mentioned, Trinidad is only 7kms from the north coast of Venezuela. As a result, it has become a major stop over point for the international trade in illegal drugs. Drugs, predominantly cocaine, but also cannabis, are trafficked from South American nations such as Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia and Guyana, through Trinidad and northward, to North America, and to Europe and West Africa (Townsend, 2009). This northerly flow of drugs is balanced with a southerly flow of guns and small arms from North America and Europe to Trinidad. A marked increase in the use of handguns for crime has increased at levels commensurate with increases in drug trafficking. Both of these activities have contributed to an ongoing increase in gang activity, murder and kidnapping. Rates of murder in particular have increased substantially in the last decade. The chart below shows two important trends. The first is the sudden increase in the rate of murders beginning in 2004. This increase is matched with substantial increases in the rates of kidnapping for ransom beginning in 2004 with a very dramatic jump in 2007, the year during which I began my fieldwork. Kidnapping has subsequently fallen off just as dramatically.

Table 1: Crime Statistics

Year	Number of Reported Murders	Number of Reported Kidnappings
2000	90	n/a
2001	151	n/a
2002	172	29
2003	229	51
2004	259	28
2005	386	58
2006	371	17
2007	379	155
2008	550	11
2009	509	6

Source: (Townsend 2009; Trinidad Guardian 2010; TTcrime.com)

The majority of murders are at least tangentially drug and gang related (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank 2007:130) A joint United Nations and World Bank report states that violence using weapons is on the increase. Those who smuggle illicit narcotics also smuggle weapons to protect their shipments. The most common victim (59%) is a young, Afro-Trinidadian, undereducated urban male involved with gang work and who has witnessed violence at close range from his youth (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank 2007: 133). Young

undereducated males in these areas are particularly targeted by narcotics traffickers. Refusing to work with gangs who traffic drugs can result in these youth becoming completely financially disenfranchised, as 'legitimate' work is difficult to procure and maintain, and often, subject to violence as well (ibid 135). These crimes, combined with the surge in kidnapping of upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians in the mid-2000s, have produced an intensive and widespread sense of fear and vulnerability among all classes. Kidnapping targets are almost all from upper middle and upper class families as well as family members of elites. My informants believe that only a fraction of the total number of kidnappings are reported. Most people believe that many wealthy families were paying ransoms for kidnapped family members and had not involved police or armed services. Many people also believe that rogue agents within the police and the armed services might also be involved in the kidnappings. Regardless of the veracity of these beliefs about 'true' rates of kidnappings, even if we use the reported statistics for 2007, individuals were being kidnapped at a rate of close to one person every two days. That is a more than a 900% increase from the previous year. This increase caused a dramatic shift in understandings of safety, crime and criminals amongst upper class Trinidadians. While those upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians around whom this work is centered are actually unlikely to fall victim to acts of physical violence, particularly murder, anxieties about crime dominate their daily lives. Rates of reported kidnappings have dropped substantially since the peak in 2007, but the fear and increased vigilance

in surveillance generated by the 2007 increase has been sustained. Other 'serious crimes' showed a 23% increase from 2001-2006 (UNDP, 2008). These include burglary, home invasion and large scale theft. Like kidnapping, these crimes are also understood by my informants to be under-reported,. Most informants believe the crime numbers are much worse than official statistics indicate. Trinidadians respond to these increased anxieties and fears surrounding crime and violence with heightened measures of surveillance and through employing their capital to try to ensure and engender feelings of safety.

It was in the midst of this Trinidad that I found myself. I immersed myself in a location and a group consumed with avoiding crime and creating and maintaining safe space. For that reason it is both telling and slightly embarrassing that my own 'anthropologist in the field' story begins differently than most. In my case, there are no stories of arriving with a few scant contacts, a notebook and a determined plucky will. Instead, before I arrived in Trinidad, my mother went to organize details for me. Further, both my parents were there to welcome me when I arrived and introduce me to Joseph and Marilyn, friends of theirs who would become my "aunt" and "uncle" during my stay. This relationship continues, though at a distance, today. My parents live in neighboring Guyana, a country culturally and demographically similar to Trinidad, located on the north coast of South America, only a 45 minute flight from the airport in Trinidad. As it was considerably less costly to fly from Guyana to Trinidad to for a preliminary scouting trip, than to fly from Canada to Trinidad, my mother 'offered' to go to

Trinidad before my scheduled arrival. She would not take 'no' for an answer. She would, she told me over many hurried international phone calls, do a little research on the practicalities such as living arrangements, food and transit. She had acquaintances, she told me, in Trinidad that had offered advice and help on anything I might need.

My mother's concern and her exploratory trip were based on her own understandings of and anxieties about the current situation in Trinidad gained from these upper middle class acquaintances. More than for self-deprecatory humorous effect, I include this tale because my mother's experiences, her communications with me, and the decisions that she made based on the advice that she was given framed my own experiences in Trinidad in relation to risk and crime. Growing up in Canada, my childhood included frequent visits to Guyana. My comfortable middle class life in Canada where doors on homes were left unlocked as frequently as they were locked was turned upside down by regular visits to Guyana after my father took a high profile job in the country and my mother stayed in Canada with my brother and I until we were old enough to manage our own lives. In Guyana, there was a life in which my home had several armed guards, where cocktail parties included political leaders and some friends travelled with discrete personal body guards. These parties were intermixed with political soirees and casual dinners with local and international dignitaries. It was here that mingling with foreign and local dignitaries and business and social elite

became commonplace, as did learning to surreptitiously check new or unfamiliar acquaintances for concealed handguns.

Her goal, my mother told me, was to be of assistance, but also to ensure my safety, given her experience in Guyana, where crime is a serious social and political problem, and her understanding of similar problems in Trinidad⁵. Among the goals for her trip, she would attempt to secure accommodation for me so that I would not have to spend precious research funds on hotel stays after I arrived. It was an enormous gift. Like Abu-Lughod (1986: 11; 1993: xi-xiii), whose father facilitated her entrée to a Bedouin community; my entrée to Trinidad was facilitated by the introduction and connections of my parents⁶. For Abu-Lughod, the presence of her father as intermediary when beginning fieldwork assured her informants that she was a woman who understood the importance of family and who was respectable. In my case, the presence first of my mother, and eventually both my parents, served as a guarantor of my class status. Association with them was an indication that I had some reasonable understanding of appropriate social relations and would not place either Marilyn and Joseph's family, nor others at risk by virtue of my research.

Soon after my mother arrived in Trinidad to begin her exploratory trip, I began to get emails and phone calls, updating me on the housing search. "Dear

⁵ My MA thesis (Geer, 2005) completed at the University of Western Ontario detailed middle and upper class migrant reactions to similarly rapid increase in crime perpetrated against primarily wealthy Guyanese and the subsequent formation of illicit death squad which in turn targeted the perpetrators.

⁶ I am grateful to Dr. Ellen Badone for pointing out this similarity.

Sacha, Auntie Marilyn's son Junior took me to see an apartment in neighbourhood 'x', but there is no good parking, and it is very near to where some people got snatched. Even though it's gated, we talked about it, and don't think it would be the best option for you." A few days later: "I moved the search closer to Trincity [and further west, away from Port of Spain], near where Auntie Marilyn and Uncle Joseph live. Your budget cannot get you anything remotely safe in Port of Spain, and besides, all of your contacts live in the surrounding areas. No one lives in Port of Spain like no one really lives in downtown Toronto, except for bad areas or places you couldn't begin to afford. Besides, everyone around here says it is too difficult to move around inside Port of Spain, better to live around it and take advantage of the ring roads and multiple routes of access than be mired in terrible traffic...plus, it floods there". Then came phone calls. "The place that I found is very safe, it's a five minute walk from Auntie and Uncle's house, but if you're going after dark, you should drive. It's not a great apartment, it's very small, but furnished and I had to put down an extra month's rent to secure it as a pilot wanted to rent it and the landlady liked the look of him. It was in high demand".

Later: "Today we talked about a car, depending on where you live, you might be able to take the maxi-taxi's which run along the special bus route, but after dark you would need to get someone to meet you and bring you from the bus stop to your house. Auntie Marilyn says you can always call Uncle Joseph or her son Junior and they will come for you in the evenings, but that doesn't seem like a

great long term option, and what if they aren't available? Everyone agrees to wait until you arrive to decide on a car. I don't know if I like you taking public transit; even though you look the part, I feel you'll always be identified as a foreigner. You certainly will always sound like one". These emails and phone calls were the beginning stages of forming a mental map (Lupton 1999c: 144), not just of the how to go from place to place but a map of zones of safety and peril. In short, these were the first lessons in learning what constituted safe versus unsafe space. These changing descriptions of zones of safety, augmented by time of day or night, season (carnival tourist season opens many more spaces up for middle class safety) became a kind of anticipated geography before I set foot in the neighbourhoods that would be my home for ten months. ⁷

These first communications taught me that I had to learn, and learn quickly both how to identify the most risky of 'unpredictable strangers' and also where it was appropriate for me to venture, at what times, accompanied versus unaccompanied. Mental maps and appropriate behavior in different spaces were learned quickly. Habib (2007) writes of narratives of Palestinians about space in their homeland: "While their descriptions of sites matched their experiences of the landscape in personal ways, disagreements and confusions hinged on what type of information an outsider to the history or geography of the site would need to

⁷ I realize that some of my most important lessons happened before I arrived in my field site. This is not that unusual for fieldwork, since in any instance, the research brings along pre-conceptions and the explorations of others. The extent to which this emerging sense of a dangerous but familiar world shaped my research is part of the puzzle this dissertation seeks, at least implicitly, to unravel.

understand or appreciate what was lost in the transition to Israeli statehood” (2007:75). Similarly, in Trinidad discussions of place and space and memories of particular places are linked to particular crime events. These crime events are used as a shorthand for justification of further isolation by the speaker. A restaurant, for instance may be described as “near where them people get snatch [kidnapped]”. Therefore that space enters the narrative as no longer safe, and must be treated and understood as suspect by both the speaker and the listener and added to mental maps of Trinidad. These sorts of narratives work to educate the viewer I cannot say whether my own mental map was accurate, and over the course of my fieldwork, I did worry constantly about whether I was pushing the boundaries of the safe spaces on my map enough, too much, or in the wrong ways. For the most part, I attempted to take in the advice of those who had taken upon themselves to look out for me, to teach and chastise and assist me in moving about the country as best I could.

In the end, a small bachelor apartment was chosen for me in a house in an upper middle class area. This neighbourhood is suburban in Trinidadian terms, being outside the core of the more urban Port of Spain. The ten to fifteen minute walk to public transportation meant that a car would also be necessary. Public transportation was deemed unsafe at night, and it would have been a sweltering walk during the daytime. Most people that live here commute via the one east/west highway into Port of Spain each day, a commute that, on a bad morning, can take over three hours to travel at most, 40 kilometers. Aside from maxi-taxi’s

and busses, only those with special dispensation such as politicians and dignitaries, are able to use their vehicles on the Public Bus Route (PBR) that runs parallel to the main highway into Port of Spain and which takes considerably less time than either the highway or the third option, the old 'main road'.

In my mind's eye, my research was to be with the Trinidadian equivalent of the social circle with which I was associated in Guyana: elite professionals who are wealthy, security conscious people with house staff, those with easy access to 'first world' entrance visas or even more commonly, overseas passports, and who, at least in their own worlds, had opinions which shaped or influenced public discourse, and in the broader social and political field, influence governance and national politics. In truth, the group that I found in Trinidad was a mix of those persons as well as people who occupied a more "middle management", middle class social strata. It was these people who form the core of my experience with Trinidadians fear of crime and pursuit of safety.

A Daytime Ethnography:

Nearly halfway through my fieldwork, I joked to my supervisor and friends back home that I was writing a 'daytime ethnography', so difficult was it to move about after dark. While there was no one who was physically inhibiting my travel, it became too onerous and too mentally exhausting to put into place all the precautions deemed necessary to be safe during the night by myself. In fact the only major way I breached the most common of the security lessons I was taught was to drive by myself at night. This was a sheer necessity, as I lived alone

and my partner had remained in Canada during my fieldwork. Barring trips to Joseph and Marilyn's a few blocks away, I did not drive alone at night very often, and only, as will be seen in chapter 6, after taking significant precautions. Still, I was forced to make several concessions in my fieldwork as a result of this limited scope of movement. I was, for instance very curious about the daily campaign stops that were being held by all three major political parties in the months leading up to the election in 2007, but was told I would only be safe at the events of one or, perhaps two parties. I was plainly disallowed from attending the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian supported People's National Movement (PNM) party meetings. Many argued that, since I looked Indo-Trinidadian, I would be at a minimum harassed and possibly even physically assaulted. I was too wealthy looking, too Indian, too out of place, I was informed. The 'wrong type' of people, I was told, attend those rallies. I would not have been safe. I was able to attend several Congress of the People (COP) political rallies only because Marilyn and Joseph were planning on attending and invited me along.

Still, only a few months after I arrived in Trinidad, I attended African Emancipation Day festivities in a large stadium downtown. I was one of very few Indian looking spectators in a crowd of thousands. I was openly mocked for wanting to go and was only 'allowed' to attend because, as one informant told me 'everyone is peaceful on Emancipation Day. They won't trouble you today'. I experienced no problems despite my 'out of place' appearance and spent several hours watching the 'cultural' displays and taking in the craft and art stalls during

the daytime portion of the festivities. As will become clear, fear produces conundrums and contradictions, elisions between 'the wrong type of people' who might hurt you and personal experience of friendliness and calm. All of my informants inhabit and find meaning in these contradictory experiences.

Trinidadians I worked with told me they spend more time thinking about crime and thinking about how to be safe now than 'before', a time marked not so much by a specific event or year as by a recollection of when they had to do less to be safe. Each response to violence came incrementally. First bars on the windows, then a higher gate, then keeping the kids off the street, then preferring them to be in the house unless you are outside with them. Soon, parents were having their children picked up by a private school bus, or driving them to school. Karl, a lifelong educator and author with a beautiful home in an expensive and highly desirable area just off a busy street filled with posh restaurants and expensive nightclubs has gone from tending beautiful gardens in his open yard and plants on his verandah to cutting all of them down so that he can more easily survey his yard to ensure that no one is hiding there. Karl is not wealthy, but a comfortable retiree who dresses modestly on purpose in order to abate suspicion that he might have something worth stealing. His home has increased several times in value since he bought it in the late 1970s. A few years ago, someone attempted to rob Karl when he left his gated yard early in the morning to go to the airport. He says he fought the attacker off successfully with karate skills he had learned as a child. Since then he has erected concrete half walls with steel grating

stretching to the ceiling around his once open rear verandah. Next to his large television sits a smaller one on which a closed circuit television shows a continuous feed from cameras placed around the house. At all times Karl and his family are reminded of the potential of break in and violence.

Karl and I met in his airy though fenced-in verandah at mid-day. He had come home from some casual part-time work to meet me, and had neglected to tell his wife, at the time house cleaning deep in the home, that we had arrived. She was startled to hear voices and spent several anxious moments trying to ascertain whether she was in the process of a home invasion before recognizing her husband's voice.

Raymond, an academic I spoke with reported a long period in which he could not sleep without the aid of some form of sleeping pill, so acute was his anxiety about crime and the future. Physicians with whom I spoke told me they have seen a rise in the number of wealthy individuals seeking anti-anxiety and sleeping aid medications and patients who report being unable to relax or 'get over' some particular crime event.

At a trip to a family gathering in Central Trinidad I met a small nuclear family who lived in a middle class, predominantly Indo-Trinidadian subdivision. The year before, the family's home had been invaded and robbed. Fortunately no one was killed in the attack, and mother and daughter escaped unscathed by barricading themselves in the bathroom. The father of the family was bound with rope by the perpetrators and made to reveal where all the family jewels and cash

were located in the house. The whole family was traumatized, but none more than the father. Upon entering the house, and before hearing the story of the home invasion, I noted a loft bedroom erected high in the living room. I complimented the lady of the house on the interesting architectural feature only to be told it was added after the home invasion. Her husband could no longer sleep in the ground floor bedroom as they had before, because he could not easily see the street or hear noises from the yard. The raised open bedroom and new barred windows gave him a sense of safety. The construction was expensive, but was a more viable option than moving to a new home. From his high vantage point, her husband felt safe, and felt he had more ability to protect his family. The neighbours, on the other hand, complained that the unfamiliar light so high in the house was keeping them up at night, frightening them as they saw silhouettes moving about the house where before there had been none. These vignettes illustrates the relational quality of fear of crime and the production of safety I explore in this text. Even with the architectural changes, the woman said, her husband rarely slept through the night. Stories such as these are told and retold constantly, disseminated as tales of warning that are also practices of imagination.

I recount these stories of crime not simply for their rhetorical value, but as an introduction to the ways in which I plan to explore the lives of upper-middle and upper class Trinidadians. I understand that elite individuals and groups through contribute to the continuing disenfranchisement of lower classes due to their control and inadequate redistribution of vast quantities of wealth. These

individuals are made more visible by the ways in which they have produced their space and by the fact that they live in social climates such as Brazil, where a viable *middle* class is disappearing (see O'Dougherty, 2002 for a detailed ethnographic description of the slipping fortunes of Brazil's middle class in relation to governmental economic policies). In short, the gap between rich and poor is growing, the middle is falling out, and the elite classes, now more visible than before *perceive themselves* as at greater risk as a result.

In order to find adequate room for discussion of social inequality, and to add to discussions theorizing the reasons for the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, we must at least try to understand the position in which members of upper class groups find themselves *in their everyday lives*. This requires viewing upper classes not as inherently ill-intentioned and inhumane entities but as individuals making choices which maintain their livelihood and protect themselves and their families from threats they perceive through their understandings of risk. Insightful works have been produced by anthropologists who look at the effects of multi-national corporations, government policy similar transnational entities on the everyday lives of lower class individuals (Ferguson, 1990; Scott, 1998; Nader, 1969), but little work has been done to advance our understanding why upper middle class and upper-class groups make the choices that they do. If, by refusing to engage in ethnographic exploration of the lives of elites, we paint them callously as unthinking, not-quite-human agents of destruction, we preclude the opportunity to engage in a dialogue from which an

effective discussion of the causes and effects of extreme social inequality and segregation can occur. This position is not meant to imply that I believe that the effects of actions of members of elite groups are benign. Rather, I argue that responsible academic research will only be completed when members of elite and near-elite classes are treated with the same methodological rigour and ascribed the same rationality as members of other, lower classes. It is my fear that the corollary of the mid-late 20th century trend towards romanticizing the disenfranchised has been a blind demonization of the upper classes. This position, while satisfying (perhaps most especially for middle class, left-leaning academics like myself) has closed the door to a potentially more rigorous analysis. Nader (1969) has drawn our attention to the myriad ways in which ‘studying up’ is necessary in order to understand how large corporations and similar organizations affect the lives of everyday people ‘on the ground’. Likewise, Scott (1998) has examined the ways in which the state, through its modernist projects, makes itself legible. Drawing from both Nader and Scott, I attempt to explore and interpret the ways by which upper classes make themselves legible, through the creation of space and concerns around safety.

This project is therefore also about the differences between ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ globalization. Alongside for instance, the global trade in oil and natural gas, which has brought about enormous financial security for the Trinidadian state, there has been an increase in the degree of isolation between the classes. Much of this isolation comes through a particular trend in creating space which is difficult

for lower class Trinidadians to access. This increased class isolation is understood by informants as the direct result of crimes resulting from the increased traffic in the international drug trade or what might be termed 'bad globalization'.

My analysis is also strongly influenced by Teresa Caldeira, particularly her 'City of Walls' (2000). Caldeira's work focuses on changes to the cityscape and lives of wealthy Paulistas, or residents of Brazil's São Paulo. My own work in Trinidad similarly focuses on the ways in which talk of crime, attitudes towards police and other law-enforcement entities, and urban segregation affect attitudes towards lower classes (Caldeira 2000: 15). At a conference in 2008, Caldeira argued the following about São Paulo:

When the city was growing and violence was not an issue, the imagination that dominated the city was one of social mobility, improvement, expansion, and incorporation. Distances embodied spatially and socially were relatively unmarked symbolically. They had to remain fluid to anchor the strong belief in social mobility. Nowadays, inequalities and differences are prominently produced and are rarely left unmarked. Exaggerated and simplified, they mask processes of transformation and of improvement, and inevitably amplify the tension among social groups. Inequality has become naturalised, the taken-for-granted part of everyday life, the matter of social communication, even while it is denounced by unexpected interventions. Therefore, it is the tense and multi-layered production and contestation of inequality that we should look at to capture both the city's predicament and its vitality (Caldeira, 2008).

I suggest that in the case of Trinidad, the time 'before' when fear of crime violence was not pressing at the forefront of everyone's minds was still one in which informal segregation between racialized class groups was prevalent.

Drawing from Caldeira, I argue that understanding of 'now' is dominated by notions of crime and physical separation between the upper classes and the 'bad man'. Inequality in Trinidad, however, is not newly becoming naturalized, only becoming more legible as those with the means to demarcate and create space do so to the exclusion of lower classes.

Academic literature points to two countries that provide evidence of spatial exclusion between classes in response to crime, Brazil and South Africa. There are two major differences between the case of contemporary Trinidad, the creation of fortified spaces or gated communities and those other contexts. Other discussions, such as those of Caldeira's São Paulo (2000, 2008), Landman and Schonteich's (2002) comparison between fortified enclaves in Brazil versus South Africa, and Spinks' discussion of similarities between contemporary isolation due to crime in South Africa with historical segregation based on apartheid (2001) are differences scale of isolation and the respective nations' history. To date, Trinidad has few 'fortified vertical enclaves' or 'urban fortresses', contained luxury high-rises that include shopping, a retinue of armed guards and near total isolation of the sorts described in Brazil or South Africa. Barring a few luxury high rises, Trinidad's new middle and upper class housing is predominantly made up of gated suburban communities, in which an entire neighbourhood is gated and

access within is controlled by electronic surveillance and gates or mostly unarmed human guards. Further changes to space with regards to security take place in and on individual family homes, and most rely on leaving these neighbourhoods nearly daily for entertainment, work and leisure. The spaces which they frequent are, however, similarly fortified and also work to segregate the upper-middle and upper classes from those deemed to be 'risky'.

Trinidad's history is also quite different from that of either South Africa or Brazil. This is not to say that no useful comparative information can be found from these examples, only that the historical processes of racialization and segregation, informal and matched with authoritarian regimes, as in the case of Brazil, or formal, as in the case of South Africa's apartheid, make too close a comparison difficult. Indeed, Spinks herself argues that given South Africa's particular history with apartheid, Anglo-American theories surrounding segregations with regards to crime do not neatly apply (Spinks 2001:4). Spinks contends that processes of fortification of home spaces in South Africa are creating conditions which mimic apartheid South Africa and reinforce geographic divisions and boundaries which legislators and government projects have actively attempted to erase (2001: 4). Where Spinks' work becomes more useful for my own, is in her assertion that it is not crime, but fear of crime that drives increased socio-spatial segregation. Two important ideas arise from this assertion which I readily incorporate into my interpretation of the situation in Trinidad. First, a particular fear and understanding of the crime situation is used as justification for

all manner of safety precautions among upper-middle and upper-class Trinidadians. Despite the fact that my informants are statistically unlikely to fall victim to crime, they take significant and expensive precautions to avoid it. Secondly, there is an inherent tension between the state making projects that are attempted by government and the vision of the future understood by citizens as result of the crime situation. Spinks says that crime has caused a socio-spatial isolation which mimics apartheid, despite state-making projects of politicians to actively erase that history. Similarly, in Trinidad, the Vision 2020 project, in which Trinidadian legislators conjure a vision of the future in which first world standards are achieved exist in tension with the dire predictions about the future from my informants. State-making and class legibility are affected by the crime situation.

In Landman and Schoenteich's São Paulo, the risky others from whom the upper classes seek to protect themselves through the creation of 'fortified enclaves' are a racialized geographically disparate group. *Nordestino's* are relatively new migrants in São Paulo from, as their name suggests, the northeastern part of the country. In Trinidad, there is an electorate which votes based on long standing racialized disparities, but these groups have long lived alongside one another with relatively little trouble until recent dramatic increases in crime.

There are, however, several useful assertions from the work of Landman and Schoentiech (2002). They argue that the increase in gated communities,

particularly in developing countries, is directly related to a perception that the state is unable to protect the interests of the citizens. Gated communities lead to processes of social exclusion which inhibit “the construction of social networks that form the basis of social and economic activities” (2002: 1). Similarly, I explore both the ways in which upper middle and upper class Trinidadians conceive of and circumvent the rule of the state and the processes by which conceptions of risk and crime lead to the creation of space which is inherently exclusionary to lower classes. The creation of exclusionary spaces and new rules of ‘safe’ conduct for upper class women and children also hinder their ability to participate in public life. Most useful as a point of comparison is Caldeira’s (2000) extensive work on São Paulo, where she focuses on upper middle and upper class residences and the lived experiences of these groups. While the scale of isolation and segregation in Trinidad is not to date as extreme as in Caldeira’s São Paulo, her discussion of the ways in which fear and security are understood has significant parallels in Trinidad.

In the following chapters I will explore what it means to live in a situation in which fear of crime is endemic. First, I outline my methodology and the conceptual framework through which I approached my fieldwork and this dissertation. My fieldwork was necessarily multi-sited, temporally and physically. I make no claims to describe the totality of Trinidadian experience, but instead seek to understand what it means to occupy an upper middle or upper class position at this point in Trinidad’s history. I take special care to discuss

historical and contemporary attitudes toward racial difference, and also to look conceptually at the category of risk as related to violent crime. My ethnographic evidence shows that most decisions in Trinidad are viewed through a lens of risk, and with an eye toward maintaining, consuming and policing spaces and activities which are defined on the shifting and constantly contested grounds of that which is considered safe.

Following this review I introduce the reader to a 'typical' day in the life of a middle class family. I do so through a discussion of my closest friend and informant, Marilyn and her family. Marilyn's day, while individual and specific, is similar in many ways to the experience of the middle class in general. Through this chapter, I describe the myriad ways in which Marilyn's family negotiates and understands contemporary Trinidad, as well as the ways in which fear of crime shapes their lives.

Chapter four provides a brief sketch of Trinidadian history since African slavery, focusing on racial stereotypes and antagonisms. This chapter sets the historical stage for a discussion of the 2007 national election in chapter five. The pre Independence historical analysis is followed with an electoral history of the country since Independence in the 1960s and includes particular attention to the creation and maintenance of political parties which appeal to voters who vote based on their racial affiliation. In this chapter, I also examine two particular political programs aimed at helping the under/unemployed in Trinidad. I chart the ways that the ruling People's National Movement government has used these

programs, as well as inconsistencies in and reaction to them as a measure of the climate directly preceding the 2007 election.

Chapter five focuses on the 2007 and 2010 parliamentary elections. These elections were novel in that for the first time in many electoral cycles, notions of class were introduced into official elections discourse. This split from the more common focus on race-based differences in party affiliation combined with the introduction of crime and crime fighting as a major election issue produced campaign strategies particularly focused at middle and upper class Trinidadians and those of non Afro-Trinidadian descent. I argue, in part, that the 2007 election campaigns, particularly those by the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported United National Congress party, played on the tropes of risk and blame and racialized class difference that have become common in day-to-day Trinidadian life. I suggest that the introduction of an ostensibly non racial third party into the election fray and the subsequent loss of power by the incumbent People's National Congress in the snap 2010 election may point to a shift in race-based voting behaviours in Trinidad.

In chapter six I return to everyday life. In this instance, I do a close reading of one of my own evenings in Trinidad, paying close attention to the various ways I was learning and was taught to conduct myself in a manner deemed to be 'safe' for a person of my sex, social class and means. The ways in which I purposefully and inadvertently transgressed these rules and the effects of those transgressions are explored in a discussion of the ways in which behaviour,

in relation to an understanding of crime, is constantly negotiated to avoid risk and blame. I also discuss the ways in which the 'bad man', a distillation of stereotypes of race/class/location is conjured to both produce fear and safety from fear. These experiences are extrapolated in order to attempt a discussion of what Trinidadians have gone through as a slower more accretive process of learning to exist within a particular fear of crime framework.

Because so much of learning to be safe is taught through conversation, in chapter seven, I talk about 'talk'. By discussing several common conversational tropes I explore the ways crime is talked into meaning, including the ways in middle class and upper class Trinidadians, who in general eschew racialized language, express their concerns and understandings about the contemporary situation with slippages into often inflammatory racialized and even racist talk.

In chapter eight I discuss upper middle and upper class processes of consumption and argue that patterns of consumption among my informants can be understood through a lens of crime and safety. I make a distinction between conspicuous and inconspicuous consumption to denote that there are shifting grounds on which decisions to show or hide one's wealth are made. Each purchasing decision, including not only what, but where to make purchases, and even the decision to utilize high value items in a public or private way is scrutinized and rationalized through the filters of fear and safety. Upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians engage in constant informal debate amongst themselves over appropriate behaviours surrounding consumption and self-police

their own behaviour to avoid being criticized for taking risks or failing to understand where risks reside.

In the penultimate chapter, I focus on middle class and upper class Trinidadian's perception of what the future might hold. I marry the narratives of individual Trinidadians with a discussion of a government plan called Vision 2020, a play on words regarding the standard for 'perfect' eyesight. This plan's main goal is to employ Trinidad's vast financial resources to transform the country to 'first world' or 'developed world' status by the year 2020. This chapter charts how some of my key informants understand and respond to this plan, drawing their discourse of tomorrow from the discourses of danger they see themselves living in today.

Focusing on fear as both something people feel, and as a way of acting in and on the world, my argument seeks to broaden approaches to the study of class and social process by taking into account that even something as difficult to quantify as fear produces worlds rather than solely responding to worlds "out there", where "real" events occur. In this way, I am suggesting that the study of class and racial divisions and the problems of governance in post-colonial settings, if not in all settings, needs to take into account the way that feeling bodies make the worlds in which they live, as much as structural forces like globalization. The 'bad man' of Trinidadian discourses of crime and fear and safety is a complex conjuring of a multi-sited reality, a reality arising from the

reality of crime and the equally important reality of the way crime makes people
feel.

Chapter 2: Methods and Literature Review

In this chapter I discuss my ethnographic methods as well as the conceptual and theoretical framework which informed my fieldwork and which continues to inform my ethnographic writing. I discuss particular issues surrounding defining race and race relations within Trinidad and pay close attention to ethnographic perspectives on these issues. I attempt to describe, as explicitly as possible who I mean when I talk about upper middle and upper class Trinidadians and to provide a framework for understanding contemporary thinking about notions of risk. I conclude by highlighting various, often contradictory issues concerning the creation and recreation of space by upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians.

Fieldwork:

I spent ten months doing fieldwork in Trinidad, from June 2007 through March 2008. During that time I conducted 20 detailed oral life histories, countless informal interviews and engaged in daily participant observation among upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians. I chose Trinidad as a base of research to investigate how the dynamic intersections of migration, government corruption and inaction, the international trade in licit and illicit goods, and crime and violence produce and conjure novel anxieties and lifestyle changes in this group. This research project emerged from considerable fieldwork for my Master's degree in the culturally similar English-speaking Caribbean nation of Guyana.

Trinidad and Tobago became the location for my doctoral fieldwork rather than Guyana for several reasons. First, the population and economy is much larger, 1.4 million to Guyana's 750 000. There is also a sizable middle class in Trinidad which is all but non-existent in Guyana. While Guyana experienced a wave of crime subsequent to a jailbreak in 2002, which ultimately re-directed the focus of my research and began my interest in upper middle and upper class responses to crime and violence, Trinidad was, at the time of my planning for research, in the throes of a multi-year increase in overall crime. This situation, combined with an impending national election, set the stage for me to expand my focus to larger international issues in a new field setting.

Guyana is where my own family heritage lies, and where my parents currently live and work in relatively high profile positions in the private and public sector. When asked why I chose to move my work to Trinidad after extensive research in Guyana, my response was two-fold. First, Trinidad, I said breezily, was "culturally like Guyana, except there is a thriving middle class and money from deposits of natural gas and oil". Secondly, while studying with and among individuals of similar class status in Guyana, I learned that having ties to a semi-prominent family was both an advantage and a disadvantage as a researcher. Anthropological work with groups with significant financial or social prestige is difficult. On the one hand, having some degree of high local social status, either directly or through family connections is beneficial; it can work as an entrée or badge of acceptance to social events and other day to day life happenings that

might otherwise be difficult to access. On the other hand, this sort of fieldwork, with its emphasis on confidentiality, can be difficult. Some of my informants in Guyana were wary of my own personal connections through my family to other social elites. A few others seemed keen to use that connection, apparently thinking that agreeing to an interview with me might positively affect their relationship with my parents or their well placed friends. In itself, these issues were interesting for fieldwork, and not entirely prohibitive. All interaction with a research subject is a gift, a favour asked for by the researcher and granted. In the case of my research with upper class Trinidadians, expectations for reciprocity did not weigh heavily on me as they mostly incurred additional time spent with informants, and very little financial or other obligations.

Trinidad was close enough to Guyana geographically and socially that my own social and family connections could facilitate entrée into various social circles that would be otherwise difficult to access. Through family connections, I made contact with an upper middle class family who would prove to be invaluable during my stay. Marilyn, her husband Joseph and her entire nuclear and extended family were lifelines for me throughout my stay in Trinidad. Through them I found lodging, transportation, introductions to an enormous circle of their own upper middle class friends, family and acquaintances. Starting with Marilyn and Joseph, I utilized a snowball method, meeting dozens of other Trinidadians, some of whom were return migrants, others who had lived and worked in Trinidad their entire lives. These were the individuals with whom I

spent the majority of my time. I had contact with Marilyn and her family nearly daily. Through other, more distant family connections, I was introduced to a circle of elite Trinidadians, those who, as will be discussed, occupy a position of larger social influence as well as falling into a higher income bracket than Marilyn and her family. These individuals were more often return migrants, those who had left Trinidad for educational purposes at some point in their lives or who had migrated to North America or the UK for several years or even decades. My initial goal was to limit the scope of my study to those elite return migrants, but in the end I found that the two groups, return migrants and non-migrants of both loosely defined class groups had fascinating personal narratives and opinions in relation to issues of risk, fear, and crime. The resulting methods and methodology changed, as so often happens in the field, as result of these findings.

Oral Life Histories:

Over the ten months I was in Trinidad, I conducted twenty detailed life histories with individuals who fit the definition of return or educational migrant. These were individuals who had left Trinidad for a significant portion of time, either for post-secondary or professional training, or those who had emigrated overseas, ostensibly to settle permanently before making the decision to return. I did not conduct formal interviews with the non-migrants with whom I spent each day working and interacting. With the exception of Marilyn, whose detailed history was taken toward the end of my research period, I did not feel the need to

formalize the interview process because access was unlimited, questions and answers arose more organically, and time constraints were not a factor.

In each formal life history interview I asked informants for permission to tape our discussion(s), assuring them that the tapes and resulting transcripts would be password protected and that I would use pseudonyms for the dissertation and any other publications that might result from the research. With one exception, all interviewees agreed to have our discussion taped using a small digital audio recorder. This method was preferable for me, not only because it allowed for greater accuracy in transcription, but because without an audio recording, I felt forced to take handwritten notes. Often the act of writing during an interview distracted informants; they became curious and eager to speak at greater length about whatever it was I was writing, as though that might be what I was 'really' after. Writing notes also reduced my ability to maintain regular eye contact and to read the physicality of informants to ascertain discomfort or other bodily cues as to their general sense of safety and well being, as well as other non-verbal communications. Because, as will be discussed in chapter 7, informants were often very careful about their language, careful to position themselves as non-racist, open-minded, and often keen not to appear as though they were complaining about those of lower social and economic class status, I found eye-contact to be of utmost importance.

The life histories were open ended. I would suggest that there was no correct or incorrect way to begin the process, and that I would ask some follow up

questions as we went along, either to clarify or explain. I suggested to interviewees that many life histories began with phrases such as “I was born at” or “My father worked as”, even “My first memory is”, and from there my informants continued. My goal in eliciting a life history was not a complete history that would then be double checked by the informant and used/usable by other researchers. Unlike Gmelch’s (1992) work on Barbadian migration, my goal was not to present the narrative in its entirety for the reader. As I was interested in patterns and processes of migration and migration decision making in relation to crime, I selected oral life histories as a way to allow for a diachronic accounting of what, given the nature of a single interview, was a very synchronic process. In short, I preferred not to place individuals ‘on the spot’ by asking them explicitly what their decision-making processes were in regards to either issues of crime, violence or migration, but instead to allow their own narrative to unfold as it might and follow up with questions once the topic was introduced by the informant. My goal was to discover how issues such as crime and fear became woven into the narrative. Additionally I found that secondary issues, such as those of gender or education were also introduced to the narrative, and I did not simply receive simply a recitation of crime events. Were these narratives to be presented in current transcribed form they would be more incomplete perhaps than one would expect from an interview set up to gather the stories which can serve to represent a life. Some informants were more patient with themselves and me than others. Male informants in particular had to be drawn out in different

ways and were in general, more keen to focus on their job employment history than female interviewees. Male informants tended to treat me and my research as a sort of charming curiosity. Many spoke to me as one would to a small child. This was irksome, but from my experience in the English-speaking Caribbean, not entirely unexpected. I interpret this reaction in two ways. The first is that there are few ways to understand a woman in my position in Trinidad. I was apparently single, though old enough that I was expected to be married, and not obviously tied to a particular family or male relation. Of the few options, male informants seemed to choose between two options when relating to me, either as potential sexual partner, or as some sort of fictive affine. Most chose the latter option when dealing with me. Many men were quite avuncular, calling me 'baby' and 'sweetheart' in the light manner one would use to address a young child. The second speculation I make on this sort of avuncular interaction was a frequent thinly veiled understanding that my work was not 'hard science'. Each established male informant I spoke with told me that they dreamt that their own children, male or female, would choose an established profession such as medicine, law, business or science. A social science degree such as anthropology was not highly desired, and so as a young woman pursuing a PhD in social sciences I was treated with proverbial 'kid gloves', as a sort of interesting, if not altogether serious diversion. The second option, potential sexual partner was more difficult to negotiate. After an early bad experience in which a persistent male informant became too aggressive and I found myself fearful and uncomfortable, I

made conscious efforts to mention my close relationship with my overseas partner early in the conversation, and assert that he was to be in the country for extended visits imminently.

Informal Interviews and Participant Observation:

I found that those who have wealth and means and who occupy, as will be further described, upper middle class and upper class positions are not nearly as keen as lower class subjects to let researchers into their lives. Unlike the perhaps stereotypical anthropological subject, subjugated and either looking for a voice via an academic, or for whom refusal to interact even superficially with an academic from a higher class position and place of power is difficult to imagine, upper middle and upper class Trinidadians were extremely guarded initially about letting me into their lives.

Even after securing an interview I was extremely careful in my 'presentation of self'. In working with extremely disenfranchised communities in the past, I had learned quite quickly that particular details of my own self, my educational qualifications, my family's connections, my own social and economic class status, were of secondary importance to being able to communicate in a manner that was respectful and neither overbearing nor condescending. Further, presenting as willing to assist if asked and in paying respectful deference was key to success. In working with elites, I also adopted a posture of respectful deference. However, unlike previous research with disenfranchised communities simultaneously keen to make contact and wary of my status as researcher attached

to a local NGO, amongst elites, my status as ‘researcher’, or overseas individual was by itself wholly insufficient for entrée into their homes, offices, or even for meetings at coffee shops and food courts of shopping malls to speak with potential interviewees. Elite and upper middle class Trinidadians were extremely conscious of my own class and family status, were keenly interested in my educational qualifications, and were very interested in the details of my work. A few asked plainly “What is it you are looking for from me?” or “So you are writing some sort of exposé on us?” Unlike other communities where I have done fieldwork, people were very interested in my own presentation of self, the occupations of my parents, and upon hearing that I was tangentially related to similar social circles in the neighbouring country of Guyana, were often put more visibly at ease and willing to engage with me. Plainly, these individuals did not, as in the case of more disenfranchised communities, need anything from me, nor could they initially comprehend a way in which my writing about them could benefit their lives. A willingness to ‘help’ was not the attitude I had to adopt, but rather one of being a keen and fair observer from within and without.

Agreement to participate was with very few exceptions always given as a favour to someone else, and permission was granted after ascertaining that my own background was, at the very least, similar to their own. Whether this implied a sort of class camaraderie, whether it just meant that my own social self was more readily understandable, I do not know. But what I do know is that my own class position, contacts and status assisted me enormously in gaining entrance to a

world that, as will be discussed, is carefully guarded. Compared to upper class or elite informants, and in particular return migrants of that class category, upper middle class informants were less guarded about agreeing to the interview process and including me in their daily lives.

My methodology arose from long rumination on my own positionalities. Academics and anthropologists often occupy middle class and upper class positions in their own societies. The tradition of empathetic understanding of the research subject is challenged when we turn our gaze towards elite groups. Marcus (1983) writes that those anthropologists who have studied elites have long been held in contempt either for appearing to be an apologist for those with wealth and power, or instead for criticizing their subjects overly harshly and failing to demonstrate internal logic behind the actions of elite groups. By asserting my own positionality, as an overseas researcher, definitely, but also as member of an upper class family in a neighbouring, culturally similar, and generally familiar neighbouring country, I was able to make it understood that my goal was neither to apologize for, nor to demonize elite groups, but rather to find out what their daily lives were like. As a result, this dissertation strives to examine the ways in which the lives of my informants are conditioned by a particular collision of local and global processes.

In approaching potential informants, I was aware of all of these pitfalls, and was mindful that my own Caribbean roots and family position might work to my benefit. My experience in Guyana among a very small group of elites has

been that entrance into these social circles is fairly tightly guarded. Likewise in Trinidad, with the assistance of a few contacts that I had by through my own family connections, I was able to branch out. My connections in Trinidad, though made by virtue of family ties, were less fraught with tension regarding how my own and my family's positions could benefit informants than in Guyana. These connections quickly enabled access to others, and soon I was invited to dinner parties, sailing trips, family functions, charity events, shopping excursions, exploratory drives around the country, and best of all, to accompany individuals for no special occasion, but only because they felt comfortable enough to simply socialize with me without formal reasons. My positionality remains complex in my still ongoing relationships with those who were both informants and then friends in Trinidad.⁸

⁸ For instance, I interviewed two people who responded to an email about myself and my work that was authored by a professor at the University of the West Indies. I had met the faculty member at a public lecture and he took it upon himself to write and distribute an email to people he thought might be interested in my work. One woman and one man responded. The woman was disinclined to further our acquaintance, despite what I would describe as an extremely good natured, open and friendly interview. Conversely, I was extremely wary of a male informant who responded to that same email which originated with my professor acquaintance, but which was then forwarded to another group of people. I agreed to meet him and enforced what I thought at the time were very strict precautions to ensure my own personal safety surrounding the meeting, particularly realizing that he was hesitant even to provide me with his first name. When he persisted after the interview with phone calls and invitations which I felt were untoward, unwanted and disrespectful, I cut off all contact with more than a little guilt. In both the ending of the acquaintance and the feelings of guilt, I realize I too followed the rules of the class I studied and to which belonged. I recognized later that I had taken undue risks during the meeting, and had not adequately provided for my own safety simply by choosing a public place for our interview. This man had seemed to feel that I had a romantic interest in him,

Media Analysis and Discussions:

Trinidadians discuss recent murder figures with the same casualness and regularity as North Americans remark upon the weather. Even stopping for directions when lost in a country area is prefaced by a joking query of “I hear they got plenty murders down so [in that area], can I drive through to get to ‘x’ or will we get snatched [kidnapped]”? I made it a point, both in the months leading up to my stay and throughout my time there to keep abreast of local news reporting as a means to keep up with informants, many of whom read all three of the Trinidadian major newspapers daily.⁹

A trip to Marilyn’s house in the morning, after attending the gym or before a shopping excursion almost always included a cool drink while perusing the papers on the verandah. In the mornings, the television is tuned to local news, and the same happens in the evening when several local stations have competing news reports. During the lead up to the election in early November 2007, even those who did not regularly make a habit of closely reading newspapers or watching local television news became more diligent. I used this period as an opportunity to discuss current events with informants. I had been, as mentioned, keeping abreast of local politics and major political figures before I began

despite my assurances both to the contrary and that I was faithful to my partner overseas. I did not repeat that method of recruiting informants, and have chosen not to include this person’s narrative in this work.

⁹ See Ramcharitar (2002) for a detailed analysis of Trinidadian media coverage of race and politics.

fieldwork, but I found that watching news *with* informants, asking them their perspective both on media events and on the way news events were reported was of significant ethnographic value.

In this manner I was able to interpret events in relation to the ways in which they had been reported. I was able to understand the language used to describe those that were victims and perpetrators of crime and violence and also, in the ensuing discussion was taught ‘appropriate’ behaviour for responding to and avoiding crime and potential violence. It was not an artificial situation stretch either for me or for my informant; I was quite simply doing what they do, behaving as a participant in processes of ongoing watchfulness related to safety and in ongoing conversations about politics, race and crime. I follow Abu-Lughod’s (2005) approach to navigating and understanding television viewing as part of ethnographic practice.

The key...is to experiment with ways of placing television more seamlessly within the sort of rich social and cultural context that the sustained anthropological fieldwork that has been our ideal since Bronislaw Malinowski is uniquely able to provide (1997: 112-113).

Abu-Lughod goes on to argue that perhaps the best anthropologists can do is to incorporate textual analysis with a Geertzian thick description in order to overcome the overwhelming enormity of television watching. In short, I talk about television because there was frequently a television switched on. The television, with local and American programming was nearly constantly on in most homes that I went to—even during mealtimes, and particularly during the

news. Just as opinion was presented in news programs, it was also created in the process of viewing and discussing events on the television.

This work is not about the degree to which upper middle class or upper class Trinidadians are actually statistically at risk, the chances of each of them as individuals and as families falling victim to violent crime and other ills, or whether their fears and apprehensions around risk are justified. This is not a work of criminology, and it is not my intention to bombard the reader with statistics on actual risk versus perceived risk. My ethnographic data shows, without a doubt, that anxieties around fear of falling victim to crime are extremely high amongst these groups. My informants live their lives as though they could at any moment fall victim to violence. This fear is rational and grounded in their particular experiences and narratives about the world in which they live.

My goal is to unpack these narratives in order to explore how these particular understandings, concerns and fears are reflected in the way that they lead their lives and to speculate on the effects of these understandings. In order to do so, my analysis is necessarily multi-sited both in terms of geographic and temporal spaces; it follows life history narratives of upper middle and upper class individuals, as well as historical trajectories, discourse analysis of elections speeches, accounts of government corruption and the creation of particular public service programs and notions about the future. Following Tsing (2005), who argues that “the challenge of cultural analysis is to address both the spreading interconnections and the locatedness of culture” (2005: 122), I am interested in

the way factors such as the international trade in illicit narcotics, rising murder and violent crime rates and local understandings of what those increases *really mean* interact with, collide with, alter and inform changes in practices of consumption and class performance. I will unpack the ways in which political posturing about all these issues during election campaigns collide with the above factors to conjure danger, to define what and who are dangerous. I explore the ways in which Trinidadians understand their lives, responsibilities and individual positionality vis-à-vis these disparate local, regional and global processes. I show how the informal rules for safety and security are conjured and how individuals and entire racial groups come to be deemed risky and dangerous as a result of these ‘conjurings’ (Tsing 2005:63). To this end, I argue that the recent increase in crime in Trinidad has caused dramatic changes to the ways in which space is created and understood. These changes have complicated, reinforced and re-imagined longstanding racialized divisions within the electorate and have increased literal and symbolic segregation between class groups. Poor urban Afro-Trinidadians are most negatively affected and stigmatized as result of these processes of segregation. Conversely, this increase in crime and endemic frustration with regards to crime and violence may have also destabilized long standing racialized voting patterns within Trinidad and may point to a new political paradigm. With this practical framework in mind, I turn now to some of the key ethnographic and conceptual issues which inform my work.

Race vs. Ethnicity and Slippery definitions of ‘Creole’:

A concern with racial difference is at the heart of Trinidadian history and culture. Politics have been, since shortly after Independence, predicated on particular notions of race and belonging. For the purposes of this dissertation, I use the term race, when discussing individuals of Afro-Trinidadian or Indo-Trinidadian descent, the two largest minority groups in the country. I use the terms Afro-Trinidadian and Indo-Trinidadian when speaking about time after Independence, and use terms African or Indian descended when talking about the pre-Independence period before full personhood was granted to peoples of these groups. I also use the terms Afro-Trinidadian or Indo-Trinidadian when referring to individuals or groups, but do so with the caveat that these distinctions are shifting and almost never refer to a ‘pure’ racial designation. My usage is consistent with much academic literature produced in and about Trinidad. Munasinghe notes that “in common usage ethnicity is only implied when members of the group define the ethnic, which is always their ethnic” (2001: 14). In short, distinctions of racial or ethnic difference in places such as Trinidad are difficult to parse. This difficulty means that people speak in terms of race, but when pressed, think in terms of differences more aligned to what are perceived to be ethnic or cultural differences.

I use ‘race’ while acknowledging the potential misunderstandings that might arise. In truth, I believe neither of the terms, race or ethnicity, work well, and one of my long term goals is to find a language that does not intimate

adherence to any particular ideology—either that of belief in differences beyond the phenotypic, in race, or that of essentialized ethnic differences which is often used by political entrepreneurs to meet particular goals¹⁰.

What about ‘Creole’ and ‘Dougla’?

Anthropologically, the term ‘creole’ has had something of a renaissance, particularly when describing communities outside of the English Caribbean. This term is in general looked at in a favourable light. The term resonates with what we believe to be the complexities of globalization and global processes, and hints at a sort of mixture that those who espouse policies of multiculturalism find favourable

In Trinidad, the term ‘Creole’ is used in a number of ways to reflect the essentially ‘mixed’ descent of nearly all individuals in Trinidad. This term would be closest to an ‘ethnic’ designation, but in Trinidad in particular, it has competing definitions and generally excludes those who claim Indo-Trinidadian descent (Khan 2004). Often antagonisms or tensions between individuals of Indo-Trinidadian or Afro-Trinidadian descent are phrased in everyday speech as Indian

¹⁰ My informants very rarely used the terms ‘Afro-Trinidadian, Indo-Trinidadian’ or any other variation. These terms are found almost exclusively in the discourse of politicians and government papers. I use them here so my discussion can connect with both larger political practice and everyday history. More often than not, Trinidadians ‘on the ground’ not only use the term ‘race’ but also a number of colloquial descriptors when describing individuals and groups. I use Afro-Trinidadian and Indo-Trinidadian because the local usages of categories like “black”, “negro”, Indian, “coolie”, “creole”, “dougla” carry differing semantic import in places where this dissertation is most likely to be read. I am unable to utilize these terms with any sense of comfort.

vs. Creole conflicts in everyday speech. This is complicated because Creole is also used, as will be shown, as a unifier or descriptor of ‘true Trinidadian-ness’ in other contexts. This discussion of Creole versus ‘authentic’ Trinidadian will become important in chapter five, when I discuss the machinations and discourse surrounding the 2007 and 2010 national elections. According to Khan, there are both positive and negative connotations to the word: “For New World Blacks, *creole* implied both a loss (or abandonment) of African heritage and the creation of a subsequent, New World identity (although based in part on aspects of African heritage)” (2004:7). Most people acknowledge that their blood is ‘mixed’ or Creolised to some degree and one’s choice of self-ascription as either Black, Afro-Trinidadian, Indo-Trinidadian, Dougla or Creole is not singular, but may shift depending on context and political intent. I heard for instance, one informant alternately insist that he is “pure Indian” when criticizing the machinations of the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian supported People’s National Movement (PNM) party, and that he is “a real Trini, mixed up [racially] like everyone else” when lauding the ostensibly ‘non-racial’ Congress of the People (COP) party. Underlying this distinction is the notion that ‘Creole’ is somehow *more* authentically Trinidadian than ‘Indo-Trinidadian’ and a tag that must either be claimed or circumvented, but which does not apply to those who are not even partially, Afro-Trinidadian.

Paradoxically, political discourses of nationalism, beginning with Eric Williams, the nation’s first independent Prime Minister, utilize the notion of

Creole-ness as an effort to politicize the uniqueness of Trinidadian identity in relation to the rest of the Caribbean. The term was also used to unify and instill pride in their ancestral origins among Afro and Indo-Trinidadians, depicting them as being in a position of strength and transformation in opposition to tags such as 'slave' or indentured servant (Ledgister, 2008). Williams and other nationalist politician used the term 'Creole' in an attempt to be inclusive of all racial backgrounds, and as a unifying call against colonial rule as the nation became independent. For political entrepreneurs, 'creole' is a new 'ethnic' designation employed primarily as a call for unity amongst those who vote based on notions of racial difference. This usage too is problematic. Creole has shifting definitions, but despite the attempts to use it as an Indo-Trinidadian and Afro-Trinidadian unifier, it is almost always understood to exclude individuals of Indo-Trinidadian descent (Allahar 2005; Birth 1999; Khan 1993, 2004; Miller 1994; Munasinghe 2001; Puri 2004). In short, 'Creole', when used as a symbolic cultural unifier for disparate racial groups is understood by Indo-Trinidadians and non-Indo Trinidadians to encapsulate a sense of 'Trinidadian-ness' that does not include, or includes only tangentially, Indo-Trinidadian cultural specificities. This is despite the intentions of politicians who often use the term as a cry for unity. This means that Indo-Trinidadians have long felt excluded from the definition of what it means to be 'Trinidadian' (Munasinghe 2001: 107). Indo-Trinidadian politicians have capitalized on that fear of exclusion in order to encourage race-based voting.

Douglar (also Dooglar) individuals are described as those who are of mixed Afro and Indo-Trinidadian descent. This term does not extend to other mixtures, and people who are Douglar are generally not also understood to be Creole.

England (2008) notes:

Douglarization may lead to a different kind of body from that of the Red, Spanish, or Colored, but it is a body that can still be accounted for within the basic ontology of race (2008: 7).

For all Trinidadians I worked with, no matter their racial background Creole-ness is synonymous with a dominant Afro-Trinidadian-ness which Indo-Trinidadians are invited to appropriate and participate in. Indo-Trinidadians, I was told, could for instance join in 'Mas' celebrations involving parading through the streets in costume during Carnival, but they are rarely invited to imbue this participation with anything stereotypically 'Indian'. Creole-ness does not, despite the intent of political entrepreneurs, promote a 'pan-Trinidadian' identity, because of these exclusions. For Indo-Trinidadians, this semantic exclusion from the category Creole is threatening because it represents an erasure of their history in the country (Munasinghe 2001: 107). Creole-ness is a 'symbolic privilege' of Afro-Trinidadians who can align themselves with cultural forms seen to be 'African' without jeopardizing their status as 'belonging' to Trinidad. While most ethnographers agree that creolization (used here in the sense of the mixture of old cultural forms and creation of new forms which are not found in the countries of origin) of cultural forms has occurred in Trinidad, people rarely refer to the process in daily conversation (see Miller 1994: 213-217; Birth 1999: 154).

Similar attempts by Indo-Trinidadian retaining or reinforcing ‘traditional’ Indian cultural forms have been seen as evidence of the non-legitimate status of Indo-Trinidadians and further proof of their incompatibility with true ‘Trinidadian-ness’ (Munasinghe 2001: 204). These exclusions operate not only for the term Creole, but also because other terms for ‘mixing’ between Indo-Trinidadians and other racial groups were either never created or not perpetuated. It is worth reiterating that this erasure of history is not one solely enacted upon members of the Indo-Trinidadian community, but also one which is actively supported by those members. Stoddard and Cornwall (2000) argue that the status of ‘doogla’ is one of “pollution of exogamy” and a dilution of [Indo-Trinidadian’s] ‘tremendous cultural capital by virtue of their connection to an ancient written tradition, and they believe themselves to be morally superior to the dominant Creole society” (Stoddard and Cornwall 2000:222; Segal 1993). Through their discussion of Trinidadian musical forms, particularly traditional Afro-Trinidadian calypsonians incorporating Indian musical instruments or influences, and the continued success of Indian nuanced ‘chutney soca’, Stoddard and Cornwall (2000) describe a process of ‘douglarisation’. Again, the notion of being ‘Creole’ is still exclusionary to Indo-Trinidadians. Any perceived cultural hybridity is re-termed ‘Douglarisation’.

Marilyn, a key informant who we will meet at length in the following chapter is primarily of Muslim Indo-Trinidadian descent. Her children, according to her, are the ‘real essence of Trinidad’—a product of her union with a man of

Chinese and Portuguese descent. She understands the term 'Creole' to mean predominantly Afro-Trinidadian, and therefore does not see her children as 'Creole'. She resents the implication that they are somehow less than 'authentic' Trinidadians because they do not "have black, or enough black in them, even though being all mix up is what Trinidad is about". This long-standing exclusion of Indo-Trinidadians and those who do not identify even partially as Afro-Trinidadian from definitions of 'authentic' Trinidadian-ness extends implicitly to challenge the right of non-Afro-Trinidadians to rule the country. It is of little surprise then, given this discussion that individuals like Marilyn and her family would become tired of both the major Afro and Indo-Trinidadian political parties and throw their considerable support behind a new, ostensibly non-racial third party.

While originally Creole was meant to describe individuals with African and European heritage and subsequently incorporated other groups to become, in some spaces, synonymous with 'Trinidadian-ness', there are no local words for offspring of European and Indian individuals, though to be sure, these individuals do exist. Further, 'doogla, or dougla' the term generally used to describe individuals of mixed Indian and African descent, is largely seen in the Indo-Trinidadian community to be pejorative and it is not a description that exists through generations (Stoddard and Cornwall 2002:222). As a metaphor, 'mixing' (Khan 2004) is multi-faceted and used and understood for different purposes at different times.

I asked several people how I might be described, as a child of Indian and Portuguese descent. There was no particular word for me in Trinidad I was told, not because the 'mixture' didn't exist, but because mostly Indians 'stayed Indian'. Even if I had been born in Trinidad, I would not be considered 'Creole', because I 'didn't have any black'. This erasure of mixing by Indo-Trinidadians is difficult to negotiate for those making claims to legitimacy (as 'real' Trinidadians) and authenticity (as 'real' culturally superior Indians).

Khan (2004) worked with Indo-Trinidadians in a rural area of southern Trinidad, and argues that for many of those people, 'mixed' Indo and Afro-Trinidadian individuals were a problematic category: "race mixing ostensibly produces biologically and culturally hybrid offspring, whose lack of inheritance of a clearly defined identity makes Indo/Afro distinctions ambiguous and therefore, the logic continues, politically unreliable" (2004: 14). This 'political unreliability' means that for these Indo-Trinidadians, fear of their culture becoming overrun by Afro-Trinidadians is encapsulated in 'mixing'. Khan notes that the term 'doogla' therefore, was not perpetuated beyond the first generation of mixing by Indo-Trinidadians keen to retain 'authenticity'.

The term Creole is important because the constant struggle over its definition and spaces of inclusion and exclusion is in many ways synonymous with struggles for racialized political ascendancy in Trinidad. In one instance, it is an ethnic tag for those of Afro-Trinidadian descent, a term referring to uniquely Trinidadian cultural forms (here I include food, dance and ritual). It is also a

word which denotes a mixing of ethnic groups into a 'new' ethnicity or cultural group that is distinctly Trinidadian. It is employed in various contexts to both include and exclude individuals of Indian descent from ascription (Khan 2004: 205). As such, it is a charged word, used with intents both benign and highly politically negative.

Within academic discourse the words 'Creole' or 'Creolization' also have considerable weight as a metaphor for hybridity (Tanikella 2003: 157). There were many efforts by Trinidad's first Prime Minister Eric Williams and other political leaders both around the time of Independence and subsequently to use metaphors of Creole-ness as a unifying strategy. This political discourse had, according to Tanikella, several purposes. For political entrepreneurs calling for unity and seeking power, calls of unity over plurality and racialization was a common tactic. For Tanikella, racial divisiveness

is an impediment to national development in relation to globalized ideals of a nation's progress because such divisions lend weight to perceptions of the Caribbean as illegitimate, mongrelized, and fragmented, particularly in relation to neocolonial powers (Tanikella: 2003: 154).

While this notion of being 'Creole' worked well as a statement of Independence from former colonial masters and membership in a complex international system, it worked simultaneously to clearly delimit and permanently fix facets of those multiple identities which had historically been placed in antagonistic positions.

In the case of Trinidad, scholars must be particularly careful to be clear about their meaning when discussing the terms 'Creole' or 'Creolization' as those

terms, for reasons outlined above, can have multiple meanings. Sociologist Anton Allahaar, in particular, takes issues with Afro-centrist academics who, acting as political entrepreneurs, lament that 'African identity' must take a position of prominence over a more inclusive 'Trinidadian Identity' (2005: 236-8). He argues that the formations of ethnic nationalisms within the state of Trinidad hinder true understandings of class-consciousness. He labels these political entrepreneurs, both Afro-centrist academics and Indo-Trinidadian groups such as the Maha Sabha which promote Indian nationalism over Trinidadian unity, as 'insipid' racists who manipulate history in order to serve their own political ends (2005: 257). Furthering this discussion of creolization is Tanikella (2003), who quotes Khan in stating the limits of this term:

...the concept of creolization is inherently paradoxical: the more one attempts to pin down the diversity that 'creole' represents, the more one creates a static (as opposed to fluid), predictive (as opposed to contingent), and monolithic (as opposed to multi-layered) category (Khan 2001:78, quoted in Tanikella 2003: 157).

In this vein, and whenever one deals with questions of race and ethnicity, it is prudent to remember the words of noted Caribbean anthropologist Brackette

Williams:

Anthropological analysis of identity formation processes within a population that shares a political unit require the recognition that not all individuals have equal power to fix the coordinates of self-other identity formation. Nor are individuals equally empowered to opt out of the labeling process, to become the invisible against which others' visibility

is measured. The illusion that self and other ascriptions among groups are made on equal terms fades when we ask whether those who identify themselves with a particular ethnic identity could also successfully claim no ethnic identification (1990:420 quoted in part in Munasinghe, 2001:10-11).

In the case of Trinidad, Indo-Trinidadians neither want or are able to be included in the description of 'creole' which is often used as an indicator of cultural authenticity and right to rule in Trinidad. For individuals like Marilyn's children, neither 'purely' Indo- or Afro-Trinidadian, and not included in popular understandings of 'creole' (despite the efforts of politicians to make the word more inclusive), their position is frustrating and difficult. In short, and as Munasinghe subsequently argues, ethnicity formation is intrinsically linked to nation building, to the definitions and semantics of word choice which impart notions of either inclusion or exclusion. Subsequent sections of this dissertation will detail the ways in which constantly negotiated and changing stereotypes of the two statistically dominant ethnic groups, Indo and Afro-Trinidadians are utilized and employed by individual 'political entrepreneurs' in order to achieve their own aims of political or economic superiority.

In a country where the two dominant ethnic groups have been engaged in a decades long competition for second place behind Europeans in a racialized hierarchy, conceptualizations of the relative impact of Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians on the economic and 'cultural' development of the country and bear scrutiny (see Hintzen 1989; Jelly-Schapiro 2005 MacDonald 1986; Singh 1994). As each group competed to become understood as the logical and

‘authentic’ or ‘natural’ leader of Trinidad post-Independence, political and religious entrepreneurs cast their gaze back in history to better fortify their relative positions. According to colonial ideology, individuals of African descent were perceived as better candidates for colonization and self-rule because of a misguided belief that they arrived in the new world ‘culturally naked’ (Munasinghe 2001: 129-30). Fueled by ethnocentric notions of a weak and nearly animalistic but nevertheless homogenous ‘African culture’ which all slaves were thought to possess, Africans were understood to be something of a *tabula rasa*, upon which Western ideals, religiosity, and systems of government could be imprinted. Indians, by contrast were interpreted as ‘culturally saturated’. Already imprinted with a complicated (though still inferior) culture, caste system and religion(s), Indians were not perceived by colonial rulers to be good candidates for maintaining a colonial order (Munasinghe 2001: 129-30)¹¹. These initial judgments proved important in subsequent development of ethnic identities in the islands. Competition for access to resources, and eventually political rule were formed around these changing stereotypes. Blood-based conceptions of ‘race’ were transformed into debates concerning which ethnic group had contributed more to the building of the nation and was therefore more deserving of political or economic ascendancy.

¹¹ This ideology is indicative of larger colonizing sentiment at the time (See Chatterjee, 2004; for examples of colonial perspectives of Indian culture and Indian nationalism and anti-nationalist sentiments which shaped and forced contest over ‘authentic’ Indian identity during the time of Britain’s initial occupation).

Ethnographic Perspectives on Trinidad's Racial Divide:

Perhaps what is most striking about a survey of recent ethnography in Trinidad is the strong degree of theoretical similarity in terms of dealing with issues of race despite widely varying ethnographic locales and perspectives. I surveyed several recent ethnographies on Trinidad and they were all nearly unanimous in their assertion that stereotypes such as those outlined in the previous sections, detailing purported differences between Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians are misleading, but carry significant symbolic weight nonetheless¹². While not all authors explicitly comment on Trinidadian politics, there is some discussion of debates over the control of the definition and content of a Trinidadian national identity. Conceptions of what it means to be Trinidadian are closely linked to perceptions of race/ethnicity and cultural legitimacy. Instead of outlining differences in racial lifeways, each author instead focuses on metaphorical differences in lifestyles. While they argue that these distinctions *could* be read as differences between racial groups (and are read as such by Trinidadians 'on the ground'), the authors are all quick to point out that no single individual fits these ideal types, that racial 'mixing', Creolization or what is termed locally being 'Calaloo' all defy these stereotypes¹³. Trends in racial divisiveness in the country, politically, geographically and by occupation are

¹² In this section I examine recent ethnographies on Trinidad by Birth 1999; Khan 2004; Miller 1994; and Munasinghe 2001.

¹³ This is a Trinidadian dish in which all ingredients are cooked down until they are indistinguishable from one another; it is used as a metaphor for Trinidadian unity by political entrepreneurs.

interpreted and understood, and more importantly, negotiated via discourses of racial purity.

Birth (1999) for example, sees conceptions of time as the most salient characteristic of Trinidadian society. He makes a distinction between future-oriented as opposed to present-oriented conceptions of time, and argues that these understandings of time are reduced but not reducible to racial stereotypes. Future oriented individuals are thrifty; they are savers and are associated with 'traditional family values'. Present oriented individuals, by contrast, are not thrifty but flashy and quick spenders. They are more individualistic than community or family-oriented. These ideas of time reinforce racial antagonisms, particularly among Europeans, Indians and Creoles. Each of these groups is associated with temporal stereotypes. Trinidadians use these stereotypes to explain behavior and to reinforce ethnic differences (1999:14). Birth's book contains within its title the common phrase 'Any time is Trinidad time', which is employed in various circumstances of work and leisure to account for tardiness, time spent socializing or working or appropriate timing of events. Birth is careful to note that while members of all racial groups utilize this phrase as well as future- or present-oriented conceptions of time depending on circumstances, even similar actions by members of different groups are interpreted through a lens of racist stereotypes:

If a Creole [here referring to a person of Afro-Trinidadian descent, or a mixed person who claims little to no Indian descent] arrives late for an appointment and states that 'any time is Trinidad time,' it is viewed as an example of the Creole lack of a sense of time [present-oriented]; if an Indian

arrives late for an appointment and states that 'any time is Trinidad time' it is assumed that the Indian had something more important to do than the appointment, and it is thus assumed to be a sign of Indian arrogance and lack of caring. The behaviour is the same, but the stereotypes used to interpret the behavior differ and are determined by the ethnicity of the person involved (Birth, 1999: 154).

In her ethnography, Khan (2004) argues that this racialized discourse between the two dominant racial groups in Trinidad is the result of struggle concerning dismay about 'mixing'. Her work focuses on religious identity among Indo-Trinidadians in a rural area of southern Trinidad. For Khan, the theoretical distinction to be made is not between 'present-oriented' vs. 'future-oriented' individuals or collectivities, but a struggle to negotiate the tensions of living in a plural society by subscribing to definitions of race-based purity and impurity. Working primarily with individuals of Indo-Trinidadian descent, Khan points out that the threat of mixing, and producing offspring that are not 'fully' Indo-Trinidadian, thereby increasing the risk of further marginalization for all Indo-Trinidadians, is of primary concern. Individuals utilize discourse surrounding race to negotiate this tension between 'pure' Indianness and their actual lives, which are in fact much more mixed than they care to admit (Khan 2004: 222).

She writes:

Mixing is both unspoken bogey and voiced barometer of modernity and progress in a milieu where race and religion—cultural distinctions in Trinidad's stratified society and key idioms of identity construction—are two dimensions of experience most receptive (some would say

vulnerable) to dilutions, impurities, and fraudulence (Khan, 2004: 13).

What is the significance of this emphasis on discourses surrounding mixing and purity? Khan argues that the ramifications go beyond day to day living and interactions between individuals of different ethnic backgrounds. Conceptions of Trinidadian nationalism are also linked to these tensions surrounding mixing:

Where nationalist ideologies exult in civilizing ostensibly inimical cultural, racial or other “essential” differences through an ideology of harmonious democracy, tolerance and universal representation, a contradiction arises: the consolidation of group boundaries that denotes group differences and an erasure of group boundaries that connotes group similarities (that in turn connote unity). Articulated and mutually constitutive, mixing metaphors capture the praise, the condemnation, and the ambivalence that ambiguous distinction and identities create (Khan, 2004: 224).

Politically then, ‘mixing’, or Afro- and Indo-Trinidadians coming together to vote based not on race but on ‘issues,’ is both desired and feared by Indo-Trinidadians. Inclusion and acceptance as rightful leaders equal to Afro-Trinidadians would be desirable for Indo-Trinidadians. However, this outcome is not desired at the expense of losing the sense of being ‘distinct’ from Afro-Trinidadians by agreeing, even tacitly, with unifying discourse which places them as equal, not superior contributors to the nation.

Munasinghe explores these issues in her ethnography as well, though she focuses neither on issues of present- as opposed to future- orientation, nor ‘mixing’ as does Khan (2004). Instead, she focuses on the ways in which Indo-

Trinidadians have sought to challenge long standing definitions of 'Trinidadianness' which exclude Indo-Trinidadian cultural forms through discussions of the national metaphors of "Callaloo" and "Tossed Salad". Munasinghe, like the other ethnographers surveyed, is adamant that all Trinidadians are 'creolized' (in this case meaning 'mixed') to some degree, but argues that for Indo-Trinidadians, finding a space in which Indian cultural forms are recognized in a broad definition of Trinidadian national identity is nearly impossible. This sets up a frustrating paradox for Indo-Trinidadians. Trinidadian national identity is full of metaphors of Creolization and being 'callaloo'. This is simultaneously symbolic of a highly Afro-centric version of 'Trinidadianness' (with heavy emphasis on Calypso, Carnival and other cultural forms). For Indo-Trinidadians the paradox lies here. As a group it is difficult to negotiate a space as an ethnic entity who both want to be included as contributors to the nation and recognized as distinct from other groups, particularly Afro-Trinidadians, a group considered both culturally inferior and threatening. Speaking of nationalist struggles around the time of Independence, Munasinghe argues:

It was not so much that Indo-Trinidadians...were anti-nationalist, but rather that their structural positioning in society limited their ability to create a viable and legitimate cultural referent for imagining the national community. Unable to compete with the [Afro-Trinidadian supported People's National Movement party] PNM, Indo Trinidadian leaders had little choice but to insist on their ethnic exclusivity (Munasinghe 2001: 222).

Munasinghe argues that recent political victories of Indian supported parties are perhaps the result of successes by political entrepreneurs in the Indo-Trinidadian community in challenging long held notions of Trinidad as a) a culturally Afro-centric nation and b) a nationalism defined as callaloo. More appealing to these Indo-Trinidadian political entrepreneurs is the notion that a Trinidad is like a 'tossed salad' in which various ingredients (read: pure racial groups) are mixed with one another, but still remain distinct and equal. These are not unlike the strategies of the United States' 'melting pot' (similar to callaloo), in which citizens from all over the world are supposed to blend together homogenously and the Canadian 'cultural mosaic' (similar to 'tossed salad') in which citizens retain their cultural specificities while remaining equal contributors to the nation. For Indo-Trinidadians who perceive themselves as being excluded from definitions of 'creole' which are used to measure 'authentic' Trinidadian-ness, the 'tossed salad' or 'cultural mosaic' approach is more appealing.

In his ethnography of several different residential areas in Trinidad, Miller (1994) also argues that the stereotypical distinctions between Afro and Indo-Trinidadians set up false dichotomies given the amount of cultural mixture he observed during his own time in the field. Instead, he sets up a distinction between transcendent versus transient lifestyles. Transcendence, for Miller is best understood when considering rituals such as Christmas, when special attention is paid to issues of constancy and ancestry and traditional family values. Transience for Miller is exemplified in the Trinidadian Carnival, which thrives on change and

innovation, freedom and disorder or bacchanal (1994: 82). He acknowledges that these categories, while not used by Trinidadians, may be read as a binary between stereotypes of Indo-Trinidadians (transcendence, a similar stereotype to Birth's notion of future-oriented individuals) and Afro-Trinidadians (transience, a similar stereotype to Birth's present-oriented individuals). Overall, Miller focuses far less explicitly on matters of race; rather he addresses class and conditions of consumption and modernity and argues that Trinidad is and has been since its inception a modern and cosmopolitan state. He does allow that aspects of modernity, particularly consumption are often expressed and managed by individuals and groups via discourse which reduces these larger issues to ethnic antagonisms. Miller is wary of causal histories, arguing that depending on the way some prescriptive histories are written, issues of gender, class, race or ethnicity could all be utilized to account for the current situation and still be partially correct (1994: 258-9). Both Miller (1994: 141) and Munasinghe (2001: 140) take pains to note that while stereotypically Indo-Trinidadians are seen to have lifestyles that encompass traditional family values (or transcendence), closer inspection shows that in practice alternative family forms are just as prevalent in Indo-Trinidadian as Afro-Trinidadian families. This stereotype, however, is actively perpetuated by Indo-Trinidadians as evidence of their greater moral capital and therefore greater political legitimacy.

This survey of recent ethnographic work in Trinidad makes it apparent that while inaccurate biological understandings of race (in which one's behaviour

is dictated by their phenotypic race) are commonly used by individuals 'on the ground'; ethnographers link these antagonisms to differences in lifestyles and struggles for political and economic ascendancy which have their roots in early ethnocentric assumptions about different groups rather than true differences between racial groups. While social tensions are not reducible to racial differences, individual political entrepreneurs and everyday people utilize racialized discourse to negotiate and mitigate conflict and tension.

Who are the 'Upper-Middle' and Upper-Classes?

Class is an ethnographically useful starting point, but is in Trinidad, like everywhere, driven by location and history, and thus there is no simple way to define class that can then be mapped elsewhere. I struggled for some time to find a way to conceptually categorize my seemingly disparate informants in a manner that made sense ethnographically. Initially, it seemed improbable that the largely housebound female homemaker whose husband made an extremely comfortable living and who did not finish high school, but whose children were all university-educated, could be discussed in the same piece as the international professional, a woman who, for instance, held four post-graduate degrees, advised political parties and worked at major international aid and policy organizations all over the world. And yet that is the place in which I found myself.

Ortner's (1998) use of Bourdieu's (1977) notion of *habitus*, was useful in clarifying these issues of class for me. For Bourdieu, *habitus* describes:

a product of history, produces individual and collective practices-more history- in accordance

with the schemes generated by history. It ensures the active presence of the past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, through an action, tend to guarantee the '*correctness*' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms (Bourdieu, 1990; 54 emphasis added).

Because concerns about the crime situation were immediate and pressing, a great deal of my time in the initial weeks and months in Trinidad was taken up by individuals teaching me how to be safe, to act safely and *correctly*, what and where constituted safe space, safe behaviour and safe actions. My habitus was not of contemporary Trinidad, or more fittingly, my *doxa*, that is the largely unconscious physical manifestation of habitus, was out of place and I could therefore place myself unknowingly in danger (*ibid.*). I had to actively learn and appropriate behaviours in relation to safety that for others had slowly changed and accrued over the course of months and years. If *doxa* is conceptualized as the praxis at which the ideas understood as habitus and their exertion in the physical world, it stands to reason that *doxa* is also class and gender specific. Given that, the rules of correct behavior I was taught are particular to my class and gender positionality.

I was told stories of places that were no longer acceptable for people to venture alone or in groups, places that had only a few years before been favorite destinations for people of upper middle and upper class status. Given these dynamic conditions, I wanted to explore the ways that these notions of safety

filtered through particular higher class statuses. Ortner (1998) argues that this too requires a particular approach:

We must deconstruct the public discourse, and this deconstruction must itself always work in two directions: to find the hidden racializations and other naturalizations that operate within seemingly neutral social categories (e.g. “the middle class”), but also to reveal the hidden class underpinnings of naturally based identities...at the same time, we must always go beyond the deconstruction of the public discourse and attend ethnographically to the ways in which discourses enter into people’s lives, both invading them in a Bourdieuan, even Foucauldian, sense and being implicitly or explicitly challenged by them in the course of practices that always go beyond discursive constraints (1998:14).

Therefore, at the time of my fieldwork in Trinidad, my status as ‘middle class’ in my own right did not cleanly translate to ‘correct’ middle class or above behaviour in Trinidad. By the reactions of my informants it was clear that I had not appropriately learned and internalized the racializations and naturalizations which constitute ‘safe’ or ‘correct behaviour and needed to be coached until I behaved in a manner appropriate to my class status, real or imagined. I faced both the coaching and the failure to comply ‘correctly’ several times over the course of my fieldwork. I make frequent mention of upper middle and upper class Trinidadians throughout the course of this thesis. These descriptors are not particularly straightforward, and like any category, there are elisions, blurred boundaries and individuals who fit into both and neither category. At base, I am

concerned with category that includes multiple economic classes which all face issues of crime and security in specific similar ways, given their social and financial flexibility. As will be made plain in subsequent chapters, it is also important to note that in Trinidad, it is nearly impossible to parse class separately from questions of race. Ortner's discussion of race in America is helpful though not totally applicable to the Trinidadian reality:

On the question of separation and difference between class on the one hand and race/ethnicity on the other, it seems clear that the two operate at least in part on different logics. That is, to grossly simplify the opposition, class differences emerge from logic of capitalist economic rationality, logic of profit and loss, while racial and ethnic differences emerge from a logic of internally shared identity and externally projected pollution and stigma (Ortner 1998: 9).

Still, class and race are, in her words often 'fused' and in that fusing, it is the questions which surround class which are most frequently lost or which disappear from the foreground. Miller (1994) also makes the point that many issues which are at base class issues in Trinidad are obfuscated by issues of race. In speaking specifically about the United States, Ortner continues:

Even if there is a fusion, race and ethnicity are in fact the dominant and more visible categories. That is, we may think of the fusion as a "structure," in the Lévi-Straussian sense of a particular relationship between categories. Thus to say that the categories are fused is to say that we never find either in pure form and that each is always hidden within the other. But the dominance of race and ethnicity within the fusion means that class is still more

“hidden” and requires—at this point, at least—more intellectual archaeology (Ortner 1998: 13).

Simply, but importantly, the following class definitions are not solely economic. While in Trinidad, home ownership and professional status are markers of middle class status, this status has more to do with the power to influence both publicly and privately. To be sure, those who have the financial means to afford large homes, automobiles and other physical manifestations of wealth are accorded some status, but there are others whose financial wealth is not as impressively large, but who have the ability to create and influence discourse and policy, who have the ability to circumvent many official procedures and may have, in difficult to define terms, more power than those with greater financial fortunes. In short, a rural business owner might possess vast fortunes, employ large numbers of workers and have the ability to manipulate enormous sums of money, but might not have the ability to influence others who wield power in the same way as an urban professional, like a successful lawyer, highly connected government official, or well placed executive in a private corporation. Both might belong to an upper class, though for slightly different reasons. In an attempt to provide some insight into elite perceptions of poverty cross culturally, Reiss and Moore (2005) attempt a definition:

Conceptually, our *national elites* are the very small number of people who control the key material, symbolic and political resources within a country. Operationally, we identify them in institutional terms: they are the people who occupy commanding positions within the set of institutions that are most

salient to national political influence and policy-making within a country. Our standard list of national political institutions is: representative political institutions (legislatures, presidencies, cabinets, political parties); the civilian public bureaucracy; the armed forces and police; large companies and business organizations; large landowners' interest organizations; trade unions; the mass media; prominent educational and professional organizations; voluntary associations; and religious institutions (Reis and Moore 2005: 2).

Following Reis and Moore, I am conceiving of the upper class in Trinidad as an elite, and not only an economic class. Over the course of my interviews I did not gain access to the highest echelon of political power, but did work and speak with those who own and ran their own companies, who were responsible for making cases against massive and private government corruption and who were responsible for the prosecution of high level officials. I worked with people who wrote the official discourses for political parties, and people who were the heads of regional corporations—the Trinidadian equivalent of municipal or even provincial government heads. I spoke with those who wrote speeches for politicians and other high level public officials who served on government sanctioned regulatory and advisory boards. I mingled with prominent lawyers, academics and business people. All of these people I would suggest, regardless of disparities in income, fall into elite, or upper class status groups. These are individuals who, for the most part had considerable disposable income, and the ability to circumvent many forms of bureaucracy by virtue of calling on their

large network of friends and acquaintances who could manage these issues for them. Shore (2002) writes:

The very idea of 'elites' suggests qualities of 'agency', 'exclusivity', 'power' and an apparent separation from 'mass society' – concepts that, in different ways oblige us to consider related themes of stratification, hierarchy, brokers and causal agents behind events. Elites thus represent a way of conceiving power in society and attributing responsibility to persons rather than impersonal processes (Shore 2002:4).

Upper middle class Trinidadians, by comparison, have less direct access to the creation of public discourse and policy. While their lifestyles are extremely comfortable, and while they can, through accessing their own networks of acquaintances and business contacts, also circumvent many bureaucratic or other functions, upper class Trinidadians are not as influential to the form and scope of decision-making in Trinidad. I think of their situation in terms of a series of things they do and do not do. They do not overly concern themselves with raises in rates for public utilities or increases in the cost of basic necessities like food. They often travel overseas to make major shopping excursions. Their children easily access post-secondary education and they own multiple cars and own, rather than rent their home. Upper middle class Trinidadians have stable jobs, often working for members of the elite or upper class. They employ individuals to take care of household maintenance, in the form of gardeners or cleaners, if that labour can be located. Their children gain easy access to the highest level of private education and private health care where and when necessary. These are

individuals who have no difficulty, in general, in procuring a visa to visit the United States or Canada. They may own small businesses, or work as moderately successful professionals, doctors, lawyers, or as specialists in a particular industry that, by virtue of its usefulness to the natural gas and petro-chemical industry, is in high demand. These individuals report little difficulty in finding a job. Importantly, most have difficulty accepting that their position is more comfortable or more affluent than the national median, and most often misrepresent themselves as 'middle class'. This behaviour is common cross culturally (Ortner 1998: 14). In sum, upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are definable by their ability to consume, but more importantly, their abilities to influence. Their understanding of inclusion into this loosely defined class bracket is predicated, at least in part, on the ability to construct and create space that is deemed 'safe' according to the informal standards of the group. There are few strict boundaries on these definitions, and I place these two groups together because of their shared understandings of and reactions to the contemporary crime situation and political affiliation¹⁴.

¹⁴ A similar fieldwork methodology on lower classes would have to be carried out in order to understand similar ideas with reference to lower classes. Since my focus is not on this class group, I will not attempt full definitions of those lower classes as I do not have the evidence. Sufficed to say that if class is complicated and shifting for upper middle and upper classes, it is equally complicated for lower classes. My work here is concerned with my informants' conceptions of themselves and the lower classes in relation to them.

Thinking about Risk:

In speaking both with return migrants and people who have never left Trinidad for considerable periods of time, I realized that a common trope used in their own narratives about Trinidad was that of ‘risk’. Whether to migrate, whether to return, where to live in Trinidad, what sort of social life to enjoy, what routes to drive, which features of security to employ and consume, were all topics of discussion which revolved around particular understandings of who and what might be considered risky. Discussions about nearly any daily event in Trinidad take place like a palimpsest over constant explicit and implicit negotiation surrounding risk as related to an understanding of and desire to avoid contact with the current crime situation.

This section begins with an overview of the work of anthropologist Mary Douglas. Her work on risk and blame, stretching back to the 1960s has transformed much social scientific thinking about how risk is understood. One of Douglas’ earliest works focuses on non-Western societies and at first reading, could be read as quite functional in scope but has shaped much scholarly thinking about the topic (Lupton 1999b). This early work, aptly titled *Purity and Danger* (1966) sought to understand what were then considered concepts of the domain of ‘primitive’ groups, such as “taboo”. In her later writing, Douglas reflects upon the gaps left by *Purity and Danger* in neglecting to apply the same theories to “Western” societies:

The rational behaviour of primitives is vindicated:
taboo turns out not to be incomprehensible but an

intelligible concern to protect society from behaviour that will wreck it. When miscreants are accused of spoiling the weather, killing with lightning, or causing storms at sea it is not a flaw in the reasoning process that should interest us but something about casting blame. With much regret I left the book without making any link between taboo-thinking, which uses natural dangers to uphold community values, and our modern approach (Douglas 1992: 4).

Douglas' early work pointed to individual examples of how blame is allocated in non-Western society and, with a functionalist's eye, argued that through the use of taboo and other methods of blame and exclusion, individuals which threatened the stability of a social group could be 'othered'. Categorized as polluting or contaminated, these individuals become the locus of blame for misfortune or imbalance and then become manageable and excludable from notions of 'proper' society:

Danger is defined to protect the public good and the incidence of blame is a by-product of arrangements for persuading fellow members to contribute to it. Pollution seen from this point of view is a powerful forensic resource. There is nothing like it for bringing their duties home to members of the community (Douglas 1992:6).

In short, discourse surrounding 'danger' works to delimit norms of 'rational' or 'acceptable activity. Lupton (1999a) beautifully summarizes the ways in which Douglas's theories have been applied to a more contemporary context:

What is understood to be contaminating or polluting – and therefore as dangerous in the threat it poses to social order – is culturally specific, and works to establish and maintain ideas about self and Other. Douglas' later writings on risk and culture drew attention to the use of the concept of risk as a means in contemporary western societies of maintaining cultural boundaries. She sees risk as acting primarily as a locus of blame, in which 'risky' groups or institutions are singled out as dangerous (Lupton, 1999: 3a).

Lupton's (1999b) focus on 'cultural boundaries' can be extended to include class boundaries as well. If we understand that those individuals who occupy elite positions have -- besides access to wealth and resources with which to organize their personal space according to their whim --also the influence to define what is acceptable and what is unacceptable (in effect, defining what for Douglas would be the 'risky other'), then it is not surprising that most often it is the lower classes, the poor and other undesirables who are deemed to be 'polluting,' 'risky,' or 'dangerous':

As Mary Douglas' writings have shown, the Other – that which is conceptualized as different from self – is the subject of anxiety and concern, particularly if it threatens to blur boundaries, to overtake the self. These anxieties and fears tend to emerge from and cohere around the body, which itself is a highly potent symbolic object (Lupton, 1999a: 124).

Considering embodiment of fear in relation to the 'fortified enclaves' produced by elite classes in and around urban centers, it becomes possible to understand the

rationality behind their constructions of 'space'. This issue will be addressed later in the thesis.

Regulation of the body and by extension personal living space is meant to lessen fear of crime, but this organization of space also works to manage allegations of 'blame'. Many scholars (Douglas 1985; Lupton 1999c, Caldeira 2000, 2002; Low 2001) speak of the irony of 'blaming the victim' in situations of fear of crime. Essentially, these writers are referring to the tendency for members of elite classes to point to members of lower classes as responsible for their own disenfranchisement (a stereotypical 'poor people are poor because they are lazy' argument). Living in a climate where these understandings of lower classes as a risky 'other' dominate leads to a spatial organization of households which are segregated and thus protected from the impurities and dangers of the lower classes. These security measures also provide insurance for elites against accusations of not taking good enough care of themselves or their family. In this situation, if and when a member of these elite classes falls victim to crime, violent or otherwise, they can say with a clear conscience that they have done everything possible not to become victimized (via walls, gates, security systems, and guards or dogs for example). In addition, those touched by crime reproduce discourses which further scorn the lower classes as the dangerous 'other' who deserve their fate because of their own moral failings.

Risk and what is understood to be risky behaviour are not static. They are fluid, contested, and reproduced. Important here is understanding that control

over the definition of what is understood to be 'risky' or 'dangerous' is in the hands of members of society who have influence and wealth, in other words, the elite. Mackey (1999) writes:

Notions of risk and danger, I argue, implicitly construct an imagined 'normal' state of affairs that should be defended from the perceived danger – whether it be a 'normal' or 'healthy' body at risk from disease, or a 'healthy' and 'prosperous' nation endangered by insiders or outsiders. Notions of risk not only define inclusion and exclusion, they are also normative. They construct an ideal of 'normal' through defining abnormalities and dangers (Mackey 1999: 111-112).

Just as risk and risk behaviour are contested and politicized, the inverse, 'normal' behaviour is simultaneously defined. It is a definition produced and contested largely by individuals with access to money and influence. It should be noted also that an 'ideal' type of either 'normal' or 'dangerous' is rarely found, though the images are generated through stereotypes. By taking Mackey's assertions and considering them in reference to Douglas' contribution towards the conceptualization of risk, we can see how elite groups conceptualize the 'risky other' as abnormal or unhealthy. With this in mind, the ways that these geographies of exclusion are reproduced and reflected by the segregation and insulation of elite groups becomes understandable. Given dominant discourses which position lower classes as dangerous and potentially violent, segregation, for these elite individuals, becomes an attractive and not wholly irrational idea.

German sociologist Ulrich Beck's theories come from a radically different perspective. Beck has been criticized for the Euro-centric nature of his theories (Holloway 2004: 42) but nevertheless, he has been an influential figure in theorizing risk. For Beck, risks are defined not as a self-other dichotomy, as Douglas' work suggests, but rather: "risks are defined as the probabilities of physical harm due to given *technological* or other processes" (1992: 4 emphasis added). Beck comes from the perspective that the nature of risks have changed as society has moved from the age of modernity: the shift from pre-modernity to modernity entailed that risks moved from the realm of the unknowable and mystical to the knowable realm of science (1992). Hazards and risks, in the condition of modernity came to be understood as manageable and knowable; through scientific knowledge all risks could be predicted and dealt with. The current "Risk Society" for Beck, categorizes the contemporary late-modern situation in which risks and hazards become unmanageable, perhaps unknowable as a result of changes in the larger socio-economic and environmental world system (Holloway, 2004: 40). Where modernity assumed that through scientific rationality, all risks could be understood, the contemporary era is one of greater uncertainty. Beck draws heavily from examples of environmental security, pointing to recently discovered and unpredicted long term environmental destruction resulting from scientific intervention decades ago (1992:72). In this climate, nothing is certain. Holloway quotes Beck:

The collective patterns of life, progress and controllability, full employment and exploitation of

nature that were typical of this first modernity have now been undermined by five interlinked processes: globalization, individualization, gender revolution, underemployment and global risks (as ecological crisis and the crash of global financial markets) (Holloway 2004: 40).

In sum, risks are no longer attributable to either vague unknowable forces, as they were in pre-modern times, nor are they totally avoidable or manageable through science and rationality, as was thought in times of modernity. This uncertainty, according to Beck, leads to a sort of individualization as people, now facing an uncertain world, no longer relying or trusting the ability of techno-scientific knowledge to abrogate all risks, and less likely to appeal to mystical sources of comfort, begin to reevaluate risk as coming from all areas. Risk, in this contemporary situation becomes different. According to Washer's reading of Beck: "the *quality* of the type of risks we face today are different. In comparison with the risks faced by people in the past, the dangers we face today are potentially without limit, either geographically (and thus globalised), and in terms of time, in that damage now may reverberate through generations" (Washer 2006: 2 emphasis in original). The notion of 'limitless risk' is important in understanding the choices of elite individuals. Not only is the contemporary situation conceptualized as 'risky' as a result of a polluting other, but the assumption is that risks of modernity, such as globalization become increasingly unknowable and so subject to intensifying discursive, that is symbolic rational intervention and invention.

Washer's (2006) work on the media treatment of mad cow disease during the outbreak in the early 2000s points to a way of connecting the seemingly disparate viewpoints of the Douglas and Beck schools regarding risk. Washer argues that blame for Mad Cow disease can be and was leveled equally at 'outsiders' with polluting characteristics (those who were alleged not to practice hygienic farming practices) and also at technology (large scale industrial farms meant to increase efficiency and supply), both of which were culpable in the outbreak. Like Washer's, my work also looks at the links between the known and the knowable in the experience of risk.

Thinking about 'Space' and the Ramifications of Spatial Exclusion:

Conceptions of and about 'space' are vital to this thesis, as upper middle and upper class Trinidadians invest a great deal of time and capital into the creation and maintenance of safe spaces which are isolated from those people and groups understood by them to be unsafe.

Space...is an 'active moment' in the expansion and reproduction of capitalism. It is a phenomenon which is colonized and commodified, bought and sold, created and torn down, used and abused, speculated on and fought over. It all comes together in space: space *internalizes* the contradictions of modern capitalism; capitalist contradictions are contradictions *of* space (Merrifield, 2000: 173).

Here Merrifield is explaining the writing of Henri Lefebvre, a prominent French Marxist sociologist. Lefebvre is most noted for being a founding member of a situational school of Marxism. He, like Beck writes in reaction to changing

forces of modernity. Speaking about his impact in the fields of sociology and cultural geography, Shields argues that Lefebvre:

moved his analysis of 'space' from the old synchronic order of discourses 'on' space (archetypically, that of 'social space', as found in sociological texts on 'territoriality' a social ecology) to the manner in which understandings of geographical space, landscape and property are cultural and thereby have a history of change. Rather than discussing a particular theory of social space, he examined the struggles over the meaning of space and considered how relations across territories were given cultural meaning (Shields 2004: 210).

It is in these issues-- the struggles over the meaning of space and the effects of this space--that I am interested. In the face of uncertainty, people deeply concerned with fear of crime retreat and attempt to control their lives by remaining behind literal and figurative walls—enacting and reproducing what Lupton (1999c) calls “spatial exclusion”:

Strategies of spatial exclusion...are typically employed by members of dominant social groups to exert control over marginalized groups for which they hold hostility, contempt or fear of contamination...The spaces these groups occupy are commonly singled out as dangerous and contaminating to the dominant groups (Lupton 1999c:146).

In a similar vein, Goldberg (1993) draws heavily from examples of apartheid South Africa to inform his discussion of the ways in which risk, race, and space

collide even when official public discourses of unity and multi-cultural or even melting pot ideals prevail:

Racialized space positions people in public political space, just as racialized identity circumscribes social space, as they identify the included from the excluded, the (relatively) empowered from those (largely) powerless and peripheral, the enfranchised from the disenfranchised and disinherited (Goldberg 1993: 206-7).

Safe and unsafe spaces and places become categorized and attendant informal rules about proper and improper behaviour and 'acceptable' lifestyles are created and perpetuated. As will be discussed in chapter eight, spaces understood by upper class groups in Trinidad as safe are most often extremely difficult to access by lower classes, either because they are so heavily surveilled as to be made to feel uncomfortable, or because the expense of occupying that space, whether it be a restaurant, neighbourhood or shopping centre, is too prohibitive. There is an interesting paradox here too. While members of elite groups scorn the spaces and people of lower class origins, deeming them too dangerous, unpredictable or risky to associate with, elite individuals are often highly dependent on individuals from these groups to assist in the management of their daily lives. Both Caldeira's (2000; 2002) and Low's work (2001) show that while concerned about contamination from the 'risky others' of lower classes, elite individuals also employ members of these classes to perform tasks necessary to their continued segregation against the uncertainty of modernity. The great effort toward control over the production of space into a site which is free from pollution is therefore

compromised by the necessary inclusion of these ‘undesirables’ in order for the system to run. In Caldeira’s São Paulo, security guards, maids, nannies, drivers, gardeners and all other manner of household help come from the same denigrated group from which these elite individuals are segregating themselves inside fortified enclaves. The symbolic re-ordering of space however, is often maintained in these enclaves. Elite condominiums (condominiums are preferred to single family homes because builders can include many social and other activities on the property as well as provide greater security) are not built in urban centers, but on land from which “illegal” squatters have been removed (Caldeira 2000: 283). The squatters are then displaced again, to land which is ‘more’ peripheral, and many work for the residents of the new fortified communities as domestic help. Builders of these living spaces are cognizant of the desires of future inhabitants to reduce contact with members of lower classes. Caldeira reports that though space is at a premium in these expensive constructions, efforts are made to *make* space for separate elevators for domestic help, even if the architecture demands that service and tenant elevators are side by side. The symbolic import of living ‘away’ from the polluting influence of lower classes is manifested in the construction of these spaces (ibid: 283).

My goal in this text is to unpack the ways these issues and contradictions operate among Trinidadians of upper middle and upper classes, to see the ways in which their anxieties, fears, and understandings of crime and risk are operationalized on a day to day level. In the next chapter I introduce the reader

unfamiliar with Trinidad to a typical 'day in the life' of one woman of the upper middle and upper classes. Beyond ethnographic description, this chapter will introduce some of the major contradictions, themes and areas of concern that I have approached theoretically in this chapter. The distinctions between safe and unsafe spaces will be addressed along with the ways in which notions of race are employed and the ways in which safe spaces are conjured, understood and negotiated.

Chapter Three: A Day in the Life

In these pages, I provide the reader unfamiliar with Trinidad a sense of what it might be to go about one's daily life as an upper middle or upper class Trinidadian. In doing so, I plan to discuss a typical weekday and weekend day in the life of Marilyn and her family. To reiterate, for the purposes of this discussion, I depend less on strict economic definitions of class, and rely on a more subjective notion of financial and social capital, including social standing, the ability to influence others and the ability to use one's social network or financial capital to circumvent, avoid or otherwise make easier bureaucratic and other small problems in one's day to day life as well as well as the ability to isolate oneself and one's family from those determined to be 'risky' or close to crime and criminals.

Marilyn, my closest confidante and friend during my time in Trinidad, was generous both with her time and her home. I saw her nearly every day, for times ranging from a few minutes, to most of the day. Within only a month of my arrival, Marilyn and her family had assisted in locating housing and a vehicle, guided me through the bureaucratic labyrinth of getting utilities and internet access, and helped with innumerable smaller day to day practicalities. At that point, I took on some limited responsibilities for the care and day to day functioning of her family as well. These responsibilities, such as accompanying and driving her on errands, or dropping or retrieving her university-aged daughter from school, were never discussed directly as a sort of reciprocal exchange for

access to her family, but I understood this access as a gift, and the minor errands as the way I could both be a part of their lives and reciprocate for that enormous gift of access. As Counts (1990) illustrates, fieldwork reciprocity is not always about giving things or services, and in my case this is certainly true since my informants wanted for little or nothing. Rather, these networks of reciprocal responsibility were both lessons in cultural being, and a way of becoming incorporated in their lives.

Marilyn's family consists of herself, her husband Joseph, and two children in their mid-20s, a son, Junior who was 26 upon my arrival, and a daughter, Frankie, about 22. Marilyn is 'mostly Indian' and comes from a non-practicing Muslim family in central Trinidad. She and most of her siblings have converted to Catholicism in the past several decades. Joseph was born in Guyana, and has parents of Chinese and Portuguese extraction. Both Junior and Frankie live at home and Junior had finished university a few years prior to my arrival in Trinidad. Frankie was, at the time of my stay, finishing a degree in business at an accredited UK-based university. Importantly, this university taught classes in Trinidad but awarded degrees which did not that indicate classes had been taken in Trinidad. Part of the draw of her program, beyond the course offerings, was that Frankie would have a prestigious UK education without having the expense and separation of overseas travel. Junior has a promising job that incorporates aspects of his degree at a small but thriving firm near Port of Spain.

Marilyn's husband Joseph is trained as a marine mechanic, servicing the large sea-borne vessels which in turn ferry supplies and provide accommodations for off-shore gas and oil platforms. His is a lucrative position. Since his arrival in Trinidad from Guyana as a teenager, he had worked first as an apprentice car mechanic, then, after taking courses at night and overseas, had slowly built up his credentials to the point of achieving the supervisory position he currently holds. At nearly 50, he enjoys his job, often taking overseas trips for training or to provide consultations or upgrade his expertise. At his current high level position, Joseph manages a large diverse staff, and spends the bulk of his time mentoring and completing administrative work. He works in shipyards around the coast, sometimes in an area in the southwest of the country, other times at harbours very near downtown Port of Spain. Marilyn has been a homemaker since the birth of Junior. She left a promising administrative career to raise their two children and while she does not regret it, she often wonders about what could have been. At the time of Junior's birth, money was scarce; there were no family members consistently available for child care, and child care would have been too costly for her to remain at work. In years gone by, she has done some sewing work from the home, but rarely engages in that at present. She feels her eyes are strained, and finds the family no longer needs the extra income that her sewing brought into the home. She sews only for herself and for members of her family now. The family of four live in a large four bedroom bungalow style home in an affluent upper middle class area about 14 kilometers from downtown Port of Spain. They are

close to the newly expanded Trincity mall, discussed in detail in chapter 8, as well as the international airport and several shopping and sporting destinations.

Also near 50, Marilyn is second of nine children and the oldest girl.

Perhaps as such she is motherly and protective of her siblings. She reports feeling as though she had a great part in raising all the youngest. Of the nine, two have emigrated to England. None of the other siblings feel a desire to leave Trinidad. She and Joseph considered emigration to Canada in the late 1980s during an economic recession in Trinidad, but a short exploratory trip to Toronto where members of Joseph's extended family were willing to sponsor their citizenship proved too difficult. Owing to the overly cold climate, the feelings of isolation and missing their family in Trinidad, Marilyn and Joseph decided not to go through with the move. They do not regret the decision. The family is very close. Few weekends go by without some or all of the Trinidad based siblings gathering together. They live relatively close to one another, and even ex-spouses remain in their social circle. This is, I was told carefully, not 'typical'. Several siblings live within walking distance of one another, and though not the biggest of the family homes, Marilyn and Joseph's home acts as the de facto centre for family celebrations, and gatherings. During summer months and after school hours it is not uncommon for one or more nephews or nieces to appear unannounced at the home. They are dropped off by a parent and say a quick hello before retreating to use the family computer or simply watch television. Sometimes these visits take

place because their parents need them to be watched, but more often than not, they simply come for the company.

Marilyn chooses not to drive, and depends on her siblings, children, and while I was there, frequently myself, to complete her errands while Joseph is at work. She is undoubtedly the centre of the house, believing strongly that she is responsible for the care and nurturing of the entire family. This is not quite a conservative 'women should be homemakers and remain inside the home' position. She encourages her own children to be strongly egalitarian in their own relationships and considers herself an equal partner in decision making with her husband Joseph. She receives a portion of the household income to use at her discretion, and pushes her daughter and daughter-in-law to pursue post-graduate degrees and be financially self-sufficient outside the home.

Marilyn's two children, Junior and Frankie both live in the family home. Over the time of my fieldwork, Junior was able to make the enormous investment of purchasing his own new vehicle. He was able to save funds primarily because he still lived at home. Though he has a full time job, Junior is not expected to make financial contributions to the home; instead he provides help with chores around the house. Marilyn and Joseph expect him to save his income for his own house and vehicle in the long term. These goals of educational achievement and home ownership are, according to Miller (1994), synonymous with 'transcendent' or middle and upper class status. Marilyn and Joseph are not socially conservative; they have a liberal attitude towards their children's relationships.

Junior's long-term girlfriend stays over in his room on weekends and during her breaks from her Master's of Science program at the University of the West Indies, as does Frankie's boyfriend. Both Junior's girlfriend and Frankie's boyfriend enjoy status near equal to family members in the home. They are able to come and go as they please, automatically invited to family events and meals, and expected to assist the family with small chores or errands on a level nearly equal to Junior and Frankie. Marilyn and Joseph plan to expand their home to provide greater space and privacy for Junior and his girlfriend after their marriage. They feel, as do many in Trinidad, and indeed all over the English speaking Caribbean, that it is simply a waste of money for young single adults or young married couples to rent a home when they could live in the natal family home. Children rarely leave the family home before marriage unless they are travelling overseas or from a great distance internally in the country for post-secondary education. Even in those situations, it is preferable for those youth and young adults to stay with members of extended family if at all possible.

The family has agreed that after their marriage, Junior and his wife will stay in a soon to be expanded area of the house, sharing kitchen and living rooms and living together with the rest of the family until they can afford their own home. Beyond extra space for Junior, Marilyn wants a thoroughly modern kitchen complete with professional level appliances. Construction materials will be bought locally, but for premium items like appliances, Marilyn and Joseph plan to travel to Miami and ship their goods back. Joseph takes several trips to the US

and overseas each year for work and Marilyn often accompanies him for some or all of the journey. This trip will double as a vacation and shopping excursion.

Marilyn says she will continue to provide the cooking and cleaning and general house-care for the whole family. When Junior purchases his own house, should Frankie and her boyfriend be ready to marry, they will be able to move into the space Junior and his wife will have just vacated.

A 'Typical' Day in the Life:

For this family, time management falls directly in the hands of Marilyn. She is most often up at or just before dawn. While her family sleeps, she cleans the family home, preferring to do so in the cool of the morning. She feeds the dog and begins preparations for breakfast. Marilyn notes that if she could find reliable home cleaners, or general housekeepers, she would hire them, but labour of that sort is scarce and inconsistent, and she prefers to do it herself than manage the frustration of having employees. She rouses other members of the family to get ready at differing times depending on how far they have to work from home on that given day. Joseph's job takes him to harbours and ports around the country, wherever his skills are needed on the large boats that he services. Junior often travels widely for his job as well. In order to manage traffic and arrive on time, they, like the rest of the population who lives on the east-west corridor of the country, spend large amounts of time on the major highway to and from Port of Spain. Joseph often works for as many as 12 hours a day. When he wakes, Marilyn fixes his breakfast, and often his lunch as well. He leaves generally by

about 7 am in his company provided vehicle for his day. Junior is usually up next. Marilyn will fix a meal for him and he will drive to his work on the outskirts of Port of Spain.

Prior to Junior's purchase of his car, he and Frankie shared the use of the family vehicle, a modest mid-sized wagon the family bought used. Sometimes this meant car-pooling to Junior's work and Frankie's school or summer office job, but often, when the schedules did not coincide neatly, Frankie was left without transportation. At this time she was often dropped off and retrieved from school or her summer jobs by either myself or one of Marilyn's siblings. Frankie, like most upper middle class women I encountered, was no longer permitted or no longer chose to utilize public transportation. Taxis are seen as unreliable, and prohibitively expensive. They are used only as a last resort. Public maxi-taxis, large vans which seat about 15 people are deemed to be too unsafe. While regulated by the government, maxi-taxis are operated by independent owner operators; and are understood to be of wildly varying levels of quality and safety. Stories of sexual harassment, robberies and fear of rape and other misconduct mean that women of Frankie's status only use maxi-taxis under when there are no other options.

Junior's girlfriend is Sylvie. She is a Master's of Science student at the University of the West Indies, and comes from a middle class family of more modest means. They live in an area which, closer to downtown, is far more heterogeneous in terms of class and safety. Sylvie is often forced to use maxi-

taxis for transport to and from school but only with extreme precautions. As her family does not have a vehicle, her stepfather or brother in law usually accompany her on foot to the maxi stop, 1km from the house from which she can catch a maxi-taxi to school. If her classes run into the evening and it is dark when she wants to return home, she calls ahead and either of the male family members will walk to the stop to meet her and escort her home. Other times, when she has to return home after dark, Junior arranges to pick her up in his car. Even I was called upon on a few occasions to provide a similar service for Sylvie when other vehicles or escorts were unavailable, though only when accompanied by other family members (who did not have access to a vehicle), because of course, it was unsafe for me to drive alone as well. Given her sex, appearance and the location of her home, it is not safe for Sylvie to walk alone after dark.

Both Sylvie and Marilyn's family value her education and safety so highly that they are willing to go to great lengths to ensure that she can safely complete her degree. Sylvie, it was explained, has two 'strikes' against her, besides being shy and soft-spoken, she is 'light-skinned and chinee'. Sylvie's parents are of Chinese, Portuguese and Indian descent, and she is extremely fair. She does not 'blend in', and is often harassed and even physically threatened because of her complexion by people she describes as 'Indian' and 'Black'. Based on the taunts she receives, many assume she is 'white'.

When she was a younger teen, Frankie was permitted to take maxi taxis to her private high school when accompanied by schoolmates who live nearby, but

in recent years the crime situation has come to be understood as too risky for her to use that form of transportation. When she and Junior were small children, they were picked up and ferried to and from school in a private maxi, along with other children in the neighbourhood. The cost was nearly prohibitive then for the growing family, but it was felt to be the only option to ensure secure travel for the children to their schools. The financial hardship was far outweighed by the benefit of their attending private, rather than public elementary schools.

After everyone has departed for work or school, Marilyn's day continues. While her children and husband fight traffic and then begin their working day, Marilyn continues with her housework and generally reads all of the three national papers. Throughout the morning, various local news reports will be on the television. By mid-morning, Marilyn has either begun cooking the evening meal, or gone to the gym. The gym, about a ten minute walk away is a on safe route for Marilyn to travel in the daytime. She goes for about two hours in total, between travelling to and from and meeting with her personal trainer two to three times a week. At the gym, which I also attended, about a half a dozen women are trained by a single trainer. The cost is prohibitive for local salaries, beginning at about \$80US/month depending on the level of membership. At the gym, most often local news radio is playing, and as the women stretch and lift weights under the guidance of the trainer, they discuss the latest local news. This sort of polite conversation, detailing and comparing notes on the latest crime stories, shaking heads in disbelief or in criticism of whatever news event has most recently

occurred, takes place with the frequency of discussions of the weather in North America. Talking about crime and particularly bloody acts of violence has become engrained into polite social discourse. Trinidadians of this class are persistent consumers of news, and outside of election seasons, crime dominates news coverage. Newspapers frequently publish bloody photos of dead bodies on the front pages. It is unclear to me whether the media creates or simply feeds this obsession with news of violent crime.

Fitness, particularly around Trinidad's Carnival time, is something of a middle and upper class obsession. Marilyn and her sisters diet and exercise regularly, and each told me tales about flirtations with diet supplements and 'fat burners' of dubious provenance which they had attempted over time. Carnival, the two day pre-Lenten festival celebration is the focal point of Trinidad's calendar. With its emphasis on revealing outfits, both during the bikini and bead 'Mas' celebrations and during the myriad parties in the weeks and months that lead up to the celebration, the focus on being 'body beautiful' is extended throughout the rest of the year. Middle and upper class Trinidadians are extremely health and body conscious. In Marilyn and Joseph's uniformly middle and upper middle class neighbourhood there is a large cricket field, around which is an 800m track. In the late afternoon and early evening, the track is full of neighbourhood residents running and walking the track while others practicing cricket or soccer in the pitch. By the time dark falls and the overhead lights come on, most of the women have returned home. As the evening progresses, it is

mostly men who use the sports field. I used the track often in the early evenings. Beyond feeling as though one was part of the neighbourhood, I became used to one particular corner of the track where older men would stand and comment on all the women as they passed by. A running commentary on bodily form, as well as encouraging remarks on how one's exercise is progressing and which body parts are looking particularly well is common.

For Marilyn and her family, clothing for women is expected to be up-to-date with the latest trends and always worn tight to the body. Upper class individuals with whom I worked and lived were less concerned about or influenced by trends in fashion, but were keen to wear classic styles of mostly overseas sourced clothing. Frankie very occasionally does modeling or local commercials, and is extremely concerned that she keep up with current fashion and in particular to wear clothes with global or North American corporate brand names. My time in Trinidad was marked with a rapid change in my own wardrobe and lifestyle choices. My clothes, I was told, almost immediately after arrival in Trinidad, were too boring and too frumpy. People admonished me to stop wearing such somber colours (I had a typical graduate student wardrobe of jeans and various t-shirts, mostly in navy, black and other neutral colours). When I arrived to visit Marilyn within a week of my arrival wearing jeans, a sleeveless tank top and a long sleeve button down shirt open over the tank top, I was jokingly refused entry into her yard. She and Frankie admonished me not to be so conservative. I was to take off the long sleeve shirt that 'hid' my body and be

proud of myself. Within days of my arrival in Trinidad, I found myself taken to a local shopping mall with Marilyn, Frankie, Sylvie and an ex-sister-in-law of Marilyn's. I marveled to myself at how, just shy of 72 hours from Canada, I found myself cajoled into trying on an alarmingly stretchy electric blue halter top with a rather large silver faux diamond clasp. The shirt felt far too tight and too revealing for my sensibilities, but the style was common throughout the stores of the mall. In the change room, I felt ridiculous and protested that I did not feel I should have to model the shirt, but was told to leave the dressing room to show the top to the now gathering crowd of Marilyn's family and interested passersby who had heard my protests. Marilyn was pleased and told the shop assistant to wrap up the shirt, despite my alarm. Although I protested that my "plus sized" figure did not suit this sort of extremely fitted synthetic fabric and style, she informed me that Trinidadian men like 'all sorts' and further, I must dress to show off everything I had. The shirt, which to my conservative Canadian sensibilities made me feel like nothing so much as a neon encased breakfast sausage, was purchased. Frankie was pleased. "Next", she announced, "we'll fix your eyebrows and I'll teach you to put on make-up properly. Your boyfriend will be so happy when he comes to visit!"

After the gym, Marilyn might rest or, if she has other errands to run, call on her daughter, if she's home from classes, or her siblings or their spouses to give her a lift to and from the shopping mall, grocery store or other destinations. During my fieldwork, I would often be there during these morning hours, working

on my field notes or simply visiting with Marilyn after we had returned from the gym together. As my apartment was virtually windowless; I spent as much time as possible outside during the day. As the day progresses, Marilyn fields calls from her friends and siblings, in-laws and various ex-spouses of her siblings, often doling out advice. When a brother in law calls exasperated that his teenaged daughter sneaked out of the house to meet with her boyfriend in his car outside the home's gate during the night, she offers condolences and chastises them. "You need to tell that child that once she leaves the gates no one can protect her! Imagine if someone came to carjack that car? Imagine you wake up in the morning and she's gone?! You need to get some sense in that child's head!" She looked at me after she placed the phone in the receiver and explained that the transgression was not so much about the stolen moments with the boyfriend, but the fact that the girl had put herself at bodily risk of robbery or worse¹⁵.

The main meal of the day is prepared in the mid-morning, since Marilyn refuses to cook while she's tired in the evening. Instead she makes a large hot meal mid- morning that can be re-heated for her family's return that evening. The family spends a great deal of time together, but places little emphasis on actually dining together. The horrendous traffic situation and the varying schedules of each family member mean that correctly timing a meal so that everyone can sit

¹⁵ 'Imagine' statements often coupled with statements including the temporal signifiers of 'before' and 'now' are frequently used in relation to the crime situation. I discuss these statements at greater length in chapter six.

down to eat together is nearly impossible. Instead the goal is to always have food available. The only exception is Sunday lunch, a time when Marilyn and many other Trinidadians cook a big midday meal featuring what is commonly called 'Creole' food. In this instance, Creole refers to Trinidadian food that is not of Indian origin. Stewed or baked chicken, callaloo (a dish containing various leafy vegetables, okra and other ingredients cooked down to a thick soup like consistency in which all ingredients are indistinguishable from one another), macaroni pie and other 'Creole' dishes make up the meal and the family makes an effort to eat together.

In the afternoon, Marilyn naps, reads, or runs further shopping errands for the household or for pleasure. By late afternoon and early evening members of the family, depending on their schedules, begin to return home. Marilyn's daily routine will alter significantly if errands requiring a trip into downtown Port of Spain come up. In those instances, the gym and even the mid-day cooking might be sacrificed in order to manage those errands in a manner that is both safe and which allows for best management of the traffic situation. Traffic in Trinidad is extremely congested. The 14 km trip from Marilyn's home to downtown Port of Spain can take three hours in the worst of rush hour, and 20 minutes in the best possible circumstances. A weekday trip to shop or run other administrative errands is best managed by leaving Marilyn's neighbourhood after 9 am, when the worst of the morning traffic has dispersed. Often we would go together, planning our route well in advance so that we might most efficiently move around the

clogged downtown core, avoiding spots that were, due to their proximity to 'bad areas', and worrying over parking spots and line ups. If shopping was the only thing on the agenda, the day trip would progress smoothly. The only concern was to leave town well before 3pm during the school break months, or 2 pm during the school year. During the time that elementary and secondary schools are in session, traffic becomes exponentially worse since most parents who have access to an automobile make an effort to drop off and pick up their children from school, citing safety as the primary motivation. The result is an enormous increase in traffic during rush hours.

If Marilyn, or indeed nearly any of the individuals with whom I met have some sort of bureaucratic based errand to run, efforts are made in advance to avoid the long lineups that will inevitably result. When trying to access some records held within a ministry office, Marilyn called an old friend who holds a supervisory position in the ministry. Instead of leaving well before dawn to stand in long line-ups to request the information, Marilyn and I left after morning rush hour and arrived at the offices after parking across the street. Marilyn informed one of the security guards that we were here to see her friend, and within ten minutes the woman appeared with all the necessary documents in hand. I stood awkwardly off to the side of this transaction waiting while Marilyn caught up on recent gossip with her friend. We were in full view of those waiting in the line-ups and I felt uncomfortable about what to me seemed an obvious display of favoritism. If at all possible these sorts of errands are run only after first making

an effort to circumvent the process via a connection. If Marilyn herself did not have a friend in the ministry office, she might have asked around her extended family network. If, at last she had exhausted those avenues, she would happily wait in line, as when she and Frankie had to wait in the notoriously long lines for access to a traveler's visa to visit family in the United States. At least Marilyn has the benefit of a highly flexible schedule. She and Frankie were able to wake extremely early, knowing that the rest of the household could manage on their own for a single morning, and were first in line to get an appointment time. Where networks of friends and acquaintances could not assist them, Marilyn and her family relied on their own mobility and ability to manage time in a way unavailable to those who are locked into more rigid schedules as a result of their lower class working situation.

In the evenings, the family makes every effort to watch the local news together while eating or catching up after the long day. During the lead up to elections, when daily machinations between political opponents unfolded like a soap opera, the whole family, indeed most people I spoke with, were extremely news-conscious. On his long return drive from work, Joseph would listen to political call-in shows, often calling ahead on his cell phone to ask whoever was home to tune in, so they could all hear the debates on elections issues, primary among them crime and violence. Keeping abreast of the news through a communal reading of papers, while not formalized, is common. After the news, televised political call-in and talk shows debate current topics. The most

salacious news stories involve murder, and most major newspapers have few qualms about publishing gory photos of murder victims or crime scenes on front pages. These photos, accompanied by large font headlines proclaiming the latest murder count, become common conversation topics.

While plainly not likely to fall victim to murder, these Trinidadians were nonetheless extremely aware of news reports concerning murders. They used the murder count in particular as a benchmark against which judgments about the entire country's crime situation, and their relative safety could be debated. Many conversations begin with "Did you see the article in Newspaper 'x' the other day?".

With the exception of Junior, who might stay late at work or go to 'lime'¹⁶ at homes of his friends, or take Sylvie out, the family generally remains home on weekday evenings. Extended family members may stop in to drop off or pick up various items or nieces or nephews who had come for a visit and stayed after dark, but serious socializing with anyone is reserved for the weekends. This pattern held true for many of my informants, most of whom reported that not only do weekdays start too early because of the need to fight traffic, but also trips during the weekdays after dark were mostly unnecessary. For those with whom I met who were not working steadily, or who were retired or worked from home,

¹⁶ To 'lime' is a general purpose term in much of the English speaking Caribbean that refers to casually spending time with friends. It was once the domain mostly of young single men, for whom 'liming' could range from a few hours to a few days, straying about from home and bar on and on. More often it is a term used to indicate anything from having a few drinks to playing video games. Where before 'liming' was almost exclusively outside the home, more often socializing now takes place at other's homes or in carefully controlled safe, if exclusive, environments.

similar patterns were maintained. At most excursions for dinner or more commonly, entertaining in one's own home were the most common evening weekday activities.

The exception here is for young men. Junior, in particular, spent the least time at home during the weekend and weekday evenings. His job, at a company dominated by other young men in similar positions to his own, is more flexible than most office jobs. Since his supervisors understand the demands of the traffic situation, Junior's work hours are flexible. While he makes an attempt to get in to work before 9 am, if the traffic situation prevents that, he is not penalized. Similarly, as the company is doing well financially, the management has added incentives, both to keep their highly trained staff happy, and to keep them from seeking employment elsewhere. Often Junior would return home at or after 9 pm directly from the office, reporting that he and his 'fellow geeks' had lost track of time after finishing their work for the day playing video games on consoles provided by management in the office. Depending on Sylvie's schedule, Junior might stay late so that he can retrieve her from late classes. Other times he exercises on equipment also provided by management. The benefit is two-fold. Junior is happy at the company, and he does not have to spend rush hours sitting in traffic. He is able instead to spend those hours happily engaged and has a quicker and ultimately less frustrating commute. When not out with Sylvie, with whom weekday evening outings consist primarily of going out to the largest movie/entertainment complex in Trinidad, on the western side of Port of Spain, he

would go 'liming' with his male friends. This activity seemed relatively tame compared to the reported weeknight adventures of his single older uncles.

Junior's evenings out usually consisted of an evening of drinking, not out at a bar, but at the home of another friend. This choice was made, allegedly for the sake of ease and relaxation, but his parents both indicated that they felt more secure that he was not 'out straying', both for his safety, and his reputation¹⁷.

For Frankie, weeknights are almost always spent at home. Sometimes she visits other couples with her boyfriend at their homes. Only very occasionally does she spend the evening at her boyfriend's home, but while he is welcome to sleep over at Marilyn and Joseph's house, Frankie is not permitted to stay overnight at his apartment. Unlike her brother, Frankie does not go out in the evenings unaccompanied by either her boyfriend or another male family member. This is deemed too unsafe. Like Sylvie, weeknight outings for her are limited to evenings at friend's homes and the occasional trip to the movie theatre. With her parents, and Junior, depending on his schedule, the only occasional trip on a

¹⁷ Marilyn's single brothers are much less concerned with remaining in on weeknights. These men, in their 40s and divorced fit much more in to the classic 'liming' mode in line with what Miller (1994) might term 'transience'. Their class status is not similar to that of Marilyn, her nuclear family or that of her married sisters. These brothers work as mechanics, and while make an income comfortable enough to support themselves and the children from their failed marriages, they are not as comfortable nor as 'forward-thinking' personally. While they ensure their children go to private schools, participate in extra-curricular activities, and are firmly on track for eventual induction into upper middle class Trinidad, they themselves are considerably wilder, venturing into areas they would not allow their children to go, seeking entertainment and adventure.

weeknight might be into downtown Port of Spain long after the rush hour traffic has ceased to visit a high end ice cream parlour. If Marilyn and Frankie decide that they would rather visit a street side homemade ice cream stall in a less 'safe' area, Joseph might comply, and might even stay in the vehicle parked in front of the stand while Marilyn and Frankie get their food; but should he decide that there are risky looking people milling about, he will exit, stand some feet away from the women, and make it obvious that he is there looking out for them. Joseph is neither large, nor intimidating, but the nature of his job requires him to drive through 'risky' areas often in the wee hours of the morning. He has thus applied for and received a license for a firearm. On occasions such as this, he will carry it in a way that makes it obvious to an accustomed observer, and thus, in his mind, deter any opportunistic robbers from either himself or his wife and daughter.

Weekends for the family represent a marked change of pace. In discussions of 'before', a discursive trope used to indicate a time between 5-10 years prior to my arrival when fears and anxieties around crime were nearly non-existent (discussed further in chapter six), people like Marilyn and wealthier upper class people reported the weekends were full of travel—long jaunts in the country and picnics in rural area, or trips to the beach. Such trips, after a spate of robberies of similar parties in isolated areas, are far less frequent now. Joseph is an avid fisherman and uses his half ownership in a mid sized inboard engine fishing boat to take the day to go fishing with some of his brothers-in-law or to take younger nieces, nephews and friends, 'down de islands'. 'Down de islands'

is a catch all phrase used to describe boating activities just off the northwestern-most shore of Trinidad where a scattering of small islands, some former jails and leper colonies, offer sunbathing, boating, sailing and other pleasure-craft activity. These are activities available only to those with access to a boat. There are some party boat cruises that take place in this area, but those are understood by my informants to be rough and full of undesirable people. To go on one of those boat cruises is to take a risk. After mentioning that I was thinking of buying tickets for a cruise for myself and my white Canadian boyfriend when he came to visit me during my time in the field, I was flatly forbidden to do so. At length I was made to understand that these harbour cruise party boats are predominantly a lower class Afro-Trinidadian activity. Not only would I feel uncomfortable, but my Caucasian Canadian boyfriend and myself would very likely be harassed. Whether these dire predictions would have proven correct, I cannot say. Instead, an outing with Uncle Joseph and some of his brothers-in-law, nieces and nephews on a trip 'down de islands' was arranged.

Fishing and boating are Joseph's favorite weekend pastime. Most weekends, there are no women involved. Instead he and some of his brothers-in-law and even ex-brothers-in-law will go fishing. Leaving before dawn, depending on time and tide, and capitalizing on the low traffic on the weekends, they will spend the day fishing, returning as dusk approaches. Often, in an extended family as large as this, there will be a get together on a weekend to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or most often "just because". Marilyn and her sisters organize in

advance to decide who will prepare what side dish. Often the men, including her single brothers and even ex-spouses of her sisters, decide on a meat or fish to put on the grill. Family gathers at Marilyn's home or at one of the homes of her two sisters in Trinidad. Between nuclear family members, brothers and sisters, nieces, nephews, and assorted girlfriends, and boyfriends of the family, these weekend get-togethers could include 50 people, and often I was the sole attendee that was neither related nor dating or married to a member of Marilyn's extended family. All of the family members, including older teenagers and those, like Junior and Frankie, in their 20s generally attend, at least for a portion of the evening. These gatherings are a chance for Marilyn and her sisters to compare fashions, catch up and talk politics. They are high energy events at times, evolving into boisterous dance parties, and at other times low-key. If he has been fishing, Joseph might arrive late with several small shark or other large fish caught during the day. Late into the evening, long after the proper dinner has been completed, the family will begin to clean fish and assemble a 'shark and bake'. Frying a 'bake', a sort of panbread with dough made by hand and similarly battering and frying fish, the family often has stayed long into the night, returning home together in the early hours of the morning. These weekend outings are extremely frequent, particularly in the summer months, when there are a large number of family birthdays.

Older children like Junior and Frankie might use the weekends to visit with friends in their homes, or occasionally venture into Port of Spain to go to a high-end night club. Trips to these clubs, with their high prices and high security

are infrequent, but when they go, the women dress up and are carefully watched over by their boyfriends or male partners. Other larger and more expensive parties might be attended as Carnival season begins. These parties, often held in places only accessible by car, are corporately sponsored and can have ticket prices that exceed \$100US/couple. These evenings are planned far in advance and one such party I attended, with Junior, Sylvie and nearly a dozen of their friends was a lesson in security. Electronic wristbands held our ticket information. When we entered the party, digital pictures were captured of our faces so that the wristbands could not be used by anyone else. Armed guards patrolled the perimeter of events and when a few of us left the confines of the open air party to venture to a food stall across the street, the men in the group became highly focused on ensuring the safety of the group in relation to those people outside the party who could not afford tickets to the event, but who lived in the area, or came to enjoy the music outside of the party's high walls.

Trips to the country's beaches for swimming or socializing are relatively rare for most upper middle and upper class Trinidadians. The beaches are difficult to reach, and few roads run north to the most famous and pristine of the beaches. Unlike other Caribbean islands, Trinidad is not primarily known for tourism, and the sorts of activities that are tourism friendly, like beaches, are rather difficult to access. While the beaches are popular, like other areas that are slightly isolated, they are considered unsafe after dark or when mostly abandoned. Trips to the beach are planned carefully around the worst of traffic delays.

Particularly busy times, after Carnival or late Sunday afternoons are avoided as traffic and beach congestion are both heavy and it is thought that there are large numbers of intoxicated drivers on the road as the day progresses. Trips to Maracas Bay, the most famous and tourist-developed beach are difficult to access, and, upon closer inspection, the beach is informally racially segregated. There is a section of beach most often used by Afro-Trinidadians, a central spot used by tourists and 'white' individuals, and a section predominantly used by Indo-Trinidadians. These patterns of informal segregation are similar to those in several popular nightclubs which informally have 'Indian' and 'Creole' nights. Nightclubs are infrequently attended by the persons with whom I interacted. Hugely popular and expensive dance clubs have nights which are widely known to be 'Afro' or 'Indo' Trinidadian nights. I found this fascinating, and was told that while Afro-Trinidadians really could go to any night, Indo-Trinidadians would feel uncomfortable going to 'Creole' night, fearing that they might be harassed. Whether this was likely to happen I do not know, but it does seem to indicate a level of underlying tension in which non-Afro-Trinidadians have internalized an image of Afro-Trinidadians as inherently prone to violence or wildness.

Most of the people I interacted with prefer to boat, sail or yacht, or access more private leisure spots rather than go to beaches or large nightclubs. I do not attempt to make the argument that those middle and upper class individuals eschew these places because of some degree of racial segregation, but rather mean

to suggest that the places which they choose to access are normally highly regulated in a different way.

The size of Marilyn's extremely close extended family perhaps accounts for the reason that there are few 'non-family members' at their social events. But the way in which they spend their leisure time is not very different from that of most individuals of similar or higher financial and social standing. Surojini, another good friend who falls within an upper class or elite social status category and whose social network included the most powerful individuals in the country, spends her weekends engaged in quite a similar manner. She is never so content as when her house is full of friends, and often they joke that getting her to leave home is impossible. Conversely, she enjoys long leisurely drives around the country and lingering gourmet meals at fine restaurants. Her family has a large beach house on the less densely populated south-eastern shore of the country called Mayaro. A large two story five bedroom structure located on miles of mostly empty beach, Surojini's beach house, and the swath of beach homes which surround it are not occupied full time. They are weekend homes for those families who want access to a beach front retreat for themselves and their friends. Like those who go 'down de islands' sailing, yachting or, like Joseph, fishing on the weekends, those with the funds to do so have historically also gone 'down Mayaro' for long weekends and breaks. The two to three hour drive (as compared to the 0.5-1.0 hour trip to harbours 'down de islands') means that historically

most people have preferred to make the trip and to stay overnight when coming from the east-west corridor of the country.

In the months leading up to my arrival in 2007, a spate of break-ins, robberies, and one high profile murder occurred in the Mayaro area. In November, 2007, the stepson of an extremely prominent executive and the groundskeeper were both murdered at a nearby “lonely” beach home and their bodies were found stuffed in the trunk of the son’s car (Trinidad Newsday Reporters, accessed November 19, 2007). This crime caused a great deal of shock in the area, and trips to Mayaro and Manzanilla decreased substantially. Criminals were understood to be capitalizing on the isolation of the area in order to perpetrate criminal activities or hide from authorities. For that reason Surojini, and others like her rarely made the trip in the time I was in the field. I went to that region of the country only once over the course of my fieldwork, a heavily organized day trip with myself, Surojini, and importantly, two male friends. Surojini and I would often drive around the country sight-seeing, but we would rarely leave the vehicle for long periods. With our male companions, she felt safe enough to engage in a little beach walking, and exploration of the area but not comfortable enough to remain in the beach house overnight. For Surojini, and others like her, leisure time is increasingly isolated, spent at elite expensive restaurants, dinner parties at home, boat trips to private island homes with even wealthier friends off the north-west coast and increasingly, trips overseas to New York and Toronto for shopping, dining and visiting with friends. It is not the case that these activities

did not occur prior to the sudden increase in criminal activity in the country, only that these activities increasingly dominate social calendars. Those friends of Surojini's whom I met at her home who did not know of her long afternoons spent driving the country, expressed shock that Surojini 'strays' so far on her driving road trips in between their playful teasing that she prefers not to leave her house.

For many, as with Marilyn and her family, their average lives are a balance between safety and risk, between increasingly isolated and protected forays into public and carefully managed venues. Like most others with any degree of status or capital resources, they employ these to circumvent bureaucratic and other administrative roadblocks and slowdowns, and to improve and utilize their considerable home spaces for entertaining and other in-the-home pursuits. Women's lives have been particularly curtailed because of the increase in criminal activity. Women are not particularly targeted, but it is thought that a woman would not fare as well, be open to sexual violence and be less able than a man to fight back given a situation of violence. To date, women are not therefore discouraged from educational or occupational pursuits, but indeed their freedom of movement is severely curtailed, particularly socially and women self-police their movements.

Here I cannot rely on analysis that utilizes a 'traditional' division of space between the male/female sphere (see Douglas 1992; and Brana-Shute 1989 as quoted in Burton 1997:166 for further examples of this use in the literature). While this dichotomy may hold true insofar as men, for instance Marilyn's

brothers, are far more likely to 'stray' or go and lime for long periods of time, chasing women and drinking in the company of other men, women report becoming increasingly housebound over the course of the past several years. Professional women and men who do not subscribe to the 'liming' lifestyle, but whose social calendars are more apt to be filled with high-end dining and cocktail parties, find themselves further limited to places that can be reached by car. Those people who would in the past have had little problem using public transportation for themselves are finding themselves dependent on their vehicles. This increasing dependence on private vehicles means that upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are further segregated from lower classes. This decreases the amount of time that upper middle and upper class Trinidadians, and their children, spend mingling with individuals of lower classes. Given this isolation, stigma regarding the lower classes flourishes among upper classes. Those who have children but not the means to hire a driver or additional help may find their time increasingly occupied with driving their children to and from school.

Marilyn's sisters are all business owners, and as such can dictate their schedules around their childcare needs. For other women in her position, often jobs are given up, or shifted to part-time in order to accommodate the needs of transporting children to and from school and extra-curricular lessons and activities deemed essential for future success. The kidnapping and subsequent murder of prominent female business woman Vindra Naipaul Coolman in 2007 sent shockwaves throughout the country (Rogers, 2007). Much beloved by the

employees in her chain of grocery stores, Naipaul-Coolman's kidnapping from her vehicle and subsequent death--apparently she was shot in a struggle before a full ransom could be paid--was held by many as evidence that women were no longer out of bounds for criminals. This incident worked both to increase surveillance and self-policing by women, as well as to further demonize and render illogical and animalistic those who were involved in these crimes. Media reporting on the crime focused on interviews from other wealthy Indo-Trinidadians in the wealthy mostly Indo-Trinidadian suburb in Central Trinidad from which Naipaul-Coolman was snatched. The media reported that residents felt particularly targeted for this sort of violence and further, did not place a great deal of faith in the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian police services (Rogers, 2007). Naipaul-Coolman was Indo-Trinidadian, and as the perpetrators were mostly Afro-Trinidadian and gang-implicated, veiled racist sentiment permeated discussions of the case in the media and in daily conversation.

Even before Naipaul-Coolman's kidnapping, precautions around avoiding kidnapping and robbery were high. Marilyn and her family rarely admit to fear of crime, but the precautions that they employ to avoid major crimes such as kidnapping are intense. One of Marilyn's sisters and her husband own and operate a large car rental business. The two of them have a small storefront and a large fleet of cars. Maintenance of the fleet falls to two of Marilyn's brothers who are mechanics by trade. Her sister, Melissa, and brother in law, Michael, have owned the company for over ten years and are the only individuals who meet with

customers. Since the inception of their business, Melissa and Michael have each owned two cell phones, one for personal use and another for the business. They also have two names, and two different life histories. Neither Melissa nor Michael have ever let a car rental client know that they are the owners of their rental business. In fact, they go out of their way to let all customers 'know' that they are only employees. So concerned are they that they will be targeted for kidnapping, Melissa and Michael have created entirely false life stories about the fictitious owners of the car rental agency. Included in their own false life histories that they discuss in casual conversation with clients, is that they do not have children (in fact they have two). Melissa and Michael fear that their children might be targeted for kidnapping for ransom. Melissa often told stories about relationships she has had with long time customers that have spanned several years, in which she has maintained this false identity. When asked, neither Melissa and Michael, nor the other members of the family will admit to fear of crime, but they do all, in some dramatic ways, make allowances and changes in their daily lives to avoid crime. These allowances require constant vigilance and unease. Underlying Melissa and Michael's conjured second life is a real fear of those who are not intimately known and fear of falling victim to crime. In this situation, no one, not even long term customers are exempt from suspicion. This suspicion and constant vigilance is maintained by fear and also feeds fear. The 'need' for vigilance is used as justification for turning inward and dealing only with a close social network predominantly composed of family. This is in direct

opposition to the narratives of these individuals, which are rife with stories about happenstance meetings, or aid from other more successful individuals in their past which assisted them in long term success strategies. Recall that Beck (1992) calls this turn towards individualization a consequence of reflexive modernity. While I would not go so far as to argue that this inward turn is novel for this era, I would suggest that the crime situation is compelling many upper middle and upper class Trinidadians to eschew public spaces and unguarded social interactions. This means that lower classes are simultaneously removed from meaningful interaction with upper classes and therefore have fewer chances to make the connections with upper class individuals that might assist their upward mobility.

An examination of typical events which make up a weekend day in the life of Marilyn and her family, and to a lesser extent, in the life of Surojini show a few trends. The first is increasing isolation in order to avoid exposure to crime and people deemed to be 'risky' because of racialized stereotypes associated with those related to crime. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are increasingly isolated from those who do not occupy similar class positions. The second trend is the extent to which women in particular are forced to make more strident concessions to fear of violence. Their movements and freedom of independent movement are increasingly limited for the sake of imbuing a feeling of safety. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians make every attempt to use their social and financial capital to circumvent bureaucratic processes and administrative hurdles. The frequency of socializing has not diminished considerably from 10-

15 years ago in the mid to late 1990s, but the quality and type of socializing is more class homogenous, more safety focused and also more isolated from lower class Trinidadians than before.

The upper and upper middle-class Trinidadians I worked with, then, understand lower class Trinidadians predominantly through the lens of the media as the quintessential “risky other” from whom they must be protected. As a group, upper middle and upper class Trinidadians enjoy far greater amounts of flexibility in their daily lives than lower class Trinidadians who are compelled to meet timetables set by others and are limited in their home and private lives based on their small salaries. Upper class groups are able to employ their considerable disposable income in order to create and manage home and transportation spaces in a manner that avoids fear of crime. Further, these groups are able to manage their time so as to avoid areas understood to be ‘unsafe’ at their most risky times. Upper middle and upper class groups use contacts from within their social network wherever possible to circumvent and avoid both bothersome bureaucracy and prolonged exposure to people and areas that they understand to be unsafe. By using automobiles, eschewing public transportation, and frequenting spaces such as shopping malls over the less expensive downtown core, upper middle and upper class Trinidadians report becoming increasingly isolated from lower class individuals. To what ultimate extent this will trend will incur a further narrowing of social networks, is unknown. I would speculate that these sorts of isolating practices will lead to greater difficulties for lower classes both in accessing the

upper classes socially and professionally than before. In examining their daily lives, we can see in the actions of individuals like Marilyn the concern for producing or even conjuring safety by attempting to ameliorate circumstances which place them in contact with those deemed to be 'risky'. In the next chapter, I move from the intimacy of daily Trinidadian life to an in depth examination of the history of Trinidadian electoral politics, and the ways in which understandings of race, risk and blame are rooted in particular racial stereotypes which have caused and perpetuated a pattern of race-based voting in Trinidad.

Chapter 4: Government and Elections

In this chapter I introduce the reader to Trinidadian government function and electoral history. I also provide a historical overview from the time of Trinidad's initial colonization in order to explain the demographic make-up of the country and to chart the ways in which racial stereotypes were first generated, as a nation-making project, echoing in particular Clark's discussion of similar processes in Ecuador (Clark 1998). I begin with a short discussion of the structure of Trinidadian government, then move on to a brief colonial history, followed by a discussion of Trinidadian electoral politics from Independence in 1962, through 1986. The 1981 and 1986 elections receive special attention because the move in those elections against race based voting sets the historical stage for a similar movement in the 2007 election, and again in the election which is underway as I complete this text in 2010. I then explore elections since 1986, and in particular, the emergence of the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported United National Congress (UNC) which represents only the second major party since Independence to challenge the ruling predominantly Afro-Trinidadian supported People's National Movement (PNM). Finally, I examine two government programs, the Community Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (CEPEP) and the Unemployment Relief Program (URP). Criticism of these programs by my informants underscores the ways crime and issues of governmental mistrust have created conditions under which Trinidadians in general and upper class Trinidadians in particular are willing to throw their

support to a third party. This chapter works as a springboard for the next, in which I discuss the 2007 election, when a strong third party emerged, and speculate on the current [May 2010] election.¹⁸

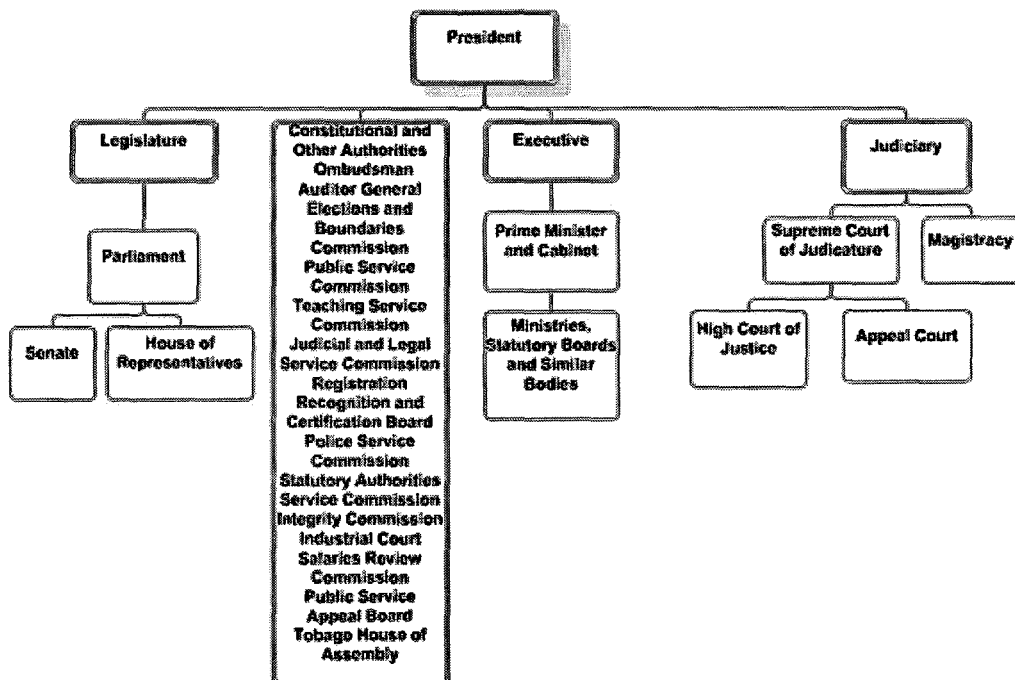
Overview of Government in Trinidad & Tobago:

Trinidad and Tobago gained Independence from Britain in 1962, and the two-island state's parliamentary democracy is modeled after that of the United Kingdom. The government structure contains executive, judiciary and legislative branches.

Illustration 1:

¹⁸ The governing PNM, under Patrick Manning, called an election almost 3 years earlier than required by the constitution, and voting took place on May 24, 2010. While I have been following these events closely, and keeping in touch with my informants during the campaign, this election and its results can only be touched on very briefly here. However, this campaign appears to echo events in the 1980's.

**Organisation of the Government
of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**



Source: <http://library2.nalis.gov.tt/Portals/0/772/govorgchart6.jpg>

In 1976 a President replaced the British monarch as head of state for Trinidad and Tobago. The President, distinct from the Prime Minister, is chosen from an electoral college containing both the Senate and the House of Representatives. There are 31 senators. These are positions appointed by the President, with 18 members chosen at the Prime Minister’s suggestion, 9 at the suggestion of the leader of the opposition and a further 11 chosen at the discretion of the President from members of the community.

The House of Representatives consist of 41 members (this was a 36 member house until 2007) who are elected for five year terms and are representative of geographic voting districts throughout Trinidad and Tobago. A

vote of no-confidence from members of the House of Representatives can direct the President to call a new election before the normal five year term is through.

The executive branch of the government is by the Prime Minister, and under her/him, the Cabinet.

The executive branch includes the Cabinet, Ministries and Departments of government, statutory authorities and governmental institutions. The Prime Minister is a member of the Cabinet. After an election, the President appoints as Prime Minister the member of the House of Representatives who commands the support of the majority of members of that House. On the advice of the Prime Minister, the President appoints members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to the Cabinet. The Cabinet controls the government of Trinidad and Tobago and is responsible to Parliament. They implement the laws passed by Parliament.

The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago is the legislative branch of the Government. The President, the House of Representatives and the Senate make up Parliament. The President is the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The Parliament has the power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Trinidad and Tobago in accordance with the Constitution (Deane and Moyer, 2009).

Finally, the judicial branch of the government is headed by the Chief Justice. This branch of government has overall responsibility for the administration of justice in Trinidad and Tobago, although it is not the court of final appeal. That responsibility lies with the Privy Council in England, although measures are in

place (but have not yet passed) which would replace the Privy Council with the newly forming Regional Caribbean Court as the ultimate authority.

Local government is broken into geographic divisions with each locality run as an independent, though government-owned corporation. These corporations are responsible for building and maintaining infrastructure such as roads and community centers and other municipal functions. Elections of members of local government are also supposed to be held every five years. The current Prime Minister, Patrick Manning has refrained from calling local elections for over two years, claiming the system needs restructuring. His wife, Hazel Manning, has been appointed Minister of Local Government. She was not elected into Parliament, only appointed by her husband. This is a technically legal, though uncommon practice.

2) Colonial Rule and Electoral and Party History to 1986

First spotted by Christopher Columbus in 1498, Trinidad was named and placed under Spanish rule. The Spaniards did enslave the native Carib and Arawak populations but until the late 1700s paid little attention to Trinidad. Trinidad's population was only 2,763 in 1783, six years after Spain opened the islands to immigration by both Europeans and white settlers from neighboring islands. At the time Amerindians made up about 74 percent of the total population. African slaves were first brought to the islands in 1517, but they constituted only 11 percent of the population (310) in 1783. This undisturbed period of time relative to other Caribbean islands meant Trinidad had a markedly

different experience with slavery, and subsequently with indentured labour than other Caribbean islands. Because it was left mostly untouched for the first few hundred years, population growth was slower than on other Caribbean islands such as Jamaica and Barbados.

The colony's 1793 entry into the sugar plantation system and the expansion of the inter-island slave trade was relatively late (Brereton, August 2007). In 1797 the British conquered the islands, which were formally ceded by Spain in 1802. By this time the original Amerindian population had been nearly entirely eradicated via the introduction of European diseases and more aggressive forms of genocide. At the time of British conquest there were approximately ten thousand slaves or about 56% of the total population of the island. Six years later slaves would make up almost 74 % of the island's population. Of those slaves, most were born in the French colonies. Trinidadian slaves were by and large not part of the 'middle passage', slaves brought directly from Africa to the Caribbean. Instead they were brought as 'human property' to the island with planters from surrounding colonies who were drawn by the abundance of land and incentives provided by colonial rulers keen to populate and turn a profit from the island (Brereton 2007). The abolition of the slave trade out of Africa in 1807 did not slow the importation of slave labour into the colony. These bans applied only to the importation of new slaves from Africa, not the internal trade of slaves between the Caribbean islands. Regional trade of slaves from other islands and colonial

holdings to Trinidad continued until the abolition of slavery itself in 1833 . This would exacerbate a long standing labour shortage in Trinidad. (Brereton 2007)

Incentives were given to free blacks from other islands after emancipation to work on plantations, but the availability of arable land, and a small but thriving cocoa producing industry which offered better wages, more flexible hours, and less difficult work for the agricultural labourer, meant that those who owned sugar plantations faced a serious post-emancipation labour crisis (Ryan 1972: 17).

Because of Trinidad's late start into sugar production, and changes in slavery laws, Trinidad's plantations were chronically under-staffed. By emancipation, slaves were not close to meeting the plantations' demand for labour. Neither had all available arable land in the island been developed. Further, because Trinidad's arable land mass is so much larger than that of other islands, it was difficult to compel freed slaves to remain working on plantations. On smaller islands, freed African slaves had few options other than to continue working on the sugar and other plantations for a wage. In Trinidad, many chose to strike out on their own, taking up available land (Munasinghe 2001: 50). Trinidadian sugar planters realized that without an influx of workers the industry would collapse. Unable to lure labour in any other way, these landowners successfully lobbied the Crown to allow for the importation of indentured workers to fill the gap and save the industry.

Indentured Workers:

In order to manage the labour shortage, colonial planters lobbied the Crown for the implementation of systems which allowed the importation of indentured workers. The most successful of these initiatives involved Indian workers. Beginning in 1844 and continuing until 1917, Indian indentured labourers quickly filled the labour gaps on the sugar plantations¹⁹. Implementing this 'Indian solution' to the labour shortage was not easy. Sugar planters had to fight with the government of the day as well as local cocoa producers, who did not require the labour influx but were taxed to pay for the program nonetheless, to justify their need for Indian indentured labour.

The arrival of Indian indentured workers, alongside prevailing racist attitudes towards African-descended former slaves, set the historical stage for an antagonism between descendents of these groups that prevails to this day. Munasinghe argues that planter discourse even prior to the arrival of Indian labourers set the tone for the creation of ethnic stereotypes that exist to some degree today. In their struggle to bring in indentured Indian labour, planters

¹⁹ Between 1853 and 1866 Chinese laborers were brought to the island as agricultural workers. Mostly artisans and tradespeople, Chinese immigrants were described as ill-suited to plantation labour (Brereton: 1981: 100). Smaller influxes of Syrian and Lebanese immigrants also came to Trinidad in the early 20th Century but like the Chinese labourers, most quickly moved from agricultural work and into service and business sectors. Small Lebanese, Syrian and Chinese populations remain in Trinidad (Ryan 1972: 18).

degraded Free Black labour as a tactic to find support for their program and also made a moral argument for the indenture process:

They claimed that the injection of a new labour force would ultimately benefit the existing labour force by improving their 'moral character'... The [Indian] immigrant's ignorance boiled down to their vulnerability as cultural aliens. The ignorance of the Negro, in contrast, alluded to an imputed mental deficiency. Such representations prefigured future descriptions and debates concerning the 'shrewd' yet 'vulnerable' East Indian and the 'Western-Oriented' yet 'childlike' Creole (Munasinghe 2001: 57).

Indian indentured workers began arriving in 1845, and by the abolition of indentureship in 1917 approximately 143,939 individuals had entered into the country (ibid: 67). Ryan argues that indentured Indian workers came with their own set of presuppositions about African descended groups, thinking them 'savage' and polluting as the appearance of 'black' skin linked Africans with followers of Rawana, "the Demon king of the Hindu Ramayana epic" (Ryan 1972: 21). These negative stereotypes alongside prevailing racist attitudes only added to feelings of antagonism between groups. Although the Indians were of different language groups, religions, castes, and geographic origins, the act of crossing the ocean to get to Trinidad, what is referred to as *kali pani* by Indian descended-Trinidadians and their descendents, was a unifying act and one which forged a common bond between Indians. Indo-Trinidadian sentiment was premised less on caste and more on what has been called "Jahaji Bhai" a term loosely translated to mean 'brotherhood of the boat'. Those who were unlikely to

have encountered or even tolerated one another in India were said to have become brothers by virtue of their common experiences, almost a re-birth, on their passage to Trinidad (Khan 2004: 129-332). Importantly, this sense of brotherhood amongst Indians, despite pleas for unity from various political entrepreneurs, was never extended to African-descended former slaves whose ancestors also underwent a brutal ocean crossing before finding themselves in the colony. The 'brotherhood' was racialized. It referred to those who would become Indo-Trinidadians only, and became an important part of the shared history focussing on the choice Indians made in coming to Trinidad, as opposed to the forced relocation of Africans through slavery (Khan, 2003). Further, those Indians and Africans who did find themselves working in similar plantations or cocoa farms were often separated, and did not work together (Brereton 1974: 37).

Trinidad's diverse population has been subject to and has engaged in producing and reproducing racial stereotypes since the area was first colonized. Most important, ideas about different racial groups are not a taboo subject of discussion. Munasinghe notes:

In Trinidad, as in Guyana, a generalized system of beliefs based on the notion of fundamental difference between Creoles [here referring to individuals of Afro-Trinidadian descent] and East Indians prevails and is expressed mainly in the form of stereotypes...It [rhetoric and stereotypes based on ethnicity] constitutes a legitimate part of popular discourse unlike, say in the United States, where the emphasis on speech control limits race rhetoric to the 'unmentionable' (2001: 128).

Dominant in this rhetoric is discussion of which ethnic groups are legitimate enough to lead the country and produce and control definitions of what it means to be Trinidadian. These stereotypes have been used, augmented and politicized by members of Trinidad's non-white ethnic groups since Independence. It is worth noting, however, that racial antagonism in Trinidad has historically been horizontal, between the two largest racial groups, and not, at least since the 1940's, directed at the former colonial rulers or plantation owners (1997:120)

This 'irony' has had longstanding ramifications not only in terms of relations between groups, but also in claims to a racialized political legitimacy and in the ongoing struggles over the definition of Trinidadian national identity. There is constant contention over which group, Africans or Indians, has contributed more to Trinidad. These discussions aim at determining which group is, as Ryan puts it the "logical successors of the old colonial elite" (Ryan 2005: viii). In her discussion of Guyana, where similar historical patterns of African slavery, Indian indentureship, and racialized voting practices have occurred, Williams argues that the subordinate groups:

developed a view of the social status hierarchy as composed of 'givers' and 'takers,' based on contributions to the development of the Colony. Their view inverted the European dominated social status hierarchy. The Europeans were seen as those who always took more than they contributed, thus falling on the lowest rung of the inverted social hierarchy...Criteria used to identify a particular ethnic group as givers or takers relative to another were linked to stereotypical views of the innate abilities and cultural propensities of the target ethnic group... (Williams 1989: 116).

These two largest racial groups in Trinidad have also experienced a historical geographic separation largely based on trends in occupation. Though by no means a perfect split, African descended groups and their descendants moved earlier than did Indians from plantations to urban centres, embracing formal European style education and the civil service and other professions (Brereton 1981: 131). Because of this Indians did not enter into work on cocoa plantations or the oil industry in nearly the same numbers. Instead, they remained longer on sugar plantations and in private business before embracing higher education and the professions (Dookeran 1974: 80). It is important to temper these statements; while these trends are pervasive, the separation between racial groups today is more often political than spatial. Miller (1994) reports that even the rural town of Chaguanas, known colloquially as the “Indian Capital” of Trinidad, has a 30% Afro-Trinidadian population, which compares closely with approximately 40% at the national level.²⁰

Independence and onwards:

A casual glance at election results from 1961 onwards shows a strong race-based split between Afro-Trinidadians, who have predominantly supported the People’s National Movement (PNM), and Indo-Trinidadians who have

²⁰ This situation may also be the result of efforts by various governments to strengthen their presence in some of these regions by such tactics as building housing estates to which only members of one racial group or another has access. My informants spoke about this type of program often, but in the absence of reliable longitudinal census and electoral data, what effect these programs has had on racial mixes in some regions is difficult to discern.

supported parties such as the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), and then the United National Congress (UNC). The Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR) and then the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), third parties which have challenged these race-based voting trends in Trinidad, play a key role in what has been a tumultuous electoral history since Independence.

Led by their first Trinidadian-born Prime Minister, and head of the People's National Movement (PNM), Eric Williams, Trinidad became an independent nation under the rule of the PNM in 1962. The PNM won 57% of the vote in the 1961 election, to a 42% showing from the Democratic Labour Party (DLP). At this time, Afro-Trinidadian identifying individuals outnumbered Indo-Trinidadians in Trinidad and the first election was marked by strong race-based voting trends. The DLP was composed primarily of Indo-Trinidadians who were worried that the PNM's planned modernization of the electoral system would disenfranchise illiterate, rural, and non African descended citizens. The DLP was headed by "Trinidad's most educated man", an Indo-Trinidadian named Rudrinath Capildeo. With a PhD and a law degree, Capildeo was seen by Indo-Trinidadians as representative of the future of Indo-Trinidadians. They rallied around Capildeo, while the DLP party tried to both court Indian votes and prove it was non-racial. In the end, it became a highly polarized electoral fight. Brereton says of the election:

This campaign was the roughest in Trinidad's history, and by far the most racist. Essentially it was a struggle between two ethnic groups for political power, and issues and policy took second

place. The PNM asserted the right of the black nationalists to govern Trinidad as the majority group...Both parties appealed to race as their major strategy...a state of emergency was declared in several areas where Indians were the majority group; naturally the DLP thought that the objective was to terrorize its supporters. It seems fair to say that the campaign was marked by an aggressive determination by the PNM to defeat the DLP by any means (Brereton 1981: 245-6).

The PNM led government enjoyed support of the international community largely because of its capitalist orientation which differed from other English speaking Caribbean states at the time. As Hintzen notes:

When the PNM was formed in 1956, party leaders explicitly rejected a socialist direction for the country. Its moderate ideological position meant that Western governments and international investors had nothing to fear if the party managed to assume control of the post-colonial state...for these reasons, the PNM had the best chances by far of succeeding the British at the head of a post-Independence government... And its proposed programs were consistent with the interests of the local business community even though the latter was represented by the political opposition (Hintzen 1989: 59).

This capitalist orientation was supplemented by an economy unique in the Caribbean. Not dependent on either export agriculture or tourism, like most other Caribbean nation-states, by 1939 oil was the country's largest source of revenue. The country experienced an additional economic boom in the 1970s through the early 1980s with a combination of further discoveries of offshore oil fields at a time when oil prices were also rising internationally (Munasinghe: 2001: 99).

PNM 'regime survival' was maintained largely through patronage projects directed at Afro-Trinidadian dominated sectors like the oil and gas industry through programs such as the Development and Environmental Works Division (DEWD) which sponsored make-work programs for irregularly and under-employed youth and young men. These programs were accessed by predominantly Afro-Trinidadians (Hintzen, 1989: 73-4, see also Birth, 1999: 40). While attempts were made to use oil surplus dollars in patronage to attract Indo-Trinidadian votes to the PNM, the general consensus among many Indo-Trinidadians who remember that time was that the government purposefully excluded Indo-Trinidadians from the benefit of oil surpluses because of racial intolerance (Munasinghe 2001: 101).

In the 1966 elections, the PNM captured nearly 53% of the popular vote and twice as many seats as the DLP, which managed 34% of the vote. There was a proliferation of smaller third parties in this election, but the PNM and DLP gathered the same proportion of seats as in the 1961 election. Again, problems with elections transparency and vote rigging were alleged. Further, there was considerable internal fighting in the DLP. Capildeo, once extremely pro-capitalist, had initially spurned advances by trade unions to join the DLP. At length, perhaps in an attempt to shore up support amongst rural union workers, Capildeo attempted to move the party towards a pro-socialist platform, and was forced to step down as leader of the opposition, though he did remain head of the DLP (Meighoo 2003:66-68)

By the elections in 1971, the PNM had a commanding 84% of the vote, to the DLP's 12.6%. The DLP was plagued with infighting and crumbling, and had also called for a boycott of many seats in the election. As a result of the boycott and the low turnout, the PNM captured every one of the 36 seats in parliament. The DLP further accused the PNM of ongoing electoral fraud with rigged voting machines (Meighoo 2003: 73-75).

In 1976, there was a proliferation of new political parties. In addition to the PNM, a new party, the United Labour Front (ULF) emerged and managed to gain an impressive 27% of the vote as opposed to the PNM's 54%. Other parties, including the DLP secured the other 29% of the vote, showing a decline in PNM support. The ULF was made up of a coalition of several predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported trade unions, particularly those that were unable to successfully unite with the DLP in the previous election. Trade unions, both representing sugar and cocoa workers and other unions such as those responsible for the functioning of public transportation, had been gaining in strength throughout the 1960s and 1970s after a decline throughout the 1940's and 1950's. Basdeo Panday, emerged as the leader of the ULF. Panday was a lawyer with strong roots in rural, predominantly Indo-Trinidadian sugar workers' unions, and commanded a great deal of support and respect. Panday emerged as a powerhouse in electoral politics, as did the rest of his family. By the 1990s,

Panday would become head of the new United National Congress, and his brother and daughter would also command seats in Parliament (Ghany 2001).²¹

Throughout the 1970s, the Trinidadian government, buoyed by the international rise in oil prices, prospered. Imports of overseas goods rose from 41% to 87% of the real GDP between 1970 and 1980 (Meighoo, 2003: 91). Trinidadians had a great deal of money to play with, and the middle and upper classes expanded and thrived.

By the elections in 1981, the opposition to the PNM was even more fractured. In addition to the ULF, with Panday at the helm, a new Party, the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR) contested the election. The ONR was comprised of the remnants of the DLP and other small parties with ideological as opposed to primarily racial reasons to oppose the PNM. The ONR were also perceived as the party which appealed to local business interests. In contrast, the ULF appealed to rural and union affiliated Indo-Trinidadians. These two groups essentially split the opposition vote, though they had agreed to work together should they be able to form a coalition. At the end of the 1981 election, the PNM had earned 53% of the vote and a commanding 26 of the 36 available parliamentary seats. The ULF with 15% of the vote and 8 seats became the

²¹ While beyond the scope of my review here, it is worth briefly noting that trade unions have played a significant role in challenging race based electoral politics in Trinidad. The Butler party, for example, which broke from the Trinidad Labour Party in the 1930's because the TLP was seen as not sufficiently radical, had as its core value racial harmony and integration (Meighoo 2003: 293-4). A clear historical analysis of the role of unionism and of internationalist socialism in Trinidadian politics has yet to be undertaken. It is worth noting that the UNC was formed by a union activist and leader, Basdeo Panday.

official opposition party. Most surprisingly, the ONR captured an 22% of the votes, but failed to win any seats in the election (Meighoo 2003: 323) .

3)Recent Elections and Shifting Alliances

The elections of 1986 were among the most surprising in Trinidadian electoral history. For the first time since its formation, the PNM lost the elections. The National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) was made up of a coalition of smaller parties including the now defunct United Labour Front (ULF) aligned with the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR) to form the NAR. This was a staggering defeat for the PNM which dropped from a 54% plurality in 1981, to just 32% in 1986 and was reduced to only three seats, from 26 in the previous election (Meighoo 2003: 53).

Several factors contributed to this defeat. First, Eric Williams, the powerful leader of the PNM since 1961 died suddenly. His death caused rifts and a vacuum in the internal power structure within the PNM. Williams was a charismatic leader and a noted orator, and tellingly, had left no obvious successor. Secondly, after a decade of extremely high economic growth, international oil prices dropped and Trinidad plunged into an economic recession, the first major economic retreat since the global depression of the 1930's. Finally, the opposition parties had united successfully and for the first time, had, through coalition, avoided strictly race-based support. Meighoo (2003) calls the 1986 NAR the

‘party of parties’. According to Lloyd Best, a theoretician for the party, the NAR drew together 9 distinct political and also racialized constituencies:²²

- the ‘Afro-Saxon’ or middle class black community grown disenchanted with the PNM’s handling of the economy;
- the Black Power Community who saw power in the unity of the black working class of the oilfields;
- residents of Tobago, who were mostly Afro-Trinidadian but possessing a “rural, nearly Indian” sensibility;
- Hindu rural Trinidadians involved in agriculture;
- urban Muslim and Christian Indo-Trinidadians;
- the small white minority of the island;
- and finally other nationalist or internationalist intellectuals and those of mixed race who find

²² I am using Meighoo’s account of Best’s characterization, without further comment (2003: 106-7). Since my focus here is on an account painted with rather broad strokes, detailed discussion of these groups is not possible. In particular, the people of Tobago, who do not play a significant role in my work to date, are a serious complicating factor in any discussion of racial and political history. Tobago is moving towards greater independence, and with a population of less than 100 000 to Trinidad’s approximately 1.3 million its role in national politics in Trinidad and Tobago has been somewhat marginal.

Many of these groups had come together under the ONR in 1981, and had earned over 20% of the vote, but it was not until coalition with Panday's ULF to form the NAR that the PNM was toppled. The combination of parties was more openly socialist in orientation and their constituencies had grown frustrated with what was considered inappropriate and excessive spending during the recession of the 1980s. Today, upper class Trinidadians recall the 1986 election as one of few in which race-based voting was trumped by a truly multi-racial coalition. It was not that voters had 'swung away' from the PNM, but rather a new electorate had come out to vote (Meighoo, 2003: 119).

The NAR did not last beyond its single term in office. Poor management strategies and an inability to make good on sweeping electoral promises made the party largely ineffectual (Meighoo, 2003: 120-1). The NAR under Prime Minister ANR Robinson, with former ULF head Basdeo Panday as Deputy Prime Minister, was forced to devalue the dollar and seek overseas loans from the International Monetary Fund. The government was further weakened by an attempted coup in 1990, including the storming of parliament and a week-long hostage-taking of more than 70 prominent politicians, members of the media and private citizens by a group called Jamaat Al-Musileem (JAM).²³

²³ The JAM exists to the present day, and is comprised of mostly Afro-Trinidadian converts to Islam. They have railed against wealthy Indian Muslims, and claim to represent and advocate for all Afro-Trinidadians, even though most

Large scale financial set-backs and internal fighting within the NAR combined with the sense of insecurity that came after the coup, which caused riots and over 20 civilian deaths, meant that by the election in 1991, the PNM was in power again (Ledgister, 1998: 117). During the NAR's short rule, Panday split from the NAR to form and lead the United National Congress (UNC), taking with him much of the rural Indo-Trinidadian vote. His split with the NAR signaled the return of a largely two party, race-based voting system. By 1991, the PNM returned to power with 45% of the vote and a commanding 21 of 36 seats in Parliament. The UNC, led by Panday, made a strong first election showing with 25% of the vote and 13 seats. The NAR, despite a strong showing of 25% of the vote, earned only 2 seats in parliament (Meighoo 2003: 304). Since the elections of 1991, the NAR has not earned more than 5% of the vote. The factions which were split in 1981 in opposition to the PNM, and united in 1986 to defeat the PNM, had fallen apart again. The UNC, with Panday at its helm, represented a return to racialized voting practices. The ideological 'others' who had united to form the NAR had fallen by the wayside (ibid: 174). Subsequent elections (until 2007) in Trinidad have been near ties between the PNM, headed by Patrick Manning, and the UNC, headed by Basdeo Panday. Both parties have appealed to racialized language to shore up votes. These tactics, and the effect they have had on middle and upper class Trinidadians will be discussed in the next chapter.

Afro-Trinidadians are Christian (Zambelis, 2009: 9). They claim their political ideology is drawn from the Black Power Movement of the 1970's. The JAM, and its leader, Abu-Bakr, are still active in Trinidad though they are a best a small part of the current political landscape.(ibid. 11).

The subsequent continued slide of the economy combined with population demographics have tended to produce very tight electoral contests since the short-lived government of the NAR. These tight races have meant that in recent years, both discourse about race/ethnicity, political legitimacy and national identity have become increasingly intertwined. In 1995, the UNC, led by Panday won the general election. Strictly speaking, the election was a tie, with both the PNM and UNC winning 17 parliamentary seats, and two seats going to the hobbled NAR. With the support of the NAR Basdeo Panday became the first Indo-Trinidadian Prime Minister in Trinidad's history. Khan argues:

While the unprecedented election of the UNC arguably created a climate where people could broach the subject of racial tension with less self-consciousness—and less commitment to the rhetoric of rainbows—the election also encouraged a discourse where the antagonism between Afro and Indo is reified and naturalized; that is, its historical foundations and material conditions became talked about as if located somewhere within heritable temperament and disposition (Khan 2004: 17-18).

The UNC rule was marked by allegations of favoritism and corruption, including a large scandal involving Panday and his wife over bribes allegedly accepted for the building of a new international airport building (Meighoo 2003). But despite this discontent, the next election, in 2000 was not so close. The UNC did not have to appeal to the NAR to form a majority. The UNC came out of the elections with 52% of the vote and 19 seats in the parliament to the PNM's 46.4% of the vote and 16 seats. The NAR earned only 1.2% of the vote, but retained one seat in Parliament (ibid: 309). Only a year later, after internal conflict in the

UNC, and allegations of corruption leveled at Panday and other high level UNC executives, another election was called. This time, as in 1995, the UNC and the PNM came close to even, with 49.9 % and 46.5% of the votes respectively (ibid: 311-312). Both the UNC and PNM earned 18 of the 36 possible seats in parliament. The result was a tie, and neither the NAR nor any other party had won a seat to break it. Then Prime Minister Panday proposed a system of power-sharing, which was rejected by the PNM. After long negotiations, the UNC and PNM had to submit the question for constitutional resolution to President Robinson (the former Prime Minister under the NAR in 1986). President Robinson appointed Patrick Manning Prime Minister, placing the PNM back in power. According to Meighoo, "the only explanation that the President gave for his choice was based on the constitutional preamble stating that 'men and society remain firm when society is based on moral and spiritual values and the rule of law'" (2003: 281). My informants told me they understood this to be a reference to the numerous charges of large scale corruption under UNC rule.

Patrick Manning and the PNM were sworn in as Prime Minister on Christmas Eve 2001. The UNC would not accept this decision and a hung parliament forced another election in 2002, this time won by a margin of 20 seats to 16 by the PNM. Panday remained leader of the opposition UNC, and by 2007, the party, after aligning with a few other smaller parties, had become the United National Congress-Alliance, or UNC-A (telection.com). While Panday's

leadership was questioned by many, both outside the UNC-A and within its ranks, he still retained considerable support among rural constituents.

By 2006, a year before the next election was due, a new, well-funded and strongly supported third party emerged into the electoral fray. Central Bank Governor Winston Dookeran quit the UNC and formed and headed the Congress of the People (COP) (CBCnews, 2007). Dookeran had been a member of the UNC, and was even named political leader of the UNC while Panday fought corruption charges during his time as Prime Minister. Widely respected, my informants repeatedly told me that Dookeran was nominated unopposed by Panday to that position because of his reputation for steady and 'clean' practices. At length, Dookeran struggled with the Panday backed side of the UNC executive and by 2006, he announced his intention to leave to lead the newly formed Congress of the People (COP). Dookeran's split from the UNC was messy and public. As he left for the COP, many former UNC and, importantly, many independent senators and MPs left with him. Several former PNM representatives also backed the new party (Chan Tack 2006). Like 1986, the third party in this election was grounding its appeal on a platform of racial unity. I turn to this election in detail in the next chapter.

My discussion of the electoral history of Trinidad from Independence to 1981 shows that racialized voting patterns and strong personalities have dominated politics here. I include this history as a preface to my larger argument regarding the 2007, and ultimately 2010 national elections in Trinidad in which

for the second time in the country's history, an ostensibly non-racial political party has taken over the reins of power²⁴. As in any state with two large minority groups who have been historically voted based on understandings of that racial position (see, Fiji and Guyana for further examples in Hintzen, 1989), voting patterns tend to change only with considerable upset which jars the electorate into action. In the case of the NAR's historic win in 1986, the combination of Williams' death and considerable financial crisis created a situation in which Trinidadians were willing to abandon long held voting patterns. In Trinidad's 2007 and 2010 elections, I argue the upswing in crime factored into people's apparent willingness to break with traditional voting patterns.

The PNM has always been strongly supported by Afro-Trinidadians who, from the time of Independence until 1990 were the demographic majority in Trinidad, and held office until 1986, when a combination of a unified opposition which included a large rural Indo-Trinidadian minority in addition to a diverse set of ideologically based 'racial' groups, a downturn in the economy and the death of a charismatic leader in Eric Williams proved too many obstacles to overcome. Although only a single term government, the non-racial NAR opened up the possibility of unity based governance for the first time since the 1930's. Subsequent elections returned to patterns of racialized voting but these tensions have also given impetus to the emergence of a political alternative. I present this historical information here to support my argument that Trinidadian politics stand

²⁴ The 2010 election occurred during the final stage of writing this dissertation. I include a partial analysis of the election in chapter 5.

at a precipice. The 2007 and 2010 elections are the subject of the next chapter. However, in order to understand the rhetoric and the campaign strategies of that election, I want to conclude my discussion here with consideration of two government programs which my informants told me, repeatedly and passionately, exemplified the failure of racialized voting and race focused governance.

4) Elections, Programs and the Little Problem of Trust

The Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (CEPEP) began as a government sponsored program in 2002. One of the stated goals of the program was to relieve stress on the environment caused by dumping of waste in public areas and to improve the condition of the local environment. The goal was to employ unskilled and semi-skilled workers on beautification projects, coastal area clean-ups and for “restoration and maintenance of open spaces” (Ottley 2006:3). A report in 2009 by the Ministry of Culture and Gender Affairs describes CEPEP as a means of economic support to ‘otherwise unemployable’ women, but does not indicate what defines participants as ‘unemployable’ (Ibid: 10). This sort of ambiguity in project description underlies some of the problems with transparency and purpose that the programs holds. At the time of inception, responsibility for the program fell under the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment, but responsibility for its day-to-day operation was managed by Trinidad and Tobago’s Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL), a company owned by the Trinidadian government which was also under the supervision of the Ministry of Public

Utilities and the Environment. Work would be identified and contracts given. As described in Cabinet documents, the program would function as follows:

Project activities under the Program will be contracted out to micro and small contractors who would engage multiple Project Teams comprising of semi-skilled and unskilled unemployed individuals in the respective local communities...The contractors would be responsible for the overall management of the operations of the project teams. It is proposed that these contractors would benefit from startup capital (as a loan) provided by the government, but would eventually evolve towards receiving appropriate support from the soon to be established Small and Micro Enterprise Development Company Limited. (Ottley, quoting from a note to

Parliament, 1996: 3)²⁵

Workers who qualify for the program are in turn paid by the contract holder out of these funds. My informants report that they were skeptical about the program from its inception and a report released by the PNM on the program confirmed some of the often voiced concerns:

- 64% of CEPEP's workers are Afro-Trinidadian, 13% are Indo-Trinidadian, and 23% are mixed
- A 'typical' CEPEP employee is a 42 year old single unwed woman with primary school education.
- "49% of employees who were hired more than 4 years ago were still part of the program; 30% do not believe they can

²⁵ This program echoes one of the five Millenium Development Goals promulgated by the United Nations following a global summit in 2000 (<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>). The language of these programs needs to be understood as serving both local national politics and the politics of international partnerships, in particular with the United Nations Development Program.

obtain another job... For about 73% of workers, CEPEP is their sole means of income” (Ali 2009).

These statistics confirmed the opinion of many with whom I spoke who see CEPEP is little more than a hand out to poor Afro-Trinidadians, a form of make-work rather than a real and forward looking employment program. Concerns about fiscal mismanagement of the program, including lack of financial oversight and favouritism in the awarding of contracts which my informants told me have been longstanding were born out by an audit in 2006 (Ottley 2006).

Unlike CEPEP, which is focused on particular kinds of community enhancement projects, the Unemployment Relief Program (URP) provides unskilled and semi-skilled unemployed workers a stipend, paid directly to them, in exchange for work in various trades and fields as a way of enhancing skills and employability.²⁶ There are specialized women’s programs in the URP as well, but women are not limited only to those programs. Anyone who is over 18 with valid identification and who is out of work can apply for either CEPEP or URP. According to the government website, the overall goal of each programs is to “provide short-term employment for unemployed persons in the community” (Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago 2009).

²⁶ The URP stipend, which amounts to approximately half the normal hourly wage in Trinidad, is not considered a salary or wage. Instead, it is an income supplement or support, while the worker is undergoing training. In contrast, workers in the CEPEP program are paid a wage comparable, and in some instances even higher, than the normal hourly wage, along with benefits and vacation pay.

Criticism of the programs focused not only on problems of management and accountability. These criticisms have led to budget reductions for the programs, and their re-organization, including placing CEPEP under the control of the Prime Minister's wife, who had been appointed a cabinet minister. More interesting for me, however, were ideological criticisms of the program, rather than the more explicitly practical complaints about transparency and vote-buying.²⁷

As early as 2006, the media was reporting on complaints about CEPEP, alleging that the funds distributed through the program were being used to purchase guns and that the programs were causing a labour shortage around the country (Alexander 2006). This report was somewhat confirmed by complaints from my informants that they could not find labourers to work a full day, "because everyone wants to work, or barely work for CEPEP". Many middle and upper class individuals whom I interviewed and interacted with desperate to hire labourers to assist with yard and house work, and businesses whose labour force was drawn from the unskilled and semi-skilled cohort were finding they could not compete with these programs. One woman, Jeannie, whose experiences I discuss in more detail in chapter 6, was burgled by the labourer she had hired to work as a

²⁷ Criticisms of these programs for mismanagement and accountability can also be ideological, of course. Indeed, as Roy and Wong (2000) show in their analysis of similar Canadian job creation programs, both CEPEP and URP actually have the potential to be very effective poverty and employment reduction programs, since they both focus on enhancing the capacity of public sector based work sites to generate employment to meet short term needs and to buttress against cyclical downturns in other areas. This potential effectiveness is never directly addressed in my informants criticisms.

gardener. When friends and neighbors pointed out troubling signs of breaches of personal and household safety related to this man, Jeannie countered that she did not know how or when she could find someone else to work for her.

The perception among my informants was that because CEPEP workers were never expected to work a full day or to work very hard for their pay, most chose to remain attached to those programs rather than take on full-time employment. Raymond's opinion of these programs was echoed by many of my informants:

Raymond: It destroys the work ethic. Because that CEPEP/URP thing filters up, services, government ministry. And then, the absurdity, is so glaring. On one hand you have a labour shortage and on the other hand you have a hundred thousand young men sitting on the side of the road and doing nothing. This is going to come to a head. Very soon. Within ten years they are going to have to import mechanics, electricians, technicians, because everybody will have migrated. Everybody who can do it will have migrated, or they will be locked out of it.

For Raymond, the frustration was not at 'lazy youth' but at a system that perpetuated a reliance on handouts and patronage. Most of my contacts were in favour of a non-labour based welfare system for those that they felt were truly needy or for whatever reason could not work, highlighting an ideological distinction between being unemployed and being needy. This distinction often took on a racialized flavor. Frequently when talking about the ineffectiveness of

CEPEP and URP workers, people would shift from 'lazy CEPEP' and other workers to 'them negro people' or other, more racialized language. A more subtle form of distinction emerges from comments such as Marilyn's reaction to the report which showed the 'typical CEPEP employee' was an unwed single mother supporting a household of 4 or more. Why, she asked should this woman be on the streets sweeping trash or painting rocks while her children are left home unsupervised. Doesn't this, Marilyn wondered, make both the woman and her children more vulnerable? A strong hint of "those people" pervaded some aspects of the criticism of these two programs. However, to be clear, this attitude was not simple minded racism, but instead arose from the widely held perception that both CEPEP and URP funds were facilitating crime and other gang activity as well as failing to meet the goals it purported to uphold in terms of skill building and transitioning to effective long term employment. Newspaper accounts of different kinds of fraud associated with CEPEP and URP, and their use of gang networks in poorer neighbourhoods were widespread during my time in Trinidad, and my informants commented on them often. While the veracity of specific allegations are difficult to determine, something even the courts in Trinidad acknowledged in dealing with violent crimes believed to be connected to the operation of these programs, I am confident in asserting that the *belief* both programs were corrupt and that they were exacerbating the crime situation was widespread throughout the country, regardless of class and racial affiliations.

CEPEP and URP funds were spent overwhelmingly in the poorer Afro-Trinidadian areas of the country. This pattern of distribution is not in itself surprising, since these are also the areas with the highest levels of poverty and unemployment. The program is similar to 'workfare' projects worldwide (see National Union Research, 2000 for discussion of similar project's in Canada). Instead of receiving welfare or unemployment insurance benefits, which do not require participants to work to earn money, CEPEP workers are required to participate in a daily work project. The program was initiated by Patrick Manning and the PNM shortly after re-gaining power from the UNC in the 1990s. The programs have had real effect on unemployment numbers. A glance at unemployment statistics from 2000, through the program's inception in 2002 and through to most recent statistics in 2008 shows a steady and significant annual drop in overall unemployment numbers, from a total of 79 000 unemployed men and women in 2000 to just 29 000 unemployed men and women in 2008. This is a drop from approximately 11% to approximately 4.5% in the space of just 8 years (UNData). Unemployment numbers have crept up since 2008 and the current unemployment rate is estimated to be 7.5%. Whether this increase correlates with cuts to CEPEP and URP programs enacted since 2006 cannot be positively shown, but suffice to say these statistics indicate that there has been a significant decrease in unemployment (and thus in semi-skilled or unskilled labour) since the inception of the program. This correlates with my own data that which shows that upper middle and upper class Trinidadians believe there to be a

labour shortage, and are experiencing real difficulty in hiring labour. Further, my informants believe that the quality of CEPEP and URP work is extremely limited, and that these programs provide few long terms strategies to assist the people who are enrolled in the program.

It was the notion that contracts were often given directly to gang leaders and others involved in crime that troubled my informants most deeply. This practice was not only manifestly bad policy, my informants thought, but because these contracts were also lucrative, people were concerned the practice could contribute to increases in inter-gang crime as leaders competed for access to the programs. The events surrounding the death of one gang leader demonstrate the basis for this concern.

On September 12, 2007, the murder tally for the year stood at 232 individuals; this figure did not mark a sharp increase over the previous year. (Trinidad Newsday 2007). A few days later, on September 16th 2007, about 6 weeks before the national election, Kerwyn “Fresh” Peters was shot 28 times at a public party in Laventille that he had sponsored and funded. Fresh was the leader of one of the biggest drug and weapon implicated gangs in the country, ‘G-Unit’. G-Unit is based in Laventille, considered by not only my informants but almost everyone else I met to be among the most dangerous areas in the country.

By the end of the calendar year, two and a half months after Fresh was killed, the official murder toll had risen from 232 to 395 (Renne 2008). To put that increase in perspective, approximately 41% of the year’s total murders took

place after Fresh's murder. Fresh was believed to have kept murders and crime at bay under his leadership. As leader of one of the most powerful gangs in the area, he acted as a sort of patron for the area, because as the Trinidad Express reported, Fresh was also the holder of a \$2.5 million dollar state funded contract (Gonzales, 2007). The lucrative government contracts Fresh and other gang leaders were known to have received were understood throughout the country and in the press to be payment to keep some modicum of control in the area. Fresh was described after his death as a "gang leader turned community leader" (Sorias 2008). Fresh was powerful through the illicit enterprises his gang conducted as well as the licit control of lucrative contracts. Unable or unwilling to curb crime in the area through the police and the judiciary, government officials instead tried to prevent the situation from escalating by working *with* individuals like Fresh.²⁸ After his murder, Fresh was lauded by priests and others as a strong 'community leader', responsible for keeping minor disputes and violence down and for sponsoring community events and helping those in the area who were in need. Few mentions of his ties to crime were made (Gonzales, 2007). The year following Fresh's

²⁸ Pisani (2003) notes, with respect to intervention in the HIV/AIDS crisis in various parts of the world, that where public health and criminal culture intersect, it is both rational and prudent to work with existing networks of control and order, at least as one approach. In thinking about the connections between gangs and CEPEP and URP, I am struck that a program which appears to have been mostly about patronage did open an opportunity, even if an unstable one, for approaches to both poverty and crime grounded in a model of community effectiveness. However, since my main interest here is in what my informants thought of all this, I will not explore this matter further, but it is a challenging and important issue ripe for future investigation and analysis.

killing saw 550 murders, a staggering increase from the year prior. The Homicide Bureau estimated a full 70% of them were gang related (Seuraj 2008).

In February of 2007, I spoke with Dr. Sammy, a regional corporation head in the far south of the country. He was incensed at the new morality that seemed to have sprung up after Fresh's murder:

Geer: What I'm hearing is that there are government contracts going to these gang leaders.

Dr. Sammy: That is public knowledge, the fellow they call Fresh, that they talk so much about, that's "bringing peace" [Dr. Sammy made 'air quotes' with his fingers at the phrase 'bringing peace'].

Geer: The one who was killed in November?

Dr. Sammy: Yeah, he had a ten million dollar contract to build apartments. Ten million dollars!

Geer: Do you think he ever built anything?

Dr. Sammy: I don't know, all I know is the priest when Fresh died talked about how Fresh was bringing peace to the area and so on, and that he was part of the solution...that's what we've been reduced to, people are accepting that as solutions. Without getting to the reason why, and the URP projects and so on, giving contracts to gangs.

For Dr. Sammy, there was nothing to be gained by making alliances with individuals such as Fresh. This complicated and often dual role of gang leaders/community patron is not novel. Bourgois describes similar seemingly contradictory positions in his study of urban gang members in the United States (1996). The scramble for power after Fresh's murder led to an increase in gang related murders in the area. By 2008, gang members argued that the power vacuum left by the deaths of leaders like Fresh and others had caused youth as

young as 13 to become involved in gangs and argued that most killings were retributive. Those murders in turn filled the news and daily conversations of individuals who, while by virtue of their class position, education, occupation and living situation are unlikely to ever be affected directly by these events, but nevertheless felt victimized. For the people with whom I spoke, frustration and anger were leveled not only at those who called Fresh a 'community leader' but at the government for putting the country, these neighbourhoods, and the speakers themselves, in a position of collaboration by virtue of the misallocation of their tax dollars.

Discussion:

While the middle and upper class people with whom I spent my time did not believe themselves to be direct targets of murder or gang violence, and while they had no interest in claiming government patronage dollars for their own remuneration, they were incensed at the ways in which government was implicated in both of these things. For many, the particular sort of corruption was indicative of the downfall of the country and added to the myriad reasons that they could not feel safe or secure. Evidence of government money fuelling gang violence was used by elite Trinidadians to justify their own preoccupation with security.

Beyond the fear of becoming victimized by crime, complaints were most often framed in terms of decreasing human capital and relations between those decreases and the future financial viability of their own situation and that of the

nation at large. Simply put, beyond the increases in crime, my informants saw the systems of patronage and corruption as reducing the capacity for 'honest' work among the lower classes. Many told me that they understood their own success as being contingent on the success and upward mobility of those of the lower classes who have been ghettoized and marginalized by the corruption within these programs. My informants also recognize the ways in which these processes are linked to particular political parties. This is not a simple linear equation, however. While talk of corruption, and comments of "look how low we have had to sink" were commonplace, this talk was interwoven with talk that was more subtle in its navigations of fear, stereotypes, and criticism of governments and politicians.

I interviewed Delilah and her mother, Jane, together. Delilah was in her early 60s, and her mother, Jane, in her mid 90s at the time of the interview. They lived together in an extremely affluent suburb of Port of Spain, both having retired in Trinidad after leaving for separate countries in the 1960s and 70s. They were both adamant that the middle class 'bourgeois angst' about crime was ridiculous and did not affect their lives in the slightest. Delilah in particular argued that as long as reasonable precautions were made, as one would make in any big city, safety was possible. The problem, she thought was that people assumed that Trinidad was still the village they grew up in, and it most assuredly was not. Jane, at 94, still drove herself. She said that barring taking care that no one followed her into the yard when she pulled in, sometimes as late as 1 am,

after visiting friends, she was not concerned for her safety. Deliah said they employed several people from Laventille and they all 'loved her mother like their mother, and vice versa'. "Don't get me wrong", she said "this is not a case of loving your nigger maid. This is genuine affection". The following is a section of our discussion. I asked what concessions they felt they have had to make faced with the recent spate of crime.

Deliah (daughter early 60s): I just carry on. I live in Trinidad the way I lived in [overseas], I don't make any concessions, at all.

Geer: Except for the gate and the bars on the house?

Deliah: Well, they were here.

Jane (mother mid 90s): Well, you have to, because you don't know who's parking down the street, there's a chance.

Deliah: You can always deter people.

Jane: So if they pass and see dogs and barriers they say, I won't try.

Geer: I suppose you don't really hear of home invasions in [this area].

Deliah: That's another thing. It's an important point. It's where you live. I mean it could happen, it could, because it could happen to us anywhere, but I don't feel particularly...

Jane [cutting in]: If you leave your house wide open and you go out, well you look for it, because they see the chance and they come in.

Deliah: I must tell you the other thing that we find is that native Trinidadians [as opposed to return migrants like herself and her mother] treat people less well off than they, terribly. We see, I mean, we had to rebuild this house because it was an old house, it was virtually rocking. And we had to deal with all kinds of people. Two hundred people have been through. Everyone says wherever you have

builders, you have thieves later. We haven't had that. And you know what, these people who come, they look like absolute shit. They look like demons.

Geer: And they're coming from nearby? From places like Laventille?

Delilah: All of them! They're coming from Laventille to work here. But you know what, if you treat people with a bit of respect and regard, they treat you well. And we have had no trouble. And I'm telling you, have we Mommy?

Jane: I've been here alone for three years...

Delilah: And she was here overseeing the construction, the finishing the building. Mommy was here on her own with these people.

Jane: And fighting with them.

Geer: I have heard a lot of people say 'Oh god I would love to have a gardener if I could find one'.

Delilah: It's true. They're hard to find. I must tell you something. This guy, most of the people are foreign, no, I tell a lie, two are natives, but older. Young Trinidadians are difficult. They don't know how to do anything. I mean this morning we had to call a plumber because we had a problem with our guest toilet and he comes and he's a nice guy, but...he brings three young men outside. Do they know how to behave?! No! I went to open the door and this young man is bracing on the car, the other is leaning like this [leans back with arms crossed in front of chest], and looking up and down my legs, and the other has gone to lean on the arm of the tree.

Geer: He climbed on your tree?

Delilah: He's sitting on the base of the tree like this [indicates a slouched, reclined position]. You don't behave like that. People get scared, because they're kind of taking over. I didn't like the other one looking at my legs!

Geer: So, what was the issue? It sounds as if you're saying they were kind of occupying too much space in an aggressive way?

Delilah: They don't know how to behave.

Jane: One of them had a criminal look to his face.

Delilah: And then people get scared. So I ran around quickly and shut all the doors. And I told the housekeeper to tell you [Jane], 'Let none of them in here except the older guy'. Young people are not like the older people. Young Trinidadians are...

Geer: I suppose there is only so much the older plumber can do with his apprentices if all the other inputs are bad?

Deliah: And that's true of most of the young people who we have dealings with. They just, they belong to another generation, and they're angry, they don't know how to behave. They are unschooled in every single sense of the word. It's difficult. That class of young people, it's very difficult.

This exchange exemplifies the contradictory and often confusing attitudes towards racialized, crime-ridden areas like Laventille, and to the individuals who come from these places. Jane and Deliah were both proud of the level to which they 'mixed' with lower class workers and individuals from 'bad' areas like Laventille. And yet, their narratives, and the back and forth between them as they explain the situation of feeling uncomfortable with younger workers shows the level of complexity and contradiction underlying these interactions. These contradictions are grounded not simply in race but in a sexualized otherness and a standard of danger which is racialized. When Delilah exclaims that she did not like the man 'looking at her legs', she expresses more than the discomfort of the moment. The underlying implication is that the real or imagined performed

masculinity of the workers from Laventille, and other risky men is both uncontrolled and uncontrollable. Delilah has internalized notions of lower class men being overtly sexual and sexualized, a trait implicit in 'outside' or transient lifestyles. Delilah expresses her concern broadly, stating 'they don't know how to behave' and 'people get scared', generalizing the threat from the single moment in which she was uncomfortable being viewed in a manner she interpreted as sexual, to include all lower class men. Delilah and Jane feel strongly that they should not judge all Laventilleans as a single group. But after first stating that just a bit of respect and regard is necessary to ensure safety, they describe feelings of anxiety and fear while rushing through the house to close windows and doors after seeing the men accompanying the plumbers. Their desire to hire workers from 'bad' areas such as Laventille is both tempered and tempestuous and is rife with distinction based on class as well. When Delilah says that the men 'didn't know how to behave' she is projecting her own social class position's notion of right and wrong onto the actions of the men leaning on her tree and standing in her yard. The body of the man from Laventille is doubly stigmatized as overly sexual and unruly, associations which correlate with other stereotypes regarding the lower classes. Here, the very performance of male masculinity of the lower classes is interpreted, internalized and understood as threatening to upper class women. This is an issue I explore in chapter six. These interpretations of the bodies of lower class men have significant consequences. Not only are these stereotypes comparable to those created around slavery, when the bodies of slaves

were likened to little more than barely controlled animals, but the bodies of upper class women are re-conjured and defined again as at threat (“they’re taking over”) from those who cannot or will not behave appropriately (see Beckles 1999 for construction of stereotypes surrounding black slave masculinity). The result is an unintentional recreation of stereotype in which a particular classed and racialized masculinity is interpreted as threatening and as grounds for isolation. This further distances Trinidadians in upper classes from those most stigmatized in the lower classes.

Conclusions:

CEPEP and URP are not the only programs or issues that upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians find problematic²⁹. They are however, emblematic of the ways in which frustrations about lower classes and the nation are understood and expressed.. My informants link actual and perceived increases in crime to the trade in narcotics and gang violence. These problems are in turn linked to illicit dealings with programs such as CEPEP and URP. This chapter has offered a sketch of post-Independence electoral politics, and in particular, an overview of challenges to race-focused campaigning and voting. In providing this sketch my goal has been to familiarize readers with the key players in the 2007 election, which was underway during my fieldwork. Discussions with my informants during and immediately following the campaign were strategically

²⁹ Of particular importance in recent months is the Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDECOTT) scandal, in which contracts for large construction and other projects were allegedly mismanaged by prominent members of the PNM.

important in allowing me to see the historical shape of racialized political practice in Trinidad, and in particular, for allowing me to better understand the ideological issues underlying criticisms of government anti-poverty programs which have been contentious since their inception. With this background in mind, I want to turn, in the next chapter, to a discussion of the 2007 election, which like the elections of 1981 and 1986, may prove to be a watershed moment in the continuing development of practices of governance in Trinidad.

Chapter 5: 2007 National Elections: Risk, Blame and Crime

In this chapter I present a detailed examination of the 2007 National Election in Trinidad. I was fortunate to be present during the campaigning and aftermath of this election. The 2007 election was the first since 1981 in which two strong, ideologically different parties opposed the People's National Movement. I also present some analysis of the 2010 election, called suddenly and which took place as I finished this dissertation. The result of the strong, though split opposition in the 2007 election was that issues of class, in addition to standard Trinidadian appeals to race were introduced into the political discourse. I first briefly examine each party's platform for the 2007 election, noting their vast similarities, before an in-depth examination of the tactics each party used during their campaigns. Next, I unpack the reactions of upper class Trinidadians to the results of the election and to the machinations of the various political parties during their campaigning. Finally, I examine the 2010 National Election in which a united Congress of the People (COP), United National Congress (UNC) opposition successfully defeated the People's National Movement (PNM). I also speculate as to whether this might represent a fundamental shift away from race-based voting in Trinidad.

Party Platforms in the 2007 National Election:

In this section, I briefly outline the campaign policies of the three major political parties that contested the 2007 elections. It is important to note that there are few substantial differences between the parties in terms of their long and short term visions of the future. Unlike North America and most of Western Europe,

differences between parties in Trinidad are rarely about ideological differences on the left wing versus right wing spectrum. Instead 'right to rule' is imbued with arguments about racial fitness, risk, and for this election, class.

All three parties, (UNC, PNM, and COP) campaigned on platforms that were primarily focused on crime reduction. All three promised updates and improvements to the system of DNA analysis screening and the implementation of a database to assist police services (Browne, 2007). All three promised upgrades to weapons and training for police officers and significant investments in legislative budgets in order to increase the number of prosecutions (ibid). In most ways, the plans of these parties were very close. The Congress of the People (COP) differed slightly in suggesting 'citizen's voices' panels to comment and provide feedback on the crime situation, and the PNM suggested a pay increase to those officers on the police force who had higher than average conviction rates. All three parties suggested more strict laws for those involved with firearms, gangs, drug trafficking and murder (Browne 2007).

Each of the three parties was also concerned with reducing rising food costs, the inevitable drop in the price of oil and natural gas on the international market, and the traffic situation. Each party promised various methods of easing traffic congestion and traffic related road accidents: a rapid rail system, alternate sea ferries from the south of the country to Port of Spain, and other infrastructure investments to ease traffic. Their campaign promises were in many ways similar. The debates between Trinidadians 'on the ground' or on the national news and in

national media that focused on the content of the election promises were far fewer than discussions of particular parties. Instead, debate surrounded each party's fitness to rule based on a specific set of grievances. The PNM, in general, was maligned as racist, inefficient, and too willing to spend money on projects that were not viable or necessary. The UNC-A, also maligned as racist, potentially corrupt, and with Panday at the head, were not considered fit to rule. The Congress of the People, the new party, was mostly blasted with allegations of elitism, class based interest, an allegations of not 'knowing the country', and questions about COP leader Winston Dookeran's ability to find and sustain support among the working class and the poor, something my informants thought key to effective governance.

The Peoples National Movement (PNM) campaign preceding the 2007 election was based on an updated version of their Vision 2020 plan which was put into place prior to the 2002 election. The plan's primary goal is to bring Trinidad up to the status of 'developed' or first world standards by the year 2020. 20/20, the term used to describe 'perfect eyesight' is here used as a metaphor for the future. I discuss this plan in greater detail in chapter nine. Besides fighting crime and updating the legislative process to more efficiently prosecute criminals, the plan has a heavy focus on modernization by way of investment in infrastructure and particularly in the development of several non-petrochemical related industries. In particular, Manning was keen to introduce smelter and steel manufacturing facilities in the southern area of Trinidad and to end what he called

an unprofitable sugar industry. Further, plans to increase the number of subsidized and affordable housing units were among the Vision 2020 priorities (Government of Trinidad and Tobago 2007). For the most part, the PNM relied on its record of growth. The GDP of Trinidad had been increasing at over 9% per year for nearly five years at the time of the election, and the PNM's basic election platform was that they would continue the good work they had begun since their takeover in 2002. Elections songs like "PNM, we stepping up with you!" focused on the continued upward trajectory of the nation since the PNM regained power. Manning is a strong public speaker, and at frequent campaign stops, often as many as three rallies per day in the weeks leading up to the 2007 election, Manning would rouse the crowd with shouts of "This is PNM country"!

The UNC-A campaign was considerably more complicated, as the following section will show, but they ran on a platform mostly concerned with fighting crime and reducing rates of home invasions, burglaries, kidnapping and murders. The UNC, led by Panday had early in the race aligned with several smaller parties in an attempt to broaden his support base. They changed their name to the United National Congress-Alliance (UNC-A) for the duration of the campaign, but reverted to the United National Congress (UNC) after the election. The UNC-A platform, was, as the others were, focused on crime reduction, but also on establishing alternate plans for economic diversification away from the petroleum and natural gas industries. Unlike Manning's PNM, the UNC-A was interested in revitalizing, not shutting down the sugar industry, a campaign point

which was exceedingly important to Panday's historic voter base, rural union-member, Indo-Trinidadian sugar producer followers.

The Congress of the People's (COP) campaign was different in that its plan for innovation, at least in the party platforms was heavily focused on development of human resources capacity amongst the Trinidadian population. Besides the focus on crime, similar to the platform of the other two parties, the COP platform included a proposal for an overhaul of the CEPEP program in order to make it more than a work for welfare program, but to allow for skills training and provide routes for advancement for participants and greater transparency in the program's function. The plan was explicitly against the PNM's proposed smelter project and other large scale industrial projects proposed by the PNM, particularly those which created only unskilled labour positions and which had what the COP understood to be a negative environmental impact. A second campaign platform was one of 'community governance' allowing for greater political and social participation of all citizens, and updating legislation to ensure protection against discrimination based on race, sex or sexual orientation (COP Manifesto 2006). Finally, the COP did not plan to scrap the sugar industry, but to revitalize it considerably, investing in 'value-added' after market industries for the product (Trinidad Breaking News, accessed October 13, 2007).

The key point in this brief overview of the three main party's campaign promises for the 2007 national election is that there was a high degree of similarity between all three campaigns. The content of political debate among

upper class Trinidadians centered on which party would be able to fulfill these promises, which one would not squander or misuse the government treasury, and which one would not appeal to the most venal racist sentiment in order to shore up support among an electorate concerned about crime. In the sections that follow, I discuss the UNC-A, COP and PNM campaign tactics in greater detail. In particular, I focus on the machinations of the UNC-A during this election cycle. Most threatened by the introduction of the COP, the UNC-A used a series of tactics to try and minimize any votes lost to the COP, which in turn solidified their position as a party which appealed to veiled sentiments of race, risk, and blame.

Campaign Tactics:

As I have said above, the most prominent campaign issue in the 2007 Trinidadian election campaign was crime and fear of crime. Throughout the election campaign, discourses using and capitalizing on prevailing notions of risk were used by campaigning political leaders in relation to crime, race and class in order to shore up support among their “traditional” constituencies. This strategy was by no means a new phenomenon.

I suggest that novel in this 2007 election were the ways in which Panday, leader of the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported UNC-A, used tropes of risk and violence to try and persuade middle class and above voters to continue to support his party based on racial affiliation. Panday invoked notions of class, and specifically, charges of elitism, to attempt to sway those voters understood to be

supporting the COP instead of the UNC-A. Panday's discourse, in my view indicated that he worried that class would trump race as a deciding factor in the 2007 election, causing him to lose a substantial portion of his electoral base. As shown in the previous chapter, class has rarely entered into discussions of the 'right to govern' in Trinidad. Hintzen, argues: "The evolution of ethnic politics [in Trinidad] means that the middle class in each ethnic group is allied with the lower class of that group not with its confreres on the other side of the segmental boundary" (Ledgister, quoting Hintzen 1989: 123).

Creation of the Congress of the People (COP):

The Congress of the People (COP). By no means the only third party—the COP, headed by a former Central Bank governor and Indo-Trinidadian former UNC executive, Winston Dookeran, emerged 14 months prior to the November 2007 election and became very popular, very quickly. Dookeran was everything that Panday was not. He was neither a great nor motivational speaker, neither skilled at word play nor *picong*, a stylized rhetorical form of discourse that is both light and teasing and meant for the amusement of the audience at large. He did not seem to fit within the boisterous tradition of charismatic leadership in Trinidad and throughout the English speaking Caribbean (Allahar, 1995). Dookeran and the COP did however, adopt a non-racial strategy for campaigning which positioned them as the 'thinking person's party'. Dookeran in particular had a reputation for honesty and integrity. He had been the head of Trinidad's central bank, and he was nominated unopposed by Basdeo Panday to lead the

UNC while Panday dealt with legal issues stemming from allegations of corruption. Dookeran may not have been charismatic, but he was and continues to be representative of a certain steady honesty.

While perceived to be made up of primarily Indo-Trinidadians, the COP was resolute in attempting to court all races. In that way, the COP progressed in a manner quite similar to the ONR in the 1981 elections.

Dookeran took with him several prominent and long time members of the UNC when he defected to the COP, and also importantly, several independent senators also joined his party (Douglas S. 2007). Allahar notes “Owing to the very highly-developed racialized consciousness that exists in Trinidad (and no doubt in other Caribbean countries too), one finds a general tendency to minimize the importance of class as a political or even an analytical category [by politicians and the public]” (2005: 22). This tendency to minimize class can be detrimental, as class and race are often mutually reinforcing. In short, while Indians have historically voted for the ‘Indian’ party, they also make up a greater portion of the middle class. Therefore in this instance voting for one’s ‘race’ is often similar for voting to one’s class, but with class as the unmarked term, an inarticulate presence. This tendency to minimize class can be detrimental to the emergence of political consciousness based on shared social and economic interests because with class as the unmarked term, an inarticulate presence, it cannot be effectively spoken and so those interests cannot be made present in political deliberations.

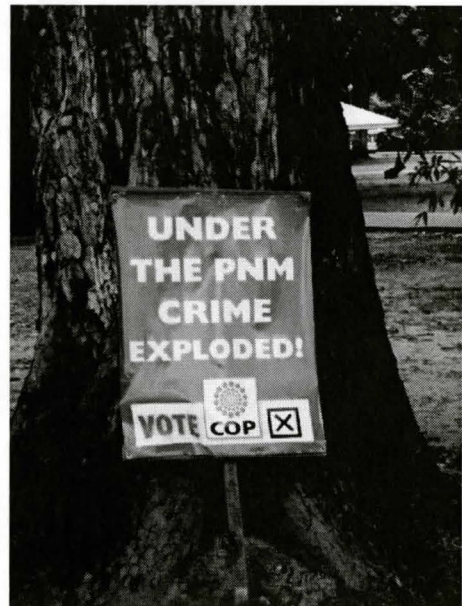
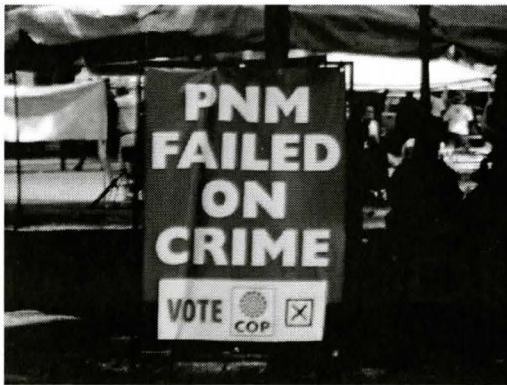
The creation of the Congress of the People (COP) was an explicit attempt to shift that system of allegiances, and Panday and the UNC-A saw this quite clearly.

The 2007 election had several competing class conflicts at work simultaneously. For the UNC-A's campaign strategy in relation to the COP, this was a class tug of war within a particular racialized boundary. Class suddenly became not only very important- but also linked to notions of 'real Indo-Trinidadianess' in a way that had previously been reserved for discussions of race alone. In Trinidad, political representation and economic success do not necessarily go hand in hand. Afro-Trinidadians disproportionately make up the lowest economic classes, while Indo-Trinidadians make up much of the middle and upper class. Recall, the Afro-Trinidadian supported PNM party was in power at the start of the election and with two exceptions had been the ruling party for the country's 45 years since Independence. In short, people talk about an Afro-Trinidadian party and an Indo-Trinidadian party, but they could just as easily talk about a predominantly lower class supported party versus a middle and upper class supported party. This way of speaking occurs, but rarely. Everyday social discourse tends to deny or obfuscate the class element, or redefine income and class differences solely through racialized language.

It was into this particular fray that the emerging third party Congress of the People (COP) entered. The party appealed at least initially, to the intellectual elite in Trinidad offering a non-racial discourse of good governance. Journalists, lawyers, doctors professionals and members of the academy, of all ethnic

backgrounds, began to support the party in a vocal and persuasive manner, including many who had not been active in electoral politics in the past. These groups, disparate on the surface, were united in opposition to the machinations of both the PNM and the UNC-A, for reasons which included class, but were also linked to a refusal to participate in 'race-based' voting and a frustration with the status quo. Attendance at COP political rallies exceeded expectations, and many believed that the party was pulling a strong middle class support base. Individuals like Marilyn and her family, who had never attended political rallies in the past, were ardent supporters. The following photos are from a large COP rally in Woolford Square in downtown Port of Spain.

Photographs 3 and 4:



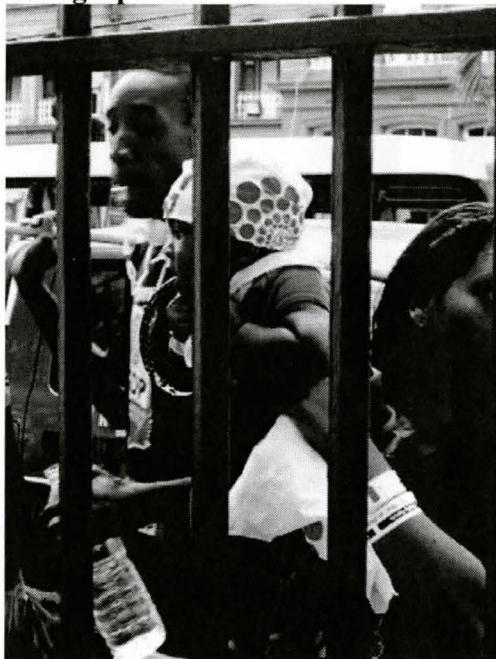
(Posters at at COP rally, September 2007, photos by author)

Photograph 5:



(COP Rally Preceding 2007 Parliamentary Elections)

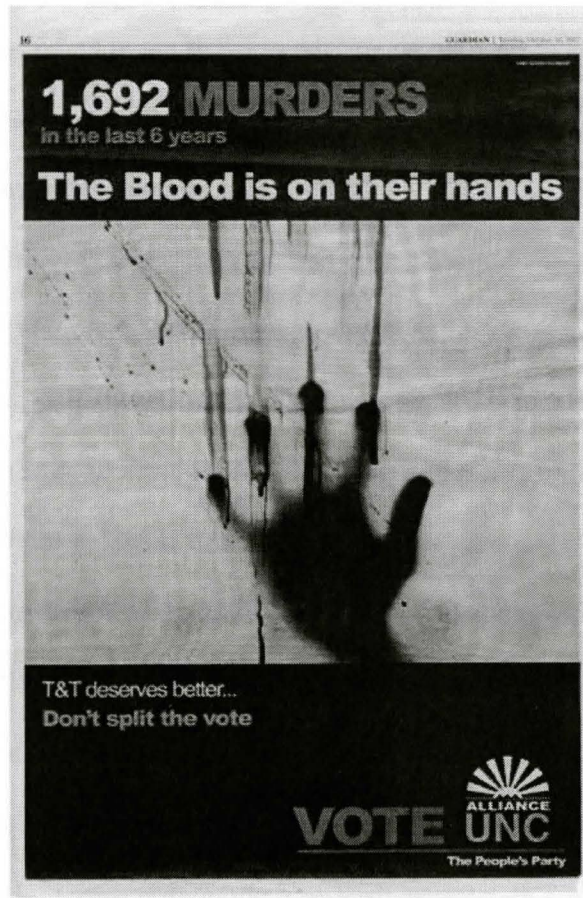
Photograph 6:



(A young family arrives at a COP rally preceding the 2007 election, photo by author)

It was in this climate that the UNC-A began a media campaign to try both to frighten its core lower income voters, and to attract those who were perceived to have strayed to the COP. This campaign included repeated use of tropes of risk, blame and fear. What follows are a few examples to show the ways in which the UNC-A used both 'traditional' fear tactics, as well as the incorporation of class within the Indo-Trinidadian community in an attempt to shore up votes.

Photograph 7:



(paid Advertisement in the Trinidad Guardian Newspaper, October 27, 2007)

The predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported UNC-A capitalized on these feelings of fear, on changing notions of risk as well as the horror over the rapidly increasing murder rate. Print advertisements like the one above, featuring graphic images of blood and attendant statistics about the number of murders in the years since the PNM came into power were frequent. Radio ads running at the same time featured what could be described as the aural equivalent of this advertisement. Though impossible to reproduce in this medium, the tone of the radio advertisements was frantic, and included sounds of screaming women and children, gunshots ringing out and the noise of doors being broken down, in short, the sounds of terror. There were few words in the radio advertisements, simply the same statistics repeated on the backdrop of sounds of screaming and terror, and the sounds of what seemed to be doors broken in. My informants 'read' these sounds as indicating a home invasion, a crime which targets middle and upper class individuals, or those predominantly Indo Trinidadian people who at that time lived in rural and suburban areas of south and central Trinidad. The UNC-A was evoking and tapping into a climate of fear in which Indians would be 'preyed upon' by 'roving gangs of bandits' who lived in the forest and came to 'rob, rape and pillage' at night before returning to the forested areas of the country.

While the explicit target of the advertisements was the PNM, there was an important implicit message as well, admonishing Indo-Trinidadians not to be swayed by the COP, because they, as a population were under siege from crime perpetrated by Afro-Trinidadians. These images or of 'attack' or 'siege' resonate

with discussions I had with Delilah and Jane who worried about the labourers from Laventille that were coming to their home. Just as Jane and Delilah worried that “they’re taking over” and “they don’t know how to behave”, UNC advertisements played upon similar fears of being overrun by those who mean to do their supporters ill. Beneath the statistics showing the number of murders which had occurred in the past five years, the advertisement reads ‘the blood is on their hands’ –referencing the ruling PNM government and attributing the increase in deaths by homicide to government mismanagement. Below is the slogan ‘don’t split the vote’. The advertisement is arguing two things simultaneously. By arguing that the ‘blood is on their hands’ the UNC-A poster blames the PNM government for the increase in the homicide rate, but does not seem to engage voters who have traditionally voted for the PNM. The secondary message is perhaps the most indicative of the ways in which the UNC-A was trying to sway those voters who might have voted for the COP. ‘Don’t split the vote’ is not an attempt to woo voters away from the PNM, but rather to keep them from voting for the COP.

I showed this advertisement to a number of people and asked them to explain what it was saying. The explanations were remarkably similar. They explained that this advertisement assumes that the UNC-A will not sway PNM voters to the UNC, but is concerned primarily with the vote being split away from the UNC-A to the third party ‘non-racial’ COP. What is remarkable here is that no one with whom I spoke believed that this ad was targeting the poor, Afro-

Trinidadians who were the primary victims of the alleged 1692 murders. There are no racialized markers here. Even in a colour reproduction the bloody hand on the advertisement could belong to a person of any racial background, but the subtext explained to me is that the PNM government will not protect *Indo-Trinidadian* people from crimes related to the drug trade and gang violence such as robbery, carjacking, home invasion. The subtext that my informants understood and explained is that the PNM government would be *unwilling* to protect Indo-Trinidadians from the risky, othered, poor Afro-Trinidadian who has become representative of all criminal ills in Trinidad Afro-Trinidadians and the COP would be *unable* to protect them.

The UNC-A's campaign devised other strategies to forestall this shift. Foremost among them was labeling the COP and particularly the COP's leader, former UNC executive member, Winston Dookeran as elitist and traitorous, both to the UNC-A and implicitly, to all Indo-Trinidadians. Recall, Dookeran was once a member of the UNC. When Dookeran split with the party, Panday's deputy Jack Warner indicated that he could 'take his jahaaji bundle and walk'. (Douglas, S. 2007) This is a clever reference to Indo-Trinidadian history. 'Jahaaji' is a reference to 'Jahaaji Bhai', translated loosely to 'the brotherhood of the boat', the unifying experience that all Indo-Trinidadians went through crossing the ocean to come to Trinidad as indentured labourers. By telling Dookeran to take his 'bundle' and go, the UNC was telling him he was no longer a 'brother'.

Further, about six weeks before the election Panday made the statement at a small campaign stop in front of a rural, primarily Indo-Trinidadian crowd that his was “not the party of knife and fork Indians”. What does this mean? In a two party race, where votes could be easily predicted between Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians, class was the new standard of inclusion in the UNC-A and the new standard of belonging in the political party and belonging as an authentic Indo-Trinidadian. Ryan (2007) notes that the ‘knife and fork’ term goes back to the 1970s, when the accusation of being ‘knife and fork’ was leveled at Afro-Trinidadians who were allegedly no longer in line with the ‘true’ ideals of Afro-centric nationalism and who had instead become too ‘colonised’ (2007). Panday’s comment was a ploy at normalization. By insisting that he was not a ‘knife and fork Indian’, Panday attempted to appeal to what he called the ‘grassroots’, poor rural Indians who live in the former sugar producing areas from which he comes. A ‘knife and fork Indian’, mean quite literally someone who eats with a knife and fork, as opposed to with their hands in the “traditional” Indian style which sugar plantation workers and their families. Those ‘knife and fork’ Indians, who do not eat moist meals with their hands and with a ‘roti’ or other flatbread instead of utensils are immediately cast in the category of suspect, of traitors to the party, and therefore their race, because of their class.

When I asked people what they felt Panday’s phrase meant there were various iterations on the theme. Knife and fork means urban or suburban. Knife and fork means possibly no longer Hindu or Muslim and thus points to those

'urban' Indo-Trinidadians who are more likely to have converted to Christianity than rural Indo-Trinidadians. Knife and fork, above all, means no longer working or lower class. It suggests someone who has turned their back on what have suddenly be defined as 'real' Indian ways, and therefore on Indo-Trinidadians as a whole. It was an attempt to level a simultaneous charge of both elitism and cultural inauthenticity. 'Knife and fork Indians' therefore becomes the new enemy, the new 'risky other' for Indo-Trinidadians precisely because of their ambiguity. The UNC-A was attempting to normalize a definition of 'real Indo-Trinidadians' in the same manner that Sarah Palin, U.S. Republican Vice-Presidential nominee in the 2008 National Election continuously linked 'real Americans' and 'American values' to only those who were 'hockey Moms' or plumbers who drink beer. The 'true Americanness' who did not partake of those activities became suspect. Similarly, this linking of tropes, whether with eating styles and true Indo-Trinidadian-ness or beer drinking and authentic Americanness, is an implicit accusation revolving around risk. This is a subtle argument. Panday's UNC-A portrayed itself as the only savior for Indo-Trinidadians against criminals. According to my informants, Panday attempted to assert that voting for the COP instead of the UNC-A was therefore a vote *for* the PNM and is tantamount to inviting the 'risky other' to rob Indo-Trinidadians. By arguing that his was not the party for 'knife and fork Indians' Panday was arguing that this was not the time to let class consciousness trump racial or ethnic sense of

belonging because to do so would be to invite violence. He was trying to maintain the historical tendency in Trinidad for race to 'trump' class in voting choices.

Panday worked hard to court the leadership of the Hindu community, and in doing so, took pains to paint himself as a Hindu 'man of the people' in contrast to Dookeran's Brahmin elitism. For Raymond Ramcharitar, this strategy was ironic precisely because Panday had presented himself as the 'uber-Brahmin' the intelligent Hindu leader, in order to gain power in the 1990s (Ramcharitar, 2008: personal interview). The vicissitudes of the new focus on class compelled Panday and the UNC-A to improvise.

UNC-A Media Tactics: 'Won't somebody think of the children?'

Just before the election, the UNC-A candidate in the St. Augustine riding, Vasant Bharath was interviewed on a local television station. Bharath was in the race for a seat against COP leader Winston Dookeran. This riding was coincidentally the one in which I and Marilyn and most of her family resided. After what could be described as a 'regular' television interview, in which Bharath outlined UNC-A policies and platforms, Vasant Bharath asked the interviewer for a moment to address his would be constituents and said the following. These words are paraphrased closely, but are not a perfect transcription owing to the nature of televised interviews and the speed at which I could transcribe.

Now is not the time to vote on principle, now is not the time to vote on integrity.[Alluding to the various corruption charges pending against the leader of the UNC-A] I ask the people of Valsayn [the wealthiest part of a wealthy constituency] not to think

of themselves when they vote and not to think of their own children, but to think of the children in Pasea [the poorest area of the constituency] because when times get bad, you will have the money to escape but think of the children of Pasea who will suffer (UNC St. Augustine MP Vasant Bharath, days before the 2007 National Election).

This was a carefully constructed and complex appeal. Bharath worked hard to appeal to liberal guilt among wealthy voters and telling them gently to bite their tongue and vote for a man [Panday] who they might find despicable in order to ensure safety for the lower classes of their own racial group. Not only is guilt being attributed, but also blame. Those who choose to vote for the COP are, if one follows the logic of Bharath's words, voting against the poor in their own constituency, against their brethren who are among the poor of their own race. I watched this interview with Marilyn and Frankie, both of whom had been following the campaign closely. They were familiar with candidates of all three parties in nearly all the ridings, watched the news together with the rest of the family each night and attended numerous COP rallies. Frankie, was angry at the remark about 'not voting on integrity'. She exclaimed at the T.V.: "This is real real disgusting. The UNC is a bunch back-a-lot Indians'. When I ask what that meant, she looked briefly embarrassed at the terminology she had employed. "It means they have money but no class. They want to vote for Panday even though he is a fool and corrupt because he is Indian". Frankie was frustrated with what she termed 'lower class' or ill-educated Indo-Trinidadians who did not think before voting, and frustrated further that Bharath had the audacity to tell her how to vote in her first election (she had been too young to vote previously). In the

end, Bharath did win the seat by just a few hundred votes, denying COP leader Dookeran a voice in Parliament. Of all the disappointments for the COP during this election, having Dookeran 'lose his ticket' was the most crushing for the future of the party. Without a voice in Parliament, many felt that the party's future was in question.

Panday's Speech: UNC-A's Election Eve Speech:

The *pièce de résistance*, as it were, in terms of scare tactic voting, was the speech made by Panday on the eve of the election. The entire final rally was a study in contradictions seemingly aimed at providing a message of unity for everyone. It featured Bollywood stars flown in from India to perform, local "Creole" soca stars, steel pan music, and Jamaican dancehall performers. The UNC-A went so far as to publicize that U.S. politician Jesse Jackson, a sure symbol of racial unity, would be flown in to speak to the crowd. Jackson did not appear, and the UNC-A alleged that this was because his flight had been cancelled due to runway repairs at the airport—though the airport authority claimed that no flights were ever cancelled or diverted. COP and PNM supporters accused the UNC-A of making the appearance up to appeal to Afro-Trinidadians. Reverend Jackson, when reached for comment days after the election, claimed that he did not know the UNC-A was asking him to speak on the eve on the election and claimed he had cancelled ahead of time as he did not want to be interpreted as interfering in another country's electoral processes (Chan Tack 2007).

Panday spoke last at the rally, before the enormous crowd and after the numerous musical performances. I transcribed the following from television and recorded radio broadcasts:

Give yourself a chance, give your children and your grandchildren a chance you may never have an opportunity to give them again. If you allow Manning and the PNM, to remain on your backs again, for another five years, by not going out and vote on Monday, or by *dividing your vote*, you will have only yourselves to blame for that tragedy. My brothers and sisters-- think of it. How will you live with yourself, how will you live with your conscience, how will you be able to look your loved ones in the face, if by your negligence or faintheartedness you impose the *yoke* of Manning and the PNM on their necks for another five years. How will you be able to look in the mirror, when your son and daughter has been kidnapped, murdered, robbed and raped. If you do not do your duty on Monday, only you will have to be blamed. You will not be able to look in the mirror, if on Monday the PNM is there, and you say to myself,[sic] 'Oh god, why did not I go out and vote'. Only you can change your life. I beg you to do so on Monday. I beg you to go out and vote for the UNC-Alliance and stand tall! Take your friends and families with you and as you go, walk with you head held high, and stand tall, and help to free your brothers who are un-free, because it is said that none of us is free until all ourselves are free. (Basdeo Panday, at the UNC-A rally held at the Aranguetz Savannah two days before the 2007 National Election).

Alleging that without his leadership people's children *will* be robbed; raped and kidnapped is an alarming statement. During the speech Panday, always a charismatic speaker, begged the audience for another chance to rule, and compared himself to a soldier who wanted to "go down with his boots on". Panday was making a last ditch appeal directly to those who might vote for the COP linking their vote to fear of violence. He was using political rhetoric to address the most pressing and alarming issues, and attempting to raise the level of panic among the electorate. Panday's words played on existing fears and anxieties about the crime situation, and his language worked to make the risk more apparent and more real than is reasonable. He also attempted to blame those who might divide the vote for what is presented as "inevitable" misfortune, caused by 'dividing your vote'. This was an allusion to the fear of the COP drawing support from the UNC-A's traditional base. Finally, the use of the word 'yoke' was semantically important. The idea of a yoke, which is used to team oxen, but which also has allusions to slavery is imbued with meaning. Panday implied that under PNM rule, UNC-A followers, predominantly Indo-Trinidadians, would be treated as animals, or worse yet, as slaves, a reference to African-descended Trinidadians.

Raymond Ramcharitar, an academic, former journalist and author was incensed at the tactics used by the UNC and Panday. Discussing Panday's 'you will only have yourselves to blame' speech, he expressed disgust.

Raymond: That is the kind of leader that has kept Indo-Trinidadians back. But the thing is, apparently

they [Indo-Trinidadians] like it, apparently they like him.

Geer: Surely not all, how many Indo-Trinidadians voted for COP?

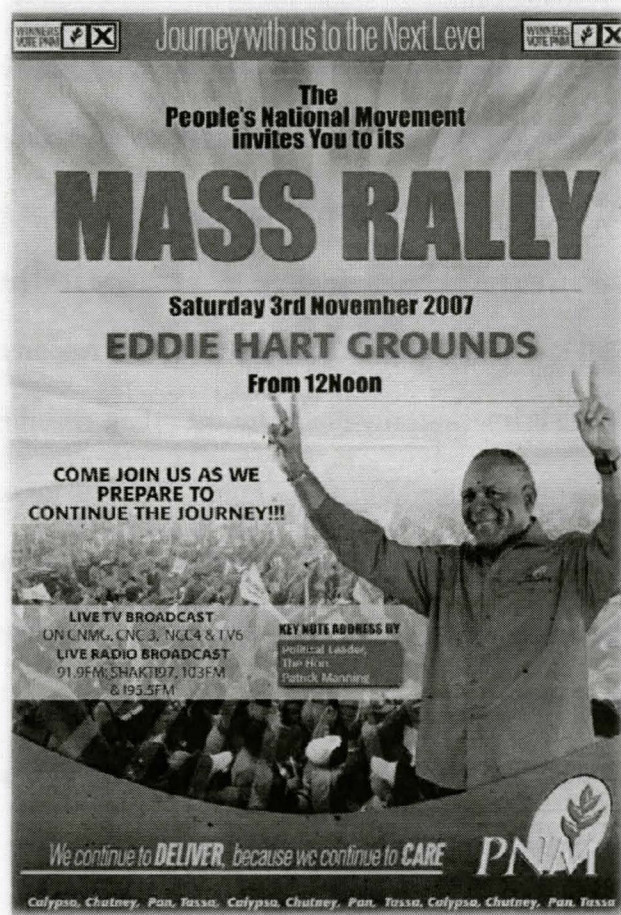
Raymond: But they didn't win any seats. There have been parties like the COP since 1966, '81 the ONR, '86 the NAR. I voted for the COP, I was a strong supporter. I didn't believe that Indians could be so utterly self destructive and stupid. And um, after the election, I said, There's no more to say. There's nothing more to say. There's a tremendous class and caste resentment among Indians which is under theorized because the scholars, the Indian academics, are um, too busy trying to paint a picture of the industrious, noble, religious, pious Indian, and the African academics are too busy with slavery.

Raymond was fed up with Panday's antics, but also his what he understood to be Panday's hypocrisy in manipulating Indo-Trinidadian voters. Important in Raymond's narrative is the absolute and clear linking of race with political allegiance. Raymond describes himself as Indo-Trinidadian, and also linked Indo-Trinidadian 'stupidity' with rural and low class status. He himself is from a semi-rural, predominantly Indo-Trinidadian area, and presents himself as an exception to the dominant racist ways of thinking. Raymond, and others like him voted for the COP because of their frustrations with the machinations of both the UNC-A and PNM. This sort of frustration was important in the 2010 election as well.

The UNC-A tactics during the 2007 election were aimed at retaining support among their traditional electoral base through the use of risk and blame.

Campaigners used tropes of risk and blame and allegations of inauthenticity to intimidate those who might have considered voting for the COP. These, combined with the fears surrounding crime and increasing frustration at programs such as CEPEP and URP have made set the stage for a strong showing for the COP.

PNM Discourse During the 2007 National Election: Photograph 8:



PNM Newspaper advertisement from Tuesday October 30, 2007, Trinidad

Guardian Newspaper

The PNM campaign focused primarily on reaffirming all that had been done over the course of the previous five years in which the party had controlled the government. The poster above, showing Prime Minister Manning with his arms raised in victory contains the words “Come Join us as we Prepare to continue the Journey!!!” and “We continue to DELIVER, because we continue to CARE”.

Through campaign stops, the PNM focused on what had been done and what was yet coming. Almost no references were made to the COP. I argue that the PNM strategists left criticism of the COP to the UNC-A strategists, feeling that PNM chances of re-election were stronger than ever given a divided opposition. The PNM had a strong voter base, had revised electoral boundaries and like all incumbent governments, they had the resources of the government itself. While it is technically illegal for the ruling government to use government money to campaign, the Ministry of Public Utilities, for example, ran non-partisan public service messages reminding the public that in the last five years the PNM government had installed new light poles in their neighbourhoods. Messages like this were ubiquitous.

Panday’s allusion to the ‘yoke’ of Manning and the PNM was not the only point at which tropes invoking slavery were employed by politicians. A few days prior to his party’s re-election in 2007, Prime Minister Patrick Manning spoke at a People’s National Movement (PNM) rally in a southern sugar producing area of Trinidad. He said the following about the potential future of the Trinidadian

sugar industry under UNC-A rule: “They will revive the sugar industry and put you back to cutting cane. That is slavery, that is going back to slavery (and) that will happen only over my dead body” (Charan 2007). Using the term ‘slavery’ to refer to paid workers is surprising. Given Trinidad’s particular racialized social and electoral history, this term is especially contentious.

Manning’s statement needs to be read against history. He is accusing Indo-Trinidadian politicians of enslaving other Indo-Trinidadians. Through the expression putting them ‘back’ to cutting cane, he is intimating that Indo-Trinidadians were once enslaved in a manner similar to Afro-Trinidadians, a position that Indo-Trinidadian nationalists condemn and one that many Indo-Trinidadians find offensive. For Indo-Trinidadians, often positioned historically and in contemporary situations as ‘outside’ Trinidadian culture, free to participate but not add to it, these distinctions are important because they re-ignite and re-affirm stereotypes of Indo-Trinidadians as outside mainstream culture and therefore not worthy to lead the ‘whole’ country (Khan 2004).

While the rally at which the Prime Minister’s comment were made was held in an area perceived to be overwhelmingly Indo-Trinidadian, many told me that they believed part of Manning’s campaign strategy was to bus in vocal PNM supporters to rallies in areas where he did not expect a large crowd. This tactic was used so that media coverage would portray a large crowd. It is likely then, that Manning was not attempting to win over the local audience with his talk, but rather to speak to his larger support base through media coverage of the event.

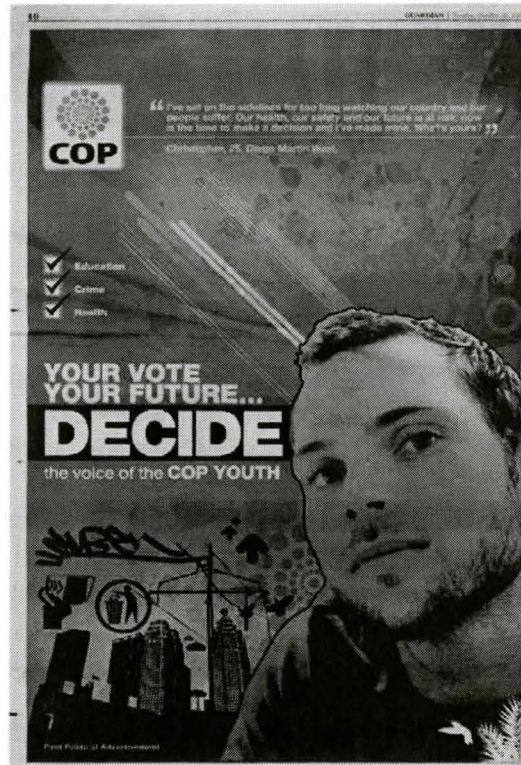
Reaction to the PNM Prime Minister's statement highlight the myriad ways that racialized understandings of Trinidadian history play out in day-to-day life and suffuse discussions of contemporary political machinations including corruption, patronage and crime.

The day following Manning's speech in which he alleged that the occupation of cutting sugar cane was similar to slavery, I received a phone call from Marilyn. She asked if I was free to accompany her on some errands and to do some shopping. I told Marilyn I would be happy to accompany her on the outing, and before I hung up asked her if she had heard or read about Manning's speech about slavery the night before. She laughed and hung up, choosing not to answer. At the appointed time, I drove the few blocks from my rented apartment to her home, pulled up to her front gate, greeted the dogs and waited for Marilyn to join me. As she buckled her seat belt, I jokingly asked Marilyn what she had thought about Manning's speech, as she'd expressed exasperation with either me or the speech on the phone. She grew thoughtful, and as I pulled the car out of her street she said, that there was no way 'them Indian people in South' would appreciate having sugar cane work referred to as slavery. Cutting cane she said was awful, difficult, dirty work, but it was at least honest. We turned a corner only to find that the sides of the roadway were filled with Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (CEPEP) workers cutting the lawns on the boulevards in front of the residential homes. There had been a CEPEP team in the neighbourhood before, trimming grass along sports fields and

the small public boulevards and sweeping debris off the roads. The workers are a source of constant frustration and amusement and the butt of frequent jokes. As my vehicle slowed to pass the CEPEP workers on the street, Marilyn, already incensed at the comparison of sugarcane work to slavery, gestured angrily at the workers on the roadway and said, “Manning thinks cutting cane is slavery! *This is slavery! Tell me what he is doing to his own people is not slavery!*” She was quite angry, as many people were when discussing or encountering these work gangs. The contrast between what she thought was useless posturing about the dismantling of the sugar industry, a move she was not necessarily against, and the reality of what, in her view, were useless and demoralizing make-work projects was too sharp not to notice. Marilyn, like many of my informants, made what seems to be a largely race-based comment. For her, Indo-Trinidadians were not being put back into slavery. Rather, the poor, under and uneducated predominantly Afro-Trinidadians who, she believes, have few other choices but to do little work as CEPEP employees and earn barely enough to survive are the ones who are enslaved. Her disgust is aimed in two directions, at a government that uses programs such as CEPEP as patronage projects to ensure re-election, and at the hopelessness and as she says ‘learned laziness’ of those individuals who are involved in these projects. When Marilyn became incensed at Manning’s reference to sugar cane work as slavery, she was not only angry at the historical implications and long standing ethnic antagonisms of the country—she was also angry at what she saw as the hypocrisy of the statement.

COP Campaign for the 2007 Elections:

Photograph 9:



(Paid Congress of the People Campaign Advertisement, Trinidad Guardian Newspaper, Thursday October 30, 2007).

In contrast to both the PNM campaign, which focused on the good things the party have done in office, and UNC-A campaign which focused on criticizing the PNM and dissuading voters from choosing the COP, the COP campaign focused primarily on criticizing the PNM and showing that they would be inclusive and thoughtful during its time in office. The advertisement above features a quote from a potential voter. The COP advertisements used this strategy frequently, placing criticisms of the ruling government in the mouths of everyday looking people. At a talk in Chaguanas, colloquially known as the “Indian Capital of

Trinidad”, Dookeran appealed to history speaking first of the parties which preceded Trinidad’s Independence:

I am now sensing the rebirth of the politics that has kept us ahead of the game. I am now sensing a new energy among our people here in Central Trinidad that once more you shall stand up and become an equal partner in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

I am sensing that you have left the past to the past. You acknowledge the contribution of the PDP, the DLP and the UNC and you are now about to embark on the new ship of the Congress of the People.

So my friends in the thousands here today is evidence of the fact that you intend not to fight hard to remain in Opposition, you intend to form the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and nothing less!

There are some who are declaring war. There are some who are uttering threats. There are some who are at every opportunity insulting people.

My friends, we are past that stage; those are people in the old period. What they have done, having lost the 2002 election, they want to create the team they thought should have won and they are today fighting the 2002 elections and we are fighting the 2007 elections! (Dookeran 2007).

Dookeran appeals to those who have traditionally voted for the UNC-A and intimates that the party’s campaign is a relic of the past. He also references tactics and ‘threats’ ostensibly made by the UNC-A during its campaign.

Dookeran is not explicitly appealing to race, but is encouraging those who had previously understood political affiliation through the lens of race to move

‘forward’. This approach is consistent with the tenor of the rest of the COP campaign which acknowledged threats from the UNC-A and painted that party as beneath the dignity of a people embarking on a journey into a different kind of future.

Several aspects of the COP campaign are worth highlighting. The first was a focus in its advertising on what the party stood for, rather than what it was against. While the campaign speeches and advertising were critical of both the PNM and the UNC, the tone of the campaigning was on “leaving this behind” and “moving forward”. The image of the journey, which Dookeran invokes above, was rehearsed throughout the campaign. In plain terms, the COP ran a positive campaign rather than a negative one, a tense balancing act between attacking the other two parties and finding sites of coherence between supporters of both the other national parties, from which the COP had to draw support.

A different but perhaps more compelling aspect of the campaign was making the perceived weakness of the COP leader into an asset. Policy, platform, criticism and judgment were almost always cast in advertising material as coming ‘from the people themselves’ rather than from the top of the party downward. This approach is in direct contrast to the trend toward charismatic leadership based campaigning, not only in Trinidad but throughout the Caribbean (see Allahaar 2001 for detailed discussion of the place of charisma in English-speaking Caribbean politics). Instead, the COP avoided an appeal to “people like us” by deploying diversity as a fundamental value. While all three political parties

presented images of racially diverse Trinidadians, the addition of quotes coming ‘from’ these racially diverse faces on print advertisements was received as an additional indication of true diversity within the COP’s support base. COP supporters explained that the UNC and PNM only “found lackey’s”—people who did not fit the predominant racially supported stereotype—to sit for publicity photos, but the COP was understood to “really have” a racially diverse support base. The result was that the COP advertisements were read by my informants as “truth” in relation to the “obvious pandering” of multi-racial advertisements of the UNC and PNM.

The Results:

After the election in 2002, when the PNM and UNC both received a nearly equal number of votes, and an identical 18 seats in parliament, electoral boundaries were changed. Instead of 36 seats, and the potential for a tie in a two-party race, Trinidad and Tobago now had 41 possible parliamentary seats. Of those 41 seats, the PNM won 26 in 2007, an increase of 8 seats, but at 46% retained about the same proportion of the total votes. The UNC dropped from 18 to 15 seats, and from 48% of the vote to approximately 30% of the overall vote, as compared to the 2002 election. Finally, the Congress of the People, like the ONR in 1981, earned an impressive 23% of the vote. Despite earning nearly a quarter of the popular votes, the COP failed to capture a single seat in Trinidad’s ‘first-past-the-post’ system of representation.

One cannot look at these numbers and assume that had the COP not run the UNC-A would have been victorious. A number of people said the COP was

their only choice. In its absence, this group claimed they would not have voted. Further, in a breakdown by constituency, the COP gained votes in historically PNM constituencies which, in the past, the UNC-A had barely managed a few dozen votes. This suggests that the COP made inroads with those who had historically supported the PNM as well as drawing support from among UNC supporters. This is important precisely because it suggests the non-racial focus of their campaign appealed to historically racialized voting blocks.

For the people with whom I spoke, the frustration at the UNC-A and the PNM stemmed from the fact that both parties appeal to a racialized demographic, despite putting forth candidates who represented the spectrum of racial mixtures.

Helen: I think that what was encouraging in the last election was that there were so many young people that went up. Of course all the parties and the ethnic mix of all the parties, forget what Panday and that other jack ass say. The fact is that if you want to look, which I did, I looked at all the pictures in all the candidates in all three parties, do you know there was nothing between them in terms of age and race. The UNC candidates were as mixed as the COP candidates as the PNM candidates, in terms of race and age. There was nothing between them, except the rhetoric, and the constituencies they were appealing to.

For Helen, and other COP supporters with whom I spoke, the frustration arose from the way appeals to racial voting blocs made it impossible for different policy approaches to emerge and be evaluated. For Marilyn and others like her, the inability for the COP to gain even a single seat in 2007 was difficult to accept and an emotional issue. Few had thought that the COP could win the election, but

many did think that perhaps the party would win a few seats, and become stronger and more viable for the next election. No one expected that the next election would come fully two and a half years earlier than scheduled. When even Dookeran failed to win his seat, losing to the UNC-A representative Bharath who had appealed that residents ‘think of the children’, many felt that hope had been lost. There was a great deal of talk about a possible UNC-A and COP alliance prior to the election, but in the end, Panday refused to consider it, calling the COP a ‘non-starter’. Moreover, the executive within the COP refused to align with the UNC while Panday was still in office because he was seen as the prime architect of the racialized rhetoric with which the strategists of the COP did not want to associate.

One of my informants, Leah, expressed frustrations which were exemplary of the most common sentiments I heard from my informants. I interviewed Leah early one Sunday morning after the election, at the campus of the University of the West Indies. In her mid-twenties, Leah had taken advantage of the country’s GATE program to study abroad for a post-graduate degree, returning to work for a mandatory two years with a government agency before she could strike out on her own³⁰. We had not met prior to the interview—and so in the interests of safety, she chose a public area at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine

³⁰The GATE (Government Assistance for Tuition Expense) program provides 100% of undergraduate and 50% of post-graduate tuitions fees and has other special allowances for students seeking education overseas (Government of Trinidad and Tobago Nd.). The program was an initiative of the PNM government and has been subsequently maintained and refined by UNC and People’s Partnership Governments.

campus, where she had gone to school before going overseas and where her sister was enrolled. She asked that the circumstances of our finding one another be kept confidential. She met me first with a sibling, and made sure that I was the researcher that I had presented myself as over the phone: she and I then moved to a table in one of the breezy open air study carrels that are scattered throughout the campus. It was late in the university's term, and most public areas were full of students studying for exams and socializing. Fearful that my tape recorder might not pick up our voices over the noise and wind, we moved about until we found a location that was somewhat sheltered. We happened to find ourselves in a study area that was occupied entirely by Afro-Trinidadian students, studying and socializing. The area was simply a roofed structure without walls, containing rows of long tables. We awkwardly sat side by side on one bench so that the tape recorder had a better chance of capturing our voices. Thoughtful and soft-spoken, Leah was keen to share her experiences with me.

To my untrained eye, she appeared to be simply Indo-Trinidadian, but as I learned repeatedly, I was hopelessly bad at attempting to infer any sort of racial 'mixing' from appearance alone. She herself identified as 'mixed', her father Indo-Trinidadian and her mother as she says "Chinese and Black", though she acknowledged that she is often assumed to be strictly Indo-Trinidadian. She comes from a devoutly Catholic Port-of Spain family, and that urban home, combined with her Indian appearance and non-Hindu status, make her feel as

though she is constantly misunderstood. She explained to me that she was ‘what some might call pure Indian’ on her fathers side, but that she detests that term.

To the casual observer, we were an odd pair. Two Indian looking or at least predominantly Indo-Trinidadian looking women squishing ourselves awkwardly in amongst a group of Afro-Trinidadian looking students and promptly talking politics into a recorder. I knew from talking to Junior and Sylvie that Indo and Afro-Trinidadian students do not often mix at the University. I asked Leah what she thought of the election.

Leah: I can tell you that I voted for the COP. I didn’t think that they would win, but I thought they would get a seat. I also felt in the aftermath of the elections that representation could have been given to those who voted, but that’s just the way our system is, so that means that we have to restructure our parliament, and things like that³¹. I am very happy at least that they tried to be involved in what’s going on still, even though I think it would have been a shame if this party came up in the year before elections and then disappeared because they lost. I am happy when I open the pages [of the newspapers] to see that they give an opinion about something.

I feel as if sometimes, statements like ‘this is PNM country’. That’s offensive to me, that’s very offensive to me. I can’t imagine, you know, that all of us who are contributors to this society...I pay taxes, whether it’s VAT or income tax, and you want to tell me that this country belongs to somebody else but me and the people of Trinidad

³¹ Recall, Trinidad uses a first past the post system which meant that despite gaining over 20% of the vote, the COP earned no seats. Leah has, in the immediate aftermath begun to look ahead to possibilities of electoral reform.

and Tobago. So, things like that annoy me to no end.

At this point, both of our voices hushed slightly, and I recall feeling both awkward and uncomfortable at this point in the conversation. Why were we both lowering our voices? Had we both determined that we were surrounded by Afro-Trinidadians, and drawn the potentially fallacious mental conclusion that they were therefore PNM supporters? At any rate, it appeared we began to take greater notice of our potential audience. I asked Leah about what she thought of Panday and the UNC-A campaign. I realize now, after returning from Trinidad, that I had internalized these racialized assumptions regarding the other students in the university study area. While I learned where to drive and not drive and how to behave myself ‘correctly’—I had also internalized many assumptions with regards to political affiliation³².

Leah: You know what? I don’t know what to say. I don’t know what to believe in terms of politics. I was so eager, at the first about politics and voicing my opinion, but now I just know that I don’t know anything. I don’t know who to believe anymore, that’s the truth. The only thing that I believe is what I see. So, human behavior, that kind of thing, but giving any sort of comment about politics, I often say, take it with a grain of salt. I’m entitled to say something but you don’t have to believe it, don’t take offense to it. But the thing with ‘this is PNM country bothers me. And I don’t care if anybody is offended by that.

³² I am grateful to Dr. Eva Mackey for pointing this out.

At the last sentence her speech increased in volume a little bit. I wondered, did she realize the oddness of assuming that we were surrounded by PNM supporters based on the same type assumptions that repeatedly mis-label her? Is she simply fed up and speaking to those she assumes can hear our conversation? Later, I recount bits of the meeting to other friends and informants in Trinidad while protecting Leah's anonymity; they inform me that "Indian and Negro" students don't mix much at the university, that there is often antagonism between the groups, and people probably thought we were extremely strange.

Geer: I don't really understand it, but it seems to me when they say 'This is PNM country' they are saying 'this is black, or, this is Afro-Trinidadian country'.

Leah: *They* would say no. They would say no. I went to a post election forum right here on campus they were talking about you know 'what is a national party' and this third party [the COP] claimed to be a national party but it really wasn't because it was strictly middle class and it can't be a national party if it only targets a certain income bracket, even if it crosses certain racial lines. But I can't say that PNM is national. I think that we need to dispense with the race part of it and that's a problem. That is a problem.

Neither Leah nor Helen identified as purely Afro or Indo-Trinidadian. They were more concerned with their class status, with educational qualifications, professional standings and their ability to use these assets to influence the larger society. Leah spoke about writing papers for publication to inspire other young people to become more politically conscious and aware of the shortcomings of both the PNM and the UNC-A. For both Helen and Leah, as well as many other

enthusiastic COP supporters with whom I spoke, the COP became an attractive option because it seemed to espouse beliefs that were in line with their class status, even though not all of its supporters were middle or upper class. The COP appealed to what Miller (1999) would call transcendent themes like: forward-thinking, 'respectable' and home-oriented, committed to savings, long term success, moderation, and education. Miller argues that these characteristics are often reduced on-the-ground to racial differences, but are in fact more closely aligned with differences in class. These are also values arising from middle class status and world view, and as such, the COP embodied a shift away from the race-based PNM and UNC-A by appealing to voters on the basis of class rather than race.

It is also interesting to compare the narratives of Helen and Leah to the historical evidence presented in the last chapter. There is a historical precedent to the outcome of the 2007 election. Recall that in the 1981 election in Trinidad (that was the election just prior to the historic first defeat of the PNM by the National Alliance for Reconstruction NAR), there existed two strong opposition parties which together earned more votes than the PNM. These two parties were the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR), which was understood as a union of disparate, though often racialized groups and middle and upper class intellectuals, the 'thinking person's party' and the United Labour Front, headed by Basdeo Panday and with a predominantly rural Indo-Trinidadian union based working and lower class following. The COP and the UNC-A in the 2007

elections can be read in a very similar manner. The results also were nearly similar. The COP seems to be supported by disparate groups united in opposition against the racialized rhetoric of the UNC-A and the PNM. Panday's election tactics for the UNC-A, accusing the COP of elitism and charging that he is not a 'knife and fork' Indian, only reinforced to COP supporters that his actions were untenable. During earlier incarnations of this thesis, I put forth that it was my contention that the 2007 elections were quite similar to the 1986 elections and that Trinidad might again be standing on the cusp of a historic election in which a party which a unified opposition might again topple the PNM. In fact, my speculations proved true. The COP and UNC-A united under the banner of the People's Partnership (PP) when Prime Minister Manning called an election suddenly in early 2010, nearly two and a half years earlier than required by law. In the next section I discuss the alliance of UNC and COP which defeated the PNM in 2010 and speculate as to the long-term ramifications of this alliance.

The 2010 Election:

Despite the strong showing in the 2007 election, the PNM was hobbled by accusations of financial mismanagement and a lack of transparency within its internal structure. While CEPEP and URP scandals rocked the PNM government, in 2010, allegations against PNM Prime Minister Patrick Manning and one of his Senators, Calder Hart, in relation to the government owned Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDeCOTT) proved more damning (Gumbs-Sandiford, 2010). Restrictions of space prevent me from providing all the details,

but suffice to say, allegations of large scale financial impropriety regarding the awarding of construction contracts rocked the government. In early 2010, a full two and a half years prior to the next scheduled national election, Prime Minister Manning, head of the PNM, called an election to avoid a parliamentary vote of no-confidence (Gumbs-Sandiford 2010).

Since 2007, the UNC has also undergone serious transformation. Panday, who led the UNC into the 2007 election calling himself a soldier and promising to 'die with his boots on' has been voted both out of the executive leadership of the UNC. In addition, he, his daughter Mickaela, and his brother Subhas, both UNC parliamentarians, were not put up for nomination in the 2010 election (Ramdass 2010). Panday's ousting from the UNC is of enormous semantic importance. He is equaled only by Manning in his habitually appealing to race for political support. Because of his start as a sugar union activist, he has long held what is considered to be the rural, Indo-Trinidadian vote. Panday has been replaced by a long time deputy and UNC stalwart, a woman named Kamla Persaud-Bissessar. Persaud-Bissessar is the first woman to head a major political party in Trinidad's history. She worked under Panday, but has criticized him in 2010.

Persaud-Bissessar has also removed other contentious members of the UNC, in particular Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj, a long time UNC parliamentarian who in 2000 crossed the floor to join the PNM and is held responsible for the early election of that year. In recent years, Panday had brought Maharaj back into the UNC fray and he even won his seat in a hotly contested region in the 2007

election (Ramdas 2010). Removing individuals like Maharaj, who along with Panday are associated with the most excessive of the sort of machinations that COP supporters found unpalatable, has led to another important change. The COP and UNC aligned for the May 24th, 2010 election. Also present in the union was a small Tobago only party which contested two seats against the PNM.

This union represented the first time since 1986 that those in opposition to the PNM have been able to successfully come together. The more ideological, and disparate groups—people such as Leah and Helen, as well as those who did not support the UNC because of their inability to tolerate Panday's sort of racialized appeal and blame of upper classes, strongly supported the PP. Both the UNC and the COP under this alliance retained their own party banners and have agreed in advance that should they win, Persaud-Bissessar would be the President Minister. Dookeran, as leader of the COP did not run for a parliamentary seat, but remained party leader of the COP and it was largely understood that should the PP win the election, he would be named president. The two parties did not merge executives, instead, they split the voting areas. The UNC contested 21 seats, the COP contested the 17 remaining seats in Trinidad and the Tobago Organization of the People (TOP) contested only the two Tobago seats against the PNM.

This tactic was important practically, since it avoided vote splitting, but it was also important symbolically since it implied without erasing differences that the partnership members shared fundamental similarities. Ironically, “don't split the vote” is the very slogan that the Panday-led UNC tried to use to scare voters away

from the COP in the 2007 election. Recall also Meighoo's (2003) assertion that the success of the NAR in 1986 came from several disparate groups uniting after acknowledging some basic similarities, and were successful in removing the PNM from office.

Once Persaud-Bissessar had taken leadership and prevented some of the more divisive members of the party from participating in the election under the UNC name, the alliance was made possible. In this way, the 2010 election was made up of multi-sectoral interests and class interests in a way that the UNC was not able to do, and so was able to handily defeat the PNM. At a campaign 'walkabout' in Laventille the days leading to the 2010 election, Persaud-Bissessar made the following comments after noting that Laventille had long been loyal to the PNM:

And yet what do we find after almost 60 years of control of Laventille? ...one of the most troubled areas in all of Trinidad and Tobago.

"Crime is out of control, social ills abound, the youth have lost hope, there are no programs for development...that is the legacy of the PNM towards its most loyal constituency,

"Look at your condition...and compare it with the billions of dollars that have been given to the Prime Minister's friends and favourites...some \$4.0 billion in cost overruns, not cost you know, but overruns...While you, who have supported Mr. Manning, live in these abject conditions, he lives in an Emperor's Palace and sleeps on sheets of silk...while you scrun to make a dollar. They do not care for you now, and they never will...they only care for themselves and their money hungry friends!"

She also made it clear that by his own admission, Manning is not interested in unity. She said the groups that have come together in the People's Partnership have united to "get rid of Patrick's corrupt and incompetent National Movement, who has neglected you, used and abused you for the last 60 years (Parasaram, 2009, accessed May 11, 2010).

My work during the initial emergence of the COP detailed in earlier parts of this dissertation appears to have been serendipitous. The 2010 election indeed captured a moment not seen in Trinidad and Tobago since 1986.

2010 Election Results in Detail:

The PNM was roundly defeated in the 2010 election. The People's Partnership (PP), containing the COP, UNC, and TOP gained 29 of 41 seats, dealing a devastating loss to the PNM which dropped from a commanding 26 seats in 2007 to just 12 seats in 2010. Persaud-Bissessar became Prime Minister, and Winston Dookeran, earlier touted to become President was instead given the role of Minister of Finance, a role understood by several of my informants to be more in line with his previous experience and more suited to his skills, as the position of President is largely understood to be symbolic more than truly powerful. Together, Persaud-Bissessar and Dookeran are understood to have the two most meaningfully important jobs in the government.

This election is significant for several reasons. A brief examination of three electoral districts does indicate a significant shift in terms of long standing voting patterns. In the following three tables, I examine 2002, 2007 and 2010

elections results from three long standing PNM constituencies. These are meant to be illustrative only. It should be noted that between the 2002 and 2007 elections, electoral boundaries were shifted significantly and there was an increase in electoral seats from 36 to 41. What these comparisons do show us are significant shifts away from traditional voting patterns in areas that have been without question, PNM 'safe' seats. The bolded numbers represent the winners of that year's election.

Table 2:

Laventille/Morvant

	PNM (# of votes and % of total)	UNC (# of votes and % of total)	COP (# of votes and % of total)	Total
2002	12 180 (87%)	1641 (12%)	n/a	14 017
2007	11 069 (81%)	1047 (8%)	1545 (11%)	13 661
2010	10 797 (71%)	No candidate	3780 (25%)	15 158

The numbers from Laventille/Morvant, the area in which CEPEP and URP scandals were based and in which the focus of most PNM patronage projects have been located showed an approximately 10% shift away from the PNM towards the COP. In 2002, the UNC earned approximately 11% of all votes in the riding. By 2007, the number of people voting against the PNM had increased to 18%. By 2010 the number of votes against the PNM had increased to 25%. While this was still a definitive 'win' for the PNM, this increase in support for other parties,

particularly those ostensibly non-racial parties such as the COP is indicative of a substantial shift.

Table 3:

Arima

	PNM (# of votes and % of total)	UNC (# of votes and % of total)	COP (# of votes and % of total)	Total
2002	12 348 (72%)	4458 (26%)	n/a	17 141
2007	8603 (64%)	1224 (9%)	3464 (26%)	13 463
2010	7214 (48%)	No candidate	7612 (51%)	15 053

The Arima seat, located on the east-west corridor of the country is understood by informants to be a predominantly Afro-Trinidadian lower middle and middle class constituency. The PNM had won every election in Arima until 2010. Their loss in 2010 was historic. Over the course of three elections, the PNM went from a 72% share of the overall vote in 2002 to just 48% in 2010. This 24% shift away from the PNM is a significant indicator that race-based voting practices are falling away. It is significant also that the People's Partnership chose to run a COP candidate instead of a UNC candidate. Mr. Roger Samuel is an Afro-Trinidadian youth pastor with a long history of activism in the area (TTParliament.org, accessed July 30, 2010).

Finally, I turn to the Port of Spain South constituency. As with the Laventille and Arima constituencies, the Port of Spain South has been a traditionally 'easy' win seat for the PNM.

Table 4:

Port of Spain South

	PNM (# of votes and % of total)	UNC (# of votes and % of total)	COP (# of votes and % of total)	Total
2002	9080 (78%)	1693 (14%)	n/a	11 594
2007	7823 (67%)	573 (5%)	3141 (27%)	11 537
2010	7855 (60%)	No candidate	4808 (37%)	12974

This constituency is significant in that it displays both a considerable shift in traditional PNM support, from 78% in 2002, to 67% in 2007, and 60% in 2010, an 18% drop in support in just 8 years. Importantly, support shifted again to the ostensibly non-racial COP instead of the UNC party, which is still understood to serve and be supported by Indo-Trinidadians.

A brief glance at these statistics suggests that race-based support for both the PNM and the UNC have diminished significantly. While the new Prime Minister is also the head of the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported UNC, she has gained support because of her willingness to remove political entrepreneurs like Panday and others who appealed to notions of race and blame to draw support. Persaud Bissessar is supported by Attorney General Anand Ramlogan, a former member of the COP and a young lawyer with a history of work in social activism and human rights.

What do these results show? The most obvious conclusion is that electorates experiencing sudden financial or social unrest, comparable to

Trinidad's crime problem often oust their incumbent leadership. However, there is a much more fascinating paradox that is unique to Trinidad. The great paradox here is that the crime situation in Trinidad is conjuring and re-creating classed and racialized negative stereotypes of lower classes while simultaneously de-racializing voting patterns. While upper middle and upper class Trinidadians find their lives increasingly circumscribed by safety precautions and informal rules which reinforce and create racialized separations in physical and social space, the past two national elections show that patterns of voting are becoming less racialized. This points to the great frustration felt both by upper and lower classes—another similarity despite increasing segregation between the two groups.

2010 Local Government Elections:

In July, Trinidad held local government elections, similar to municipal elections in Canada. In these elections, candidates vie for council seats in a government-owned municipal corporation which is responsible for community centres, roads, and other local development initiatives. The People's National Movement (PNM) had postponed local elections for four consecutive years past their due date, claiming that the local government process needed to be re-organized (Ramdass 2009). Persaud-Bissessar called local elections shortly after her election to Prime Minister, fulfilling one of her campaign promises. As with the parliamentary elections, the UNC and COP came together under the People's Partnership. Together, the PP won 99 of 134 electoral seats or 73% of the total

number of seats to the PNM's 35 seats or 26% of the total seats. At the last election in 2003, the PNM had won 66% of the overall electoral seats. The 2010 election represents a substantial 40% decrease in their share of the electoral seats. Given these results, the People's Partnership won 11 of 14 regional corporations which manage local government across Trinidad and Tobago. As with the national elections, the three municipal corporations that the PNM retained leadership over are in historically unwaveringly PNM areas.

Whether the alliance will make any inroads in traditionally PNM supported communities such as Laventille remains to be seen, but this COP UNC alliance has the ability to shift the focus of Trinidadian politics away from race-based voting towards broader questions of governance and nation making. My conclusions based on work during the initial emergence of the COP detailed in early parts of this chapter, appear to have been prophetic.

Conclusion:

The machinations by competing political parties around the 2007 elections are indicative of the ways the Trinidadian electorate, and particularly upper middle and upper class Trinidadians have become unwilling to vote based on old race based alliances when larger problems like the escalating crime situation and the issues within government programs such as CEPEP and URP have begun to significantly constrict their daily lives. The 'bad man from Laventille' has become conjured larger than life, and become symbolically aligned with both the increase in crime, and the PNM. Since all Trinidadians are affected by the

increase in crime, albeit in very different ways, this issue has superseded race base alliances and forged a space in which a new party may be able gain electoral supremacy in the country. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians have historically been able to distance themselves from the most aggressive race-based rhetoric surrounding elections, publically calling it divisive and unnecessary but privately continuing to vote for what they called the 'lesser of two evils'. Given the stark changes in lifestyle and safety concerns that these upper classes faced around the time of the 2007 election, discomfort with the political situation was strong, and lifestyles and livelihoods of upper class Trinidadians were altered as a result. These changes, perhaps more than any other, led to the frustration and discontent which gave the Congress of the People considerable support.

In this chapter, I have unpacked the tactics and policies of the three major political parties in the time leading up to the 2007 national election. I argue that during that election, a focus on class, in addition to race was prevalent amongst political discourse. Further, the UNC-A attempted to capitalize on tropes of risk and blame, as well as allegations of inauthenticity based on class and race, in order to retain voters that were perceived to be moving to the new third party, Congress of the People. I charted reactions to that election and showed how people similar in background and ideology to those who founded and supported the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR) in the 1981 Trinidadian national election (and subsequently aligned to form the ANR to win the 1986 election) were throwing their support behind the COP in the 2007 election. Given

these similarities, as well a recent call for new elections in May 2010 by the PNM and the subsequent alliance of the UNC and COP, I speculated that the 2010 election might be the first since the historic 1986 elections in which a unified non-race based opposition to the PNM may gain power in an election. The degree to whether this represents a permanent shift in the scope and content of Trinidadian electoral politics remains to be seen. Trinidadian history has shown that a return to race-based allegiance can happen after a display of unity.

In the next chapter, I move from a macro level analysis of the political spectrum in Trinidad to a more micro level discussion of daily life in Trinidad, in which safety, from those very issues so hotly debated during election time, is taught, negotiated and learned. I also discuss the way that the 'bad man', the racialized, stigmatized risky other from which upper class Trinidadians seek to isolate themselves is understood, conjured and used as a trope which both produces fear of crime and actions deemed necessary to produce safety from crime.

Chapter 6: Learning Safety and Conjuring Fear

In this chapter I present an intimate discussion of two events, both of which show the ways in which safe behaviour is taught and learned, and the ways in which blame is interpreted and conveyed by members of the upper middle and upper classes in Trinidad. I also include a discussion of how the quintessential ‘bad man’ is conjured and employed, often in contradictory ways, as a means of promoting safe behaviour as a social and even moral obligation of class membership.

Initially, I convey these issues through a first person narrative of what should have been a relatively simple event—a night at a night club in downtown Port of Spain with some upper class female acquaintances. In describing the details of this evening I show how fear of crime is taught and sustained. My own personal experience, blurring the borders between researcher and participant and friend, shows how those who took it upon themselves to care for me often did so by teaching me the finer points of ‘becoming safe’ in Trinidad.

I explore the ways in which definitions and descriptions of risky others are conjured given the crime situation, and how, in this process of conjuring, transforms rational concessions to perceived danger to practices which constitute and then reinforce isolation. My analysis draws from Lupton, who claims we cannot rely on a strict definition of risk as:

an unproblematic fact, a phenomenon that can be isolated from its social, cultural and historical contexts. Rather, what are identified as ‘risks’, by ‘experts’ as much as lay people, are understood as

inevitably the outcome of sociocultural processes.
Further, such risks tend to serve certain social,
cultural and political functions (1999a:2).

My narrative explores the understandings of risk that underlie the practices of upper middle class and elite Trinidadians, focusing on the following questions::

- How do these understandings operate, change, and reproduce and how are these issues spoken about in everyday discourse?
- Who is demonized and blamed, valorized, lauded and feared and in what way are new lifeways constructed as result of these conceptions of risk?
- How are those without the obvious means to purchase or consume safety, or to avoid contact with risky others understood when a crime occurs?

In the second part of the chapter, I turn to the media reports which were published after the 2009 murder of a young girl named Tecia Henry. Tecia was from the most violent street in the most violent neighbourhood of Trinidad. I use the example of her death, as a child not of the elite, but poor, Afro-Trinidadian and 'othered' several times over, to discuss the ways in which the contradictory impulses of blame and tolerance are negotiated by wealthier groups I interviewed and lived among.

An Evening Out:

As indicated in Chapter 1, my home in Trinidad was about 14 kilometers east of downtown Port of Spain. It was a tiny bachelor apartment abutting a larger home in a sprawling upper middle class subdivision. Few of the individuals with whom I was acquainted from that area, including young adults, went into Port of Spain to visit bars or nightclubs on a regular basis, preferring instead to visit at friends homes or to visit some of the spaces deemed safer such as movie theatres, North American chain restaurants, and shopping malls, mostly

in areas outside of the downtown core. Since these same individuals also strongly cautioned me against driving alone at night, even to meet with people for formal interviews, evening outings were difficult at best. When I was invited to meet with a group of professional women from wealthy areas around Port of Spain who were planning on visiting several high end bars and nightclubs, a great deal of planning and negotiating was required. In what follows I trace out the planning and practical concessions and agreements that went into organizing this quite simple and, ultimately, uneventful trip.

First, out of caution and respect for those in the area who had welcomed me into their lives, who were teaching me to be safe and always keeping an eye out for my safety, I called Marilyn's husband Joseph with my itinerary for the evening. He promptly offered the services of his 26 year old son Junior to drive me to and from the downtown core, but I politely refused, instead agreeing to stop by his home on my way into town for the evening to make sure that I knew where I was going. At the agreed upon time, I left for the evening, unlocking and locking the two locks on my apartment door, then a third lock on the door leading into the garage where the entrance to my apartment was located. Outside, I squinted against the security lights which lit the yard after dark but made it difficult to see beyond it once within their glare. I glanced around and paused to make sure the yard and street were clear. I made my way to the pedestrian gate leading to the street. There I produced another key, this time to a padlock keeping the gate closed. Reaching awkwardly through the gate I opened the deadbolt,

passed through onto the street, and turned to snap the lock shut again. Had there been space for me to park my vehicle in the fenced yard, I would have left after activating an electronic gate opener. As it was, I parked, to the great dismay of many, on the street. Once through the pedestrian gate I used the remote entry device, also on my keychain, to unlock the fifth and final lock between home and vehicle, the door to my small Honda Civic.

Once in the car, I was still not free to start the engine. Before placing the key in the ignition, I plugged a small electronic device attached to my keychain into a slot on the dashboard and waited for a light to flash green and produce a beeping sound. Only then could I place the key in the ignition. I began a mental countdown. I had approximately seven seconds to successfully start the car's engine before the alarm would sound. Without the aftermarket device, installed to deter car thieves, the engine would not start when the key was placed in the ignition and the alarm would sound³³. Once the car started, I drove the few streets over to my uncle's home.

When I arrived, I paused before exiting the vehicle to look for unknown individuals, suspicious movements or anything else that did not feel 'right'. I exited the car, locking the door and unlocking Marilyn's front gate. Had I felt

³³ I had spent nearly 20 embarrassing minutes shortly after my arrival in the country trying in vain to shut the alarm off after I had done the routine out of order. In the end I had to call Marilyn's son Junior, who called the alarm installation expert, who then had to call me and talk me through the process. I was chastised and teased for that. The message was, as always, one of safety. Forgetting the order needed procedure to start the car and being unable to drive the car quickly meant that I was a sitting target for car thieves, robbers and kidnappers. I was lucky, I was told, that I had made the mistake during the day in a residential area, instead of somewhere deemed 'risky'.

even slightly uneasy, I had been instructed to use my cell phone to call the occupants of the house, so that someone could come look out for me as I traversed the several meters from the car to the gate which surrounded their home.

Inside the home, I found the whole family, including Junior and Sylvie and Frankie and her boyfriend, settling in for a weekend night at home watching movies and entertaining other extended family members who had dropped in for a visit. I was glad to have them look over my route. At that point I had only been to the downtown a few times, and never by myself, and never at night. I pulled out my map of the downtown core, confusing even in daytime because of the myriad one way streets, and indicated the route I thought I would take. It became apparent immediately that while the route I had selected would indeed get me to the place I wanted to be, it was in every sense, the 'wrong' way. I was counseled on best driving routes to and from the downtown core given the time of night and the location of the bar that I was visiting and advised on where exactly to park. At this point, when I was being so conscientiously counseled, it became apparent how incredibly important this alternate sense of geography was for safety. It was clear to Marilyn's family that I did not have a proper mental map of risk and danger in Port of Spain.³⁴

³⁴According to Lupton:

This 'mental map' does not simply rely on geographical aspects of a space or place, but also draws on ideas and assumptions about social relations and the kinds of people who inhabit or

I was also reminded of a list of areas and neighbourhoods near the core I was to avoid at all costs. I was cautioned about using higher speed thoroughfares such as the Lady Young highway which cuts through Laventille, which was considered the most dangerous area on my route. Using that thoroughfare, which takes travelers through this 'dangerous' area and deposits them onto a different, less busy, part of the edge of the downtown core, cut significant time from my commute, depending on where I was going, and was considered to be an acceptable route during the daytime. The route cuts through the mountains and provides a spectacular view of Port of Spain proper and the sea. During the day, families stop at a vista point to take in the view. At night, youth from the area often congregate to play football. Not only were the people there assumed to be criminals or to have criminal ties, but, on account of my Indo-Trinidadian appearance, I was told I would be especially targeted. It should be noted that this level of planning, down to 'where to park', would not have been expected had I been accompanied on my trip. I was simply judged not to have the knowledge to select safe routes or know safe spaces on my own.

That evening, and on countless other occasions driving to and from other destinations, the same stories were told. "You have to realize, if your car breaks down or you get a flat tire, no one is going to help you. No one will stop, especially at night". At other times, "God help an Indian [me] who has car trouble

pass through these spaces and places at specific times of day and night (Lupton, 1999a: 144).

and finds themselves in that area". The potential of my car failing while in an unsafe area was constantly expressed as a worry, despite the fact that the car was maintained largely by Marilyn's extended family, several of whom were mechanics by trade. In particular places, at particular times, I was told that should the car break down, or get a flat tire, I was to ignore it and to continue driving on the tire rim or failing engine until I was clear of the area. I was under no circumstances to leave the car and I was to get on the phone. These rules, peppered with anecdotes, real and, I suspect, occasionally exaggerated for effect, were a regular part of planning conversations such as this one. The 'You could end up robbed or even dead, you'll be helpless' stories were often followed by another anecdote which would be completely contradictory, detailing times when the narrator had come to the assistance of or was aided by the same stereotypical other I was being so deliberately trained to avoid. Each story was peppered with phrases like "You will be fine, but better to be safe, *ent*?" To what extent the well-meaning advisors truly believed the advice they were giving me, and to what extent they were using exaggeration to enforce an as yet incomplete mental map of safe and unsafe places and safe and unsafe individuals is difficult to parse. The combination of dire warning and comforting reassurance performed an important social and cognitive process of *creating* fear, conjuring the risky other, in order to produce or create behaviours of safety, not only for me but, equally important, for my teachers. This process is a way of performing fear in order to produce safety. I had never performed any of these actions at my home in Canada, and people

with whom I spoke indicated that they had only had to perform vigilance in this way within the last 10-15 years.

At Joseph's house, surrounded by his family and helpful route providers, I was given a few more rules. My cell phone would be with me at all times and I was instructed to call if I was at any time lost or uncomfortable. Everyone made it known that 'had I been Uncle's child' I would not have been permitted to drive into the city at this time of night, and worse yet, return alone well after midnight. This large extended family contained many young women only a few years younger than my, at that time, 28 year old self. None of those women were permitted to drive alone at night, save for those forced to battle horrendous rush hour traffic returning from their day jobs. But even then, that was simply 'dark', not late night. This restriction of movement among women in particular, was a fairly recent development, since only five years earlier, many women had been more comfortable driving in the evening. A rash of kidnappings (Rogers 2007), car-jackings and robberies, particularly those targeting middle and upper class Indo-Trinidadian women had curtailed solo night driving completely for almost every woman I met. The few who still drove did so out of necessity, and took great pains to be cautious. Safety was thought to be in numbers.

Once, when I was at a party in a gated community, a niece of Marilyn's called to say she needed a ride to the party. She was at her house, only two streets away, in a wealthy but un-gated neighbourhood. Frankie volunteered to drive over several streets to pick her up, a round trip that would have taken

approximately 2 minutes of driving outside of the gated community. When I saw Joseph hesitate to allow Frankie to make the trip, I offered to accompany her, but, as it was after dark, even my presence was not quite enough. Finally, a third partygo-er volunteered and with the addition of a 14 year old boy, Frankie's cousin, we all headed out.

There is a gendering to these sorts of isolation. To be sure, many women drive with other women alone at night out of necessity, but given the choice, most find it preferable to be accompanied by a man, even one as young and inexperienced as a 14 year old. The implication, as I understood it, was not that Marilyn's young nephew would be adept at fighting off robbers, carjackers or any other type of nefarious evil-doer, but rather that his presence would be a disincentive for those looking at a vehicle full of women as an advantageous target. This was more a comment on the judgment of the criminals than on the abilities of women. This incident is significant as it points to the ongoing hyper-vigilance surrounding women's bodies as result of the crime situation. This hyper-vigilance leads has led to a considerable reduction in women's autonomy. For my female informants, there have not been any additional negative repercussions other than increased difficulty moving around. Though some informants told me that they feared that if the crime situation got worse, women would be excluded from traditional avenues of success because of increased isolation generated through of fear of crime. At the time of my fieldwork, upper middle and upper class women were not dissuaded from participating in public

life or barred from jobs except insofar as to limit the times that they could move about alone. Women who worked in the downtown core reported not leaving their offices during their lunch hours or on breaks because they feared unwanted attention or crime should they venture out onto the streets without a male companion. Upper middle and upper class families and social networks simply exercised their considerable temporal and financial flexibility to accommodate constraints on movement and timing in order to accommodate changes in 'safe' behavior for women. This solved the problem for upper middle and upper class Trinidadian women and children, but it was a strategy that was resented. Further, for lower class Trinidadians, without the financial capacity or flexibility to monitor and alter lifestyles in order to attempt to ensure safety from crime, the consequences may become more severe. Car ownership is unlikely for those who occupy a lower middle or lower class economic and social status. Women from these groups who work nights or need to move about the country are forced to take their chances on public transportation or spend money on taxi-cabs.

As for my night out, I was firm but persistent, rebuffing further offers of a lift to and from downtown. Uncle Joseph respected my decision and I was roundly teased for my lack of sense of direction and understanding of 'good and bad' places to go. Younger family members jokingly offered 'help'. Of particular amusement was my Canadian accent and my inability to pronounce particular street and highway names like a 'local'. Given my Indian appearance, there was much debate as to whether a non-Trinidadian accent would be helpful

or a hindrance to me, should I get lost. Would I be left alone as a foreigner? They and many others believed that white foreigners are largely left to their own devices even if they wander into 'dangerous' areas because robbing or otherwise committing acts of crime toward them would result in too great and too thorough a response from police services. An Indo-Trinidadian looking woman with an overseas accent on the other hand, might be evidence of local roots and considerable wealth, and I might therefore be vigorously pursued if my accent gave me away. Laughingly, the family tried to coax a few phrases in a comically thick and stereotypically lower class Trinidadian accent from me so that I might ask for directions from strangers on the street, without revealing my 'alien' nature. Because I had not been there over the last several years to learn, argue and embody the nuances of behaviour deemed to be required in order to recognize who and what was risky, who and what should be feared, I was thought to be at greater risk of attracting dangerous attention to myself.

With map in hand, I was, at last free to head to town. I found parking at the appointed lot, met up with a friend I had found through my parents, and was introduced in a trendy bar to several of her female professional friends. In their late 30s and early 40s, mostly single, these women expressed frustration at how difficult it was for them to meet casually for a night on the town. Besides me, only one woman had driven by herself, and she had not come from a great distance. She had the benefit of driving a large pick-up truck, in which she said she felt safe and slightly invincible. The truck belonged to her ex-husband, a prominent

professional who worked in the downtown core. The security staff who moonlighted watching cars in the evenings knew the vehicle and the owner. She explained that they would look out for her and keep the vehicle safe. The other women had carpooled or met up after work during the late afternoon. Later in the evening, they had ventured out together. They were a racially diverse group of executives from various media outlets, publicists, lawyers and individuals who worked for international aid and trade organizations. They were well known and well-heeled. Throughout the evening one or several women would be pulled away to join other friends, or the group would be joined by another friend or acquaintance similarly out for the evening.

This outing took place only a month prior to the national election, and those people I was with were all fervent supporters of the new, 'non-racial' third party called the Congress of the People (COP), discussed in chapter five. Many of them, along with family and friends, were involved directly with the COP campaign, though none were actual candidates. A few had actually run for parliamentary seats in previous elections for other, now defunct third parties. They were all very interested in and knowledgeable about the coming election. Like Marilyn and her family, they all took pains to keep up on current events in the country. Unlike Marilyn, these people were more directly connected to the political newsmakers and to the editorial elites who decided what made the news and what did not.

It was a busy night at the bar. People were keen to talk about the upcoming election and the ills facing the current regime and the problems that would confront whoever won. These conversations on the election were inseparable from those about a recent spate of highly publicized murders of alleged gang leaders from Laventille and the retributive murders that followed. Conversation became sombre as the women began to speculate on what 'Port of Spain people' think about the impoverished individuals who live in these gang dominated communities such as Laventille, Sea Lots and other 'risky' places. 'Port of Spain people', I soon realized, was here used as a short hand code for those who live in the exclusive middle class and elite communities in and about the capital of Port of Spain. It did not include those who live in the overpopulated slum areas which also border the same area. The conversation turned to how 'Port of Spain people' have no idea what happens outside of these wealthy areas due to their isolation. Further, another woman charged, the suburbs are where the horrors of poverty take place, and those horrors disproportionately affect Afro-Trinidadians. Another suggested the problem is different in Afro-Trinidadian communities than in poor Indian communities, which are still 'attached' to richer Indian communities.

One of the women present, Joycelyn, who works in national media, picked up the thread of the conversation as it related to 'Port of Spain people' and told a story of driving to her place of work one afternoon only to get stuck in an unexpected traffic jam in the downtown core. Two men were fighting, she said,

and traffic had stopped either because people could not pass through or they were more interested in watching the exchange. She said she locked her doors and reached for her cell phone. “You know I would never drive that way if it wasn’t the only way to get to work”, she said.

While she watched the two men fight, a third man came screaming out of a nearby building, and brutally beat one of the men engaged in the fistfight with the butt of a handgun. She was, ‘literally stuck, traffic wasn’t moving and this was happening, not three feet from my car. Blood was spurting! I was terrified,’ Joycelyn continued, saying that she was terrified because she was blocked in. There was no way for her to escape in her car and no way she could exit the vehicle for fear of getting dragged into the melee, getting robbed in the confusion or losing her car. “You hear about these things, but to see it is a different thing. All I could think about was a stray bullet finding its way into the car. You grow up in a middle class home; you are really sheltered. I talk about these things all the time, but you don’t know what it is about.” She added that when the fight finally resolved and she got to work, shaking, and retold the tale to others at the office who lived in the area, the reaction was laughter at her naïveté. She finished the story by adding. “People don’t know. We Port of Spain people don’t know what it’s like”.

Were it not for the location of her job Joycelyn never would have found herself on that particular street and neither, she went on to argue, would anyone of her class or background. They would never witness that sort of violence, and

therefore are clueless as to the reality that other lower class Trinidadians live.

The episode convinced her only that there was much she could not know.

The conversation went on. A man present at the table commented that the area in which the woman witnessed the violent exchange was a place he himself had played as a child, but which his children had never seen. His children, he said, had few friends outside of their private school and their gated community. Their lives were even more sheltered than that of Joycelyn, who witnessed the fight, and he was unsure of how to teach them about his own experiences as a child in this city.

At length, the evening finished. After being offered a couch in a downtown apartment instead of driving the 14 kilometres back to my suburban apartment, I was escorted to my car by a group of women. I began the journey home, getting briefly lost before finding the highway. Rifling through my purse to place my cell phone within easy reach, I found the digital recorder I used to record oral life history interviews. I began speaking into it, passing the time by recording some thoughts on the night. Soon, I began to test myself, to chart orally all I had learned. As I pulled to stop lights I employed all of the advice, listing the things I was looking for, the potential dangers of each neighbourhood I had driven through, shocked to listen to all I had absorbed in a few short months. I ranked the gated communities that I passed by, noted what kinds of security each had, whether I was being watched as I in turn observed the gates and the homes within. Finally at my gate, I approached the house slowly, checking the street for strange

lights, strange cars, pedestrians or movements in my compound's yard or those nearby that could indicate something dangerous, something out of sorts. Satisfied that all was well, I turned off the ignition, slipped my cell phone into my pocket (in case I lost my purse), steadied my purse in the crook of my arm and twisted my bunch of keys in the dim light to ensure I had the keys in the right order. Out of the car, I locked it with the remote lock, took a few steps and used another key at the pedestrian gate padlock, quickly scampered across the lawn through the security lights to the small garage door, opened a lock there, and another two at my apartment door and I was home 'safe'.

Trinidad's Walls

The conversations I witnessed during my night on the town were telling, particularly the one with man who claimed he did not know how to teach his children about things not related to 'Port of Spain' people, not related to their isolated gated community. For Caldeira (2000), the 'City of Walls' as she calls contemporary São Paulo has the effect of changing habits. "The everyday routines of those who inhabit segregated spaces...are quite different from their previous routines in more mixed and open environments" (2000: 297). In these new safe commuter communities in Trinidad the effect of these concerns for security are very similar to those of the urban architectures discussed by Caldeira. In Trinidad, the goal of separating oneself and one's family from 'undesired interactions' is explained as a means to eliminate the risk of crime. There are far fewer gated communities in Trinidad than in São Paulo, though the numbers are

increasing. The ways individuals transform their space in an effort to reduce the risk of both fear of crime and actual crime can be read as manifestations of class and status in that the visible signs of these security measures announce to the world that you have something worthy of protection. Status is thereby conferred not only by having things, but by employing security measures that allow one to broadcast that they have something to protect. These measures can also be seen as an extension of the embodiment of risk in relation to crime. In Caldeira's São Paulo this new model of 'spatial segregation' causes people to continually re-imagine their city spaces. (1996: 303). For the people I lived and worked with in Trinidad, this re-imagining takes the form of continuous altering of mental maps of safe and unsafe spaces. This conjuring, imagining, and re-imagining the 'risky other' who inhabits the 'bad' spaces is a learned and constantly shifting process that is imbued with concerns about the crime wave, about the trade in drugs, and about the future of the nation. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are engaged in complicated processes of negotiation and concessions to fear of crime and in all of these imaginings, utilize a racialized, classed imagining of the 'other' as a distillation point around which fears coalesce. This 'other' is used as a benchmark or a signpost, a common 'known' factor of fear to be avoided at all costs. Previous chapters showed how this 'risky other' was embodied in language surrounding elections. In the following pages I discuss how that distillation of classed and racialized traits is formed, re-formed and maintained among upper middle and upper classes.

As mentioned, most suburbs outside of Port of Spain are not gated. New subdivisions under construction are at least nominally gated, while those closer to town with more luxurious ocean views, in the highest profile, wealthiest regions of the country have much higher levels of security. Depending on the size and cost of homes, some are more 'high tech', requiring individuals to enter a password on a key pad in order to secure entry, bypassing the human element all together. This way tenants can allow individuals and cars in from outside of the gates using a phone or telecom system. These are more common in smaller elite gated communities. New planned community suburbs include homes which are individually gated and wholly fenced in with one or two entrances, at which a guard may be stationed either 24 hours a day, or only overnight. In general, people speak derisively about the effectiveness of these guards, noting that they are effective only in dissuading the least persistent and are often lazy or sleeping. Security measures extend beyond the location of a home to how one lives within it. All of these measures are taken to avoid the "bad man". I learned who the 'bad man' was, in relation to myself.

One particular afternoon, after an idle shopping excursion to a local shopping mall, Marilyn and I attempted to gain entry to a newish gated subdivision on our way home. Marilyn had remembered seeing an advertisement in the paper for a house for sale within the subdivision and she was, at the time, considering a move to a bigger home. After stopping at the gate I gave the guard my full name and in a slightly deferential way, requested entrance. Marilyn

laughed at my 'Canadian manners'. I had, she said, "over explained" myself to the guard, stopping at the gate, speaking too quickly and worst of all asking permission to enter, instead of simply telling the guard to open the gate because I was going in. She was not counseling me toward rudeness, she explained, but instead argued that as a young Indian looking woman, travelling with another Indo-Trinidadian woman, with my sensible car, overseas clothing, and muddled, mostly foreign accent and demeanour, I would not be denied entry to the community. She laughed, "It would be different if you were some bad man from Laventille or Sea Lots in an old car". In short, I met none of the class or racial criteria of someone from whom either the security guard or the inhabitants of the gated community needed protection.

Given my non-threatening appearance, I should not have expected any resistance from guards likely too worried about censure from residents angry their friends were not allowed access to bother with noting identification or barring entrance from 'someone like me'. I had failed to see that given prevailing attitudes, there is little chance I would be identified as 'risky', as a stranger to be feared or carefully interrogated. The stranger, according to Ahmed is not only that which is different from us, but one who is recognized and understood precisely because of this performed difference:

When we face others, we seek to recognize who they are, by reading the signs on their body, or by reading their body *as* a sign. Such acts of reading constitute 'the subject' in relation to 'the stranger', who is recognized as 'out of place' in a given

place...Each time we are faced by an other whom we cannot recognize, we seek to find other ways of achieving recognition, not only by re-reading the body of *this* other who is faced, but by telling the difference between this other, and other others. (Ahmed 2000: 9).

My failure to recognize my own 'obvious' innocuousness was in fact evidence of my inability to perform 'safety'. I was not able to recognize that I belonged, was not visibly "out of place" in seeking entrance to the gated community because of my bodily signifiers. The "bad man" would be "out of place" in this situation, as I would have been "out of place" in Laventille. My gaffe in overly formal manners with the security guard provided Marilyn and her family with reason to further educate me, to ask me thorough questions, to prepare me carefully for solo travels. For Marilyn and others, I needed to learn and re-learn 'appropriate' sorts of histories, those that would abrogate my risk of falling victim to crime, even if those histories also employed stereotypes which, once examined were contradictory.

In truth, it is this proverbial 'bad man from Laventille or Beetham or Morvant' that is the quintessential distillation of the 'risky other' in contemporary Trinidad. Like 'Port of Spain people' who are assumed to be unaware of the full extent of the crime situation, the 'bad man from Laventille' is a stereotype. He is a bogeyman and a label that carries significant stigma. Laventille and Morvant and Beetham are nearly exclusively Afro-Trinidadian neighbourhoods with large squatter populations, south and east of Port of Spain, in which gang violence is

endemic, where the majority of gang and drug related murders either take place, or from which most victims originate. Fully 66% of all murders occurred in 2008 occurred in districts within those three areas. These three areas contain only about 15% of the population (Townsend 2009: 27-28).

People who are not from the area rarely attempt entry during the day, and fewer still at night. Those people who are not from the 'bad' areas do not face these sorts of calculations about whether or not they belong or can enter areas like Laventille. These people know that they do not belong, that they would not fit and be identified as a stranger. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians may alter their mental map and practices in order to avoid fear of crime, but they do not ever feel as though they might receive a bad welcome, be barred entrance or be heavily surveilled because of their appearance, unlike their racialized lower class counterparts. They are not perceived as a physical threat to other Trinidadians, either of their own class or others.

For my informants, the embodiment of all that is wrong with Trinidad in terms of the crime situation is distilled in the young black gang member from these crime ridden areas. Caldeira, in detailing similar processes in urban São Paulo, discusses the way that *nordestinos* or north-easterners, usually Afro-Brazilians, are vilified and held in contempt in many of the same ways as those from Laventille or other parts of poor Trinidad. Thought to be poor, black, ill-educated, *favela*-dwelling and in possession of traits of criminality, the *nordestino* is the focus of risk and considered symptomatic of social decay by middle and

upper class Paulistas, and indeed as Caldeira subsequently shows, even for those who similarly dwell in urban slums (2000: 32). For the Trinidadians with whom I spoke, like 'Joycelyn' who described herself as a 'Port of Spain person', much of their lives are preoccupied with avoiding contact with individuals who come from Laventille or Sea Lots or are seen to be imbued with these criminal qualities. There are exceptions, and nearly every person I encountered regaled me with a tale of the person that was from the area who was 'a really good person', or who did not try to rob or steal, who worked hard at a legitimate job, or who was well spoken or well-educated. This contradiction was frequently recognized and as frequently dismissed in the name of safety. In different instances, I was told of the myriad kindnesses, and humanity of people from these bad areas, those who had been labeled as risky and to be avoided at all cost. These kindnesses were waved away with follow up comments which alleged basically that in most situations, it was not worth taking the risk of presuming the rationality, humanity, or non-criminality of these individuals. So powerful was the conjuring of the risky other, and so important was its symbolic work in enforcing safe behaviour that most chose to ignore the contradictions and work instead to maintain isolation from these people.

These contradictions are evidence of the imperfect nature of the conjuring of both fear and safety. Just as safety is not guaranteed by following the shifting and contradictory informal rules, neither are the perceptions of those who fit the description of the 'risky other' always (or even mostly) sound. Still, in the stories

highlighting the kindnesses and humanity of people from these bad areas, the individuals are also presented in a manner by upper middle and upper class Trinidadians which is often limiting and fits within a secondary set of stereotypes. The 'exceptions' to the 'rule' of the inherently violent 'risky other' are presented as similarly 'simple,' often pitiable or exceedingly 'good' individuals. Those who have displayed noteworthy, kindness, humanity, or have upheld standards which are not associated with the 'risky other' or the 'bad men' are lauded as simple heroes, who are congratulated often the way one would congratulate a child. The stereotypes of the 'bad man' even when turned on their heads, contain a distancing, childlike set of qualities which still prevent these lower class Trinidadians from meaningful contact with upper class Trinidadians. These sorts of descriptions fall within the noble savage archetype.

The Death of Tecia Henry:

On June 13, 2009, a young girl from a notoriously bad street in Laventille named Tecia Henry disappeared after being sent to the corner store to pick up a few things for her mother. She did not return that evening and by the next day, newspapers were covering the story, as they had several other stories of missing girls from all over the country. These stories, much more than discussions of missing or male gang members, held the attention of the media-consuming public. Two days later, when no leads into the child's disappearance had been discovered, residents of Laventille burned tires on the road in protest over what was perceived to be police inaction on the case. Tecia's aunt alleged willful police inaction

because of their poor, marginalized status, saying that the media preferred to dredge up old stories about Tecia's mother's drug history and that 'people are against Black women in the ghetto who are only trying to uplift themselves'.

(Trinidad and Tobago News Blog, 2009). The Trinidad Guardian wrote:

Another resident on his way to work the morning Henry disappeared, said he, too, spotted a gunman lurking behind a house. According to the resident, as Henry was making her way to the shop she stopped to fix her slipper. The resident was adamant, however, that no "stranger" could have been responsible for Henry's disappearance. "Nobody would come in Laventille so, especially at Crook Street. Is somebody from right in here responsible"(Kowlessar 2009).

Tecia was found strangled several days later in a shallow grave beneath a house only two doors away from her home. Speculation placed the motive as some sort of retributive murder because one or both of the child's parents had drug connections of which they had run afoul. Tecia's mother publically called on the Prime Minister for an apology after he alluded vaguely to other nefarious reasons for the child's death, publicly stating "there is more to it than that, but I am not at liberty to say" (Kowlessar 2009b). The apology never came, and almost two weeks later, on July 5, 2009, Ricardo 'Docs' McCarthy, the alleged leader of the 'Block Eight Gang', the gang which controlled the area in which Tecia was abducted and killed, was himself gunned down and killed. He had been in hiding since shortly after the child disappeared. On July 7, 2009, the Guardian newspaper ran a full page colour photo spread featuring photographs of Tecia's mother and grandmother, as well as relatives of other individuals allegedly killed

by McCarthy, celebrating his demise (Kowlessar 2009c). Under the subheading 'justice served' the article featured a quote from Tecia's mother stating "I must feel happy about that. I get justice from the people, because they [are] working" (Kowlessar 2009c).

The notion of the 'stranger' as someone who, as Ahmed argues is recognizable, whose body can be read and interpreted comes to the fore in this media report. The 'stranger' is understood by virtue of their being out of place, and is recognized as such (2000:9). Laventille residents argued that the person responsible for Tecia's disappearance had to be someone from within the community. The person could not be a stranger to the area. It was simply not possible to be an unnoticed stranger on a street that has such constant high surveillance. Tecia's death was first reported as a terrible horror, and then slowly, accusations of blame, leveled at her parents, and supported by the most powerful political figure in the country began to surface. Tecia was no longer an 'innocent' in the same manner as wealthier children. By virtue of her class/race/location, her image was altered, by what she must have seen, by her compromised innocence. Tecia's death, and the issues that were brought up in its media coverage, point to many issues related to the way that crime, risk/riskiness and blame are allocated. Secondly there is the issue of justice. The residents of Crook Street burned tires and demanded justice from authorities for Tecia's death, but accepted the murder of her murderer as a sort of justice equivalent to a formal trial and jail sentence.

Thus, Tecia Henry, the child kidnapped and killed in that place where, for the majority of the public, 'the stranger' is located, is mourned by the public, but aspersions are cast upon the mother because of her polluting qualities. Blame is leveled both at the mother, for failing to protect her child and for her alleged involvement in drugs, in that place of all places, but also at the inaction of police and the government's inability to effect change in that area that would remove the criminal element. The death of the child is used by those in the area and importantly by those who do not live in Laventille as a sort of touchstone, an indicative event which reinforces to those outside of Laventille, who are not drug and gang implicated, that which is already understood about residents of Laventille, their connections to drugs and lawlessness. Tecia's murder bolsters convictions among upper middle and upper class Trinidadians with regards to their own personal safety precautions. This resonates with Douglas' (1966) understanding of blame. Scott and Jackson argue that "Parents are not only responsible for the care for their children, they are also *held* responsible for their children's wellbeing and conduct and are thus accountable if their children are victimized or if they victimize others" (1999: 103). Stories like that of the fear of that quintessential 'bad man' who killed Tecia Henry work in the conjuring both of safety and victimization. While Tecia's case is discussed with the caveat of her parents' disreputable and polluting behavior, her death is also used as justification for curtailing freedom of movement and further isolating children of upper middle and upper class Trinidadians. Children are therefore especially subjected to

changes in their daily life brought upon by the desire to produce safety. During my fieldwork, deaths like that of Tecia Henry, those described as innocents immersed in unsafe areas, were met with large amounts of frustration. Elites who spent their time promoting and working on improving the justice system in Trinidad, who advocated for legal processes which would ensure access to appropriate due process for perpetrators and victims, would sometimes throw up their hands at a story like Tecia's, exclaiming "Why can't the cops just go in there and clean that whole place out? Start over!" This sort of exclamation, made in frustration and advocating no due process or even legal justice for those who perpetrate crimes, shows the high level of frustration with the situation. It also points to a willingness to accept extra-legal action if a larger conception of 'justice' is met.

This willingness of otherwise law-abiding citizens to accept extra-legal measures of justice resonates with similar issues highlighted by Caldeira's (2000) work in São Paulo. Caldeira examines the case of two men held in jail for the killing of an elite girl from a gated community. The men held for the crime had obviously been beaten and even sodomized prior to even being charged with a crime, yet the punishment, illegal though it was, was interpreted as both necessary and warranted, both by Paulistas who were of the elite class targeted by the initial crime, and by lower class Paulistas from the scorned and maligned 'bad' areas from which the alleged perpetrators came (2000:357-9). Similarly, in Trinidad, frustration with an ineffective justice system has upper middle and upper class

individuals endorsing extra-legal and often violent forms of punishment against 'bad men'. Caldeira notes also that in discussions about specific hypothetical acts of violence, people across all political spectrums in São Paulo often resort quickly to condoning acts of torture, beatings and extra-legal punishment on offenders (2000: 365). Similarly, in Trinidad, individuals often invoke the need for serious violent extra-legal acts of violence against those 'bad men' like Tecia Henry's murderers. In these discussions, men like Tecia Henry's murderers become sub-human, and therefore not entitled to basic human rights. What begins with a discussion of "that poor Tecia child" quickly and often turns to discussions of the 'necessary' ways and means that upper middle and upper class Trinidadians must employ their capital, even extra-legally, to protect themselves from the 'bad men'. Indeed, in 2010, measures have been introduced which will bring back 'lashings' as punishment for crimes and there are renewed calls to employ the death sentence.

I will address these issues in chapter 10 of this work, but for now return to the issue of isolating children from harm.

During my time in Trinidad, I watched as parents refused to let their five to ten year old children walk even 150 meters unattended from a main bus route to a primary school in the bright light of mid-morning despite the fact that there were numerous children and adults on the route. For parents, this vigilance required paying an extra fare on the maxi taxi. Adult and child rode from their point of origin to the stop no more than 150 meters from the child's school. Both

parent and child would disembark and make the walk to the school and the parent would then retrace her or his steps to the bus route to wait for and catch the next bus to take them further into town. Those who observed this behaviour argued either that it is a mark of ridiculousness, or that it is necessary because, “You do not want to be the person that loses their child”. This pattern too is a marked change from the life that most individuals remember. Many people bemoan that their children are missing out on the sort of childhood that they themselves had.

There is considerable frustration at this perceived necessity to protect children and debate over whether it is even necessary. One woman, Delilah, a youthful looking retired top-level executive in her early sixties, expressed the conflicting frustration with what she thought was excessive protection of children, arguing that traffic was so bad because these “stupid middle class mothers with their bourgeois angst were clogging up the highways in their big cars driving one child back and forth from school to lessons”. Delilah resolutely refused to believe that the concessions she should have to make to protect herself against crime were any worse than those she had made when she lived in London or New York, but even so, she did feel frightened at some points. She had left for the UK as a teenager and told me that because she was not subjected to ‘ridiculous’ constraints as a child and young woman, she was fully prepared to act as an adult and fend for herself. She fears for the children who have been driven everywhere by overprotective parents, arguing that these children will not be able to manage their own lives.

Despite a Trinidadian propensity for using racialized language in everyday talk, both jokingly and in earnest (see Birth 1999; Khan 2004; Miller 1994 Munasinghe 2001 for examples), and the also accepted generalization that the 'bad man' was poor, Afro-Trinidadian and urban, few individuals with whom I spoke truly believed that race predicted behaviour. The quintessential 'bad man', the 'stranger' is understood with reference to race, class and geography, but is not thought to be bad *because* of geography or race. For the individuals with whom I spoke, the 'bad man', while personally avoided is also spoken about with a particular sort of liberal sensitivity. He is presented as a failed being. Under this 'sensitive' rhetoric, generally only begun after frustrations about the 'bad man' are expressed, the 'bad man' is discussed as being failed by the country's educational system, and failed as a victim of negligent parenting due to parents themselves being overburdened by poverty and poor-education. These sorts of statements, often made in contradiction to earlier frustrated sentiments which express desires to 'wipe out' or 'clean out' the physical space from which the 'bad man' comes, can be read as an attempt to inject humanity back into a situation found frustrating and untenable. Ironically, by presenting the 'bad man' as both the root of all of Trinidad's problems, and as a failed project, 'he' becomes less human, and therefore a more perfect target for both scorn and extra-legal intervention.

I suggest that for many of my informants who live within literal and metaphorical upper or upper middle class enclaves, blame and frustration are

pointed in two directions, both at the stereotypical 'bad man' whose actions might harm themselves or their families and at the government and social programs that fail these bad men and in particular their children. While my informants protect themselves and endeavour, through locks and alarms and carefully thought out driving routes to ensure that they do not have to come into contact with the 'bad man', many also express horror at the conditions which create the 'bad man' and his ways of life.

The 'man from Laventille' is the quintessential distillation of the 'real threat', an archetype of the 'risky other'. Holloway and Jefferson (1997) argue that crimes which feature "individual identifiable victims and individual identifiable offenders" are those which are most likely to instill fear as opposed to those where victim and perpetrator are difficult to pinpoint (eg. toxic waste dumping). Criminals are thought to be individuals who otherwise have little power in a formalized sense—be it education, meaningful enfranchisement or freedom from stigma, and tend to be 'strangers' or marked as strangers (1997: 260). Thus 'stranger danger' is the primary locus of anxiety about crime. "Crimes between familiars tend not to get treated as crimes. This blaming of the outsider builds loyalty and this assists social cohesion...It also renders the problem potentially *controllable* (1997: 260, emphasis in original). In Trinidad it is a racialized, class specific, even geographically rooted individual, and therefore 'stranger' to middle class and elite areas, who is both victim and victimizer and

around whom fears and anxieties about personal safety and the future of the nation coalesce.

Conclusion:

In this chapter I have explored the ways in which appropriate measures towards safety are taught, learned and reinforced. A narrative of an evening on the town explored the ways in which 'mental maps' operate as a means to ensure safety and avoid risk. The ways in which I transgressed informal rules regarding safety by driving by myself after dark highlight the ways in which the lives of women are particularly constricted given this dynamic understanding of safe behaviour. For upper middle and upper classes, moving about in safety is often like moving from one sort of jail to another. Moving from my apartment to my vehicle required the opening and closing of five locks and a complicated alarm system. Upper middle and upper class lives are increasingly constrained by the practices of safety and feel as though their experiences of the 'whole' of Trinidad are constrained as a result. Spaces of safety are simultaneously spaces of segregation from lower classes and from those without the means or capital to inhabit or create similar spaces. As practices meant to alleviate fear of crime become normalized, so too does isolation from lower classes.

I have also discussed the way the notion of a 'bad man' is employed as a bogeyman, a distillation of stereotypes that are used as a tool to encourage safe behaviour. The 'bad man' is a stranger, but is recognizable as such. His body and features are racialized and marginalized. For those upper middle and upper class

Trinidadians who move outside of their own comfort zones, into places where they themselves are 'out of place' as I was in a vehicle at night, the stereotype of the 'bad man' is recognizable and readable. Narratives in which the 'bad man' defies stereotypes rarely break through the more fear-filled reading of the irrational and dangerous 'bad man'. Instead, they imbue the 'bad man' with a child-like quality which prevents him/her from being understood as a rational peer. These sorts of discussions of those 'risky others' who defy stereotype are presented as the 'exception that proves the rule' relative to those about violence and inherent criminality. The end result is that these perceptions make it difficult for lower class Trinidadians to access upper classes socially or professionally.

This tension, between empathy for the 'bad man' and fear of him is disconcerting to those who invoke the stereotype in order to keep their children safe, or to encourage 'safe' behaviour in others, but the stereotype is used nevertheless. In this way the bad man is conjured as an imaginable manifestation of that which is feared. In addition, the stereotype feeds fear, and thus reproduces itself. The issues of blame and the 'stranger' are invoked again in an analysis of the murder of the poor young Afro-Trinidadian Tecia Henry. Media reports which alleged that the child could not have been killed by someone from outside of the neighbourhood, by someone who did not fit into the stereotype of 'the bad man from Laventille', demonstrate the ways in which mental maps are reinforced and fear is reproduced. Tecia's death was used to reinforce notions of blame as related to safety and children, as justification for the further isolation of children

and women, and as a talking point for discussions of the ways in which the current government has failed those citizens whom it purports to assist. The murder of an innocent is used in the conjuring of the inhumanity of the 'bad man', and so reinforces the stereotype.

In the next chapter I move from the way people make, understand and rationalize concessions to violence to unpack the ways in which people talk about fear of crime, as well as the ways in which they talk about crime in reference to notions of time and race.

Chapter 7: Talk of Crime

In this chapter I talk about 'talk'. Fear of crime and anxiety about crime are, as seen in earlier chapters, endemic in Trinidad. In this chapter I unpack several types of discussions that I observed in various forums. I argue that these discussions reflect frustrations and anxiety associated with the ever increasing vigilance required to avoid crime, and also perform an ongoing critique of the current government in Trinidad and Tobago. Talk of crime is ubiquitous in Trinidad. In this chapter I discuss the ways in which people talk about crime, and what effects these discussions have in terms of regulating behaviour. I discuss narratives about crime in relation to notions of time, and unpack the way those narratives work to regulate 'safe' behaviours. Finally, I explore the ways the use of race based insults in daily conversations point to underlying tensions, frustrations and contradictions in the daily lives of upper middle class and elite groups.

I argue that these discursive slips into racist language show frustration not just at a racialized risky other, but also at the circumstances of life individuals find themselves in as result of a lifestyle duality similar to Miller's (1994) distinction between transience and transcendence, discussed in Chapter 2. This duality is not reducible to race, class, religion, occupation, or location of 'home' alone, but is often expressed in classed and racialized talk. These talk events point to a larger tension within Trinidad to which other ethnographers have alluded. Besides normalizing behavior, talk also normalizes opinions regarding

crime events in general, and particularly normalizes classed and racialized stereotypes about poor Afro-Trinidadians.

Talking about Crime:

In her discussion of gated communities in the United States, Low writes: "The discourse of urban fear encodes other social concerns including class, race, and ethnic exclusivity as well as gender" (Low, 2001: 56). Talk of crime expresses coded judgments of class and race. Further, it produces methods and instructions for vigilance against crime and is in itself a method for making vigilance behaviours mandatory. In so doing, this talk also increases fear of crime. In this way, talk of crime feeds back onto itself increasing both fear and vigilance. Thus, talk of crime and fear of crime are two distinct but intimately related categories, each of which reinforces the other.

In Caldeira's (2000) São Paulo, the 'impure' other that the upper middle and upper classes seek to segregate themselves from are personified in the conception of *nordestinos*: poor African slave descended migrants to São Paulo from the economically depressed North-east region of Brazil (Caldeira 2000: 32). Caldeira argues that in speaking about crime, members of elite groups reinforce stereotypes about the risky (often racialized) other, and also transform the way that space is imagined. The narratives are prescriptive, in the sense that they clearly define who and what is to be feared, who are the 'risky other', but they are also soothing:

Amid the chaotic feelings associated with the spread of random violence in city space, these narratives attempt to reestablish order and meaning. Contrary to the experience of crime, which disrupts meaning and disorders the world, the talk of crime symbolically reorders it by trying to reestablish a static picture of the world (Ibid: 20).

The static, comforting picture of a life *as it should be* which is created by talk of crime works to: a) clearly delimit *who* the threats to security are; b) establish an informal consensus on appropriate measures to combat this threat and; c) “as the narratives are repeated, the neighborhood, the city, the house, and the neighbors all acquire different meanings because of the crime, and their existence may be realigned according to the marks provided by crime” (Caldeira 2000: 28). So too in Trinidad, as the neighborhood, city and its inhabitants are discussed through talk of crime, space is produced and delimited. It is politicized and becomes not benign but places of contention which are deeply rooted to the functioning of society. Safe and unsafe spaces and places become categorized and rules about proper and improper behaviour are created, challenged and perpetuated. Talk of crime in Trinidad works to define which categories of persons are deemed to be potentially dangerous by virtue of their race, class, social standing or way of life. This talk also reifies these individuals and their characteristics, and in so doing, helps to provide order to the world. The ‘bad man’ from Laventille, indeed any young, poor, Afro-Trinidadian, like Caldeira’s *nordestinos*, are markers of both disorder and the potential for order itself.

The description in the last chapter of my experience at Marilyn and Joseph's house, seeking directions before I left for a night on the town, was also a negotiation. In between the warnings of places to go and avoid, constant asides of 'Did you hear what happened near place 'x'?' filtered into the conversation. These conversations, like so many others I took part in over the course of my fieldwork, act as a consensus-making tool. They ensure that all participants in the conversation are in agreement about what are currently considered appropriate protocols and behaviours in order to maintain safety. These constantly negotiated and changing processes are contested and contradicted and as such never formalized but instead are always in the process of being made by being repeated and so enforced. The ongoing production of consensus through talk drives and sustains these norms. Individuals are self-policing about their own concessions to the threat of violence but are also constantly challenged in talk of crime to justify and alter their behaviour.

Information about safety and about recent events in particular places is given in rich detail. While it may have been Uncle Joseph telling *me* about safe places to park and ways to drive in order for both he and I to try and feel safe during a solo trip to the city one weekend night, he was also telling his children and the extended family members who were present. When he reiterated the places where I was and was not to drive, he also made asides to his adult son, nephews and other young people present, reminding them that the nightclub that they very rarely attended was near my destination, and was even closer to the

border of an unsafe area. His implication was that the warning I was receiving would be useful for them as well. When, after my evening out, I told them of how I made a wrong turn in the downtown core and found myself driving through the very bad area I had been told explicitly to avoid, I was jokingly chastised. While the reprimand might have been light, the next time I went downtown in the daylight with Marilyn, and again with Uncle Joe, special effort was made to show me, in their words, where I went wrong, how close I was to travelling into a place I would not have found my way out of, or might not have emerged safely from, where I would 'surely' have been taken advantage of had I stopped or had my car broken down. On subsequent driving tours around downtown, my guides not only reiterated where safe and unsafe areas were located, but were full of stories about the things that had been possible in those spaces before they became unsafe. These stories were rich with the insights into the ways in which individuals and their families were connected to the city.

A key part of what this talk does is produce norms without necessarily reducing them to truisms. This kind of normative infiltration ensures that codes of conduct never become "just because" but always emerge out of direct connections with experience. Vigilance becomes the constant ingrained behaviour, and naming and identifying both sources of danger and means to avoid those dangers becomes the shifting element to the interaction. Exclusion and inclusion, safe and unsafe, each emerge as normative codes out of direct and persistent observation. As Mackey argues, "risks and dangers [are] social constructions that people

mobilize to support and defend political and moral positions and to define and maintain conceptual boundaries between self and other” (1999: 111). One strategy is the use of what I call ‘before’, ‘now’ and ‘imagine’ statements, in talk of the current state of affairs which sets this nomothetic process in motion by locating normative consensus in the flow of time. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians constantly identify, contrast and place events and appropriate behaviours against a temporal spectrum of before and after which these events and behaviours did not *have* to exist. In short, shifts in ‘normal’ safe behaviour are understood through time.

‘Before, Now and Imagine’:

One morning, reading newspapers on Marilyn’s breezy verandah with one of her sisters, we were told that Jeannie, a friend who was due to arrive shortly, had recently been robbed on a particular street in downtown Port of Spain. The simple statement “Jeannie’s purse and jewelry were snatched on ‘X’ Street in broad daylight” prompted a wave of discussion. In no time, Jeannie was deemed to be foolish by being in that particular area alone during the day, *and* (it was quickly assumed, though no one knew for sure what Jeannie was wearing) by dressing in a manner to indicate that she had something worth snatching. “You know how Jeannie does dress to attract attention”, one woman said. “Furthermore”, they went on, “why was Jeannie even wearing jewelry while in that area?” I learned quickly that Jeannie should have known that wearing jewelry [“she with her big foolish diamonds”] was asking to be robbed. The woman who

brought the bit of gossip about poor Jeannie was interrogated thoroughly. “Did she have money in her purse, or in her pocket? Because obviously, it is silly *at a time like this* to keep valuables in your purse”. I began to interject, to ask questions and figure out why Jeannie’s actions were wrong, why she must shoulder some of the blame for her misfortune. I was told the purse is the first place that will be robbed. “Everyone knows that you walk with your cash and important belongings tight in your pocket, cell phone too, so that they can’t be snatched”.

That particular street, despite its association with crime is not off limits provided individuals take other risk-reducing measures. Jeannie, I understood, was not wrong to be on that street, but should have known better than to broadcast her wealth while there. Poor robbed Jeannie was due for an earful of accusatory statements and questions from the other women when she arrived. What exactly was she wearing? Why had she not taken off her jewels? Did she know that she asked for it? In short order similar stories arise about others being robbed. Like the rape victim who is accused of dressing ‘as though he or she wanted it’, people who have been robbed or accosted are first questioned to see whether they were displaying their wealth too obviously. Stories about people who had taken precautions, but who were nonetheless followed from a shopping mall, or robbed after visiting an ATM were told and retold. I realized, as the focus turned from Jeannie to other stories of crime, other narratives, that had Jeannie been taking proper precautions and still been victimized, the conversation would have shifted

and Jeannie would have received more sympathy, and the robbers considerably less. Had Jeannie been dressed appropriately, I would instead have heard statements such as “What is being done about this”? Eventually, the conversation turned to the essential frustration about the frequency of crime. Marilyn’s comments capture the scope and tone:

What has happened when a good woman can not even go and shop for her family? It used to be that you could send a child to go and run these errands, now not even a grown woman can walk without being attacked. This would never have happened before. *Before* if we would wake up with nothing to do, we used to jump in a maxi-taxi [the most common form of public transportation], and go and *stray* in all them shops. Even if night catch us [if the sun had set] we would be ok.

Had Jeannie behaved in a manner understood to be appropriate, and was nonetheless robbed, the critique of the robber would have been de-humanizing. The robber would have been painted as illogical and savage. However, since the gathered group had suspected that Jeannie had transgressed rules of ‘safe’ behaviour, the robber was understood and described in terms that lent him more humanity. Later on in my fieldwork, when Jeannie’s home was robbed, the criticism both of her, and of the people who committed the crime was more intense, both because of the circumstances of the crime and because of Jeannie’s now established laxity with regard to ‘appropriate’ behaviours of vigilance in relation to crime. Jeannie had, in the previous few years built an extremely large home in an up and coming gated suburb about seven kilometers east of Port of

Spain. Nestled into the base of a mountain foothill, the gated community in which she and her husband built was designed for status, and luxury.

The small community was accessible by vehicle through only one entrance which was controlled by an electronic gate. A code had to be entered, either on a keypad, or by cellular telephone to open the massive steel gates that led into the community. Inside, several other young families had their homes, both large single family structures like Jeannie's, with sweeping verandahs and plush amenities, and smaller, no less extravagant semi-detached town-house style homes. Unlike other, less secure neighbourhoods, where homes were individually gated and neighbours spoke less frequently, in Jeannie's neighbourhood, children and adults often socialized or threw group parties at the communal pool located in the centre of the development. Jeannie was wealthy enough to afford a gardener, a man from a neighbouring area considered to be a zone where gangs thrived. He was, except for his age (in his late 30s) the perfect definition of a 'bad man'. Jeannie said she trusted him and often, much to the consternation of her friends and family, fed him on days that he worked for her.

In the weeks leading up to the robbery, at social and family events, Jeannie was chastised for behaving 'too liberal' with the gardener. When he began to walk through the main floor of the house to get from front yard to back (instead of walking around the house) without chastisement, her family began to criticize Jeannie, telling her she should not allow such disrespect. She should never allow anyone into the home, and to walk through was just laziness. A

gardener or any help other than a maid or housekeeper should never enter the home unless specifically invited. When the gardener began to ask her children to fetch him ice and water from inside, she was teased and chided for letting her children be bullied by the gardener. “You think that man even has a fridge in his house? Now he can’t work without ice?” Jeannie was repeatedly cautioned, and her husband was by turns implored to ‘talk some sense’ into her and to ‘take care of this’ himself. The tone of the comments seemed to indicate that a man from that area, besides being hired labour, was not deserving of the treatment that Jeannie bestowed upon him.

When a few weeks later, the gardener walked uninvited into Jeannie’s bedroom to ask her a question while she was home alone, family and friends expressed shock and outrage. After first ascertaining that she was unharmed, the criticisms and suggestions came fast and fierce. The gardener must be fired. No one can take those sorts of liberties. Jeannie had “brought it upon herself” by allowing the man too much freedom. For her part, Jeannie struggled, claiming she “didn’t want to make the man feel like a servant” and “wanted her children to treat everyone right. Her mother always treated people right”. These defenses were mocked by friends and family alike. “That was the way things happened **before**”, she was told repeatedly. “**Now** it is too dangerous to take a risk like that. You can’t allow such slackness. You have to be firm; you must show people who work for you who is boss.” “People will take advantage **now**. They don’t care that they could work for you forever if they treat you properly”.

The dire predictions came true when Jeannie came home unexpectedly one afternoon and discovered that the home was being robbed. She entered the main floor only to catch a glimpse of a man running up the stairs to the second level. He ran through the house, exited through an upper window, jumped the fence and disappeared into the thick forest that ran alongside the community. Following him would have been impossible, even if Jeannie could have summoned the police in time. While in a gated community, Jeannie's house was tucked into a corner, abutting the dense forests and hills. A small creek ran alongside her house. It would be nearly impossible to track anyone. Jewelry was stolen from her bedroom, as were small electronic devices from her children's rooms. Jeannie was sure that the man she had seen running through her house was the gardener. Again, Jeannie was lambasted by her friends and family. Each of her minor transgressions in allowing the gardener ever increasing latitude and freedom in and around her home were rehearsed. "Imagine", they said "if her children had been home". Suddenly, all of Jeannie's parenting and safety decisions came under scrutiny, as did her choice of home. Her young teenage daughters were, it came to light, on occasion left at home by themselves. Jeannie and her husband felt that the security afforded them by living in the gated community mitigated some of the risk of undesirable people entering the yard. 'Not so', she was quickly, and repeatedly, told. In sum, the prevailing opinion was that the gated community provided at best, according to those criticizing her, a false sense of security. One only had to jump the fence to get in or out of the compound, and

when one became a familiar face, such as a gardener, it would be even easier to come and go without much notice from neighbours.

In a paper on discussions of crime and violence among residents of gated communities in the United States, Low argues “that social control and social domination are exercised through the everyday social action of language” (2001: 52). Jeannie and her husband were repeatedly chastised for the risks that they took with their property and their children. And frequently the frustration had a temporal element. **Before** one could do all manner of things, including demonstrating trust and kindness towards one’s gardener. **Now** that (in)action, behaviour, understanding, or interaction is no longer safe. Comments below, from Marilyn and others, are addressed both at Jeannie and the listening audience:

Imagine what might have happened, what might still happen if you don’t fix this! Get your life under control. **Imagine** what would have happened if she had come in sooner and cornered him by accident”? **Before** if you had thieves, you wouldn’t assume they would get violent, **now** you are lucky if you don’t get killed. **Imagine** if she had the children with her? You coulda trust people to be decent **before** (Marilyn and others)

Low paraphrases Daiute’s model which argues that talk of any criminal event has five elements which can be applied to Jeannie’s case. Talk can be seen: (1) “as reporting an event”—Marilyn’s sister brings news of the robbery at Jeannie’s house (2) “as evaluating the event”—Marilyn and others present speculate on the known facts about the event, that Jeannie walked into a robbery, and parse Jeannie’s behaviour in the weeks leading up to the event; (3) “as constructing the

meaning of the event”—Jeannie is here determined to have been a victim, but is also blamed because of her actions; (4) “as a critique of the event”—all those who have heard of the event discuss what should have been done to avoid it, what changes to the home and property as well as Jeannie’s behaviours should have been made; and (5) “as socially positioning the speaker”—Jeannie is among the targeted wealthy just like us, the women on Marilyn’s verandah are making clear. Her riskiness is their risk too (Low 2001: 55). Each of these elements are then repeated as the story of the robbery and the events leading up to the robbery are re-told to those who have not heard the story. The censure and numerous criticisms are not only leveled at Jeannie and (to a lesser extent) her husband but both the listener and the speaker. ‘Look what she did’ is a reminder, a repeating nomothetic observation, about what ‘we’ don’t do, must never do. Before, now, and imagine become narrative markers in an ongoing tale of being proper and so, being safe. In forcing the point home to Jeannie, the talk about the robbery depicts the gardener as sub-human, an animal not to be trusted and whom one must be protected against. As a result, negative opinions about the lower classes is reinforced. Others who commented on the event gave their opinion, “What that gardener needs is a good cut arse! That would teach him not to do so again!” Physical retribution and punishment are understood as acceptable in the case of the gardener, since he is lowered beneath basic human dignity.

What/when is before?

What is understood to be safe is always under review and revision both in the light of new events and as an ongoing accounting of historical trajectories and changes. A frequent trope in conversations, 'before' is a nebulous period of time between five and fifteen years before my fieldwork, in the early 1990s when, far from being perfect, the experience of everyday life nevertheless did not seem so rife with necessary concessions to the threat of crime. This period is not tinged with a sort of rosy-hued nostalgia. Instead the nature of crime is understood to have been different at that period. It is not characterized as a time when everything was good or perfect, but rather a time with fewer worries, or at least different worries, about safety from violence. At one point I asked one of Marilyn's brothers whether they had been afraid of crime 'before'. The response was an overwhelming yes. One brother told a story about an incident in the late 1980s when he and his brother, drunk after a long evening out, decided to sleep in their car in a downtown area rather than attempt to drive home. They woke in the morning to find their wallets and shoes gone (stolen from feet hanging out the windows as they slept). They said that due to the circumstances, they 'deserved' that loss, and laughed it off, but that the difference was that now they could not even park in that street. Had the circumstances presented themselves 'now', they would expect the car to be stolen, and that they would be robbed and perhaps beaten. They distinguish between those sorts of opportunistic but non-life threatening crimes of 'before' and the entire areas of 'unsafe' and violent space which are part of day to day life 'now'.

Marilyn, who does not drive, and on whose breezy verandah we dissected Jeannie's transgressions, is no longer comfortable taking public transportation except for a few rare occasions. Her grown children and large extended family normally manage to assist her in running errands and making appointments, but on the rare occasion that she requires a taxi, her husband now insists that she phone to let him know that she has arrived at her destination safely. Joseph is no longer comfortable with her taking a maxi-taxi—the mini-van style small busses that carry up to 15 people and ply public routes. While it was very certain that I was never to be permitted to take this form of transportation alone, Marilyn and I often jokingly and surreptitiously planned trips she and I would take. We never moved beyond the planning stages. There was an element of childlike challenging authority (here Joseph) and a wistful resistance to danger to these conversations. We laughed as we planned how she would have to pick out my most 'West Indian' clothes so that I would not be pegged as a potentially money - carrying foreigner and followed off the bus at our destination. Or worse yet, Marilyn leaned in one day, "One-a them boys on the bus could call or text his friend up ahead and you would get picked up as soon as you step out. Before everyone had these cell phones, you coulda get away more easy". Marilyn's tone changes as she speaks about a 'before' when she could 'stray all day'. This is not sadness, and it is not just nostalgia, but something tinged with anger and a very practical wistfulness. Thinking about 'before' is one more way of normalizing 'now', rendering it normative and enforceable.

These 'before' statements are a common part of day to day conversation:

- “**Before**, we could leave our teenaged girls at home alone at night, or let the children play on the street in front of the house”;
- “**Before**, I could leave the children at home and run to the neighbourhood track to do my exercise for an hour at twilight”;
- ‘**Before** we wouldn’t have to lock the gate, or lock the front of the house when we were in the back”;
- ‘**Before** we could go for long drives in the country at night”;
- ‘**Before**, our daughter would take public transit to school, or drive by herself at night”;
- ‘**Before**, we could walk downtown at night, or stay at the beach past dusk, or go to Mayaro by ourselves for the weekend”.

These examples of 'before' statements refer not to a particular point of rupture, but to many small ruptures which have cumulatively changed 'normal'. Individuals use points of freer movement as touchstones around which a sense of what it means to be in a particular place are formed. The corollary to the 'before' statement is the 'now' statement. 'Before we could do 'x', now we cannot' or 'now we must do 'y' instead'. These 'before' statements, while on the surface

disconcerting, pointing to how bad things have become, are also, as Caldeira would argue, comforting (2000:20). In their totality they acknowledge differences between now and then, but also produce a new normal. They conjure safety even as they define danger. The corollary 'now' statement delimits new norms, new safety, and produces, in that way, a sense of security. It is as if 'before' makes 'now' sensible. This is so constant a feature of day-to-day talk, that its performative effect needs to be clearly understood as being more than complaint, more like a mode of compliance with today and complicity with why today is the way it is.³⁵

I spoke with Dr. Sammy in his office. He is the head of a regional corporation, a form of local governance similar to county or municipal government in Canada, in the deep south of Trinidad³⁶. As head of a regional corporation, Dr. Sammy's position is directly tied to the UNC government since his position is at the discretion of the political party that has won the parliamentary seat in the area. He is in charge of a large budget, decides where to allocate national funds in the region and wields a great deal of local influence as a result. He holds a doctorate from the University of Western Ontario, and has been

³⁵ Goffman's notion of front and back stage aspects of the performance of self and the construction of spaces where self awareness can be enacted is apt here (Goffman 1959). Exploring this connection in detail here is not possible because of space constraints on the current text. As will be apparent in chapter 8, where I talk about modes of consumption as performative practices which also constitute safety and risk, this aspect of living safe in Trinidad is one which needs fuller exploration. I am grateful to Dr. Douglass St. Christian for this observation.

³⁶ Dr. Sammy is his real surname and 'Dr. Sammy' is the way he is known in the region. He asked me to use his real name in discussing him in my work.

involved in regional politics since the 1970s. He has served the area for a long time after spending a great deal of time working for various non-profit organizations which advocated for squatters' rights. He spent nearly a decade living in Canada earning his doctorate. He lives outside of the 'east west corridor' in Trinidad, as defined in the introduction, in which the majority of the crime takes place, and the majority of the population resides. Instead, he lives in the deep south of the country, an area often described in idyllic language by those who do not live there. Rates of crime have not been nearly as high in these areas compared to the more urban and suburban areas of the north of the country. In the weeks prior to my interview, there had been reports of home invasions in the area around the town where Dr. Sammy lived, a relatively new phenomenon. I asked him if the recent events had affected his daily life:

Dr. Sammy: My personal life, no. I am still rural, I am further south [of the most recent incidents]. I'm into the...backlands. Not much, four or five miles. So it hasn't affected my personal life. There isn't anything different that I've been doing since last year. Last year, more conscious things, when I'm driving on the road, who's following me? When I leave the airport I look back to see who's following, because there's a thing now, they follow you from the airport for miles and miles and then they rob you in your own home, when you're relaxed. People who come in with suitcases, who they've picked up at the airport.

Geer: That's the dangerous moment?

Dr. Sammy: So you keep looking back, and you keep conscious of who's behind you. That's the last two years, never **before**, but it's forced me to

change. I know that my brothers who live in the town that I grew up are much more security conscious than **before**, much more.

Geer: I know folks in the east west corridor who, three four years ago, their daughters in their twenties could drive at night. Now, women don't drive alone at night anymore, people don't go out at night, they used to go wander around Frederick street at night. Is that the situation down here in the south as well?

Dr. Sammy: Listen, the whole socializing has changed tremendously. The churches will tell you that midnight services on what we call old year's night is no longer at midnight, it's now at ten or six o'clock. People tell you they go to prayer meetings they must leave a certain time. Even weddings or christenings or what have you, they must leave at a certain time. If they park they might have to pay a security or something to look at their vehicles. So yes, people who are doing very well are the security firms. Extremely well, and that's an indicator if you wish, of a changing society.

Geer: Even down in this area?

Dr. Sammy: Yeah, people now...depending on the occasion, like wakes, you see what they did at a wake yesterday? They went in and shot up people, can you **imagine**? I know my father-in-law died in November and they closed the gate during the wake, in Couva. They wouldn't normally do that. So they are doing that more and more in the non-urban areas. They are conscious too at weddings I am told that now they are hiring security. It just makes people feel a little comfortable. What is even more frightening now though, is the acceptance of crime! As a way of life, rather than fighting crime.

Like Marilyn and the others expressing incredulity at Jeannie's situation and at the ways in which life 'before' had been different, Dr. Sammy also references temporal differences in describing the changes that have been made to keep vigilant.

Dr. Sammy's story is not uncommon, especially for those who claim to have not been directly affected by crime. While he is aware of the issues surrounding crime and risk, it is not, in short as bad for him as it is for others. This is usually attributed to following proper protocols, however informal, to remain safe, or explained as a result of luck. Dr. Sammy looks behind him, stays on guard, and therefore given these ingrained behaviours, believes he is better protected than those who do not conform to similar strategies.

Often stories such as Dr. Sammy's shifted from personal experiences with crime or the 'before'/'now' distinction to a different trope, 'imagine'. For Dr. Sammy, it is 'imagine' a wake being a place in which crime is committed. It is unthinkable that this boundary of polite society could be transgressed. He uses 'imagine' statements in one of two ways. The first is to indicate incredulity at a situation believed to be out of control, or vastly changed for the worse. The second is to speculate about how the situation could have been much worse, how lucky a person is or might be to have transgressed a newly normalized rule of safety and still emerged unscathed. Similarly, those commenting after Jeannie's robbery use 'imagine' statements in both ways. "Imagine, if she had had her children with her", and other statements such as "Imagine, you give a man a job,

and this is how he repays you”. ‘Imagine’ performs two kinds of normative work, the first reproducing meanings by commenting on extremes, such as Dr. Sammy’s comment about the wake. The other is a widening of the net of normative control by speculating about “what could have happened” as a way of strengthening the embedded obligation in ‘imagine’ statements about “What must happen, what you must do.”

Watching TV and Imagining:

Crime events reported in the media are often a springboard to talk about crime in general. Televised evening news is watched regularly by nearly every person with whom I spoke. Owing to the horrendous traffic in the evening coming out of Port of Spain and heading in all directions to suburban areas, news does not begin until 7 pm. Often during my fieldwork, I would arrive at an individual’s home in time for the nightly newscast. Watching the news was not a passive event. As reports of government spending, election updates and crime flashed on the screen, individuals would talk, and I would ask questions to clarify what I knew. In Marilyn’s family, Junior and Frankie also read the papers.

As a research method, arriving with newspapers in hand or in time to watch the news was always illuminating in terms of what people were thinking about. Beyond the function of regulating behavior around crime, and inculcating appropriate concessions to and ways of being in particular places, these conversations also had the benefit of reinforcing class positions. A story about a

child kidnapped or a young girl raped as she made her way home from school leads to other kinds of 'imagine' statements:

- “**Imagine** how hard it is for those single mothers who don't have a car to keep their children safe?”
- “**Imagine**, we live in a country where you no longer feel safe going to the market or letting your child come from school? You know now, I can't even let the children go and wander in the mall by themselves?”
- “**Imagine** the horrors some of those young girls experience because they have to travel [take public transportation]? Hustling to get home at dark so they can lock up in their house?”
- “**Imagine** these single parents, leaving their house before light breaks to work in town for no money, only to have to travel hours and come home, find the water cut off, their children been alone since they come back from school and only then can they get started for the next day? How can you protect your children when you have no one to watch them, no money to put them in a good school, surrounded by all those drugs and bad influences?”
- “**Imagine** what sort of life that a child who grows up in that can have, no chance”

- “Another five murders in one night, can you **imagine** how it is to live in a place like that (a gang-ridden area)? It must be every little boy who becomes a teenager gets swept away”;
- “Can you **imagine**?”

In these expressions of empathy, imagine statements about the poor ‘other’ do two things. First, they place individuals outside of the new ‘normal’ (upper middle or upper class) in categories of either passive victim or victimizer. Those people who do not have the social or financial capital to avoid victimization, in this rhetoric, become either static victim or active victimizer, either the ‘bad man’ or the one he is most likely to brutalize. In this case, those most often brutalized are the ‘bad man’s’ peers. This sort of othering resonates with Abu-Lughod’s suggestion that the “process of creating a self through opposition to an other always entails the violence of repressing or ignoring other forms of violence” (1991: 140). Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians conceptualize themselves in direct opposition to those who occupy lower class/race/location positions. In so doing there are double elisions produced. This rhetoric both obfuscates diversity among those in that lower race/class/location, and normalizes the upper middle and upper classes as active, blameless, and superior.

Individuals use the crime situation to explain how much worse it is for others, usually those who do not have the means to control their space and movement. In this way, other, larger anxieties about the nation are expressed. As

Dr. Sammy comments he feels that it is indeed a shame that he has to be more alert while driving from the airport or, as he subsequently explained, hire a private security guard to accompany his children to and ensure their safe return from parties in Port of Spain. However, for him, the *real* travesty exists for those who occupy lower class positions. Upper middle class and elite Trinidadians express their class identity in terms of ability to control their space and surroundings, as well as by showing empathy for those who have lesser means. In among the 'imagine' ("imagine how it is to live there, it must be every boy who becomes a teenager gets swept away") statements are both sympathy and condemnation. These statements have the effect of both complicating and empathizing with the difficulties of those who are less wealthy, and rendering those same individuals static, unchanging and 'othered'. These statements also remove agency from those individuals and reaffirm the superiority of upper middle and upper classes.

The lives of these upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are therefore expressed as serene and opposed to 'bacchanalian' excesses, or as discussed in Chapter two, they encapsulate transcendence instead of transience. Miller (1994) argues that the notion of 'bacchanal' is, in Trinidad, about the 'emergence into light of things which normally inhabit the dark' (246-7). Bacchanal is scandalous behavior brought to public view and is, Miller argues one of the marks of 'transience' (246). Trinidad's world-famous Carnival celebrations which precede Lent each year are affectionately referred to as 'bacchanal', a kind of revelry of dance and bad behavior. Miller sets up a distinction between transcendent versus

transient lifestyles. Recall that transcendence, for Miller is best understood when considering rituals such as Christmas, when special attention is paid to issues of constancy and ancestry and traditional family values. Transience for Miller is exemplified in the Trinidadian Carnival, which thrives on change and innovation, freedom and disorder or bacchanal (1994: 82). He acknowledges that these categories, while not used by Trinidadians, may be read as a binary stereotype between Indo-Trinidadians (transcendence, similar in stereotype to Birth's (1999) notion of future-oriented individuals) and Afro-Trinidadians (transience, similar in stereotype to Birth's (1999) present-oriented individuals).

'Imagine' statements, which attempt to normalize behavior surrounding safety and the creation of safe space, can in this light be read as a means to establish oneself as 'transcendent', forward thinking, aspirational, middle class and cultured, as opposed to the subject of 'imagine' statements, who are 'transient'. Lower class people, in these statements do not drive their children everywhere, and they let their teens ride on public transit. Their children are left unattended and have the ability to be in risky situations. They live in bad neighbourhoods and have to put up with endemic crime. They cannot control when the water or power comes on and off; they are at the mercy of poor understaffed hospitals and schools. In comparison to upper middle and upper class people, their lives are disorderly as a result of their lack of control, lack of opportunities, education, family values, parenting, and lack of ability to make and control their space. They live 'bacchanal' as oppose to performing bacchanal

during Carnival or at other carefully scripted social events. This vision of and understanding of lower classes is similar to Caldeira's discussion of the way *nordestinos* and indeed, the whole north east of the Brazil are stigmatized as potentially criminal, racially unpredictable and undesirable with other more complex associated assumptions smuggled in about that group and area as a whole:

Those who consider themselves better off frequently deny the poor the characteristics and behaviors associated with capitalism and modernity, such as rationality, knowledge, saving, planning, and getting the most out of resources. Such arguments are applied not only to poor individuals but also to poor regions (Caldeira 2000: 70).

'Imagine' statements construct a life for the 'risky others' that is both pitiable and insurmountable. 'Imagine' statements that begin with a sort of empathetic take on a news story, "imagine how hard it is to raise a child if you live in Laventille" are often followed by definitive reifying statements. "That child will be poor, ill-educated and probably fatherless. They won't know proper schooling, and their poor mothers will never have the time to make sure their lunches are packed or that they have help with their schoolwork". Because so many of these 'imagine' statements are also focused on children, they are necessarily linked to the anxieties individuals feel about the future of the nation, which I will discuss in a later chapter. These 'imagine' statements are also used to describe those lower class Trinidadians who defy stereotype. "Imagine how hard this one must work, how good he must be to avoid them gangs and go and

work for honest money”; “You know who I consider a hero? The poor one from Laventille who goes to work at a Subway and take home his lil paycheque every week and stays away from the crime and minds. He needs to be held up as an example; he needs a medal. He is a hero to me. Imagine what he goes through just to fight traffic and show up on time and without complaint”. In these statements, the ‘imagined’ person or people transcend the category of pitiful and ascend to a kind of nobility which is, in essence just as reifying and limiting as the implications of inherent danger and irrationality.

These ‘before’, ‘now’ and ‘imagine’ statements are not unlike other attempts at signifying belonging to a particular group while also defining who does not belong. Where ‘before’ the barometers of difference were held to be particular understandings of race, ethnicity, political affiliation or family values, increasingly the ways in which individuals respond to and are implicated in the changing crime situation in Trinidad are similarly becoming a mark of inclusion or exclusion and the point around which anxieties about personal safety and the nation coalesce. ‘Imagine’ statements place racialized, lower class Trinidadians in a realm of near otherworldliness. The ‘imagine’ here actually implies the inverse, that of an almost ‘unimaginable reality’ and thereby places lower class Trinidadians in a position of insurmountable difference. Their place in the ongoing creation of the nation is similarly distanced. ‘Imagine’ statements create a semantic barrier between rich and poor that reaffirms the position of the wealthy, and increases their symbolic distance from the poor. In these statements,

even those upper middle and upper class informants who indicate that they had lower class childhoods position the new lower classes as different entirely from their experiences. The future of the nation then, is imagined as one in which these lower classes must be managed as one would manage a child. I return to these notions in the final chapter of this work. Those who do not have the ability or the will to conform to those “rules of avoidance” and vigilance measures prescribed by ‘before’, ‘now’, and ‘imagine’ statements are marked with the same sort of scorned lifestyle attributes as are those people who are marked by their race/class/location positionality (Caldeira, 2000:20). The ways in which people express frustration or judgment about those who do not conform to informal standards of safety or safe behaviour are similar to the ways in which these same people level critiques at the machinations of Trinidad’s government and bureaucracy, which were a key part of the election campaign rhetoric I discussed in chapter five.

Slips of the Tongue and Endemic Frustration:

A study of fear of crime discourse completed by Holloway and Jefferson argues that discussions around crime and victimization might serve as a sort of location for displacement of other anxieties that “do not display the modern characteristics of knowability and decisionability (or actionability)” (1997: 263). These characteristics are foundational to Beck’s notion of “reflexive modernization” in which individuals, faced with risks that are both unpredictable and international, find themselves turning inward in an attempt to protect

themselves. While I do not find great novelty in the connections that Beck supposes in his discussions of “reflexive modernization” I argue that in the case of Trinidad, upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are increasingly segregating themselves as a result of the uncertainty they face related to fear of crime. Some, like Delilah, the retired top-level executive who believes crime in Port of Spain is no worse than in New York or London, argue that the reactions of her class contemporaries to crime, and the ubiquitous talk of crime is excessive and a symbol of ‘bourgeois angst’. Holloway and Jefferson contend instead that narratives surrounding crime are a way to express fears about phenomena that are less knowable, such as larger economic woes. In the case of the people with whom I spoke, I believe talk of crime serves as an outlet for frustrations and anxieties that might otherwise seem too self-involved or too indicative of privilege. By utilizing what I call a sort of ‘liberal speak’ in which extreme empathy is expressed for those less fortunate, individuals are able to express their own frustrations and anxieties through discussions of other people’s lives. Risks related to fear of crime are enumerated and elucidated, and suggestions about their abrogation offered. Those who live with and near the ‘risky other’ are conjured and re-created in this talk, albeit couched in language that offers pity or nobility instead of explicit judgment. These sorts of careful discussions are paradoxically often interrupted with frustrated and racialized outbursts from the same individuals.

The day after the national election in November 2007, when the incumbent largely Afro-Trinidadian supported PNC government was reelected, I spent the day with a wealthy woman named Surojini. Surojini was a staunch supporter of the third party COP that had, despite receiving over 20% of the popular vote the day before, gained no parliamentary seats in Trinidad's first-past-the-post electoral system. Surojini believed in the COP in large part because it eschewed the thinly veiled appeals to a racial voter base that she felt the ruling PNM and opposition UNC-A thrived on, as discussed in chapter five. At some point during the day, we decided to make a run to one of the more expensive grocery stores near her home in the hills overlooking Port of Spain. Upon leaving the grocery store, I placed some small bills I had received as change in a Salvation Army Christmas Appeal bucket. The phenotypically Afro-Trinidadian woman who stood behind the bucket with her bell thanked me, but Surojini chided me as we walked away, saying "Don't give them any money. *Their* government is going to take care of all them". It was a strange comment coming from someone so passionately involved in non-racial third party politics. On the surface, I read the comment as racially hostile, and completely uncharacteristic. 'Their government', I thought?

After a time, I pushed my friend on the comment, asking her to clarify the source of the frustration that provoked the comment. She explained that the Salvation Army attracts predominantly poor Afro-Trinidadian followers and that those individuals are most likely to receive political patronage from the PNM

government and so my money was not necessary. Feelings were high. Surojini was sore after her hopes at 'smarter politics' were dashed so badly in the election the day before. When pressed, she explained her comment with significant nuance, labeling her frustration with patronage projects that feed but do not meet the needs of the poorest of the poor and which use thinly veiled racist language to perpetuate a climate of fear of being run over by one race or the other. Her frustration was not with those who had become what Douglas (1985) would call the 'risky other' but rather with a political party that claimed to meet their needs and failed. She felt that the ruling PNM party only facilitated the state of poorly functioning education and political patronage that not only created, but encouraged the actions of—for lack of a better term—'the bad man from Laventille' because with patronage came the votes necessary to ensure re-election.

While her frustration exploded as a thinly veiled racialized comment, her frustrations were not just racist. She resented the constant state of watchful vigilance that she felt forced to maintain in order to feel safe. Her criticism of the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported UNC-A were similar. She resented having her movements curtailed and feeling it necessary to wish that her children, then overseas at school, would remain there instead of coming back to make a life in Trinidad. Surojini finds it harder and harder to avoid falling into stereotypes as her life becomes more and more constrained. She worries that many individuals because of age or migration history cannot remember a time of freer movement

and less isolation. She worries that within a generation the frustrations she feels and refers to in one sarcastically loaded comment will become common-place. She worries that those with means will not try to make the situation any better. The lapse in language is indicative not only of her frustration, but also her increasing isolation in the face of managing these rapidly changing risks. For her, the price of safety and effectively managing risks of violent crime is isolation both from the country and from people who do not occupy similar class statuses. The rapid speed at which rates of crime have increased have only added to the anxiety.

Racialized speech is nearly always also anti-government speech. When Uncle Joseph took Auntie Marilyn, Frankie and I for ice cream in Port of Spain one evening, he decided to use the Lady Young Highway, which arcs over a mountain range and has spectacular views of downtown Port of Spain. The look out point is bordered by Laventille, and the whole area is one that I was told to avoid during lonely night-time periods. When I asked if we could stop at this prominent look-out point, he agreed to pull in, but refused to let me leave the car stating “we don’t know what them nig-nogs over so are up to”. ‘Nig-nogs’ is a derogatory colloquial term for the young Afro-Trinidadian youth who were playing soccer on the flat parking lot area of the lookout point. Joseph was plainly aggravated that he did not feel safe enough to allow me or his family to exit the car for fear of some sort of crime by the youth sharing the space. I was shocked by the term, and repeated it slowly and quietly. “Hear,” Joseph said, “it’s not that

they are negro, right? But lord, how is it these boys have nowhere else to go but lime here at night? I don't know if they are bad, but I can't take the chance with you".

These slippages, whatever the nuance behind them, are dangerous in their capacity to normalize stereotypes³⁷. They are exemplary of the frustrations, anxieties and history of racialized language in Trinidad, and also, because of their contradictory nature, show evidence of a withering of respect for the humanity of those in lower classes. Those same individuals who campaign for third parties, who inflect language with the sympathetic 'imagine', who point to government corruption and inadequacy in fostering independence among lower classes also throw their hands up in frustration and make a comment along the lines of "why can't the police just go in there and clean the damn place out"? The implication here is that those who live in these 'bad' places are both expendable and undesirable.

Conclusion:

Talking of crime is a way to ensure that one is taking proper precautions to avoid victimization—in other words, by talking about crime and the ways in which others are dealing with crime or reacting to particular crime events, individuals negotiate, learn and implement or plan to implement life strategies which have risk reduction as their goal. This process relates to three common

³⁷ These slippages are made in frustration, not playful jest, and must be distinguished from a playful Trinidadian tradition of picong, or stylized and lighthearted teasing speech which also often uses racialized language. See Patton (1994) for more detailed discussion of the use of picong in speech and Calypso.

constructions in language that relate to the ways in which people talk about and position themselves in relation to crime. Narratives about crime which use the tropes 'before', 'now' and 'imagine' serve to reinforce social status and police those who do not conform to appropriate standards of behavior. These narratives also serve as a gauge delimiting who is undesirable in different social capacities and in different settings. Racialized slips are also comforting in the way that they manage to re-assert appropriate behaviour and in so doing, a sense of normalcy even during dramatic changes. They build consensus by conjuring and describing who and what is to be feared, and also by imagining what solutions to those threats might look like. Finally, I argue that the racialized language that middle and upper class individuals sometimes use makes present an underlying racial tension and serve as a way to express frustration at the perceived ineptitude of the Trinidad and Tobago government and at their situation, a situation they both own, as influential citizens, and which they feel they can no longer control. An analysis of talk of upper middle and upper class Trinidadians in relation to crime and the lower classes indicates contradictory lauding and racialized excoriating language in regards to lower class individuals and those who are unable to manage their space and lifestyles in order to avoid crime.

In the next chapter, I move from the ways in which upper middle and upper class Trinidadians talk about crime, and negotiate their anxieties with regard to crime, to a discussion of how these groups consume safety.

Chapter 8: Consuming Safety Safely

“We don’t need to grow vegetables, we have oil.”--Marilyn

On my second day in Trinidad Marilyn accompanied me on my first trip to one of the largest shopping malls in the country so that I could stock the kitchen in my newly rented apartment. I remarked that many of the pre-packaged fruits and vegetables available for purchase were identical to imported products available in large supermarkets in my hometown in Canada. I said that I expected to find similar processed foods, but was surprised that produce was imported to Trinidad where the weather was ideal for growing fruits and vegetables. Marilyn explained that everything was available in Trinidad now, and since the increase in global oil prices people were both able to afford this produce and put a high value on eating those foods, whatever their quality and despite the higher price. Locally grown produce, while available in grocery stores, was not high quality or always fresh, she said. It was better to buy local produce from open-air farmers’ markets or from small road-side stands. Not everyone was comfortable with this practice, she said, even though they had “all grown up doing so”, because these places, while less expensive and offering fresher goods, were often in less accessible or more secluded areas.³⁸

³⁸ Mass consumption in Trinidad is tied closely, as Marilyn recognized and Miller (1994:314) has noted, to the country’s oil booms, though Trinidad has a long history with imported goods, given the history of oil production and the presence of a large American military base on the island (ibid: 204). This connection is found elsewhere, and not only in the Caribbean. See, for example, Shankman (1976), O’Meara (1990), or Lockwood (1971) for discussions of the emergence of

Marilyn's comment was also political. She told me the government, in its quest to be what she called 'modern', was not sustaining the agricultural industry, and that dependence on foreign produce would prove costly in the long run if and when global oil prices fell. This was my first trip to the large grocery store located inside the shopping mall, one of easily one hundred trips over the course of my time in Trinidad, and the first time I began to examine the ways in which the shopping mall was both a space of concession to anxieties about crime and safety from undesirable 'strangers'. The experience further underscored the ways that acts of consumption shape and are shaped by upper class Trinidadians understanding of risk and safety, and increase these groups' isolation from those deemed to be 'risky' or undesirable. As with other forms of avoidance based on notions of safety, these patterns fell not only along class lines but employed racial stereotypes.

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which safety connects with consumption and consumerism. Following O'Dougherty (2002), I start from the position that consumption is integral to class identity and focus both on the social aspects of consumption but also "the ways consumption engages people in ongoing stratification processes" (2002: 11). For upper middle class and elites in Trinidad, consumption reflects and refracts class concerns regarding crime and fear of crime. The goods consumed, as well as where and under what conditions

new patterns of consumption of imported goods in Samoa, which flowed from American military operations there.

they are purchased, shed light on how class is enacted and class boundaries are enforced.

These two issues, a change in quality of life for middle and upper class Trinidadians, and higher levels and greater fear of crime, are visibly manifested in consumption choices. Safety from crime in the construction of home space, as well as personal safety while away or in vehicles is largely understood to be consumable, and a symbol of status as well as a marker of difference. These processes are by no means uniform. Trinidadians might employ strategies of conspicuous or inconspicuous consumption both in their homes and daily lives depending on the situation and their particular experiences. However, at either end of the spectrum, from conspicuous to inconspicuous consumption, I argue that the creation and maintenance of spaces safe from risk is intimately linked to processes of consumption. In particular, I examine consumption of safety products as related to the creation of home-space, automobiles and finally shopping malls, as indicative of the ways in which spaces of consumption are also becoming increasingly isolated. Transgressions or acts of crimes in these and other sanitized deliberately 'safe' spaces are harshly criticized. Like Jeannie, who was robbed of her jewelry and also burglarized in her gated community, those who fail to mobilize their capital to purchase and maintain safe spaces for themselves, their neighbours or their families are subject to rigorous informal critique. This critique highlights the importance placed on maintaining

consumption as a strategy of safety. Like justice, consuming safety must both be done and be seen to be done.

Neighbourhoods and Home Safety:

I will now examine the suburban neighbourhood in which I lived in Trinidad as a way of exploring the various ways home spaces are transformed and constructed for the sake of status and safety. It is not novel to claim that status is conferred and expressed by virtue of the neighbourhood where a family chooses to live or housing style the family chooses to adopt (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1994; Thomas 1998). Instead, I argue in this section that within fairly homogeneous middle class and elite neighbourhoods, a premium is placed both on safety and safe housing styles as well as surveillance.

While not among the many new gated communities in Trinidad, the area of Orange Grove in which I lived is a homogenous middle class neighborhood. The roads are constructed with large speed bumps, called 'sleeping policeman', which slow traffic, and deter public taxis and other individuals from using the area to bypass traffic on the main highway or other roads, acting like an invisible gate protecting against opportunistic intrusions. The homes are well-maintained, with spacious treed lots. It is a planned residential community built approximately 36 years ago on a large block of former sugar cane land. Today, beyond the flat landscape and the floral names of the streets, the area bears little resemblance to its agricultural past. As Miller notes, "(t)he formation of 'residential areas' has become the single most successful strategy for constructing a distinct middle

class. The deliberate intention has been to move away from complex settlements with considerable divergence of income and status, in order to create relatively homogenous housing areas where one's presence is indicative of one's social position (1994: 36)". That Orange Grove is more than three decades old suggests that class formation, at least with respect to the emergence of a distinct middle class, is likely a process that has been going on for even longer. A comprehensive exploration of this process, in both Trinidad and Guyana, is part of my ongoing work in this area.

The subdivision includes mostly sprawling one and two story homes, ranging from a modest low bungalow without a car port to a sprawling two storey multi-bedroom home, complete with expensive European cars, and a full time gardener who tends a second enclosed lot containing a cricket pitch, and cages of exotic birds. Unlike more heterogeneous older neighbourhoods, there are no visible businesses or small stores attached to the structures, few multi-family homes and very few pedestrians on the street. Unlike new enclaves, homes in Orange Grove are individually gated, but the neighbourhood as a whole is not.

There has been a change in the nature of social interaction in Orange Grove. 'Before' more of daily life took place in front yards, where children would play outside and parents would gather to pass the time or speak with one another. Several residents report feeling resentment at the recent diminished amount of interaction with their neighbours while feeling a strong need to continue community policing and lifestyles which keep them safe by virtue of the

community's isolation and homogeneity. Personal information is guarded on the grounds of "not knowing what the neighbour is involved in, really". Still, it is commonly understood that the safety of individual homes is tied to the overall safety of the neighbourhood. The neighbour who does not adequately invest in visible upgrades for the home that work to ensure safety, or who does not employ these safety features in an adequate way is 'asking' to be victimized. Further, if that person's home is burglarized or vandalized, the whole neighbourhood is thought to have unfairly been placed at risk. Others in the neighbourhood will complain that criminals who see a security weakness in a single home will then search for and exploit weaknesses in the rest of the neighbourhood. In this way, even under conditions of reduced social interaction, behaviour within the neighbourhood is policed.

Also at play is what Caldeira calls an "aesthetics of security" (2000:293) an attempt to maintain security, but also a way to mark social status by virtue of having these security features. While some houses have subdued, simple but effective electronic gating systems, replete with clean lines and designed for maximum privacy, others have ornate gold painted wrought iron baubles adorning the tops of fences which draw attention to the features. The difference, it was explained to me, was the difference between old money and new. Especially ornate bars on windows, fences higher than average, and sometimes extreme decorative additions to security features such as wall tops, all indicate both the desire for security and a desire to differentiate oneself from other middle class

people and set oneself above neighbours through one's stylistic choices, suggesting the newly well-off may be over-reading the unspoken rules of class expression.

Homes are individually gated, increasingly with electronic gates. Beyond luxury, electronic gates that open at the touch of a button from inside the home owner's vehicle are considered a safer alternative to gates which they must be opened with a key and since the homeowner must exit the vehicle to do so. Since many kidnappings or home invasions occur while individuals are exiting or entering their home, this moment of literally transgressing the boundaries between outside and inside is the moment most fraught with danger. People have been snatched or their cars stolen as they leave their vehicle to go and unlock a non-electronic gate. An electronic gate allows the homeowner greater powers of surveillance and therefore greater control.



Photograph 11 – Individually gated homes in Orange Grove. Photo by author

Most homes have fences six or eight feet high, though a few fences are nearly double that height. In general cars are no more than five years old and relatively expensive. While none of the homes have full time security guards, this is not because some individuals do not want guards, or could not afford them. Rather it is considered too difficult to find reputable and consistent labour. Dogs, living outside and bred for security, are a more common security option. Pure-bred large sized dogs are favoured, as it is thought that their menacing size and appearance is more frightening to potential thieves than a 'pot-hound', the local term for a mixed breed animal, usually born on the streets. At the same there is also a common belief among my informants that those 'pot-hounds', by virtue of generations of inter-breeding on the street, are more wary and watchful, and are better at alarming homeowners should someone make an attempt at breaching a gate to get into the yard, or worse. This is one example of the way in which

conspicuous consumption of that which looks safe and is costly is preferable to the less costly but perhaps more effective alternative.

Unlike people in Laventille, where Tecia Henry was killed, few residents of Orange Grove believe that their neighbours or anyone living in the area would commit a violent crime against anyone in the neighbourhood. They are, however, wary of those lower income/lower class service providers who enter the neighbourhood. For example, when Marilyn's new pit bull puppy began to run to the front fence and playfully lick the hand of the garbage man through the gates of their home, this behaviour was cause for both laughter and concern. The puppy was fretted over, and the family worried that it had been spoiled and made too 'soft'. The job of the dog was to provide security to the household, and that meant barking, especially at outsiders like the men who removed the garbage. Marilyn was criticized by her husband and son for 'spoiling' the puppy and making it a 'pet' instead of a guard dog. The pit bull was an extremely expensive purchase for the family. Great care was taken to look into the dog's bloodlines, and stories told and retold to family detailed the brutal manner in which these dogs were treated at the kennels in order to 'toughen them up'. Marilyn was being criticized for undermining the value of the dog as a both a signal against danger and a sign of security. Security measures are aimed at deterring the 'bad man' or the 'stranger' from entering the area. Choices for safety products, such as dogs, pay equal attention to presenting the obvious appearance of safety as well as functioning as a measure of safety.

“The Syrians”: Conspicuous Consumption of Safety

Early in my fieldwork, Surojini offered to take me on a walking and driving tour of Port of Spain and the residential neighbourhoods that surrounded it. She insisted that I should not go unaccompanied as I would be liable to wander into an unsafe area and did not yet know how to carry myself. I agreed and drove to Surojini’s home, only to transfer into her vehicle so she could drive us about. We drove to the downtown core, parked in a guarded lot and walked ‘safe’ areas of downtown, places with high-end shops not yet found in shopping malls. Surojini told me that it had been over a year since she had walked these streets. Claiming to hate shopping and ‘to not have the energy for the hassle’, she no longer went on what a few years ago had been frequent long rambling window-shopping trips in the downtown core. Instead she used ring roads circling the core and related ‘unsafe’ areas at every opportunity, both to avoid traffic and to ensure safety. She was not comfortable being driven by anyone but herself or her husband, and was wary of getting stuck in a traffic jam with no easy exit. Nevertheless, she said that having me as an ‘excuse’ would be a good reason to visit some places she hadn’t been in a great while, despite living less than two kilometers away. Along the tour she pointed out a community nestled near the downtown core of Port of Spain “where the ‘Syrians’ live”.

The ‘Syrians’, not unlike the ‘bad man from Laventille’ is a catch all phrase used to describe someone of either Syrian or Lebanese extraction in general, but more specifically is meant to refer to one of several extremely

wealthy dynastic families in Trinidad. The community developed over the last century and a half from a few small group of Syrians, Lebanese and Turks who migrated to Trinidad in the time just after emancipation. Beginning as cloth merchants and peddlars on bicycles, these families and their fortunes have grown (Singh 1994: 109) . They are now owners of corporations and are considered, at least by my informants, to be among the wealthiest families in Trinidad.

I was told numerous stories about ‘the Syrians’ and the extent to which ‘those families’ will go in order to ensure safety. Not just gated communities, the homes of the Syrian wealthy in these areas have gates twice as high as the common standard for other wealthy homes, armed security, and often, individual family members travel in the company of plain-clothes body guards. Unlike the nominally gated and guarded community (described in chapter 6) into which Marilyn and I talked ourselves simply because we did not appear to be ‘strangers’, Surojini and I did not even attempt entry into these compounds. She knew that without express permission we would have been denied access by the guards, even though she had friends and acquaintances in the compound. The result of these extreme safety measures is to create a gap, an omission in space, a spot on the map that has become completely removed from public access, both visually and physically.

“The Syrians” represent the pinnacle of intensive security and isolation. In my time in the country I heard several versions of the following story. After a member of a prominent and very wealthy Syrian family was kidnapped several

years ago, the family chose not to rely on the Trinidadian police and security services. Instead a foreign paramilitary force was hired from another country. They rescued the kidnapped family member and exacted extra-legal and bloody revenge on the kidnappers. These actions were said to have been particularly violent in order to make a statement to any 'would-be' kidnappers, and to protect the entire Syrian *minority community*. The message, plainly, was that these families operate as a tightly-knit unit and are willing to mobilize their capital to circumvent even the law in order to protect themselves. There are several versions of the ways in which the kidnapping rescue took place, some a great deal more dramatic than others, but all versions agree that the kidnapped family member was returned and the extra-legal security force removed from the country before Trinidadian police and army services were even aware a problem was afoot. Further, there was little suggestion that the family acted in any way irresponsibly.

The general opinion of my informants was that it would have been impossible for the Trinidadian police and army forces, or the anti-kidnapping squad to have secured the safe return of the kidnapped child. Many people told me that were they in the same position and possessed the resources, they would have used the same measures and found no moral issue with the reputed brutal killing of the kidnappers. This, like the murmurs of 'good riddance' when Tecia Henry's murderers were themselves murdered, hints at the way the body of the 'bad man' becomes devalued, regarded as sub-human given the stresses of crime. The bodies of children are hyper-protected, and the bodies of extremely wealthy

'Syrian' children perhaps most of all. The extra-legal infractions, by the Syrians, or those hired to act on their behalf, are not subjected to the same morality as those who perpetrate 'lesser' crimes. The family of the kidnapped Syrian boy is judged to have done everything reasonable to protect their children. The transgression by kidnapers of this particular child is therefore doubly damned by those who comment on the case because they kidnapped the youth despite the appropriate behaviour of the family. In this logic, the kidnapers are therefore considered less worthy of justice, and more deserving of punishments by Trinidadians on the ground. These opinions come from even those who are in general, against corporal punishment and who work to ensure the rule of law is followed. This apparent devaluing of the lives, rights and bodies of the 'bad man' or indeed all lower classes associated with 'bad' areas points to an increasing separation between upper and lower classes.

It should be noted that Townsend (2009: 27) draws careful but unsubstantiated links to prevalent rumours within Trinidad that several prominent members of these Syrian families are also the leaders of local cocaine syndicates. Many of my informants also suggested that the kidnapping of the Syrian child was connected in some way to a power struggle amongst those who profit most from the trade in cocaine, but this has never been proven. Regardless of the motivation for the kidnapping, whether simply for ransom or related to some internal conflict within the hierarchy of those involved in narcotics trafficking at the highest level, my informants understand the response of the 'Syrians' to be

just. Those who speculated that the kidnapped child's family might somehow be involved in the traffic of drugs maintain that not 'all Syrians' may be so involved and the crime is heinous regardless.

Something as conspicuous as the kidnap rescue is juxtaposed in my informants' accounts of the 'Syrians' with a distinct regard for the inconspicuous too. In person, members of these families are said to be rarely ostentatiously or flashily dressed. Body guards, it was explained to me, are not uniformed and not obvious to a casual observer. Others with whom I spoke who hired personal security help for special occasions only, such as an off-duty police officer to trail teen or young adult children at large open air public parties around carnival season and ensure their safe return, were similarly careful that the security personnel were not conspicuous. While parents in these examples were concerned that their children would be safe, they were careful not to use the security as an obvious status symbol at the public event. In short, they could discuss hiring security with their friends and social peers at times before or after the event, and reap the benefit of enhanced moral and social capital. The goal was not to draw unwanted attention toward their children while they were away from the home space, as that action would in itself create excessive risk. While home space is rather conspicuously created to provide obvious displays of security, both aesthetically and in practice, in terms of individual lives outside the compound walls, care is taken by individuals not to draw attention to themselves either by comportment or personal aesthetic. Consumption of safety is neither always

visible nor consistent. Just as the safety of particular places can shift and change depending on factors such as time of day, so too do rules about consumption of safety. Different spaces and situations call for differing levels of visible consumption of safety. The brazen manner in which “The Syrians’ are said to have acted extra-legally and apparently without impunity, despite allegedly taking the lives of the ‘bad men’ kidnappers point to a shifting scale of acceptance of violence and justice for those who occupy the position of ‘bad men’. The veracity of any or all aspects of the story regarding the kidnapping of the Syrian family member is of secondary importance to the way the story is discussed, elaborated on and passed on by those who use that tale as cautionary or illustrative.

Moderate Conspicuous Consumption: Moral Imperatives for Community Safety

“The Syrians” represent the high end of the consumption of security spectrum, or more importantly, they are *understood* to be the most security conscious in the country. The following account details the ways in which other, less wealthy individuals, understand and interpret the security precautions of their neighbours. While not necessarily friendly with their neighbours in a manner they would have liked to be, these people nonetheless hold them to account for their actions with regards to safety.

When I was leaving one wealthy neighbourhood with two informants to go to dinner one evening, the homeowners noticed that the automated steel gate that protected a home several doors down was open after dark. No exterior

security lights were on and the interior of the house was unlit. What followed showed me the way in which consumption of products meant to ensure safety is understood to have value only in conjunction with their proper employment. My two acquaintances expressed alarm that the gate of the home was open and that the home was therefore more vulnerable to theft or home invasion. In discussing the situation, one remarked to the other that the home owners were overseas on business, but the adult son of the homeowners, an owner of a popular restaurant in downtown Port of Spain was overseeing the house. After ascertaining that neither of my acquaintances had a cellular phone number for the adult son, my friends changed our dinner plans. We were now to go to that man's restaurant. Upon arrival, they not only told him that he had failed to close his gate and turn on security lights, but also that they would let his parents know. He promised his neighbours it would not happen again.

It was not enough in this situation for the man to have electronic gates or lights at the house. He was chastised for not using them properly. Similar accusations were leveled against Jeannie (discussed in the last chapter), whose home was robbed by her gardener. She too was accused of not having employed her income adequately to ensure protection. After the robbery of her newly constructed home in a gated community, Jeannie was subjected to criticism for choosing to spend money on furniture and home accessories before 'burglar proofing'—steel bars for windows and doors or an additional security alarm. Her parenting was also criticized. She left her young teen daughters at home alone,

depending solely on the security of living within a gated community to prevent break-ins. Further, she did not maintain a strict enough relationship with the hired help, in this case the gardener, and thereby created a weakness that the thief then exploited. Conversely, for those who employ what are seen to be adequate measures of security and are robbed or burglarized, the only criticism offered is directed at the perpetrators of the crime, who are portrayed as sub-human and disrespectful of 'good' or 'honest' people. No crime goes without criticism and these criticisms work both to enforce the moral obligations of the victim and reinforce the moral failures of the perpetrator. Indeed, this web of criticisms complicates the enactment of victim and perpetrator, linking the obligation to consume safety with the conditions which produce the need for safety in the first place. This connection between "buying" safety and identifying risk is dynamic, even symbiotic. This is significant because it demonstrates the dependent relationship between risk and blame and also highlights the manner in which women and children are particularly singled out for protection and isolation. Should the crime situation continue to deteriorate, the effect on the lifestyles of women and children can be understood through examining what sorts of conspicuous and inconspicuous practices of safety are imposed/taken up by these groups.

Automobiles: Inconspicuous Consumption for Safety

About cars in Trinidad, and cars as useful objects of material culture, Miller (2001) writes: "The car itself becomes understood not as a starting point

but as an object whose presence can be comprehended as part of the movement from the study of car upholstery to generalizations about Trinidadian values” (2001:22). In this section I also begin with a close look at the relationships between cars and Trinidadian values. Specifically, I examine the ways in which decisions surrounding automobiles, as objects of consumption, are being reconsidered increasingly imbued with concerns about safety.

Whereas the home-space is one in which conspicuous consumption of objects designed to maintain safety is preferred and in which status is inferred by the volume and visibility of these safety precautions, whether they are double-high barrier walls or expensive purebred guard dogs, in the case of cars and other vehicles, particularly those for women, safety in car choice, like that of personal dress and wearing jewellery in ‘unsafe places’, has increasingly become about looking as inconspicuous as possible. In North America, car safety marketing is mostly concerned with features designed to keep the bodies of passengers from injury in case of accident, with roll cages, airbags, and steel frames³⁹. The traffic and crime situations in Trinidad have diminished the importance of those features in favour of features that ensure safety from personal attack. The goal is to keep the driver free from attempted car-jacking, robbery, theft and above all to avoid

³⁹ North American car marketing does include a recent trend towards a different kind of safety issue related as much to crime as it is to physical safety in an accident. The marketing of GPS driven security features and services have become common in advertising of high end cars to high end buyers, though there is now slippage as these features are being marketed to mid range buyers too. This parallels changes in home security marketing, at least in the United States, which since September 2011 has become directed at middle class buyers, suggesting that uncertainty and a sense of vulnerability are at play in these places too.

drawing undue attention as a person who might be wealthy and therefore a target for crime.

The discussions surrounding the choice of my own automobile illustrate this. I came to understand early on in my planning for fieldwork that I would require at least partial access to a car. A car would be both a measure of safety and convenience. As the people with whom I planned to work generally lived beyond public transit routes in gated communities accessible only by car, and as I was expected to be out quite late at night at times when public transit would be considered unsafe, and private taxis unreliable, a car was deemed necessary for my stay.

A car's value is increasingly bound up in a complicated understanding that is directly related to safety, both on the road and as a way to avoid crime. As noted in the introduction Trinidad's traffic situation is incredibly congested. The bulk of business takes place in Port of Spain, an area reachable by three roads from the east, where most of the population lives. Traffic from my home to the downtown core, some 14 kilometers could take as much as three hours in bad traffic.

My car-savvy father, who arranged to be in Trinidad upon my arrival conferred with three men in Marilyn's extended family, all of whom worked as mechanics and two of whom owned their own car rental agencies. With my budget in hand, they disappeared for several hours each day for three days, returning finally with a Honda Civic, about 10 years old. This choice was not

simply based on cost effectiveness. Safety was the primary concern, not only vehicle safety in terms of working brakes and a healthy transmission, but my own personal safety while in the vehicle. Given my budget, either a Honda Civic or slightly less expensive Nissan Sunny would have been my choices. Both are ubiquitous in Trinidad, but I was told that Honda parts were more readily available due to a wider global production market. Should major repairs be necessary on the vehicle, the Sunny would be more expensive to repair. Thus the Sunny was determined to be a less optimal, if slightly less expensive choice.

These choices were also about calculating other kinds of risk. That both vehicles are quite common in Trinidad meant that they were often stolen. They might be stolen in order to commit another crime, and they could also be stolen for resale. The popularity of both cars meant that they were in many cases beneath notice. This factor has both positive and negative implications for potential car buyers. As the Honda Civic and Nissan Sunny are so common, they are ideal cars to either carjack from another individual or steal while unattended and use to commit a more dangerous crime and then either abandon the vehicle or sell it for parts. On the positive end of the spectrum, the popularity of both cars was seen as a positive in that it would not attract undue attention to the driver.

There were several important safety features added to my car after the fact, and which had also less to do with vehicular and bodily safety than preventing theft and maintaining my safety from crime while within the car. First, the airbag was de-activated. Traffic was so bad, and minor accidents so

frequent, that the airbag could be deployed as result of a minor incident and would then be costly to reassemble. Further, I was told that many robberies or kidnappings or car-jackings took place when a car is driving, only to be overtaken by a car which brakes suddenly, causing a small collision, deploying the air bag and disorienting the driver. Meanwhile a second car, working in concert with the first, pulls behind the intended victim's vehicle and boxes it in, preventing the driver from escaping the scene. The driver of the disabled car could then be robbed or snatched. While it was not thought that I would be a likely candidate for this type of offense, not having an airbag, or having it disassembled, would reduce driver confusion should such an incident happen. The car was also fitted with an after market security system which included a car alarm and an engine disabler. A key as well as an electronic device, inserted into a discrete slot on the dash, were both required in order to start the engine. Each decision made on my behalf about the automobile was about ensuring my safety from crime. Choosing a car in Canada had been a litany of safety as well, but in that case, one in which roll cages, air bags, proper tires and vehicle crash reports were consulted. In Trinidad, these considerations were secondary to providing me with a vehicle that was as inconspicuous and therefore as safe from crime as possible while still being reliable and fitting within my small budget.

This push towards inconspicuous consumption as related to vehicles was not limited to my own case. I spoke to many individuals about their vehicles, and the ways in which they chose them. I repeatedly heard of people struggling with

finding a balance between anonymity and expressing status. For those with a bigger budget than a graduate student doing fieldwork, the situation became more confusing. One very well off woman expressed frustration that she no longer drove the BMW sedan that her husband had given her a few years previously. It remained parked in the garage except for infrequent daytime trips to exclusive areas when she was accompanied by her husband. For her day-to-day travel she drove a less ostentatious, more common sedan instead. When I asked why, she said "I am not asking to be kidnapped. I'm not stupid. I refuse to advertise that I am a woman in a fancy car and have money. You never know who is going to make the best of an opportunity". Similar stories about expensive and highly conspicuous cars remaining under cover in garages of wealthy Trinidadians were common. The decision not to drive the vehicles, as well as the ways in which individuals talk about them are indicative of the ways in which concerns about safety inform consumption decisions. Discussions about refusing to utilize these objects of material culture that are conspicuous, because of an alternative logic of safety, are in themselves claims of status. Discussions of what one has had to give up in order to become inconspicuous and 'safe' are a way of claiming status. The expensive car is displayed and consumed in speech if not through being driven.

For many others, who wanted a new vehicle or something more comfortable than a small sedan like a Honda Civic, but less ostentatious than a luxury vehicle, the choice between conspicuous and inconspicuous consumption again comes into play, again with what can look like a contradictory logic. Some

individuals with whom I spoke chose what is commonly called a 'cross-over' vehicle. These are vehicles with a taller profile than a sedan but smaller than a sports utility vehicle. They are more costly and are often four wheel drive which suits the hilly areas of the country. Owners typically justified their decisions in terms of safety as well. Cross-over vehicles, such as a Toyota Rav-4, are fairly conspicuous insofar as they stand out above the more ubiquitous small sedans that dominate Trinidad's roadways. While some argue that this visibility may set them apart and make their occupants noticeable as people who might in fact have something to steal, a second logic emerges. While they are somewhat more luxurious, these cars are not very common. Therefore they are thought to be unlikely targets for crime. Those who drive these vehicles thought that potential thieves would not be interested in such cars because they would be, once stolen, difficult to conceal or re-sell. Criminals who might be interested in robbing or snatching the vehicle's driver might be dissuaded because the more expensive vehicle could draw more attention to the crime and so their actions might be reported. It is a complicated and shifting logic to be sure.

As concerns about violent crime evolve so too do attitudes and understandings of particular practices of consumption. Conspicuous consumption of goods related to the home is increasing, whereas the vehicle, as a mobile and

less secure safety zone for inhabitants is an object of often inconspicuous consumption in order to lessen attention on the occupants.⁴⁰

Most acutely affected by these decisions with regards to cars were women and young adults. Almost no women in my acquaintance drove alone after dark. Some young women are not bothering to learn how to drive, arguing that their opportunities to drive are limited severely due to constraints around safety. Most women leave the home in the company of a male driver and usually defer to that driver. Like other women, I was advised to consider the vehicle as a tool of safety and isolation between myself and risky others. On rare occasions when, for instance, Marilyn's daughter Frankie found herself with a family vehicle away from home after dark, she would often leave the vehicle at the place she was visiting and be driven home by her boyfriend. The most risk considered allowable would be for her boyfriend to follow her home in his vehicle before turning around and returning to his own home. The return trip, some 60 minutes for her boyfriend without traffic, was seen as the only safe alternative. This

⁴⁰ This practice of being conspicuously inconspicuous was brought home to me by one of my informants. This comfortably middle class homeowner chose to drive an ostentatious, but run down large American vehicle, but refused to add any after-market safety features. Instead, he chose to leave doors and windows open at all time and to take almost no care of the car beyond basic maintenance. His strategy, he told me, was to, make it apparent that he had nothing worth stealing. "I drive a car older than my children [he was in his 60s and his children in their late 20s], I dress like a pauper. Whatever I have, let them take. I won't fight them for it. But I won't show off either." His external presentation of self, particularly when outside the home, was consistently inconspicuous. He wore older, unfashionable clothes or selected fashions more likely to be worn by lower class individuals than someone of his class position. His home itself, he said, was heavily fortified, but he would never 'advertise' that wealth in his day to day life outside the security of his home.

gendered aspect to understandings and practices of safety is too big a topic to cover, given the constraints of this text. It is clear, however, that the place of gender in these practices needs to be examined further and in more detail.

The extent to which the automobile is increasingly understood less as a symbol of status and more as a tool to ensure safety cannot be underestimated. Not only was it imperative that the car be inconspicuous, but it is also important to note that the ways of being in the car have also changed. More than ever, individuals report feeling anxious while driving, taking extra care to be aware of their surroundings, particularly in traffic. These anxieties about being car-jacked, robbed or kidnapped while in a vehicle have meant that individuals are forever on guard and take care as they move about the city. Near the end of my fieldwork season, I realized just how far I had come from the naïve person who needed to be told where and when driving is appropriate, to become a savvy driver who actively attended to details that might not have been noticed only a few months earlier. The anxiety attached to what only months before would have seemed a benign event was troubling. The following is an excerpt directly from my field notes, scribbled quickly after I had returned home safely.

Fear and suspicion. This afternoon (January 25, 2008) I left Auntie Marilyn's house about 5:30 to go to SuperPharm [a large pharmacy with cosmetics, some limited foodstuffs and other imported goods]. The setting sun was directly in my eyes. It was an odd time of day for me to be going in that direction. At a stop light (stop lights occur on the highway and can last over five minutes, thus are considered risky when driving at night...but it's not dark) I notice two men in a car in

the lane to the right of me and ahead about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a car length [cars drive on the left in Trinidad, and the driver is on the right, this meant that I as a driver was physically closest to the rear passenger side of the car]. They are not dressed well, armless t-shirts, shiny faces, bad hats. Their windows are open, indicating that there is no air conditioning in their older car. This likely means there is not a lot of disposable income available, traffic is too horrendous here to drive far without air conditioning if one can help it. I see one man looking over at me through the corner of my eye, he seems to be staring. I don't make eye contact. These lights are too long to initiate even slightly prolonged contact. My mind began to race crazily.[The following is a representation of my internal thought processes.]

Oh crap, that guy's looking at me. Why is he looking at me, it's not too late out yet for a woman alone in a vehicle to seem weird. I'm not looking over there. They look rough, their window's are down. Maybe I should make eye contact. Zorina told me that if you make eye contact and make them realize you are a real live person instead of a target you are less likely to be harassed. But what if he has no nefarious intentions—then I'll just look flirtatious with the eye contact and invite all sorts of random comments and that could lead to other problems, remember that guy you interviewed who wouldn't stop calling because you stupidly bought him a beer? What if he just thinks I'm cute? Am I being ridiculous? No...I'm not being ridiculous, besides Uncle Joseph says not to make eye contact.

When this light turns I'm going to make sure they go ahead of me. Oh great, they're both staring now, the driver even rolled down the back passenger side window so they could get a better look. Are they...? What are they? Are they black? Mixed? How racist are these questions? Am I becoming some horrible racist? Indian guys could think I'm cute or want to rob me too. Ha! I can't tell, every time I try to describe someone by 'race', Auntie

laughs and tells me I get it wrong. But I should know, in case...in case what? In case they follow me? In case I see them again? Are they flirting or are they sizing me up? Either way they seem perfectly comfortable staring at me for the whole length of this interminable fucking traffic light.

I don't pay attention to these traffic lights the way I should. In the dark, at night, Uncle told me that if you have to stop at a traffic light, you should try to time it so that you can be at the front of the line of cars, with no one in front of you, so you can drive away if someone approached the car, so no one can box you in—I need to pay more attention. But it's the fucking tropics! The sun sets at 5:45. I can't wait until tomorrow to get the stuff I need, and I shouldn't have to damnit!

Uncle said that it is better to get a ticket for running a red light than to have to wait for the light to turn green. Look at me, I haven't even locked my doors. Were they following me? Why wasn't I paying attention to who was behind me in the car? What the hell...I hate this...has my tank top slipped down? Are they staring at me because I'm exposing myself in the car? Fuck that, it's not the tank top, get a hold of yourself. What kind of car is that? I should know and try to remember in case I see it behind me again. Where is my cell phone? Is it even charged? Who would I call? Would they laugh at me? Should I call someone or pretend to call someone, why are they still staring at me?

My heart is a little jumpy. Would my heart feel this jumpy if I knew they just thought I was cute and were being flirty? Are they having fun making me uncomfortable? They must know I see them staring...thank god my peripheral vision is good. Gah...finally, the light changed. I need to be behind them...I need to be able to see where they're going and make sure they don't get behind me and ram the car. Slow down, slow down...they totally just blew their horn to get me to look over there. What if there's just something wrong with my

car...no, they would have been more obviously trying to get my attention before then, rather than just staring. Do I look like I have money? What if they're working in tandem with another car and they block me in...the paper said Indians are overwhelmingly the target of kidnapping. I'm an Indian and there ain't no badge that says 'poor foreign grad student'.

My laptop is locked in the trunk. If they rob me will they open the trunk? Have I backed up all my files? I only have about the equivalent of \$150 US in my wallet. I can afford to lose that. I'm ridiculous, I'm being ridiculous. Am I racist? Classist? What the hell is wrong with me? Oh good...my turn off...they're gone. It was nothing. I can't believe I got so worked up about this. Is this reaction normal? Do people just not talk about it? Remember when you were in that fancy coffee shop with Auntie and those two young black kids came in, all thugged out with big chains and baggy pants? She stiffened up...was it because they were black? No...remember, it was because they kinda stormed in...trying to look all tough...the behaviour didn't match the locale of the quiet coffee shop...remember they stayed for a few minutes then left...besides, they were dressed to LOOK like thugs, their shoes were shiny, new, their chains were real, their hair was too slick....they were poseurs. Remember you and Auntie Marilyn sort of silently decided they weren't a threat at the same time and went back to your conversation. How come I couldn't make that decision with the guys in the car? Because they still looked like the nefarious other? No wonder I'm writing a daytime ethnography.

I wrote the preceding as soon as I returned home, trying to recreate my thought processes as best as possible during the moment. I was panicked, and cannot say to what extent my lack of habitus, my inexperience with driving there

and with noting my surroundings led to the degree of panic that I experienced. I spoke to people after and many told me that they might have reacted the same way. Importantly, they argued that a few years ago they would have laughed at me, and said that the men in the car were either trying to flirt with me or otherwise get under my skin just because they could, and I was under no real danger. My alarm, they said, was an indication that I was learning how to be adequately cautious. Mehta and Bondi (1999) say that women in particular, in discussing fear of violence often oscillate between discourse characterized as “violence being ubiquitous and beyond control, and a view of violence as limited to particular places or circumstances that can be avoided” (1999: 75). In this rationale, individuals point to two strategies to manage these feelings of fear of violence, either ‘being sensible’, by not putting oneself in a situation in which harm might befall you, or a ‘control of emotion’ strategy, in which fear is controlled by an appeal to reason. In my own experience in the automobile, my own ‘safe space’ container that moved me from point ‘a’ to point ‘b’ in Trinidad, I experienced a failure on both of those counts. Neither my goal of ‘being sensible’, by travelling before dark to ‘safe’ places, nor my desire to reason my way out of the interaction could quell the fear of the attention from the men in the other car. In my appraisal of the actions of the men in the car, and my confusion over the prolonged attention, I realized I had indeed internalized the race/danger/stranger logics that I had been attempting to describe. I had also, in the frantic moments of racing thought regarding what I ‘should have been paying

attention to', internalized and used tropes of blame in relation to risk on myself. I began to berate and blame myself for my fear as though it was the direct result of not following all of the informal rules that I had been given in a manner similar to the way Jeannie was blamed for giving 'too much leeway' to the gardener who eventually robbed her. I was both in and of the space my informants create and occupy in their everyday lives and my experience draws attention to the imperfect and uneven way that individuals experience fear, and follow the informal social rules surrounding safety. I understood then exactly how provisional these rules are and my frantic thoughts during and immediately after the event highlight one of the major tensions of this work. I struggled between internalizing the guilt of acknowledging fear and caution in the presences of racialized and classed stereotype of the 'other' or the 'stranger', and a guilt about failing to comply with 'appropriate' behavior. The reaction of others to my story of experiencing fear in the presence of attention from the 'risky, classed, racialized, other' indicates the speed at which a situation of rapidly escalating crime can change opinions with regard to the motivations of lower classes. Everyone I spoke to said that I did well to notice the attention and try and take precautions (albeit too late), but also reinforced that this reaction is both necessary and novel given recent increases in crime and violence.

Where to Shop, What to Buy? Shopping Malls as Spaces of Safe Consumption and Safety Consumption

From home-space to automobiles, it becomes more and more apparent that individuals spend as little time as possible acting or interacting in places in which there is risk of interacting with the 'risky other'. This is especially apparent at Trinidad's shopping malls. Shopping malls have become safe refuges for those with disposable income who are desirous of a socially homogenous shopping environment. Whereas 10 years ago many told me that they frequently shopped the shopping areas in the heart of Port of Spain, and even had their own businesses there, today they no longer do so. They cite the changing tenor of downtown. They no longer feel safe, and those who were business owners no longer want to deal with the security burden of transporting large amounts of cash in the downtown core. By contrast, shopping malls, particularly Trincity Mall and West Mall, are located outside of the urban areas, in suburban middle class areas. Though accessible by public transportation, they are much more easily accessible by automobile. As areas which are designed for the expenditure of disposable income, these spaces are understood as zones of relative safety for upper class Trinidadians with cars, though recent crime events have changed that perception. The ways in which these individuals understand malls, and events which transpire at malls, are indicative of the ways in which consumption of safe leisure time has changed in relation to changes in crime and fear of crime.

West Mall, the highest priced and most exclusive mall in the country, features gated security with guards that allow vehicles in and out of the property using a security card system. Once inside, local designer shops stand next to shops featuring imported brand names. The mall features gourmet foodstores which carry items unavailable at regular grocery stores, high end clothiers and small bistros which sell desserts and foods not readily available elsewhere. It is also, jokingly referred to as the 'white people mall', where 'white' is also code for 'wealthy'

Trincity Mall, by contrast is understood to be more upper middle class, and less elite than West Mall by most people with whom I spoke. It has fewer foreign chain stores and a greater number of locally based retailers. The mall is also a middle class destination for leisure. The mall has two food courts, and four large family style and sports bar type restaurants. The mall also has a large arcade, a grocery store, and a movie theatre inside. These things combined make the mall very attractive to middle class individuals looking to spend a few hours of recreation while maintaining a sense of safety. In this way, Trincity Mall is closer in form to North American malls, where the main attraction for visitors is not shopping but using the non-retail leisure services the malls offer, in contrast to West Mall, which includes non-retail services that are more exclusive and access is more closely guarded (Lee et al. 1999).

Trincity Mall does not have a gated entry system, although guards often stroll the mall carrying large semi-automatic weapons, conjuring a conjoined

sense of both safety and danger. Several services, such as banks, insurance companies, and cellular phone retailers can also be found in the shopping mall. During my fieldwork, Trincity Mall was undergoing major renovation, expanding to provide more leisure options. Middle-class parents (including Afro-Trinidadian parents) told me that they were more willing to let youth and children spend money in one of the overpriced theme restaurants inside shopping malls than to frequent corner bars or restaurants where the crowd was, in their words “more mixed”, a reference to poor Afro-Trinidadians.

Despite the feeling of safety within the mall, crime at malls is understood to be on the increase. Car theft is more frequent at Trincity Mall than at any other place in Trinidad. In the first three months of 2008, fully one third of all cars reported stolen in Trinidad were stolen from the parking lot at Trincity Mall (Neaves, 2008). Several times I was told stories of women who were robbed or otherwise assaulted, often followed from automatic teller machines within the mall, and a young man was killed in 2009 after a fight in one of the food courts.⁴¹

Despite this level of crime, mall shopping is seen as preferable to other alternatives except overseas travel, particularly for women. This is a ‘safe’

⁴¹ While beyond the scope of my discussion here, it is worth noting that shopping malls and crime are often connected in complex ways. Rates of crime in Edmonton, in Canada, are highest in concentrated commercial areas such as the vast West Edmonton Mall (Statistics Canada 2008). Malls in almost every jurisdiction covered by the Centre for Retail Research in Nottingham, England, are key targets for gang related activity, either in the form of shoplifting (shrinkage) or as crimes committed against customers in the malls. This appears to apply in all regions of the world. Finally, though not exhaustively, Lee et al (1999) found that levels of crime in shopping mall environments in the United States were not affected by the presence of visible security forces.

dangerous space. Women can and do go shopping on their own in shopping malls, but are constantly vigilant while doing so. As with elsewhere, I was given a strict set of rules for 'safe' comportment in a shopping mall. Go with friends if possible. Be aware of your surroundings. If you think you are being followed, do not leave the mall. Have your keys in hand before you exit to the parking lot. Still, the shopping mall was one of few places that I could go without feeling it necessary to inform anyone of my whereabouts.

Many of my initial meetings with potential interviewees took place in shopping malls. Interviewees, particularly those who were referred to me by a third party, were often unwilling or hesitant to meet in their homes, many plainly stating that they preferred that the researcher with an interest in crime did not know where they lived, despite my assurances of anonymity. For me in my role as researcher, the mall was a safe space that was easy to access. I did not have to worry about becoming lost or passing through risky areas. Both malls were located directly off the main east-west highway. If I was meeting male interviewees, it was a public and neutral space. For female interviewees, it was also common 'safe' space.

Colleen was one such woman I met for an interview. She had contacted me early during my stay in Trinidad, after being forwarded an email I had sent to a university acquaintance. We spoke initially because she was a return migrant, having left Trinidad as a young child and returned after approximately 20 years in the United States, including time spent serving in a branch of the US Armed

Forces. Tall and slender, Colleen was frank about her time in Trinidad. She was trained as an accountant and said that she had very little difficulty in finding either jobs or dates in Trinidad, but allowed that prior to meeting her current steady boyfriend, with whom she can venture to other parts of the country, she spent the majority of her leisure time at the mall. We met in a food court of Trincity Mall after she had finished work one day. This was safe ground for both of us, as the meeting was to take place after dark.

Colleen: Ok...what I would say, not that it's umm...it's spoken about too much, but I think there are a lot of good things going on in the country as well. And, the newspapers concentrate on the bad. I would say that because working in Manhattan I went through stuff twice a day and I saw more crime there than I have seen in this country in the last year and a half. And it's not that I'm a homebody, I like being outside, I'm usually out and about somewhere. What it is also is maybe I know how, is it to take care of myself? Like I wouldn't go down to Duke Street at two in the morning by myself in a mini skirt...you know, I mean, I carry myself in a way...I keep my head up, I'm constantly looking back, if it's at night and I'm by myself, I have my phone ready to call for help....you know things like that?

Geer: So do you walk around by yourself at night?

Colleen: Not nowadays, cause I have my car, but when I first came, I wouldn't as well, because I also used to wear a lot of revealing clothing, but people can tell that it wasn't clothing from here. So I would always stand out in my shorts, because they would always say 'American' in the shorts. It wasn't the same style, usually unless you go to the beach or you are at home in this country people don't wear

shorts. That's how you can tell an American in this country, they wear shorts at home or at the beach. So, ya, I would stand out. I'm trying to think...I don't think I would go to too many places by myself when I first came I was always on a date or with friends. Nowadays I have a boyfriend. I'm trying to think of where I would go...if I didn't have a date I would come here [to the mall] on the weekends to take myself out to the movies or lunch hour--go for lunch, but I was always in a business suit.

Geer: So, you're not overly concerned about the crime?

Colleen: I would say, only because I do not put myself in situations to be a victim. I try my best not to, you know, I think I use my common sense...I am female. I am not that tall. I'm not that big. So I can't really fight much people off. I'm usually with another person or groups if it's at night...and now that I have my car I feel much more safe now. When I was working at those places and having to travel home, there I felt uncomfortable. You know, a lot of the times at [one of her former employers] I would actually take a company car home, because of that safety reason, you know? And, um, I guess that's one of the reasons I got my car...Safety, as well as they were ridiculous with the prices, they would also say, 'short drop'[a quick taxi ride], knowing that they are supposed to go the full length of the...but I'm trying to think of a situation where I felt unsafe. And I really...do not put myself in those situations.

Colleen's account demonstrates the dual approaches to fear of violence as described by Mehta and Bondi (1999), one of common sense and the other a control of emotion. It is interesting to note that her feelings of safety are directly related to the ways in which she chooses to consume. Before she was with her

current partner, Colleen would not deny herself leisure time, but her choices of where and when to spend her time and money were conditioned by notions of class and safety. On her own, she chose shopping malls and upscale restaurants within shopping malls as places in which she could feel safe.

For Colleen, car ownership was also about safety. Not wishing to be overcharged for short taxi rides or place herself at what she saw as real risk by relying on public transportation, Colleen leveraged her position as a high ranking accountant with a large firm to ensure that she could borrow a company vehicle before buying her own car. Having the car, and having a male companion has allowed Colleen to venture further afield in Trinidad. She uses her income to consume safety, both in the form of an automobile and for her leisure time.

Colleen's story is significant because it demonstrates the ways in which upper middle class women are both limited in the spaces that they can safely venture by themselves, and able to employ their own capital in order to purchase trappings of safety which allow them to spend some leisure and other time in relative safety.

For Colleen, like many other upper middle and upper class Trinidadian women, the amount freedom of movement she experiences is based on her relationship status. While she has some freedom to come to areas such as shopping malls or to higher end restaurants on her own because of her disposable income, she was unable to venture to other parts of the country or her own community when she was single and before she bought a vehicle. For lower class women the constrictions are perhaps more severe. Without flexibility wrought from financial

flexibility and the ability to access safe, if expensive, spaces lower class women are forced to choose between 'unsafe' venturing into the world alone, or greater dependence on male affines and relationships.

Youth Consumption of Leisure and Safety:

While in general, the young people between 13-18 that I came to know did not appear to mind that their experience of Trinidad was sheltered, and they enjoyed their time in malls, they did push at the limits of vigilance and safety. Young men were the primary rule breakers with regards to safe space. Men in their late teens and early 20s are able to 'stray' more frequently and to dip into rum shops and seedy bars and areas of high prostitution. They are able to slip back and forth between secure spaces and non-secure spaces. Coming back home to their younger siblings and mothers, they reported their tales as though they had visited another world. "We went to a rum-shop near the university, close to where that man get stabbed, like we see in the paper. We had a few drinks and some food...we were cool. We didn't take worries". While these young men present what appeared to me to be a practiced sense of 'cool' when telling stories about venturing into unsafe spaces, in fact their venturing to these areas was, after some questioning, understood to be carefully planned and neither spontaneous or casual. Junior, Marilyn's 26 year old son, might shrug off the concern of his mother when he tells of going to a rum shop frequented by lower class individuals, but he gains some status by virtue of the transgression. Young men are lauded for their ability to interact safely and successfully with people from

lower classes with whom they have had little contact. Junior in particular would be hyper-vigilant about the entire encounter, planning in advance that he went with other young men he trusted, and watching the places and situations carefully for signs of trouble. Masculinity for these upper middle-class males is tied to their mobility. These interactions outside the home are similar, but not the same as interactions described as by Douglas (1992) or Burton (1997). Both of these authors detail the dichotomy between 'inside' and 'outside' in West Indian society. In this binary, the domain of women (and femininity), particularly upper class women is 'inside' the home, and their view of the world is one of the inside looking out. Conversely, the domain of men (and masculinity) resides 'outside' on the street. Besides being the realm of femininity, being 'inside' or at home, is associated with virtues such as respectability, family, being future-oriented, or 'transcendence'. Being 'outside', by contrast is associated with masculinity, reputation, 'bacchanal', being 'present-oriented', and 'transience' (Burton 1997: 162). While it is true that in general women spend more time in the home, and men outside, and that there are characteristics associated with both, I argue that when Junior and men like him tell stories of their mixing with people of lower classes 'outside', they are expressing a novel claim toward masculinity which is different than those expressed by Burton (1997: 162) and Douglas (1992: 184-5). For young upper middle and upper-class men such as Junior and his friends, masculinity is increasingly associated not only with 'liming' or being 'outside' the house but also being 'outside' in areas that are associated both with violence

and risk. The realm of masculinity for these young men is not just associated with transgressing the boundaries of the home space and engaging in activities like drinking and womanizing that are associated with a lack of 'respectability' but also with danger and proximity to potential violence and mixing with people of lower classes.

It should be noted that it is much more difficult for lower class males to also enact parallel transgressions, in which they spend their time in spaces constructed by and for upper middle or upper classes, such as malls or expensive nightclubs. While Junior and his friends might be understood as the 'stranger' in a lower class rum shop, it is unlikely that recognition would be cause for their removal. By contrast, lower class men who are recognized as 'the stranger' in upper-middle class spaces such as high-end nightclubs or shopping malls are harassed and subject to heightened surveillance and even removal.

But where Junior could use these excursions as a way of earning safety-related social capital, the same was not the case for Marilyn. After several hours picking our way through the shopping areas in downtown Port of Spain one day, we returned to the car. We had spent more time than anticipated shopping and eating and traffic was already beginning to thicken up as the afternoon rush hour began. In frustration with the delay, Marilyn directed me through some unfamiliar side streets to gain access to the highway home. As we slowed to a stop in traffic she instructed me to look to my left. "Do you know where we are? You know where that is? That's Laventille! Don't you dare tell Uncle Joseph that I took you

this way, he would kill me if he knew”. There was a mischievous expression about Marilyn as traffic cleared and we began moving again. We were not ‘in’ the dreaded and maligned Laventille, but rather on the edges, looking at a bordering street. This transgression, this moving of the vehicle so near to what is understood to be the least safe space in the country was done with a sort of rebellious glee not unlike that of her son who carefully reports his adventures in the various ‘non-safe’ bars he had gone to with his friends. But our transgression was not something Marilyn would brag about once we got home.

Accompanying a group of over a dozen young people in their early-to-mid 20s to a Christmastime Parang concert high in the mountains of an area known as Paramin was logistically difficult. Derived from Spanish influences, Parang is an acoustic guitar driven musical style that is popular during the Christmas season. Paramin, an area of Trinidad high in the hills is said to produce the finest Parang music. Every year the village hosts several large outdoor Parang competitions. Attendees have to leave their cars at the bottom of mountains in safe car parks or along side streets where they pay locals to watch over them and then pay a small fee to be ferried up the mountain by four wheel drive vehicles, to a plateau on which the concert is being held.

Organizing to attend this competition was complex. The young men of the group planned the route and met up with one another ahead of time to discuss how they would get there, which vehicles would be used and where others would be left. For most youth who were along for the trip, the only time they had ever

gone to this part of the country was during the Parang competition. Traffic, always bad, was particularly horrible and what would have been a 30 minute drive into the hills took more than an hour and a half. The group was also reluctant to leave one another, so all our vehicles travelled in a convoy. When one young man realized he needed money, the whole convoy drove until an automated teller machine was found, waited for him to finish his transaction and then proceeded. Once inside the grounds where the concert and competition were to take place, the young men were alternatively having fun and being vigilant. Dates and girlfriends were protected physically from coming into contact with 'rough looking' attendees. Often women were nudged into the centre of a circle of young men, to protect them from harm. One young woman was chastised for wearing high heels. "This is a concert, not a club, who you looking to impress, these Paramin people?" In this mixed space, everyone was more on edge than they were in home-spaces or in shopping malls.

The concert was washed out by torrential rains. The difficulty in finding our way back to the cars was especially telling. The four wheel drive vehicles that shuttled us up the top of the mountain were nowhere to be found for the descent, and we had to take a different route to get to the bottom of the hill and locate our cars. Soaked to the skin in the dark and pressed against steep embankments when cars came down the mountain, the group grew very uneasy. The road was not lit and the group was walking alone, having left before the majority of concert-goers. Marilyn's son Junior was thrust to the front of the group by his friends. Because

he had travelled and gone hunting with his father in South America, he was acknowledged to be the most experienced of the group. As others worried about risky people who might line the dark roads, looking to rob them, Junior was thought to be most adept at sensing danger in this 'unsafe' space. That we were in effect walking through suburban residential areas and not 'in the wild' was laughed about. Individuals joked and acknowledged their nervousness. Many complained that they could not simply flag down a vehicle and pay them to take us all to our cars.

This section on youth as related to consumption and fear of crime has highlighted the ways in which young men have considerably greater amounts of freedom to transgress these racialized and classed boundaries than young women. Notions of masculinity for upper middle and upper class youth under this situation of increased crime still rely on older notions of transgressing the boundaries of 'home' and behaving rowdily, but are also increasingly tied to newer behaviours, such as transgressing informal rules of 'safe' behavior and class based segregation, and, most importantly, returning unscathed. This interaction does not, as one might assume, reduce the sense of fear or stigma associated with the lower classes that young men like Junior encounter when occupying the space of the 'risky other' boundaries. In fact, the stories that young men tell about their transgressions serve only to highlight the perceived danger of the 'risky other'. In Junior's deliberate coolness about 'having a few drinks and not taking worries', he maintains the masculine ideal of being cool under pressure. Subsequent

stories, told for humorous effect and to reinforce his own masculinity because of his transgressions into unsafe space simultaneously reinforces classed and racialized stereotypes about the 'risky other'.

Conclusion:

Consumption is increasingly concerned with maintaining safety for upper middle class and upper class Trinidadians. This consumption can be either conspicuous, as in the case of the purchase and use of safety features for home-spaces, or inconspicuous, as evidenced by the growing trend towards cars that provide a sense of safety as a result of their anonymity. Automobiles, like elaborately gated and secured home spaces, provide spaces in which upper middle and upper class Trinidadians can isolate themselves from the risky lower classes. Increasingly reliance on upscale shopping centres for day to day shopping as well as for the passing of leisure time is also understood, at least partially, through a lens of safety. For those individuals who can afford it, shopping malls are places where the price of safety and the prices of high status goods conjoin. For women, these pressures of safe consumption are particularly acute. Lives are therefore limited by these consumption choices. Freedom of movement is curtailed so that bodies pass from one safe space to another, from home-space, to safe automobile, to safe work environment, to safe leisure environment. The effect of these patterns of consumption is to add to middle and upper class segregation and isolation and further compound existing racial stereotypes about

the lower classes. No longer in frequent casual contact the with risky other, fear of these individuals grows because of lack of familiarity.

This coming together of safety and consumption, where both status and safety must be bought and must be seen to be bought points to a conundrum in class relations in Trinidad. The persistence of class boundaries grounded in a racialized fear of crime is enforced, and re-invigorated, by the very thing it fears. Class identity interwoven with ideas of safety and consumption require something “to be safe from”, a risk-defined dangerous other. This paradox, that elite class identity may actually “need” fear of crime, complicates the political and social dynamics of Trinidadian politics, something that is especially apparent in how my informants think about and talk about the future, which I turn to in the next chapter.

Chapter 9: Imagining the Future

In this chapter I examine the ways in which the future is understood and imagined by middle class and elite Trinidadians. I first examine the government's Vision 2020 plan, the aim of which is to have Trinidad and Tobago attain first world or 'developed' country status by the year 2020. The title: "Vision 2020 Plan" is a play on the term 20/20 used to describe perfect eyesight. The plan has been in existence for nearly 10 years and was often used as a point of reference by informants when discussing Trinidad's future and in critiquing the current government. I present select details of the plan alongside the ways these groups think about the future in their everyday lives. Trinidadians are generally not against the Vision 2020 plan, though the degree to which they are familiar with its details varies, in part because the details about projects and proposals are often vague even in their official form. Even those people who find the ruling PNM government to be wholly undesirable often allow that the plan, with its goals of increased quality of life and short and long term economic independence for all Trinidadians, is good. Their doubts and criticisms come from their lack of belief that the plan will ever come to fruition, based on particular sorts of critiques of the ruling party, critiques which often echo racialized criticisms of Afro-Trinidadians in general. I will discuss the form of these critiques and explore the ways in which the Vision 2020 plan correlates with upper class Trinidadians' own vision of the future. Finally, I suggest that new migration strategies for children are emerging

amongst those upper class Trinidadians who are still financially successful in Trinidad.

What's the Vision?

In the months leading up to the election in 2002, the then opposition People's National Movement campaigned on a platform based on 'Vision 2020'. The People's National Movement (PNM) is the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian supported political party which came into power in 2002 against the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported United National Congress (UNC). The PNM retained power in the 2007 national elections, as discussed in chapters four and five, in a hard fought battle between the UNC and the rhetorically non-racial Congress of the People. The language used by the PNM government in reference to the plan is ambitious and positive:

By the year 2020, Trinidad and Tobago will be a united, resilient, productive, innovative and prosperous nation with a disciplined, caring, fun-loving society, comprising healthy, happy and well-educated people and built on the enduring attributes of self-reliance, respect, equity and integrity. In which... every citizen equal opportunities to achieve his/her fullest potential. All citizens enjoy a high quality of life, where quality healthcare is available to all and where safe, peaceful, environmentally friendly communities are maintained.

All citizens are assured of a sound, relevant education system tailored to meet the human resource needs of a modern, progressive, technologically advancing nation. Optimum use is made of all the resources of nation. The family as the foundation of the society contributes to its

growth, development and stability. There is respect for the rule of law and human rights and the promotion of the principles of democracy. The diversity and creativity of all its people are valued and nurtured (Vision 2020 <http://vision2020.info.tt> 2010).

From the above loosely defined parameters, the plan then identified five development ‘pillars’ and set goals and clearer definitions to support those foundational values. First tabled to parliament in 2002, the plan was subsequently updated with a 2007- 2010 Operational Plan. The plan set three target years, 2007, 2010 and 2020 with measures of success at each of those points. The idea is that with the goal of ‘developed’ nation status by the year 2020, the government will re-assess and re-align its initiatives on a yearly basis to ensure each of five ‘development pillars’ are being adequately nurtured. These pillars are:

1) **Developing Innovative People**—Plans include the support of a new (though not yet internationally accredited) University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) as well as ongoing support of established research and development programs at the more established University of the West Indies (UWI). These are meant to re-orient Trinidad’s workforce towards innovation and away from the current system which produces primarily professional (doctors, lawyers) or labour positions. The goal is also to enable for-profit commercialization of ideas through a more effective patent and intellectual property program. Innovations and funding for school curricula and teacher training are also proposed as well as increases to scholarship funding and the creation of a community college with campuses in Trinidad and Tobago. Other plans to invigorate the arts in Trinidad through

investment in infrastructure and establishment of funds for programs like the National Steel Pan Symphony, have also been proposed (Vision 2020 section 1 2002).

2) Nurturing a Caring Society: In this pillar, the focus is on poverty reduction and support to families is highlighted with corollary goals of reducing rates of teen pregnancy, divorce and spousal abuse. Major projects include the establishment of the following: a Children's Authority to improve child welfare; senior citizen's centers to provide support and services to the aging population; a sex offender's registry; homes and services for the elderly homeless; awareness programs for mental illness; homes and programs for young offenders; and increased counseling services. The planners also promise increases in affordable government housing, rent and home owner's subsidies, and renewal of urban centers through investments in infrastructure. Goals of improving life expectancy through investment in health care, particularly in access to government sponsored specialist health care, are also outlined in this pillar. (Vision 2020 2002: Section 2).

3) Enabling Competitive Business: Goals of increasing GDP, reducing joblessness, and maintaining fiscal surpluses are to be achieved by various government reforms which include increasing 'employee capacity' in the Ministry of Planning and establishing a Heritage Stabilization fund to avoid major economic unsettlement as a result of fluctuations in oil and gas revenues. Trinidad's international 'business competitiveness', measured by worker

productivity, and the number of new businesses started will be enhanced by the establishment of a Research and Development facility, implementation of a business competitiveness program among current businesses in Trinidad, through international marketing of business opportunities and tax incentives in Trinidad, and through the establishment of new Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety Initiatives. The goal of diversification of the economy away from a dependence on oil and gas extraction is expected to take the form of increased investment in tourism programs, infrastructural investment in reversing declining trends in agriculture and fisheries industries, as well as several projects focused on producing and refining natural gas. A number of projects related to investing in steel and production of industrial chemicals are also planned (Vision 2020 2002: Section 3).

4) Investing in Sound Infrastructure and Environment: Goals of structurally sound and aesthetically pleasing infrastructure will be achieved by, among other plans, improvements to the Transport Division; revitalizing a national drainage strategy; investments in road and bridge maintenance; providing alternate routes in and out of densely populated areas; establishing a mass transit rapid rail service, and moving the port in Port of Spain and reallocating that land for other projects. Modernization of communications systems is planned which includes making broadband internet access to be available nationally, improvements to the government's e-knowledge accessibility via the implementation of a stronger web access portal, connection of all schools to the internet, providing training

programs in internet usage for the general public, and increases in the efficiency of the national postal service. Water, sewerage and electricity services will be improved via implementation of several region specific water supply programs, investment in infrastructure to upgrade and create new water supply services, substantial investment in new electrical substations to increase dependability of electricity to all consumers, and various disaster preparedness plans which will avoid reductions or loss of services in the event of an emergency. Long term environmental management plans include establishment of commissions and plans to improve air quality, waste management, marine life and wildlife (Vision 2020 2002: section 4).

5) Promoting Effective Government: This pillar includes plans to improve good governance principles and practices through reform of the Local Government Ministry by tightening procurement and tendering procedures for government monies, reforming the public sector and rationalizing and improving day to day access to government services. The legal system will be strengthened and made more accessible and a special focus on access to ‘fair and equal justice’ for all Trinidadians is the stated objective of legal system reform. In particular this reform will involve the establishment of a Special Criminal Court which

will be dedicated to the hearing and determination of matters related to drug trafficking, firearms and kidnapping offences on a special and expedited basis. The court will be provided with state-of-the-art technologies and other resources and will operate under specific legislation” (Vision 2020 2002: 330).

While the PNM was re-elected after campaigning on the continuance of this strategic vision in 2007, public support of the initiatives is variable. A report based on an ongoing survey conducted by international opinion firm Market Opinion and Research International (MORI) showed mixed reactions on the success of the plan up to 2007. In particular the report noted that while more people understood the plan than ever before, people had less confidence that the plan would actually be successful in attaining 'developed' nation status (Worchester, Saith and McGill 2009: 7). Among the study's findings was that the success of the Vision 2020 program was desired, insofar as most Trinidadians wanted a higher standard of living. There was a disparity, however from the onset of the program between those who identified as Afro-Trinidadians and those who identified as Indo-Trinidadians, with the former group expressing more confidence in the program than the latter.

Despite the breadth of this program, my informants leveled critiques primarily at three key issues: crime; infrastructure; and governance. Other initiatives such as 'developing innovative people', or 'nurturing a caring society', were understood to be the sorts of things that 'should' be said by a government, more slogan than substance. My informants' criticisms were not ambiguous. They thought the plan sounded good, but the future could only be built if the government dealt effectively with crime, lack of governance and lack of government transparency, misguided infrastructure investment and what one

informant described as an “overall government culture of corruption and mismanagement”.

The most common complaints expressed by my informants involved the lack of a sense of true priorities by the government. Most derided are the physical manifestations of this particular vision of modernity. Large skyscrapers, office buildings and the Prime Minister’s new multi-million dollar residence compound were cited as examples of misguided priorities, monuments to development and progress that overlook more pressing problems such as crime, poverty and ineffective schooling and healthcare. My informants would tell me that the ruling People’s National Movement (PNM) was placing the country on a path to ruin as investments in future human resources in the country are disregarded in favour of ostentatious and short-sighted projects.

In 2009, Winston Dookeran, leader of the ‘non-racial’ Congress of the People party was reported by the media as making the following statements :

The issues of returning governance to the people of this land and having our institutions account to our people and our nation is our primary responsibility to protect our democracy and our freedom in our land. For almost 20 years those who have been in charge of the leadership of this country have either formed themselves into cabals or cartels in order to run against the people...If you were to preside over the forces of underdevelopment like the present Government is doing, we the people must make the verdict clear that we have elected you not to preside over the forces of underdevelopment but to preside over the forces of development.” He said there was the belief that high growth rate and high buildings were a substitute for real development in T&T. “Development can take place without high growth

rates if it is based on fundamental precepts of governance on one hand and on the requirement of our people to hold our governments accountable. Where we all fail as a people, is because today, we refuse to hold our governments accountable for what they have done. It is clear much work has to be done.” Dookeran added. He said development could not be imported. He said: “It is not simply a matter of high buildings, grandiose schemes, satisfying the whims and fancies of someone who does not understand the difference between development and geology.” “We need therefore to go deeper into our development challenge but we now face a more difficult situation for the very resilience of small economies like ours are being put to the test.” “Even there our governments have said, don’t worry because the recovery is coming and we will be back to normal...when we were going down, they said don’t worry we are not going down, and when we went down, they said don’t worry we will come back up. It is the act of a geologist talking about oil, not a leader talking about developing the nation,” Dookeran said (Alexander 2009).

Dookeran’s rhetoric is careful and pointed, addressing many of the same issues of governance, infrastructure and leadership that were identified as issues amongst my informants. His reference to ‘cabals’ or ‘cartels’ refers to common and widespread allegations of government officials involved in corruption, and the history of the government’s connections with those involved directly and indirectly in the international trade of narcotics. Similarly, the reference to active underdevelopment is a condemnation of projects such as CEPEP and other patronage projects which work to undermine the work ethic of the populace at

large. Finally, and most clearly, is his condemnation of the large scale construction projects done in the name of ‘infrastructure development’.⁴²

The criticisms direct at the Vision 2020 plan are grounded in criticism of the ruling party, regardless of the political affiliation of my informants. Those criticisms in turn were phrased and expressed in a way that is both classed and racialized and which reinforces existing stereotypes about the ill-educated, over-spending, short term focused Afro-Trinidadian and makes implicit comparisons to the educated, thrifty, farsighted Indo-Trinidadian middle class. As I outlined in chapter 2, this rhetoric echoes the distinction between a transcendent and a transient orientation towards the future, a distinction which is recursively connected with questions of race in Trinidad, but never in a simple linear way. Critical speech uses tropes of race, and these tropes have performative qualities which then constitute racial distinction as an ongoing issue in debates over the nature of progress and of the future.

The economy was flourishing during my time in the field, before the global economic slowdown of fourth quarter of 2008. Given the internationally high prices for oil and natural gas, Trinidad was doing extremely well financially. Even so, my informants believed that this windfall would not be used prudently, through government investment in human resources or fighting crime, but rather

⁴² One of the most common targets of criticism, often held up as an example of misguided priorities and a flawed vision of the future, was the building of a large new presidential compound on the outskirts of Port of Spain. My informants pointed to its lavishness, its cost overruns, its limited usefulness as evidence that the government vision of the future was going in the wrong direction.

would be flaunted, in a manner most commonly associated with the worst stereotypes regarding transience. Murder rates continued to increase during that period, and while the number of reported kidnappings were on the decline, upper class Trinidadians were still extremely concerned about their safety, so seeing money spent on things like the prime minister's large and "garish" home was upsetting. These large physical structures were most often used as a touchstone from which other worries about the future were expressed. The implication was that the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian government would spend precious government resources in stereotypically negative Afro-Trinidadian (or transient) ways. The crime situation is here held in tension with the nation-making project of Vision 2020 that was put forth by the PNM. The PNM plan includes visions for a 'Creole' future in which all Trinidadians are united and similar. This vision is undermined by the reality of increased class based and *de facto* race based isolation.

These criticisms are at the heart of the way my informants talk about the future. In what follows, I examine the narratives of three informants who occupy various places on the spectrum from upper middle class to elite.

Raymond:

I met Raymond through a mutual friend. He is an author, playwright, and a former journalist and political commentator. He possesses cultural capital in the sense of Bourdieu's (1986) use of the term, holding a doctorate as well as an extensive network of connections that he has amassed over the years in media,

politics, and the arts networks. He was eager to tell me about his frustration with Trinidad and Tobago's government and his opinions about what his and the country's future might hold. He felt that he in particular had little to hope for from Trinidad's future and was, at the time of our meeting, considering emigration to Canada. He appears Indo-Trinidadian, and while he lives in a wealthy suburb outside of Port of Spain, he is from the rural central region of the country. In the weeks leading up to the busy carnival season, he found some time for an interview at a North American casual dining restaurant chain located in a shopping mall.

Raymond's opinion is similar to that of many upper class Trinidadians who have had considerable experience overseas. He thought that crime and education were amongst the most pressing concerns for Trinidad. He thought 'most' Trinidadians are out of touch with their expectations of how Trinidad 'should' be. He presents himself as a realist, as someone who does not long for a rosy-hued (and largely fictitious) past in which children roamed the streets and there was no crime, but rather hopes that Trinidad will become cosmopolitan like any other large first world country, where provided that reasonable precautions are met, one could be assured of living a relatively crime free life. While he felt that crime is out of hand, he told me he still went to places that most 'bourgeois people' of his class position would not go because he knew how to carry himself.

Despite feeling better able to move about the country than most of his race and class, Raymond told me he had trouble with sleep and anxiety, something he

attributed directly to the crime situation. For Raymond, Trinidad's future is looking particularly bleak. In his opinion, the problem is not just the current government's misguided actions. He also takes issue with the way, in his words "the PNM and UNC appeal to race to instill fear and hate". In particular, his own experiences with Trinidad's "highly racial health system, in which patients", according to him, "are treated differently based on their race", was the final straw. He believes, as do most of my informants, that there is little substantial difference in the plans of any political party, only in their capacity to follow through on those plans for the future.

Our discussion began with Raymond's anger towards the systems of political patronage and the corruption inherent in CEPEP, and moved towards his concerns for the viability of the future economic and social success of Trinidad.

Geer: I'm so fascinated by this whole CEPEP and URP stuff going on in Laventille, with the accusations they are giving contracts to gang leaders.

Raymond: It's true, it's not an accusation, it's true. What they should do, is stop any pretense of work and develop a welfare system. Give you a card, and come every week. If you want to work, come and work. If you don't want to work, go home and sit down.

Geer: Instead of giving contracts?

Raymond: Exactly, because it destroys the work ethic. Because that CEPEP URP thing filters up to services, to government ministries. Then, the absurdity, is so glaring, and on one hand you have a labour shortage and on the other hand you have a hundred thousand young men sitting on the side of the road and doing nothing. **This is going to come to a head. Very soon. Within ten years they are going to have to import mechanics, electronics**

technicians, because everybody will have migrated. Everybody who can do it will have migrated, or they will be locked out of it. To get jobs you must be of a certain political standing. It's really, I mean, and all of this could have been solved by getting the PNM out and putting the COP in. I mean, I supported them but this is not a blind statement. A highly technocratic leader, accomplished academics, and so on.

Raymond is active politically and socially. He teaches at a small college where he feels he is undervalued and underpaid. In his spare time, and for extra money, he writes speeches for a high level appointed official in the PNM government. I reacted with surprise when he told me so, and wondered how he could quite literally create the compelling discourse that he finds so abhorrent. He shook his head and responded with a joke, "Like any good whore you can buy my time but not my heart, the money is good. What else can I do"?

Later in the conversation I asked more specifically about his plans for emigration.

Raymond: A couple of things. I spent a couple of years in New York, hoping to immigrate, I got a work permit and so on, in the mid nineties. I came back in '97. It was a Caribbean magazine, the guy, he was a hustler who promised people things and just ripped them off. But I had an advantage over the other people who he ripped off, he would say 'come and I'll get you a work permit' and I realized it doesn't work that way. Not even the power to get the permit, but the power to get the lawyer to get the forms. The guy's not even set up for that. I'd gotten a fellowship for a very famous writer's colony in New York. They have a really good reputation. So, they wrote me a recommendation. So there was

this work permit that you could get, where you don't have to advertise you just have to prove you are an outstanding applicant and you get some famous people to say so, so I got some people from the writer's colony, and so I got the work visa. So I was able to stay in New York for a couple of years. I realized there, well it was just a work permit. And I worked as a freelance writer and editor. It was a grind job. I wasn't doing what I wanted to do, and you know, the issue of residency, because there is only so much you could do on a work permit. I had to get married because there was no other way. So, I came back, you know, because I was fed up, so I came back here, started to work in journalism again, and I looked around the country. Back then [under the predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported United National Congress] they were good, they were doing things the economy was changing, people were starting to get more business, more capitalist oriented, which is not necessarily a good thing.

But you know I went back, I did my master's at UWI [The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad]; I started to teach at the college, and back then I was still like, you see ok, It's difficult for me, eh? I had won a playwriting prize in 2002, and couldn't get the play put on. Poetry: couldn't get it published and people keep stealing my ideas. So it's like, when you have a particular orientation and the newspapers really did a great job on me when I worked for them. When I wrote articles they would just publish letters saying 'He's a racist, he's a racist he's a racist'. So I got stuck. So I couldn't move in any direction. I had more freedom, but playwright, poet, novelist, nothing happened. I published my book here, but the publisher all he did was pay the editor and the book desiring I had to do the editing myself. So

he's like barely a publisher, but at least he published it. And he hasn't done anything to sell it. So I sold some by forcing students to buy, putting it on the reading list and so on. So the point is, why I want to leave is that, Trinidad is nice is you want to make money and you have nothing in your head.

There is no stimulation, I mean now, right at this moment, at my college, we've been traditionally badly paid at there. We recently got a salary increase, a substantial one. Which still has us just below what tertiary level education should be at. But it's substantial, so now, with the money I'm making, I can say, I can see how people can think that I'm comfortable here, I can buy a nice car....I can't buy a house. But then when I look at how the society is collapsing around me. Because in a few years, when the price of oil drops, they are destroying our capacity to feed ourselves.

Agriculture is in serious decline. We import almost everything, food, everything. So, if the price of oil collapses, if they find a fuel substitute in five years, one, you've gotten people locked into a level of consumption that is fundamentally unsustainable, you've increased racial hatred to stay in power, you have renewed the whole thing of blaming Indians for everything that goes wrong. So when you combine that and you take away the money, what's going to happen? The police service HAS collapsed. We don't have a police service. The prime minister's guards are private security. The health sector HAS collapsed. The education sector HAS collapsed.

For Raymond, the Vision 2020 Plan simply will not solve the current problems because those in government do not have the will or the capacity to turn things around, especially given the practice of both major parties using racist language to

blame one ethnic group or another for the country's problems. Further, he believes there has been an entrenchment of the sort of ineffective management at the ministry level which makes effective change impossible. He contrasts his experience overseas.

When I go to New York or London or wherever, I take the bus, go to a book shop, go to a library, walk around, have lunch in a nice inexpensive restaurant. And you know, the impression that I get is that, wait a minute, I don't have to think that someone is going to shoot me any minute, and the police won't do anything. It's an ordered society, so that matters to me. To me, the kind of ontology here that makes people not only tolerate but endorse this society is nothing...it's masochistic! It's madness! It's utter insanity!

Raymond's narrative is enlightening. He indicates not only his personal frustration, but his fears for the future of the country. These fears have culminated in a desire to emigrate and seek work in Canada. Given his master's degree and doctorate, I spoke to him briefly about the difficult job situation in academia in Canada. He listened patiently and then revealed that he intended to find a manual labour job in the oil sands of Alberta rather than attempt to break into the Canadian academy. He is aware that he will likely face great difficulty in finding a job in his field in Canada, even with his extensive experience in Trinidad. For him, the alternative, of staying in what he feels to be demeaning and depressing positions, is too great. He feels Trinidad is on the precipice of a great decline. He wishes that the third-party Congress of the People had been more successful in the 2007 election. Since they had been so soundly defeated,

gaining 23% of the vote and no seats in parliament, he feels as though the status quo will remain. His future is not, he feels, Trinidad's future. This is one extreme of how my informants imagine their tomorrows.

Kirk:

I interviewed Kirk at his home near the trendy and elite restaurant district in Port of Spain. At nearly 70, he was semi-retired, having worked his whole adult life as a teacher at a prestigious private secondary school in the country. Now he spends his days working part time in publishing and writing on his own. A frequent seniors' games participant, he is fit and energetic, espousing the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. I came to meet Kirk through a mutual friend who knew I was particularly interested in what I was then loosely defining as 'return migrants'. In truth, Kirk fits more in the category of 'educational migrant'. He had gone to Canada in the late 1960s and pursued an undergraduate degree, returned to Trinidad briefly and married before leaving for Jamaica to begin medical school. The separation from his wife proved too difficult, and Kirk returned to take up teaching. Unlike the others described in this section, Kirk falls under what I call upper middle class status. He has his own home, three children who are all highly educated and a post-retirement career that sees him meeting with high level government officials locally and internationally. We met in the barred-in verandah of his home. His wife, also retired, entered occasionally to bring us refreshments. Kirk is soft-spoken and projects an air of kindness and responsibility. He says it is his duty to enlighten those who live in a 'backward'

way by virtue of not being exposed to the 'right' sort of living. In the following continuous excerpt from our interview, he begins to tell me of his concerns.

Kirk: Crime is one of the biggest problems.

Geer: I was under the impression that this area is relatively safe?

Kirk: I don't think so, you know. It's relatively safe in the sense that people go to sleep early, but it's not safe. We have this set of burglar proofing [bars on windows, doors and any other open spaces in the home] because of the crime. We have people stealing everything. I lost my car in front of the road. I was held up in front of the gate last year.

Geer: Were you trying to come into the yard?

Kirk: No, I was going out at four in the morning to give a friend a drop to the airport. And this guy came up to me and held me up in the dark. But again, paying attention in school served a good purpose, because when I was at college I learned karate, and it was the first time I had to use it. Immediately it came back, I caught him in his throat, and then in his privates, and then he was on the ground, and he started to beg. But, if he had a gun he would have shot me, but he had his cell phone he pushed it into my back. I felt it. So, and knowing what crime is, you either give in, or react, and my first thing was to react, so I reacted.

Geer: My goodness! Excellent reactions! So, you can't leave anything out in the yard?

Kirk: Yeah, and that's why I have a big dog. The dog is at the back. We can't leave anything out. People steal it.

Geer: I'm up in Trincity, people have washers and dryers in their yard, and tool sets just sitting in their open garage—but they have dogs too.

Kirk: Well, it's not that bad, it's certain areas, but only last night I heard two people were killed...so the murder rate has passed three fifty now [we spoke in early 2008]. And I don't think we should have so much. If you ask for my experience, what I think is lacking is two things, one family life and two, education. If people should get more involved in their family life, and they get their children to be educated, there wouldn't be murders and crimes and those sorts of things. Those are the two things. The third part now, and what we need to get these two things going, is administration and implementation of administrative services. That's what we need. Not just having the money and having laws and all of this...*actually* implementing them. We don't have, people don't care about anything.

Geer: You've been here in this home 28 years? Did you always have burglar proofing?

Kirk: No, when we came it was all open, in fact when we came I said we bought it for \$150 000. The house was in shambles and through the years both my wife and I built it up, and now it is worth three million dollars.

Geer: That's a sound investment. So, did you, obviously, at four o'clock in the morning you went out you got robbed, would that have been an issue twenty years ago?

Kirk: No! All here was open, but not again. It's a bit unsafe, it's taking a chance, actually. Because if you should hear a noise, you always have to look out, we have a camera in the house that we use. To see the outside, we put it on as soon as it gets dark, so you can see what is going on. And then we have the dog loose so we have an idea of what to expect. We have to leave the lights on all the time.

Geer: I'd bet it reflects in your energy bills too.

Kirk: All these things are costing. So that's what the government needs to do. **They need to be more caring and implementing whatever laws or administration they have, not just having the money and talking.** Because there is definitely now fast division in the people. You have an upper level and a lower level, the medium is going one way or the other. Those people who are middle class, it is being divided. Half going down and the other half going back up. So there is not much of a middle class left. And I do not understand how come people can live because the cost of living is very high also. And it's not a matter of what they can do, it's what the government should do, because the government has the option to assist, especially in cost of living. And they are not doing anything much about it. For instance, since, ok, when the VAT [Value Added Tax] was introduced, the ...

Geer: That was 1989? Or so?

Kirk: What I am saying is that when it was introduced, it was introduced because it has no money. Now we have money, why can't the VAT be negated? It should be removed completely, because what are they doing with the money? Where is it going? Because for instance when the previous government was in power, they were able to build homes.

Me: During the time that the UNC [predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported party] was in power?

Kirk: Well I didn't want to call names, but the UNC built schools with less money, they build stadiums, they built an airport...now we have so much money, what have we done with it? With two hundred billion dollars? [It should be noted that the Leader of the UNC and his associates are on trial for massive corruption with regards to that airport]

Geer: Well, the prime minister has a lovely new house.

Kirk: This is what I am saying! You are not implementing administrative services, you are being selfish. Yes, we have five Superpharms [I was told repeatedly that these large North American style pharmacies are owned by a prominent member of the People's National Movement, and alleged to have been illicitly funded via the party]? Where did the money go? That's where it is going, to SuperPharm.

Geer: One of the reasons that I found the last election so fascinating, and I was looking at the Congress of the people

Kirk: This is the time that they should have won, and they didn't.

Geer: They still came up with fifteen or twenty per cent of the vote.

Kirk: They did quite well, absolutely...actually they got almost half of the votes that the PNM got, they got 148, PNM got 299. This is Port of Spain South [that is the name of the electoral district in which he lives].

Geer: So this has long been a PNM stronghold then?

Kirk: Always. This is another thing, this is why I said again we need people to be educated. And the family life. If people have a good family life, and they are educated, they would not have this backwards thoughts or trends of thoughts.

Geer: Where you only "vote your race"?

Kirk: That you only go backwards and they are not improving. And it can reduce the crime. Because Laventille and Belmont and Diego Martin, and all these places that are BACKWARD, and they keep doing the same thing over and over again because they are not self sufficient, and they are dependent.

And if government should make them self sufficient and independent they would not get votes! This is what the thirty per cent of the upper class did. They are self sufficient and independent, and therefore they didn't care about voting, they had no reason to vote.

Kirk's narrative touches on many of the same issues as Raymond's. His level of anxiety with regard to crime is quite high, and while he will not admit to being afraid, he does admit, and his home space shows, that he feels he must be constantly vigilant. Kirk also believes that had the man who robbed him had a gun, he would definitely have used it to shoot him. Kirk, and others like him no longer believe that simple robbery exists—perpetrators are assumed to be violent beyond reason. Beyond Kirk's feelings on the corruption, fiscal mis-management and strong belief in the role of the family, what is interesting to note is that of his three children, only one remains in Trinidad and Tobago, and only under duress, as family commitments prevent him from going overseas. He misses his children overseas, but argues that given the state of the government and the prevailing attitudes towards things like health, family and education, it is better for them, in the long term, to be overseas and to return only to visit himself and his wife.

Derek and Surojini:

Derek left Trinidad as a young adult with young children and his wife, and became, in many respects the 'immigrant success story'. He did well for himself and attained a comfortable middle class life in southern Ontario for over a decade before returning to Trinidad. He owned his own home, had children in extra-

curricular activities, and wanted for little materially. He describes his children as ‘fully integrated’ into North American society. Derek has a commanding and avuncular presence and has built his own successful business since returning to Trinidad with his wife. He notes that when he first emigrated to Canada, he made a concerted effort to assimilate himself and his young children into what he calls ‘mainstream’ Canadian society, spending little social time or business effort on recruiting from the Caribbean community in the area where he lived. Still, he returned nearly annually to Trinidad, with his children, and found that the desire to return was always strong.

Surojini and I spent an enormous amount of time together and she, along with Marilyn, provided some of my deepest insights into Trinidad. Because I had nearly unlimited access to Surojini, I never interviewed her formally. For that reason there is no long passage of narrative accompanying her experiences as with the other informants in this section. Instead I take care to present bits of her own back-story and excerpts of things I noted that she had told me over the nearly one year of our friendship. Surojini and I have remained in contact, frequently chatting about politics and our respective lives. It was on her verandah that I met many members of Trinidad’s intellectual, business and political elites and with her that I toured some of the least explored corners of the country. She is a medical professional with several post graduate degrees and strong ties to politics and politicians. She serves formally and informally on various political and other boards. On many occasions we spent time driving around the country just to take

in the sights. Surojini fits easily into the elite of Trinidad, both financially and socially. She has ties to the professional elite classes as well as the political elite classes and the financial backing to afford a luxurious though not ostentatious life. Surojini loves Trinidad, she would tell me often, and told me she has never seriously contemplated leaving.

What draws together the experiences of these two individuals, loosely tied together through a shared class status? Like many who occupy these class positions and who choose to remain in Trinidad, they have rapidly changing goals and hopes for their own children's future. These hopes are based on their understanding of the risks of daily life in Trinidad and their sense of how these same issues will play out in the future. I had asked Derek initially for between one and two hours of his time for an interview. He explained that due to his schedule, the most he could spare was an hour, and asked me to meet him at the airport while he waited to board a plane to Barbados for business. He was friendly and avuncular in the way many of his position were, calling me 'Baby' and 'Darling' and seeming entirely unsure as to the value of the research but willing to entertain my questions. He told me his life story in broad strokes. Born poor with an absentee father, he explains that his drive and capacity for hard work and education came from his mother. Derek explains that while he is financially successful, he has no desire for his children to return to Trinidad as he did. Derek's children were young when they emigrated to Canada, and despite the fact that they returned faithfully to Trinidad each year to visit friends and family,

Derek expresses doubt that they will make the choice to return definitively to Trinidad. For his daughter in particular, he feels that there are only extremely limited opportunities, and that even though her qualifications might provide her with a lucrative job, the tenuous control on the crime situation and the marked reduction in freedom of movement, particularly for women, would make a Trinidadian lifestyle untenable.

Geer: Do you think either of your children would settle in Trinidad?

Derek: I don't think so, my son is happy in the United States now, my daughter has been in and out but has settled in the Cayman Islands. I don't think she will come back. They have evolved to have more of an international flavour, though they like Trinidad, they like the environment here. There are a lot of things they would not readjust to completely. They come here on vacation or to spend time, but they would not be able to enjoy the freedom of movement here that they enjoy elsewhere. The crime is just too out of control for their safety and security. Unfortunately that is the reality here. They are young, their expectations are much higher. You see, I am tolerant because what I want out of life is the people, not the system. Now I have to tolerate the system when it doesn't work the way it should. And I'm willing to tolerate that because quality of life for me here is exactly what I want.

Geer: I suppose it is nice that you have the means to change your mind?

Derek: Exactly, I just leave and go somewhere else. I have good friends here and abroad that share the same point of view that I do and share the same interests in life and are happy and that's it, I don't want much more. You know?

Geer: So, it's Trinidad for good for you?

Geer: Well, up to now. I don't think that I would want to live through a long winter as a choice now. I could spend time, but I wouldn't want to through cold country because in the winter I was never into the winter sports, and then, if you have to stay indoors for all these months. And then you give up a lot of the outdoor love which I prefer and I like. So I spend time, but I would not live I don't think in a big country. I like the opportunities that it represent, I like the facilities, um...I like the services, but for me, the people content, because of my network. Plus, you drive around Trinidad or the Caribbean, you can associate memories with different experiences growing up, and to me that's important. When you are in a big country everything is so unfamiliar. That's good for a while, because...the novelty, you know, like a tourist. But when you settle in and you can't really connect with a particular environment that you have or experience. And people are just...you miss the smell and you miss the unity that is part of who we are. So, I welcome the opportunity because I have grown as a result, the kids benefitted, you know, but I welcome the opportunity to come back to. Some people say you're stupid, you were doing well here, you did well here you left, you did well there, you left.

Derek's story reveals the ways in which he understands migration as a means to fulfill his larger desires for a lifestyle that is in line with his class interests. When it comes to his children, particularly his daughter, he is unwilling for them to make choices similar to those he has made if the trade-off is a reduction in quality of life. His children, both of whom have post-graduate degrees, would have little trouble finding high-paying jobs in Trinidad, particularly with Derek's network of

connections and associates. However, he feels that Trinidad's crime situation is such that while he and his wife he can circumvent or avoid most of the pitfalls associated with avoiding crime, his children should not have to make similar concessions. Whereas once he might have liked his own children to assist in the business, now he recognizes the difficulties that they would face. This mindset is common among many with whom I spoke. As successful elite individuals, they are able to manage and make small concessions in their day to day lives to feel some semblance of security. However, when it comes to the lives of their children, they are unwilling for them to make similar concessions. For that reason they are more willing to mobilize their capital for their children to remain overseas rather than have them miss out on the freedoms not available in Trinidad.

Unlike Derek, Surojini never emigrated from Trinidad. She and her husband remained in the country throughout their entire lives barring a few trips for education. Even when things were quite bad financially in the 1980s, she and her husband did well. They enjoy frequent trips overseas for shopping or to visit friends and their home is often filled with overseas guests and friends that she has made through her international consultant positions or through other academic avenues. On several occasions, Surojini stated that she hoped her children, a boy and girl, both of whom were in university in Canada, would not return to Trinidad after their education was complete. Her children had left together, though her daughter was not yet of university age, after her son was carjacked years earlier.

Surojini and her husband had no interest in emigrating themselves. Indeed as the economy flourished, she and her husband thrived financially. However, she felt that for her children, the concessions in lifestyle were too great. They would not be content, as she has become, to avoid driving alone after dark, to restricting the bulk of their socializing to their own and other friends' homes, and being so constantly vigilant to avoid kidnapping, carjacking and home invasion. She missed them dearly, and knew that with their overseas education and their family's connections, both would find good paying jobs easily in Trinidad. However, she felt that the concessions to the threat violence would be too great for them to make.

These were not always the family's plans. Indeed her two children, separated by two years, were sent overseas together. Her son was of university age, and was ready to go, but her daughter was still finishing high school at a renowned private school in the country. When her son was carjacked only a few streets away from their home in a very wealthy neighbourhood in the hills overlooking Port of Spain, the family's plans changed quickly. Her son enrolled in university as planned and Surojini and her husband employed their financial and social resources to enroll their daughter in a prestigious private boarding school in Ontario where she finished the remainder of her secondary education. Her children were frightened by the crime, particularly her daughter Grace, who, she said told her "Imagine, Mommy, if I had gone with my Andrew [her brother]? Me with my hot mouth! I probably would have given him lip and gotten us

killed!” Neither Surojini nor her children felt safe and barring annual trips home during school holidays, neither child has recently spent any considerable time in the country. Surojini and her husband have not gone so far as to tell their children that they can not return permanently to Trinidad, and indeed, they keep each child abreast of important developments in each of their chosen fields in case they might want to return to Trinidad. However, they are also investing in real estate in North America for their children, and calling on their substantial North American network of friends and acquaintances to assist and provide guidance for their children while overseas. Surojini believes that her children will likely become Canadian citizens, but wants to give them every opportunity to succeed in either country. She and her family are pursuing dual migration strategies to attempt to assure their future. Surojini and her husband recognize that they will miss out on several important moments of their children’s lives, but feel that sacrifice is less important than the children’s safety.

One day I asked Surojini in jest, “What about the good that Grace and Andrew can do in Trinidad? If all the rich people’s educated children go, who will run this country?” She responded that if the people like her children stay, they do not have the ability to change the corrupt system, and even if they do, what is the use if they can not have a normal life? It was too much of a sacrifice. She reminded me very much of a parent refusing to send their child to war.

Conclusion:

For Surojini and Derek, and many others like them with whom I spoke, their goals for their children have shifted as their prognostications for the future have become increasingly bleak. That they do not believe that the crime situation will improve has made it so that each employs their considerable economic resources to ensure the best possible life for their children overseas. Unlike economic migrants, indeed even unlike Derek, who left Trinidad with his family in order to maintain an upper middle class standing during recession times in Trinidad during the late 1980s and into the 1990s, migration strategies among these Trinidadians are changing in relation to the current uncertainties surrounding crime and the country's future. Children of elites, like Derek's and Surojini's children have long gone overseas for post-secondary education. However, unlike middle class economic migrants, these children have traditionally come back to take up the reins of family financial and social interests. By contrast, middle class migrants have generally placed value in permanent emigration, as their social networks do not allow them the same degree of upward mobility in their country of origin. For people like Derek and Surojini, the vision of the future, so completely contradictory to that of the official government 'Vision 2020' has engendered new ways of thinking about their own family's future. Surojini and Derek are both unwilling to leave Trinidad, and are both thriving financially, but are unwilling to have their children take the same

risks and make the same concessions to crime as they are willing to do. In the next chapter, I speculate as to the possible long-term effects of this pattern.

Chapter 10- Conclusion

Dear Lord:

I know that I haven't talked to you much, but this past year you have taken away:-

My favourite actor, Patrick Swayze, my favourite actress Farah Fawcett, my favourite musician Michael Jackson, and my favourite cricketer, Alec Bedser.

I just wanted to let you know that my favourite prime minister is Patrick Manning.

- Joke making the rounds by email during the 2010 election in Trinidad

With the sudden call of an election in Trinidad halfway through Prime Minister Manning's term, my informants were excited and dubious. Trinidadians have a complex and very active relationship with history, in at least two senses. They connect, at a personal as well as a social level, with Trinidad's racial history, locating their own experience within their understandings of that history. At the same time, with an intimacy which can strike outsiders with its intensity, they have a clear and passionate sense of being part of the making of history. They know both that they are their pasts and that their future is theirs to make. This awareness makes the social and political field in Trinidad a site of ongoing contention, negotiation, and re-imagining which seems to me to be at the very heart of Trinidadian identity and culture. 'Now', 'before', and 'imagine' form a cybernetic, a recursive feed back loop, of political possibility and cultural production in ways this text has attempted to decipher, while never losing sight of

the ways Trinidadian politics and culture remain an unfinished project of nation making.

In this work I have drawn methodological direction and inspiration from Tsing (2001, 2005). She argues that the focus of responsible anthropological inquiry should be the zones of 'awkward engagement', those sites where disparate interests, uneven historical processes and the multiple mechanics of power collide to create a space into which people and ideas flow. To accomplish that goal, my project, borrowing and building on Marcus (1995), has been, in a sense, multi-sited, moving across both time and place. In order to look ethnographically at crime and fear of crime, notions of safety and their effect on upper middle class and elite Trinidadians, my analysis used oral life history, discussion of the history of race relations from the time of the global trade in African slaves and the importation of Indian indentured workers, and a review of electoral politics and government police from Trinidad's Independence to the present. I situated the analysis in contemporary and historical processes by which Trinidadian upper classes determine and define safety, safe behaviour, and risk. I explored the global trade in narcotics, for example, not at the global level, but at the local and found both that the narcotics trade, and its corollary trade in weapons has fed the amount and severity of gang violence in the country (Townsend 2009). Perhaps more importantly, my informants are convinced that the correlation between drugs and increased violence is directly related. Given those sets of beliefs, from an anthropological perspective, the lived reality for upper middle and upper class

Trinidadians *is* one of facing the local effects of the international drug trade. Upper middle and upper class Trinidadians acknowledge that along with oil and gas money, the ‘good’ of globalization, they are subject to the ‘bad’: the increased violence that comes with endemic gang and drug related violence. My goal has been to interpret what these issues, these collisions ‘really mean’ for individuals on the ground, so that I might unpack how these Trinidadians understand and organize their lives as practices of being safe and of being Trinidadian. Understanding this interpenetration of ‘safe’ and ‘Trinidadian’ is of key importance in understanding the ongoing and always shifting nation-making project in which politics collides with race and class interests in the constitution of visions of the future.

Trinidad represents an ideal base from which to explore these issues because of the particular ‘collision’ of forces in which upper classes find themselves entangled. Over a decade of strong economic growth has meant the upper middle and upper classes have thrived and expanded. Trinidad’s geographic position has also made it ideal for the transshipment of drugs such as cocaine from South America and weapons from North America and Western Europe. As a result, there has been a rapid increase in gang activity, a proliferation of weapons and attendant increases in violent crime (Townsend, 2009). During the period of my fieldwork upper class Trinidadians reported previously unknown fear of crimes that were never before considered a ‘real’ threat, such as: kidnapping, car-jacking, robbery and home invasion. These issues have produced

new forms of behaviour which have changed their day to day lives considerably from a time marked as 'before'.

My goal here has been to explore how safety and fear of crime are conjured and performed by a particular group of people at a particular moment in time and to understand that conjuring in relation to the nation's own history. Tsing talks about the notion of 'conjuring' in relation to global financial processes. She discusses the ways in which dramatic performances by entrepreneurs conjure images of wealth and riches as a lure, a suspension of disbelief which entices investors (2005:66). In their engagements with fear of crime, through performances of both fear and safety, I have argued that upper class Trinidadians conjure both that which is to be feared, and that which defines safety. They imagine, negotiate, and perform a praxis of victimhood through which they constitute their daily lives, and their sense of the future. Through those negotiations, they also conjure and re-invigorate historical racialized and classed stereotypes about the alleged perpetrators of violence. My work here demonstrates how 'victimhood' has become indivisibly connected with upper class self-definition, and so becomes self-reinforcing. This complicates the discussion of class in Trinidad, and may also resonate with discussions of class in other nations such as Guyana, and Fiji, where two large minorities utilize race as a marker of inclusion and stigma in the ongoing nation-making process (Jayawardena 1980).

I have shown that in Trinidad, talk of all sorts conjures the 'bad man', a composite stereotype distilled from a combination of race, location, and class characteristics. This talk is a dramatic performance which these groups both produce, reproduce and consume. In this performance, everything, but particularly children, women and possessions must be protected from this imagined stranger. As I have argued throughout this text, the dangerous stranger is an amalgam of real threats and imagined risks. This is neither to say that upper class Trinidadians do not face actual threat, nor that areas in which the 'bad man' is purported to live are not disproportionately affected by crime. The actions of these elite Trinidadians are not irrational; but the cycle by which that which is feared is conjured and then avoided is mutually interdependent. The 'bad man's' creation is an untidy, contradictory collaboration of disparate fear.

The ways in which space is created and used, political discourse, particular understandings of history, the near past and even individual and collective visions of the future are informed and determined to some extent by this conjuring. The 'bad man' and the creation of safe space and behaviour in relation to him are co-dependent and help determine and influence the way that all lower classes in Trinidad are understood. One exists because of the other, at the same time that the creation of space comes to rely on the imagining of the 'bad man'. His construction draws upon local understandings of place and crime, the regional trade in narcotics and weapons, and historical stereotypes of race and class. Each of these competing understandings, each opposing and intersecting

interest and motivation take a non-linear path and find root in the common form of the 'bad man' and the spaces from which he can be excluded. The 'bad man' and safe space become symbiotic, perhaps even parasitic, each on the other. Tsing argues that "conjuring is always culturally specific, creating a magic show of peculiar meanings, symbols and practices" (2005: 58). This thesis has been an attempt to trace out the multiple and sometimes contradictory connections from which this 'magic' emerges in the Trinidadian context.

To do this, I began with a discussion the details of a typical day in the life of Marilyn and her family in order to illustrate how the conjoined imaginings of danger and safety have become increasingly linked to family networks. Marilyn's son's girlfriend Sylvie cannot attend school in the evenings safely without the assistance of at times both her family and the extended family of her boyfriend. Family networks in Trinidad cohere and tighten in order to maintain and enforce safety and to assist kin in avoiding risk. For individuals like Marilyn, these networks are used to attempt to ensure safety, by creating envelopes of protection in which the entire family network plays a part.

Integral to these practices is the cultivation of a dynamic mental map (Lupton 1999b) which charts safe and unsafe places, as well as prescribes appropriate behaviours and ways of being in those places. In these maps, geography is mapped and re-mapped and features such as time of day, recent news events, and individual characteristics of people present or who might be venturing into spaces are all imputed, calculated and recalculated in an attempt to

manage potential risks, to avoid criminal acts and to mitigate fear. I have located family and other networks on these mental maps in order to show how social geography is an expression of local and even individualized theories of social trust.

I have drawn a distinction between crime and fear of crime and note that crime events such as murder are held as benchmarks of the state of the nation even by those upper class individuals who are least likely to be directly affected by crime at all, let alone murdered. As I noted those most often murdered are young, poor, Afro-Trinidadian men who are either personally gang or drug implicated or socially connected with others who are involved in the drug trade. The large increase in the rate of kidnappings which targeted upper middle and upper class Trinidadians in 2005 had almost disappeared by 2007, but the fear related to those kidnappings still permeated actions surrounding crime avoidance. There is no single or simple relationship between crime as acts and crime as idea, and in this respect Trinidad is certainly not unique.

A quick review of pre-Independence history shows that a race-focused distinction between groups was a key part of colonial governance. My discussion of electoral history has shown that Trinidad has been consumed with similar race infused splits politically since the time of Independence. By the 1990's elections in Trinidad were complex draws between the People's National Movement, supported overwhelmingly by Afro-Trinidadians identified persons and the United National Congress, which has historically been supported by Indo-

Trinidadian identified persons. I examined, in particular, the elections of 1981 and 1986. In these elections, a unified, racially and ideologically diverse opposition defeated the predominantly Afro-Trinidadian supported People's National Movement (PNM). I hold these elections up as historically significant, and possibly a clue to the contemporary political situation in Trinidad. In 2007, a third, non-racial party emerged in Trinidad and unified both upper middle and upper class voters across the racial spectrum, and attracted the support of other small ideological and racial minority groups disenchanted with race-based voting in general and PNM rule in particular. The party was the major target of the official opposition and predominantly Indo-Trinidadian supported United National Congress Alliance (UNC-A).

Analyses of electoral tactics during the 2007 election from the UNC-A, PNM and COP parties, but in particular of the language used by politicians representing the UNC-A show that class as a measure of authenticity was introduced into elections rhetoric in order to sway those upper class voters perceived to have been lost to the third party COP. In particular, tropes alluding to slavery and to race and class in the 2007 election served to further embolden the informants with whom I worked to support the rhetorically non-racial COP.

This emergence of a non-racial third party echoes the 1981 Trinidadian election in which the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR) was formed from disparate racialized and ideologically diverse groups united in opposition to the PNM, and which earned a substantial portion of votes with a

diverse support base. I chart similarities between the ONR, and the creation of the COP. I examined the similarities between the the UNC - COP alliance in the 2010 elections to the creation in the 1986 election of the Alliance for National Reconstruction (ANR) which combined the ONR with the predominantly lower class Indo-Trinidadian supported United Labour Front (ULF) to defeat the PNM. Brief analysis of the 2010 elections, which occurred while I was writing this dissertation, shows that there may indeed be a trend away from race-based voting in Trinidad.

Future study would require a more detailed analysis of political speeches in the 1981 and 1986 elections to explore similarities in election tactics in terms of appealing to a class demographic and resistance or rejection of racialization. The 2007 election in Trinidad demonstrated the ways in which the upper middle and upper class are the most willing social groups to break away from racialized voting patterns. The COP-UNC alliance's (The People's Partnership [PP]) commanding majority in the 2010 elections, points to more questions about the future of race relations in Trinidad. This was a commanding elections victory and again, points to the high level of dissatisfaction with the PNM and an indication that the PP is viewed, if not as a non-racial coalition or at least as a less racialized political grouping. The 2010 election results are not an indication that everything is 'all better', but perhaps an indication of a substantial and important shift. Whether this is a shift that will continue remains to be seen. If it does, other nations with a highly racially polarized electorate should take note of the ways in

which the PP campaigned. The crime crisis, and rapidly changing notions of risk have (re-) entrenched racialized understandings of lower classes, but have also apparently invigorated the majority of the electorate to change long held voting practices. It is, of course very possible that with slow or no recovery or change in the crime situation in the nation, there will be a reversion to older voting patterns, but at present, Trinidad remains a democracy to watch. Future research to analyze the rhetoric and results of the 2010 elections in relation to the way class and race were presented and constructed would be of value, but given the recent occurrence of these elections, close analysis of them is outside the scope of this work .

I have argued that fear of crime is not only about fear of actual crime, but can be understood symbolically as a set of discourses and actions which are produced in reaction to systemic issues which are deemed to be 'risky'. One of the ways in which concerns surrounding these systemic issues are manifested is through talk of crime and fears of crime. Low, in her discussion of gated communities in the United States writes:

The discourse of urban fear encodes other social concerns including class, race, and ethnic exclusivity as well as gender. It provides a verbal component that complements, even reinforces, the visual landscape of fear created by the walls, gates, and guards. By matching the discourse of the inhabitants with the ideological thrust of the material setting, we enrich our understanding of the social construction and social production of places where the well-to-do live (Low 2001: 56).

Talk about crime conjures and allays fears, and it also works to police behaviour. Caldeira (2004) reminds us that talk of crime works to re-order a world that is fearful. In Trinidad, talk of crime is a complex negotiation. Through talk, appropriate concessions to and measures against crime are produced and invented. Discussions of safety carry implicit tropes of blame for those who do not conform to ever changing standards of safety, and sympathy for those who have been victimized despite attempts to ensure safety. These safety measures are culturally constructed and class specific. Minimum standards of esthetics, behaviour and creation of space are informally mandated for those who occupy particular class positions. The upper middle and upper class Trinidadians with whom I worked blamed those who were robbed but were deemed not to have taken appropriate safety measures to avoid robbery. Those conversations also functioned to reassure those who had made 'appropriate' measures that safety was possible. Throughout this dissertation, I also draw on Caldeira's (2000; 2002; 2008) work. While the particularities of history and scale of segregation are different between her example of São Paulo, and my work in Trinidad, the findings of this dissertation are clearly in line with Caldeira's conclusions.

The tropes of 'before', 'now', and 'imagine' are used as shifting temporal references by Trinidadians in an attempt to make sense of their current situation. As with talk of crime, use of these tropes is a way to define and understand the new normal. 'Before' is decidedly not nostalgic. This is not a rosy hued understanding of a time free of crime or fear. Rather these references are tinged

with anger and frustration at the current situation, and a sort of wistful remembering of a time when such a heightened state of surveillance for safety was not required. These 'before' statements highlight the concessions to fear of crime that have been made and highlight the ways in which the speaker has aligned their life with this new normal. 'Before' statements and their corollary 'now' statements are acknowledgements of changing norms and compliance with those changes. 'Imagine' statements work on two levels. They comment on the extremes of daily life given the current crime situation, and they are used as speculative statements, seeking consensus on the worst of what 'might' have happened given a particular situation. These tropes also work to normalize behaviours surrounding crimes, and to normalize ideas about those who are understood to perpetrate these crimes. An unintended consequence of this sort of talk is the reification of the lives and essential qualities of lower classes. Through this talk, members of these classes are described as though they are homogenous and passive, thus reproducing stereotypes related to race/class/location.

Trinidadians occupying upper middle- class and elite statuses employ their considerable disposable income to create safe spaces to avoid crime and dissuade criminals. This consumption of safety can be conspicuous, when related to home spaces, or as was the case at the height of the fear of kidnappings, inconspicuous, when related to automobiles. Objects which indicate status are held in differing lights in this regard. Given the fear of theft and crimes against one's person, claims of status have increasingly been made not by the actual use and display of

objects of wealth, but instead through talking about one's inability to utilize those objects given prevailing norms with regards to security. Wealthy individuals incorporate their mental maps of areas deemed to be safe and unsafe with other risks, such as a presentation of self that is more or less likely to be identified as wealthy and therefore a target for robbery or some other crime. Talk then is about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, but also a way of categorizing of what status objects cannot be used or displayed. This tactic allows a small trusted audience to recognize status, while keeping the speaker safe from theft or crime related to those objects. Inconspicuous consumption is therefore, for those 'in the know' a marker of status. Conspicuous consumption is likely always about what is conspicuous to whom, but in the case I have explored here, it has become formalized in a pragmatic discourse where consumption is also made "safe".

Armed guards and gated communities are powerful symbols of the ways in which the discourses surrounding appropriate reactions to risk carry meaning for elite individuals. Dammert and Malone (2003) examine fear of crime in Chile. They try to explain the reasons that fear of crime is endemic in Chile despite low rates of actual crime:

We relate fear of crime not only to individual characteristics or structural ones, but to "other" insecurities as well. There is a growing understanding that fear of crime encompasses not only fear of criminal acts per se, but rather is a manifestation of a wide range of daily insecurities, including those related to economic, political, and social issues (Dammert and Malone 2003: 80).

One of these “other” insecurities in Trinidad may be related to gender, something which I feel is a key aspect of the way conjuring in one domain may have consequences for how other domains are conjured. Young adult men of middle and upper class statuses are most free to transgress the borders of safe spaces and venture into places in which the ‘bad man’ might freely move about. Their triumphant return to upper middle and upper class life does not reduce racialized stereotypes of lower classes. Rather, their ‘transgressions’ into unsafe space are articulated as acts of bravado among unruly ‘risky others’, perpetuating stereotypes and stigma. These forays are treated as adventures, though still carefully planned. Women’s movement, especially at nighttime, is more severely and actively constrained among the groups with whom I worked. Further research is needed to chart the effect of this increasing isolation in terms of the ways in which women feel free to participate in public life. In particular, as Mohammed (1989) notes, while women in Trinidad have made substantial gains in the post-Independence period in terms of employment and other forms of equity, mechanisms remain in place to maintain male control. A more detailed and thoughtful analysis of connections between the conjuring of risk and safety and patriarchy would be valuable.

Conceptions of the future are tempered and affected by the contemporary security climate. Upper middle class and elite Trinidadians use particular facets of the PNM’s Vision 2020 plan as a benchmark against which critiques of the government can be made. These critiques are made with language that echoes

stereotypical critiques of Afro-Trinidadians, or more generally, class based critiques along the lines of transcendence versus transience. Trinidadians are in general pessimistic about the future, despite an economy strong relative to those of other neighbouring island-states. New strategies have emerged with regards to elite children and elite class reproduction, and increasingly the future is understood in bleak terms.

This dissertation has been about the ways in which fear can affect behaviour and outlook amongst a particular class marked group under a specific set of circumstances. Fear itself is difficult to see or measure, but the actions which result from that fear, can, as this dissertation has shown, produce enormous changes in the day to day lives of individuals. Fear of crime changes the ways in which daily lives are carried out, the way that political campaigns are run and even the way that political parties are understood. While fear is distilled in the stereotypical and racialized body of the 'bad man' it is more than that. Daily life is shaped by and responds to these changing definitions of 'safe behaviour' and family networks tighten as a result.

Opportunities for Future Research/ Exploration:

Several issues have arisen over the course of this research which are tributary to the thrust of this work, or which simply cannot be addressed responsibly in a work of this scope. The most prominent is the situation of the status of women under the situations of increased vigilance which I have alluded to above. Another key area involves the ways in which migration patterns,

particularly for elite youth might change given the crime situation. Finally, the possibility that extra-judicial measures against crime might emerge should the electoral route to government reform fail, is of importance not only for understanding the future of governance in Trinidad, but is relevant for other places undergoing similar kinds of risk and danger related stresses. The focus of my fieldwork was on upper middle and upper classes, but the obvious corollary would be similar work to understand the responses of lower class and poor Trinidadians to the dramatic increases in violent crime. The poor in Trinidad are increasingly barred from particular social spaces because of the racialized stereotype attributed to them. This informal segregation is not yet at the scale found in some other crime nations, but points to a troubling trend in which it becomes increasingly difficult for lower classes to achieve upward mobility or to fully participate in public life with those who occupy upper classes.

Stuart Hall writes about the ‘moral panic’ in Britain in the 1970s, in which racialized and classed youth were held to be emblematic of the social ills and anxieties of the nation after a few highly publicized muggings despite the fact that crime statistics did not support the level of anxieties regarding crime (Hall 1997). The situation of Trinidad is in some ways similar; while upper middle and upper class Trinidadians are unlikely to fall victim to the rates of murder so often used to express anxieties about the nation, their lives are circumscribed by real and rational fears surrounding safety. Hall argues that these issues led to a ‘signification spiral’—“the binding together of discrete moral panics into a single

larger anxiety” (Proctor 2004: 78). In the case of Trinidad, fears about the nation, about safety and the future are distilled into a racialized and classed ‘bad man’ against whom home and nation must be protected. Hall goes on to argue that such a distillation might subject groups associated with those anxieties to specific targeted or outsized negative intervention with the law. In Trinidad, my upper middle and upper class informants alternately called for brutal extra-legal and violent removal of all those associated with ‘bad areas’ and more humane types of interventions through improved education and social services. This observation combined with recent attempts to reintroduce corporal punishment and anecdotal calls for the increased use of the death penalty for crimes associated with these ‘bad men’, points to a similar trend to that described by Hall. Future research would explore changing and contradictory attitudes towards punishment both at the upper and lower class levels in relation to the struggling police services. This work would explore whether the positive trends towards reduction in race-based voting and the somewhat contradictory class and racial segregation will have long standing effects on either the perception of the risky other, or political process.

Historically Trinidadian elite parents have sent their children away to North America and the UK for education. Children have been sent away to gain the credentials and experience necessary for them to take over or expand family businesses or enter into professional occupations with the assistance of their family’s social or political network. These elites must be understood as distinct from middle class economic emigrants for whom future financial success for the

entire family is often dependent on emigration of entire family units and whose numbers swelled immigration rolls from the 1950s through to the present. Elite Trinidadian young adults have historically returned from overseas education to positions of power and wealth in Trinidad. Increasingly during my research, elite Trinidadian parents cited increasing fear as a key reason to hope that their children do not return to Trinidad upon completion of their education. Elites like Surojini have invested considerable financial resources in their children so that they might attend post-secondary and post-graduate education overseas. When her two children were young, Surojini expressed hope that her children would benefit from an overseas education and return to make a life in Trinidad. However, since her son was car-jacked and rates of crime have increased so substantially, Surojini has begun to express a desire for her children to remain overseas. This hope is expressed even though parents like Surojini themselves plan to remain in Trinidad. Highly educated young adults like Surojini's children are the heirs apparent to the business, political and social elite of Trinidad. If the crime situation has motivated elites to choose not to reproduce their status via their offspring in Trinidad, what then happens to class dynamics in Trinidad?

Indeed, class dynamics is the elephant in the room in the lives of my informants. My own focus has been on middle class and elite Trinidadians, and so my discussion has been narrowly focused on this group's sense of their class position and interest. But classes do not exist in silos, isolated one from the other. Class is a fracturing and fractal-like system of contentions among structural

interests, competition among discourse making practices which define worth within the interplay of these interests, and the play of forces and transnational stresses which infiltrate local conditions, almost always surreptitiously. Future research which takes all class interests seriously, and interrogates processes of class conditioned agency and political culture is needed to unravel this web of intentions and misdirections.

A different, but perhaps more problematic theme I feel needs exploring are the ways which elite Trinidadians might be tempted to circumvent the law themselves. Caldeira (2000) points to the exigencies within gated communities in São Paulo, and among wealthy Paulistanos who would rather, for instance, have their children break the law by driving underage than have them take public transportation. Similarly, the tributary issue of family networks in this dissertation leads me to wonder what the future holds for Trinidad. In what ways might the tightening of these networks in Trinidad lead to an elite refusal to follow either the rule of law or the rule of government. If, as the example in chapter 4 showed, 'the Syrians' can hire a team of extra-legal gunmen to track down and retrieve a kidnapped child, what relationship to the rule of law might emerge from within other powerful groups feeling sufficiently threatened? What effects might such actions have on larger Trinidadian or even regional Caribbean society?

Trinidad's gang violence problem is not localized to Trinidad alone. It is fed and funded by the regional and international trade in arms and narcotics. I

have argued that as the links and networks between these businesses grow, perceptions of the 'bad man' and indeed all poor Afro-Trinidadians have become further polarized and hardened, and greater efforts have been made to increase distance and isolation from these groups. As Feldman (1994) has argued in the context of Northern Ireland, a conjuring of insurmountable difference, especially difference grounded in a model of safe and risky bodies themselves, can lead to a form of rule of law for "us" but not for "them". That fear of crime is intensifying among the middle class and elite in Trinidad, a fear grounded in longstanding racialized models of difference and identity, suggests that the future of governance in Trinidad, at least in the near term, is fraught with possible dangers that are not clearly understood.

Trinidad, and Trinidadian elites are not a microcosm of elites around the world. Each configuration of class, as of race or gender or other tropes and histories of identity and danger, must be deciphered within its own particularities. My work here has argued for a specific discussion of class in the Trinidadian context, and has opened a discussion on the meaning of fear and the future of governance in Trinidad, linking the politics of racial difference with the poetics of family and space and the pragmatics of nation making. Each of these things are contentious and contradictory, predictable and at the same time unknowable except as they continue to emerge. These processes of conjuring how to be a particular kind of Trinidadian at a particular point in history are not smoke and mirrors behind which some more universal truth waits to be found. Rather, this

conjuring is a trick of the light against a backdrop of real fears and imagined realities, which together form the moments in time from which my informants, and all Trinidadians, will construct their various futures.

References

Abraham, Sara.

2001. The shifting sources of racial definition in Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana: a research agenda. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 24(6): 979-997.

Abu-Lughod, Lila

1986/2000. *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1991. "Writing Against Culture" in *Recapturing Anthropology*. Richard G. Fox – (ed) Santa Fe New Mexico: School of American Research Press. 137-162.

1993/2008. *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1997 The Interpretation of Culture(s) After Television. *Representations* 59 (Summer):109-134.

Ahmed, Sara

2000 *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. London. Routledge.

Alexander, Gail.

2007 Cepep pays out a whopping \$207 million. In *Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*. <http://legacy.guardian.co.tt/archives/2007-04-25/news12.html>
Accessed April 25, 2007.

2009 Dookeran: Trinidad in State of Emergency, *In Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*.
<http://guardian.co.tt/news/politics/2009/10/20/dookeran-tt-state-emergency>
Accessed October 20, 2009.

Ali, Ken.

2009. Cepep gives Value for Money, *In Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*.
<http://guardian.co.tt/news/general/2009/01/15/cepep-gives-value-money>
Accessed January 15, 2009.

Allahar, Anton.

2001. *Caribbean Charisma: Reflections on Leadership, Legitimacy and Populist Politics* Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

2002. "Race" and Class in the Making of Caribbean Political Culture. *Transforming Anthropology*. 10(2): 13-29.

2005. Situating Ethnic Nationalism in the Caribbean. *In Ethnicity, Class, and Nationalism: Caribbean and Extra-Caribbean Dimensions*, Anton Allahar (ed). Toronto: Lexington Books.

Balroop, Peter.

2009, 'Criminality in URP' in *Trinidad Guardian*.

<http://70.86.108.178/news/general/2009/06/21/criminality-urp>

Accessed 21 June, 2009

2009 a 'Absenteeism part of URP culture' in *Trinidad Guardian*. Accessed June 21, 2009

<http://guardian.co.tt/news/general/2009/06/21/absenteeism-part-urp-culture>

2009b 'More URP ghost gangs found...Grande, Arima under watch' in *Trinidad Guardian* .<http://guardian.co.tt/news/crime/2009/06/21/more-urp-ghost-gangs-found> Accessed 21 June, 2009.

Beck, Ulrich.

1992. *Risk Society*. London: Sage Publications.

Beckles, Hilary MacD

1999 *Centering Woman: Gender discourses in Caribbean Slave Society*. Kingston, Jamaica : Ian Randle Publishers,

Birth, Kevin.

1999. *Any time is Trinidad Time: Social Meanings and Temporal Consciousness*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Bourdieu, Pierre.

1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press

1986 The forms of capital. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* In J. Richardson (Ed.) Pp. 241-258 New York: Greenwood.

1977 *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (translated by R. Nice) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourgois, Philippe

1996/2003 *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brana-Schute, Gary

1989 *On the Corner: Male Social Life on a Paramaribo Street Corner* London: VanGorcum Ltd.

Brereton, Bridget.

1974. *The Experience of Indentureship: 1845-1917. In Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians of Trinidad.* John La Guerre, Ed. Pp. 25-38. Trinidad: Longman Caribbean Limited.

1981. *A History of Modern Trinidad 1783-1962.* Kingston Jamaica: Heineman.

2007 Public Lecture, Freedom Road Public Lecture Series, August, 17. National Museum and Art Gallery, Port of Spain Trinidad.

Browne, Juhel, and C. Rampersad,

2008, 'Cepep revamp Job cuts expected as new entity takes over', *Trinidad Express*, accessed October 29th, 2008.

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161394206

Browne, Juhel.

2007, "The Big Crime Promises, how political parties plan to clean up the bloodshed. In *Trinidad Express*

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161226903

Accessed , November 2, 2007

Budram, Kelvin.

2009 "Caribbean is our home now, says Saith". In *Trinidad and Tobago Express*,

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161518435

Accessed August 17, 2009.

Burton, R.D.E.

1997 *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition in the Caribbean.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Caldeira, Teresa.

2000. *City of Walls: Crime Segregation and Citizenship.* Berkely:

University of California Press.

2002. Paradox of Police Violence in Democratic Brazil. *In* *Ethnography*.
3(3): 235-263.

2008. Worlds Set Apart. *In* *Urban Age: A Worldwide Investigation into the
Future of Cities*.
http://www.urbanage.net/10_cities/08_saoPaulo/essays/pv_SA_Caldeira.html
Accessed September 13, 2010.

CBC News

2007. Trinidad and Tobago's politics of opposition Former Prime Minister
Basdeo Panday returns... again. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/trinidad-tobago/opposition.html> Accessed September 17, 2010.

Centre for Retail Research

2009 Retail Crime Overseas
http://www.retailresearch.org/crime_and_fraud/2009_retail_crime_overseas.ph
Accessed January 13, 2010

Chan Tack, Clint.

2006. "Dookeran Launches new Political Party" in Trinidad and Tobago
Express, <http://www.newspaper.co.tt/news/0,44093.html> Accessed June 21,
2010.

2007. Rev Jackson: I did not know about the election. *In* *Trinidad Newsday
Newspaper*. <http://www.newspaper.co.tt/politics/0,67670.html>
Accessed May 09, 2010.

Charran, Richard

2007 "Children of the Cane: From Tractor to Trigonometry" *In* *Trinidad Express*
http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161237124
Accessed November 18, 2007.

Chatterjee, Partha

2004. *The Politics of the Governed: Considerations on Political Society in Most
of the World*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Clark, Kim.

1998 *The Redemptive Work: Railway and Nation in Ecuador, 1895-1930*. Book
series *Latin American Silhouettes: Studies of History and Culture*, series co-
editors William Beezley and Judith Ewell. Wilmington, DE: SR Books.

Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi.

1994 Architectural Conspicuous Consumption and Economic Change in the Andes *In American Anthropologist*, New Series, 96 (4) Pp. 845-865.

Congress of the People

2006 Manifesto. In. COP website

http://www.coptnt.com/ver03/media/cop_manifesto.pdf Accessed May 12, 2010.

Counts, David

1990 Too Many Bananas, Not Enough Pineapples, and No Watermelon at all. Three Object Lessons in Living with Reciprocity. In *The Humbled Anthropologist: Tales from the Pacific*, Philip DeVita, ed., pp. 18-24. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Dammert, Luci and Mary Fran Malone,

2003. Fear of Crime or Fear of Life? Public Insecurities in Chile. *Society for Latin American Studies*. 22(1): 79-101.

Deane, C.A. and Moyer, V.

2009 Trinidad and Tobago Law and Legal Research. Hauser Global Law School Program, New York University School of Law.
www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Trinidad_Tobago Accessed May 9, 2010.

DeFreitas, Patricia

1994 Playing Mas': The Construction and Deconstruction of National Identity in Trinidad. Ph.D. Dissertation. Department of Anthropology McMaster University.

De-Light, Dominique and Polly Thomas

2007 *The Rough Guide to Trinidad and Tobago*. New York: Rough Guides.

Dixon, Dixie Ann

2010 Businesses Call for Balance in Minimum Wage Increase. *Trinidad Guardian Online*.

<http://guardian.co.tt/business/business/2010/06/12/businesses-call-balance-minimum-wage-increase>. Accessed June 15, 2010.

Dookeran, Winston.

1974. East Indians and the Economy of Trinidad and Tobago *In* Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians of Trinidad. John La Guerre, Ed. Pp. 69-83. Trinidad: Longman Caribbean Limited.

2007. Public Speech at Montrose Junction. *In*. Breaking News.

<http://news.bn.gs/article.php?story=20071013080816829>. Accessed May 7, 2010

Douglas, Sean

2007 “Dookeran: TT not for sale, Jack” *In* Trinidad Newsday.

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/politics/0,65975.html> Accessed October 14, 2007.

2008 “Lucky resigns from COP”. *In* Trinidad Express

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,75534.html> Accessed September 18, 2010.

Douglas, Mary.

1966. *Purity and Danger: an Analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*.

London: Routledge.

1985. *Risk Acceptability according to the Social Sciences*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

1992. *Risk and Blame: essays in cultural theory*. London, New York: Routledge.

Encyclopaedia of the Nations

2010 Trinidad and Tobago,

<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Americas/Trinidad-and-Tobago-ETHNIC-GROUPS.html> Accessed September 10, 2010.

Feldman, Allen

1994 *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror In Northern Ireland* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Ferguson, James

1990 *The Anti-Politics Machine: “Development,” depoliticization and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Geer, Sacha

2005 *Being a ‘come-backie’: Narratives of Work, Belonging and Identity among Guyanese Return Migrants*. MA Thesis. Department of Anthropology, University of Western Ontario.

Gender Affairs Division, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, Trinidad and Tobago
2009 Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000). Government of Trinidad and Tobago.
<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/TrinidadTobago.pdf>
Accessed June 1, 2010.

Ghany, Hamid
2001 "Basdeo Panday: 25 Years on Panday Faces: Maha, Mother of All Battles." http://www.nalis.gov.tt/Biography/bio_BasdeoPandaytwo.htm accessed September 17, 2009.

Gmelch, George
1992. *Double Passage: The lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Goldberg, David Theo
1993. *Racist Theories: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers.

Goffman, Erving.
1959. *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, N. Doubleday.

Gonzales, Gyasi
2007 28 Bullets: Gang Leader Shot Dead, Fire Woman wounded. *In* Trinidad Express. http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161203857
Accessed September 17, 2007.

Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
2009 'Unemployment Relief Program' (URP)
<http://www.gov.tt/business/service.aspx?id={C6B46104-4A70-4939-9531-ABDF19403383}> ' Accessed August 1, 2009.

2007 "Budget Statement 2008" <http://www.finance.gov.tt/content/pub9.pdf>
Accessed September 17, 2010/

Nd. GATE FAQs. <http://www.stte.gov.tt/GATEInner.aspx?Lid=3&id=10>
Accessed September 18, 2010.

Green, Garth L.
2002. Marketing the Nation: Carnival and Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago. *Critique of Anthropology*. 22(3): 283-304.

Green, Garth and Philip Scher

2007 *Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival*.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Gumbs-Sandiford, Anika

2010 "Manning to call Election in May" in *Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*.
<http://guardian.co.tt/news/politics/2010/04/04/manning-call-election-May> Accessed May 07, 2010.

Habib, Jasmin

2007. "'We were living in a different country': Palestinian Nostalgia and the Future Past". In *Mixed Towns, Trapped Communities: Historical Narratives, Spatial Dynamics, Gender Relations and Cultural Encounters in Ethnically Mixed Towns in Israel/ Palestine*. Eds. Dan Rabinowitz and Daniel Monterescu. Ashgate Publishing. Pp. 65-84.

Hall, Stewart

1997 "Old and New Identities, old and New Ethnicities" in *Culture, Globalization and the World System* Anthony D. King (ed.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp.41-68.

Heerallal, D.

2008 No Justice for Carleah: Witnesses Fail to Show; murder accused goes free, *Trinidad Express*.
http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161313143
Accessed, April 22, 2008.

Hintzen, Percy.

1989. *The Costs of Regime Survival: Racial mobilization, elite domination and the control of the state in Guyana and Trinidad*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Holloway, Sarah L.

2004 "Ulrich Beck" In *Key Thinkers in Space and Place*. Valentine Kitchin and Valentine (eds) London: Sage Publications. 40-46.

Holloway, Wendy and Jefferson, Tony

1997 "The Risk Society in an Age of Anxiety: Situating Fear of Crime", *The British Journal of Sociology*, 48 (2): 255-266.

Jackson, Stevi. & Sue Scott

1999. Risk anxiety and the social construction of childhood. *In Risk and Sociocultural theory: new directions and perspectives*. Deborah Lupton (ed). 86-107. London: Cambridge University Press.

Jayawardena, Chandra

1980 "Culture and Identity in Guyana and Fiji" *Man*, New Series, 15(3), pp. 430-450.

Jelly-Shapiro, Justin.

2005 "Are we all creoles now?" Ethnicity and Nation in a Heterogeneous Caribbean Diaspora" *In Ethnicity, Class and Nationalism: Caribbean and Extra-Caribbean Dimensions*. Anton L. Allahar (ed). Toronto: Lexington Books.

Kangal, Stephen,

2007 'Shame and Scandal in CEPEP' in Trinidad and Tobago News, <http://www.trinidadandtobagonews.com/selfnews/viewnews.cgi?newsid1172327872,79528,.shtml>

Khan, Aisha.

2004. *Callaloo Nation: Metaphors of Race and Religious Identity among South Asians in Trinidad*. Durham: Duke University Press.

1993 'What is a "Spanish"?: ambiguity and "mixed" ethnicity in Trinidad', in *Trinidad Ethnicity*, ed. K. Yelvington, University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tenn.

Kowlessar, Gina.

2009a Laventilleans Join in Search for 10 year old girl 15, June, 2009 Trinidad Guardian, <http://guardian.co.tt/news/crime/2009/06/15/laventilleans-join-search-10-year-old-girl> Accessed 24 June, 2009.

2009b 'Tecia's Mom demands and apology from PM' 23 June, 2009, Trinidad Guardian

<http://guardian.co.tt/news/crime/2009/06/23/tecia-s-mom-demands-apology-pm>
Accessed 24 June, 2009.

2009c 'John John 'rejoices'' 7 July, 2009, Trinidad Guardian,

<http://guardian.co.tt/news/crime/2009/07/07/john-john-rejoices> Accessed 7 July, 2009

2010. Union Boss Claims that CEPEP workers are forced to attend PNM meetings. In *Trinidad Guardian*
<http://guardian.co.tt/news/general/2010/04/28/cepep-workers-forced-attend-pnm-meetings> , Accessed May 06, 2010.
- Landman, K. and Schonteich, M.
2002 Urban Fortresses: Gated Communities as a Reaction to Crime. *In African Studies Review* 11(4) Pp.71-85.
- Lash, Scott & Wynne B.
1992 "Introduction" *In Risk Society*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ledgister, F.S.J.,
1998. Class Alliances and the Liberal Authoritarian State: the Roots of Post-Colonial Democracy in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Surinam.
- 2008 "C.L.R. James as a Creole Nationalist: Reconsidering The Case for West-Indian Self-Government" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the WESTERN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION, Manchester Hyatt, San Diego, California Online PDF* .
http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p238148_index.html Accessed July, 20, 2010.
- Lee, Gang with Richard Hollinger and Dean Dabney
1999 The relationship between crime and private security at US shopping centers. *American Journal of Criminal Justice* 23 (2) Pp. 157-177.
- Lefebvre, Henri
1991. *The Production of Space*. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell.
- Lockwood, Brian
1971 Samoan village economy, Melbourne, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Low, Setha M.
2001. The Edge and the Center: Gated Communities and the Discourse of Urban Fear. *American Anthropologist*. 103(1): 45-58.
- Lupton, Deborah.
1999a "Introduction" *Risk and Sociocultural theory: new directions and perspectives*. Deborah Lupton (ed). 1-12. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 1999b. *Risk*. New York: Routledge.

1999c "Risk and the ontology of pregnant embodiment" *In Risk and Sociocultural theory: new directions and perspectives*. Deborah Lupton (ed). 59-85 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mackey, Eva.

1999 Constructing an endangered nation: risk, race and rationality in Australia's native title debate. *In Risk and Sociocultural theory: new directions and perspectives*. Deborah Lupton (ed). 108-130 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MacDonald, Scott B.

1986 *Trinidad and Tobago: Democracy and Development in the Caribbean*. London: Praeger Publishers.

Mamdani, Mahmoud

1996 *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Marcus, George

1983 "Elite as a Concept, Theory, and Research Tradition" *In Elites: Ethnographic Issues*, George Marcus (ed.) Pp. 3-7. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

1995. "Ethnography In/Of The World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography. *In Annual Review of Anthropology*. 24: 95-117.

Matroo, Carol.

2007 'Mango Rose residents under 'house arrest', in *Trinidad Guardian*, <http://legacy.guardian.co.tt/archives/2007-11-16/news4.html>. Accessed Friday 16th November 2007.

Mehta, A., and L. Bondi.

1999. Embodied discourse: on gender and fear of violence. *Gender, Place and Culture* 6:67-84.

Meighoo, Kirk.

2003. *Politics in a Half-Made Society: Trinidad and Tobago 1925-2002*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Merrifield, Andy

2000 "Henri Lefebvre: a socialist in space" *In Thinking Space*, M. Crane & N. Thrift (eds) London: Routledge. 167-182.

Miller, Daniel

1994. *Modernity, an ethnographic approach: dualism and mass consumption in Trinidad*. London, New York: Routledge.

2001. *Car Cultures*. (Ed.) New York. Routledge.

Mohammed, Patricia

1989 "The Women's Movement in Trinidad and Tobago in the 70's and 80's" in *Caribbean Quarterly* 35(2): 8-45.

Munasinghe, Viranjini

2002. Nationalism in Hybrid Spaces: The Production of Impurity out of Purity. *American Ethnologist*. 29(3): 663-692.

2001. *Callaloo or Tossed Salad?: East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Nader, Laura

1969. Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up. In Dell H. Hymes (Ed.) *Reinventing Anthropology*. New York, Pantheon Books, 1972. p. 284-311.

National Union Research

2000 *Workfare: a Low Wage Strategy for the Canadian Economy* .
<http://www.nupge.ca/files/publications/Workfare%20complete.pdf>
Accessed September 1, 2010.

NIPDEC (National Insurance Property Development Program)

2010 NIPDEC CDAP Plan.
http://www.nipdec.com/site15/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12&Itemid=26 Accessed September 13, 2010.

Neaves Julien

2008 Malls, business places must step up security' As car thefts rise. In *Trinidad Express*, http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161299134
Accessed Thursday March 27, 2008.

O'Dougherty, Maureen

2002 *Consumption Intensified: the politics of middle class daily life in Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press.

O'Meara, Tim.

1990 *Samoan Planters: Tradition and Economic Development in Polynesia*

Wadsworth: Florence KY.

Ortner, Susan. B.

1998 "Identities: The Hidden Life of Class" in *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 54:1 Pp. 1-17. University of New Mexico Press.

Ottley, S.

2006. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on a Special Audit of The Community Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (CEPEP) Implemented by the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment and The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL). Port of Spain, Trinidad.
<http://www.auditorgeneral.gov.tt/documentlibrary/downloads/10/CEPEP%20Special%20Report.pdf> Accessed January 15, 2010.

Parasram, Jai.

2010a Kamla's Dream, a crime free and prosperous Laventille. *In Jyoti Communications*.

<http://jyoticonmunication.blogspot.com/2010/05/kamlas-dream-crime-free-and-prosperous.html> Accessed May 12, 2010.

2010b

Manning Unveils \$20B highway project, Hazel 'weeps' for Pandays. *In Jyoti Communications*. Accessed May 12, 2010.

<http://jyoticonmunication.blogspot.com/2010/05/20b-highways-project-coming-hazel-weeps.html>

Patton, John H.

1994 Calypso as Rhetorical Performance: Trinidad Carnival 1993 in *Latin American Music Review* 15 (1) Pp. 55-74.

Pisani, Elisabeth.

2003 Back to Basics in HIV Prevention: focus on exposure. *In BMJ* 326 Pp. 1384-1387.

Proctor, James

2004 *Stuart Hall, Routledge critical thinkers*. London: Routledge.

Puri, Shalini

2004 *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post Nationalism and Cultural Hybridity* Palgrave MacMillan, New York.

1997: "Race, Rape and Representation: Indo-Caribbean Women and Cultural Nationalism" *Cultural Critique*: 1997 119-163.

Ramcharitar, Raymond

2005 *Breaking the News: Media and Culture in Trinidad*. San Juan Trinidad.
Lexicon Trinidad Ltd.

Rampersad, C.

2008. 'AmCham president: CEPEP, URP draining labour supply' in Trinidad Express, http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161352826
Accessed July 16, 2008.

Ramdass, Anita.

2010. "Pandays booted out: End of an Era as Mikaela, Subhas rejected by UNC". In Trinidad Express Newspaper.
<http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/Comments?id=161648159>
Accessed May 03, 2010.

2009 "99 seats for Partnership, 35 for PNM". In Trinidad Express Newspaper
<http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/99439134.html> Accessed June 1, 2010.

Reis, Eric and Mick Moore

2005, Introduction *in* Elite perceptions of Poverty and \ Inequality. Reis and Moore (eds.) New York: St. Martin's Press.

Renne, Denise.

2008 "395 new record high 2007 murder toll' Trinidad Express,
http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161257830 Accessed
January 2, 2008.

Rogers, Simon

2007 "Trinidad shuts down in protest at violence" The Guardian UK.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/jan/27/travel.trinidadandtobago>
Accessed January 30, 2007.

Roy, A.S. and Wong, G.

2000 Direct Job Creation Programs: Evaluation Lessons on Cost-Effectiveness
In Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques 25 (2) Pp. 157-169.

Rudder, David

2006 *Trini to de Bone*. From Trini to de Bone. New York: Warner Brothers.

Ryan, Selwyn.

1972 *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago: A Study of Decolonization*

in a Multiracial Society. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

2007 "Caribbean Man Revisited" In Trinidad Express

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_opinion?id=161166974

Accessed August 4, 2007.

Scher, Philip

2003 Carnival and the Formation of a Trinidadian Transnation. Miami: University of Florida Press.

Scott, John C.

1998. Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Scott, S. & Sue Jackson

1999 'Risky Children and Risky Childhoods: Theorising Childhood and Sexuality' in D Lupton (ed.) Theorising Risk and Culture. Cambridge: CUP

Segal, D.

1993 "Race" and "Color" in pre-independence Trinidad and Tobago', in Trinidad Ethnicity, ed. K. Yelvington, University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tenn.

Seelal, Nalini

2008 "Manning Gets Private Guards", in Trinidad and Tobago's Newsday.

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,71593.html> Accessed January 17, 2008.

Seuraj, Indarjit

2008 "Gang Killings riddle 2008". In Trinidad Newsday.

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,92205.html> Accessed December 22, 2008.

Shankman, Paul

1976 Migration and Underdevelopment: the case of Western Samoa Westview: Boulder.

Shields, Rob

2004 "Henri Lefebvre" in Key Thinkers in Space and Place. Valentine Kitchin and Valentine (eds.) London: Sage Publications. 208-213.

Shore, Cris

2002 Toward and anthropology of elites. In Elite Cultures: Anthropological Perspectives. Shore and Nugent (eds.) New York: Routledge.

Singh, Kelvin

1994 *Race and Class: Struggles in a Colonial State Trinidad 1917:1945*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Sorias, Leah

2008 Teen Gang Leaders on the Loose. *In Trinidad Guardian*, Sunday August 18th, 2008, <http://legacy.guardian.co.tt/archives/2008-08-17/news8.html> accessed June 1st, 2010.

Spinks, Charlotte

2001 *A New Apartheid ? Urban Spatiality, (Fear of) Crime, and Segregation in Cape Town, South Africa*. Working Paper Series. London: Development Studies Institute.

Statistics Canada

2008 Neighbourhood Characteristics and the distribution of crime in Edmonton. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-561-m/2008010/findings/5001955-eng.htm> accessed May 12, 2010.

Stoddard, Eve and Grant H. Cornwall

2000 "Cosmopolitan or mongrel? reading Creolite and Hybridity via "Douglarization" in Trinidad" *In Identity, ethnicity and culture in the Caribbean*, Ralph Premdas, (ed) St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago: The University of the West Indies. School of Continuing Studies, pp.211-245

Tanikella, Leela

2003. *The Politics of Hybridity: Race, Gender, and Nationalism in Trinidad*. *Cultural Dynamics*. 15(2): 153-181.

Thomas, Paul

1998 *Conspicuous Construction: Houses, Consumption and 'Relocalization' in Manambondro, Southeast Madagascar* *In The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 4 (3) Pp. 425- 446.

Tourism Development Company Ltd.

2010 *Tourism Investment Climate Sector Profile*. http://www.tdc.co.tt/investment_climate.htm Accessed September 17, 2010.

Townsend, Dorn

2009. *No Other Life: Gangs, Guns, and Violence in Trinidad and Tobago*. A working Paper of the Small Arms Survey, 8. Geneva: Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Trinidad and Tobago Newsblog

2009 "Tecia Henry Strangled"

<http://www.trinidadandtobagonews.com/blog/?p=1260> Accessed June 19, 2009.

Trinidad Guardian

2010 “Dookeran to Become President in Unity Accord”. In Trinidad Guardian Newspaper.

<http://guardian.co.tt/news/politics/2010/04/18/dookeran-become-president>
Accessed April 18, 2010.

2009a ‘Frustrated Farmers: Land Distribution taking too long’

<http://guardian.co.tt/business/business/2009/02/15/frustrated-farmers-land-distribution-taking-too-long>. accessed February 15, 2009.

2009b ‘UNC: Cepep being used to buy votes?’

<http://guardian.co.tt/news/politics/2009/03/11/unc-cepep-being-used-buy-votes> accessed August 1, 2009

Trinidad Newsday

2007, ‘Gunman commits 232nd murder’

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/crime/0,64010.html> accessed September 12, 2007.

Trinidad News Reporters 2007

“Top Banker’s Stepson Murdered” in Trinidad Newday,

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,68240.html> accessed November 19, 2007.

Trouillot, Michel

1992 The Caribbean Region: An Open Frontier in Anthropological Theory.
Annual Review of Anthropology.22:19-42.

Tsing, Anna

2000. “The Global Situation”. In *Cultural Anthropology*. 15(3) 327-360.

2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connections*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

TTCRIME

Nd about. <http://tcrime.com> accessed September 13, 2010.

Ttelection.com

Nd. Analysis and Commentary.

<http://ttelection.com/index.php?q=elections/analysis&aid=4> Accessed, Sept 17, 2010.

UNData

Nd. Trinidad and Tobago, economic indicators.
<http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Trinidad%20and%20Tobago#Economic>
Accessed September 17, 2010.

United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
2010 Human Development Report Trinidad and Tobago. Accessed September 13, 2010. http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_TTO.html

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Latin American and Caribbean Region of the World Bank
2007 Crime, Violence and Development: Trends, Costs and Policy Options in the Caribbean. New York: United Nations.

Vision 2020
2002 <http://vision2020.info.tt> accessed August 11, 2009.

Washer, Peter
2006. "Representations of Mad Cow Disease" in *Social Science and Medicine*. 62 (2) 457-466.

Weekly Gleaner.
2005 High Vincentian Refugee Claimants. Weekly Gleaner Newspaper. November 3, 2005. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1P3-947158721.html>
Accessed May 1, 2010.

Wilkinson, Bert
2010 Brits seek probe of Guyana Death Squads *In Caribbean Life News*, www.caribbeanlifeneews.com/articles/2010/05/17/news/caribbean/caribbeanlife-cl_news_caribbean-2010_05_13_wilkinson_death_squad_probe2.txt accessed Monday may 17, 2010.

Williams, Brackette
1990 Nationalism, Traditionalism, and the Problem of Cultural Inauthenticity". *In Nationalist Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures*. Richard Fox (ed.). Washington: American Anthropological Association.

Worcester, Robert, Lenny Saith and Mark Gill
2009 Research Can (help) Transform Nations: How a Developing Nation Uses

Research to Support Transformation: Trinidad and Tobago's "Vision 2020".
Paper Presented at the 62nd Annual WAPOS Conference. September 11, 2009.
http://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/News/Research-Can-Help-ransform-Nations_Sep09.pdf Accessed May 13, 2010.

World Bank

2010 Data Trinidad and Tobago, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/trinidad-and-tobago> Accessed September 12, 2010.

Yelvington, Kelvin A.

2001. The Anthropology of Afro-Latin American and the Caribbean:
Diasporic Dimensions. *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 30: 227-260.

Zambelis, Chris

2009. Jamaat al-Muslimeen: The Growth and Decline of Islamist Militancy in
Trinidad and Tobago. In *Terrorism Monitor* 7(23) Pp. 8-11.