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"And They All Came From New Orleans": Louisiana Migrants in Los Angeles—Interpretations

of Race, Place, and Identity

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Sociology

by

Faustina Marie DuCros

2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"And They All Came From New Orleans": Louisiana Migrants in Los Angeles—Interpretations

of Race, Place, and Identity

by

Faustina Marie DuCros

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Rebecca J. Emigh, Co-chair

Professor Vilma Ortiz, Co-chair

Migrations from one location to another can create the need to explain identities that originated
in one region and do not quite translate to the new place's racial structure. Empirically, we know
little about racial and ethnic identity construction processes for American-born persons with
Black ancestry who were part of the Great Migration in this country. My dissertation analyzes
the construction of racial, ethnic, and place identities among first- and second-generation
Louisiana migrants who came to Los Angeles during the 1940s to the 1970s. Using data from 47
in-depth life history interviews, I argue that racial and ethnic identity in this case is a product of
the interplay between local and national racial structures and meanings, collective memory and
nostalgia, and place-based interaction. I find that migrants established an enclave that supported
collective memory and collective nostalgia for Louisiana through Louisiana-centered interaction.

This contributed to attachments and identifications associated with place that were used to modify the Black and Creole racial and ethnic identities of migrants in Los Angeles. Most of the migrants in this study constructed Black identities modified with Creole and Louisiana-based identities. A smaller proportion of migrants had Creole-only, or Black-only identities, but Louisiana-based identities were important for these migrants as well. In addition to the factors associated with racialization, identities were constructed using a combination of ancestry, visible ethnic and racial markers (such as surnames, phenotype, and culture), and place-based factors. The study makes several contributions to the literatures on race, ethnicity, place, Black identities, the Great Migration, and Louisiana Creoles.

The dissertation of Faustina Marie DuCros is approved.

Walter R. Allen

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Rebecca J. Emigh, Committee Co-chair

Vilma Ortiz, Committee Co-chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

For my Gram, with love.

And in memory of Pops and Big Gram.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Viola and Henri both were born and raised in New Orleans and migrated to Los Angeles in the early 1940s along with thousands of other Louisianans during the Great Migration years.[1] Viola's mother, Eugenie, had previously taken a trip to visit her sisters out in Los Angeles and really took a liking to it. This time Eugenie sent her only daughter and son-in-law out to Los Angeles as the family's representatives at a relative's wedding, and encouraged Viola to stay for a while. Eugenie offered to take care of Viola and Henri's one-year-old son while they were gone. Viola and Henri rented a room from some other Louisianans they knew, and after staying for a few months decided they liked it, too. Henri was in construction and he could make a good living in Los Angeles with all of the new development. Eventually the rest of the family made their way to Los Angeles, just as Eugenie had planned—she knew Viola's father would follow his only daughter anywhere she went.

Viola, Henri, Eugenie and the family initially settled in the West Adams area of Los Angeles. Eugenie, a shrewd saver, bought houses a handful of times and sold them when the family was ready to trade up to a bigger house or a new neighborhood. Just as she probably would have in New Orleans, Viola kept her own young and growing family close to her mom, and the two generations often shared these homes. When the last of their five kids were just coming out of diapers, Henri and Viola decided to look for a home of their own. They found a run down house they hoped to renovate on a block populated with older White people in the Chesterfield Square neighborhood. It was near St. Brigid's Catholic Church, already a home parish to many Louisiana migrants just like themselves.

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[1] These are pseudonyms.

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When the real estate agent, cued by Viola and Henri's hard-to-categorize looks, tried to figure out whether he should sell to them or not based on their race, ambiguity won over and they eventually closed the sale on the house they planned to raise their five children in. Viola and Henri and the rest of their family considered themselves Creole, but in Los Angeles this really did not have the same currency as it did in New Orleans. Many migrants like Viola and Henri were in a new position—free from under the thumb of the southern brand of Jim Crow, but now facing different and sometimes more subtle forms of racism. They now had to decide how to explain to others what Creole was—that their backgrounds were a mix of racial and ethnic ancestries, often French, Spanish, Black, and Indian, along with a smattering of other European and non-European origins. When asked, sometimes saying one was from Louisiana was enough and other times it was not. In this post-War era saying one was Colored or Negro was sometimes met with incredulity, and other times it was accepted. For other migrants, ambiguity was not an issue and they were treated as Black persons, with all that it entailed. But nestled within the bustling center of the Louisiana migrant community—many, if not most of whom had this Creole connection—it often did not matter because people knew who you were. But outside of that core, what did this relatively obscure background mean in this new place—where Louisianans were living amongst many more thousands of other Black southerners who made their way to Los Angeles, and where they interacted with people of racial and ethnic groups they had never been exposed to before, and who themselves had never even met a Creole?

My own paternal grandparents were part of this migration out of Louisiana. And the experiences of my relatives and the people they knew were always so intriguing to me. The questions about identities, Creoles, and migration they provoked hung in the back of my mind over the years. And as I pursued my training as a sociologist I was continuously struck by the

fact that this migration experience spoke to many of the questions that were relevant to the sociological literature on how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and negotiated. This dissertation takes these early musings and explores the following research questions: How are racial and ethnic identities constructed and modified? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? More specifically, what did being from Louisiana, and for those who had the connection, being Creole mean in Los Angeles? How were the migration and settlement processes experienced by these migrants?

Beyond my own family's history of migration, this choice of case is analytically significant because of the complicated and historically three-tiered racial structure in Louisiana that grew out of racial and ethnic mixing over centuries of colonization and slavery. This history created a unique understanding of race and ethnicity, especially for people of color who lived there. In particular, the Louisiana Creole ancestry that most respondents in this study have a connection to is often racially and ethnically ambiguous in the U.S. context, especially outside Louisiana. Furthermore, Los Angeles was a major destination for Louisiana migrants during the Great Migration (Flamming 2005; Sides 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). California, and especially Los Angeles, were more racially and ethnically diverse than Louisiana, contributing to very different contexts in which to construct these identities.

The various branches of literature on how racial and ethnic identities are constructed do not individually cover the range of explanations that address the questions raised by this particular case. The complexity of the Creole case, particularly the aspects of racial mixture and migration within the United States, situates it at the nexus of research examining White ethnicities, Black identities, multiracial individuals, and immigration. These literatures point to a

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host of overlapping factors that can be used to construct identities such as external categorization; internal identification; racial and ethnic markers like phenotype or ancestry; class, socialization, and cultural exposure.

But this research also shows that these factors may be used in different ways depending on the group. For example, research on White ethnicities argues that multiple ancestries, and other racial markers like surnames and appearance can be used to construct identities, often in symbolic ways (Alba 1990; Gans 1979; Waters 1990). This literature often argues that this mode of constructing identity is not available to people of color, especially those with Black ancestry (Nagel 1994; Waters 1990). Concurring with that assessment, some research on African Americans has shown that non-Black ancestry is unimportant in how Black identities are constructed (Waters 1991). Yet, Creole individuals taken as an ethnic group within the Black racial category might produce different findings. Creoles are sometimes noted as exceptions in studies on African American racial and ethnic identities, but are at other times included in the African American category (see Smith and Moore 2000; see Waters 1991). Previous research on Louisiana Creoles as a group has shown that this ancestry as a whole, and the ancestries that compose it, are used as part of group narratives of Creole identity (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007).

Furthermore, research on African Americans has generally taken for granted that Black racial identities are constructed, although they are often adopted simultaneously as ethnic identities (Cornell and Hartmann 1998). However, recently more attention has been paid to how American Black identities are influenced by other factors like class and multiraciality (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Khanna 2011; Lacy 2007; Pattillo 2003; Pattillo-McCoy 1999; Smith and Moore 2000). For example, research on multiracial individuals shows that individual

parental ancestries are important for persons with mixed Black ancestry (Khanna 2011; Smith and Moore 2000). There are also many similarities in how identities are constructed and negotiated using racial markers such as appearance and surnames. So do Creoles construct multiracial identities? Can Creoles be explained by the multiracial literature? It is not quite clear. Some may occasionally use the multiracial framework, but the historical narrative of multigenerational racial and cultural mixture, and specific ties to a place where this identity emerged make it distinctly different from the experience of individual multiracial persons who have varied parental ancestries and do not share similar ties to one place.

It is in this regard that Creole experiences might be better accounted for by the contemporary immigration literature that focuses on identities constructed by immigrants who come from Latin and South American, Caribbean, and African countries. These immigrants come from places that often have national ideologies of racial mixture that occurred over generations (Bogac 2009; Duany 2002; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; C. Sue 2009; C. A. Sue 2009; Waters 1999). Their racial structures are such that racial identities, as well as social and economic mobility, are constructed on a spectrum; and for people in the mixed racial categories identity often depends on a combination of class status, skin color, and other factors and is not based on phenotype alone (Davis 1991; Duany 2002:241; Harris [1964] 1974; Hoetink 1985; Roth 2012; C. Sue 2009; C. A. Sue 2009; Sunshine 1985; Telles 2002; Van den Berghe 1967). Yet, those with Creole ancestry must contend with being raised in the American racial structure, which often does not recognize variation in American Black identities, while also being aware of a regional racial history that historically privileged this category of mixed persons. It is in this regard that this literature is an uneasy fit.

And what of the internal migration component of this case? Louisiana migrants, many

who were Creoles, moved from one region of the United States to another—a move from one place where their unique racial history was understood, or at least acknowledged, to another place where it was obscure. The ways that identities were constructed in Louisiana would not quite translate to this new setting with its own unique and diverse racial structure. On this point the contemporary immigration literature is useful. It accounts for immigrants' experiences adjusting to new racial structures. It also helps to account for any differences between first- and second-generation migrants, as it has been a main focus of this literature (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008; Waters 1999).

But none of these literatures quite capture the role that relationships with place might have in this experience. In the White ethnicities and Black identities literatures, the concern with place is often about socialization, cultural exposure, and authenticity in creating identities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Lacy 2004; Smith and Moore 2000; Waters 1990). Similarly, in the multiracial literature it is about how socialization and cultural exposure to Black or other non-Whites, or how more diverse contexts shape identities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000). Most often the multiracial literature does not consider the role of regional context in the ways that biracial identities are constructed (Khanna 2011). And the immigration literature suggests that place influences racial and ethnic identity construction through interpretation of home and host racial structures, interaction with other social actors, contexts of socialization, and changes in place which shift the meanings of these categories. It also suggests that migrants sometimes construct identities that are oriented toward their countries of origin while in their host countries, and place is taken for granted as part of how ethnic and racial labels are constructed (e.g. Dominican ethnicity references the country of Dominican Republic). These country-based identities are interpreted to be a result of

translation and reapplication of home racial structures to the new setting (Roth 2012). And they may sometimes be used as a way to distinguish themselves from being racialized in a negative way (Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). But what deeper meanings does place have in the migration experience, and how does that shape identity?

The Great Migration literatures and the literature on Louisianans and Creoles also both do not completely account for the complexities of this case. The sociological Great Migration literature usually does not focus on one specific state group. Louisianans are often just part of a collective of states represented in analyses, and with the unique history of Louisiana and Louisiana Creoles, this is an oversight. Furthermore, examination of the disaggregated experiences of migrating, settling, and constructing identities had by migrants has not been a mainstay of this literature (Boehm 2009; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000).

And the Creole literature also falls short in explaining the range of issues relevant to this case because it has been largely multidisciplinary, leaning heavily on historical research, journalism, and folklorist perspectives with less focus on sociological frameworks of explanation (Dormon 1996b; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Hirsch and Logsdon 1992; Kein 2000; Spitzer 1996). While Creole identities have been a topic of interest in this literature, this issue is often approached in a way that lacks systematic exploration of factors and patterns that influence identity construction (for exceptions, see Domínguez (1986), Gaudin (2005) and Woods (1972, 1989)). Furthermore, the focus of the literature on Creoles has stayed largely in Louisiana, despite the state's large out-migration during the Great Migration period. References to the migration are often only made in passing (for exceptions, see Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972, 1989).

As is often the case with sociological conundrums, the explanation of how race, ethnicity,

and place work together in the construction of identities in this case cannot be gained by consulting one body of literature. One solution to this dilemma, however, is including literature that focuses specifically on place. This literature is broad, and touches on a myriad of aspects of social life (Gieryn 2000). One subarea that provides the analytic tools to examine this case further detail is that of place attachment and place identity, a literature that often addresses changes in, or losses of place, which is highly relevant to this case. Place attachment is an emotional connection to a physical place that results from experiences and interactions in that locale (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Hummon 1992:262; Kyle and Chick 2007; Low and Altman 1992; Milligan 1998, 2003; Trentelman 2009). Place identity is "an interpretation of self that uses environmental meaning to symbolize or situate identity" (Cuba and Hummon 1993a:548). This meaning is influenced by experiences and interactions in specific environments/locales/places (Hochschild 2010:622).

But much of the place attachment literature that focuses on short-term migrants, recreational visitors, disaster victims, and residents of neighborhoods where changes in the place are occurring, does not consider how place influences how racial and ethnic identities might be constructed (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cox and Perry 2011; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Gieryn 2000; Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Lewicka 2008; Ocejo 2011; Trentelman 2009; Williams et al. 1992). Some studies use concepts from the literature on place attachment and place identity and apply it immigration, but racial and ethnic identities are not usually the focus—it is more about the immigration and immigrant identities (King et al. 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). And most studies in the sociological vein that use work on place attachment and place identity do so in a more peripheral manner, and often do not examine the mechanisms that are at work in constructing and maintaining them (e.g., Borer

2010; Hochschild 2010; Kato 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b; cf. Milligan 1998; cf. Milligan 2003; Ocejo 2011).

This dissertation bridges these disparate literatures and argues that racial and ethnic identity can be a product of the interplay between local and national racial structures and meanings, collective memory and nostalgia, and place-based interaction. The rest of this chapter and Chapter 2 will continue to lay the groundwork for the analysis found in the dissertation. I next discuss in more detail the context for the research. Then I describe the current study, including a review of the methodology and data used in this dissertation. Finally I provide an overview of the remaining substantive and concluding chapters of the dissertation.

THE GREAT MIGRATION, LOS ANGELES, AND LOUISIANA CREOLES

In this dissertation I contribute to answering the question about how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and affected by mixed ancestry and migration through an examination of the experiences of Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles. But why study Louisiana migrants in this location? There are three important reasons: first, the Great Migration created a mass movement of people and circumstances that would provide new arenas for the construction and negotiation of identities. Second, Los Angeles was a unique destination for the Great Migration economically, as well as racially. And third, Louisiana migrants made up a great proportion of the new Black residents in Los Angeles during this period. Louisiana's racial history provides a complex and sociologically intriguing context from which its migrants moved and had to that point constructed their racial and ethnic identities. In the process of answering the questions about racial and ethnic identities, this dissertation also contributes to answering questions about how the migration and settlement processes were experienced by these migrants, and what being from Louisiana, and for those who had the connection, being Creole could mean in Los Angeles.

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The remainder of this section provides an overview of the case and how the previous literature has answered these questions.

The Great Migration

The Great Migration moved millions of Black people from the South and dispersed them throughout several northern and western states. During the first period of the Great Migration (approximately 1910s-1930s) almost two million Black people left the South (Boehm 2009; Gregory 2005; Marks 1989; Sides 2003). In the second period that began in the 1940s with World War II (sometimes called the Second Great Migration), approximately four to five million Black people left the South (Boehm 2009; cf. Gregory 2005; Lemann 1991; Sides 2003). Southern Black migrants were from both urban and rural areas of their home states (Marks 1989; Sides 2003; Tolnay 2003). The migrants were more positively selected than those who stayed, with higher education and literacy rates, but there was also diversity among their characteristics (Marks 1989; Tolnay 1998, 2003).

Black migrants left the South mainly to escape limited economic opportunities and stifling social conditions. Economic opportunities for Black people were lacking partly because the changes in agricultural business caused by environmental blights, but also because of the limited manufacturing and other non-agricultural jobs available to Blacks in the South (Gregory 2005; Lemann 1991; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003). In northern and western regions of the United States, opportunities opened up because of reduced European immigration and two world wars (Eichenlaub et al. 2010; Marks 1989; Sides 2003; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). The social and political conditions in the South were also important push factors. Limited educational opportunities, political disenfranchisement, segregation, and racial violence were also important reasons that propelled migrants away from their hometowns (Eichenlaub et al.

2010; Gregory 2005; Lemann 1991; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay and Beck 1990, 1992).

The majority of migrants went to northern cities, especially in the first phase of the Great Migration, but eventually western destinations also became important. Places like Chicago, New York, Detroit, and Philadelphia received the most migrants (Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003). Northern employers were short on workers with the virtual cessation of southern and eastern European immigration and the industrial boom related to World War I and actively recruited Black southerners to fill their empty positions (Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). During the second phase, western destinations began to attract more migrants (Gregory 2005; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). The defense industries that boomed during World War II were a great draw to northern and southern California (Flamming 2005; Gregory 2005; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003; Taylor 1998; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006).

The migration streams that developed were also partially related to the ways that migrants left. Train lines and highways to the North were usually linking points of origin in the South to their destinations (Lemann 1991; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Wilkerson 2010). Similarly, the western bound train lines and highways linked migrants from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas and other states to California (Flamming 2005; Gregory 1989, 2005; Sides 2003; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006).

The migration streams were also shaped by who had gone before, because migrant networks provided encouragement, housing, jobs, and information for new migrants (Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003; Wilkerson 2010). Family members, friends, and the existence of a Black community were important factors in the decision of where to go (Hine 1991; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Price-

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Spratlen 1998; Tolnay 2003). In internal labor migrations, like international ones, distance and transportation options often limited the prior exposure to the destination and most of those who left the South did not have much personal knowledge of their destinations (cf.MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; cf. Marks 1989). But the benefits of and approaches to migrating were passed along "lines of communication" from those who had gone first to people back home (Hine 1991; Marks 1989:20; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003). These migrants who had pioneered the move provided information about housing and job opportunities, and often a temporary place to stay while getting settled, so subsequent migrants often followed (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemann 1991; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003). In addition to providing a network of housing and other practical resources for migrants, friends and family who paved the way in advance were a social support network, even if just by example (Marks 1989; Tilly 1970). Furthermore, concentrations within an established Black community provided resources and institutions (such as NAACP and Urban League chapters, ethnic presses, and churches) that served the migrants and provided a draw to a given location (Marks 1989; Price-Spratlen 1998).

Going to Los Angeles

Los Angeles became a prominent destination during the second large-scale migration from the South (Flamming 2005; Gregory 2005; Sides 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). This period was bracketed in the beginning with the World War II era, and roughly includes the 1940s through 1970, although there were smaller numbers of Black migrants making Los Angeles their home in the pre-War era (Flamming 2005; Robinson 2010; Sides 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). Los Angeles was one of the most promising destinations for Black migrants during this era (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). The old-line population of Black residents was relatively wealthy, Black businesses developed and flourished at higher rates, and home

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ownership was high compared to other destinations (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). The wartime defense industries, shipping, manufacturing, and new construction were economic boons attracting new migrants (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). Migrants from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, and Georgia gradually flooded Los Angeles during these two periods, with Texas and Louisiana being the largest contributors (Flamming 2005; Robinson 2010; Sides 2003). By 1950, over 200,000 Black migrants lived in Los Angeles, and more were coming (Rutkoff and Scott 2010:307).

A large proportion of Black migrants settled in the central city area (Flamming 2005; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). As with the other streams in the Great Migration and some international migrations, migration chain support networks contributed to residential concentrations of interstate migrants (Bond 1936; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Phillips 1999; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay 2003; Wilkerson 2010). Parallel to the Italian village/Little Italy patterns found among Italian immigrants in the United States, state-based concentrations were noted in various neighborhood areas of Los Angeles (Bond 1936; Flamming 2005; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). In the beginning of the twentieth century, Black southern migrants to Los Angeles generally settled near Central Avenue, south of Downtown, which at that time was called the Eastside (Flamming 2005:68; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). (See Figure 1.) By the 1940s, Black residents began to move westward as real estate opportunities opened up with legal actions lifting some discriminatory housing restrictions (Chapple 2010; Flamming 2005:98; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010).

Racially, California (and the West more broadly) was a very different destination compared to the northern industrial cities that the majority of migrants flocked to (Rutkoff and
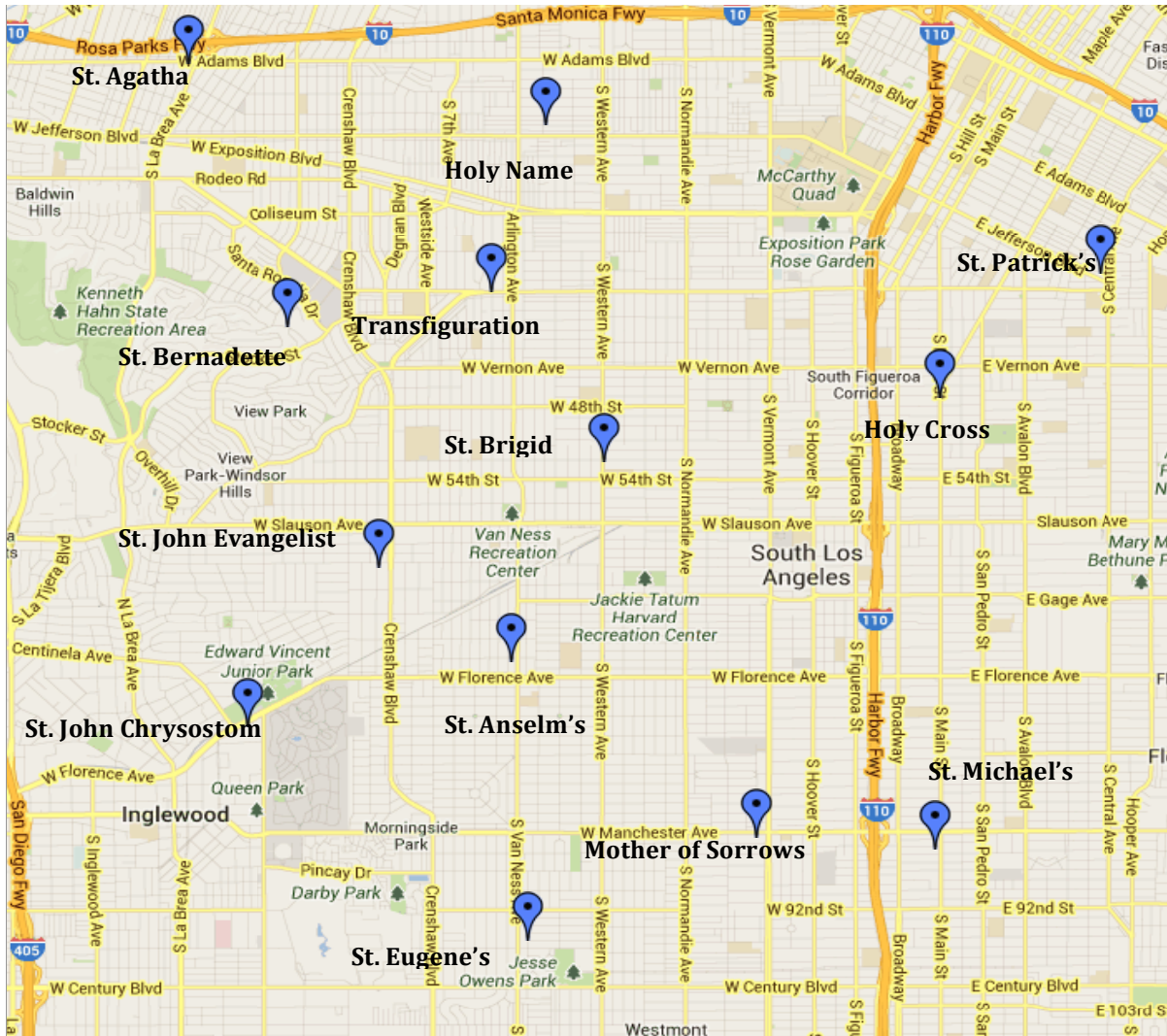
Figure 1. Map of Los Angeles Neighborhood and Catholic Parishes

Scott 2010; Sides 2003; Tolnay and Eichenlaub 2006). Historically, it had a diverse population

and its own racial and ethnic conflicts and continuum; the population included people of various

ancestries, including Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Mexican, Black, Apache, Italian, Jewish, Irish,

Greek, only to name a few (Almaguer 1994; Limerick 1987; McWilliams 1945; Rutkoff and

Scott 2010; Sanchez 1993). The diverse history of colonization, cooperation, and conflict across

racial and ethnic boundaries would continue to be a part of Los Angeles's development in years

to come (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sanchez 1993; Sides 2003). Despite the wartime production

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industries providing previously unavailable economic opportunities for Black migrants, a historic pattern of competition with other groups of color presented a unique context in the West compared to other destinations of the Great Migration (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). For example, Black workers experienced concentrated competition with Mexican workers who were located above them in a "tripartite racial hierarchy" that included White, Mexican, and Black workers (Sides 2003:41).

Sociological accounts of the Great Migration out of the American South tend to frame it aggregately as a story of demographic shifts, push and pull factors, labor migration, assimilation, the pathologies of urban living, residential segregation, or Black entrepreneurship (Basu and Werbner 2001; Blauner 2001; Frazier 1939; Gregory 2005; Lieberson 1980; Logan and Molotch 1987; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000). However, relatively less is known about sociological factors that shaped other aspects of migrants' everyday experiences, why destinations were chosen, how migrants from specific states settled in their new cities, how migrants constructed identities, or how the second generation of this migration understood the phenomena (Boehm 2009; Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Price-Spratlen 2008; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000). This is especially the case for the second phase of the Great Migration, which has been comparatively overlooked (Boehm 2009; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Oral history has been identified as a crucial data source for answering these kinds of questions (Boehm 2009; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003).

Furthermore, as noted for the literature on Black Americans more generally, in the sociological literature on the Great Migration there is also not much attention paid to the variation in racial and ethnic identities and culture of the Black interstate migrants in their new

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setting, despite the South being such a distinct region (Gregory 2005). The assumption is that African American identities are a given for Black migrants. Yet, individual states were no doubt sources of their own distinct identities and cultures, yet the story is usually told in terms of the more homogenous "southern," "Black," or "African American" experience. Some of the historical literature does make claims, if sometimes cursory, about how southernness was transplanted or how southern or migrant identities developed, but there is often not much on state distinctions within the identities of migrants (Gregory 2005; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sernett 1997). In addition, as the literature on place attachment and place identity suggests, there would likely be interactional and emotional processes that would develop during migration and resettlement in response to the disruption of and reestablishing ties to people and the places they left. These gaps suggest that there is room for further research on Black migration during this period that can contribute to answering the broader questions about how racial and ethnic identities are constructed, how interstate migration affects that process, and how the migration and settlement processes were experienced by specific groups of migrants.

Louisiana Migrants, Louisiana Creoles

Louisiana was the second largest source of southern Black migrants in Los Angeles during this period (Flamming 2005; Sides 2003). Louisiana contributed 18.8 percent of the Black migrants to Los Angeles, just behind Texas (Sides 2003:38). While not all Louisiana migrants who came to Los Angeles during the great migration were Creole some estimate that thousands of Louisiana Creole migrants came to Los Angeles and created a significant urban concentration (Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Woods 1989). Some of these reports offer that approximately 15,000 people from Louisiana moved to Los Angeles after World War II and created the largest community of Creoles outside of Louisiana (George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott

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2010; Woods 1972, 1989). Below, I define Creole and briefly discuss the conditions in Louisiana that led to the emergence of this group. Then I discuss the more contemporary research on their status in both Louisiana and in locations outside of the state, primarily Los Angeles.

The terms Creole, Louisiana Creole, or Creole of Color are generally understood to refer to people from Louisiana who putatively have African, French, Spanish, and Native American ancestry (Dormon 1996a; Hall 1992a; Jolivétte 2007). Because of their shared African ancestry and the American reliance on the one-drop rule, Louisiana Creoles of Color have often experienced similar structural circumstances as the wider American Black community (Davis 1991). But this ancestral mixture has contributed to the phenotypically varied and racially ambiguous appearance of many members, although certainly not all (Davis 1991; Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007). Thus, the Creole of Color identity was also historically used by many to hierarchically differentiate themselves from the larger Black population—though not unproblematically (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005).

The complex and sometimes ambiguous racial identity associated with Creoles emerged as a result of the extensive and significant history of slavery and colonialism in North America, particularly unique in Louisiana where a prolonged French and Spanish colonial influence shaped the racial structure and social relations. The ethnic and racial identities of Creoles in Louisiana have been socially constructed and changed by sociohistorical processes that have occurred since Louisiana's colonization by the French in 1718. The term Creole did not initially differentiate racial categories but rather New World nativity and European ancestry in response to forces of Americanization after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Native-born inhabitants of the Louisiana territory (White and of color) used it to distinguish themselves from the influx of new American settlers (Brasseaux et al. 1994:xi-xiii; Domínguez 1986:121-126; Hall 1992a). Slaves

or people with African ancestry, but born in the New World, were also called Creole by some (Brasseaux et al. 1994:xi-xiii; Brathwaite 1971:xv; Domínguez 1986; Hall 1992a:157-159). However, over time the term Creole of Color was used to refer to a Creole of mixed racial ancestry. Members of this group had been recognized as part of a middle category in a three-tiered racial structure (Black, free people of color, and White) (Domínguez 1986).

The social structure that recognized Creoles of Color as separate from Black slaves progressively disintegrated as the American period continued, and the impending Civil War drew closer, broke out, and came to a close (Domínguez 1986). Racial distinctions produced with the Creole category became more significant because Creoles of Color did not fit in the American binary system of Black and White. White Louisianans drew sharp racial distinctions between themselves and the Creole of Color population. Concerted efforts to define Creole as a purely White group proliferated in the public sphere. In turn, after the Civil War the Creole of Color population, formerly distinguished legally from Black slaves, lost its status as a separate group and many sought to preserve their separate status by asserting the superiority of Creole culture and social location compared to the wider, and now free, Black population (Brasseaux et al. 1994; Hanger 1996). Creoles of Color defined their group and constructed their distinct cultural traits using a narrative of mixed racial ancestry, particularly the greater-emphasized French and/or Spanish colonial ancestry (Brasseaux et al. 1994; Domínguez 1986; Hanger 1996). Creole identity was thus constructed in ways similar to those described with respect to the construction of Whiteness in the United States, with the constant shifting and redefining of boundaries in order to dominate groups perceived as subordinate (Conzen et al. 1992; Foley 1997; Nagel 1994; Roediger 1999; Takaki 2000; Waters 1990). It is also similar to how contemporary Black-ancestry immigrants often attempt to distance themselves from the wider African American

population (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999).

In twentieth-century Louisiana, the Creole practice of boundary marking based in local status relations continued (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a). Two racial groups of Creoles, Black and White, separately and persistently continued to assert this identity (Domínguez 1986:149-151, 262, 263). With respect to the Creole of Color community, some persons with Creole ties chose not to adopt a separatist stance and blend in with the larger Black community, especially during and after the Civil Rights period (Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005). Others have maintained distinctive communities in Louisiana well after the Civil Rights and Black Pride eras, which included continuing endogamy and exclusivity, an indication that they continued to maintain boundaries drawn between them and others (Dormon 1996a:170; Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972). People in the wider Black population (a group that Creoles often distanced themselves from) often had a negative reaction toward Creole exclusivity and Creoles experienced social marginality from that source (Dormon 1996a:171). A revitalization of Creole identity came about in the 1980s and 1990s in response to White Cajun/Acadian ethnic revitalization in the 1970s, solidifying boundaries between those two groups and their respective ethnic movements (Dormon 1996a:172-178). However, based on these data from the 1970s and 1980s, some researchers predicted that Creole would wane in usage and get lost in a Black/White dichotomy (Domínguez 1986:181; Dormon 1996a). Other predictions expected that some level of Creole identity continuity would be maintained (Woods 1972). The published research past this point in time diminishes, leaving open a gap for newer work (e.g., Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Parham 2008, 2012).

Several other features characterized Creole of Color communities in the late nineteenth-through the twentieth-century Louisiana. Like many people in the state, Creoles were also

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traditionally a Catholic group (Domínguez 1986:223; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1989). In addition to church involvement at largely Creole parishes, they participated in their own social institutions such as social and pleasure clubs and Mardi Gras clubs (Domínguez 1986:223-224, 257-258; Dormon 1996a:167; Gaudin 2005:95-96; Hirsch 1992:266). These social institutions often contributed to insulated and close-knit communities (Gaudin 2005). Some of the most notable urban concentrations were in the Seventh Ward and Tremé neighborhoods of New Orleans (Anthony 1978, 2000; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005). Cane River, a more rural area near Natchitoches, was another notable, and some claim the original, Creole settlement (Woods 1972). Cultural practices such as culinary and music traditions, and Creole and/or French language heritage also provided solidarity amongst Creoles, although there are intrastate regional differences as well (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a:171-172; Gaudin 2005:14; Jolivétte 2007; Spitzer 1996).[2] For example, some have noted that rural Creoles tend to identify more traditionally and separately as Creoles, and urban Creoles tend to be more Black-identified (Dormon 1996a; Woods 1972).

By the latter part of the twentieth century, Creole concentrations diminished. Urban decline and renewal, changes in the economy, cross-country migration, desegregation, and suburbanization led to the dispersal of many Creoles (Gaudin 2005). Economic shifts in the rural areas led to movement throughout the state and beyond (Woods 1972). The Seventh Ward in New Orleans emptied out after the Great Migration streams and suburbanization evened out (Gaudin 2005). African Americans moved into these formerly Creole spaces (Gaudin 2005).

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[2] The Louisiana Creole language is a dialect of the French language that emerged as a result of interactions between African slaves and French-speaking colonists in the New World (Mosadomi 2000). Some note several types of Louisiana Creole, but in this dissertation I use Louisiana Creole or Creole French (Domínguez 1986; Mosadomi 2000). By the war years of the twentieth century, use of French and Creole in Louisiana waned (Domínguez 1986; Hall 1992b; Valdman 1996).

Hurricane Katrina capped of the demographic shifts in the city, causing some concern among its remaining Creoles about the fate of the culture (Parham 2008).

Creoles Outside of Louisiana

Most scholarship focuses on Creoles in Louisiana, and the literature that addresses Creoles outside of Louisiana is more sparse—it is often journalistic, not widely published, or not based on recent fieldwork (e.g., Anthony 1995 cited in Daniel 2002:86-88; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Woods 1989). Historical studies on southern out-migration and Black communities in Los Angeles include minor accounts of Louisianan and Creole experiences, but ultimately classify Creoles somewhat uncritically within the African American community, overlooking some of the nuances of their experiences (e.g., Flamming 2005; Sides 2003).

However, the research that does exist has documented some of the reasons for migration out of Louisiana and to Los Angeles. Louisiana Creoles joined the mass migration north and west during the second phase of the Great Migration for many of the same reasons that other Black Americans did. They were escaping economic decline in farming, searching for economic improvement and better education, and fleeing racial discrimination, political exclusion, and violence (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Woods 1972). More specific push factors in New Orleans included the slowing of the building industry, a key employment source for Creole tradesmen (Gaudin 2005). On the destination end, an increase in building, defense industry jobs, military deployment, the employment connections for Pullman Porters (Los Angeles was the end of the line), and a comparatively freer racial structure contributed to the making Los Angeles a desirable location (Gaudin 2005; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003; Woods 1972). (See Chapter 3 for more on how Los Angeles was chosen and experienced as a destination.)

This literature has also found that these Louisiana migrants tended to create enclaves in

their destination city (Flamming 2005; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989). By the 1950s, the Los Angeles enclave was located in the center of the city within the larger Black concentration, with most of the businesses and two key Catholic churches located on or near Jefferson Boulevard, in proximity to the intersection of Exposition Boulevard and Crenshaw Boulevard (Gaudin 2005; George 1992). The residential settlement stretched north toward West Adams Boulevard, east toward Central Avenue, south toward the city of Inglewood, and west toward South La Brea Avenue (See Figure 1). (See Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of the Los Angeles enclave.)

The research on migration out of Louisiana has reported some cultural continuity across locations. This was the case for a study of 109 Creole youth raised in migrant "colonies" outside of major Louisiana Creole enclaves in the 1970s through 1980s (Woods 1989). Traditional Creole values were still found among Creole youth raised in Los Angeles, Chicago, Texas, and various sites within Louisiana indicating Creole cultural continuity; these values include an emphasis on homeland (in Louisiana), Catholic religious beliefs, and family (Woods 1989:123-127). However, knowledge of Creole heritage was more limited for those who lived further away compared to Creole youth who lived in closer proximity to the hometown in Louisiana (p. 39). Creole identity was at least partially dependent on how insular social institutions were in those colonies. Ironically, in the largest and more racially diverse colony on the west coast, the migrant enclave was the densest and Catholic retention the strongest (p. 38), yet, the out-marriage rate was highest and the rate of Catholic Church marriages was lowest (p. 59). For the participants who were knowledgeable about their ancestry, the combination of socialization outside of Louisiana and the Black Power movement created a somewhat different understanding of Blackness and Creole identity compared to the previous generation. While demographic

indicators of cultural retention such as endogamy and church weddings reveals something about cultural retention, they do not cover the range of ways that Creole identity might manifest itself among second generation migrants.

The limited research illustrates varying identification patterns. For some, being Creole in Los Angeles means having an African American identity; others have maintained a separate Creole ethnicity (often in a complementary way rather than in the traditionally hierarchical way in Louisiana); and still others acknowledge a multiracial identity (Anthony 1995 cited in Daniel 2002:86-88; George 1992; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989). Jolivétte's (2007) recent study focuses on Native American identity among Louisiana Creoles settled across the country. He views Creole and Native American identities as primarily cultural, but also the result of racial processes (p. 36). However, his focus group and interview data conducted with Creole activists at conferences may ignore the everyday interpretations of identity and focuses only on those who are more invested (personally or politically) in a Creole identity. Louisiana Creole migrants maintained a degree of identity and community continuity and connection to their home state after moving from one physical environment to another (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Jolivétte 2007:63; Woods 1989). Some patterns that contributed to this continuity during the Great Migration period were continuous migration streams, sustained involvement with the Catholic church, and traditions such as zydeco dancing, Creole cooking, and social clubs (DeWitt 2008; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Jolivétte 2007:61; Woods 1989). Despite the research pointing to these migration and residential patterns, and cultural practices as contributing to continuity, there has not been much in-depth sociological analysis of how any one of these features helped to accomplish this task, nor has the research focused on how place figures into this process.

In light of the literature reviewed thus far, strategies of boundary construction and

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maintenance associated with Louisiana, Creole, and Black identities are likely to be different when moving from one geographic space and context to another (Gaudin 2005). Creole identity in Los Angeles, if it is used, likely takes a somewhat different trajectory in its construction and negotiation because it has been moved out of the original context and racial hierarchy from which it emerged. For example, persons with Black and Creole ancestry from Louisiana likely had to explain their identities differently in Los Angeles where multiple ethnic and racial groups coexisted such as Asian, Latinos, other Black persons, and Whites in contrast to Louisiana where a three-tiered racial hierarchy historically existed on a continuum of Black/Colored/White (Gaudin 2005; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). This makes the study of Louisiana migrant, Black, and Creole identities in Los Angeles particularly relevant to the questions of how race and ethnicity are constructed, and how mixed ancestry, migration, and place shape those processes. To my knowledge, no study or case bridges all of these elements in a systematic way. In this dissertation I take on this research problem.

CURRENT STUDY

In this dissertation I analyze the construction of racial, ethnic, and place identities among first- and second-generation Louisiana migrants who came to Los Angeles during the 1940s to the 1970s. Using data from in-depth life history interviews, I argue that racial and ethnic identity in this case is a product of the interplay between local and national racial structures and meanings, collective memory and nostalgia, and place-based interaction. Migrants established an enclave that supported collective memory and collective nostalgia for Louisiana through Louisiana-centered interaction. This contributed to place attachments and identifications associated with Louisiana that were used to modify the Black and Creole racial and ethnic identities of migrants in Los Angeles. While this dissertation answers questions about a historical migration and

identity in the mid-twentieth century, it is also a study of identity in the early twenty-first century when the interviews were conducted. The dissertation forms a nuanced account of how some American-born persons with Black ancestry construct their identities. It also reveals how migration from one location to another and relationships to place influence the social meanings of racial and ethnic identities. The study also contributes to understanding the meaning and usage of Creole in Los Angeles.

My findings show that the majority of Louisiana migrants in this study who have Black ancestry also have a connection to Creole ancestry. Through the in-depth interviews with Louisiana migrants in their own homes and communities, the dissertation demonstrates the multiple ways that Black and Creole ancestries are understood in relation to each other, and how they are used to construct identities. Creole ancestry has been described as a historically multiracial ethnic group, meaning a group that has emerged as a result of generations of mixture of putatively distinct racial groups (in this case, mostly Black, White, and Native American/indigenous) and distinct ethnic groups (for example, French, Spanish, or Chickapee) resulting from colonization and slavery in North America (Jolivétte 2007). This view recognizes attributes associated with both race and ethnicity (Jolivétte 2007; Nagel 1994:152-153). But it also must be viewed as an ethnic group *within* the larger Black racial category. The power of race and racialization as Black people in the lives of most migrants with Creole ancestry has positioned it as such. Most of the migrants in this study constructed Black identities modified with Creole and Louisiana-based identities.[3] A smaller proportion of migrants had Creole-only,

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[3] Most migrants preferred the use of Black to African American, although they used the latter in official contexts, such as when filling out forms. As a reflection of that preference, and as a way to recognize the diverse regional and cultural origins of Black-ancestry groups in the United States, I most often use the term Black.

Based on my findings, persons with significant Creole ancestry often identify as Black *and* Creole. As a form of shorthand, I may refer to my respondents who identify in this way as Black and/or Creole, or Black/Creole. I

or Black-only identities, but Louisiana-based identities were important for these migrants as well. In addition to the factors associated with racialization, identities were constructed using a combination of ancestry, visible ethnic and racial markers (such as surnames, phenotype, and culture), and place-based factors.

By taking on this case and asking the questions that I do in this dissertation, my intent is to problematize the common conceptions of how racial and ethnic identities are constructed in the United States by persons with Black ancestry. This contributes to exposing the power that these social categories bear for them. In studying the Creole case within the context of internal migration I must acknowledge that in important ways many migrants with Creole ties were relatively privileged in the Great Migration story. Some of that privilege comes as a byproduct of the racial ambiguity experienced by many persons who have ties to Creole ancestry, and mobilized historically by members of the group. Some benefitted from that privilege more than others—sometimes occasionally, sometimes more regularly. On the other hand, there were those who could not or refused to benefit from the advantages offered by a racial hierarchy that privileges Whiteness and denigrates Blackness. By examining Creoles I illuminate the processes of how and when societal categorization occur, and how it is experienced. So while this study is examining Black ethnic diversity, it is not ignoring the role of race in this process (Pierre 2004). While this study is saying something about Blackness, it cannot and does not make a claim to representing "the Black experience," as I think no research endeavor or individual can.

Next, I turn to the qualitative research methods and description of the data that I use in this dissertation. Following that I provide an overview of the remainder of the dissertation.

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also leave the term Creole open for respondents who only identify as Creole (in some cases French Creole or American Creole). This choice is a contrast to those respondents who may also or only identify as Black or African American.

METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANTS

This dissertation draws on data from a study of 47 life histories recollected by Louisiana migrants and children of migrants who arrived in Los Angeles as part of the second phase of the Great Migration, a period that spanned from the late 1930s through 1970s. In these interviews migrants recalled their experiences in Louisiana, migrating to, settling in, and living in Los Angeles from the migration period to the present day.

I recruited the participants by establishing contacts at Louisiana-related events, organizations, businesses, through personal contacts, and through snowball sampling. The public events were festivals related to Mardi Gras celebrations or otherwise celebrating Louisiana food or music, and held at various venues in Los Angeles County. These included the annual Long Beach Bayou Festival, the annual Crawfish Festival, the annual Simi Valley Cajun & Creole Music Festival, the annual Mardi Gras at the Farmers Market in Los Angeles, and a Mardi Gras celebration at Uncle Darrow's restaurant in Marina Del Rey. I also attended a post-Hurricane Katrina revival performance of the play, *Inside the Creole Mafia* (Broyard and Smith 2006). My recruitment methods at the events included randomly approaching patrons, introducing myself, and passing out a flyer which called for "Louisiana migrants" and their children in Los Angeles, leaving the racial and ethnic identities open for respondents to define in the interviews. I also wrote up ethnographic fieldnotes for each of these events.

Furthermore, I also cold-contacted individuals at organizations and businesses like the Southern California Louisiana State University Alumni Association, the Creole Networking Enterprise website, and restaurants like Harold & Belle's, Uncle Darrow's, and La Louisianne. I provided the same recruitment materials to these individuals through regular mail or email.

I also gained access to potential participants through personal contacts like friends and

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family who knew about my research and knew of persons who were from Louisiana. For example, some UCLA faculty members, fellow graduate students, and coworkers in my personal network who knew of someone whose family was from Louisiana or who migrated themselves offered to pass on my recruitment materials, usually via email. However, I chose not to recruit through my Louisiana-origin family so that I could ensure a greater variety of respondents.

The snowball sampling was facilitated through approximately six nodes that were created from the above recruitment methods. With every contact that I made, whether or not the individual ended up interviewing with me, I asked if they would pass on my research information to others they knew. When I met someone in person, I always provided a handful of extra flyers to pass on. Some participants gave me the names and contact information of potential interviewees. Others passed on my flyer to people they knew. Some emailed their friends, family, and acquaintances on my behalf, sometimes forwarding my recruitment flyer as an attachment. And some participants would call a potential interviewee on the spot and ask if they were interested in participating.

My efforts at recruiting were sometimes aided by my status as a grandchild of New Orleans migrants. I disclosed this status in many of my introduction emails where my recruitment materials were attached. On some occasions, participants recognized my first and/or last name as familiar Louisiana names, or interviewees knew members of my family. However, many times respondents did not ask about this until the end of the interview.

Qualitative interviews are a useful method for collecting data on interpretations of and reactions to human processes and events in people's everyday lives (Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Schatzman and Strauss 1973; Weiss 1994:9-10). They can get at the meaning that actors attribute to a given social reality or phenomena, especially those that are not bounded by specific physical

settings, such as identity (Kleinman et al. 1994; Schatzman and Strauss 1973). Although this study examines a specific destination for Louisiana migrants, there is no longer a physical center, such as a bustling neighborhood, where participant observations of daily life would yield data on the questions at hand. Furthermore, identity is one of the key questions of this study, and the interview method allows for respondents to reflect on the processes of construction, meaning, and salience of various kinds of identities (Kleinman et al. 1994).

Thus, I used an interview guide based on a life history format to facilitate narratives spanning the respondents' experiences from childhood to the present day (Bertaux and Kohli 1984). I chose this format to capture both the historical aspects of this migration experience and as a way to recognize the value of the respondents' perspectives on phenomena occurring in their own lives and as historical sources in their own right (Bertaux and Kohli 1984; Kleinman et al. 1994; Perks and Thomson 1998). I phrased the open-ended questions so that respondents were free to structure the narrative of their life story (Bertaux and Kohli 1984). I asked respondents to "tell me about…" various aspects of their lives to elicit accounts of migration, work, community, neighborhood, group membership, identity, religious and holiday traditions, and family practices at various points in their life history. The questions asked first-generation respondents to recount pre- and post-migration experiences, and asked the children of migrants to recount comparable experiences living in Los Angeles from childhood through adulthood. This method allowed respondents' narratives to clarify the roles of race, ethnicity, generation, and place in shaping their identities over the course of their lives in Louisiana and Los Angeles. I digitally recorded the interviews and transcribed them. The lengths of the interview sessions were on average three hours. Some follow-up interviews were conducted and lasted approximately two hours. Most interviews were held in respondents' homes. Occasionally I met respondents at another location

of their choosing. In two cases, I interviewed respondents via telephone. I also wrote fieldnotes about the events before and after interviews.

Because of the historical significance of this project, I also approached this project as a hybrid oral history endeavor. The life history approach described above lent itself well to this goal, documenting the stories of migrants. Furthermore, interviewees were also given the option to donate their oral histories to the UCLA Center for Oral History Research. The respondents were advised that this was completely voluntary, and that it was an endeavor separate from the dissertation. The donation of interviews would take place after the completion of the dissertation.

However, I kept the traditional practice in sociology of using pseudonyms for all respondents, and the people they refer to if their relationship would reveal respondents' identities.[4] On the other hand, in line with the oral history goals of the dissertation, when names were used generally and did not reveal any compromising details, or in reference to publicly known persons (like business owners) I did not use pseudonyms. Furthermore, the names of streets, neighborhoods, and places like churches, schools, and businesses were also retained unless they could be used to reveal the identity of a respondent (for example when reciting a home street address).

Respondents identify themselves in racial and ethnic terms that fall into the broad categories of Black (6 percent), Black/Creole (77 percent), Creole (15 percent), and White (2 percent) (See Table 1). Most migrants (45 of 47) in the study claim some connection to the Louisiana Creole community through ancestry, culture, or language—the analysis in this

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[4] Pseudonyms would also be used on the labels of oral history donations, however, the content of the recording would not be altered.

dissertation focuses mostly on their interview data.[5] Within their narratives, most participants

with this background often speak of Creoles interchangeably with Louisiana migrants. I

interviewed 25 first-generation and 22 second-generation Louisianans; 28 were women and 19

were men. The age of respondents ranged from 39 to 87 years old. Most of the interviewees or at

least one parent came from the New Orleans area (34 of 47). There were also some families

hailing from the city and rural regions in and around Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Eunice, Lake

Charles, Natchitoches, and Shreveport. All of my interviewees have been residents of Los

Angeles County, and most lived within the enclave located in the center of Los Angeles some

time during their lives.

Table 1. Study Participants by Racial/Ethnic Identity Category and Generation

	First Generation	Second Generation	TOTAL
Black	2	1	**3**
Black/Creole	20	16	**36**
Creole	2	5	**7**
White	1	0	**1**
TOTAL	**25**	**22**	**47**

The analysis strategy included transcribing relevant parts of the interviews, reviewing the

audio and transcripts for accuracy and content, doing preliminary coding, and writing analytic

memos on codes and themes while collecting data, then returning to focused analysis after

preliminary themes were identified. I employed a combination of transcribing interviews myself

and using professional transcription services. After transcriptions were completed and verified

for accuracy, I entered the data files into ATLAS.ti software, which is an electronic data

management and coding program. The software allows users to create codes, write memos,

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[5] I interviewed one Italian American first-generation respondent but I was unable to find any other respondents who identified in this way or more generally as White. This could be a result of the snowball sampling, or an indication of the prevalence of people of color migrating during this period. There was one first-generation Black respondent who did not claim any connection to the Creole community, ancestry, or language.

perform searches, and create filters in order to facilitate analysis. Using the software, I coded and

analyzed transcripts for themes grounded in the data and informed by the literature (Charmaz

2001). I was the only analyst on this project, but I refined and built on the codes from the first

round of analysis through continued focused coding, returning to the data to check emerging

patterns. This allowed for multiple passes at the data. These were documented and elaborated

upon in research memos, which permitted themes to emerge that informed subsequent analyses

(Charmaz 2001; Emerson et al. 1995; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Weiss 1994).

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

In Chapter 2, I further examine the literature on race, ethnicity, and place that informs my

analysis of the research questions. I explore how the data answer the research questions in three

substantive chapters. Chapter 3 contributes to answering the questions: How were the migration

and settlement processes experienced? What did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? I

demonstrate that Louisiana migrants created a Louisiana-centered enclave in Los Angeles, within

the larger Black migrant concentration in the city. I argue that two related mechanisms in Los

Angeles, interaction with the migrant community and Louisiana-centered interaction in Los

Angeles were important aspects of a residential, church, and business concentration in Los

Angeles. I also show how the concentration in turn helped to reinforce collective memory and

collective nostalgia for Louisiana, setting the stage to restore migrants' place attachment (see

Chapter 5). This was particularly important for the second generation's perception of the

migration that brought their families to Los Angeles. In addition, I show how the more

traditionally analyzed factors of migration networks, migrant streams, and residential segregation

contributed to creating the Louisiana migrant concentration (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-

Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay et al. 2000). Being

from Louisiana meant, for most, being a part of a migrant community that determined multiple facets of daily life, from where one lived, went to school, worshipped, and conducted business. It meant being reminded of a connection to a regional homeland other than Los Angeles on a regular basis. By looking at these aspects of migration for Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, this chapter demonstrates the complexities of Black migration during this period.

In Chapter 4 I examine the following questions: How is the meaning of Creole constructed and used by migrants in Los Angeles? How are racial and ethnic identities constructed? How are these identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are they affected by migration? I show that there are several narratives that Louisiana migrants use to define Creole. Many of the migrants' accounts of the meaning of Creole are contextualized by explaining to outsiders who Creoles are. In doing so they rely on racial mixture, cultural features, history, phenotype, ancestry, and place narratives. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive types of explanations, but tools that they draw on depending on the situation. The ideas about racial and ethnic categories that are used in the Creole narratives are also related to how migrants with Black and Creole ancestry construct their identities. For most, identities are often constructed situationally in interactions with others where ambiguous appearances or other ethnic/racial markers draw questions. Black identities are often modified by Creole cultural or mixed racial identities. Multiple ancestries, socially-mediated appearance, surnames, language, place, and racialization as Black are important factors in how migrants construct their identities. These Black and Creole identities are constructed in ways that are similar to, but not quite like any one of groups discussed in the literature on White ethnics, Black identities, multiracial persons, and immigrants with Black ancestry.

Chapter 5 contributes to answering these three questions: How were the migration and

settlement processes experienced by Louisiana migrants? What did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? And how are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? I illustrate how three mechanisms, interaction in the mnemonic community, visits back, and collective memory and nostalgia, contribute to maintaining migrants' place attachment and place identities in response to displacement. First-generation respondents' attachments to and identification with Louisiana were indicated by their use of the idea of home or homesickness, pride in place, and a sense of the irreplaceability of Louisiana within their narratives. Second-generation respondents indicated their place attachment by using home, pride, and irreplaceability as well. The second generation expressed their place attachments in two ways: a migrant-oriented attachment and a children-of-migrants attachment. By focusing on migrants' emotional connection to place, I demonstrate how it is possible to use Louisiana-centered place identities to modify racial and ethnic identities. Finally, in Chapter 6, I review the findings and discuss the conclusions and contributions of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2
THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE AND ETHNICITY, AND THE ROLE OF PLACE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I examine in further detail how previous literature contributes to answering the research questions pertaining to the construction of identities: How are racial and ethnic identities constructed and modified? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? I do this in four main sections of the chapter: (1) The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity, (2) Power and Ethnic and Racial Options; (3) Research on the Construction of Black and Other Non-White Identities; and (4) Relating to Place: Place Attachment and Place Identity.

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

In this first section I define race and ethnicity. Following this, I examine previous literature on how race and ethnicity are socially constructed, with particular attention to the empirical literature that reports on how White, Black, and other non-White ethnic and racial identities are constructed and negotiated. In the process I highlight several factors that contribute to how race and ethnicity are socially constructed.

Race is a social construction that is used to define groups of people on the basis of physical characteristics that are perceived to be shared and inherent (Cornell and Hartmann 2007:25). For example, everyday human interactions often embody 'folk concepts' of race where humans perceive phenotypical differences, associate them with racial meanings, and base their interactions on beliefs about what those differences mean (Banton 1979:130; Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Rex 1973:184). Omi and Winant's (1994) definition of race in the U.S. context emphasizes how the actual meanings of racial categories ("different types of human bodies") are based on the current politically-informed racial order that changes over time and by location (pp.

55, 56, 61).

Ethnicity is a social construction that is commonly thought of as perceived cultural differences (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Nagel 1994; Omi and Winant 1994). But it is also based on beliefs about how a combination of social and primordial characteristics, such as culture, language, shared history, religion, regionality, ancestry or descent work together to create distinct groups of people (Conzen et al. 1992:4-5; Cornell and Hartmann 2007:19; Nagel 1994:152-153; Omi and Winant 1994:15). It is often used by social actors in a way that emphasizes the ideas held by people about common ancestry or shared history, as opposed to a reality of biological relatedness (Cornell and Hartmann 1998:16-21; Omi and Winant 1994:15). Often, collective group action has been facilitated by the belief of common heritage (Jenkins 1997:10, 168; Weber 1978). Ethnic groups are commonly viewed by outsiders as "a distinct community" (Nagel 1996:9).

Despite the fact that race and ethnicity are analytically distinct concepts, both race and ethnicity are sometimes used by social actors in ways that draw on the beliefs about presumed shared origins, ancestry, or kinship (Cornell and Hartmann 2004). And in this way, racial and ethnic categories and identities are used to mark boundaries between groups of people (Barth 1969; Cornell and Hartmann 1998). Boundaries are the "set[s] of criteria" that allow people to make distinctions between themselves and others (Cornell and Hartmann 1998:81). Racial and ethnic boundaries are "continuously negotiated, revised, and revitalized" (Nagel 1994:153).

Interactions between society (including the ascriptions by others) and individual choices are mechanisms by which such boundaries and meaning are constructed (Barth 1969:75; Domínguez 1986; Nagel 1994:152, 154, 162, 167). Ethnic and racial designations have been widely understood to be different from each other in that the former denotes a product of self-

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identification and the latter categorization by others (Banton 1998; Cornell and Hartmann 1998:27-31; Jenkins 1997; Nagel 1994). While this tends to be true in many cases, both racial and ethnic categories can be viewed as part of a constantly interacting process between internally and externally defined affiliations, particularly with respect to how ethnicity can be shaped and constrained by both external and internal forces (Barth 1969; Cornell and Hartmann 1998:37; 2004; Jenkins 1997:53; Nagel 1994; 1996:20, 45; Smaje 1997:317-318). For example, the interaction between internal and external forces influences identity in many types of scenarios, such as when internal identification influences external categorization for majority ethnic group members in Eastern Europe (Ahmed et al. 2007). Cornell and Hartmann (1998, 2004) argue the example of African American identity as both a racial and ethnic category; it is a product of racialization and external categorization, but ultimately embraced and used in a way that is similar to an internally chosen ethnic identity.

The way that individuals understand their own and others' identities in terms of race and ethnicity may vary based on the distinctiveness of social situations—that is in "different social contexts and at different levels of social organization" (Okamura 1981:452; Waters 1990). Situational ethnicity is a result of the interaction between social situations and social settings. Social situations exist at a micro or interactional level, where social actors engage with various choices of action; these choices are also based on interpretations of the social setting, or more macro political or economic context (Okamura 1981:453). The concept of situational ethnicity connects both "cognitive and structural aspects of ethnicity" to describe how social actors navigate the meaning of social interaction based on their positions within and perceptions of specific situations and settings (Okamura 1981:463).

Ethnic and racial identities may be layered situationally as well since both have come to

be viewed as being flexible based on variations in context, situation, and subject to various interpretations, providing an array of negotiable identity choices subject to internal and external definitions and validation (Nagel 1994:154-155; 1996:21; Okamura 1981; Wade 1997:19). Choices of what racial and ethnic combination to highlight, what level of depth to present at any given time, what the situation will allow, and ways to challenge the situation are governed by interpretations of the situation that emerge from the interaction between characteristics of the structural and individual levels. Furthermore, ethnicity or race may be layered with other characteristics such as gender or class, or may not even always be the most salient factors in identity construction, allowing these other identities to be more prominent given specific situational circumstances (Okamura 1981:454).

For example, in one situation among a group of White persons a Native American person may be perceived and/or present oneself in racial terms (e.g., Native American). In a second situation among a mixed group of Native Americans, the same person may be perceived and/or present oneself as having a specific tribal ethnicity (e.g., Sioux) (Nagel 1996:21). Another example comes from Waters' (1999) study of West Indian immigrants. Her participants attempt to resist categorization and identification in terms of the American racial structure, but this varies by situation. In some work situations they are perceived as Black, and in others (such as those where they compete for jobs with African Americans) they are immigrant or West Indian, or in some cases use a country-specific identity. Furthermore, other research shows that mixed race kids (non-White and White parents) identify differently depending on the situation they are in—at home or at school—and the patterns vary depending on the racial groups that make up their ancestry (Harris and Sim 2002).

Thus, in order to examine the research questions using the case treated in this

dissertation, I begin with viewing race and ethnicity as both socially constructed in distinct but related ways. Race is often associated with the meanings given to physical differences between people. Ethnicity is constructed as a combination of ideas about cultural and sometimes primordial differences between people. The meanings given to racial and ethnic differences are often used to mark boundaries between groups of people. Both can be viewed as a combination of interactions between categorization by others and identification by individuals, with race sometimes relying more on ascription by others. The construction of racial and ethnic identities are shaped situationally, variably shaped by actors' interpretations of social contexts and social settings at the micro level (face-to-face interaction) and the more structural conditions at the meso and macro levels of society (such as residential patterns, segregation, occupational opportunities, racism). Viewing race and ethnicity as situational also accounts for the possibility of layering them together and/or with other forms of social identities.

POWER AND ETHNIC AND RACIAL OPTIONS

Examining how racial and ethnic identities are constructed using a case of migrants with Black and Creole ancestry requires a look at how power relations are often embedded in these processes of individual and group identification and social categorization. This is because some groups possess the ability to impose categories of ascription upon other groups of people (Jenkins 1997; Weber 1946). Social formations based on racial ideology are often characterized by power struggle, domination, hierarchy, exploitation, and conflict; while ethnicity also involves power differentials and social categorization, it is often not to the same degree (Bonilla-Silva 2001; Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Jenkins 1997; Omi and Winant 1994). For example, this becomes especially apparent when the presentations of identity that people put forward are then subject to the validation of that identity by others (Cooley [1902] 1964; Domínguez 1986;

Goffman 1959; Khanna 2004). In the United States, racial categorizations can override the mechanisms of internal ethnic identification, such as is the case for Black Americans and other people of color (Nagel 1994; Waters 1999). For stigmatized ethnic groups, such as the Roma in Eastern Europe, external categorization is also more powerful (Ahmed et al. 2007).

The ethnic and racial backgrounds that individuals have and the social context in which they are created influence how their racial and ethnic identities are constructed. In the United States context, White ethnics, persons with Black ancestry, and other persons of color have different options available to them with respect to how they construct identities.
Given the social circumstances in the contemporary United States, Whites (who are the dominant racial group) have been noted to engage in symbolic ethnicity and have options when it comes to identifying themselves ethnically. Symbolic ethnicity is a way of engaging with ethnicity that is not tied to ethnic culture in a way that regularly structures other facets of life, such as socioeconomic opportunities. This type of ethnicity is passive (Gans 1979, 2009) or thin (Cornell and Hartmann 1998).

Several factors are involved in the way that White ethnics negotiate their identities. Ancestry, appearance, surnames, and cultural exposure all can play a part in deciding on ethnic options. Ancestries are used to construct racial and ethnic identities because of the presumed biological and primordial origins they represent; an individual's racial and ethnic characteristics can be attributed to that person's ancestors (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Waters 1990, 1991:59). For example, White ethnics choose among several ancestries when constructing their identities (Waters 1990). The literature on White ethnic options explains how widespread intermarriage and assimilation shape the ways that White ethnics are able to exercise choice over the way that they conceptualize and identify themselves, particularly when they have several ancestries in

their backgrounds (Alba 1990; Waters 1990). By the third and fourth generations White ethnics often have several ancestries in their family history and their racial and ethnic choices are not based in instrumental necessity (Alba 1990; Lieberson 1985; Waters 1990). Having a more recent immigration background for a particular ancestry does not necessarily mean a stronger identification with that ancestry (Waters 1990:63). For example, the ancestries of White ethnics' fathers were usually preferred, but there was also a preference for the most "ethnic" of ethnic groups, such as choosing Italian over Scottish ethnicity (Waters 1990:36). These choices suggest that White ethnicities have flexibility related to their privileged racial standing.

Racial and ethnic markers, such as appearance and surnames, may be used as means to categorize, but they also inform internalized ideas about how to place oneself in a specific group or to highlight a particular identity (Nagel 1994; Omi and Winant 1994; Waters 1990, 1991, 1999). When physical and other signifiers are recognized subjectively, their meanings can be highlighted and interactionally presented to others as part of the self to construct racial and ethnic identities (Brubaker 2002; Goffman 1959; Okamura 1981). People, including White ethnics, use their own perceptions of how they look to themselves and others to make choices about identity (Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Jaret et al. 2005; Waters 1990). Among White ethnics, physical appearance may be used to highlight a specific European ethnicity once removed from the immigration process by several generations (e.g., red hair points to Irish ancestry) (Gans 1979; Waters 1990). Surnames also work in a similar manner. Waters (1990) finds that White ethnics often identify with their father's ethnicity, particularly because of the surnames' role in signifying specific ethnic groups. These external factors are often used together to highlight a specific ethnic or racial identity.

Exposure to and participation in cultural practices of a given group of people are also

significant for how racial and ethnic identities are shaped (Conzen et al. 1992:4-5; Nagel 1994:152-153). Spatial concentration of immigrant groups can be evidence of a persistent ethnic or racial identity (Gordon 1964; Lieberson 1980). Thus, maintaining a spatial concentration is often beneficial for preserving a strong ethnic group identity, political power, and economic power (Lieberson 1980; Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Several of the White immigrant groups from the turn of the twentieth century wave have maintained high spatial concentration, and "after several generations, particular nationalities continue to be associated with specific patches of national territory, giving them their distinct idiosyncrasies and cultural traits" (Portes and Rumbaut 1996:51).

The reverse of this mechanism, residential dispersion, has been viewed as a counterpart of cultural assimilation (Gordon 1964; Lieberson 1980; Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Therefore, leaving an ethnic concentration may facilitate the loss of cultural distinctions and blending in with other neighboring groups. Cultural markers can signify thick or thin ethnic ties, or in other words, can be practices that structure interactions and outcomes or they can be more symbolic (Cornell and Hartmann 1998:14-15; Gans 1979; Waters 1990). Waters (1990) finds that White ethnicity in suburban locations outside of well-established ethnic concentrations is largely symbolic identification with ethnic groups of an individual's choosing. As generations gain distance from the immigration experience, they have become removed from the daily practices once associated with being 'ethnic', and these practices no longer organize daily life or chances (Alba 1990; Gans 1979; Lieberson 1985; Waters 1990). Yet, the practices can still be used as visible ways to symbolically signify ethnic identities. Participation in cultural practices such as specific foodways, family or community traditions, and holiday celebrations perceived as ethnic by Whites have been important to how they construct ethnic identities (Waters 1990). These

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cultural markers can be used in combination with any of the other racial and ethnic markers discussed above in negotiating racial and ethnic identities.

This literature on White ethnics points to ancestry, external markers, and cultural exposure as important for constructing racial and ethnic identities. Ancestry can be important for how social actors conceptualize and enact racial and ethnic identities, providing the links to origins that are commonly thought to be the source of these types of identities. Ideas about ancestry are also linked to external markers like appearance and names and influence how ethnic choices are made and how they are negotiated. Residential concentration and cultural exposure also determines access to the material with which racial and ethnic identities are constructed and signified to others. These markers can determine organize daily life and outcomes, but if they no longer do, they may still be used in symbolic ways.

Ethnic Choices for Non-Whites

On the other hand, the process of ethnic choice available to White ethnics has been argued to be non-comparable for Black Americans and other non-White groups (Alba 1990; Nagel 1994; cf. Song 2003; Waters 1990:156). Racialization of Black people in America has been argued to be so complete even compared to other non-White groups that ethnic or other distinctions are usually not recognized (Kibria 2000; Nagel 1994; Waters 1990). For example, unlike ethnic Whites, Black people in the United States are often only allowed the option of being Black in public or institutional settings and are culturally homogenized as African Americans (Alba 1990; Kibria 2000; Nagel 1994; Song 2003; Waters 1990, 1999).

One reason for this outcome is found in the U.S. racial structure, which has historically been concerned with classifying humans in racial categories according to an "either-or logic,"

such that people only are allowed to be in one category at a time (Omi and Winant 1994:54).[6]

One manifestation of this is how hypodescent (also known as the one-drop rule) has been applied in the United States. Ancestry has been a key component of how the one-drop rule works (Waters 1991). The principle of hypodescent argues that anyone with Black ancestry is Black (providing the proverbial one drop), enforcing "affiliation with the subordinate rather than the superordinate group in order to avoid the ambiguity of intermediate identity" (Harris [1964] 1974:56; Davis 1991; Fields 1990, 2003). Thus, historically, even if persons who did not look Black were known to have a Black ancestor they would be classified as Black, often at the expense of any other ancestries a person might have (Davis 1991; Khanna 2011; Nagel 1994; Telles and Sue 2009; Waters 1991). This has been both a formal and informal rule that has been infused in popular ideas about Blackness, and has been structured by the hierarchical relationship between Whites and Blacks, where dominant Whites hold the power to define who the subordinate group is based on presumed ancestry (Davis 1991; Khanna 2011; Telles and Sue 2009). While other non-White groups also struggle with racialization, they are treated with relatively more flexibility in how they are externally and internally defined, with the Black racial category being the only one that is treated in such a rigid manner (Brubaker 2002; Davis 1991; Fields 1990, 2003; Kibria 2000; Nagel 1994; Tuan 1998).

Yet, the attempts of social actors to negotiate resistance to categorization are illustrated by how racialized categories can be turned around to create positive and voluntary racial or ethnic identities at the collective and individual levels. For example, Nagel (1994) describes instances of ethnic mobilization where the construction of culture gives new meanings to

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[6] The 2000 Census has officially changed this to some degree by creating a multiracial option. However, the ideological concern for neatly categorizing people remains (Brunsma and Rockquemore 2002; Harris and Sim 2002).

negative hegemonic definitions of racial categories. In her examples, social movements reappropriate racial categories or descriptors. For example, the one-drop rule has often been adopted by Black persons as part of their identity construction and sense of community (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Davis 1991; Hochschild and Weaver 2007). And within the Black Power movement the sayings espoused by the movement such as 'Black is Beautiful', utilized the racialized category of skin color to mobilize the group. Similarly, the Native American civil rights movement used racialized epithets to organize under the Red Power Movement (Nagel 1994:166-167; Omi and Winant 1994:69). Jenkins (1997) describes this process as a "historical negation of a powerful negative 'racial' categorization, by reworking it as a positively valorized identity" (p. 81). The interplay between categorization and identification is thus demonstrated by members of groups categorized by those in power adopting the racialized label and using it as an internally validated and positive identity. In addition to resistance at the collective level, individuals sometimes attempt to exercise agency by negotiating identities interactionally. For example, some studies of Black/White biracial individuals focus on the agency that is exercised in attempting to create identity in opposition to external forces of the hypodescent rule (Edles 2002; Hardesty 2001).

Alternatively, resistance to categorization and racialization as Black or African American among various Black-ancestry groups can be viewed as a method of reinforcing racial hierarchies (Bashi 1998; Pierre 2004). For example, Black-ancestry immigrant groups who are racialized as African American often seek to differentiate themselves from the latter. This takes the form of highlighting cultural and sometimes phenotypical differences (e.g., Habecker 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). Cultural explanations about immigrant exceptionalism often take the form of modified culture of poverty arguments against native-born African Americans

(Bashi and McDaniel 1997; Pierre 2004).

Pierre (2004) argues that social scientists have been complicit in perpetuating this revised immigrant exceptionalism argument. On one hand, research on ethnic differentiation amongst Black groups could potentially contribute to countering the tendency of social scientists to ignore the complexities of Black racial and ethnic identities (Omi and Winant 1994). On the other hand, Pierre (2004) argues that the research that has focused on ethnic differentiation is problematic because it has frequently relied on contrasts between immigrant 'model minorities' and African Americans within segmented assimilation frameworks (e.g., Portes and Zhou 1993; Waters 1999; Zhou 1997). This has roots in the rise of the ethnicity paradigm that was used to explain European immigration and assimilation of the early twentieth century, often comparing the outcomes of recent White immigrants to those of Black Americans (Omi and Winant 1994; Pierre 2004). Essentially, the ethnicity paradigm is again being used to reinforce a racial structure that puts African Americans at the bottom, pitting various non-White groups against each other.

Examining ethnic differentiation within the American-born Black population can contribute to breaking down some of the problematic aspects of the immigrant/African American binary in the Black ethnic diversity framework. But this also has to be done while acknowledging that within the American-born Black population, various forms of distancing and reinforcing of racist hierarchies has also taken place. It also must keep the interplay between racial and ethnic identities at the forefront in order to highlight the power of racial structures, not simply cover over them.

In summary, differential power relations, where some groups have more influence over categorizations of themselves and others, can shape both race and ethnicity. Yet actors, even

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within less powerful groups, still attempt to negotiate how their racial and ethnic identities are constructed. While migrants with Black and Creole ancestry may be subject to dominant forces of racial and ethnic categorization, particularly the one-drop rule, there may be some layered ways that racial and ethnic identities are constructed individually and collectively. The next section will examine previous research on Black and other non-White identities to determine how this might be possible.

RESEARCH ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF BLACK AND OTHER NON-WHITE IDENTITIES

A side effect of this either-or logic and the way that hypodescent has been applied in the United States is that there is often a lack of recognition of the heterogeneity among Black people. However, there are many ways in which distinction is created based on various intraracial subcategories. Analysis of how these subcategories are used allows researchers to understand how race and ethnicity are used in the perspectives of social actors about their worlds (Brubaker 2002; Brubaker et al. 2004; Roth 2012). Several studies note that Black racial and ethnic identities are not givens in social life and newer work is beginning to explore various facets of how Black identities are indeed constructed by people everyday (Brunsma and Rockquemore 2002; De Andrade 2000; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Jackson 2001). Because the case treated in this dissertation focuses on interstate migrants with Black and Creole ancestry, I next review in more detail some of the literature on skin color, class, bi-/multiracial parentage, and ethnic/national-origin/immigration differences, which offers analysis of some of the diverse ways that Blackness is constructed. However, I argue that research is still lacking on cases of how non-immigrant Black ethnicity is constructed in the United States.

Skin Color and Phenotype

Skin color and phenotype vary widely for persons with Black and other non-White ancestries,

but they are generally important determinants for socioeconomic outcomes and for how they may construct their identities (Cross 1991; Davis 1991; Nakano Glenn 2009; Russell et al. 1992). It is well documented that lighter skin color for Black and other people of color can result in advantages in income, education, and marriage markets (Allen et al. 2000; cf. Edwards et al. 2004; Hunter 1998, 2005; Keith and Herring 1991). The mechanism for these outcomes is usually colorism, or discrimination based on skin color and other phenotypic features such as hair texture, nose shape, and lip shape (Russell et al. 1992; Thompson and Keith 2004). It can be multidirectional in terms of privileging darker or lighter persons, but it usually privileges lighter skinned individuals at the European end of the spectrum (Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Russell et al. 1992; Thompson and Keith 2004). This may allow for greater negotiation of identity in mainstream society and is likely to improve the life chances of persons with lighter or more European phenotypes. Power and privilege are usually concentrated among lighter skinned people in the Black population and other non-White communities (Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Russell et al. 1992).

Beyond socioeconomic outcomes, there are other ways that skin color is important for persons with Black ancestry. While skin color itself does not directly lead to developing a Black identity because of the history of the one-drop rule including even light skinned persons as part of the racial category, it is important to how Blackness is constructed and negotiated interactionally (Davis 1991; Hochschild and Weaver 2007). Although light-skinned persons may identify as Black, they may not necessarily be categorized as Black by outsiders, or may be given more favorable treatment. On the other hand, there may be costs to authenticity and acceptance in the wider racial or ethnic community that come with light skin or more European features (Harris and Khanna 2010; Hunter 2005; Smith and Moore 2000; Williamson 1995). For

example, conflicts among Black people of differing skin colors may arise in a workplace where a darker supervisor resents lighter subordinate because light skinned people are perceived as privileged and receiving more promotions (Russell et al. 1992). Overall, because of the U.S. history with slavery, hypodescent, and colorism, skin color and phenotype are important factors for answering the question of how identities are constructed amongst people who have Black ancestry, whether as part of the "monoracial" Black population or as part of racially mixed groups. (Additional discussion of how this works for various groups with Black ancestry is further discussed beginning on page 53.)

Class-based Heterogeneity

Studies on class difference within Black communities have argued that it is a point of demarcation previously ignored by older research, which often associated Black communities with urban poverty and ghettos (Gregory 1998; Jackson 2001; Lacy 2007; Pattillo-McCoy 1999). According to these critiques, even sociological research that focused on class tended to argue that Black communities did not have much differentiation until the post-civil rights period, and even then that it could be dichotomized between Black underclass and the Black middle class (e.g., Wilson 1980, 1987). However, much of the more recent literature on Black class diversity has focused on the ways that class shapes distinctions within the wider Black population and influences the creation and negotiation of Black identities (Hirsch and Jack 2012; Lacy 2007; Pattillo-McCoy 1999; Smith and Moore 2000; Taylor 2002). Class diversity is something that Black persons feel the need to educate outsiders on in order to challenge stereotypes of urban poverty often used to define the entire Black experience (Fleming et al. 2012). Differences in class experiences shape perceptions of obstacles facing the wider Black community (Hirsch and Jack 2012), can shape socialization and cultural experiences (Harris and Khanna 2010; Lacy

2004; Smith and Moore 2000), can contribute to social distance between members (Harris and Khanna 2010; Pattillo-McCoy 1999; Smith and Moore 2000), and can be used on a daily basis to distinguish boundaries (Jackson 2001:126; Pattillo 2003; Taylor 2002).

For this study, one relevant way that class status influences how Black identities are constructed is through different opportunities for socialization within a wider Black community. Socialization within a particular community or group of people works as a mechanism of creating an identity associated with that group (Harris and Khanna 2010; Smith and Moore 2000). Cultural exposure is important for persons with Black ancestry in order to feel close ties to the wider Black community and to be able to construct and negotiate an authentically Black identity (Harris and Khanna 2010; Lacy 2004; Smith and Moore 2000). Middle class Black persons are often "'raced as Black, but 'cultured' as White'", at times challenging their own and other people's conceptions of authentic Blackness (Harris and Khanna 2010:640). These circumstances shape everyday choices made about how to construct, cultivate, and present Black identities. For example, middle class Blacks who live in White neighborhoods may not be embedded in a Black cultural context and may feel distance from the wider Black community (Harris and Khanna 2010; Smith and Moore 2000). Middle class Black individuals in some suburban or predominantly White neighborhoods respond to this by nurturing Blackness for themselves and their children through purposeful socialization in Black spaces to counter their experiences in predominantly non-Black public and professional spaces (Lacy 2004, 2007; Smith and Moore 2000). Comparing two suburban communities, Lacy (2004, 2007) finds that some choose to live in predominately Black neighborhoods so that their non-work lives are built around interaction with other Black people. Others who do not live in Black neighborhoods choose to incorporate specific activities such as participation in Black social clubs, attending

Black churches, or sending their children to historically Black colleges to provide this balance.

Some middle class Black persons construct their identities in response to their perceptions of authentic Blackness and of how they are treated by the wider Black community (Harris and Khanna 2010; Smith and Moore 2000). Black persons observe differences in the way that race mates walk, dress, speak, and even stand and link them to authentic Blackness, middle class, or lower class origins (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Rollock et al. 2011). Some who experience rejection by, or who want to feel closer to other Black people because of their class status perform Blackness by highlighting cultural symbols like clothing (e.g., hip hop styles), less conservative hair styles, and speech patterns (using Black English if they were familiar with it) that fit their perceptions of what it means to be authentically Black (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Smith and Moore 2000). In some ways this is akin to a type of symbolic ethnicity (Smith and Moore 2000). These "narrow" conceptions of Blackness usually conform to those perceived to be used by counterparts with lower socioeconomic status (Harris and Khanna 2010:641; Smith and Moore 2000). Some also construct their identities by distancing themselves from Whites socially so as not to seem too White or less Black (Harris and Khanna 2010).

Sometimes in constructing Black identities, individuals create, emphasize, and observe intraracial boundaries rooted in classed differences to distance themselves from broader Black communities. In order to reduce perceived pressures to act in ways that they view to be negative approaches to Blackness, some middle class Black persons conceptualize and embrace middle class versions of Blackness as authentic (such as going to museums, emphasis on excellence in education, walking, talking, and dressing in specific ways) (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Rollock et al. 2011). This is a contrast to what they regard as lower class performances of

Blackness. For example, assessing the type of English language used is a strategy for determining class status of other Black persons (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001). Using Standard English regularly, or at least in public or professional situations is viewed by both middle and lower class Blacks as indicative of a specific middle class way of doing Blackness or Blacks doing Whiteness (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001). Similarly, walking with purpose, as a means of transportation and not the activity in itself, and the absence of an exaggerated stride that is often associated with being from the 'street' was viewed as another way that middle class Blackness was done (Jackson 2001; Rollock et al. 2011). And Pattillo (2003) illustrates that racial identities for the Black people in her study were constructed in concert with class identity in the context of neighborhood activism and politics. Boundaries were constructed among the Black residents in the community using class-specific behaviors, such as middle class homeowning residents distinguishing themselves from the lower class renting residents in the area (pp. 75-76).

The literature on class distinctions suggests that Black individuals and communities have various facets of their identities that can be negotiated. As Jackson (2001) notes, race and class are performative and embodied identities that intertwine with each other and other forms of identities. This indicates that non-racial social identities can affect racial identities and vice versa. The way that people act, walk, dress, and talk all are visible markers used in the way that identity is performed or signified; performances change over time and space, and can be successful in one environment and unsuccessful in another (Fleming et al. 2012; Jackson 2001:157-158). For migrants with Black ancestry this points to the possibility that socioeconomic class, regional, or other intraracial distinctions that confer privilege on one portion of the wider Black community and disadvantage another may also influence how and in

relation to whom racial identities are constructed. These findings also point to the role that contexts of socialization and institutions in Black communities have in contributing to the diverse ways in which Blackness is understood, constructed, and negotiated. For example, in the studies reviewed above, Black middle class persons were socialized in contexts that often created a feeling of separation between themselves and other Black people. If migrants with Black ancestry participated in separate or distinct social institutions this may create solidarity among themselves, but contribute to a lack of connection with non-Louisiana migrants or the wider Black community. Or if migrants lived in more middle class areas, they may be more likely to perceive themselves as separate from the wider Black population, contributing to class cleavages between migrants and the surrounding community. The emphasis on contexts of socialization also suggests that places may be important in how Blackness is constructed and negotiated. Furthermore, social actors may construct identities using means deemed authentic by peers in order to facilitate solidarity and compensate for the divisions that may be experienced as a result of doing Blackness in specifically classed ways. Or they may construct identities by playing into social divisions, emphasizing or enforcing the boundaries created by these distinctions.

Multiracial Experiences

Another way that heterogeneity in Black experiences has been explored is in the research on bi- and multiracial persons.[7] A large portion of the early work on Black/White and other multiracial persons included conceptual pieces that discuss the implications for enumeration and racial categories (Daniel 2002; Hall 2000; Root 1996). Some empirical studies focus on how Black and

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[7] Here I introduce biracial and multiracial as distinct terms. Biracial refers to an individual whose parents are of two different racial groups. However, multiracial could include biracial and those individuals whose parents might be bi- or multiracial themselves. For the sake of inclusivity I will generally use multiracial, unless referring specifically to biraciality.

     Also, while my focus is on how multiraciality informs understandings of diverse forms of Blackness, the literature on multiracial people will often include research on other non-Black mixed race persons and provides insights applicable to the case at hand.

multiracial identities are constructed and negotiated and how multiracial persons relate to their wider non-White ethnic/racial communities—these themes are important for answering more broadly the research question of how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and affected by mixed ancestry (Harris and Khanna 2010; Khanna 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000).

Multiracial individuals can adopt a variety of approaches to their identities. For example, Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) find several identity options among those with one Black and one White parent. Using survey and qualitative interview data with Black and White biracial persons, they report a typology of four groups: biracial border identity (where a biracial identity is separate from either one of their parents' ancestries and is validated or invalidated by outsiders), singular identity (one racial group is chosen), protean identity (various identities chosen from Black, White, or biracial depending on circumstances), and transcendent identity (self-identity is based in nonracial terms). They find that socialization in Black or White social networks, interactional validation of identities, and socially-mediated appearance (how they think others view them) shape the identity choices that biracial persons make between these options (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002, 2004). Their work differs from other research on biracial persons by systematically exploring the different types of biracial identities.

Using Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) typology as a rough template, I review in more detail how persons with multiracial ancestry construct five types of identities. These include constructing (1) biracial/multiracial identities; (2) choosing a more singular Black, White, or other non-White identity; (3) shifting between various identities depending on situational circumstances; (4) adopting a symbolic racial/ethnic identity; or (5) avoiding a racial identity all together (Hardesty 2001; Harris and Khanna 2010; Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011;

Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000). Multiracial individuals can construct their identities drawing on various factors such as childhood and adult socialization or cultural exposure gained in familial contexts and social networks; appearance; and other ethnic and racial symbols (Hardesty 2001; Harris and Khanna 2010; Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000).

Some researchers find different forms of biracial or multiracial identities. The validated biracial identity is found amongst those who have a mostly White appearance and have experienced socialization and acceptance within mostly White social networks, and more rejection from Black social networks (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). An "unvalidated" biracial identity is often the result of a Black appearance, socialization within Black social networks while young, while also experiencing rejection from those Black social networks, and transition to White social networks as an adult (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002:43).

Other research does not usually distinguish between the validated and unvalidated variety of biracial identities. However, it does confirm that some persons with Black and White parentage who identify more biracially feel socially and culturally different or disconnected from their wider Black communities. This may be due to early socialization experiences in White or non-Black communities, and having experienced negative interactions or rejection by other Black persons (Harris and Khanna 2010; Smith and Moore 2000). Some biracial individuals draw on the notion of ethnic ancestry pertaining to their White parent in order to emphasize their biraciality (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011). Harris and Khanna (2010) specifically point to the more White appearance of some biracial persons as providing a certain kind of flexibility in feeling comfortable amongst White social networks, particularly as a response to negative treatment from Blacks. Another contributing factor is that biracial persons may feel the need to

acknowledge all parts of their identities, drawing on their non-Black parentage/ancestry and childhood socialization in families who emphasize a biracial identity or outlook (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000).

In contrast, other biracial individuals have a more negatively constructed biracial identity when their socialization experiences include colorblindness in their very young childhood, or having adults define their identity for them (Hardesty 2001:123-124). They progress with age to feeling trapped by their marginality in the American racial structure and experiences of constantly negotiating the categories placed on them by others (Hardesty 2001:119-120). This more closely resembles Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) unvalidated biracial identities where individuals experience rejection or challenges on all sides.

Some persons with biracial parentage choose a more singular identity. A singular Black identity has been associated with having a conventionally Black appearance, primarily Black social networks throughout the life course, parental socialization geared more toward Black identities, and experiences of acceptance by Blacks and rejection by Whites (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Some persons who have a more singular White identity, a less common finding, would likely have a more White appearance, White social networks, a lack of parental discussion about Black or biracial identity options, and acceptance by Whites (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Research on Asian biracial individuals has found that Asian appearance and cultural exposure contribute to identification with the Asian racial group, but the study does not include a biracial option, structuring the possible outcomes as singular monoracial identities (Khanna 2004).

Another method of constructing identity among multiracial people is what Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) call a protean identity. For Black/White biracial individuals, this type of

approach has been linked to having exposure to racially diverse social networks as a youth and adult so that persons are comfortable transitioning to and from various identities (Black, White, biracial) in changing social situations, and reporting feeling equally close to both Black and White social networks (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). In Rockquemore and Brunsma's sample, these individuals were most commonly in the middle range of a Black to White phenotypical scale and reported looking ambiguous but often assumed to be Black (p. 98). They also were adept at using cues like speech styles or language to signify their belonging in any of the categories that they chose (e.g., Standard English with Whites and Black Vernacular English with Blacks). Another study of young biracial people also finds that the experience of biraciality was nonlinear and an ever-changing identity that shifted throughout their life spans depending on experiences and context (Hardesty 2001). Some youth achieved a sense of empowerment or agency from constructing and negotiating their self-identities (Hardesty 2001:129), proving similar to the positive portrayal of the protean identities reported by Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002).

Along similar lines, other types of protean identities are situational and/or symbolic. For example, some multiracial individuals can employ symbolic ethnicity and engage ethnic/racial options in ways that are similar to White ethnics by choosing which of their ancestries to highlight in various situations (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011). While this may seem similar to Whites whose ethnic options may not have costs, the reasons for the use of these ethnic and racial symbols and options differ in that they may combat negative stereotypes about their non-White racial background and other forms of racial inequality and privilege (Khanna 2011:1062). For example, some Black and White biracial individuals express a symbolic ethnicity through cultural and ethnic symbols in order to highlight not White, but biracial identities (Khanna 2011).

This is accomplished by some who cultivate ethnic cooking skills or hang flags associated with the non-Black parent's nationality or ancestry in order to signify their biraciality (Khanna 2011). Jimenez (2004) finds that some Mexican American and White mixed race persons relate to their White ethnicities in symbolic ways that are similar to White ethnics, where they draw on superficial or limited knowledge of "ethnic" traditions. Conversely, some also access their non-White identities in symbolic ways, such as when Mexican American identities are called up by focusing on their knowledge of ethnic Mexican food or holidays. While these studies argue that their participants were able to engage with ethnic and racial options to a greater degree than past research has reported for non-White individuals, multiracial persons are still generally constrained by whether or not they have physical racial and ethnic markers such as appearance and surnames that indicate their non-White ancestry (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011).

Some choose to have an identity that is constructed "*beyond* races" (Hardesty 2001:128, 134). Persons of multiracial ancestry are sometimes more similar to Whites in identifying in non-racial terms (Jaret and Reitzes 1999:722; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). For example, this identity choice has been found to be most common among individuals who have a White appearance; those having the most continuity in White social networks over childhood and adulthood; a lack of parental socialization toward racial self-definitions; feeling an equal lack of closeness to either Black or White racial groups; and possibly experiencing rejection or discrimination from either of the racial reference groups while not associating it with their self-understanding (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002).

Factors that Influence Multiracial Identities

Now I turn to examining more closely the roles of (1) socialization and (2) visible racial and ethnic markers such as appearance or surnames. The findings from this research demonstrate that

the social contexts and networks that multiracial persons are exposed to influence the ways that they construct their identities. An undercurrent of the discussion above indicates that being socialized in Black or otherwise coethnic social networks contributes to a cultural expertise that is conducive to identifying with that group. For example, for Black and White biracial persons, being socialized in Black communities contributes to identifying more closely with other Black persons and the perceived ability to construct and negotiate authentically Black identities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000). Another study finds that culture and place in White middle class neighborhoods shape a White identity for young women with Black fathers and White or Asian mothers; conversely, culture and place in more diverse college settings helped to shift their identity to Black-centered (Twine 1996). For Asian and White multiracial persons, knowing their Asian parent's ethnic language or being exposed to ethnic food contributes to identifying as Asian (Khanna 2004).

On a related note, constructing multiracial identities is also influenced by how bi-/multiracial persons relate to the wider non-White ethnic or racial communities. Depending on perceptions of acceptance and rejection, multiracial individuals may distance themselves from White and/or Black social networks (Harris and Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Smith and Moore (2000) find that Black and White biracial college students experienced social distance from other Black students and Blackness in general. Harris and Khanna (2010) find that biracial individuals are more readily accepted within the larger Black community than their middle class monoracial counterparts, although some still experienced rejection based on looking more White than Black. Jimenez (2004) also reports that some mixed Mexican American and White individuals often feel marginalized by their Mexican American coethnics and family, and are able to assert their Mexican American identities more easily when not in situations with

other Mexican Americans. White and Asian biracial persons also construct their identities in relation to how they are treated by other Asians and Whites, identifying as White in cases where they felt rejected by their respective Asian coethnic communities (Khanna 2004). Furthermore, those who had experience living in their parents' Asian countries while growing up are more likely to identify as White in those contexts and once in America because their difference in relatively homogenous societies was amplified (Khanna 2004).

The discussion above also recognizes appearance as an important factor in choosing identities (Khanna 2004; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Stephan 1992). Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) note that the quantitative association between appearance and racial identities is not simply through skin color itself, but through socially perceived appearance. Identities are shaped by how individuals think they look to others (Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Jaret et al. 2005; Khanna 2004; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Skin color is also mediated by negative treatment from White or Black racial reference groups or exposure to Black racial contexts (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). For example, Black and White biracials' perceptions of their own skin color were associated with their childhood socialization contexts, where those who were in Black social contexts reported their skin color as lighter and those who were in White social contexts reported their skin color as darker (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002:102). Multiracial Asians also rely on ideas about how others perceive them in choosing identities. Those who felt they appeared more Asian to others were more likely to choose an Asian identity over a White identity (biracial was not one of the choices in this study and so the findings reflect more singular racial identity options) (Khanna 2004). And Mexican American and White biracials who were teased for being light skinned by Mexican American family members often constructed their identities in response to that experience (Jimenez 2004).

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Multiracial individuals also use physical appearance and the embodiment of racial and ethnic symbols in the performance of racial and ethnic identities. Harris and Khanna (2010) find that some Black/White multiracial persons enact Blackness in ways that draw on narrow definitions of what it means to be Black, physically highlighting "Black" hair styles (natural styles like Afros or braids), speech patterns (using Black Vernacular English versus Standard English), and clothing (such as hip-hop styles that Black peers wore). In contrast, others draw on racial symbols associated with Whites to modify their speech (such as using "dude" or "awesome"), clothing or jewelry (such as surf/skate styles or shopping certain "White" brands, or wearing a Star of David necklace), and tastes in music (like rock & roll or pop versus hip hop) to highlight their biraciality (Khanna 2011).

Furthermore, surnames can sometimes be an external marker that cues negotiations of identities in interaction with others. This is the case for Black and White biracial individuals who have Jewish or Italian last names, for example (Khanna 2011). Similarly, Mexican American and White biracial persons with Spanish surnames reason that their names mark them as being Mexican American, so they choose that identity interpersonally and on forms (Jimenez 2004).

In summary, the research on multiracial individuals contributes to the literature demonstrating that the Black racial category and even multiracial identities are not homogeneous or unchanging entities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Whereas much of the literature reports on biracial/multiracial identities as a singular entity, Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002, 2004) research in particular elaborates on the different *types* of identities among biracial individuals, adding to a greater understanding of how persons with Black and non-White ancestry might negotiate identities. Taken as a whole, this literature's findings suggest that persons with Black and other non-White ancestries may negotiate racial and ethnic

options in public and other situations (cf. Nagel 1994; Waters 1990). Some multiracial Americans with Black ancestry may be negotiating to construct identities that emphasize their Blackness and in others may be attempting to de-emphasize it; others may try to emphasize their Whiteness or their multiraciality; or in some cases non-racial identity may be constructed. Some may be continuously transitioning from any one of these depending on the social situation they are navigating. This literature also suggests that multiracial identities are sometimes constructed in ways that are similar to White ethnics, where choices about which aspects to highlight might be made through symbolic means. This can be done using various factors such as phenotype or how individuals interpret the ways that others see them; ethnic or racial symbols like clothing, hair, or speech; highlighting parentage or ancestry; and drawing on socialization contexts.

Just as the literature on middle class Black persons indicated, this multiracial literature also suggests the importance of family and social network socialization in Black or other communities. If persons with Black ancestry were socialized in a way that was somehow separate, marginal, or different from the wider Black community, this might contribute to constructing an identity that focuses on their biraciality or non-Blackness, distancing themselves from other Blacks. Furthermore, as is the case for Black middle class persons, some of the strategies that are used to do Blackness are based on perceptions of what individuals think are the most common expression of Black identities. Those who do not perform Blackness in these ways, perhaps because of a lack of socialization within Black social networks, often feel disconnected from the wider Black community.

This literature on biracial or multiracial persons is usually focused on racial mixture of one generation, which differs from the racial mixture that often goes back many generations for Louisiana migrants with Black and Creole ancestry. This leaves unanswered the questions of

whether these migrants construct multiracial identities? And if so, are these same factors used by bi-/multiracial individuals salient? Are they used differently? Furthermore, the focus on the social contexts in much of this literature discusses it in terms of exposure to racial/ethnic communities. Less often is the actual place's influence noted. Khanna (2011) notes that much of the research on mixed race persons does not address the role of regional context and she recognizes that a limitation in her own sample is that it was taken from the South, a place with a specific racial history which may shape the way that her Black/White biracial respondents' identities are constructed. Thus, further insight may be gained from considering research on Black and non-White immigrants and some American groups who have national or local histories of multigenerational racial mixture and personal histories of movement from one place to another in order to determine how changes in social context shape the ways that their identities are constructed.

Immigration and Domestic Sources of Ethnic Diversity

Ethnic distinctions within the wider Black population have gained more scholarly attention particularly because of the influx immigrants with Black ancestry in the post-1965 era. Much of this research explores how first- and second-generation immigrants with Black ancestry adapt to and challenge American racial structures, among other outcomes (De Andrade 1996, 2000; Foner 1985; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Kasinitz 1992; Kasinitz et al. 2004; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Stepick et al. 2001; Waters 1999). Other sources of ethnic differentiation within the U.S.-born population of Black Americans can be found among some historically mixed race groups often located in the southern and eastern regions of the country. However, these examples have not received quite as much examination with respect to identity construction as those from contemporary immigration. In this section I first review literature on

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Black ethnic diversity in the United States resulting from immigration and four types of identities that emerge out of that experience: (1) immigrant-oriented; (2) ethnic American; (3) American-oriented; and (4) pan-identities. Second, I review some examples of native-born ethnic diversity. Finally, I discuss how both of these examples point to five significant factors for the construction of ethnic and racial identities that are relevant to multiracial ancestry and migration: (1) responding to stereotyping, racialization, or discrimination; (2) social contexts; (3) external social markers like appearance, language, and names; (4) generational status; and (5) class.

The increase of immigrants with Black ancestry in the United States after 1965 has contributed to an "unsettling and destabilizing of the meaning of Blackness in the United States" (Hintzen and Rahier 2003:2; Roth 2012). When movement has been a part of the recent history of an individual or group, such as migration from one geographic place to another, the meanings given to racial and ethnic identities in one location may or may not translate to a new location's social structure (Domínguez 1986; Harris and Sim 2002; Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Nagel 1996:21; Okamura 1981:452; Twine 1996; Wade 1997:19). African, Caribbean, and Latino or South American immigrants from Brazil, Cape Verde, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, or Puerto Rico come from nations where racial mixture is part of the racial ideology and social structure. In contrast to the United States, in some of these countries racial identity (as well as social and economic mobility) for people in the mixed racial categories often depends on a combination of class status, skin color, and other factors and is not based on phenotype alone (Davis 1991; Duany 2002:241; Harris [1964] 1974; Hoetink 1985; Roth 2012; C. Sue 2009; C.A. Sue 2009; Sunshine 1985; Telles 2002; Van den Berghe 1967). Immigrants with Black ancestry are often discriminated against and racialized as monoracial African Americans once in the United States based mainly on their phenotype. The resistance to this by many immigrants presents a challenge

to America's practice of categorizing people based on appearance and hypodescent (Bailey 2006; De Andrade 1996, 2000; Foner 1985; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Kasinitz 1992; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Stepick et al. 2001; Waters 1999).

The identities used by immigrants with Black ancestry come in a range of possibilities. And as they struggle with decisions of whether or not to resist racialization as African American, they may decide to construct their identities by attempting to create boundaries or trying to blend in (Bailey 2006; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Stepick et al. 2001; Waters 1999). A commonality across many of the identities constructed, however, is that there is a recognition, if not an assertion, that these Black-ancestry immigrant identities are different culturally or ethnically from African American versions of Blackness (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Richards 2008; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999).

One way that some immigrants may construct identities is by choosing to maintain immigrant-only identities associated with their country of origin. They may create boundaries between themselves and African Americans or other groups in United States by drawing on features of, or cultural elements from, their countries of origin. For example, some first-generation West Indian immigrants may use accents, clothing, and other external markers to signal to others that they are not African Americans (Waters 1999). Similarly, Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants, particularly those with darker phenotypes, highlight their Spanish language-use and names to distinguish themselves from African Americans (Roth 2012).

Cape Verdeans from two migration streams have constructed their immigrant identities in opposition to African Americans (Sánchez Gibau 2005). Historically, the early immigrants chose to draw boundaries between themselves and the nearby African American population through various distancing strategies, which included using the label "Portuguese", settling in enclaves,

using *Kriolu* language (Creole Portuguese), and emphasizing their Catholic religious beliefs (Sánchez Gibau 2005:409). Contemporary Cape Verdean immigrants assert an immigrant-only identity to contrast themselves from African Americans in similar ways. When they use Black in their identity, they often clarify that they are not referring to Black American culture, but rather color or affiliation with African origins (Sánchez Gibau 2005). They also find themselves drawing less rigid boundaries between themselves and nearby Spanish-speaking immigrants due to a sense of affinity based on a shared categorization as foreign, similar cultural practices (such as food items), close geographic and class proximity, and shared community resources (Sánchez Gibau 2005:422). This example highlights the fluidity of boundary and identity construction in relation to other groups. These same strategies of identity construction would not necessarily be employed in their homeland, and are the product of the situational context in the U.S. in combination with their experiences in their home countries.

Second-generation immigrants may also construct immigrant identities, but in a different way. For example, some second-generation West Indians in Brooklyn also hold on to island-affiliated identities because they are strongly tied into ethnic communities, confident in their ethnic performances, and do not perceive themselves as strongly influenced by American culture (Richards 2008). In contrast to the first-generation examples above, these West Indians do not construct or view their immigrant identities in opposition to African Americans.

Immigrants with Black ancestry may also adopt an ethnic American identity (also referred to as bicultural or hyphenated-American identities in some of the literature) where immigrants draw from their ethnic community or their family's country of origin, and the host countries (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Waters 1999). These types of identities may or may not employ boundaries as strongly as more immigrant-oriented identities. For

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example, some second-generation West Indians in the middle class construct their ethnic American identities by enforcing boundaries between themselves and poorer Blacks generally, not just African Americans or other West Indian immigrants (Butterfield 2004). On the other hand, some Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants exhibit a fluency in both their immigrant and American cultures, which allows them to move between both worlds when needed (Roth 2012). This may include capitalizing on their bilingualism in the workplace or employing code switching in behavior styles, in addition to linguistically (Roth 2012). Later generations of the pre-1965 Cape Verdean immigration streams used Cape Verdean American identities (Sánchez Gibau 2005). They sometimes identified as Black or African American first, and Cape Verdean as a secondary or cultural identity—thus they were Black American *and* Cape Verdean. And contemporary second-generation Cape Verdean youth also identify with (although not *as*) African Americans to some extent and adopt some of the latters' musical, clothing, hair, and other styles.

Second-generation West Indian Americans notice distinctions between themselves and their parents and other first-generation immigrants in their ethnic cultural competence. They also rely on other second-generation immigrants as their reference group, rather than the first generation or their parents' home country (Richards 2008). Others might be constructing a hyphenated identity because they want to emphasize the equal footing they have in American society, such as second-generation Haitian Americans who try to distance themselves from negative stereotypes about Haitian immigrants within the Caribbean diaspora (Richards 2008). Sometimes these ethnic American identities only emerge later in life, such as once adolescents reach college, where they develop clearer understanding of the differences in Black diaspora identities (Butterfield 2004).

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Other forms of ethnic American identities among Black-ancestry immigrants rely on symbolic expressions of culture. Some second-generation West Indians focus on superficial aspects of cultural expertise, like food or even just ancestry (e.g., identifying as Jamaican because families are from Jamaica) (Richards 2008). Like White ethnics who choose identities based in superficial ties to ethnicity, identifying as West Indian without having strong personal investment is possible without any social cost in locations like Brooklyn because the identity has high cultural currency in these densely immigrant communities (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008).

Another identity option, and often the one that many immigrants try to resist, is that of American, and as noted above more specifically African American. This pathway is often viewed as a downward assimilation for members of the second generation in the immigrant incorporation literature (e.g., Portes and Zhou 1993). However, some immigrants go with this identity for various reasons, and perhaps only in some situations. For example, during the Civil Rights period, later generation Cape Verdean Americans identified primarily as Black Americans because they recognized that they shared local and discriminatory experiences in 1960s-Boston, with some even joining the Black Panthers and otherwise demonstrating their alliance (Sánchez Gibau 2005). Lower class West Indians have been reported as adopting more American-centered identities, in some cases because of their residential proximity to African Americans (Waters 1999). It may be that as young West Indian students are developing their racial identities, school settings seem to exert pressure or encourage an African American version of Blackness particularly when interacting with many African American fellow students (Butterfield 2004). This may also be combined with code switching to ethnic expressions of identity at home (Butterfield 2004). For Haitian youth, realizing that their experience of being Haitian is very

different from that of their parents, having lower class status, and being treated like African

Americans due to similar phenotype contributes to assimilating toward the African American

youth model (Stepick et al. 2001:260, 261). It is also often more associated with how Black male

immigrant identities are constructed due to a higher sense of racial solidarity in the face of racial

profiling or capitalizing on assumptions about Black masculinity (Butterfield 2004; Roth 2012;

Waters 1999).

At the other end of the racial spectrum, those immigrants with more White phenotypes

may construct identities that are viewed as aligned with White Americans. For example, some

immigrants from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic have been noted to take this approach

(Roth 2012). This may come out of temporary instances of taking advantage of mistaken

identities based on White-looking phenotype, situational passing, or simply not highlighting

Latino aspects of their identity (Roth 2012).

Another form of identity construction is adopting pan-identities in diverse settings. For

example, instead of only using island-specific identities, some middle class, Anglophone West

Indians living in a diverse Queens neighborhood might use pan-Caribbean identities (Butterfield

2004). This is based on their experiences connecting with neighbors from other Caribbean

countries, including Spanish-speaking islands (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008). Contemporary

Cape Verdean immigrants using Black as part of their identities do so in a way that also aligns

them with the broader African diaspora (Sánchez Gibau 2005). Later generation pre-1965 Cape

Verdean Americans use Black in a way that acknowledges some shared experiences with African

Americans (Sánchez Gibau 2005). College-educated Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants

are more likely to acculturate to a Hispanicized American racial schema using Latino or Hispanic

(Roth 2012). However, Dominicans are more likely than Puerto Ricans to adopt Latino or

Hispanic identifications while living in the United States (Roth 2012). This may be due to the fact that Dominicans find pan-identities raise their status within Latino national hierarchies, particularly in relation to Puerto Ricans in New York who view themselves as distinct among other Latinos because of their American citizenship (Roth 2012).

Research on ethnic heterogeneity within the Black-ancestry population native to the United States is less prevalent and contains conflicting findings. For example, Waters (1991) finds that non-Black ancestry is insignificant for identity construction by native-born Black Americans who prefer monoracial Black identities, compared to West Indian immigrants who value an immigrant identity. In contrast, other studies demonstrate that specific ancestries and ethnicities might be important for some native-born persons of Black ancestry. For example, for persons who have ties to Creole ancestry (a category often racialized as African American, although many Louisiana Creoles would argue that they are not *only* Black), the combination of Black, Native American, French, and Spanish ancestries attributed to the group are significant in producing individuals' identities (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Jolivétte 2007). Domínguez (1986) finds that this reliance on ancestry is a way of constructing and maintaining boundaries between themselves and the wider African American population as well as Whites in Louisiana as a way to grasp for higher status within the racial hierarchy of the South. The expression of this identity in Louisiana is often tied into class-cued differences as well, such as occupation (e.g., skilled labor or teaching), speech style, behavior/manners (e.g., propriety), marriage patterns (e.g., endogamous pairings), and religious preference (e.g., practicing Catholicism) (Domínguez 1986; see also Dormon 1996a).

Other groups often referred to as "triracial isolates" have an even less well-developed presence in contemporary social science literature, aside from older histories and anthropological

accounts (Daniel 2002; Greenbaum 1991). Some of these groups are known as Melungeons, Lumbees, and many other labels. Although there is some debate about their origins, they are believed to be separate groups that emerged in the southeastern United States during the conquest and colonial periods made up of multigenerational racial mixture of various Native American, White, and African ethnicities, with an emphasis on the Native American component (Daniel 2002; Everett 1999; Greenbaum 1991; Rowe 2009). Generally, despite the possibility of Black ancestry, these groups are treated in the literature as multiracial Native American groups versus African American groups (cf. Daniel 2002; Everett 1999; Makofsky 1982; cf. Rowe 2009; Sider 1976). These communities are often associated with specific places—counties, towns, regions within states, and across states (Daniel 2002; Everett 1999; Rowe 2009; Sider 1976). In addition, specific surnames are used to signify membership in these communities (Daniel 2002). And in many cases, these identities are constructed by privileging Native American and other White ethnic origins over Black ancestries in order to distance themselves from the larger Black population, particularly during the antebellum, Civil War, and Jim Crow periods (Daniel 2002; Everett 1999; Greenbaum 1991).

Factors that Influence Black Immigrant and Domestic Ethnic Identities

The above discussion suggests many factors that are important to how Black immigrant and domestic ethnic identities are constructed. Many of these are similar to those suggested by the Black middle class and multiracial literatures. Here I further examine five factors that have significant roles in this process: (1) processes of stereotyping, racialization, and discrimination; (2) social contexts; (3) generational status; (4) phenotype and other visible ethnic markers; and (5) class.

 As noted throughout the discussion above, stereotypes, discrimination, and/or

racialization as African American, and the desire to distinguish themselves from that group are one set of factors influencing the way that immigrant and Black ethnic identities are often constructed (De Andrade 2000; Domínguez 1986; Habecker 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). Some immigrants perceive that they would be subject to discrimination from African Americans and sometimes construct their identities strategically and at times temporarily to demonstrate their affinity with African Americans for what they perceive as personal safety or the desire to fit in while navigating certain neighborhoods or social situations (Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). Or they may do so for political reasons (Domínguez 1986; Sánchez Gibau 2005). However, this is not always the case and other immigrants, such as some second-generation West Indians do not construct their identities in relation to African Americans at all, but rather more positively using fellow second-generation West Indians in densely immigrant-populated Brooklyn as their reference group (Richards 2008).

It is also evident that local social and racial contexts and cultural exposure are an important second set of factors in how immigrant and ethnic identities are constructed. Changes in the locational context influence how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and negotiated. Because internal identification and external categorization occur in communication with the location, immigrant identities are very different in the host society from how they would be negotiated in their original locations (De Andrade 1996; Gaudin 2005; Nagel 1994:90-114; Okamura 1981; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1990; Woods 1989). Features that contribute to how racial and ethnic identities are negotiated, such as external markers, as well as strategies of boundary construction and maintenance are shaped by locational contexts because interpretations of identity are informed by the meanings rendered to them in a given place (Domínguez 1986; Harris and Sim 2002; Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Nagel 1996:21; Okamura 1981:452; Twine 1996;

Wade 1997:19). Over time, immigrants learn the racial categories of the United States, and construct and negotiate their identities with the knowledge they have of race and ethnicity at home and in their new setting (Oboler 1995; Roth 2012). For example, in a Louisiana Creole migrant colony in a northern state, Creole identity was interpreted in relation to being "in between" the Black, White, and "Spanish" categories predominant in that area, whereas in Louisiana it is constructed in relation to Blacks and Whites (Woods 1989:36).

Another way that context shapes how immigrant and ethnic identities are constructed is in how different forms of identities are used in different situations. For example, many of these immigrants use race-, ethnic-, or place-based identities in various contexts (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). A case in point is how in concentrated Cape Verdean contexts contemporary immigrants use references to their home islands to construct their identities. But in broader contexts Portuguese, Cape Verdean, or Black can be used depending on the neighborhood where they live or who they are interacting with (De Andrade 1996:272; Sánchez Gibau 2005).

Residential choices may also influence how home and U.S. racial knowledge might be used in constructing identities. Depending on how and where migrants settle, racial and ethnic identity may be persistent, or subject to reshaping or assimilation with some other group. As noted for White immigrants at the turn of the century, densely concentrated immigrant spaces and communities support the maintenance of contemporary immigrant identities. The sustained reference to a non-U.S. racial structure can mediate the impact of discriminatory and racialized experiences for Black-ancestry immigrants because they have another racial reality where they may not be viewed as outside of the norm (Foner 1985:717; Waters 1999). For example, immigrant spaces that are created and maintained by first-generation Habasha Ethiopians and

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Eritreans are important for both preserving identities and providing the ability to deflect the impact of racialization in the wider American racial structure (Habecker 2012). Immigrant spaces like these are often composed of a mix of residential and entrepreneurial concentration (Habecker 2012; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). This is sometimes a more influential force for first generation or more recent immigrants with African-ancestry because they have a clearer memory or connection to their homeland which often keeps their national and ethnic identities stronger than compared to their children and those who have been away longer (Foner 1985:717; Sánchez Gibau 2005:419; Waters 1999).

Even ethnic groups that emerged in the United States hundreds of years ago are affected in similar ways by residential concentration. For example, the persistence of Creole residential communities in Louisiana was important in the maintenance of a Creole identity (Anthony 1978; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a). Anthony (1978) reports that residential concentration created a well-defined place and contributed to ethnic continuity in the New Orleans Creole community in the early 1900s, despite the disappearance of legal recognition of the community during this period (pp. 139, 159). Similarly, reservation space is important for maintaining solidarity among various triracial isolate Native Americans (Greenbaum 1991).

These immigrant and ethnic spaces in the United States are also important for second-generation immigrants. Some immigrant-centered social contexts in the United States are so concentrated with people and social practices from home countries that they provide enough cultural competency to aid the construction of ethnic identities in lieu of having much exposure to the country itself (Richards 2008). For example, neighborhoods in Brooklyn are so densely West Indian (to the point that Brooklyn is referred to by many as one of the islands) that many second-generation immigrants are able to construct island-oriented identities based on their

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continuous contact with the immigrant community, its institutions, and stories of the homeland (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008). Similarly, the Cape Verdean residential and commercial concentrations that are reinforced by contemporary immigration bolster the social networks and institutional embeddedness that support the Cape Verdean identities of current immigrants and later generations (Sánchez Gibau 2005).

As with White ethnics, leaving an ethnic concentration for suburban locations may facilitate blending in with neighboring groups or identity may become a "symbolic" ethnicity (Gans 1979; Gordon 1964; Lieberson 1980; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Waters 1990). For example, West Indians who live in more diverse neighborhoods are more likely to identify panethnically (Butterfield 2004). Some 'second generation' Creoles who were socialized outside of Louisiana and appeared phenotypically White did not have any indication that they were racially mixed until they attended family reunions and noticed relatives who appeared more phenotypically Black (Woods 1989). They had no contextual understanding of their ancestry and ethnic group. Furthermore, in migrant "colonies" outside of Louisiana, knowledge of Creole heritage was more limited compared to Creole youth who lived in closer proximity to the hometown (Woods 1989:39). The respondents from these colonies were mostly socialized in these locations outside of the Louisiana area. Despite Catholic retention being the strongest in the largest and more racially diverse colony on the west coast, the out-marriage rate was highest and the rate of Catholic Church marriages was lowest, indicating moves toward assimilation with the wider population (Woods 1989:38, 59).

As noted throughout the discussion above, generational status is a third important factor in the construction of immigrant and ethnic identities. This is because movement from the geographic region where a racial or ethnic identity originates and generational distance from this

location shapes interpretations and approaches to that identity. Second and subsequent generations are removed from the location where meaning of an identity is established. They are socialized in different contexts and may not have the same understanding of it as if they had been socialized in the original location. Because of this different context of socialization, second-generation immigrants often do not have the same cultural reference points or racial/ethnic markers associated with a given identity, which in turn shapes how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and negotiated. For example, second-generation West Indians are able to negotiate their identity as West Indian to some extent; but if the goal was to distance themselves from African Americans as their West Indian parents often tried, they faced difficulty (Waters 1999). This was due to their finding it harder to differentiate themselves because phenotype was the primary feature on which they were classified; and other ethnic markers that were used by first-generation parents, such as accent or specific West Indian cultural knowledge, were not available to them (cf. Richards 2008).

Another form of generational distinction found among immigrants and native-born ethnic groups are age cohort generations (Davis 1979; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Woods 1989). In the United States, the Civil Rights and Black Power movements created a specific context for constructing Black racial and ethnic identities. American-born children and grandchildren of earlier streams of immigrants and native-born ethnic groups with Black ancestry who came of age after desegregation and during the Black Power movement period experienced profound shifts in perceptions and constructions of Blackness (De Andrade 1996; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Woods 1989). This is similar to Black/White biracial persons who were born before and came of age during the Civil Rights period and were more likely to identify as only Black compared to those who were born

after this period who identified more readily as biracial (Korgen 1998 cited in Khanna 2011). For example, younger Creoles in Louisiana were often uncomfortable with their "special status" and attempted to connect with the broader Black population, in contrast to older Creoles who tended to maintain the separate identity (Dormon 1996a:170). For Creoles raised outside of Louisiana during this period, the political climate in combination with the different context of socialization resulted in an understanding of Blackness and Creole identity that diverged from the previous generation's (Woods 1989). In the post-Civil Rights era, ethnic revitalization publications such as *Creole Magazine*, promoted inclusiveness of the broader Black population, especially among the younger generation of Creoles (Dormon 1996a). Similarly, some Cape Verdeans who came of age during this period reported that outwardly identifying with the Black American population during the racialized period of the Black Power movement was a matter of social survival (Sánchez Gibau 2005:426).

Visible racial and ethnic markers like appearance (including skin color, hair, and other phenotypical features), alone or with other markers like surnames or language use, make up a fourth set of important factors for the construction of Black immigrant and ethnic identities. These features are often used to misidentify individuals. These markers are subject to situational interpretation and shape the construction of identities and the interactions that individuals have negotiating them. For example, throughout Cape Verdean history in the northeast United States, mixed Black and Portuguese appearance and proximity to an established African American population led outsiders to assume that they were African American, especially when they were two and three generations removed from immigration experiences and no longer had accents or spoke *Kriolu* (De Andrade 2000; Sánchez Gibau 2005). In other cases, contemporary Cape Verdean immigrants experience a case of "mistaken identity" as Latino (and particularly Puerto

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Rican) given their sizeable population in the neighborhood and the combination of racial and ethnic markers such as racially mixed phenotype and accents, which signify foreignness (Sánchez Gibau 2005:422). Puerto Rican and the Dominican immigrants who have more White or Black appearances are sometimes mistaken, at least initially, for White or African Americans. It is not until an accent is heard or name is made known that their actual origins are clarified in the encounter (Roth 2012).

Like multiracial Black individuals, Black-ancestry immigrants or native-born Black ethnic persons use these same markers to actively construct their identities and interpret the identities of coethnics. For example, some individuals from mixed race ethnic or immigrant group backgrounds may use specific hairstyles to convey Blackness (De Andrade 2000; Domínguez 1986; Sánchez Gibau 2005). During the Black Power movement era, young Cape Verdeans and Louisiana Creoles intentionally performed a Black racial identity by wearing their hair in Afro styles (Domínguez 1986; Sánchez Gibau 2005). Some Puerto Ricans construct the differences between themselves and Dominicans at least partially through similar appearance factors, such as the difference between Dominican women who straighten their hair and Puerto Ricans who keep it curly (Roth 2012). Or using hair styles like braids might signify to some immigrants a Black American identity (Roth 2012). For Cape Verdeans, phenotype varies on a continuum and has been used to interpret and represent various racial and ethnic identities, and even specific island affiliations (De Andrade 2000: 273; Sánchez Gibau 2005). As a researcher, De Andrade's (1996, 2000) own Cape Verdean appearance, including hair and skin color, was used as a cue for her Cape Verdean participants to relate their experiences. If her hair was frizzy and she had a tan, people read her as more African-oriented; straight hair and lighter skin could signal a different or opposite approach to race (more European). She could not predict which

appearance would work with each of her respondents before hand, so this was a factor that influenced the interactions, although she was not always certain about how (De Andrade 2000:278). In this case the interactions between the researcher and the study participants were shaped by the latter's categorization of the former's ethnic and racial identity.

Other immigrants may use physical appearance including light skin color, European facial features, or straight hair to emphasize their Whiteness or at least their distance from Blackness (Domínguez 1986; Habecker 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). For example, Ethiopian and Eritrean Habasha ideals of beauty and group appearance are encompassed by descriptions of beautiful women with light skin, narrow noses, and wavy hair (Habecker 2012:1214). This reasoning is also used as a support for the preference for endogamy (Domínguez 1986; Habecker 2012).

For those who may or may not exhibit physical racial ambiguity, features like accents, language, comportment, body language, or names might also be important in how identities are constructed. For some Cape Verdeans, the identity is recognized and signified using a combination of factors in addition to physical appearance, such as manner of speaking and interacting, connections to community, Portuguese family names, and language (De Andrade 2000; Sánchez Gibau 2005). Embodied behaviors like walking, posture, personal space allowed to others may also be ways of signaling Creole, Puerto Rican, or Dominican identities (Domínguez 1986; Roth 2012). West Indian accents or use of island pidgin are emphasized when clear West Indianness is desired (Waters 1999). Puerto Rican or Dominican immigrants may intentionally speak Spanish to ensure that they are noticeably different from African Americans (Roth 2012). In Louisiana, particular French, Spanish, Irish, or German names were common signifiers of Creole ancestry (Domínguez 1986). Puerto Rican or Dominicans may reveal or

change their Spanish names strategically depending on the impression they want to give in specific interactions (Roth 2012).

Fifth, class also shapes the different ways that Black immigrant and ethnic identities are constructed and maintained in ways that are similar to those discussed for middle class monoracial Blacks and multiracial persons. It can determine where individuals live, shaping their socialization contexts, who their reference groups are, and the ethnic resources that they can draw from in constructing identity. For example, a study of West Indians in New York shows that a more working class Brooklyn context is more densely West Indian compared to a more diverse and middle class Queens neighborhood (Butterfield 2004). This results in different ways that West Indian identities are constructed. For the working class, West Indian identities are lived in everyday exposure to coethnic social networks and businesses. For the middle class, a more concerted effort using social organizations is required to maintain a connection to the West Indian identity. Similarly, higher education amongst Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants tends to encourage panethnic identities whereas those with lower education tend to use national origins to identify themselves and other racial types (Roth 2012).

Class status can also be used as a way to signify separateness from another group, such as when middle class persons distinguish themselves from others. Some research shows that immigrant class status is used to construct identities in ways to avoid racialization as Black Americans. For example, middle class West Indians in New York identify ethnically versus those from more working class backgrounds who identify racially as Black (Waters 1999). Middle class Habasha Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants try to portray themselves as a kind of model minority who value hard work, education, and family to get around racialization as Black Americans (Habecker 2012). Some Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants try to distance

themselves from stereotypes that Latinos are poor, unprofessional, or criminal by conveying educated or middle class status through comportment and dress while constructing their identities (Roth 2012). For Habasha, Puerto Ricans, and Dominicans who are more working class, staying immersed in the ethnic enclave is another way to maintain an immigrant identity and avoid the racial hierarchy in the United States that would disadvantage them and/or treat them as Black Americans (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012).

In summary, the research on Black immigrant identities and the limited research on native-born Black ethnicity suggests that Black people in the U.S. draw on various factors when constructing and negotiating racial and ethnic identities, although they are often constrained by the racial structure of the United States that relies heavily on external racial markers. There are several kinds of identities and strategies used. For international immigrants the options include immigrant, ethnic American, American-identified, or pan-identities. For domestic ethnic groups, choices might range from an ethnicity-based to race-based identity. Both the research on Black-ancestry immigrants and Black-ancestry ethnic groups suggests that marking boundaries between themselves and a wider African American population is a common way that these identities are constructed. However, it is not the only one, since immigrants and domestic ethnics can also choose to align themselves with African Americans for various reasons or in various situations. Furthermore, several factors are particularly important for immigrants and domestic ethnic groups and the choices that they make in constructing identities. These include responding to stereotypes/discrimination/racialization, social contexts, generation, phenotype and other external markers, and class.

RELATING TO PLACE: PLACE ATTACHMENT AND PLACE IDENTITY

Relationships with place can have a significant role in the construction and negotiation of racial

and ethnic identities. The discussions above have drawn mainly on the literatures on immigration and the social construction of race and ethnicity, which suggest that place has a significant role in constructing Black and non-White identities, mainly as locational contexts in which racial structures, socialization, and interaction exist and take place. This provides some direction toward understanding how interstate migration may affect the identities of Louisiana migrants with Black and Creole ancestry, particularly how the situationality of race and ethnicity, local racial structures, and the movement of people from one location to another might affect identity construction. However, drawing on the literatures on place, place attachments, and place identities, this section examines more closely an alternative way to understand the roles of place and the emotional relationships and interactions that individuals have with their region of origin in the construction of identities. I do this with the intent of exploring how these relationships to place, specifically place attachments and place identities, might be used in connection with, or to modify, racial and ethnic identities. First I provide some definitions pertaining to my use of place. Then I will define and review some approaches to place attachments and place identities that will be relevant for understanding how place might be used in connection with constructing racial and ethnic identities.

Place is a space that has three components: meaning, a geographic location, and material form (Gieryn 2000; Relph 1976).[8] First, places are spaces that have been given meaning through experience, social relationships, and interaction (Gieryn 2000; Lobao 1996; Milligan 1998, 2003; Relph 1976; Tuan 1975). Second, place is also a specific geographic location, or physical site, or setting for experiences, interactions, and social relationships (Gieryn 2000; Lobao 1996;

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[8] A definition of place requires a definition of space to give it context (Relph 1976; Tuan 1977). Space is an abstract conception of the physical environment (Gieryn 2000:465; Milligan 1998:6; Relph 1976:8; Tuan 1977:6). It is "a site that exists, but is not yet defined or known" (Milligan 1998:6).

Milligan 1998; Relph 1976). Third, place is physical, a collection of natural or human-made objects at some specific location (Gieryn 2000:465; Milligan 1998:2-3; Relph 1976:47).

Places come in different spatial scales, from a room at the micro level to the global environment at the macro level (Lobao 1996:78; Low and Altman 1992; Tuan 1975). Regions, states, cities, and communities are places at the middle range (Lobao 1996:78; Low and Altman 1992). The larger the place the more difficult it is to experience directly (Tuan 1975). For example, regions and states are difficult to ascertain directly through the senses (Tuan 1975:159). Rather they are more readily understood through symbolic (Tuan 1975:159) or interactional means (Milligan 1998). Places are also nested so that smaller places exist within larger ones and "processes at one spatial scale influence those at another" (Lobao 1996:78; Gieryn 2000). For example, cities are nested within states, states are nested within regions, regions within nations, and so forth.

Two of the several ways that people relate to place is through place attachment and place identity, which are separate but interrelated phenomena (Lewicka 2008). Place identity is "an interpretation of self that uses environmental meaning to symbolize or situate identity" (Cuba and Hummon 1993a:548). This meaning is influenced by experiences and interactions in specific environments/locales/places (Hochschild, Jr. 2010:622). Place attachment is an emotional connection to a physical place that results from experiences and interactions in that place (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Hummon 1992:262; Kyle and Chick 2007; Low and Altman 1992; Milligan 1998, 2003; Trentelman 2009). It can be a positive, negative, or neutral emotion (Cochrane 1987; Milligan 1998; Relph 1976; cf. Trentelman 2009:201; Wiborg 2004).

Both place identity and place attachment can also be multilayered, as in being identified with or attached to two places at once but for different reasons (Hernández et al. 2007; Hummon

1992; cf. Milligan 1998; Relph 1976; Wiborg 2004). For example, a person could be attached to one city because she has family ties and was born there, but attached to another city because she likes living there. Place attachment and place identity can also be associated with multiple scales of place, as in identifying with one's dwelling while at the same time identifying with the community or region in which that dwelling is located (Cochrane 1987; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Hernández et al. 2007; Hidalgo and Hernández 2001; Lewicka 2008).

Place attachment and place identity are independent but can relate to each other in several ways (Hernández et al. 2007; Lewicka 2008).[9] For example, place attachment and place identity may have similar contributing factors that lead to each outcome independently, such as in the case of long term residence resulting in place attachment and place identity (Hernández et al. 2007). On the other hand, place attachment and place identity may be associated with the same place but may be influenced by different variables (Lewicka 2008). Or a place identity can influence a place attachment (being attached because you identify) (Lewicka 2008).

Alternatively, place attachment could develop before place identity (Hernández et al. 2007). For the purposes of this dissertation and understanding how relationships to place might shape the construction and negotiation of racial and ethnic identities, I acknowledge that there are many ways that they can work together. But the main distinctions to note are in how these

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[9] There are many ways that previous literature has dealt with how place attachment and place identity are connected (Hernández et al. 2007; Lewicka 2008; Trentelman 2009). While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to review them in detail, here I will point to three additional approaches (for detailed review, see Lewicka 2008 and Trentelman 2009). One approach has been to use them interchangeably or use one to operationalize the other without much discussion of the distinctions or mechanisms of how they might be related; whether this is always intentional is unclear (Hernández et al. 2007:311; Lewicka 2008; e.g., Williams et al. 1992). For example, place identity has been used as a measure of place attachment (Trentelman 2009) and place attachment as an indicator of place identity (Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b). A second related approach is that one term is explicitly treated as a component of the other (Hernández et al. 2007). A third is that place identity and place attachment are treated as one of several components of a broader concept, such as sense of place (which is how people subjectively perceive, and what they consciously feel about, their environment) (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Hernández et al. 2007; Hummon 1992:262; Kyle and Chick 2007; Lewicka 2008; Trentelman 2009).

relationships to place are defined and expressed: place attachment refers to the emotion of feeling attached to a place that results from experiences and interactions associated with that place, and place identity uses experiences and interactions associated with a place in constructing identity. Place attachment can inform and modify racial and ethnic identities and place identity can be used in lieu of or in combination with racial and ethnic identities.

Constructing Place Attachment and Place Identity

Several types of processes that contribute to place attachment and place identity have been identified: biological, environmental, psychological, biographical, and sociocultural (Gieryn 2000:481; Lewicka 2011; Low and Altman 1992:8; Tuan 1977). Here I focus on those that fall under biographical and sociocultural processes, particularly how experience, interaction, and leaving a place shapes place attachment and place identity. Place attachment and place identity can arise from "accumulated biographical experiences" or repeated meaningful interaction in and with a specific site, which can be positive, negative, neutral, or mundane (Gieryn 2000:481; Cochrane 1987; Milligan 1998:6; 2003; Relph 1976; cf. Trentelman 2009:201). The physical features of a place in turn influence interactions in a site (Milligan 1998, 2003). Once meaning has been associated with a place through interaction, continuous presence or interaction there is not necessary to maintain attachment to or identification with it because the symbolic and emotional meanings created can stay with the actor after leaving the site (Milligan 1998, 2003; Tuan 1975; Wiborg 2004:429).

Milligan (1998) identified "two interwoven components" of place attachment that exist simultaneously for a site: (1) interactional past and (2) interactional potential (p. 2). First, the interactional past is the collection of memories and experiences linked to a place through repeated interactions in a given site (Milligan 1998:2). The meaningfulness associated with the

place corresponds with the meaningfulness of the interactional past (p. 10). It is an accumulative process that can be "reinterpreted over time" so experiences that were not meaningful at one time might become so at a later point (pp. 9, 10). For example, Milligan's (1998) ethnographic study of employees at a university campus coffee shop before and after a relocation of the organization found that coffee house employees reported to work on a regular basis, but may not have recognized daily events as significant. But those experiences put together and reflected upon at a later time created a set of memories associated with that place that became important when the organization moved sites. Or in the case of migrants, refugees, or disaster victims, the body of experiences and memories growing up and living in a place create a meaningful interactional past connected to that specific location (Bogac 2009; Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cox and Perry 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b).

Second, the interactional potential is what actors can imagine or expect to happen in a place based on (1) their previous interactions there and (2) the physical characteristics of the site (Milligan 1998:2). An example of how previous interaction influences the interactional potential in Milligan's study is how employees at the old coffee shop knew that they could expect to have meaningful interactions with friends/coworkers while working or stopping by for a visit in that location based on their previous experiences before the organization moved.

The physical aspects of a site also shape a place's potential for meaningful interactions that in turn facilitate attachment to it (Milligan 1998). Three significant physical characteristics in Milligan's (1998) site were layout, atmosphere, and positioning. The physical layout refers to characteristics such as the size or where things are arranged that shape how people interact with each other in a specific site (p. 18). For example, the specific layout of the kitchen area in the coffee house increased the "sociability" of the place so that employees were able to interact with

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each other while working, whereas the new site's layout isolated workers during their shifts (p. 18). The atmosphere refers to "visual appearance," which could be viewed as "representing the acceptance of specific values and behaviors" on the part of the organization or place (p. 22). For example, the alternative, bohemian style decor in the old coffee shop site invited a similar type of student patron, and was a contrast to the cold, corporate cafeteria-style decor in the new coffee shop. The positioning refers to placement in relation to a larger area (p. 25). For example, the isolated location where the old coffee house was positioned in relation to the rest of campus influenced the "degree of accessibility" and "perceived exclusivity" because patrons had to make a conscious choice to visit, whereas the new site was designed so that everyone using the student union had to pass through (p. 18). All of these features contributed to the old coffee house employees having a stronger attachment to the old coffee house than the new one.

I propose an additional concept—interactional layout—that expands Milligan's (1998) ideas on the physical features of interactional potential and captures how actors negotiate the interactional potential of the physical site. Interactional layout is how the physical layout has been manipulated or used by actors to facilitate interaction. This differs from general interaction or the physical layout in facilitating sociability because it specifically indicates that the actors make intentional use of the physical features such as size or arrangement of the place. It contrasts from Milligan's (1998) use of layout, atmosphere, and positioning, which focuses mostly on how the static physical features of the interactional potential shaped the site, and not how the actors negotiated them. Interactional layout allows the theory to account for the agency of actors with varying levels of power in a social and physical setting. For example, Milligan's (1998, 2003) participants were not in charge of determining the physical layout of the coffee shop, rather they were constrained by the decisions of university officials and so had to interact within the already

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defined parameters.

The underlying motivation of interactional layout can also be applied to other aspects of the physical features of a place if appropriate for the case. For example, if physical positioning was a relevant feature of the place, interactional positioning might be an appropriate expansion to indicate that actors were negotiating the physical site's placement in relation to a larger area in social ways that influence how accessible the place is for interaction.

Displacement Events

In the literatures on immigration and situational race and ethnicity, movement from one location to another is assumed to influence the variable meanings of race and ethnicity because of changes in racial structures and meanings of racial categories. The place identity and place attachment literature can be used to examine the emotional effects of movement from one place to another on the relationships to place and identities constructed from those relationships. This links migration to displacement, the involuntary or voluntary "disruption in place attachment" that occurs as a result of losing or leaving a place (Milligan 1998:3; 2003:382, 385; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). Displacement can be a key event making attachment to a place apparent to actors when it otherwise was taken for granted (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cochrane 1987; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b; Milligan 1998:3, 28). Though displacement is not a necessary condition for awareness of place attachment (e.g., Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; cf. Milligan 1998:10, 28; 2003), by causing a discontinuity in place it is a mediating event that changes the trajectory of the process in which place attachment and place identities are created and maintained (Milligan 2003:382, 385). Furthermore, while in some cases the displacement is permanent because the original location is no longer accessible after a relocation, it is not specified in the literature that the displacement has to be irreversible nor does

all access to the original site have to be cut off for actors to experience displacement (Bogac 2009; Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b).

Several studies focusing on the interactive nature of place relationships point to the ways that place identity is influenced by disruption in place attachment. For instance, when routine interaction in a place one is attached to is disrupted—for example, by a threat of, or actual loss of place—it highlights or reframes one's place identities linked to those place attachments (e.g., Cochrane 1987; Cox and Perry 2011; Milligan 1998, 2003). Milligan (1998, 2003) finds that day-to-day interaction in a work organization's specific site created a strong attachment and through place continuity, identification with it; and after a loss of the site and break in place attachment, nostalgia helped to restore the place identification associated with it. Cochrane (1987) found that experiences of living and working an entire lifetime in an island fishing community and the threat of its loss created a strong sense of attachment to and identification with their work-home sites and secondly with the region. And Hochschild, Jr. (2010) observed that meaningful interaction and negotiation of a conflict over who did and did not belong in a social club highlighted actors' place attachments and resulted in strong place-based identities.

Restoring and Maintaining Place Attachment and Place Identity: Nostalgia, Collective Memory, and Collective Nostalgia

Displacement requires repair if attachment and identification are to continue. A combination of nostalgia and collective memory create one mechanism that contributes to the restoration and maintenance of place attachment and place identity after a displacement (Milligan 1998, 2003). Nostalgia is a positive emotion felt for events experienced by individual actors as a response to some other negative circumstance, such as when one fondly reconstructs and recalls memories of one's childhood home in response to a parent's death (Davis 1979; Milligan 2003; Wilson 2005).

It works as a mechanism to repair discontinuity in place attachment and place identity by relinking the past memories or expectations of events and interactions to that lost place in a positive way, which restores access to the interactional past and potential of a place (Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Milligan 1998:11; 2003:385; Ocejo 2011).

Nostalgia is an individual emotion, but it can also be felt (1) collectively (Davis 1979; Milligan 1998; Ocejo 2011; Wilson 2005); (2) for past events not individually experienced (Borer 2010; cf. Davis 1979; Wilson 2005; Zerubavel 1996, 1997, 2003); and (3) for imagined future events (Borer 2010; cf. Davis 1979; cf. Milligan 2003). First, collective nostalgia is motivated by Milligan's (1998, 2003) utilization of nostalgia and collective memory. Socially remembering shapes personal memories, and also creates collective memory, which is an amalgamation of the individual pasts of community members into one that all "remember collectively" (Zerubavel 1996:293; 1997:96). The groups of people that shape what is remembered (such as "families, organizations, nations") make up "mnemonic communities" (Zerubavel 1996:289; 2003). Another form of mnemonic community can be a generation of people who had collective experiences in a given time and place (Davis 1979; Milligan 2003). People learn how to understand their experiences and memories, what they should remember and forget, by listening to the recollections of members of these communities (Zerubavel 1996:286; 1997:87; 2003:5). One of the ways that communities reinforce their collective memories is through "mnemonic synchronization," or remembering together at an appointed time, such as during holiday celebrations (Zerubavel 1996:294; 1997). Collective nostalgia, then, is a type of collective memory where a community of people share a favorable emotion about a shared and selectively remembered past in the face of some negative circumstance, such as when people "sense that their attachments to a place and their future in a place are under threat" (Ocejo

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2011:287; Borer 2010).

Empirical examples further illustrate how collective nostalgia works. For example, Milligan (1998, 2003) shows that nostalgia can happen collectively, leading workers to realize they share a past as old coffee house employees, which enables them to experience a restored continuity in their attachment to the coffee house while resisting attachment to the new coffee house. In her case, the interactions that occur in the new site provide a negative contrast to those from the old one, creating nostalgia that works as the mechanism to strengthen the original employees' place attachment to the old site and reinforce their identities as "old coffee shop employees." This is tied to the physical aspects of the sites that also contribute to them becoming mnemonic places with the ability "to organize the past experiences of an individual, as well as to transmit aspects of a shared or collective past" (Milligan 1998:12). The employees at the coffee house restore their place attachment to the original site with a collectively nostalgic view of what were previously thought of as negative physical aspects of working in the "cramped" and "dingy" site (p. 11). They collectively contrast these conditions to those spacious, bright, and generic conditions of the new site, which are not preferred.

Other examples of this process can be found in diverse circumstances. For instance, the first wave of gentrifiers in a New York neighborhood collectively and nostalgically recalled the drugs, prostitution, and abandoned buildings in their narratives of attachment to and symbolic ownership of their neighborhood as a response to further commercial gentrification which was threatening social and cultural displacement (Ocejo 2011). And refugees regained their attachment to their home country when they employed a similar process of collectively and nostalgically remembering the social and physical aspects of place in the context of building and interacting within an ethnic enclave (Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Second, collective nostalgia also can be felt for events not individually experienced. This is largely motivated by the idea that by adopting the group's biography as part of their own past through collectively remembering, actors can experience events that the communities they belong to experienced even if they were not present (cf. Davis 1979; Wilson 2005; Zerubavel 1996:286, 290; 1997; 2003). Actors can experience a variety of emotions about such events (Zerubavel 1996; 1997:91), for example, leaving the way open for feeling nostalgia about events and places that are not experienced individually (such as a collective interactional past).

Third, nostalgia can be felt for the lost interactional potential of a place—that is the lost future in a place (cf. Davis 1979; cf. Milligan 2003), the lost *understanding* of the future in a place, and the lost features of the place (Milligan 2003:398). This application of nostalgia is motivated by "collective imagination," which is similar to collective memory; but in looking toward the future, the temporal opposite of collective memory, it employs "future-oriented nostalgia" based on a community's present concerns and their understanding of the past (Borer 2010:98, 111; cf. Wilson 2005:37). The selectivity with which the imagined future is created, or its idealized nature, is an element drawn from nostalgia. For example, this future-oriented nostalgia and utopian ideas were used by residents of a stigmatized community who collectively imagined a prospective community center in a restored firehouse that would have the ability to repair the negative image of the neighborhood (Borer 2010). By experiencing collective nostalgia for the interactional potential or future in that place, members of the collective can restore their emotional attachment to and identity associated with a place.

In summary, nostalgia is a positive emotion about an individually lived or collectively experienced past or imagined future in the face of some negative circumstance or concern. Nostalgia and collective nostalgia can be used by actors as a mechanism to repair discontinuity

in place attachment. This is accomplished by linking the memories of past events, interactions, or

potential for these to that lost place, even when some actors within a collectivity may not have

had much direct experience with it (Borer 2010; Milligan 1998:11; 2003:385; Ocejo 2011;

Wilson 2005; Zerubavel 1996, 1997, 2003). Restoring place attachment and place identity

through collective memory and nostalgia is one way that place may be used by interstate

migrants in connection with their racial and ethnic identities.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The implications of this literature for answering the research questions are many. The

dissertation asks: How are racial and ethnic identities constructed and modified? How are racial

and ethnic identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by

migration? Overall, the studies on White ethnic identities and Black-ancestry identities that focus

on skin color, class, bi-/multiracial individuals, and immigration contribute to understanding how

Blackness and non-White identities are constructed and negotiated. Yet, the literature still has

not fully addressed how people who have a U.S. reference point and a group history of

multigenerational mixed-Black ancestry interpret these processes of identity construction.

Considering the differences between White and non-White persons in the power they have to

categorize self and others demonstrates that the racial and ethnic backgrounds themselves

influence how identities are constructed, with Whites having more flexibility in the choices

available because of fewer or less severe experiences of stereotyping, discrimination, and/or

racialization. The literature has shown that for various Black-ancestry groups, racialization as

African American is a common motivator for respondents to reinforce boundaries between

themselves and the latter. But this is not always the case, and there are several reasons why

immigrants and other groups with Black ancestry might identify with or align themselves with

African Americans. There is also much overlap on the factors identified as important for the construction of racial and ethnic identities, including social context and cultural exposure; ancestry; external markers (particularly ambiguity in appearance, names, and accents/language); generational status; and class, although they may work in different ways for various groups. Examining interstate migrants with Black and Creole ancestry bridges the research on the ways that White ethnic, African American, Black immigrant, and multiracial identities are constructed.

The previous literature demonstrates that locational context (e.g., from nation, region, to neighborhood) is important in determining how racial and ethnic identities are constructed. The location is part of the social context, shaping the settings of interactions where race and ethnicity are constructed and negotiated, including opportunities for socialization and cultural exposure. For example, the structural conditions of a neighborhood may contribute to the density or lack of density in ethnic networks, thus shaping the interpretations of identities in daily life. The more cultural exposure, the greater the resources are to construct a given identity. The other racial and ethnic groups that live nearby also shape identities by creating the conditions for boundary work. And movement from one location to another has the potential to shift the meaning that social actors give to their identities, and the ways that they shape them. This is because racial and ethnic meanings are constructed in relation to place. These studies reviewed here suggest that new or diverse situational, neighborhood, or regional contexts (compared to the individual's background or the original context) complicate how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and negotiated.

The research on native-born Black identities that finds non-Black ancestry to be unimportant cannot necessarily account for persons with Black and Creole ancestry who may construct and negotiate ethnic and racial options in ways that are more similar to bi-/multiracial

or immigrant persons. Black Creoles often represent an anomaly or footnote in those studies (e.g., Smith and Moore 2000; Waters 1991). But like multiracial individuals, the desire to acknowledge multiple sources of ancestral diversity may be important for members of a Black ethnic group with a history of mixed ancestry. However, the tools that can be drawn on in this process might be different since for multiracials individual parents' ancestries are important. Furthermore, the individual ancestries connected to Creole are not always affixed to distinct persons in the family tree, and in this way are similar to how immigrants from Caribbean and Latin American countries understand their racial makeup. Also like immigrants, the original place associated with given identities is likely important in how they are constructed in new settings. Because of the history of many generations of mixture, and the experience of generational shifts in the U.S. racial structure (i.e., living through the Civil Rights and post-Civil Rights periods), Creole ancestry might be used either on its own or in combination with a racial identity, or parallel to how ancestries are used in White ethnics' identities (e.g., Irish or Italian).

Ethnic markers like appearance, names, accents/language are identified as important for White ethnics and these diverse Black-ancestry groups. But the way that they work for each varies. For contemporary White ethnics these can be used to benignly supply choices for identity. For much of the Black-ancestry population there is a more complicated relationship with external markers. Sometimes they are used by others to categorize and racialize as non-White, and at other times used by the individuals themselves to construct boundaries or belonging. And there is a spectrum of appearances that are subject to colorism. Features associated with a more Black appearance (e.g., phenotype or clothing) can be used to categorize or racialize one as African American, but they can also be used to construct authentic Black identities when desired. More White or ambiguous appearances can be used by Black others to categorize as not authentically

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Black, by individuals themselves to emphasize distance from African Americans, or by White others as racially foreign, exotic, or more acceptable. Names and language can also be used for a variety of purposes in the construction of racial and ethnic identities, from categorizing as other than Black, to non-White, to foreign and many options in between.

The literature suggests that generational status may be important to constructing racial and ethnic identities in several ways. For example, among individuals with Creole ancestry (which includes a multigenerational history of racial mixture in the United States) who migrate from one state where regionally-specific identities were historically constructed to another state with its own local racial structure, there may be generation-related processes that are similar to those found among White ethnics and contemporary international immigrants. First- and second-generation identities may be constructed differently due to differences in socialization contexts. Second-generation identities may rely heavily, but also distinctly on the level of ethnic residential and commercial concentration. Boundaries may be constructed differently, and the use of factors such as ethnic markers may develop in ways that are distinct from the first generation.

Class status is also important to constructing racial and ethnic identities. It may determine social contexts, and ways that cultural exposure is managed. But it may also be used in conjunction with other factors to construct a Black identity that distinguishes individuals from specific segments of African Americans or other Blacks, from stereotypes of Blackness, or otherwise being racialized as Black.

Ethnic studies research on Creoles and other mixed Black-ancestry groups provide some analysis on domestic Black ethnic diversity, although it still needs more attention. Although the Creole case is one of the better-developed literatures in this area, there is not much regarding

how migrations and changes in place can shape these identities. This is important because of the mass migration out of the South in which many Louisianans participated. Nor is there much on how the construction and negotiation of ethnic identities changed since most of this research was conducted in the 1980s. This study will add contemporary research in this area.

I also argue that the literature on how place attachments and place identities are constructed, restored, and maintained interactionally can be applied to understanding an additional mechanism through which racial and ethnic identities might be modified or contextualized through relationships to place. The literature on the social construction of race and ethnicity and immigration suggests migrants sometimes construct identities that are oriented toward their countries of origin even while in their host countries. It also suggests that place influences racial and ethnic identity construction through interpretation of the home and host societies' racial structures, interaction with other social actors, contexts of socialization, and changes in place which shift the meanings of these categories. These country-based identities are interpreted to be a result of translation and reapplication of home racial structures to the new setting (Roth 2012). And they may sometimes be used as a way to distinguish themselves from being racialized in a negative way. But identities are also made and modified in interaction with the place itself. Migrants with specific experiences, memories, and expectations of interaction associated with their place of origin may likely have strong emotional connections to that place. When this emotion is attachment, the home place can be an integral part of how they identify themselves in new settings. A migrant's leaving their home, despite the anticipated advantages, may cause a feeling of disconnection, and perhaps longing for that place. Interaction with fellow migrants with whom place-centered collective memories and collective nostalgia can be shared can restore a feeling of attachment and identification with that place in the new setting. This kind

of place attachment or identity may be used in lieu of, in addition to, or to modify racial and ethnic identities and the ways that they have been described by other literatures.

Over the next three chapters I examine the empirical data that answer the research questions of this dissertation. In Chapter 3, I next analyze how migrants experienced the migration and settlement processes, how they established and supported the enclave in Los Angeles, and what being from Louisiana meant in Los Angeles.

CHAPTER 3
"THAT WAS OUR CLUSTER": THE RESIDENTIAL, CATHOLIC PARISH, AND BUSINESS CONCENTRATION AMONG LOUISIANA MIGRANTS IN LOS ANGELES

[Y]ou know, we socialized together. Some of us worked together[... . W]e went to church and we'd see each other at church and—so we really kind of didn't lose step with a lot of the habits and things from New Orleans…
　　—Hubert, first generation

There's a whole expatriate community. There's tons of them. They went to churches where most of the people came from New Orleans. Went to bakeries where people came from New Orleans. We even lived in a neighborhood where people from New Orleans—many people in that area […]. Yeah, it just seemed like a lot of New Orleans just relocated en masse.
　　—Reynard, second generation

Contemporary sociological accounts of the Great Migration tend to focus on the causes of migration, the push and pull factors, and frame it aggregately as an explanation of unequal socioeconomic outcomes (Blauner 2001; Gregory 2005; Lieberson 1980; Light 1972; Marks 1989; Tolnay et al. 2000). It is often formulated as story of the demography of African American labor migration, entrepreneurship, assimilation, residential segregation, and the so-called pathologies of urban living and ghettos, often while making problematic comparisons to European immigration of earlier and then-contemporary periods (Basu and Werbner 2001; Blauner 2001; Frazier 1939; Gregory 2005; Lieberson 1980; Light 1972; Logan and Molotch 1987; Marks 1989; Tolnay et al. 2000). However, relatively less is known about sociological factors that shaped other aspects of migrants' everyday experiences, how migrants from specific states settled in their new cities, how migrants constructed identities, or how the second generation of this migration understood the phenomena (Boehm 2009; Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay et al. 2000).

The above passages from Louisiana migrants suggest that state-based distinctions

continued to be significant for both the first- and second-generation members of an interstate

migrant community in Los Angeles. Hubert and Reynard name the kinds of places that were

important in supporting their migrant community: "neighborhoods", "churches", and businesses

like "bakeries." They were describing a Louisiana enclave. For the purposes of this chapter, this

kind of enclave is defined as having a concentration of people who share a status used as part of

their identities, having a concentration of businesses and/or non-economic institutions that

support their lifestyle, and having a strong tie that exists between the lifestyle and the geographic

place they occupy (Abrahamson 1996; cf. Portes and Jensen 1987). Ethnic enclaves are

important physical spaces for supporting immigrants' collective memory, nostalgia, and

attachments to home (Abrahamson 1996; Mazumdar et al. 2000). In immigrant communities,

enclaves create spaces where migrants can continue to operate in ways similar to the home

country, they also reinforce language and cultural practices; they are also important for the

second generation's connection to their homeland (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Mazumdar

et al. 2000; Richards 2008; Roth 2012).

The role of migrant residential and economic concentrations was similar for southern

interstate migrants during the Great Migration throughout northern and western destinations

(Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). The international

immigration literature gives a sense that enclaves are important for specific national groups, and

their second generation as well (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Mazumdar et al. 2000;

Richards 2008; Roth 2012). But there is less known about how migrants from specific American

states of the Great Migration era and their second generation interpreted enclave experiences and

ties to their home states from the vantage points of their new cities (Boehm 2009).

Some of the historical literature on the Great Migration does make claims, if sometimes

cursory, about how southernness was transplanted or how southern or migrant identities developed, but there is generally not much on state patterns or distinctions within the identities or experiences of migrants (Bond 1936; Gregory 2005; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). For example, Gregory (2005) argues that southern Black migrants had an effect on their destinations and the nation as a whole through organizations, politics, industries, changing racial rules, and culture. Sernett (1997) examines how the religious landscape of Chicago changed with the importation of specific southern Protestant religious forms by migrants during 1916-1918. Lemke-Santangelo (1996) argues that Oakland over time began to reflect the southernness of migrants through cultural expressions linked to values, religious practices, foodways, and styles of socializing. Hine (1991) argues a similar point about the Midwest generally in one paragraph, also suggesting that "psychological and emotional relocation" was so complicated that it kept women migrants tied to their states of origin, motivating their only partial assimilation to the north, and contributing to the southernization of their destinations (p. 134). Although many of these sources note the states of origin that were most common for each destination, it is usually a homogenized southernness that is represented, and they do not systematically examine specific state-based patterns. Furthermore, the arguments are made to varying degrees of elaboration.

Rutkoff and Scott (2010), on the other hand, attempt to make more explicit links between specific points of origin and destinations in their profiles of specific cities comprised of a review of mostly previous historical studies and sources, and other literary sources. For example, in their chapter on Los Angeles, they have sections peppered with examples that demonstrate how Louisiana migrants (and in some cases Creoles in particular), along with others, influenced their

new city culturally with jazz, specific food practices, and religious practices along with reporting on the demographic changes made during migration.

Phillips (1999) also focuses on one destination, Cleveland, and notes the influence that Alabamans, who made up at least fifty percent of migrants at some points during the first phase of migration, had on the city. Although she also reports the experiences of migrants from other states, accounts from Alabaman migrants predominate. And that migrants called it "AlabamaNorth" demonstrates the extent of the influence from that state. For example, she suggests that migrants from individual states sometimes created residential concentrations partly because of residential segregation, but also through chain migration. They created social clubs within churches and secularly along state lines, and infused southern worship styles into northern churches all in order to preserve their connection to being southerners. While she identifies these patterns, they make up only a portion of her historical narrative.

The literature that focuses on Creoles, and touches on their experiences outside of Louisiana claims relatively few academic studies (DeWitt 2008; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989) and journalistic/memoir pieces (Aubry Kaplan 2011; George 1992) on the migration experience. The body of research that does address migration, however, is relevant to the questions at hand because most of the Louisiana migrants I interviewed had some connection the Creole community. The studies and articles that mention migration to Los Angeles note that there were residential, church, and business concentrations of Louisiana Creoles in the city (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989). Some estimates of the number of Creole migrants to Los Angeles range from over 1,000 members of one extended family (Woods 1972) to a vague "thousands" of families (Gaudin 2005:98), to 15,000 migrants (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). But more data and analysis is needed because of

uneven coverage of pertinent issues relating to how migration and settlement were experienced.

For example, Woods's (1972) study of one extended family of Creoles from around the rural Natchitoches region of Louisiana includes a detailed examination on the demography of migration of in the center of the state, to three settlements outside of Louisiana. One of these areas was most likely Los Angeles (pseudonyms were used, but the characteristics of the site point to Los Angeles). Woods finds from an analysis of statistical data from 1960 and 1964, and qualitative interviews and records mostly from the 1950s and 1960s, that migrants from this one extended family lived clustered near one another in Los Angeles neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were mainly majority nonwhite or Black neighborhoods, but about 16 percent lived in areas that were mostly White and may have been passing (Woods 1972, 1989). These migrants attended parishes in those neighborhoods, and socialized at church and church-related events. Although Woods reports migrants living around parishes, she argued that they were not necessarily ethnic centers that attracted migrants, but that concentrations were likely a function of parishes being so close together in neighborhoods where these Creoles lived. Woods also notes generally that some migrants outside of Louisiana owned businesses that were gathering places for other Creoles, but her study does not examine the existence or role of business concentrations in her research sites.

There are several other gaps that Woods's (1972) study leaves unfilled. Her data only represent migrants from one area of Louisiana and related to one family. The bulk of the research was conducted before the end of the migration, and generally analyzed the first generation of migrants, although the study was published in 1972.[10] Woods's account relies most on

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[10] Woods's (1989) follow-up study with the children of these Creole migrants in the same destination cities focuses on value retention and Creole identity, and compares them to NORC survey data for American youth of the same

descriptive statistics and records analysis. Migration and resettlement are analyzed in terms of demographic factors. While the extent of the documentation is impressive given the lack of enumeration distinguishing Creoles from the wider Black population, there is less emphasis on how the social processes of resettlement were experienced by migrants themselves, despite her occasional use of interview excerpts. My research supplements Woods's with a rich qualitative account of how migrants experienced their settlement. My study also presents new data that widens the scope to migrants from New Orleans and other cities in Louisiana, is not limited by drawing on one family, includes migrants who arrived after Woods's data was collected, and systematically analyzes the children of migrants' perspectives on migration and settlement.

Gaudin's (2005) historical analysis of Creoles mainly from New Orleans addresses the migration of Creoles largely from the perspectives of those who stayed in Louisiana. She draws on a variety of sources, including oral history interviews. Part of her analysis argues that Creole migration changed the shape of Creole identity in New Orleans while also creating an enclave in Los Angeles. Gaudin documents in some detail the residential, church, and business concentrations, but only interviews five new sources in Los Angeles with the remaining Los Angeles data coming from secondary sources such as news articles that have been presented elsewhere (e.g., in George 1992). Gaudin refers to distinctions in ideas about Creole identity between pre- and post-Jim Crow era Creoles, but she does not analyze generation systematically. As with Woods's (1972, 1989) work, my study again adds original oral history data that supports some of Gaudin's (2005) findings, while including a sociological analysis of how the migration and resettlement processes were comparatively experienced by first and generation Louisianans.

As Hine (1991) suggests, this mass migration in which Louisianans participated involved

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age range. Her examination of the second generation, however, does not focus on the migration story, and also is limited by the same gaps as her earlier study cited above.

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disrupting and reestablishing emotional ties to people and place, processes which further

complicated resettlement. But the aspects of migration and resettlement encompassing

interactional and emotional processes have been largely overlooked in the sociological literature

on the Great Migration and the literature on Louisiana Creoles.

Furthermore, few of these studies systematically examine the perspectives of the second

generation of the Great Migration (Boehm 2009). International immigration literature reveals

more about second-generation experiences than the Great Migration literature does about

second-generation interstate migrants (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Mazumdar et al. 2000;

Richards 2008; Roth 2012). The Great Migration literature occasionally includes the

recollections of children of migrants, but usually not systematically (Boehm 2009; Hine 1991;

Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999). And studies of Black communities in the northern

migrant destinations include the second generation, although nuanced, usually do not focus on

how children of southerners understood migration experiences similarly or differently from their

parents (Gwaltney 1993; Robinson 2001; Stack 1974). By examining the practical, interactional,

emotional, and generational aspects of migration for Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, this

chapter examines one case that illustrates the disaggregated complexities of Black migration

during the second phase of the Great Migration.

This chapter contributes to answering two of the broad questions of this dissertation and

filling in the above gaps: How were the migration and settlement processes experienced? What

did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? In this chapter I demonstrate that Louisiana

migrants created a Louisiana-centered enclave in Los Angeles, within the larger Black migrant

concentration in the city. I show how the more traditionally analyzed factors of migration

networks, migrant streams, and residential segregation contributed to creating the migrant

concentration (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay et al. 2000). But I also argue that this enclave hosted a mnemonic community of migrants and functioned as a site of Louisiana-centered interaction in Los Angeles. Two key mechanisms were important in the residential, church, and business concentration in Los Angeles: (1) interaction with the mnemonic community and (2) the interactional potential of Los Angeles. These mechanisms and the concentration in turn helped to reinforce collective memory and collective nostalgia for Louisiana, providing the conditions to restore migrants' place attachment (see Chapter 5). This was particularly important for the second generation's perception of the migration that brought their families to Los Angeles.

As I argue, the migrant community was also a mnemonic community, a group of people that collectively shape what is remembered (Zerubavel 1996:289; 2003). These communities can be families, organizations, or a generation of people who had collective experiences in a given time and place (Davis 1979; Milligan 2003; Zerubavel 1996, 2003). People learn how to understand their experiences and memories, what they should remember and forget, by absorbing the recollections of members of these communities (Zerubavel 1996:286; 1997:87; 2003:5). In addition to interacting within a mnemonic community, one of the ways that collective memories are reinforced is through "mnemonic synchronization," or remembering together at an appointed time, such as during holiday celebrations (Zerubavel 1996:294; 1997).

Recall from Chapter 2 that the interactional potential is what actors can imagine or expect to happen in a place based on (1) their previous interactions there and (2) the physical characteristics of the site (Milligan 1998:2). Because the migrant concentration was also a mnemonic community, the interactional potential of Los Angeles was made up of the expectations for interacting in a way that was influenced by memories of Louisiana. In this case,

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there is a collective nostalgia for Louisiana that is generated by the mnemonic community of migrants, a type of collective memory where a community of people share a favorable emotion about a shared and selectively remembered past in the face of some negative circumstance, such as the disruptive nature of migration (Borer 2010; Ocejo 2011:287).

The chapter's findings provide a foundation for understanding the context in which migrants' racial and ethnic identities were constructed (see Chapter 4), and it sets the stage for examining the role that migration and place attachment have in constructing these identities (see Chapters 4 and 5). Herein I occasionally refer to how these features contribute to migrants' place attachment, but I examine this part of the process in more detail in Chapter 5.

My argument is developed in three main sections where I also compare by generation. The first section presents how the residential concentration of migrants emerged from the combination of migrant networks, chain migration streams, and residential segregation, which created a community in Los Angeles linked to Louisiana. This concentration would help to acclimate migrants to a new place. But the second-generation accounts illustrate how it also created (1) the conditions for a mnemonic community, which would support nostalgic remembering of Louisiana, and (2) a context for Louisiana-centered interaction. This laid the groundwork for restoring a Louisiana place attachment and place identity (This will be discussed further in Chapter 5).

In the second section, I examine how migrants used Catholic parishes as core sites of the Louisiana-centered interactional potential. In addition to their spiritual role, the parishes were locations of interaction and symbolic centers that promoted access to the mnemonic community and their collective nostalgia for home (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). Two sub-themes are examined: (1) parishes as geographic markers and (2) parish social life, which includes parish-

centered socializing and the migrant's influence on the parish.

The third section looks at how the Louisianan-owned business district was partially created by, and served as a mnemonic place where migrants could engage in collective nostalgia for the interactional past of Louisiana. It also provided physical sites of interaction for the migrant community and contributed to the Louisiana-centered interactional potential in Los Angeles. The emphasis on mnemonic community and collective nostalgia helps to explain how Louisiana Creoles established a business district that was both distinct from, yet still within the larger Black settlement.

GETTING A HOLD: THE MAKING OF A RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATION

It became evident from my conversations with most of the first- and second-generation migrants that there were very specific areas where most Louisianans lived and that this settlement pattern was created by the combination of the network of migrants and chain migration, and residential segregation. As with some international migrations, residential concentrations of interstate migrants were created as a result of the support network of the migration chain. Somewhat parallel to the Italian village/Little Italy patterns found among Italian immigrants in the United States a century ago, state-based concentrations cropped up in various neighborhood areas of Los Angeles as a product of the state-to-state migration streams during the Great Migration era (Bond 1936; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Robinson 2010; Tolnay 2003; Wilkerson 2010). By the beginning of the twentieth century, Black southern migrants to Los Angeles generally settled near Central Avenue, south of Downtown, which at that time was called the Eastside (Flamming 2005:68). Residential segregation was a major force keeping Black old-timers and new migrants in specific sections of the city, even leading to housing shortages during the early phases of the migration (Bond 1936; Chapple 2010; Flamming 2005; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010;

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Sides 2003).

By the 1940s, Black residents began to move westward as real estate opportunities opened up with the lifting of some discriminatory housing restrictions (Chapple 2010; Flamming 2005:98; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Louisiana migrants followed and sometimes led this general westward movement, and by they 1950s established their own recognizable and persistent section near Crenshaw and Jefferson within the boundaries of the Black residential concentrations in Los Angeles (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010).

As noted in Chapter 1, over the twenty or so years during the height of the migration from Louisiana, the residential settlement eventually spanned north toward West Adams Boulevard, east toward Central Avenue, south toward the city of Inglewood, and west toward South La Brea Avenue (see Figure 1). This concentration would help to acclimate migrants to a new place. This part of the story is similar to other immigration and Great Migration accounts (Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Phillips 1999). But it would also create the conditions for a mnemonic community, which would support nostalgic remembering of Louisiana and a context for Louisiana-centered interaction. This then would lay the groundwork for migrants to create interactional continuity between two places, Louisiana and Los Angeles, and for restoring Louisiana place attachment and place identity (see Chapter 5 for further discussion).

The Role of Migrant Networks and Chain Migration in Creating the Mnemonic Community

A key step for Louisiana migrants was the decision to come to Los Angeles. Los Angeles had become an important destination in the second phase of the Great Migration that began in the 1940s largely because defense industries and new construction created many new jobs (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003). Many Louisianans had experience in the skilled trades and could

put their skills to work in the growing city (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Some early migrants were drawn to the entertainment industry, particularly the burgeoning music scene (Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Military men who had been exposed to California saw a land of opportunity and wanted to return (Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Woods 1972). Migration networks, led by pioneers, contributed to establishing and supporting a steady stream of migrants who then were poised to build a residential concentration (Gregory 2005; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003).

The benefits of and approaches to migrating to Los Angeles were passed along "lines of communication" from pioneers to people back home (Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989:20; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003). Helen (age 77, first generation, migrated in 1955) described it this way: "there was the communication of those who were here with those who were still there and it was like, you know, "Come on. Come on. You know, we'll find a place for you to stay," you know?"

In addition to the information passed along migrant networks, visits to Los Angeles by potential migrants were another important way of gaining information about the possibilities of California. An example of this was the men who had been exposed to California while in the military and wanted to return to make a life there (Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Helen describes this migration as the story "of the men coming out here and seeing what a lovely place this is and by contrast [to New Orleans], the opportunities." A second type of pre-migration visit that planted the seed of potential migration was paid to persons within the kin or hometown network. In Hubert's (age 82, first generation, arrived in 1956) migration story it was his wife who had visited family in Los Angeles first and returned to New Orleans with the idea that California was the place to be: "and so [my wife] started dripping water on me, 'I want to go to California.' I

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said, 'OK, we'll go next year.'" Hubert's wife was the persistent driving force ("she started

dripping water on me") of getting her family out to Los Angeles. Other migrants recalled the

power of visiting, too: "Because they would come out and visit and maybe kinda stay with one

family for a while or at least knew when they were coming out to visit they had a place to stay"

(Joanne, age 64, second generation, arrived in 1949). This is a contrast to other descriptions of

labor migrations, especially international ones, where distance, transportation options, and cost

limit the prior exposure to the destination (cf. MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; cf. Marks

1989).

As suggested in the passages above, migrant networks provided encouragement, housing,

jobs, and information for new migrants. Upon their arrival many of the migrants stayed with

family or friends as they settled in and became familiar with Los Angeles. These migrants

elaborate on how the migration stream was sustained by this mechanism:

> […] this is the story of helping each other […] encouraging their friends, you know, and
> bringing their families, wanting their fam—and there's one family member, you know,
> then another. My brother and his wife moved out here and eventually, her brother moved
> out here, you know. I moved out here, my brother moved out here. My husband's sister
> moved out here, he moved out here. So, it was, you know, just an ongoing thing. And it
> took away all of the mystery about being in a new place, you know? (Helen, age 77, first
> generation, migrated in 1955)

> Well, her relative who was living here said, "If you come to California, you can stay with
> us till y'all get on your feet." She had a fairly reasonably sized house. Three or four
> bedroom house over on 61st Street […] . (Hubert, age 82, first generation, arrived in
> 1956)

> But like the [Guillorys] who came, and then they would kind of put up the other people.
> Maybe the husband would come out and maybe stay. Or the adults may come for a while
> and kind of look for a house and live with somebody for a while 'til they could kind of
> get their bearings and then buy their own home. And so that's how the [Perraults] bought
> their house across the street from the [Guillorys]. And how we hung out as kids with the
> [Guillorys] and with the [Perraults]. And how the community grew. […] So we did that
> and that's how we came. (Joanne, age 64, second generation, arrived in 1949)

Highlighted here is the role of migrants who had gone first in recruiting more Louisianans to

come to Los Angeles. This helped to create the circumstances to allow others to adjust ("took away all of the mystery about being in a new place"; "you can stay with us till y'all get on your feet"; "live with somebody for a while 'til they could kind of get their bearings"). They were "encouraging" others to come, creating a succession of migrants that were interconnected ("there's one family member, you know, then another"). In Hubert's case, in-laws made the offer to open up their home while they got settled so he sent his family ahead. This support from fellow migrants is consistent with other accounts of the Great Migration, as well as international chain migrations (Hine 1991; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay 2003; Wilkerson 2010).

In fact, some migrants recognized parallels between their own interstate migration story and that of contemporary international immigrants.

> That was kind of like coming from Mexico [*laughter*], you know, go live with Uncle Jose for a few months and then get your own place. […] I think it's the same, like I said before, the same kind of thing that's happening now with people coming here from any other country; the Vietnamese, the Koreans, the Mexicans. Your cousin and your friend. And they're doing this and that, and making more money and they're doing better. Their kids are going to better schools. And, I guess, the first ones who came from Louisiana had the foothold, and they had accommodations so you had a place to stay until you found your own place. (Deborah, age 59, second generation, parents arrived in 1947)

> And [my father] said it was—he slept in the window seat, because it was so many people in the house that, you know, it was like an immigrant family, you know. And he just remembers it being very small, but full of people who were all trying to get set up. That's how a lot of families were. (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents arrived in 1941 and 1956)

Deborah and Audrey incorporate the analogy of contemporary immigration because of the way that the migrant network paved the way and encouraged more migrants to come. Using groups that are familiar to her from living in the Los Angeles area as her comparison, Deborah frames the reasons for migrating in terms of shared hopes for better opportunities financially and for children's education.

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In addition to providing a network of housing and other practical resources for migrants, friends and family who paved the way in advance were a social support network, even if just by example (Marks 1989; Tilly 1970). Betty tells of how her friends provided a sense of solidarity that was important in her settlement even though her husband had gone ahead:

> And then I had a girlfriend here, I couldn't take too many chances. I had to make sure he had a place for us when we went. You know 'cause I went after [my husband]. And she said I could stay with her until we got situated. But he had a place. It wasn't much of a place, but it was a place on 77th, I'll never forget, and Main. Westside of Main. […] But thank god for my girlfriend and them, they were looking out for me 'cause I didn't have no relatives here. All my family stayed. Like some people their whole families came to California, but it was just me and my daughter at the time that came to California. And so [my friend] and them was living on 39th and Budlong at the time with her mother. She was here a year before me, my girlfriend. But her whole family was here. Like I said, thank god for families, New Orleans families, too. You know, you try to stay in the same vicinity and the same neighborhood. (Betty, age 79, first generation, migrated in 1956)

Even though Betty did not end up needing to stay with her friends, having that safety net was important in helping her feel brave enough to sell most of her belongings and make the trip out to California.

As Betty illustrates, too, the support of those who had gone before facilitated finding homes of their own often near the network of friends, family, and fellow migrants within the areas of the city that were open to Black people. The connection felt with fellow migrants fed Betty's desire to stay close to "New Orleans families," reinforcing the residential concentration that was initiated by this tendency to stay with friends and family. Hubert's, Helen's, and many of their fellow migrants' decisions about where to buy their first home in Los Angeles were influenced by similar sentiments in that they chose to buy near where they already had lived and had friends and family. Hubert summarizes the ultimate effect of this practice: "In fact, one of the unique characteristics of this whole group, the New Orleans migrants who moved here, they've been very cohesive. They've stayed kind of in close relationship with each other." This pattern has been observed in other destinations of the Great Migration and other chain migrations

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(MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). But these reports

indicate that Louisiana migrants perceived the duration or nature of this pattern as unique

compared to other interstate migrant and Black communities in Los Angeles.

The Role of Residential Segregation

Although one of main reasons migrants left Louisiana was to escape the racism and

discrimination of the Jim Crow South, in settling in Los Angeles they were met with one aspect

of the local type of discrimination—in the form of residential segregation. The collective

memory about how the migrant concentration came about is largely about how the Louisiana

community helped each other during this phase of the settlement. But some did link the

concentration's development to residential segregation.

> And this is where most Black people lived in [from] New Orleans. Nobody had gone
> west of Western. That was the next migration. [*Laughter*] And they all went to
> Jeff[erson] High School. [...] You lived in an area that is segregated as New Orleans.
> Honestly. Because below Slauson there were no Black people. Above Washington, there
> were no Black people. [*Laughter*] On the other side of Alameda there was hardly any
> Black people. And at Western on the other side. So you had a group of people who all
> were in the same boat. Everybody knew everybody about. (Marguerite, age 87, first
> generation, migrated in 1945)

> We could not live past Arlington. West of Arlington, north of Exposition. They had a
> restrictive covenant. When I moved on Fifth Avenue, you know, there was a restrictive
> covenant and I didn't know it until I saw the escrow papers. They paid $10.00 a year and
> when we sold that house, that money was taken out of escrow. So it was here. (Therese,
> age 83, first generation, migrated in 1942)

> But their homes were always on the Eastside and I had associated Creoles with the
> Eastside, but it turns out that, you know, there was segregated housing in L.A. and that
> for the most part, Blacks, in general, lived on the Eastside. (Joanne, age 64, second
> generation, arrived in 1949)

Consistent with the literature, early migrants lived on the Eastside of Los Angeles near the

Central Avenue area that housed most Black residents of the period (Chapple 2010; Flamming

2005; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003).

   The boundaries of the Black areas were gradually moving south and westward as time

wore on (Chapple 2010; Flamming 2005; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sides 2003).

Some of the migrants were pioneers in the new areas, sometimes before the restrictive laws and

covenants were removed. Some of these migrants moved into areas under a mistaken assumption

or the pretense that they were White, or at least not Black.

> [M]y grandmother ended up in Leimert Park on _____, and that was very Westside. I think my father said—you have to ask him—but, you know, when she bought there and she moved there, they thought she was White. Then they got distraught when they saw her—seeing who started, who was coming into the house. But by that time, it was too late. But that's where she lived the rest of her life, but. And all the—when I was growing up, all the New Orleans people kind of lived in the same neighborhood […] . (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents arrived in 1941 and 1956)

> Eddie: …There's another name for Creoles too, you know. They call them "blockbusters." […] What happened is the first one would come in and they didn't know, and many people did that. They'd get the light-skinned person to go out and buy the house, then the real ones would move in. So, and in most cases it was legitimate, but when the families started showing up, the first to get in, they'd sell them a house, no problem, they didn't give them a hassle, "Oh, we're selling to Caucasians," beautiful, the neighbors are all happy. A couple of weeks later, or maybe when they start moving in, the dark-skinned ones show up, "Whoa, what have we got here?" And all the signs, then all the signs would go up, so they called them blockbusters.
>
> Bern.: When we were looking for a house, we actually had a realtor tell us that we didn't want to move there and we'd say, "Well, why not?" "Because Black people are living there." He told us he just spoke to one of them.
>
> Eddie: Yeah, real estate people would actually use, they'd put Black people in the house to get the neighbors to put the signs up. Yeah, generate the sales. Yeah, they would actually plant them in the house and I'm sure in many cases tell them to act up, live up to the stereotype, and the signs would go up like crazy. (Eddie, age 70, first generation, arrived in 1956)

These two accounts describe two similar instances of moving into neighborhoods that were soon

to be formerly White. Audrey's account of her grandmother who migrated in 1941 seems the

least intentional of the two; Eddie's and Bernadine's implies that realtors were key orchestrators

of the process in the early 1960s when they were looking for houses. However, they both suggest

that some migrants engaged in a kind of passive and/or situation-based passing that many were

familiar with in New Orleans, allowing others to assume their race based on appearance (Anthony 2000; Gaudin 2005; Roth 2012).

Because of the history of racial mixture involved with having Creole ties to Louisiana, many migrants with ambiguous appearances may have been relatively privileged in the local racial structure that denied visibly Black persons access to housing and other resources. Yet, they were also experiencing this on the edges of the Black community—they were not willing to take passing to the extreme form, forfeiting their ties to family, friends, and the wider Black community. Almost all of the migrants knew of someone in their immediate or extended families who "went to the other side" to live as White, cutting off ties with most of their kin, or at least with those who could not pass themselves. In the migrants' view, the type of passive passing described in the above examples was a definite contrast to permanent passing.

Although legal housing segregation restrictions were lifted in the 1940s, there were still challenges to moving into proscribed areas. Through the 1950s and '60s, migrants continued to move further south and west as the housing options expanded. But as Eddie and Bernadine suggest, they were still met with resistance from White real estate agents and neighbors in areas that were not already, or selected to be in transition.

> [B]y the time they came out here in the '50s, they were able to live in, like, South Central. That was west. I mean, like south—like Crenshaw, those places were really restricted. You couldn't live there. Well Crenshaw Boulevard was really Westside. And Compton, my father says that Compton, you definitely didn't go there. It was completely off limits, you know. And a lot of these—Inglewood—all these places, were places that they didn't—nobody went to. He said, you know, you couldn't—you just didn't go. (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents arrived in 1941 and 1956)

> It was moving toward being a Black neighborhood and it was a typical thing that had been going on in the Los Angeles area, being redlined, like an area was selected to turn over from one race to another and this particular area was in the process of doing that, changing from one race to another. [… W]e went out to find there were housing developments being developed. We would go out to look at these developments and the people were always very cordial with you, very nice, and they couldn't, at that time, they couldn't stop you. That was 10 years after we got here, so that was in, I came here in '57,

so that was more like '67, that's when I was, say maybe '65, so things had really changed on the books, but they hadn't changed with the people, I would say. We were led to believe that we could go anywhere and we could have if we fought it, but like I said, I made the decision I wasn't a pioneer and I wasn't going to pioneer because I wasn't going to put my children through that. (Cordelia, age 73, first generation, arrived in 1957)

Audrey's account implies that there were lines that should not be crossed during the early period. Like Eddie and Bernadine, Cordelia recalls the efforts of real estate agents in manipulating the options available to them. She moved to her current home east of Inglewood in 1967, but she and her husband chose a neighborhood already in transition. Cordelia and others preferred to wait to move into these areas until they were already in transition for the safety of their families.

Others chose to challenge the racial structure outright as pioneers. Bill's recollection of the situation when he first moved to Inglewood in 1961 demonstrates some of the repercussions.

When I first came out here, nobody lived in Inglewood. No Black person lived in Inglewood. That was restricted covenants and all this kinda stuff. I was the first—no, I was the second Black person in Inglewood. […] As a matter of fact, when I got creosote bombs thrown at the house and all that kinda stuff, [my friend] would come over with his guns and sit on the porch with me. It was really bad news, really, really bad news. But we survived. Within a year, there were Blacks all over the place. Man, White flight. You've never seen it like it happened in Inglewood. (Bill, age 81, first generation, migrated in 1956)

As one of the first Black families on their block, Bill and his family were targets of violence from White neighbors. However, as he notes the isolation was short-lived and Inglewood moved toward being a majority-Black neighborhood. Although migrants were moving out of the original concentrations on the Eastside and the newer concentration that emerged in the 1950s near Crenshaw and Jefferson, they were still close enough to participate within the migrant community (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). There were also enough migrants in these new areas in Inglewood to create sub-concentrations of Louisiana migrants in specific Catholic parishes and schools (more on this starting on page 122 in the next section on the role of church parishes).

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The Mnemonic Community and the Second Generation

The close-knit and geographically concentrated community of migrants from Louisiana created

the conditions where Louisiana could be at the center of collective memory and collective

nostalgia—the migrants formed a mnemonic community (Zerubavel 1996). The significance of

the mnemonic community for the first generation becomes more evident in the sections on

building the parish and business concentrations found below. But for the second generation, the

mnemonic community is even particularly important for passing on the story of the

hometown/home state and the migration to the new place. For example, the second- generation

accounts of the network of migrants coming to Los Angeles were very similar to that of the first

generation. The second generation was aware of how the migration stream renewed itself,

bringing family members and new friends to Los Angeles. While some respondents seemed to

recall this from their own observations, many seemed to be retelling stories that were part of the

collective memory of the migration and how the migrant community was formed—passed on

from parents and through their embeddedness in the mnemonic community.

> Uncle Joe was the first to come to California and he had a home. And so then my dad came with us, and Uncle Thomas came with his kids and we all stayed with Uncle Joe. Well Uncle Joe had gotten a job with Lockheed. And that was during the war. So of course, as soon as dad came he got Dad a job and Uncle Henry a job. When they were able to get on their feet they went into the barrio and it was called the Aliso Village, First and Mission Road. Uh huh. And so then we moved there and then Aunt Sophie and Aunt Matilda came. The other two younger sisters, but they were single. They stayed with Uncle Joe until they got—. So all of them had gone through Uncle Joe's house. And then finally my grandparents came. And then once the grandparents came they stayed at everybody's house once a month. They just went around to all the other kids' house. So that's how they did it. (Claudine, age 69, second generation, arrived in 1942)

> And we knew through family stories as well as family being out here that there was a lot of us out here, but we just didn't know exactly where they lived at, you know. But we knew our people, in fact, Dad came out and stayed with his sister and her husband for about a month or so until he got established and got his own place. And we learned over time that that's what we did in order to help family. Family came out and stayed with family until they got a hold and moved on. And that's just the way it developed, you know. (Albert, age 58, second generation, arrived in 1963)

Claudine and Albert describe how their own families accommodated their respective members as each new phase of migrants acclimated to Los Angeles. These were family stories passed down to children and became part of the mnemonic community's collective memory. Albert directly attributes his knowledge of the migration chain to "family stories." Like other migrants, Claudine arrived when she was a toddler and could not have had much of her own memory of her own migration, never mind the details with which her account enumerates the order in which her relatives cycled through the one uncle's (the first to migrate) house. This points to the likelihood that she was drawing on her family's collective memory of how the migration proceeded.

The Migrant Concentration: A Louisiana-Centered Interactional Potential

This concentration both created and supported an environment where the expectations of interaction and many of the physical features of the site (i.e. the interactional potential) were Louisiana-centered. This interactional potential within the residential enclave was partially based on the collective memories of experiences (interactional past) in Louisiana, which shaped the body of interaction that was being built in the new site.

Migrants vividly recounted the Louisiana-centered environment with a distinct connection to the physical features of the migrant community. One of the most concentrated areas for Louisianans by many accounts was part of the West Adams neighborhood, off of Jefferson Boulevard between Crenshaw and Arlington, also often referred to as the Avenues, where numbered avenues run perpendicular with Jefferson Boulevard (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; see Figure 1).

> They had the sandwich shops, they had the fish markets, they had the cleaners, and a lot of it was up in the Avenues at first. A lot of people settled in the middle of the city, around the 40s, up in the Avenues and Leimert Park and then up in Baldwin Hills, View Park, so it kind of stayed, that's where the bulk of the people were at that time—.

[*Interruption*] The Avenues, yeah, in the Crenshaw, west of Crenshaw. There's still some over there, west of Crenshaw, and the settlement was very large over there. And Jefferson […] . (Cordelia, age 73, first generation, arrived in 1957)

That was a summer vacation, to come out to L.A. to see my aunt, and what we would do is we'd come by train every summer. We'd go by my aunt, and she lived in many areas. When we were visiting, just visiting, she lived in the—we called it the Creole ghetto at the time. It was funny. We'd say "ghetto" but it really wasn't. She was on one of those Avenues off Jefferson. All of Jefferson were Creole businesses—restaurants, cleaners. That was the part of town I think that the majority of the Creoles had moved into, and she lived on—like I said, one of those Avenue streets, like 7th Avenue or 8th Avenue. And they had big houses. Some of those houses were huge, because a lot of them were living off Arlington. (Janine, age 58, first generation, arrived in 1962)

Both Cordelia and Janine recall being aware of the well-established migrant concentration. Here, Janine reports knowing about the area jokingly called the "Creole ghetto" prior to her actually moving there. The phrase ironically indicates that it was densely populated with migrants, particularly Creoles, from her home region. But it was not an economically marginalized ghetto, during this period this area had well-kept homes and was a middle and working class neighborhood. It was also still in transition from being a mainly White neighborhood to opening up first to middle class Blacks (Chapple 2010; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). This usage of "Creole ghetto" to describe the residential concentration could also have been a response to the racialized conception that Black people lived in concentrated and economically disadvantaged areas. Janine was situating the Louisiana Creole enclave within the Black community, but at the same time distancing Creoles from the stereotypes associated with it.

Furthermore, Eddie (age 70, migrated from New Orleans in 1956) and his wife, Bernadine demonstrate how the physical aspects of the migrant neighborhood were connected to Louisiana:

Eddie: This was it. This area was it. You know, a lot larger than Seventh Ward, but this circle say from Manchester to Washington. I'd say from La Brea probably to Western at that time, was probably where most of them landed. Yeah. Well, it was affordable, the neighborhood was in transition.
Bern.: And Jefferson Boulevard really.

That Eddie makes the comparison between this area of Los Angeles and the size of the Seventh Ward emphasizes the point of reference and also the feeling that this section of L.A. and New Orleans' most notable Creole neighborhood (and the point of origin for the majority of migrants) were related physically.

As noted in the passages from Cordelia, Janine, and Eddie, migrants described the physical features of the migrant community. And in the previous sections, they described how the community eased their physical transition to a new city. The migrant concentration also eased their social and interactional transition as well. For example, the interactional potential served as a buffer against the type of racism that Louisianans and Creoles of color faced in Los Angeles; it was still an issue even though it was often less overt compared to what migrants faced in Louisiana.

> But that was the subtleness of this place, the great Los Angeles. This was what, there was a lot of racism here and a lot of prejudice and I really believe the reason we didn't have a whole lot of problems because we still had this big village of people that we became friends with and the clubs started and it was like it moved from here to here. There was a lot of parties, a lot of dances, a lot of everything. (Cordelia, age 73, first generation, arrived in 1957)

Cordelia notes that where the migrants settled geographically created a "big village" of Louisianans (the physical features), and it also created interactional expectations that were Louisiana-centered. The "big village" and the social institutions and practices that were part of it ("social clubs"; "parties"; "dances"; "a lot of everything") were in a sense transplanted from one place to another ("like it moved from here to here"). These same kinds of activities were used as buffers against Jim Crow in Louisiana and they continued a similar role in Los Angeles. This close-knit community of migrants offered stability and continuity in the type of interaction that could be expected despite the uncharted territory of the subtler racism found in the idealized "great Los Angeles." George (1992) notes, and my own data confirm (discussed in Chapter 4),

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that the concentrated community also helped insulate the migrants from uncomfortable situations where their sometimes-ambiguous racial identity was questioned by other Los Angelenos—Black, White, or otherwise. International immigrant enclaves often serve a similar protective role against American-style racism for their respective migrant communities, but the immigration literature does not often break down the mechanism into interactional components (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012).

For the second generation, too, the interactional potential of Los Angeles provided a very Louisiana-centered environment, from friends to neighborhood.

> […] there was always lots of friends and kids, plus all of the other people who had moved out here from New Orleans, who lived on, all off of Jefferson Boulevard between Crenshaw and Arlington and down to Western. Everyone just kinda settled on Jefferson because parts of New Orleans are in Jefferson Parish[11], so when people came out to L.A., they settled along Jefferson Boulevard which is really interesting […] . (John, age 50, second generation, arrived in 1960)

> There's a whole expatriate community. There's tons of them. They went to churches where most of the people came from New Orleans. Went to bakeries where people came from New Orleans. We even lived in a neighborhood where people from New Orleans—many people in that area [*inaudible*]. Yeah, it just seemed like a lot of New Orleans just relocated en masse. (Reynard, age 49, second generation, arrived in 1962)

These accounts suggest that physical features of place (the second component of interactional potential) in Los Angeles stoked the migrants' collective memory of, and nostalgia for, the interactional past of New Orleans. For example, John's interpretation of the connection between the "Jefferson[s]" in New Orleans and in Los Angeles makes the physical link between the interactional past and potential in Louisiana and the physical aspects of Los Angeles. Reynard lists the kinds of physical sites within Los Angeles that were Louisiana-centered ("churches", "bakeries", "neighborhoods").

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[11] In this quote, it is important to note that Jefferson Parish is referring to the geographic districts in New Orleans, not church parishes.

These passages also illustrate that migrants and children of migrants expected to interact with other Louisianans ("lots of friends and kids, plus all of the other people who had moved out"; "There's tons of them."). They were immersed in what Reynard calls an "expatriate community", summoning up the image of long-term foreign residents in a country not their own, remaining identifiable as non-native by maintaining practices and customs from their home. Reynard's use of the phrase "en masse" indicates the large scale and interconnectedness that this migration had in the eyes of the second generation. By the time Reynard migrated and/or was aware of the concentration, it seemed like the community simply had transplanted in its entirety.

These accounts demonstrate that the migrant concentration had intergenerational saliency. Yet, while the first and second generations were similar in acknowledging the role of the migration chain in growing the migrant community and the locations of neighborhoods where many Louisianans lived, there were some differences in how they framed it. Clearly the first-generation migrants were the decision-makers in this transaction, and they spoke of it in those terms. Their perspective was first-person narrative of how the mnemonic community was constructed. The second generation's narratives also provided evidence of the mnemonic community, sometimes as witnesses of it, but also illustrating the role of collective memory in their versions of how this community arose by incorporating the "stories" from elders. Several of the data passages discussed here point to the residential patterns and church and businesses concentrations as significant and interconnected aspects of the migrant community's infrastructure. Next, I discuss how residential settlement patterns and the Catholic parishes worked hand in hand in keeping the migrants lives in Los Angeles tied to their home state and to each other.

THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC PARISHES IN THE CITY OF ANGELS

This section examines how migrants used Catholic parishes located within their residential concentration as part of the Louisiana-centered interactional potential of Los Angeles.[12] Louisiana has a strong history of Catholicism dating back to its colonial period (Davis 1990). Throughout the interviews, most respondents identified themselves as having strong Catholic and Creole roots.[13] Their connection to the Church stemmed from their origins in the largely Catholic state of Louisiana. Two of the key Catholic parishes for the migrant community in Los Angeles were Transfiguration Catholic Church and School (on West Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and 3rd Avenue in Leimert Park) and Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church and School (on Jefferson Boulevard, just east of Arlington) (see Figure 1). Catholic parishes served as houses of worship. But many also hosted elementary schools.[14] I demonstrate that these Los Angeles parishes, along with others, were central organizing institutions for the Louisiana migrants who settled in the areas surrounding them. The parishes also helped migrants relate to a new place and promoted access to the mnemonic community and their collective nostalgia and memory of home. The parishes were used in this endeavor in two ways by migrants: as means of (1) geographically organizing the city and (2) socially reinforcing the migrant community and shaping the way the parishes in their new location functioned.

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[12] Here I use parish to refer to (1) the actual church building location, (2) the neighborhood territory around the church, and (3) the congregation who attends the church. When clarification is necessary, I use an appropriate modifier.

[13] Migrants' involvement in the Church ranged from devout church-going to non-practicing or non-religious. There were also a few cases of non-Catholic migrants who came from Protestant-based religions such as Baptist or Methodist.

[14] Catholic high schools were usually separate from the parish itself, but the parish schools were feeders to these institutions. But just as with the churches, specific high schools in the area had concentrations of Louisianans.

The Use of Parishes as Geographic Markers

The Catholic parishes were significant for geographically organizing the lives of people in the Louisiana migrant community. The application of this Louisiana-based mode of using the parishes is evidence of a collective memory and nostalgia for the interactional past of Louisiana, where social life was organized by involvement with the Church to the extent that even relationships to place were influenced. This lent itself to a Louisiana-centered interactional potential in Los Angeles that helped make their acclimation to the new place possible, and that would also contribute to a restored Louisiana place attachment (see Chapter 5).

Catholicism and the Church parishes played a key role in the lives of first-generation migrants before they left Louisiana, and they were significant for organizing the lives of people in the Louisiana migrant community in Los Angeles. Betty (age 79, first generation, migrated in 1956) describes the origins of this significance:

> And any Catholic church in the city had New Orleans people. Because New Orleans was a predominantly Catholic city. And most of the people that came belonged to the different parishes in New Orleans.

Life in New Orleans was so heavily organized by involvement with the Church ("was a predominantly Catholic city") that it even influenced relationships to place. The Catholic parishes in Los Angeles were directly linked to New Orleans through the parishioners who were part of the migrant stream.

Collective memory for the interactional past of Louisiana that focused on parishes contributed to how the Louisiana-centered interactional potential in Los Angeles was conceptualized. Regardless of their current religious standing, first-generation migrants map the city using the church parishes as primary geographic markers in conjunction with the city streets and neighborhoods. For example:

> […] you know how we go about it to say what section, where you live, is by our

churches. And I was, we were in St. Anselm's Parish. And for a short time we were in St. Brigid's Parish. Do you know where those churches are? [...] Well, that's how we used to say. They'd say, "Where do you live?" and that's what—everybody would say what parish, and then you knew the surrounding areas of that area. (Chloe, age 71, migrated in 1960)

When I say Creoles I mean people from Louisiana. I don't mean color or anything. I just meant people from Louisiana who settled in the same little area here. You know. And that's what we did. We were all in St. Patrick's Parish or Holy Cross's Parish or those. Everybody was out here, you know? (Bill, age 81, migrated in 1956)

Chloe demonstrates the centrality of the parish in organizing how Louisianans relate to the geographical location of places ("by our churches") and provides a context for how these features emerged within the data. Chloe was one of the few respondents who explicitly described the significance of Catholic parishes for Louisiana migrants as geographical markers based on the interactional past in Louisiana. Most other migrants, like Bill, used this convention but did not explain why.

Chloe and Bill's passages also illustrate how important parishes were for defining the parameters of the Louisiana Creole migrant population. Chloe uses this method while explaining where her extended family was living when she arrived in Los Angeles in 1960. Bill only uses parish names to geographically locate the larger concentration of migrants. He continues to describe another parish he was familiar with after he settled this way: "Hell, yes. Half of your St. Eugene's was from New Orleans. Half of St.—the Criers and the Lafittes. All these people, yeah, Beinbels, the Dienonays. They were all at St. Eugene's." While this proportion of Louisianans may be an exaggeration, it further illustrates the migrants' perceptions of parishes as key to locating the dense concentration of migrants. Many times migrants would only use actual street names when trying to clarify if I knew where the parish was located.

By continuing this form of relating to place that was customary at home in Louisiana, migrants helped ease their transition to a new place. Breaking the sprawling city of Los Angeles

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down into smaller sections using a parish framework that was familiar made the city more

manageable and more Louisiana-centered. For example, Chloe began her quote above with this:

> They were living in, let me see—I don't know what section. I think now they might call it
> Hyde Park area, in Los Angeles. 'Cause, uh, but that's the—and you know how we go
> about it to say what section, where you live, is by our churches.

Even though Chloe uses a neighborhood name to identify the location, she seems a bit unsure of

her answer in these terms. From this false-start Chloe then switches to using the parish, a more

natural mode of talking about the geography of the city based on her interactional past in

Louisiana and then in Los Angeles. Sustained use of this framework several decades after

moving to Los Angeles also illustrates the continued salience of this form of relating to place,

and by extension, the persistence of a Louisiana-centered interactional potential. This also

contributed to the second generation's understanding of the role of parishes as geographic

markers.

*"There Were Quite a Few in the Catholic Schools": The Second Generation on the Role of
Parishes as Geographic Markers*

The second generation's orientations to Los Angeles and Louisiana were largely based in their

interactions growing up in the California, and Catholic school was a big part of that experience.

As a result, the second generation also used Catholic parishes to identify and define the

boundaries of the migrant community, but more often used city streets as a primary marker with

the parish school and then the church as institutions within those boundaries. This is different

from the first generation whose use of the parishes in Los Angeles was influenced by a

combination of the interactional pasts from both Los Angeles and Louisiana. The interactional

past of Los Angeles had been partially shaped by the actions and interactions of the second

generation's parents. The mnemonic community's collective memory and nostalgia for an

interactional past in Louisiana was a key mechanism by which the significance of Louisiana was

passed on to the second generation, thereby shaping the Louisiana-centered interactional

potential of Los Angeles.

The density of the Louisiana migrant concentration built by the first generation shaped

how the second generation experienced place and the parishes in Los Angeles.

> I don't know if you're familiar with the Jefferson area, but we used to call it the "Jefferson Connection" 'cause you found families from Louisiana on almost every avenue, along in there. […] Well, I just know that there was a large community of people from Louisiana who attended Holy Name of Jesus School and Church. And they also lived within walking distance. You could just walk the neighborhood, and like I said, on almost every street throughout, you would find someone from Louisiana. (Deborah, age 60, parents migrated 1947)

> A lot of the people that migrated from New Orleans to Los Angeles kinda migrated around that 8th Avenue, as far south as Slauson, up into like View Park or Leimert Park area. There were quite a few in the Catholic schools. That was another—even though Transfiguration was a big one, there were other ones, like St. John Evangelist on Hyde Park and Crenshaw. Lot of—lot of New Orleans, Louisiana kids influence there, St. Eugene's, St. Anselm's, and St. Bernadette. (Danny, age 50, parents migrated in 1956)

> And Holy Name [School] was a very tight-knit community especially if you had been there from the beginning obviously. Like I say everybody went there. […] Yeah, Holy Name was quite an adjustment because all the Creoles in L.A., they had to go there too I guess, 'cause they all lived within the proximity of—and I'm stretching it a bit because Santa Barbara [now called Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard] was like the farthest point because I think there were a lot of Caucasians who occupied that particular area. It's kind of an upscale area, but from Santa Barbara to I guess what we call the freeway, the 10, everybody within that proximity went to Holy Name, and from like Normandie to Crenshaw, that was a Holy Name drawing point and the other people went to Transfiguration, which obviously is right there on King. (Cyril, age 67, second generation, migrated in 1946 at when 5)

So the second generation had a strong sense of the migrant concentration through their school

experiences. It made sense to use parish schools as geographic markers because as also evident

from the first generation, the parish framework guided how migrants settled in the city and

created a Louisiana-centered interactional potential around parishes ("you found families from

Louisiana on almost every avenue"; "that parish was a very high percentage of Creoles"; "lot of

New Orleans, Louisiana kids influence there"). Holy Name and Transfiguration parishes were

two of the most densely populated migrant churches, and thus schools, in the area. Cyril's account confirms that the significance of these parish schools as a way to situate the Creole concentration was transmitted to the second generation ("all the Creoles in L.A., they had to go there too I guess, 'cause they all lived within the proximity"). Danny shows that there was also second-generation awareness of the population of Louisianans spilling out into neighboring parish schools ("St. John Evangelist … St. Eugene's, St. Anselm's, and St. Bernadette.").

The second generation's interactional past in Los Angeles infused with exposure to the mnemonic community influences the way that they describe the location of the migrant community. Experiences and memories of going to school in Los Angeles shape how both Deborah and Danny apply a commonly-used convention among the second generation where they describe places Creoles/Louisianans settled together by streets and neighborhood as the initial geographic markers ("the Jefferson area"; "around that 8th Avenue"). Deborah's example shows that, anchored by Jefferson Boulevard where many Louisianans settled, the parish school is mentioned first and then the church; but both are treated as institutions within this area. Danny, too, initially traces out the boundaries within which the migrant population was contained in terms of streets and neighborhoods, then by the Catholic schools that they went to. He also uses the street names to modify parish identifications ("like St. John Evangelist on Hyde Park and Crenshaw"). Because of the second generation's interactional past growing up in Los Angeles, it is the parish school (not so much the church) working within these street boundaries that is identified as an important social institution serving migrant families. This is particularly evident in Cyril's quote, which demonstrates the importance of the Catholic school in orienting the second-generation experience in Los Angeles.

Overall, most of the second generation's orientation to place and Louisiana emerged from

their meaningful experiences and interactions as school children in Los Angeles. Their immersion in the mnemonic community of migrants through the parish schools in turn shaped the way that they talked about the concentration of migrants. Their approach was somewhat different from their parents'. The second generation used the street names to describe their orientation to place, and then the Catholic schools and parishes as places within specific geographic boundaries. The children of migrants were melding the Los Angeles and Louisiana ways of relating to place. The next section will further explore how migrants used parishes to socially reinforce their community. The parishes were key places for social activity for the first generation and the parish schools were important for second-generation socializing.

Parish Life: Socially Reinforcing the Migrant Community

In addition to being used as a method of relating to geographic locations and describing the Louisiana migrant concentration in Los Angeles, the parish was a key social component of the Louisiana-centered interactional potential of Los Angeles. As a central organizing feature of social life, the parish had a role in demonstrating and reinforcing the migrant community's attachment to Louisiana. The parishes helped preserve continuity in the type of interaction that migrants experienced in two ways: (1) parish-centered socializing stimulated co-migrant contact (setting the stage for collectively nostalgic interaction) and (2) migrants used the parish as a vessel through which they could incorporate elements of Louisiana into their lives while living in Los Angeles (evidence of their nostalgia for Louisiana).

Parish-Centered Socializing

In Louisiana, parishes were physical sites of interaction, and parish life often overlapped with the rest of social life. In Los Angeles, many respondents told of attending Mass, partaking of the various sacraments, serving as Eucharistic ministers or as altar boys, volunteering at the church,

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and attending festivals. Others were part of families who only attended the more social events put on at the parishes, such as dances or weddings. In addition, many of the second generation's interactions with the community of Louisianans revolved largely around exposure as school to other kids from migrant families, or participating in extracurricular activities sponsored by the Catholic schools, such as little league baseball. There were two important aspects of parish socializing for the first and second generations. The parish facilitated their access to (1) the mnemonic community of migrants, and (2) the collective memory of and nostalgia for Louisiana. The meaningful experiences and interactions within parishes in Los Angeles would ultimately contribute to migrants' place attachment associated with Louisiana (see Chapter 5 for a more detailed examination of place attachment).

By moving and interacting within and across specific parishes' boundaries where other Louisianans were, the mnemonic community of migrants banked on the hope that they would be able to collectively and nostalgically recall the interactional past of their home state. For example:

> I had cousins here and mostly people at that time, that I came to L.A. from New Orleans, and they tried to live around each other and tried to get the same culture we had in New Orleans […] . And for an example, you know where the Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church is? […] Cimarron and Jefferson, that's where I got married, where we got married there and all the Creoles would go to church there. (Bernard, age 77, migrated around 1955)

> [B]ut even to move in the parish, you know, it seemed like you clumped together in certain parishes so that you could be together and learn from there. (Helen, age 77, first generation, migrated in 1955)

The choice to move within a certain parish's boundaries ("clumped together") was often described as being driven by the desire to stay close to fellow Louisianans. Bernard implies that migrants were engaging in collective nostalgia for the type of interaction found in Louisiana by trying to replicate it ("tried to get the same culture we had in New Orleans").

Many of the church-centered activities were held at the parish location, making it a physical site of interaction where the mnemonic community of migrants came together. This would contribute to the Louisiana-centered interactional potential of Los Angeles.

> […] we saw each other, we went to church and we'd see each other at church and—so we really kind of didn't lose step with a lot of the habits and things from New Orleans. (Hubert, age 82, first generation, arrived in 1956)

Migrants could expect that the "habits" and other elements of interacting that they were familiar with from their interactional past in Louisiana would be reinforced in Los Angeles. As in Bernard's quote, the parish is a key physical location in this attempt.

The reach of the parish framework in organizing social interaction among migrants went beyond church services. Another way that parishes organized social interaction was as the source of interactional partners within the mnemonic community. Betty (age 79, first generation, migrated in 1956) describes the parishes as hosting the reuniting of old friends from Louisiana and ultimately as the source of new ones: "And that's how I saw a lot of them and met more people over the years. You know, more and more and more start coming."

Events that were held in churches, such as weddings and funerals, were also important for access to members of the mnemonic community.

> And also, I went to a lot of weddings. I remember in the '70s, there were people getting married every month. So I'd go to a lot of weddings, and unfortunately, started going to a lot of funerals, because people started dying. So I knew the church that way. So I kinda looked forward to going. Even though I wasn't practicing, I liked, you know, the community of it. I liked to see people at church. Once in a while, my grandmother took me to Mass. […] But, so I got a real clear sense of the church, even though I wasn't a practicing member. [… Y]ou know, we all knew each other. So I, you know, I spent a fair amount of time at church events. Even though I didn't actually go to church. (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents came separately in 1941 and 1956)

Audrey illustrates that exposure to the church in this way allowed her to claim her sense of connectedness to other migrants ("Even though I wasn't practicing, I liked, you know, the community of it. I liked to see people at church."). This was something that she clung to because

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she felt that she missed out by not being a parishioner or enrolled in the Catholic schools.

Respondents also discussed forms of cross-parish socializing taking place within the city that widened the awareness of the larger mnemonic community. Activities within the migrant community at times spanned the boundaries of several parishes. For example, many of the formal and informal social clubs were created by groups of first generation migrants to stay connected to each other. Bernard (age 77, migrated around 1955) says that the Louisiana migrants ("Creoles") who were settled near one another around certain parishes drew their social club membership from the parish network: "So all the Creoles gather with each other. Then they would have different clubs and they'd be more or less Creole clubs, you know." These clubs that were organized around being Creole and coming from Louisiana were described as spanning the membership of several core parishes.

The second generation also experienced this widened social network based on individual and family involvement in parish religious services, community events, and school extracurricular activities.

> Our relatives lived in those parishes as well, parish communities. St. Paul's would be another one […] . Our families were involved in the church, too. I mean my dad was on the parish council. We were altar boys, and so we knew people and we had families in different parishes around St. Eugene's. There was carnivals and my dad, the family would always be involved in the carnivals and the activities that was going on in the parish community. (Scott, age 44, second generation, parents migrated separately in 1943 and 1957)

> And the reason why you knew this because there was a little baseball league that we played in as—yeah, I didn't say that, but that we participated in, and our parents knew the parents from, those kids from those other schools. (Danny, age 50, second generation, parents migrated in 1956)

Scott points to his own and his family's involvement in both the religious and social aspects of the parish as providing access to the migrant community. As Danny notes, several parish schools with many Louisianan students were linked to each other through extracurricular activities and

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through a parental network. These forms of participation and interaction contributed to the parish's ability to reinforce social cohesiveness for the second generation. It was not only the actual participation, but the collective knowledge about the people their parents knew and from where that aided in creating a link to Louisiana for the second generation.

Since Louisiana-centered parishes were known within the broader migrant community, their events attracted other Louisianans and provided another type of cross-parish socializing.

> We have a lot of uh, friends there, and then we have some in St. Jerome's Parish. So, sometimes when the other parishes have affairs, we find ourselves going, too, because we have so many people that we know that belong to that parish. (Chloe, age 71, first generation, migrated in 1960)

> Mainly through the parties and the dances. […] There was a large Creole student body at Mount Carmel High School [a boys' school], and I might have gone to a few of their games. So, through the football games and basketball games, that's how some of the others socialized. And then you just go to people's houses. And not a whole lot of things, but I guess enough. […] We used to go to certain churches looking for cute guys too. Mass. (Deborah, age 60, second generation, parents migrated 1947)

When a parish hosted events, people who lived in that parish attended. But friends of the host-parishioners who lived in other parishes also attended. This was particularly salient for the second generation as they grew older. Catholic schools also helped to maintain connection to Louisiana people to some extent, but socializing outside of the actual school day or outside of gender segregated campuses became a more important component to socializing with other Louisianans ("games"; visiting different Masses at "certain churches" where other Louisianans congregated).

Although cross-parish socializing transcends a single parish as a physical site, it still employs the parish-framework as a way to organize interaction amongst the migrant community using these places. For example, Eddie and his wife talk about four parishes being linked physically and socially by a network by Louisianans.

Bern.: St. John's up on Crenshaw, St. John Evangelist, and then St. Bernadette's, when

they opened up, they had a lot of Creoles up there. Oh, yeah, there were quite a few. […]

Eddie: Yeah, there's functions they give that we attend, Christmas parties and stuff. There's a loop, there was a network between say Holy Name here, St. Bernadette's and St. Agatha's, those four was kind of a circle.

Bern.: Yeah, it's a club—it's like a club of the churches. Whenever there's something going on, those are the four churches they usually involved together. That's our cluster. (Eddie, age 70, migrated from New Orleans in 1956)

There is a physical aspect to the way that the parishes work together to shape the interactional potential of Los Angeles. The terms "a loop," "kind of a circle," invoke physical descriptions of space that encompass the idea of interconnection. These parishes' positioning in proximity to one another facilitates the overlapping patronage at parish "functions." The imagery of these four parishes forming "a club of the churches" and "our cluster" echoes the notion of the smaller social clubs that populated the Louisiana parish communities, but on a larger scale. It highlights the interactional layout (i.e. how the physical layout has been manipulated or used by actors) that facilitates interaction among the smaller parish communities of migrants, but also encourages them to come together as a larger migrant community.

The accounts above reflect parish socializing during the height of the migration. But the social significance of the church has continued beyond the initial years of settlement and has had a long-lasting role in facilitating Louisiana-centered interactional opportunities for migrants. In addition to church services, senior group meetings are another way that the parish is transformed into a place that links the mnemonic community to Louisiana.

I belong to the senior's group over here at St. Bernadette's; many of them are from Louisiana. I don't know about now, but I do know when I first got into it and during maybe from the 90s to about the 80s or something, that, my goodness, I would say 80 to 85 percent were from New Orleans, if not the whole state of Louisiana. (Helen, second generation)

Although Helen is not sure of the exact proportion of Louisianans to non-Louisianans in this particular group now, the fact that she perceived it to be so dense at one time speaks to its role as

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a site that encourages a Louisiana-centered interactional potential. This group and at least one other based in another parish draw their membership from several parishes around the local concentration. These senior groups and other auxiliary groups related to the Church continue to bring back members who have converted from Catholicism or moved away to these key parishes for interaction with fellow migrants (for example, some of those who moved to the outer areas of the greater Los Angeles area to live with children reported visiting in this way).

Thus parish centered socializing provided access to the mnemonic community and contributed to a Louisiana-centered interactional potential in Los Angeles. Parishes, as sites in the built environment and as neighborhood sections, contained a pool of interactional partners from Louisiana. They became places that represent Louisiana or familiar aspects of life in that place. While the first generation spoke about their exposure to co-migrants coming directly out of the parish and church attendance, as well as the social networks that grew out of them, the second generation recalled the schools having a significant role in creating the opportunities to interact with other migrants. Overall, the parishes had a role in creating an assemblage of Louisianans that could be identified by other Louisianans and drawn on to engage the collective memory and nostalgia for Louisiana. The next section further demonstrates how the parishes provide the context and the opportunity to nostalgically and collectively remember Louisiana.

Migrant Influence on the Parish as Collective Memory and Collective Nostalgia

Migrants used parishes to incorporate specific elements of Louisiana in their lives in Los Angeles. This is evidence of the collective nostalgia for Louisiana, which provided continuity in interaction and would contribute to restoring place attachment (see Chapter 5). For example, traditions from Louisiana were infused in the repertoire of parish events. Community and fundraising events in the Los Angeles parishes included features often interpreted as having a

Louisiana twist, such as Mardi Gras-themed festivals, Friday fish fries during lent, or zydeco dances.

Louisiana-influenced celebrations incorporated in the local Church calendar provided continuity in interaction and were a form of collective nostalgia for home. For example, the Feast of St. Joseph held in Los Angeles accommodated the migrants' New Orleans-style Catholic sensibility and nostalgia for the place.

> It stemmed from, really, an Italian belief that St. Joseph would help them in times of need. And even to this day, Creoles in the Seventh Ward, even out here—the church that's off of 60th and Crenshaw always used to have a large St. Joseph's festival, and we used to all go. (Clarice, age 70, first generation, migrated in 1965)

> There are a lot of events at churches. Church hall stuff. There were a lot of, like—I won't say pagan, but there were, like, events like the Feast of St. Joseph, which was not really official Catholic holiday, but the Creole people get together and have food, and eat. You know, it wasn't really religious, but it was social. So we'd do that. […] I knew, because I'd been to other Catholic churches, this was a very different kind of—this felt, to me, like a different tradition, this whole Creole thing was something very specific. (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents came separately in 1941 and 1956)

While St. Joseph's celebrations are not only observed in Louisiana or Creole-populated Catholic parishes, both of these passages illustrate that migrants perceived that there was a distinct character to the Catholic parish sponsored events held in the migrant community. Audrey calls it "something very specific." For her, part of the uniqueness was that these events were so social ("it wasn't really religious, but it was social"). But there is also the sense that migrants interpreted their continuation in Los Angeles as something that nostalgically linked them to their home. For example, Clarice was reminded of this celebration while showing me a book during our interview, *The New Orleans Seventh Ward: Nostalgia Dictionary* (1996) by Darrlyn Smith. She directly connects the Catholic practices of the Seventh Ward in New Orleans and those in Los Angeles ("Creoles in the Seventh Ward, even out here"). The nostalgia for the old practices

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links the two places and puts them in symbolic proximity, creating the conditions where

continuity in migrant interaction is sustained.

The continuity in Louisiana-centered interaction provided by zydeco dances held at

churches was another way that parishes were used in encouraging collective memory and

nostalgia. Several churches incorporated zydeco dances, or la-las, in honor of the Louisiana

Mardi Gras celebration and at other times of the year as fundraisers for the local parishes.

> But we used to have a Mardi Gras dance, for years when I was at St. Anselm's. Then St. Francis Cabrini used to have theirs, and then Transfiguration, and then Holy Name. So now, it's beginning to catch on, because St. Jerome's have it, and then in the Valley—I mean, not the Valley, in Riverside, there's a lot of Louisiana people there. So they're doing it out there. So now, that Saturday, before Mardi Gras out here, they're all having Mardi Gras dances. And it's optional; you can wear costume, or you don't have to. (Chloe, age 71, first generation, migrated in 1960)

> St. Eugene's Parish, Father Shelton, he knew that we were all Creole. […] And so he has big dances for that reason, you know, for Mardi Gras and have the beads. And he's up there, and they're pushing him in a little wagon around the hall, and he's throwing beads, you know. He does that. And they tell me that Transfiguration Parish in Los Angeles has a lot of Creole people. And they do Mardi Gras up there at the parish, you know. (Claudine, age 69, second generation, arrived in 1942)

> Um, some of them [the dances] were church affiliated like the Knights of Peter Claver, and then I think it's the Knights of Columbus and so on. I think it's Knights of Columbus. Sometimes there were subdivisions of that like the Women's Auxiliary. You know. Um, and sometimes it was just the churches themselves that put on these la-las to raise money. (Zaida, age 41, second generation, parents migrated in 1946 and 1963) [15]

Mardi Gras and other zydeco dances held in parish halls transform the meaning of these sites in

the built environment from only religious places to also representing Louisiana places. The

critical mass of migrants at these parishes and in the affiliated Catholic organizations ("there's a

lot of Louisiana people there"; "we were all Creole"; "a lot of Creole people") links the practice

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[15] Knights of Columbus (2013; Davis 1990) is the nationwide Catholic fraternal organization that Blacks were not allowed to join for many years (http://www.kofc.org/un/en/about/index.html). Knights of Peter Claver (2011; Davis 1990) is the oldest and largest Black Catholic fraternal organization that was established in the South (http://www.kofpc.org/).

to that place (i.e. Louisiana) and signals that conditions for collective memory and nostalgia exist there. That these practices became part of parish traditions is evidence of the migrants' collective memory and nostalgia at work.

Mnemonic synchronization, engaging in collective remembering and nostalgia for home at an appointed time, was also an important component of these events. The feast of St. Joseph and Mardi Gras brought migrants in Los Angeles together in one location, and also symbolically linked them to the celebrations occurring in their hometowns at the same time. For example, above Clarice links both places during the celebration ("Creoles in the Seventh Ward, even out here"). Albert's recollection of the parish hosting fish fries during Lent similarly demonstrates this mechanism:

> See, now that was one thing that I learned, too, that was you know, it was really very much passed on. You know, that every Friday, we used to go to church to have fish because that was Friday during Lent. They had a fish fry at church. Well, out here they didn't really do that in every church and I thought well, why aren't they doing that? I thought, well, you know, we're supposed—that's just the thing to do. Every Catholic have a fish fry at the church, see, but St. John Evangelist started it and Holy Name, uh, yeah Holy Name of Jesus started it. So then we started going to get fish on Friday at church, you know, during Lent, and that was like the normal thing to do from back home. (Albert, age 58, second generation, migrated in 1963)

The synchronized and celebratory interaction involved in these traditions facilitates nostalgic co-remembering and continuity in the style of interaction (interactional past) from Louisiana.

Through their desire to reproduce elements of their hometown—a manifestation of collective nostalgia for the interactional past of New Orleans—the migrants were able to make the parishes themselves mnemonic places. These were places that had the capacity to invoke nostalgic memories of Louisiana.

> Holy Name. Yeah, there's a big *fleur-de-lis* carved into the railing over at Holy Name, you know? Those guys, the Aubrys and the Desvignes and all them, they're the ones that built that church, you know? Built Holy Name, you know, right there on Jefferson Boulevard and Arlington, you know? And they carved a *fleur-de-lis* into the railing, you

> know? It's still there, you know? (John, age 50, second generation, migrated in 1960 at age 3)

> They got so that they got off keen and started callin' it Corpus Christi until the Monsignor got very angry one Sunday, and he got up on the pulpit and he told them to, "Not refer [to] Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Los Angeles, California as Corpus Christi because it isn't and please refrain from doing it." Sure did. They tried the same thing they did in New Orleans it didn't work though. […] So they just didn't like that, which I couldn't blame him because it's not Corpus Christi church. That's where all the Creoles went to church at in Corpus Christi [in New Orleans]. (Bernard, first generation)

Holy Name Parish underwent major remodeling in the early 1950s (Lees 2011), by which time the migrant concentration in the parish area had already been established. John's account shows that the migrant community, who included many with experience in the building trades, helped the remodeling efforts, and they essentially branded the parish as their own with the *fleur-de-lis* (Gaudin 2005; George 1992).[16] By nicknaming Holy Name, "Corpus Christi," they were invoking the predominant Creole parish in New Orleans ("they got off keen and started callin' it Corpus Christi"). While this was not a permanent change within the parish, it does highlight the importance of parishes as sites in the production of collective nostalgia. By using a symbol of the original place (the *fleur-de-lis*) and physically attaching it to an institution that was also being interactionally embossed with markers from Louisiana, the migrants lay claim to this mnemonic place.

The saliency of the collective memory and nostalgia for Louisiana was passed on to and experienced by the second generation through these practices that were incorporated in the parishes by the first generation. Equally important in John's example above is that it demonstrates evidence of the power of the mnemonic community to relate a collective memory of place, apparent here since he was not yet born and his family did not migrate until 1960,

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[16] The *fleur-de-lis* is a symbol commonly used in New Orleans and Louisiana that links the state to its French origins, and is used by individual Louisianans to identify themselves with the state.

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several years after this remodeling occurred. The second-generation accounts from Audrey, Claudine, and Zaida above also demonstrate this. Furthermore, when Albert moved to Los Angeles he noticed differences in the parish practices, he was nostalgic for the way things were done back home. Albert's sense of comfort in the Catholic parish and his connection to Louisiana was restored when practices from home were reproduced in Los Angeles by the first generation ("that was like the normal thing to do from back home").

In this section, I illustrated how social life for Louisianans was organized by involvement with the Catholic Church, to the point that even relationships to place were influenced. The significance of the parish for interaction was adapted from Louisiana to the Los Angeles context. I determined that there were at least two key ways that first and second-generation respondents used the Catholic Church parishes: (1) geographically and (2) socially. For the first generation the significance and the use of the parishes came from their direct interactional past in Louisiana and their understanding of the potential for interaction there. For the second generation, the collective memory of Louisiana created within the mnemonic community and the interactional potential of Los Angeles reiterated the significance of Louisiana in the parishes. First-generation respondents used the parishes as geographic markers. Second-generation migrants did the same, but with the perspective that parishes were connected to school experiences. The parish also had a role in demonstrating and reinforcing the migrant community's attachment to Louisiana by preserving continuity in the type of interaction they experienced in two ways: (1) parish-centered socializing stimulated co-migrant contact and a Louisiana-centered interactional potential (setting the stage for collectively nostalgic interaction) and (2) migrants used the parish as a vessel through which they could incorporate elements of Louisiana into their lives in Los Angeles (evidence of their collective nostalgia for and attachment to Louisiana).

NEW ORLEANS WEST: NOSTALGIA AND THE MNEMONIC COMMUNITY IN THE BUSINESS CONCENTRATION

As noted above in the first section on the neighborhood concentration of migrants, the business concentration was also a byproduct of residential segregation. But there was also something unique about the Louisiana enclave. Within the boundaries of the wider Black business district in the West Adams and Crenshaw area was a sub-concentration of Louisiana businesses. This section of the city was the center of the Black community during the 1940s through the 1960s (Chapple 2010; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). Jefferson Boulevard lies at the very bottom of the West Adams neighborhood, separating it from Leimert Park. And right on that street sat many of the Louisiana businesses discussed here (Chapple 2010; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). In addition to being a source of income and employment, the business concentration was used to contribute to a Louisiana-centered interactional potential in Los Angeles. This occurred through the concentration's provision of physical sites that invoked Louisiana, and that allowed the mnemonic community to interact with each other and engage nostalgically with the interactional past of Louisiana. One key feature of the interactional past that the concentration catered to was the specific food tastes of the migrants. The replication of aspects of Louisiana accomplished by the first generation within the business concentration is evidence of both their use of and support for collective nostalgia. The second generation's narratives recalled the enclave more heavily in terms of its role in determining interaction and linking them to their families' home region.

The businesses in the enclave were used to create an interactional potential that was Louisiana-centered. The interactional potential was made up of the expectations for interacting in a way that was influenced by Louisiana, and the physical set up of the enclave that made this possible. For example, many migrants had a vivid memory of how the business section of town

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was set up to provide them with daily exposure to a feeling that they were connected to

Louisiana:

> […] there was Aubry's Barbershop and Mr. Desvigne's Barbershop, and there was Big
> Loaf Bakery owned by Segis McGlurkin and the other folks who owned, who owned
> what is now Harold and Belle's, which at one time was a pool hall. And so there was a lot
> of New Orleans families, and there was Pete's Louisiana Hot Sausage place over there
> and Ashton's Shatto on, on Slauson, so [there] was a lot of close New Orleans
> community in the city, so our house was always full of people from the neighborhood and
> relatives and family that everyone knew […] . (John, age 50, second generation, migrated
> in 1960 at age 3)

> And we'd walk back and forth up and down Jefferson in big groups. There were the
> stores along the way like Big Loaf Bakery. And I can remember my mother sending me
> to the little notions place to buy thread and all for her. […] And there was Saint Bernard
> Market on the corner of Jefferson and 6th Avenue. I'm sorry, 8th Avenue. And I used to
> go there and buy veal rounds so that my mother could make panéed meat. [*Laughter*]
> And the people knew me. They knew I was William and Mag's daughter. Then there was
> Errol Hearse Cleaners down the street, and he knew my parents. There was even a guy
> down on his luck, who was an alcoholic, and he hung out at the liquor store on the corner.
> And he knew my parents. And just people up and down the street who knew my family.
> (Deborah, age 60, second generation, parents migrated 1947)

Despite being located in Los Angeles, this business district brings Louisiana to the minds of

migrants. John and Deborah's lists of businesses illustrate that these institutions were means for

making Los Angeles seem like it was oozing Louisiana-ness—the lists go on and on. One can

envision migrants walking up and down a bustling corridor of Louisiana-named and Louisiana-

evoking businesses. The businesses also contributed to the feeling that this part of Los Angeles

was a small community, not a sprawling metropolis. Deborah recalls a definite sense of a close-

knit community ("people up and down the street who knew my family").

Once the business concentration was established, its existence served as a physical

beacon for migrants who were arriving in Los Angeles. For example, Helen (age 77, first

generation) comments on the business enclave that was already established by 1955 when she

arrived:

> [A]nd look at all the places. Now that impressed me. You talked about what impressed

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me when I came here: was to see all these food establishments. With the Creole-type food, the New Orleans-type food. They specialized it, they named it. So they, you can see, that the influence that it had here. In fact, Harold and Belle's is one of the few places that doesn't connotate, you know, it having come from New Orleans, you just know that it is.[17]

The fact that Helen describes being "impressed" by the number of New Orleans businesses she found in Los Angeles when she arrived illustrates that this was an important way for new migrants to be physically reminded of home when they were walking the streets of Los Angeles. It shaped their expectations for interaction in this new site.

The businesses in the concentration were also sites of gathering where migrants had access to the mnemonic community. For example, above John directly links the businesses and organizations within the district to socializing with other migrants and access to a close-knit migrant community ("so our house was always full of people from the neighborhood and relatives and family that everyone knew"; "a lot of close New Orleans community in the city"). Eddie (age 70, migrated from New Orleans in 1956) thought along these same lines:

> Yeah, well, Jefferson was the hub. On Saturday, you went on Jefferson, you saw everybody that was from New Orleans. They had a meat market, they had Merlin's, they had The Grotto, Devil's Den. The barbershop, there were two or three barbershops. A couple of guys opened sandwich shops, so that was—when you wanted to see somebody—when anybody came in town, they'd wind up at one of the barrooms or in the meat market […] the cleaners, Marine Cleaners, that was another spot where you could run across someone. So Jefferson was really the connection for everyone.

The area of Jefferson Boulevard being discussed here is identified as "the hub" of the migrant community. Thus the interactional potential of Los Angeles, and this area in particular, was such that migrants could go to certain locations and expect to interact with the mnemonic community

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[17] Harold and Belle's did not come into existence in its current form until the 1980s, but the site had been a Creole/Louisiana migrant business for decades prior. The property itself was purchased and developed by a migrant in the 1940s, and later leased to various Louisianan businesspeople and then eventually leased and sold to the current owners. Previous incarnations were various barrooms owned or run by migrants. However, it eventually became, and still is, a flagship restaurant of the Creole/Louisiana community. According to Helen, it is so authentic that it does not need to advertise that it is connected to New Orleans, "you just know that it is."

in a way that was reminiscent of Louisiana ("you saw everybody that was from New Orleans";

"Jefferson was really the connection for everyone").

Others similarly illustrated the centrality of the businesses for access to the Louisiana

mnemonic community.

> You had—oh, well, I can't remember the man's name right now, but it was a Creole place of gatherin', in a sense, on Exposition Street. The name escapes me right now. But there were people. (Clarice, age 70, first generation, migrated in 1965)

> So that's where the Louisiana people used to gather at to buy the food that we were used to in New Orleans. (Chloe, age 71, first generation, migrated in 1960)

> And then, we'd frequent some of the Louisiana restaurants, like there's a restaurant just recently moved called Five Cs and it was five Castille brothers, another Louisiana family name, and we'd go there and we'd see people that we know. It was kind of like a, you know, just a familiarity. We'd have a lot of folks from Louisiana in our lives. (Scott, age 44, second generation, parents migrated separately in 1943 and 1957)

These sites of interaction in Los Angeles were associated with home and people from home

("Creole"; "Louisiana people"; "New Orleans"; "Louisiana family"). Echoing Eddie, both

generations viewed these as meeting places for migrants to find their fellow Louisianans

("Creole place of gatherin'"; "Louisiana people used to gather"; "we'd see people that we

know"). And this was particularly important for nurturing the second generation's "familiarity"

with the wider first generation and the migrant community in general ("We'd have a lot of folks

from Louisiana in our lives."). The daily, lived experience was built around people from

Louisiana, keeping the place itself in the forefront of their lives.

Furthermore, the business concentration allowed for collective memory and nostalgia for

the interactional past of Louisiana. For example, the desire to find regionally specific foods and

services that felt familiar to migrants was a form of nostalgia for the interactional past associated

with Louisiana that translated into the entrepreneurial and consumer choices of the migrant

community. The businesses that most of these passages name as part of the "hub" are mainly

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eateries, bars (which also served a limited menu of hometown favorites), and markets. And

although there were other businesses like the barber shops and cleaners where people gathered or

ran in to each other, the food-hometown region connection is clearly important within the

migrant enclave (Abrahamson 1996). Others noted:

> […] the assimilation out here, there were markets where people sewed certain things, and you purchased from those people. […] The Five Cs restaurant was one that was known on 54th Street when I came to go get Creole food or po' boys because you wanted the same food you had left, and you found who was selling what you wanted. (Clarice, age 70, first generation, migrated in 1965)

> Yes, there were places. […] He had a meat market on Jefferson, and everybody used to go there, because it was the same cuts of meat that we got in New Orleans. Because when you go to the—even the stores now, the meat is cut different. Because yesterday, my husband, he had wanted, what we call seven steaks. It's a steak, and the bone is shaped like a seven, like the number seven. And we used to get it at that market. And there was another market on Western, it was called Quintin's, and you could get the seven steaks there. So that's where the Louisiana people used to gather at to buy the food that we were used to in New Orleans. (Chloe, age 71, first generation, migrated in 1960)

> Oh, growing up, yeah, yeah. There was all kinds of stuff. I mean, Henry Marine's Sandwich Shop over there on Florence. Girard's had a little—like a fish market and a meat market and a little grocery store over there on Western, just different stuff where I guess they could go and get the kind of stuff they were familiar with or that brought them closer to home. Strange. So they knew all these places. [… T]hey had their little spots where they'd get certain things that I guess they needed from home or whatever, and then especially for my father, there was Ms. Thibodeaux who made the boudin that he always had and whenever she was making boudin, he had to go get some, so different things like that […] . Different stuff, but they had their little spots where they'd go and get those kinds of things and, I don't know, it just seemed normal to me. I just thought it was another store or whatever. (Kyle, age 41, second generation, parents migrated in 1960)

These passages tap into at least one of the main motivations for the development of the Louisiana

business enclave in Los Angeles: to satisfy the nostalgia for regional foods and the place that

they came from ("you wanted the same food you had left"; "the food that we were used to in

New Orleans"; "stuff they were familiar with or that brought them closer to home"). The second-

generation perspective demonstrated by Kyle shows that the significance of the collective

memory and nostalgia was passed on by witnessing and experiencing the business concentration

themselves. But there was also a component of storytelling that cemented the memory for them. Audrey further illustrates this point by noting, "I grew up visiting a lot of people all the time and hearing their stories. And that's how I kind of put stuff together."

These passages, and the whole of this discussion, ultimately point to the collective memory and collective nostalgia that migrants had for aspects of their home state. The irreplaceability of Louisiana is illustrated by the replication of institutions and forms of business that served the regionally specific tastes of migrants and served their desire to be reminded of home. For example,

> That's why hot sausage is so popular out here because it was transformed right out here, and what didn't come with the Creoles, they ordered it from New Orleans, and it was— no, it was brought on planes. (Clarice, age 70, first generation, migrated in 1965)

Clarice's comment is about the food shops that specialized in making a particular food item from home ("transformed right out here"), and the extent to which migrants went to bring pieces of their home to Los Angeles. The creation of the business concentration was linked to the collective memory and nostalgia for these aspects of the interactional past in Louisiana, and it in turn sustained an interactional continuity that would support the place attachment of the migrants who used it (see Chapter 5).

Some explanations for the lack of successful Black business enclaves during the Great Migration period point to the lack of unique tastes of Black migrants (Light 1972; Marks 1989). However, other research notes the distinct southern tastes of migrants (Gregory 2005; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). The case of these Creole Louisianans who brought their preferences for food items born out of the complicated colonial history of Louisiana supports the latter findings. But it also illustrates how diversity within the Black migrant population has not been thoroughly examined in the sociological literature on the Great Migration. I find that the connection between the specific food tastes and the business ventures

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of Louisiana migrants was driven by nostalgia for these foods and the association with place that they produced. The establishment of the businesses, such as the restaurants and meat markets that were owned by and catered to the Louisianans in Los Angeles, illustrates how the migrant community had shaped the interactional potential of Los Angeles in such a way that it could be used to invoke Louisiana and fuel the nostalgia for that place. For the first generation these businesses were an intentional way of connecting to their home; home was elsewhere and the connection to that home was being maintained by foodways that could be adapted or replicated in Los Angeles. For the second generation, the concentration of migrants played a mnemonic role, providing a constant reminder of their families' place of origin, and the significance of the place in their community's memory (Mazumdar et al. 2000). These connections were filtered through the first generation and their access to the larger mnemonic community.

CONCLUSION

This chapter examines the questions: How were the migration and settlement processes experienced? What did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? From the perspectives of both first- and second-generation migrants, I demonstrate that during their settlement of Los Angeles, Louisianans created a Louisiana-centered enclave within the larger Black migrant concentration in the city. They were a concentration of people who shared the status as Louisianans and Creoles; their residential, church, and business concentrations supported a Louisiana-centered lifestyle; and they maintained strong ties between the lifestyle and the geographic place they occupied (Abrahamson 1996; cf. Portes and Jensen 1987). I find that this ethnic enclave was an important physical space for supporting immigrants' collective memory, nostalgia, and attachments to home and community (Abrahamson 1996; Mazumdar et al. 2000). These findings are consistent with the literature on immigrant and Great Migration interstate

migrant communities, where enclaves create spaces wherein migrants can continue to operate in ways similar to the home country or region, and reinforce language and cultural practices (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Phillips 1999; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Rutkoff and Scott 2010).

But while the international immigration literature gives a sense that enclaves are important for the second generation and their sense of connection to their parents' homeland, less is known about how the second generation interstate migrants of the Great Migration era understood their parents' experiences and ties to their home states (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Richards 2008; Roth 2012). I demonstrate that the enclave was an important factor in passing on the collective memory of migration, and of belonging to a migrant community in Los Angeles for the second generation. Louisiana and Louisianans were a salient part of the second generation's experience growing up in Los Angeles.

This was accomplished because, as I argue, this enclave hosted a mnemonic community of migrants and functioned as a site of Louisiana-centered interaction in Los Angeles. Two key mechanisms of the residential, church, and business concentration in Los Angeles were: (1) interaction with the mnemonic community, and (2) the interactional potential of Los Angeles. The concentration in turn helped to reinforce collective memory and nostalgia for Louisiana's interactional past, setting the stage to restore migrants' place attachment (see Chapter 5).

The three forms of concentration each had important roles in this process. The residential concentration was shaped by the more traditional patterns observed in the Great Migration more broadly, where pioneers and chain migration paved the way for settling in a new place, and residential segregation limited the areas where they could live (Bond 1936; Chapple 2010; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Marks 1989; Robinson 2010;

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Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000; Wilkerson 2010). Although some had the ability to bypass overt racism when looking for homes and jobs because their appearances were ambiguous, others (perhaps even in the same family) did not. This is evidence of the still very real role that race had in their lives during this time period.

This concentration also helped to acclimate migrants to a new city. It helped them adjust to both new and familiar kinds of racism they encountered in the Los Angeles racial structure as people of color. It also created the conditions where the interactional potential of Los Angeles was Louisiana-centered. This offered continuity—migrants knew what to expect interactionally from Los Angeles and from their peers because of it. This also created the conditions for a mnemonic community, where Louisiana would be at the center of collective memory and collective nostalgia. This was especially significant for the second generation's understanding of the story of the migration and the role of the hometown/home state in the new place (Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Religious places are important for immigrants' adaptation to their new environments and socializing the second generation (Bankston and Zhou 1995; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). Similarly, migrants during the Great Migration used churches and religion in their adaptation (Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Sernett 1997). Although less studied than Protestant denominations of migrants, Catholic parishes were important tools for promoting a Louisiana-centered interactional potential and access to the mnemonic community, which would ultimately contribute to reinforcing migrants' place attachment to Louisiana (see Chapter 5). Migrants used the parishes in two ways: as means of (1) geographically organizing the city and the migrant concentration and (2) socially reinforcing the migrant community and shaping the way the parishes in their new location functioned. First generation migrants drew on their collective

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memory of the interactional past in Louisiana in the way that they used parishes to interpret the geography of Los Angeles in terms of parishes. The second generation's use of parishes geographically drew on their interactional past of growing up in the Catholic schools and churches of Los Angeles. Parish-centered socializing also provided access to the mnemonic community in the context of a Louisiana-centered interactional potential and allowed first- and second-generation migrants to exercise collective memory and express collective nostalgia for Louisiana by incorporating practices from home in the parish setting.

The business concentration established by Louisiana migrants was also used to create a Louisiana-centered interactional potential and provided access to the mnemonic community. This occurred through the concentration's provision of physical sites that invoked Louisiana, and that were places for the mnemonic community to interact with each other. The businesses also allowed migrants to engage nostalgically with the interactional past of Louisiana, particularly in the form of food items and other reminders of home that were sold. For the first generation these businesses were an intentional way of connecting to their home and is evidence of the first generation's collective nostalgia. For the second generation, the business concentration was more important for determining interaction and playing a mnemonic role, providing a constant reminder of their families' place of origin and the significance of the place in their community's memory, and the attachment associated with it (Mazumdar et al. 2000).

In answer to the second research question, being from Louisiana meant, for most, being a part of a migrant community that determined multiple facets of daily life, from where one lived, went to school, worshipped, and conducted business. It meant being reminded of a connection to a kind of regional homeland other than Los Angeles on a regular basis. By looking at these interactional and emotional aspects of migration for Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, this

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chapter demonstrates the complexities of Black migration during this period that are suggested by historical studies as important, but are often not examined in detail (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010).

The findings of this chapter describe the context in which migrant's racial and ethnic identities were constructed (see Chapter 4), and set the stage for examination of the roles that migration and place had in constructing these identities (see Chapters 4 and 5). These features of the migrant concentration in Los Angeles contributed to migrants' place attachment, which I examine in more detail in Chapter 5. I now turn to the examination of the meaning of Creole and the construction of identities.

CHAPTER 4
"YOU'RE THIS COMBINATION OF CULTURES AND RACES": THE MEANING OF CREOLE AND INTERSTATE IDENTITIES

But my mother would always say, "Well, so-and-so's from New Orleans," which really meant they were Creole. It almost like that became the same thing. Creole and New Orleans are the same thing, in her mind. Yeah. But there were no other—to me—like my mom, Creole and New Orleans meant the same thing, same place, same people, and I didn't know too many people outside of that.
        —Audrey, second generation

Creole can be— [...] it could be any shade of color. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're light skinned and your hair is straight, and you're this. Creole comes in all forms, fashions also as far as a culture of a group of people that came from Louisiana or New Orleans. You know, you could look Hispanic, you could look White, you could look Black, you could be light brown, dark brown. It's a mixture; it's a melting pot. So I feel like, you know, if someone asks or if I was describing it, you know, you can't pinpoint any particular person or color as being Creole.
        —Danny, second generation

[...] people would be puzzled at the color of my skin or the texture of my hair, and I'd say I was Black. I mean, I've been told outright, "No you're not." I've had people tell me that many, many times. [...]. So, I just give them a little mini lesson on what it is, what a Creole is.
        —Deborah, second generation

Chapter 3 demonstrated that Louisiana migrants created a residential, church parish, and business enclave within the boundaries of Los Angeles' Black neighborhood. For most of the migrants I spoke with, that meant having ties to Creoles in Louisiana and living among a mnemonic community of Creoles in Los Angeles. As Audrey's passage noted above, she learned from her mother that "Creole and New Orleans meant the same thing." But what significance did that have in Los Angeles, especially given that the majority of respondents identified primarily as racially Black? Danny and Deborah's passages point to several important factors in understanding this puzzle: culture, racial mixture, place, a range of diverse ambiguous appearances, racialization, and contending with questions from outsiders about identities.

The assumption is usually made that African American identities are a given for Black migrants during the Great Migration. In many ways, this is true. Racialization as Black and

experiences under Jim Crow pushed these migrants out of the South in search of a better life, in search of humane treatment (Gregory 2005; Lemann 1991; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay and Beck 1990, 1992; Wilkerson 2010). But individual states were no doubt sources of their own distinct identities, cultures, and racial structures; and yet the Great Migration story is usually told in terms of the more homogenous "southern," "Black," or "African American" experience (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemann 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003). As a counterbalance to this tendency in the literature, this chapter investigates the following questions: How is the meaning of Creole constructed and used by migrants in Los Angeles? How are racial and ethnic identities constructed? How are these identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are they affected by migration?

I examine these questions in two main sections: (1) The Meaning of Creole in Los Angeles and (2) Identity Encounters. This format facilitates analysis of how Creole itself is constructed before delving into how it is used by the migrants in constructing identities. In the first section I address how first- and second- generation migrants construct definitions of Creole in Los Angeles. Migrants view Creole in terms of race, culture, and place—sometimes all of these at once, but they could at any given time rely more heavily on any one of these frameworks. Taken together, for most migrants Creole assumes the form of an ethnic group within the Black racial category. The respondents' narratives about the meaning of Creole engage ideas of racial mixture, ancestry, history, phenotype, culture, language, and place to define this composite category. These are addressed in three broad subsections that reflect themes that emerged from the data: (1) race mixture narratives, (2) cultural narratives, and (3) significance of place narratives.

The second main section answers the questions: How are racial and ethnic identities

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constructed and modified? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are they affected by migration? How is Creole used by migrants in Los Angeles in this process? I argue that racial and ethnic identities are constructed by Louisiana migrants in ways that are a cross between the methods used by White ethnics, African Americans, bi-/multiracial individuals, and Black-ancestry immigrants. The data reveal that in most cases identity is constructed racially first, then ethnically. Black racial identities are modified with Creole, mixed ancestry, or place identities.[18] Some use singular Black, Creole, or mixed race identities, but these are less common. The participants' racial and ethnic identities are constructed using factors like ancestry, socially mediated appearance, surnames, language, historical narratives, racialization experiences, cultural knowledge, and place. Mixed ancestry shapes identities by creating the need for identity encounters where outsiders ask migrants to define and negotiate their often-ambiguous identities. Then it provides multiple sources of identity to draw from during these interactions so that individuals often combine racial and ethnic facets of identity together. Migration shapes identities by creating changes in the context in which they are constructed, providing new reference groups, new understandings of race and ethnicity, and a home place to anchor an identity to. Identities are also constructed situationally, and are not fixed. Migrants' narratives of these identity encounters highlight how social context interacts with external markers of race, ethnicity, or regional origin to shape the form identities take in certain situations. I examine migrants' identity encounters in two subsections addressing (1) how they negotiate Black, Creole, racially mixed, and mistaken identities, and (2) the role of place in negotiating these identities.

In answering these research questions, this chapter contributes to understanding how one

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[18] Most migrants preferred the use of Black to African American, although they used the latter in official contexts, such as when filling out forms.

group of migrants from the Great Migration era constructed racial and ethnic identities, a process that is generally overlooked in much of the literature (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay et al. 2000). The chapter also contributes to the limited literature on Louisiana Creoles outside of Louisiana (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Woods 1972, 1989). Furthermore, this case adds to current literature on Black identities that often focuses on contemporary immigrants (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). And while this chapter makes these contributions to knowledge about this historical migration period, it also contributes to understanding how migrant and Louisiana Creole identities are constructed in the contemporary period.

THE MEANING OF CREOLE IN LOS ANGELES

Most of the migrants have some connection with the Louisiana Creole community whether through their own family background, language, or by socialization within or in relation to the community. Not all who have this experience use it as an identity, but they nevertheless demonstrate a variety of frameworks for understanding and defining what Creole is to them. This section lays out the different tools that respondents use to define the meaning of Creole while living outside out of the region where Creoles originated.

Some of the more common approaches include defining Creole in terms of racial mixture, as culture, and in relation to place—historical narratives run throughout each of these. It is important to note that for both generations these analytic categories are not types of people or identities, but rather a range of approaches used to discuss the multifaceted meaning of Creole. Migrants sometimes use several of these as narratives, and at times even in contradictory ways. Throughout these narratives, there is a constant negotiation of Creole's relationship to Blackness.

Race Mixture Narrative

Many migrants linked the meaning of Creole to a racial and ethnic mixture that was associated

with Louisiana's colonial history under French and Spanish rule. Through the use of this

narrative, there is a continuous flow back and forth between Creole being constructed as a Black

category, but also as a mixed race category. Both generations of migrants used this racial mixture

narrative, but the first generation relied on it less. This narrative employed the language of

ancestries and primordial origins, and referred to racial and ethnic components. The most

commonly used ancestries included Black, Native American, French, and Spanish, but others

(e.g., Irish or Chinese) sometimes made their way onto the list.

Mixture narratives evoked race explicitly by using the language of the perceived

physicality of race:

> I've got two ways. [*Laughter*] One thing is maybe French, Spanish, Indian and usually
> it's some Black blood in it. Usually. Now I'm sure that there are people who don't, I
> don't know who they are, but there maybe. And I don't know where mine comes from
> particularly. That's all that. And I think sometimes, and then you had a whole, another
> segment of New Orleans, particularly, who wanted to be Creole, but they wanted to be
> White, they did not want to be Black. And we've known families that grew up that way.
> (Marguerite, Black/Creole family, first generation)[19]

> And getting back to that, you explain that Creoles are like gumbo. You put everything
> you can think of in to the pot and it comes out some delicious soup that they make. It's a
> combination of French, Spanish, um Indian, um, all that racially mixed together because
> that's the way it was. There are no true "whatever it is" from New Orleans. You're mixed
> with everything. Even White people and Italians got into that thing. (Cyril, Black/African
> American/Creole, second generation)

Marguerite's use of the language of "blood" illustrates a primordial understanding of Creole.

Cyril uses "racially mixed" explicitly and implies that a 'purity' of racial categories would be

impossible ("there's no true" or pure racial category "from New Orleans"). Marguerite and Cyril

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[19] The identity labels attached to the passages indicate how respondents identified and their relationship to Creole
distilled from the entire interview.

both also use "mixture" in reference to some form of the generic list of components of Creole (French, Spanish, Indian and Black). This language implies their understanding that racial and ethnic categories can be combined in some concrete, physical way and seems to be supported by an underlying primordial logic that relies on the ideas of blood and mixture. But despite the similar use of primordialism, this view of Creole is contrary to hypodescent because Blackness does not supersede all other components in the narrative.

There is also a lack of precision, a fuzziness, in this narrative as well. Marguerite admits that this combination is not necessarily a hard and fast rule, and that she does not have concrete information that would prove her personal link to these ancestries ("I don't know where mine comes from particularly"). Cyril makes Creole analogous to gumbo (a stew of many and varied ingredients, perhaps Louisiana's most renowned regional dish), which highlights the multiple sources of ancestry ("everything you can think of"; "even White people and Italians got into that thing"). Cyril's comment is in line with Marguerite's general narrative of the composition of Creole, which does not bear the onus of having to prove it.

Even when other migrants did not use the words "race" or "blood" explicitly, the narrative about "mixture" was clear:

> And it entailed Spanish. It entailed Blacks. It entailed people of French descent, people even of Chinese descent and the small percentage of that. So, you see, all of this evolved to create the Creole community. (Clarice, American/Black/Creole culture, first generation)

> So when I think about it, and I've not thought about it to this extent, but when you look at every aspect, it's like that pot of gumbo. Everything is in it. You know? And I do think so. You know, and yours may be limited to some things, some specifics and then some. And somebody else's the same specifics, and then their some. But it's the mixture. (Helen, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

Clarice's definition echoes Marguerite's and Cyril's by invoking ideas of mixture, percentages, and specific ancestries ("descent") of Spanish, Black, French, Chinese. While she is not using the

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word race per se, she refers to racial and ethnic categories and links the mixture to the emergence

of an entire group of people ("Creole community"). Helen also makes the analogy of Creole to

gumbo, and like Cyril acknowledges that Creole is a mixture of unknown quantities and origins.

The mixture makes Creole the sum of all its parts. The racial mixture narrative often had a

somewhat positive tone to it, a subdued sense of pride. For example, both Cyril and Helen

valorize this mixture by equating Creole with "some delicious soup" that symbolizes the place

where it was created.

Sometimes the racial and ethnic categories identified in the general definition of Creole

stemmed from respondents' knowledge or assumptions about their personal ancestry or family

history. Beyond the traditionally-identified Black French, Spanish, Native American, some

migrants included a range of ancestries as diverse as Chinese, Croatian, German, Irish, Italian, or

Morrocan. For example, Clarice listed Chinese because of her family's Chinese origins in her

great-grandparents' generation. Another example illustrates this point:

> Well, I would explain the whole Creole thing, you know, Louisiana, the intermingling of
> the French and the Blacks. I'd say I have—one of my mother's relatives was from Santa
> [sic] Domingo via maybe via Africa, who knows. My brother's done extensive research
> about some of our relatives who were freed. They were free people of color in New
> Orleans. (Deborah, Black/Creole influence, second generation)

Deborah indicates that her explanation of Creole comes at least partially from her knowledge of

the genealogy of her family. Beyond the links to "French and the Blacks", she points here to

specific ancestral ties to historical Santo Domingo. This illustrates that ancestry is part of these

respondents' racial mixture narratives about the meaning of Creole, and at times strengthens their

own connection to the group.

These passages demonstrate that on one hand, Creole is a Black category. On the other

hand, Creole takes on a narrative of a distinct racially mixed category. For example,

Marguerite's explanation of Creole as including a contingent of racial passers underscores the

assumption that Creoles are Black. While Cyril's passage does not explicitly list Black, the non-Black ancestries seem to be in addition to a Black core, and elsewhere he emphasizes Blackness. Conversely, Clarice and Helen demonstrate that Creole is its own category ("all of this evolved to create the Creole community"; "But it's the mixture"). Similarly, Cyril's and Marguerite's definitions challenge the one-drop rule by allowing for multiple ancestries to be recognized as distinct and alongside of Blackness, or to create a new category that focuses on mixture. The data also demonstrate how migrants talked about both races (Black or Indian, for example) and ethnicities (French or Spanish) as equally associated with physical origins and mixture associated with Creoles (Cornell and Hartmann 1998, 2004).

Historical Narratives

For many migrants, an important component of the narrative of mixture was emphasizing the history of this process. This was more prominent within second-generation narratives, although I did find it among first generation as well.[20] Some migrants pointed to the role of history in differentiating Creoles from other mixed race people: "So that was Creole as opposed to just some, there are people of mixed race, but those are different. Creoles are a very specific history" (Audrey, Black/Creole background, second generation). This approach of using the history of Creoles often took the form of recalling the colonial history of Louisiana, slavery, plaçage, and free people of color. For example, Deborah mentions the historical group to which many Creoles trace their history, the *gens de couleur libre* (which translates to "free people of color"), a free, mixed race class that emerged during the era of slavery. Having family ties to free people of color was a point of pride and distinction for many respondents, and was especially salient when discussing genealogical research that contributed to their definitions of Creole (Parham 2008,

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[20] The use of a historical narrative was more prominent in racial mixture so it is analyzed here, but it was also present in the cultural and place explanations.

2012).

Other migrants provided similar historical narratives of the mixture process in their

definitions of Creole:

> But now with Creoles, that's generations and generations of mixtures where both of your
> parents are that same mixture. So you don't know at what point the White came, the
> Black came in and there's so much, you know, it goes back generations and then the
> slavery where there—or even without slavery, 'cause there were a lot of free people of
> color. And then there were a lot of illegal marriages, but they were still marriages or
> wink, wink, where, you know? We understand you're not married because the law won't
> allow it, but—. (Joanne, Black/Creole family, second generation)

> But when you think of the history of how anything was established in this New World,
> you know, and to me how Creole came about—you have the African […] you know, and
> then all of that mixture that happened. And they kept mixin', and mixin', and mixin', and
> mixin', and mixin'. (Zaida, African American/Creole culture, second generation)

The emphasis on the temporal longevity of the mixture that is part of the very definition of

Creole is illustrated in Joanne's use of "generations and generation of mixtures" and Zaida's

exponential "mixin.'"

In some ways, this historical narrative of mixture is performing a subtle distancing from

slavery or other Black groups that might be racially mixed (perhaps multiracial individuals or the

wider African American population which also recognizes racial mixture). In my interviews this

was not usually done as part of an explicit statement about Creoles being better than some other

group. However, this pattern may be demonstrating some residual form of boundary marking or

social distancing from Blackness that was used in the Louisiana context (Domínguez 1986;

Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972).

The way that many migrants recited this information gave the impression that this

knowledge was gained from conducting their own research on the definition of Creole: reading

histories, watching documentary films about Creoles and Louisiana, and conducting genealogical

research. In fact, several sources on Creoles were cited by migrants, including *The Forgotten*

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People: Cane River's Creole of Color by Gary B. Mills (1977). Bliss Broyard's (2007) *One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life—A Story of Race and Family Secrets*, about her father who was a literary critic and Creole from New Orleans that passed as White, was on the minds of many of my informants because it had come out not too long before the interviews were conducted.[21] Many migrants asked me if I had heard of, read, or watched particular books or documentaries. Some even offered me copies of news clippings or documentaries about Creoles and/or Creole history. In this way, Creole history works like a more generalized form of ancestry, like a very broad family history that migrants could rely on to help them understand and define this group that they were associated with. Actual genealogical research was also common either among the respondents themselves, or some family member who shared their findings with everyone in the family.

One reason that outside knowledge may have been so prevalent can be found in the circumstances of the emergence of Creole. Many first and second generation migrants told me that the older folks did not want to talk about the past because of pain and shame of slavery, plaçage, and the sexual exploitation of women of color throughout Louisiana's history. Many also lamented the fact that they had not spent more time pursuing this information when their elders were alive, although they conceded that it was just not something that people talked about.

Another possible explanation for the use of the racial mixture narrative and the reliance on outside sources among the second generation may be a function of generation itself. These narratives may represent a kind of symbolic knowledge, along the lines of those used by later generation White ethnics or multiracial individuals who understand ethnic backgrounds in terms of food or holidays (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011; Waters 1990). This may also be a result of the

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[21] Although Broyard's book is a memoir, it has historical and genealogical components.

wider acknowledgement of multiracial identities and multicultural movements within the United

States racial structure, and the likelihood that younger generation of migrants would be more

aware of these shifts in the post-Civil Rights era (Brunsma 2005; DaCosta 2006; Khanna 2010).

This construction of Creole using symbolic knowledge may also have emerged because of the

distinction in the contexts of socialization between the first and second generation (this will be

further discussed beginning on page 173).

Phenotype

Talk about phenotype was also used as a narrative tool that emphasized racial mixture in the

definition of Creole and who was Creole. These narratives could include focusing on lighter

phenotypes, or at the other end of the spectrum focusing on darker or a variety of phenotypes.

For example, here Creoles were described as having more European features:

> […] fundamentally, mixed Black people, most of them—I always thought it was Black and Indian and French, or something. That's the best I could do. But in my mind, it was more geographic. They all came from New Orleans; that much I knew. It was more that than anything else. And they tend to have lighter skin and, you know, the hair was different. They looked more White. (Audrey, Black/Creole background, second generation)

The portion of Audrey's multifaceted definition that refers to mixture and phenotype

demonstrates that, while in her view they were less important than geographical origin, they were

still important features of the composition of Creole.

The appearances of individuals and their immediate family members also contributed to a

definition that associated Creole racial mixture and phenotype. For example, Deborah used this

approach of defining Creole with her children to help them cope with being socially perceived as

racially ambiguous.

> And so I explained to them the French heritage, the intermingling, the whole thing about people of different cultures mixing, and you have different color skin and different textures of hair. (Deborah, Black/Creole influence, second generation)

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Deborah's definition of Creole here consisted of a narrative of racial mixture ("intermingling") where phenotypical language ("different color skin and different textures of hair") is used to describe the variety in physical features.

The phenotypical appearance of ancestors was also used in respondents' explanations of the meaning of Creole.

> I tell them that I'm French Creole and that's a mixture of a whole lot of things. And I tell them, I said, I'm sure it's Black, Spanish. Some, they say African American. I said, now I don't know how far I could say I'm African American, you know. I said, but I do know that I do have Spanish blood in me. Somebody had to be of Color somewhere back, what was it, I don't know. I said, but in my mixture looking—and recently, the one of Color more was the Indian, you know. I said, because I wouldn't know, I wasn't born then. I said, but looking at the pictures that I have when they're talking, saying of color, it's coming from the Indian side is what I can see. And I said, but as far as looking and saying really a Negro or African American, I didn't see one on our side of the family at all, you know, nor [my husband's]. Like, we look back at pictures and say, if people think we're Black, how come we're not seeing pictures of somebody that looks like a real Negro person, you know. But they were just assuming as far back as you go there is a mixture, you know. That's why. (Claudine, French Creole, second generation)

> My grandfather married my grandmother and although her name was Morel, which is French, she looked exactly like she was an Indian, a Native American. She had high cheekbones. She was a light, light brown. You saw her picture, that picture of my mother's—she looked Indian to me. And I always thought we had Indian, you know? (Estella, Black/Creole background, first generation)

Claudine and Estella illustrate how migrants sometimes relied on observed phenotype to explain the racial mixture associated with Creoles. Claudine's explanation of not seeing visibly Black people in her extended family seems in line with her apparent distancing from Blackness in her definition. Estella's narrative of what she thought Creole meant highlights the French ancestry from distant relatives ("great grandfather came from France") and physical indications of mixture and phenotype (that her grandmother's name was French, but "looked exactly like she was an Indian, a Native American."). Although Estella does not describe relatives who were or looked Black in this passage, her own personal identification with Blackness elsewhere illustrates the complexity of constructing definitions.

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In contrast to the previous examples that focus on lighter phenotypes, some respondents used descriptions of Black or diverse phenotypes to illustrate the racial mixture narrative.

> [T]he misconception about the Creole is they were all light. That is not true. You see? […] So, you know, people will see and this is why if the hair is not smooth, it's like, "Oh, you can't be Creole." Or if your skin is just jet black, yeah you are Creole. So that's where I get disturbed, you know, when somebody want to tell me, "Oh, no so-and-so is not Creole." That's not true. You know, those people had—there was the mixtures of the French, the Spanish and an African, you could come out Black. You know, there were dark races. (Therese, Black/Creole, first generation)

> Creole can be— […] it could be any shade of color. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're light skinned and your hair is straight, and you're this. Creole comes in all forms, fashions also as far as a culture of a group of people that came from Louisiana or New Orleans. You know, you could look Hispanic, you could look White, you could look Black, you could be light brown, dark brown. It's a mixture; it's a melting pot. So I feel like, you know, if someone asks or if I was describing it, you know, you can't pinpoint any particular person or color as being Creole. (Danny, Black/Creole heritage, second generation)

These two definitions resist what Therese describes as a tendency to privilege lighter phenotype within the Creole community. Therese still emphasizes the mixedness ("there was the mixtures of the French, the Spanish and an African, you could come out Black.") of this group of people using the classic components but does it while acknowledging and emphasizing the possibility of phenotypical Blackness ("hair is not smooth"; "skin is just jet black"). Danny does the same by listing a range of phenotypes ("could be any shade of color"; "you could look Hispanic, you could look White, you could look Black, you could be light brown, dark brown") following with a statement that confirms racial mixture as the source of his observation ("It's a mixture; it's a melting pot.")

Phenotype has historically and often been used to distance Creoles from the wider Black community (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972). While some of the passages hint at this distancing by pointing to phenotypical difference, in my interviews very few used it to overtly argue that individuals or Creoles as a whole were better than other Black

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people who did not exhibit this feature. The use of phenotype in defining Creole could be inclusive or exclusive. The more European phenotypes described by some as defining Creole, while a physical reality for many with this background, could be interpreted as evidence of the exclusivity of Creoles. However, there were some migrants who sought to break the assumptions of those stereotypes by emphasizing the diversity of appearance, rather than just the more privileged end of the spectrum. Despite my finding that overt distancing from Blackness was rare, appearance was still something that people with Creole ties used to describe both insiders and outsiders. This points to a residual colorism used within this community. More overt instances of distancing were usually described by participants as something that other people did, or that used to be done in the past. The range of phenotypes and the complications of defining membership and authenticity that arise from it illustrates the similarities between Louisiana Creoles and the wider Black American community, multiracial individuals, and Black ancestry immigrants (particularly those from Latin American and Caribbean nations whose racial structures incorporate spectrums of phenotype and colorism).

The racial mixture narrative used in defining Creole employed several components including physical, ancestral, historical, and phenotypical characteristics to construct what can be understood as a Black category in some instances, and as a mixed racial category in others. In some ways this narrative is similar to the racial meanings used by immigrants with Black ancestry from Caribbean and Latin American countries, particularly those with national ideologies of mixture and a spectrum of phenotypical variety (Roth 2012; C. A. Sue 2009; Telles and Sue 2009). The data show that there is a type of textbook answer about the most common ancestries that are used in the racial mixture narrative (Black, Native American, French, and Spanish), which is in line with other research on Creoles (Dormon 1996a; Jolivétte 2007). And

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there were other ancestries acknowledged by respondents based on their personal family histories (Jolivétte 2007). A combination of ethnic and racial categories were talked about as equally subject to physical mixture, which is more along the lines of a racial understanding (Cornell and Hartmann 1998, 2004). While members of both generations used this manner of defining Creole, it was more heavily relied upon by the second generation where it led off the definition. This may be related to generational distance from the origins of this group contributing to a more symbolic understanding of Creole, like later generation White ethnics or biracial individuals who latch on to food, holidays, or other symbolic aspects of an ethnic identity (Khanna 2011; Waters 1990). This racial mixture narrative also contributed to a subtle distancing from Blackness, much more mild than previous literature has reported (Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005). However, it also was used to demonstrate inclusivity of Blackness as a correction to assumptions about exclusivity of Creoles. The racial mixture narrative, particularly the phenotype component, does still point to historical and contemporary colorism. In addition to this racial narrative, culture was an important factor in defining the meaning of Creole. The next section will explore the relationship between racial mixture and culture narratives.

Cultural Narrative

Cultural and racial definitions of Creole are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and are interconnected narratives used to understand the term. As one migrant said, "You're this combination of cultures and races" (John, Black/mixed ancestry/Creole culture, second generation). The migrants' use of "culture" demonstrates their thinking about Creole in ethnic terms, although very few used the word "ethnic" in their narratives. The first generation was more likely to use the cultural narrative, although both groups used it. Here I discuss two forms of a cultural narrative: one that incorporates a combination of racial and cultural narratives, and a

second that is more explicit about Creole not being racial. Again the tension between Creole as a

Black ethnic group and Creole as a distinct group becomes apparent. The combined racial/ethnic

approach employs a combination of racial and cultural features that construct Creole as a distinct

racial and ethnic group. The explicitly not race approach is essentially used to argue that Creole

is not a race of its own, but rather an ethnicity within the Black racial category. This seems to be

used as a way to counter the tendency of "other" Creoles to distance themselves from Blackness.

Within the racial explanation given by many is a nod to culture, as though Creole began

with racial mixture that eventually brought about a cultural mixing that members adopted as their

own singular culture. It is similar to the narrative that relies more singularly on the racial mixture

story, but it also incorporates cultural elements. For example:

> I typically use the word "mixed" and it's a mixture of the races. Now, *[pause]* but I also
> throw in the culture is really what makes it unique. So I don't just say we're mixed with
> Black and French and Indian and Spanish. I say that many years ago even five, ten, you
> know, five to eight really to ten generations back there was that mixture. Now for me and
> my family, I don't know about all the Creoles, but for my family what happened after that
> was successive generations married Creole, married this, this mixture. And so it's sort of
> like it's a mixture but then it created a secondary. [… A]nd so it was the mixture of the
> different ancestor or origins of people coming together, and then at a point in time those
> people stayed in with the same mixture of people. Catholic as well, big families, um, big
> on family, and which kind of differentiated us amongst you know—. (Alan, Creole,
> second generation)

Alan's narrative is about mixed race ("the word mixed, and it's a mixture of the races") but also

that a culture was created by this process and is important for distinguishing Creoles from any

other group or individual ("but I also throw in, the culture is really what makes it unique"). As

noted above by Audrey and others, the historical longevity of multigenerational racial mixture is

a distinction from a multiracial individual (which implies just one generation of mixture). But

more importantly for this section, Alan seems to also associate this and endogamy with the

culture that defines Creole, along with the Catholicism and large families.

Some explanations were more conflated, where it was not clear which factor was more

dominant.

> To me, when I say Creole I'm talking about people of mixed heritage. Basically most of them are in the Catholic Church and they have that sense, that culture where they get together for weddings, funerals. You know, it's that atmosphere, those are the people that I'm referring to when I say Creole. (Marie, Mixed, first generation)

> Because, that's what they classified us as, although, most of all our people say we're Creole. And you know, that's uh, um, ah—let's see, how you put it—it's a culture. But I mean, that's our culture, but that's not our race. And the reason a lot of people say Creole, because we are of mixed bloods. (Chloe, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

Although the mixed narrative is still prominent here, both examples highlight that culture and race are inextricably connected. After introducing the idea of mixedness in a vague reference ("mixed heritage"), Marie describes cultural elements and traditions such as Catholicism, weddings, and funerals. Chloe explicitly says that Creole is culture and not race, but then associates Creole with biological mixture ("mixed bloods").

Some narratives hesitated to totally discount the racial mixture component, but did lean more heavily toward a cultural narrative.

> But, it's almost that Creole to me rather than a race, if you will, or an ethnic group. It's more of a culture as well. Not that it is, but I think more culture than I think race with Creole. Because, now that, to my part, is the part that, to my way of thinking, is the part that's so beautiful, you know. (Helen, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

> Creole means, uh, really it means a mixture—not necessarily racial, because I think that's what a lot of people think of initially—but for me it's the putting together of all of those cultures: the African, the European, the Native American, even the Spanish. And it came up with a whole different, whole new culture. Right? And the food is influenced by it, the music is influenced by it because, you know in terms of jazz for instance, it's to me a mixture of African rhythms and all that stuff, but with the European instruments. And all that sort of thing. And so to me it's a melding together. You know it's putting the best of all of those things together and coming up with something even better. (Zaida, African American/Creole culture, second generation)

For Helen, Creole is on the verge of being a culture of its own ("Not that it is, but I think more culture than I think race with Creole"). For Zaida, Creole means "mixture" but not necessarily only in a racial way. She talks about it in terms of cultures—and a mix of cultures at that—and

names the standard list of origins and ancestry. The food and music are used as exemplars of the

cultural mixedness of the group. Jazz music becomes a metaphor for the cultural mixture that

took place in Louisiana, just as gumbo was used as an analogy for the racial mixture narrative.

Explicitly Not Race

Next, there is a segment of respondents whose narratives are more adamant about the status of

Creole as a culture and not a race. This may represent a conscious or unconscious effort to

deemphasize the history of colorism and racial hierarchy that led to the development of the

Creole category. This approach ends up supporting the argument that Creole is not a race of its

own, but rather an ethnicity within the Black racial category. This puts it on par with Black

immigrant groups that end up being treated like an ethnicity within the larger racial category.

The first generation was more likely to use this narrative, but both generations are well

represented here. This may be due to the first hand exposure to the culture that first generation

migrants had to Creole culture in Louisiana. Migrants pointed to specific features of culture that

they were familiar with and that draw the attention away from race. For example, "Creole is a

culture, not a race. You know, the culture is dancing, and music, and foods" (Josephine,

Black/Creole culture, second generation). Others said:

> I think it's a cultural thing, you know. I think it's how you grew up, where you grew up,
> and that sort of thing. [… B]ut what it adheres to is a concept of a cultural tradition that
> we've all internalized—like we were talking earlier about going to church on All Saints
> Day; like having a party for the christening of a baby; like those sort—cooking gumbo z'
> herbes on Holy Thursday. You know, and those are not racial things, those are cultural
> things, so in my opinion, there's not a Creole race, you know. There's not a Creole race,
> there is Creole culture and I think those of us who grow up in it may not be able to define
> it, but we sure the heck know what it is, you know. (Hubert, Black/Creole culture, first
> generation)

> That's a culture, that's a subset, that's something that— […] . We always knew that was
> our culture, but I think it was always—at least as far as our generation in my house, it
> was, "Yeah, that's what we are, but we're Black." [*Latter part intoned with Black English
> accent*] You know, if you gotta divide it and then once you've got the Black people, if
> you want to you can say, "Well, we were all Creole and this cultural thing is who we—

the church we go to, that kind of stuff." (Kyle, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

Here, Hubert and Kyle detail several components of Creole that give it a cultural meaning rather than a racial one: religion, traditions, and food are intertwined ("the church we go to"; "going to church on All Saints Day; like having a party for the christening of a baby; like those sort— cooking gumbo z' herbes on Holy Thursday"); place also influences the culture in this definition ("where you grew up"). Kyle emphasizes Creole's status as culture by contrasting it with a Black racial identity. He supports his definition with the assertion that his primary identity is Black, but Creole is contained within it as an ethnicity ("That's a culture, that's a subset").

Linguistic components of culture were also used to demonstrate how Creole was not a racial designation at all.

> But other than that, it's just a language, and I don't—because I identify with the language and—some people call it a nationality, but it's not. I hear people all the time saying, oh, so and so's Creole; but it's not a nationality. It is a language. That's all it is. (Joyce, Black/Creole language, first generation)

> I'd say, "Well, let me make it simple for you. I don't want to get into a whole discussion about what it is. It's just that my culture is Creole culture. I was raised Creole. I speak the culture. But never have I ever known Creole to be a race." (Herman, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

Herman and Joyce both refer to the linguistic facet of Creole as an element of the culture ("It is a language. That's all it is."; "I speak the culture"). Both of these migrants were from the more rural prairie region of Louisiana, west of Opelousas, and spoke Creole French.[22] While this was rather uncommon among the respondents generally (the majority of whom came from New Orleans and the Cane River region) many recalled elder relatives who spoke Creole or French.

> […] we had a culture, a French-speaking culture. My dad spoke Cajun, you know, Creole. My mom spoke French. And her mother spoke French, beautiful Parisian French. (Bill, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

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[22] See page 20, Footnote 2 for more on Creole French.

[My grandfather] would talk Creole around different people that we knew, OK, they must be Creole too (Calvin, Black, second generation).

Though not fluent themselves, Bill, Calvin, and others, referred to language as something that contributed to their definition of Creole as culture, particularly when they witnessed its usage by family members.

Phenotype could also be used, ironically, as a way to distance the definition of Creole away from a racial mixture narrative and toward a cultural one. For example:

Well a lot of people are misinformed as to what Creole means. So many people that call themselves Creoles actually think that it is a race. And so a lot of people are confused, you know. They just think well your light skin or your hair is straighter and your features are keener and you considered a Creole that you—that's a race, they think that's a race. But you can be Creole and be dark as, black as night and still be Creole. It's the culture that you come from, you know. (Josephine, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

Josephine argues that many Creoles define it as a race characterized by phenotypes associated with White appearance. She comes from an area near Alexandria where Cane River Creoles, who tend to adopt this view, have settled (Woods 1972). Her use of an extreme simile (one can have skin color as "black as night and still be Creole") and highlighting of culture ("It's the culture that you come from") discounts that approach.

In summary, the cultural narrative of Creole was sometimes used in combination with the racial narrative and at others in explicitly non-racial terms. These two different approaches to the explanation of Creole resulted in respectively different ways of defining it—on one hand, as a distinct racial and ethnic group, or on the other hand as an ethnicity within the Black racial category. In some cases this latter approach was a response to the argument used by some Creoles that the category was a race in itself. For most migrants, Creole more than anything else was a cultural repertoire that they had gained from their families and the community either in Louisiana or in Los Angeles. Creole as culture was discussed with respect to specific elements of culture such as language, religion, and food, but also in vague or general terms. The first

generation's tendency to use the cultural argument rather than the racial mixture narrative may be linked to the fact that they were socialized within the culture in Louisiana, making that element more salient for them. It may also be part of a conscious or unconscious move toward correcting or obscuring the racial hierarchies that have historically been associated with Creoles. This may be motivated by a critical view of these racial hierarchies, or may be evidence of the influence of color-blind ideology which obscures the power of race that has characterized the current era (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Winant 2001). The next section will discuss more about the importance of place in these patterns.

The Significance of Place

Place is a crucial feature of defining Creole precisely because the racial mixture and culture that developed was so tied in with Louisiana as a place, including its colonial history. In this section, I first focus on explicit ways that place was used to specify Creole as both a context of socialization and as a basis of the definition. Some of the first generation's use of place was about residential patterns within New Orleans or other areas within Louisiana. For the second generation, naming the state or city as a point of origin for Creoles was important for defining the term. Then I discuss some of the ways that place influenced patterns observed in some of the previous excerpts supporting the racial mixture and culture narratives. Throughout this discussion, I draw several parallels with contemporary international immigration to provide some insight into the relationship between place and the definition of Creole.

In the Louisiana context, the place where migrants were raised helped to define the meaning of Creole for the first generation. As Hubert said, Creole has to do with "how you grew up, where you grew up" (see page 170). Within the New Orleans context intracity boundaries were used to mark Creoles and non-Creoles (Domínguez 1986):

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The Creoles lived downtown and the Americans lived uptown, OK. That was their interpretation. (Hubert, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

They were all Creoles, and that's the only reference point I ever heard. I don't think I ever heard anybody [*inaudible*]—we lived in the Seventh Ward. So what they called Uptown, a lot of people were not Creoles, and so often they would refer to them as "those Americans." Now I don't know what made the distinction of "those Americans," if they were people who didn't speak French or what. (Lucille, African American/Creole culture, first generation)

[…] the parents wanted us closer to the Creole community because there weren't very many Creoles around Uptown. They were scattered. In the Seventh Ward they were two doors down, one door down, across the street and around the corner. So when we started to be interested in girls, they wanted to make sure we associated with the Creole community, so we moved into the Seventh Ward. (Eddie, Creole/Black, first generation)

The Uptown/Downtown distinction within New Orleans was one way Creoles identified each other and created boundaries with non-Creole Blacks. The Seventh Ward was located Downtown and was an iconic neighborhood for many in the Creole community (Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005). Outside of New Orleans other regional distinctions were made.

My grandmother said, "I'm not a Cajun because I'm not from the hills." Now, see, that's how they defined it, that the White people in the hills were Cajun. They weren't. They were Creoles. See? Or they were Frenchman.[23] (Claudine, French Creole, second generation)

Claudine describes how Creole was defined in contrast to Cajuns by place markers in the rural central part of the state near Cane River.

In both of these settings it is apparent that Creoles drew boundaries against reference groups in the state where the category emerged. The first generation's connection of Creole to their home state is partly about socialization within specific residential concentration patterns and local racial structures. That place is important in the definition of the Creole category demonstrates the similarities between Louisiana migrants and first-generation international

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[23] Claudine uses the term "Frenchmen" in this passage, which is a term that was equivalent to Creole in some rural areas of Louisiana such as Cane River and the prairies. Creole was used by these Louisianans when exposed to other Creoles when they migrated or among the younger generations.

immigrants who maintain an immigrant orientation and use racial structures of their homelands as reference points in the United States (Roth 2012).

In the Los Angeles context, some migrants viewed being from Louisiana as tantamount with Creole.

> When I say Creoles I mean people from Louisiana. I don't mean color or anything. I just meant people from Louisiana who settled in the same little area here. You know. And that's what we did. We were all in St. Patrick's Parish or Holy Cross' Parish or those. Everybody was out here, you know? (Bill, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

> But my mother would always say, "Well, so-and-so's from New Orleans," which really meant they were Creole. It almost like that became the same thing. Creole and New Orleans are the same thing, in her mind. Yeah. But there were no other—to me—like my mom, Creole and New Orleans meant the same thing, same place, same people, and I didn't know too many people outside of that. (Audrey, Black/Creole background, second generation)

> Mostly we just thought they were all Creole or pretty synonymous with folks from New Orleans and it really just mattered if they made gumbo or not, you could tell that way. (Reynard, African American/Creole, second generation)

These passages illustrate how for some being from Louisiana or New Orleans was a proxy for Creole and vice versa ("Creole and New Orleans meant the same thing"; "Creole or pretty synonymous with folks from New Orleans"). This demonstrates that as in international immigration, intrastate distinctions get smoothed over for a more inclusive understanding of categories. In this case, the category of Creole becomes interchangeable with the place names. And Louisiana or specific cities like New Orleans take on the significance of a home country, where intracity or regional distinctions once used for boundary construction in Louisiana are now not as relevant. As with international immigrants, place and racial and ethnic categories become intertwined in the host destination.

For second-generation migrants who grew up in Los Angeles, away from the birthplace of Creole, naming Louisiana as the place of origin was important to their definition of the term. Place was also very interconnected with the racial mixture, cultural, and historical narratives

used in respondents' definitions of Creole. As Danny (Black/Creole heritage, second generation) noted, "it's the mixture of different races that mixed in that region of the country, New Orleans, Louisiana." Other respondents shared a similar use of place:

> I mean I think finally it's OK to be Creole and to proclaim it and it doesn't mean anything other than what it is. It means that maybe you're from New Orleans, and that you have a French name, and that you're mixed with somethin'. It could be a combination of twenty or thirty different things, but you're mixed with somethin'. You have a French name. Either you or your parents are from New Orleans and so you're in the club; you're a Creole, whether you have brown skin and quote-unquote "bad hair" or light skin and quote-unquote "good hair." It doesn't matter. (John, Black/mixed ancestry/Creole culture, second generation)

> […] it was basically a mix of different cultures that became this one subculture. It had its roots in African slaves and in French slave owners and Spanish people who lived in Louisiana, and a whole bunch of other people who came in and bought into this culture—Native American—. (Kyle, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

New Orleans and Louisiana are named as specific geographical settings for these racial and cultural mixture narratives. Along with several elements of a racial mixture narrative ("mixed with somethin'", phenotypical variety, and French ancestry), John's definition lists being from New Orleans as key to defining Creole ("Either you or your parents are from New Orleans"). Kyle's definition is a combination of a racial, historical, and cultural mixture narrative, along with identifying Louisiana as the historical site where French and Africans mixed during the colonial and slave-holding period. Thus, racial mixture leading to a unique cultural development in a very specific geographic location comprises the definition. The second-generation Louisianans' use of naming the state as part of the definition of Creole is like second-generation immigrants who adopt and ethnic American approach to the U.S. racial structure. For example, second-generation West Indians who retain symbolic use of national or regional labels as part of racial or ethnic categories are making place, race, and ethnicity inextricable (Richards 2008).

These subtle differences between the first and second generation were tied to the shift in place and the changes in contexts of socialization:

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Well, I think, you know, I understood what Creole was, but it's a very different status from my parents, because it was such a specific thing in New Orleans. Whereas, here it definitely meant something, but you were sort of observed in a larger, you know, population, which was, I guess, the whole point, I guess. (Audrey, Black/Creole background, second generation).

Audrey observes that the two generations had different points of reference for their understandings and definitions of Creole. For the first generation, their experiences in New Orleans, or other cities in Louisiana gave them a distinct social context for constructing the meaning of Creole ("it was such a specific thing in New Orleans"). It meant local divisions, differences set in that specific racial structure. She also explains how in Los Angeles the meaning of Creole had to be understood in within the context of a broader and more diverse setting of racial and ethnic reference groups ("here it definitely meant something, but you were...observed in a larger...population"). Creole was juxtaposed to the wider Black community, but also set in relation to Latinos, to Asians, to Whites in the local Los Angeles racial structure. So Creole meant somewhat different things in each place. This again reiterates the similarities with first generation immigrants who have their original racial structure as a reference point and the second generation's meaning is constructed mainly within the U.S. structure (Richards 2008; Waters 1999).

While there is mild variation between generations in how the meaning of Creole is constructed, the influence of collective memory and the mnemonic community in Los Angeles is evident in how the role of place gets transmitted from first generation to second generation (Milligan 2003; Zerubavel 1996). The second generation lived in the concentrated community of migrants and were socialized to recognize the often-implied link between place and the definition of Creole. As Audrey and Reynard demonstrated, from their parents they got the sense that New Orleans meant Creole, and that people from New Orleans were Creole ("my mother always said"; "mostly we just thought"). Audrey illustrated how this ultimately was filtered into

her own concept of how place informs the meaning of Creole: "But in my mind, it was more geographic. They all came from New Orleans; that much I knew. It was more that than anything else." In terms of place, the second generation adopted more explicit references to Louisiana or specific cities of the state as part of their definition of Creole. This mechanism of collective memory imparting the significance of place is similarly found among some international immigrants who live in concentrated communities of migrants (Mazumdar et al. 2000; Richards 2008).

In addition to these literal ways that place is used to define Creole, Louisiana and Los Angeles's racial structures and the movement between them contribute to some of the generational patterns observed in the racial mixture and cultural narrative sections. The immigration literature suggests that first-generation immigrants are likely to have homeland or immigrant-oriented identities that distance themselves from Blackness and the second generation may develop ethnic American identities. Applying this literature to how definitions of racial and ethnic categories are constructed, it may seem counterintuitive that the first generation would favor a cultural narrative that ultimately shows support for a definition of Creole as an ethnic group within the Black racial category. Likewise, it may seem contradictory that the second generation commonly used the race mixture narrative, which contains themes of Creole as a distinct racial group.

However, looking closer at the role of place provides some insight. In Louisiana during the Jim Crow period, race, phenotypes, and ideas about racial mixture were very important for the first generation on a day-to-day basis; they structured opportunities and socioeconomic realities in discriminatory ways. In the Los Angeles context, these were still used in discriminatory ways, but because they did not have the same meaning or significance they

worked differently. Thus race and phenotype dropped into the background in the narratives about what Creole means, and culture becomes more prominent. The second generation was removed from the Louisiana racial structure and most did not experience it first hand. Their connection to a Creole group in Los Angeles did not likely shape socioeconomic opportunities, and their interactional experiences were filtered through the first generation, pushing the younger generation to look to historical and documentary sources. So race, phenotype, and racial mixture have different meanings in the Los Angeles context, and were available mainly in symbolic ways to define Creole for the second generation. Furthermore, the first generation was raised in a context where Creole was understood and its history taken for granted. The second generation, although raised in a migrant concentration, were often pressed to explain Creole to people who were not familiar with its history, and using racial mixture proved to be useful shorthand.

In summary, racial mixture, cultural, and place narratives were shown to run throughout the definitions of Creole given by these migrants. The racial mixture narrative was used by both generations, but the second generation did so more often. The narrative drew on the perceived physical bases of race, ancestry, the colonial history of Louisiana, and phenotype. Definitions ran from very vague summaries of the traditionally used combination of Black, French, Spanish, and Native American, to using specific facts from family genealogies and published histories. The second generation was more likely to use the historical narrative drawn from published histories in their definitions. Phenotype was also used to define Creole and highlight the racial mixture narrative in two ways: (1) through emphasis on White phenotypical features and (2) through emphasis on Black or a variety of phenotypical features.

The first generation leaned more toward the Creole as culture explanation, although it was used by both generations. There were two forms of cultural narrative analyzed here: one that

incorporates a combination of racial and cultural narratives, and a second that is more explicit about Creole not being racial. The combination acknowledged the racial mixture, but also highlighted the culture that came from this mixture. Some versions privileged the cultural explanation more, and others conflated the two elements so that they were harder to disentangle. The second type of cultural narrative was more adamant about Creole not being racial at all. These definitions highlighted the specific cultural elements of Creole that would not allow for a racial definition, such as religion, traditions, food, and language. Phenotype was also used to distance the definition from race by emphasizing the diversity of appearances ranging from more Black to more White. The cultural narrative was often used as a response to the idea asserted by others (insiders and outsiders) that Creole was a racial category in itself.

Place was an important feature of defining Creole precisely because the racial mixture and culture that developed was so tied in with the location of Louisiana, including its colonial history. It was also important as a context for socialization in Louisiana and Los Angeles. Some of the first generation's use of place was about residential patterns and boundaries constructed within New Orleans or other areas within Louisiana where they were socialized. For the second generation, simply naming the state or city as a point of origin for Creoles was important for defining the term.

The Louisiana migrants' definitions of Creole demonstrate a contrast to bi-/multiracial individuals, and several similarities to international immigrants, particularly those from Latin American and Caribbean countries. These narratives demonstrate a contrast to bi-/multiracial individuals' single generation of mixture because of the history of mixture described throughout these racial and cultural narratives. Louisiana migrants also connect their definitions of the Creole category to ties with a specific relationship to place. This is not generally the case for

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multiracial individuals (cf. Khanna 2011). Rather, Louisiana migrants with ties to Creoles share narratives of generations of mixture with immigrants from Latin American and Caribbean countries, which shape the latter's national racial ideologies and end up shaping their understandings of racial categories in their host location (Roth 2012; C. A. Sue 2009). There are also some similarities with multiracial individuals and second-generation immigrants in that the second-generation Louisiana migrants' definitions of Creole make use of *symbolic* understandings of racial mixture, phenotype, and mixed racial narratives (Khanna 2011; Richards 2008). This section focused on how several factors contribute to definitions of Creole. The next section will address how these factors and the definitions of Creole contribute to the construction of identities.

IDENTITY ENCOUNTERS

Louisianans often experienced identity encounters in Los Angeles as a result of their migration to a setting where the unique racial history of Louisiana that resulted in ambiguous racial appearance and other social markers among migrants were often not understood. Identity encounters are interactions where migrants' identities were constructed as part of encounters where people questioned Louisianans about identity, or mistook them to be a member of a racial or ethnic group that did not match how they identified themselves. These encounters are similar to those reported for American multiracial individuals and international immigrants, particularly those from Latin American, Caribbean, and African nations. Several factors contributed to these encounters including: elements of respondents' outward appearance and presentation; the accents of respondents who were born in Louisiana; and French and Spanish surnames (or at least, non-Anglo last names) that were used by others to categorize them as not native to Los Angeles and marked many of the migrants who identified as Black and/or Creole as different. In this section I

first discuss how racial and ethnic identities were constructed under these circumstances, and how they connect to the Creole definition narratives discussed in the previous section. Second I focus on examining the role of place in constructing these racial and ethnic identities.

Constructing Black, Creole, and Racially Mixed Identities

Most of the migrants interviewed had some connection to the Louisiana Creole community by ancestry, language, and/or socialization. The majority of respondents identified primarily as racially Black, but Creole often modified a Black racial identity as an explanation of ambiguous appearance, racial mixture, or culture. Even some of those who did not adopt Creole as a part of their identity per se did acknowledge mixed racial ancestry as part of their method of self-identification. Fewer migrants identified more singularly as Creole or Black. As one migrant put it, there are two types of Creole identities: "They'll say they're Creole, but they're also Black, but you got some who don't even identify the Black. You have two kinds, you know, Black-Creole, you know but Creole-Creole, you got those" (Cordelia, Black/Mixed Blood, first generation).

Using Creole and Mixed Racial Ancestry Narratives to Modify Black Identities

Migrants' Black identities in Los Angeles were often modified by adding an explanation of, or reference to, a Creole or mixed racial background. The situational contingency of how and when this was done is something that was commonly discussed in migrants' interviews. For example, Janine describes how she has come to identify herself in different situations.

> When I'm in the Creole circle, I'm Creole. When I'm in a variety and if someone asks me, I usually still say Black. I'm Black, and but here lately—and when I say "lately," I mean like within the last year—I tend to say I'm Creole from New Orleans, and to some people I say I'm Black from New Orleans, I was born and raised in New Orleans. And they know immediately. The Black people know, because if they don't, they'll ask you, well, are you Creole? Yeah. So I'm starting to get a little more comfortable […] . (Janine, Creole/Black, first generation)

Janine describes different interactional situations that shape how she identifies: in the "Creole

circle," "in a variety," and among "Black people." She modifies her identity according to her audience. The "Creole circle" refers to a smaller community of people, a group where she can be Creole without qualification, a more ethnic identification. When "in a variety", or a diverse group of people, she identifies as Black but says, "within the last year—I tend to say I'm Creole from New Orleans" or "Black from New Orleans" or "born and raised in New Orleans." Black people represent a seemingly secondary in-group who "know" what it means to be "Black from New Orleans." Here she is using a modified racial identity that uses New Orleans to specify who she is, an approach that would only work, and be required, outside of Louisiana. (The significance of place will be further discussed starting on page 200.) This demonstrates similarities to Cape Verdean and other immigrants who shift from ethnic- to race-based identities depending on who they are interacting with (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). For example, in concentrated Cape Verdean contexts contemporary immigrants use references to their home islands, which convey specific cultural and appearance distinctions to their fellow immigrants, in order to construct their identities. But in broader contexts Portuguese, Cape Verdean, or Black can be used depending on the neighborhood where they live or who they are interacting with (De Andrade 1996:272; Sánchez Gibau 2005).

The interactional contingency that migrants negotiate their identities within reveal various layers of identity. For example, John responds this way when asked by others about his identity:

> I say that I'm a Black man of mixed race heritage, you know. That's usually how I answer people these days. You know? I used to just say that I was Black, that I was African American, but nowadays, I say that I'm a Black man of mixed race ancestry, you know. And that my people are Creoles from New Orleans, you know, if they really want to talk about it, you know? Then we'll talk about that and they're very genuinely interested at that point. But, you know, that's what I let people know these days—that I'm a Black man of mixed race ancestry and, you know, French and Spanish and German and whatever the hell else is in there, you know? You name it, you know, whatever you

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want, you know? (John, Black/mixed ancestry/Creole culture, second generation)

In this narrative, a Black identity is immediately modified by a discussion of racial mixture ("Black man of mixed race heritage"). It is interesting to note that while he acknowledges family members being Creole ("my people are Creoles from New Orleans"), he does not apply the term to himself in this excerpt (Domínguez 1986). Rather, individual national-origin ancestries are prevalent within this narrative of Creole ("French and Spanish and German"). John's self-identification is consistent with his definition of Creole in terms of a racial mixture narrative, but breaking it down to individual ancestries is also more like an approach used by bi-/multiracial persons or White ethnics in constructing identity (Khanna 2011; Waters 1990). Like Janine, given the type of interaction ("if they really want to talk about it"), and responses by the person he speaks to, he may explain the various layers of his identity ("my people are Creoles from New Orleans" and an explanation of what make up the "mixed ancestry").

Another component of the fluidity of identities is change over time. Just as Janine and John's excerpts illustrate that the interactional variation of these negotiations are contingent on changes over time ("within the last year"; "these days"), many second-generation migrants described embracing Black identities in their youth, but becoming more open to publicly acknowledging Creole as they grew older. For migrants with Creole ties in Los Angeles—like Creoles in Louisiana, Cape Verdean immigrants, and biracial persons—growing up during the height of the Civil Rights and Black Power eras and coming of age during the 1960s and 1970s influenced their preference for adopting Black identities even when appearances or ancestral ties made them ambiguous (De Andrade 1996; Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Korgen 1998 cited in Khanna 2011; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Woods 1989).

At times, others impressed these preferences upon them. For example, John and others described several encounters where they were called out, picked on, or attacked by other Black

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persons for having more White features or for being assumed to distance themselves for

Blackness. John described one of several of these occasions:

> I mean I remember so many times being jumped and one time I was walking down what
> was at the time Santa Barbara Avenue, and I walked and a couple o' girls came around
> the corner, these four girls, and as I passed by them they grabbed me and this one girl
> picked me up by my neck and lifted me up off the ground, and she pulled a, the other girl
> pulled a knife out of her purse, and I thought they were gonna kill me. Instead she
> grabbed my hair and cut it off and said, "Gimme some o' that good hair." And cut a big
> piece of my hair off and […] —I was just shocked.

Considering instances like these, and even milder examples, illustrates how during this period it

could be beneficial to submerge references to Creole ties within a more outward Black identity.

However, the changes in how John and Janine talk about their identities over the years indicate

that they have had increased flexibility in the options available to them. This may have to do

with societal changes with respect to how multiracial identities are increasingly valued in the

post-Civil rights era (Brunsma 2005; DaCosta 2006; Khanna 2010). Or like White ethnics who

experience changes in the personal significance of the multiple facets of their identities as they

age (Waters 1990), those with Creole ties may be more interested in acknowledging the history

mixed ancestry in their backgrounds as they age.

Even migrants who did not necessarily use the Creole label or identify with being Creole

sometimes used a form of the racial mixture narrative to identify themselves to others and

modify a Black identity. For example, Cordelia identifies first as Black: "Because I was taught to

be Black in my home, because a lot of people called me Creole, but I'm not—I don't consider

myself a Creole, although I'm fair skinned, because in my home, I was taught that I was what I

was and this is what I still am, you know. [*Laughter*]" (Cordelia, Black/Mixed Blood, first

generation). Yet, despite her generally not identifying as Creole culturally or ethnically, here she

says:

> You know, what my race is, I'm Black and of mixed blood and I'll even say of mixed

blood. You know you got French, you got Indian, you got Black, and you got White. You got the four races in you and this is what most of us have. And if that denotes a Creole, I'm a Creole, but I'm of mixed blood. So that terminology suits me, of mixed blood.

Cordelia reluctantly concedes that her racial background fits the Creole typology. So she modifies her Black racial identity using a racial mixture narrative. This breaking down of the components is similar to the method that John used to describe his identity in racial and ancestral terms without an emphasis on the historical aspects of mixture, and so it is more along the lines of multiracial persons or White ethnics. Cordelia also illustrates that even when a more or less fixed approach to this question has been adopted, there are circumstances, like the interview setting, that can reveal the deeper layers of how identities are constructed.

Many of the interviews also highlighted the importance of going beyond appearance and ancestry and considering the role of social class and socialization experiences in shaping identities. For example, Cordelia's interview gives the sense that her position was something passed on from her parents through socialization experiences. Although she was raised in the heart of the Seventh Ward, which held the main residential concentration of Creoles in New Orleans, and attended the main Creole parish church and school at Corpus Christi, she describes a somewhat separate upbringing:

> I was brought up in the city, in the segregated city, and it was like the parents enclosed us into a circle. It was like my parents' friends were doctors and lawyers. It was like an educated group of people and we were kept here. The Creoles were tradesmen, masons, bricklayers, painters. We knew them, I went to school with them, but I was over here. My brother, my older brother and I became friends in this circle with all the people. Maybe they were more our age. I don't know what it was, so we remained friends with this circle of people and, not that the circle was that small, but it's just giving you a way—. My youngest brother, I guess in a way he might have been a little rebellious. Not rebellious because we weren't really rebellious at that time, but he chose his friends outside of here [our friends]. He didn't have the same friends we had and he chose his outside, which there was nothing wrong with it. So he became, and he's still friends with, he's out here and he's still friends with I would say what you call the Creoles.

Cordelia indicates that her parents, a school principal with graduate degrees and a teacher,

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steered her toward an educated, Black elite social circle that her father distinguished from

Creoles who were in the tradesmen class. While there were actually class distinctions within the

Creole community—which included doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, and the like—Cordelia's

family interpreted Creole as only including a lower end of the class spectrum. They distanced

themselves from that group, while living amidst them. Yet, as an adult in Los Angeles she

remained involved with a Creole social network. As found for biracial individuals, social class

shapes the form of parental socialization and social networks, playing a significant role in how

identities are constructed (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). In this case it even seems to

override the influence of residential concentration (Harris and Khanna 2010; Smith and Moore

2000).

Appearance Facilitates Usage of Creole Racial Narrative

At the root of many of these identity negotiations were interactions where appearance was used

to call into question migrants' identities. In some cases, when Black identities were doubted by

outsiders, respondents were required to elaborate on how they were Black *and* Creole in order to

explain the disconnect between how they looked to others and how they identified.

For many, Creole is used to bridge the gap between appearance and self-definition as

Black. This is a contrast to some immigrants who find they want to correct the gap between their

Black appearance and their immigrant or ethnic American identities (Sánchez Gibau 2005; Roth

2012; Waters 1999). Deborah, a tall woman in her early 60s with olive skin, short and slightly

wavy brown hair, and a Latina appearance illustrates one such case:

> Where people would be puzzled at the color of my skin or the texture of my hair, and I'd
> say I was Black. I mean, I've been told outright, "No you're not." I've had people tell me
> that many, many times. […] So, I just give them a little mini lesson on what it is, what a
> Creole is. (Deborah, Black/Creole influence, second generation)

Here, Creole was used as an addendum to the Black racial identity that Deborah uses initially

with people she meets. Phenotypical appearance ("color of my skin or the texture of my hair") were markers that caused outsiders unfamiliar with her background to argue against her chosen identity ("I've been told outright, 'No you're not.'"). Her "mini lesson" includes a narrative of racial mixture, which is used to explain how she could indeed be Black given her non-Black appearance. This demonstrates similarities with immigrants who have distinct histories of racial mixture, such as Cape Verdeans who often use their own historical narrative about colonial-era mixture to explain their identities because they are a group not widely known by others (Sánchez Gibau 2005).

In some cases, appearance was at least a partial justification for the racial identity that migrants chose, and they resisted being classified by others in a way that did not match how they viewed themselves. Claudine is a 69-year-old woman with blue eyes and brown hair with natural blondish highlights done up in an elaborate '60s-inspired up-do. At first glance she appears to be a White woman. In contrast to the majority of my respondents, she identifies first as a French Creole person. Describing her experience at a Catholic school in the 1950s with a diverse population and growing Black student body she recalls:

> Because a lot of the girls, after the Blacks did start coming in—come in—the Black ones were the ones to come to me and say, "You're Black aren't you?" I said, "You know if I was Black, you didn't have to ask that question." There was a question mark behind that right. And I said, "No I'm French Creole." I said, "There were obviously Black somewhere along the line." I said, "But I can bet you for the last three generations, I know my great-great grandparents." And I said, "There wasn't." A lot of them get mad, because they don't want you to say—I said, "It's not that I'm denying that." I said, "If I was Black, I'd be more than proud to tell you that, but why should I do that?" (Claudine, French Creole, second generation)

In this example, Claudine's appearance was implied in this identity encounter ("You know if I was Black, you didn't have to ask that question"). She resists being included in a racial category that she does not feel can capture who she is. And she resists the application of the one-drop rule by Black peers to classify her in the Black racial category based on there being "Black

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somewhere along the line."

Thus, for some, Creole is a distinct racial and ethnic group that includes Black ancestry, but is not limited to *only* Black ancestry. In its distinctiveness, it also takes on the characteristics of a bi-/multiracial approach to identity (Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Most who adopted this approach to the Creole category, like Claudine, had an ambiguous racial appearance. While it may seem logical based on the history of Creole in Louisiana to read this kind of response as not wanting to be classified as part of a group that generally has been viewed as being at the bottom of the racial hierarchy, those I spoke to were just as adamant about not being put into the White racial category based on appearance.

For example, Claudine further illustrated that her identity cannot be reduced to a White appearance or Black ancestry.

> But most people, like I tell everybody. I would be very proud to put Black Negro or even look, if I wanted to pass, I could put White, but I'm not White that's what I tell people. They say, "Why don't you put White?" I said, "Because I'm not White." I said, "I have a background." That's just like, I love Tiger Woods, but that him and Oprah got into it, and I stood up for him. (Claudine, French Creole, second generation)

Claudine uses French Creole as a self-contained racial category equivalent to Black or White. This was common for Creoles who had ties to Cane River. This branch of Creoles has maintained a separatist definition of Creole and has contributed to the founding and activities of the Louisiana Creole Heritage Center in Natchitoches (Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972). In Claudine's view her identity is more substantial than simply a racial category, it has more depth than that ("I have a background."). Her comment also points to it encompassing cultural practice. So in this way it is also an ethnic group. Furthermore, Claudine applies the multiracial metaphor to this particular ethnic and racial group by identifying with Tiger Woods' adoption of a term that encompasses all of his ancestry; based on Claudine's usage of Tiger's encounter with Oprah, French Creole can be assumed equivalent to his "Cablinasian" label.

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Factors that Contribute to Stronger Black Identities

Despite the focus on Creole identities up to this point in the chapter, some form of Black identity

was the most prominent among respondents. Several factors contribute to stronger assertions of

Black identities, including racialization, family ancestry, phenotype, and racial interpretations of

identity combined with cultural definitions of Creole.

A significant and expected factor is racialization as Black. This is the factor that is most

relied upon when reporting how Black identities are constructed (Nagel 1994; Waters 1990,

1991). Calvin is a second-generation migrant who self-identified solely as Black. He is in his late

50s and came to Los Angeles when he was eight. He explains how his Black identity is in the

foreground:

> Like Tiger Woods refer to himself as Cablinasian, yeah, I don't do anything like that. I'm
> just a Black American. Yeah. Because, believe it or not, at that time, I was kid growing
> up, if any percentage of you were Black, then you're Black. You're Negro. You're
> Colored. No matter if you had one percent Black blood in you, you were colored. And
> that was the law at that time. And you sorta kinda go from there, and I think it's sorta part
> of your makeup. (Calvin, Black, second generation)

Calvin relies on how he has been treated, including being racialized as Black through the

principle of hypodescent and enforcement of Jim Crow racism, to explain his Black identity.

Being partially socialized in Louisiana shaped his understanding of racial identity options, such

that Calvin's invocation of Tiger Woods is opposite to Claudine's usage above. Whereas

Claudine supports and identifies with Tiger Wood's approach to acknowledging all of his racial

and cultural backgrounds, Calvin does not adopt a multiracial approach to identity by breaking

identity down into components (e.g., "Cablinasian"), or treating Creole as a racial/ethnic group

of its own. Thus he constructs a more singular Black identity.

Family history and ancestry also shape how Creole is used in constructing identities. For

example, Calvin views Creole ancestry as something inconsequential to how he racially

identifies himself. Only his mother's parents "had Creole in them," and he did not use this as part of his identity. Through only partial ancestry, his ties to Creole were somewhat removed, although he spent considerable amounts of time with his maternal grandparents, particularly when his parents migrated ahead of Calvin and his brother, sending for them later. Father's ancestry is often found to be most influential for White ethnics identity construction, although in this case, it may also be a combination of these other factors (like racialization) that affect Black identity construction in this case (Waters 1990, 1991). Other respondents' accounts of the role of ancestry suggest that there may be some degree of marginalization within the Creole community (and thereby a weaker connection to Creole identity) if only one parent was Creole (particularly if the other parent was Black) and if this took respondents outside of Creole residential concentrations (Woods 1972).

Appearance is also used to support respondents' assertion of a Black identity over a Creole identity. On one hand, like biracial individuals who have non-White appearances and are more likely to identify with the non-White portion of their background, here a Black-oriented phenotype contributes to Black identity (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2004; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). Again consider Calvin—although he describes having curly hair and dark skin as a child (phenotypical characteristics he associates with Creole), he believes that others view him as Black, and his adult appearance supports that. This outcome can be linked to Calvin's ancestry as well, given that he describes his father as Black and not Creole.

But as noted in the definitions constructed by many respondents, persons with Creole parentage have a range of appearances from darker to lighter. Zaida is a petite, medium brown-skinned woman in her early 40s who perceived that her appearance did not fit within the boundaries that she understood to apply to Creole, although both of her parents were Creole.

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So the browner you were, in my mind, it seemed like the less acceptable you were. So. That was a dis—I guess for people who are brown, and I am brown, or at least I think I'm brown [*slight laughter*], that was an experience, yeah. It felt like a disadvantage, in that you couldn't feel—well not that you couldn't—but I'll just say it like this, you just couldn't feel free to identify *also* as being Creole. (Zaida, African American/Creole culture, second generation)

Zaida identifies herself primarily as African American, and her appearance lines up with that identity ("I am brown"). In this passage she alludes to colorism within the Creole community toward people with darker skin and expectations of outsiders about what Creole is ("you just couldn't feel free to identify *also* as being Creole"). In her understanding, darker skin was not as acceptable as lighter skin within the Creole framework espoused by some, where Creole was assumed to be equal to being light skinned. This also reveals the use of a racial narrative, and here it is skin color that implicitly defines who can be Creole. Yet, her primary definition of Creole as cultural allows her to be included in that way.

On the other hand, there were first and second-generation migrants who had to actively assert their Blackness because their appearances were more racially ambiguous than others.

OK. I—I have to say that it's always a been a problem sort of for me. To identify as to what my race is. And, because you're mixed, you know, Creoles are mixed. They're, they're French and they're Black and they're Indian and some Spanish and so there's always been a difficult thing for me because you look at me and I don't look Black. But, yet, I am. And, my citizenship tells me I am—that I'm Black. But, a lot of people on the, for example, on the jobs, I, when I start working someplace, there's not one that will actually say that, "She's Black." Because I don't look it. (Marianne, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

I didn't want to be separated from the rest of Black people, I didn't want to separate myself and say, "I'm Creole or I'm this." Hell, it was hard enough for me to fit in as it was, I wasn't going to further isolate myself and say anything, so I was just happy to be Black. It was kind of funny, but it is. (Kyle, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

Both Marianne and Kyle had to negotiate their identities as Black in spite of physical appearances that betray their choice. This is a dilemma similar to that experienced by multiracial persons who do not appear visibly Black but struggle to convey Black identities (Harris and

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Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). These migrants were often met with resistance by others—as an inverted form of Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) unvalidated biracial identity, these were cases of migrants who dealt with unvalidated Black identities.

A main distinction between the approaches used by Marianne and Kyle, and those migrants like Deborah who used Creole to explain their racial ambiguity, is the attitude they take toward these encounters. In these instances demonstrated by Marianne and Kyle, there is a negative undertone about how they had to deal with these kinds of encounters, whereas the latter demonstrated more willingness to engage in explanations that use Creole. Marianne is in her early 60s and is a first-generation migrant who came to Los Angeles in the early 1960s when she was a teenager. With dark brown hair and olive skin, she describes herself as fair skinned and believes that perhaps she is taken for Latina by others. This excerpt comes from her answer to my question about her preferred identity. Here, Marianne finds that her identity is problematic because of her "mixed" ancestry. Although elsewhere she defines Creole as culture, here she is describing it as a mix of ancestries and as a reason for the disconnect that exists between how she and others perceive her appearance. Kyle's use of Black as his primary identity is perhaps more rigid than others' because in his view, his position in the Black community felt tenuous because of his appearance ("it was hard enough for me to fit in as it was"). Tall, with light eyes, light freckled skin, and medium brown hair, Kyle's appearance made his inclusion in the Black community something he had to prove.

Non-Black appearance or racial ambiguity and socialization interact in a way that also can contribute to a strong desire to assert a Black identity. Like Calvin, Marianne implies that treatment at the social and institutional levels during the Jim Crow period in the South (e.g. her "citizenship" or rights, or lack thereof; later in the conversation she uses "birth certificate" to

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represent her institutional identity) are factors that influence the way that she knows herself to be Black. Like Marianne, Kyle's identity choice is likely partly determined by the social and political context he grew up in, but with a different twist; he grew up outside of the South, but in the heart of Black Los Angeles during the post-Civil Rights/Black Power era of the late 1970s and 1980s where Blackness was celebrated and most of his peers were Black and Creole.

Like multiracial and middle class Black persons (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Khanna 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000), some migrants (particularly those in the second generation who had ambiguous appearances) occasionally used code switching to Black English in the interviews and demonstrated how they sometimes asserted their Black identities. For example, Kyle demonstrated this above (see page 170) when he described how he defined Creole to others as cultural, he asserted, "'Yeah, that's what we are [Creole], but we're Black.' [*Latter part intoned with Black English accent*]."

Some migrants demonstrated that identities were thought of mainly in racial terms, and their definition of Creole primarily as culture did not allow for it as a valid identity option. This resulted in leaning more toward a Black identity. For example:

> Now, if you're wanting me to say that I'm a Creole American, Creole is not really—it's a culture. It's not really a nationality, and Creoles have wanted for a long time to be considered a separate entity, like Hispanics or Chinese or—but it's a culture, and the United States does not recognize Creoles as anything but an American. […] . I'm sorry. I just—I constantly refer back to being Creole in terms of culture, but I can't go anywhere that I know of on my passport that's going to say Creole. So, I'm a realist […] . (Clarice, American/Black/Creole culture, first generation)

> I never referred to myself as Creole because actually Creole is a culture, not a race. (Josephine, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

Clarice and Josephine do not use Creole in their primary identities because they view it as a culture, not a race or an identity category. While Clarice did acknowledge the narrative of racial mixture amongst Creoles, here her statement is more adamantly relying on a cultural narrative of

Creole to construct her Black racial identity. Josephine did not equate Creole with a race in itself, although she did acknowledge racial mixture in her family and links that to her sometimes being mistaken for Latina.

This next example of a similar stance illustrates how this kind of assertion is made interactionally. Herman describes a typical situation where he is asked to explain his identity in more detail when questioned about where he is from. A portion of this excerpt was cited in the previous section on the construction of Creole definitions, but this extended version gives more context to how definitions of Creole inform identity:

> […] in most cases, if I said "Black," they follow up with a question because they see something different. My accent, kind of stuff like that. Or, "Where are you from?" I say, you know, a lot of times I say, "Louisiana." And those who are more versed with the state will come back and say, "Oh, are you Creole?" like that. And that's generally how it comes down. So then I say, "Yeah." Then from time to time, they want to know more about it. "So you're not Black, you're Creole." I'll say, "Oh, wait a minute. Wait a minute. Hold on. What is Creole to you?" and then I begin to question them. I'd say, "Well, let me make it simple for you. I don't want to get into a whole discussion about what it is. It's just that my culture is Creole culture. I was raised Creole. I speak the culture. But never have I ever known Creole to be a race." On the other side of the coin, I was raised to recognize myself as being Black, Negro. And there it is. (Herman, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

When Herman's interrogators make assumptions about Creole as a racial identification, Herman feels the need to correct them and explain his Creole background as a cultural or ethnic component to his Black racial identity that plays a primary role for him. Like Clarice and Josephine, he is adamant about Creole being only a cultural category. Social markers like where he is from, appearance ("they see something different"), or "accent" are used by people he meets to set up an interaction where he is asked to answer further questions after asserting a Black identity. Yet, his racial identity, which he attributes to socialization ("I was raised to recognize myself as being Black") prevails. With an air of finality ("And there it is") he modifies his questioner's understanding of who he is.

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Like several of the previous passages, these last three also demonstrate that socialization

in the American racial structure, particularly in the South during the Jim Crow period, and even

during the Civil Rights period in Los Angeles for the second generation, instilled the view that

race generally trumped other types of identities (Nagel 1994; Waters 1990, 1991). This

combined with the cultural definition of Creole created the circumstances where it was not used

as prominently as part of a racial identity, but it took on the role of a submerged ethnicity. This

illustrates that not only is race is a powerful factor in identity construction for persons with Black

ancestry, but that their identity construction is also processual and layered.

Resistance to Identity Encounters

Like immigrants and multiracial individuals, migrants' negotiations of identities were contingent

on situational circumstances. The above passages represent many of the times where migrants

were willing to explain their identities to outsiders. However, the same migrants were not always

inclined to go out of their way to account for themselves to strangers. Migrants' judgments of

identity encounters depended on their perceptions of the interaction, the intentions of the

questioner, or sometimes it was just dependent on the individual's disposition. Again, this was

particularly an issue for those whose appearance made their identities not easily accepted.

> I tell 'em, "Look I'm Black!" That's all I say, yeah. No, I'm just gonna say I'm Black, if
> someone—. […] No, I'm too old for that foolishness. I'm too old for that foolishness. No.
> No. I'm—no. [*Laughter*] (Marguerite, Black/Creole family, first generation)

> I—that was always uncomfortable for me because I always felt there was a motive. If it
> was coming from a White person I figured that maybe there was—you know, they
> weren't gonna be your friend after that or something, or—and if it was from a Black
> person, sometimes it could be just as bad because I think there was—we were
> discriminated against by both Whites and Blacks, you know. So I guess it was always an
> uneasiness there, and you always wondered about the motive of—but you know, we
> always, I guess tried to explain what the Creole was, yeah, so. (Henry, Black/Creole, first
> generation)

Marguerite and Henry demonstrate varying levels of impatience for the scenarios where they are

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asked about their identities. Marguerite blames her exasperation and unwillingness to elaborate on her age ("'Look I'm Black!' That's all I say."). After sixty-odd years of being mistaken for Eastern European or Latino in Los Angeles, Marguerite was done with explanations. Henry illustrates the discomfort of these situations ("uncomfortable"; "uneasiness") because of distrust of the questioner's motives.

These feelings were not necessarily static and could often change from situation to situation.

> Well, sometimes I would get annoyed that—I mean, it's hard to explain it contextually that, you know, essentially New Orleans is like a world unto itself […] but it's annoying to try to explain nuances of things that really don't explain well. They're substantive, or people of the culture, but you step out of the culture, you know, and suddenly you basically look like a Mexican, so, which is fine, but it doesn't make a lot of sense. So it's just trying to give reference points to people from the outside maybe. Not to say I didn't like sometimes, I didn't enjoy feeling exotic to people who didn't know about that. (Reynard, African American/Creole, second generation)

Reynard demonstrates that the difficulty of explanation was often a deterrent to wanting to engage in such interactions ("annoying to try to explain the nuances of things that don't explain well"). But he also highlights how his feelings about these situations could shift ("Not to say I didn't…enjoy feeling exotic to people who didn't know about that."). In these encounters, Black is the simplified version of identity, and in many cases it is the preferred identity. But appearance does not always allow it to be easily validated by others.

Official Identities

Filling out forms or answering identity questions in official contexts were just as open to situational variation as face-to-face interaction, albeit in perhaps a less interactionally complicated way (see Waters 1990). The interviews demonstrated that migrants who in some face-to-face interactions negotiated their identities to include Creole might have chosen African American or Black in official settings because it simplified the interaction and fit within the

usually more limited options provided. This sometimes stemmed from the set racial options that many observed on forms and censuses. Furthermore, as discussed above, many migrants noted in their definitions of Creole that it is not a race, and so they would not use it on a form that they interpreted as asking for a racial identity. While some migrants chose to identify themselves within the provided options, others chose to modify the options by choosing "Other" when available, or writing in "Creole" or some variation that acknowledged the various ancestries that they believed represented Creole or their personal genealogy.

The interviews also illustrate that respondents speak of their agency within these interactions, despite the official forms and contexts constricting the available options.

> There's times I've—when they—if they have a lot of choices, I probably put African American or Black or whatever they—yeah, depend on which way the wind was blowing that day. [*Laughter*] Depending on who's been nice to me or ugly that day. (Eddie, Creole/Black, first generation)

> I might put African American and I'm gonna tell you the truth; it depends on my frame of mind. Because I think it's so incidental, you know? And I understand—now I will do it—because I understand that there should be some, you know, study in conclusion as far as the census is concerned and for any kind of study that they want to do. I live as an African American. I do. (Helen, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

> I would check African American, Creole, whatever. Sometimes I feel expansive and sometimes I don't. Sometimes I feel like just getting out of there quickly, so like, every once and a while I'm on the phone and giving an interview, I mean, a phone interview to the police, the police station about something that happened, somebody broke something, stole a car, I don't know what they stole, and when I said the race, I said African American. He said, "You don't sound African American." That's the kind of thing […] . (Reynard, African American/Creole, second generation)

These examples reveal that migrants choose Black or African American most frequently—a choice that conforms to the American racial structure's use of the rule of hypodescent and their socialization as Black within said structure. But they also navigate through these official

encounters situationally.[24] Like the interpersonal interactions described above, the outcome here (the racial category they choose) is sometimes dependent on assessments of the situation, why this information is being requested, or their state of mind ("depend on which way the wind was blowing that day"; "depends on my frame of mind"; "Sometimes I feel expansive and sometimes I don't."). The variability that migrants describe in these situations resembles Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) protean identities, but here they are not describing effortlessly moving between racial contexts. It is more a response to the constraints of having to identify racially when there are other components to their identities.

In summary, Louisiana migrants constructed their identities in a diverse set of ways. For some, Black identities were readily modified with Creole as an explanation of ambiguous appearance, racial mixture, and/or as cultural identity; or Black was used with a mixed race modification. For others, a Black identity was more prominent, with Creole placed in the background. In fewer cases Creole was used as a primary identity. And in even fewer cases a more singular Black identity with no real place for Creole was preferred.

Consistent with the American racial structure, Louisiana migrants most often conceptualized identity primarily in racial terms—they constructed firstly racial identities, and then secondly, ethnic identities (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Omi and Winant 1994). Being institutionally and interpersonally racialized as Black was particularly important as the literature suggests. But appearance, ideas about ancestry, definitions of Creole or identity categories, situational variability, and change over time were other factors that shaped how Creole and mixed identities were used in addition to Black identities.

An ambiguous appearance often prompted migrants to use Creole or mixed race as an

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[24] African American was used in this portion of the interviews more than in other parts, where Black was preferred. This illustrates how identities are likely prompted by the choices made available.

explanation of their identity. Appearance was also significant for those who emphasized their Black identities more prominently, but in two extremes: some of those who appeared the most and least Black to outsiders were the most adamant about their Black identities. Ideas about ancestry (or lack thereof, as in only one side of the family was Creole) were significant for determining the ways that Creole was used in constructing identity. For example, those few cases that expressed the desire to not have to ignore multiple ancestries for the sake of one used a primary Creole/mixed identity that acknowledged Black ancestry, but did not privilege it. Cultural definitions of Creole contributed to some migrants not using Creole as part of their racial identity—they thought of it as a culture, and identities in terms of racial categories.

The situationally contingent nature of these identity negotiations was evident at every turn. This included how migrants perceived identity options to change over time, how interactions with people and forms in official contexts were navigated differently, how perceived intentions and purposes of questioners and forms shaped answers, and how even migrants' moods determined choices.

This data illustrates that mixed ancestry influences identity in several ways. It offers a variety of ancestral choices sources to draw from. It also shapes identity through ambiguous phenotypes, where migrants might have to explain their appearance using racial mixture and Creole narratives, or by influencing a desire to be viewed as Black despite their ambiguous appearance; or the way that Black identities are constructed (like multiracial individuals and middle class Black persons who perform Black identities in specific ways, such as purposefully using Black English). But incorporating mixed ancestry into identities is also subject to the constraints over the choices available because of racialization and socialization as Black, particularly in official settings where a limited range of options is offered (e.g., forms). The

factors related to race and ethnicity were not the only ways that migrants' identities were negotiated. Place also had a significant role in this process.

The Role of Place in Constructing Racial and Ethnic Identities

Migration from one location to another gives place a specific role in constructing migrant identities through identity encounters in Los Angeles. Place identity is an interpretation of self that is influenced by experiences and interactions in specific environments/locales/places, and can be shaped by displacement from the original location in which it was created (Bogac 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a:548; Hochschild 2010:622; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Milligan 2003). As with international immigrants, generational status for interstate migrants also shapes how identities are constructed. There are specific generational experiences in Louisiana and Los Angeles that are important to the way that migrants use place in relation to racial, ethnic, or cultural identities. In this case, the first generation's cultural and racialized socialization and interactions in Louisiana inform how they use and conceptualize an identity related to this place. In the case of the second generation, collective memory of what it meant to be Louisianan in Los Angeles is more important in shaping how the place identity is constructed and used to modify a racial identity. Much of the meaning associated with Louisiana is that which they gained from the mnemonic community described in Chapter 3—they learned how to use the place as part of their identity by living within the community of migrants. Given these experiences, a Louisiana place identity is used to situate the respondents' racial identities as Black, Creole, or some combination. In what follows I first discuss how the change of context/place makes negotiation necessary and/or different. Second, I examine how racial identities were qualified with a Louisiana place identification. Third I analyze how migrants responded to being mis-placed as non-native to the United States.

One of the challenges related to the shift in context from Louisiana where the Creole category originated to Los Angeles is the complexity of how identity is negotiated by migrants, particularly for those who had racially ambiguous appearances. Marianne demonstrates how some Louisiana migrants with Creole backgrounds experienced this change.

> That's the hardest part about being in a—in a—in a state where there are so many different types of nationalities that it's hard to distinguish what, who—I mean, who a Creole person is in this melting pot of people. […] At home, when we lived in our communities, that was never a problem because we all were Creoles. And, you were either Creole, Black or, or White. And, that was it. We knew nothing about Chinese and Filipinos and—Mexicans and this and that, different nationalities. Even European, some European you were not familiar with. But, back home that was never a problem. Because Creoles, we all knew each other. And, we knew who we were. And, other people recognize us as such. But, here in California, it has been a problem. And, will be a problem. But, you know, that's okay. I'm okay. I—I work through it. (Marianne, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

Like first-generation international immigrants in their host societies, Marianne finds that constructing her identity in the new context of Los Angeles was problematic because her identity was not understood (Oboler 1995; Sánchez Gibau 2005). Marianne's contrast of the Louisiana and Los Angeles contexts illustrates that each of the local racial structures have their own points of reference in the racial and ethnic landscape. She refers to nationalities found in California ("Chinese and Filipinos, and – Mexicans" and unfamiliar "Europeans") as a contrast to local racial or ethnic groups "Creole, Black, or White" in Louisiana. Marianne identifies the racialized nationalities in the Los Angeles area to contextualize her ambiguity. The more diverse the peers, the more negotiation that needs to take place. She demonstrates a nostalgic recollection ("back home that was never a problem") of the ease with which she could identify herself in the setting of Jim Crow Louisiana. This is set against Los Angeles where there is the "problem" of having to figure out how to identify oneself. These are social features of place that inform how migrants and others construct identities. The respondents' narratives of these encounters highlight how

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context interacts with external markers of race, ethnicity, or regional origin to shape the form

identity takes in certain situations.

Qualifying Racial Identities with Place

One of the responses to the change in racial structures that migrants employed was naming their

own or their parents' hometown or state to modify and explain the racial and ethnic identities

that they used. For instance, when others did not validate respondents' Black identities, this

approach helped to explain identity choices. Herman says:

> […] and then a lot of the Blacks, they said, "Man. Well, you're a different kind of Black. Where you from?" That was the next question. I wasn't a Black like from New York or Mississippi. […] So when you mentioned Louisiana, even though most of them didn't know much about it, they did know that it was different from the rest of the world. It's funny, huh? [*Laughter*] (Herman, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

When interacting with Black persons Herman finds that there is recognition of his Blackness, but

also of his difference ("a different kind of Black"). Place is invoked as a way of explaining this

difference. Herman's comment marks places like New York or Mississippi as different from

Louisiana, and Louisiana as utterly, and well-known to be, different from all others ("different

from the rest of the world"). Louisiana in and of itself explains the disjuncture of his external

physical markers and his initial response of identifying as Black. Like immigrants, whose nation-

oriented identities ground their Blackness within specific locations, Louisiana migrants construct

identities with place (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012). This connection to place is not generally

reported for bi-/multiracial individuals because there is often no consistent parallel connection to

place due to the diversity of parentage among bi-/multiracial individuals. However, some biracial

individuals use national symbols connected to their non-Black parent's country of origin as a

way to point to their biraciality (Khanna 2011).

Migrants constructed identity interactionally at the intersection of local social contexts

and racial ambiguity. Both Janine and Scott described themselves as being racially ambiguous.

Janine's appearance—light green eyes and olive skin coupled with dark, wavy hair—was likely

the basis of the questions about her identity. Scott believed that people might think he looks

African American or Puerto Rican, and that he often is mistaken for Latino when people speak

Spanish to him. Janine and Scott responded to questions about identity in this way:

> […] because I'd made friends with a couple of Japanese, I made friends with Mexicans, I
> made friends with Blacks. It was funny, though, they'd always ask, "Well, what are
> you?" And at first, the first thing that would pop out of my mouth, "I'm Black." And they
> said, "No, you're not Black." I says, "Well, I'm Creole from New Orleans." And so then
> I started saying that […] . (Janine, Creole/Black, first generation)

> I do say that I'm mixed. Typically I go, 'My parents are from Louisiana and I have a lot
> of mixture in my blood but I would say that I'm a French Creole person.' […] I think
> when people ask me I do spend the time to try to explain to them where I'm from, where
> my family is from, where [my wife's] family is from, 'cause we have the same
> background, but if people assume and don't ask then I don't put it out there for people.
> They can think whatever they think, and in L.A. you can be a number of different things
> […] . I would say if someone asks, and this is something that I tell my kids—now my
> parents didn't do a lot—but I do tell them that our roots are from Louisiana and we're
> mixed with a lot. (Scott, French Creole, second generation)

These data demonstrate an approach to constructing identities that utilized the Creole narratives

that incorporated place. They coupled the racial component with place, either as part of a follow

up to prompting ("Creole from New Orleans") or as part of a pre-planned narrative qualifying

racial identity ("where I'm from, where my family is from"; "parents are from Louisiana"; "our

roots are from Louisiana"). For example, Scott was one of the minority of respondents who

favored a primarily Creole identity and had ties with Cane River Creoles (Woods 1972). When

asked directly about it by others he uses the racial mixture narrative ("mixture in my blood";

"mixed with a lot") that does not deny Black ancestry in his background, but that also does not

privilege it (Jolivétte 2007). The specific American state of Louisiana is prominent in Scott's

answer to the identity question, but in a symbolic way that makes up part of the story that he tells

to define himself to others.

Like first-generation international immigrants who construct identities using the racial

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structures of their home countries and the host society, interstate migrants used the contexts of Louisiana and Los Angeles to negotiate an ambiguous appearance. For example, Janine recollected her experiences as a new resident of Los Angeles in the 1960s, and she described how she learned how to identify herself in racial terms that would work to answer questions from others in her new setting. In Janine's case, her new set of friends, an interracial and interethnic combination unique to Los Angeles and who were perhaps not familiar with the nuances of Black identity in New Orleans, prompted her to modify her initial identification as "Black" ("No you're not Black"). Although she described elsewhere thinking that she did not look Black, she often initially identified herself as Black to people she met because of her experiences in segregated schools and being subject to anti-Black racism in New Orleans. When her self-identification as Black was not validated in Los Angeles as a result of the disjuncture between her external markers and her initial response, she modified that self-identification to "Creole from New Orleans" or "Black from New Orleans" (see page 182) in an attempt to convey and clarify her identity for others. Place functioned as a modifier to the racial or ethnic label. Janine's sense of her identity was shaped by her experiences both in Jim Crow New Orleans and a more racially diverse setting in Los Angeles.

Like second-generation immigrants, second-generation Louisianans also used both places to construct identities, but with less direct reliance on the home region. For example, Scott was born and raised in Los Angeles and his experiences with Louisiana came from visits and living there for a relatively short period as an adult. Scott's reference to place was more general than Janine's ("Louisianan" versus "New Orleans"), perhaps because he had not been socialized there or because his family was from the less well-known and rural Cane River/Natchitoches area of the state. In contrast, Janine was raised in New Orleans until she migrated as a teenager and so

the city itself was more prominent in her place-modified racial identity.

Responses to Being Mis-placed

Many migrants talked about how racial and ethnic markers such as accent, surname, or appearance were used to mis-place them, or mark them as foreign to Los Angeles or to the United States. This is ironic given Creoles' long history in the United States. In response, some migrants asserted their Americanness, or at least their non-foreignness. This is the opposite dilemma faced by first-generation immigrants from places like the West Indies, Latino Caribbean, or Cape Verde who would prefer to be viewed as foreign (Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999).

For example, accent was sometimes used as a basis to question the identities of those who identified only as Black or who appeared to be unambiguously Black. These two migrants from the prairie region outside of Opelousas note that their accents are something that has sparked questions about nativity from strangers throughout the years.

> A lot of people thinks that I'm from the islands. Yeah. Like they'll ask, "Are you from the islands, are you Jamaican, are you from—?" And I'm like, "Noooo. Louisiana." And they, "Oh OK. 'Cause I catch something," they say, "an accent in your voice, or something." (Joyce, Black/Creole language, first generation)

> That I'm an—I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm an American! [*Laughter*] You know. That's it. […] But if I'm happen to be at the door or sitting out there and they'll ask me that. "Are you from the island, huh?" "No, I'm from Louisiana." [*A little bit of an irritated intonation.*] […B]ut, if, if they asking me any other question about, "What are you?" I don't answer. I'm a person. Period. You know. (Eva, Black, first generation)

These examples illustrate how migrants are sometimes mis-placed, assumed to be foreign to the United States because of some social marker that renders them somehow different from what Black Americans are imagined to be like ("Are you from the island"; "are you Jamaican").[25, 26]

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[25] I interpret this to mean one of the Caribbean islands because she mentioned Jamaica elsewhere.

Joyce responds to such questions with an audible aversion to the idea of being from somewhere other than Louisiana ("Noooo."). Similarly, Eva, who refers to herself and her family as Black throughout the interview, seems to have distaste for strangers' questions about where she is from. As a response to such questions, Eva embraces "American" as a national identity, and sometimes more specifically a regional orientation of being from Louisiana ("I'm an American!"; her irritated "No, I'm from Louisiana."). When asked a "what are you" question, knowing what the questioner wants (likely a racial identity) she refuses to answer the question, or at least to acknowledge it in racial or ethnic terms. Rather she answers in universal, humanistic terms ("I'm a person. Period.") (see Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Okamura 1981; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002).

Surnames that were not Anglo-sounding or otherwise unfamiliar contributed toward making Louisianans stand out as different from general assumptions about Black Americans, which required negotiating nativity. As one respondent said, "And then they ask, "Well, where are you from?" Because I think they're, the question on their face to me is, "Well you look like you're African American but your name is not" (Zaida, African American/Creole culture, second generation). Zaida's comment explicitly states the dilemma of an apparent mismatch between racial and ethnic markers that for her arise because of her Arabic first name and hyphenated French last names. Outsiders use these markers to attribute to her a foreign identity. Other migrants experienced similar encounters:

> And then I had—on top of it, the other thing about Louisiana folks, they all have different types of names. DuCros for example, De Paor, Chenier. What kind of name is that? Well, I always got it because people go, "De Paor, you're from Brazil," you know. "No, I'm not from Brazil. I'm from Southern America, the United States," you know. So, there was

[26] In contrast, the single White respondent in this study had her origins placed in another American state by strangers she happened to meet. She attributed this to her accent being called into question. Accent was the only external way that she thought she was marked as different.

always that difference and people would always say, "De Paor? Where are you from?" And again, that was all being a part of me being chased home from school. (Calvin, Black, second generation)

I think my name is what people used to ask me about. Even when I got older people thought I was from someplace else. You know like from another country or something, but I said, "No. That's my last name that I was born with here in the United States." And I say—and I used to tell 'em, "If you go to New Orleans you'll see even names even more different." (Iphigenia, Black/Creole culture, second generation)

Here Calvin uses my name, his own name, and a friend's name to illustrate unfamiliar sounding names associated with Louisiana but found in Los Angeles. As he recalls, his own name elicited jokes or questions from strangers because it did not sound like a surname associated with African Americans. He would choose to correct them by referring to his roots in "Southern America," "Louisiana," or the "United States," forcefully placing himself as non-foreign. Similarly, Iphigenia's Italian surname did not coincide with outsiders' assumptions about Black Americans. Her response emphasizes her nativity ("born with here in the United States.") and more specifically uses New Orleans to explain the origin of the distinctiveness ("names even more different"). This is somewhat opposite of the dilemma faced by Latino Caribbean and other immigrants with Black appearances who purposefully use their names and accents to distance themselves from African Americans (Habecker 2012; Roth 2012). However, Roth (2012) notes that some Puerto Rican and Dominican immigrants choose to hide these giveaways of their immigrant status in order to temporarily blend in with Americans.

Assumptions of foreignness were sometimes amplified by the combination of factors, such as appearance with some other external marker like clothing, accent, or surname, or even the sociopolitical context. For example, on more than one occasion John was mistaken for a person from the Middle East—here he was mistaken for Iranian:

I've always said people look at me kind of funny and be thinking that maybe, because of the way that I look, I should talk with a certain accent, you know? I remember during the Iranian hostage crisis, you know, being out in Santa Monica and some people being

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particularly angry and some guys in a line—in line behind me and they were saying some different things about Iranians and what they ought to do to them and all that kind of stuff and I had to turn around and tell them, I said, "Listen, man, I know you're directing all that at me because of the way that I look, but I'm not Iranian, you know? I live—I grew up right—I'm from New Orleans, I grew up right here in L.A., so, you know, I probably feel the same way that you do, but, you know. So, just be cool." 'Cause I thought they would hurt me, you know?

The combination of John's racially ambiguous but unmistakably non-White appearance and the sociopolitical context led to this encounter. The West Los Angeles area where Santa Monica is located is home to one of the largest Iranian immigrant concentrations, and in this case John was the target of anti-Iranian racialization. John's response uses his place identification associated with Louisiana and Los Angeles ("I'm from New Orleans, I grew up right here in L.A.") to combat this experience of being mis-placed and even to align himself with an American perspective ("I probably feel the same way that you do").

Like international immigrants who have ambiguous appearances, identities are often shaped by proximity to other racial and ethnic groups that they seemingly fit in with based on external markers (Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). This was demonstrated by John's example above. And like Cape Verdeans in the northeastern United States (Sánchez Gibau 2005), the interaction of appearance and surnames more often worked in such a way that Louisiana migrants were mistaken for Latino because of residential and social marker proximity in Los Angeles (Woods 1972). For example, the combination of Bill's surname and his appearance led people to think he was Mexican American in the Los Angeles context:

> Then I got transferred to East Los Angeles. Ha! You know why? Because my name is Garcia. They assumed— [*laughs*] all these years, they assumed—the commission assumed that I was Spanish-speaking. Geez! Spanish-speaking. I speak spook, man. [*Laughter*] So the folk would come into the office at that time and they immediately—the people who worked there knew who I was, but patrons would come in to make applications or whatever, and they would really speak Spanish and I would say, "Gee, I'm so sorry. I don't—." I should have learned the language, but I never have. And I would say, "I'm sorry I just don't—." "Why? Why don't you speak—are you ashamed of who you are?" "What the hell are you talking about?" [*Laughs*] "Look at me." I would

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tell 'em that. "Well, I'm from Louisiana. I'm a Louisiana Garcia." So they'd say, "Don't matter. Don't matter. Speak the language." It was funny. (Bill, Black/Creole culture, first generation)

Bill recalls how he was promoted at his job in county public service in the 1960s based on assumptions that he could speak Spanish. Latino patrons at his work site in East Los Angeles (an area known for its historically Mexican American population) also assumed he was "Spanish-speaking" based on his surname and likely his appearance.[27] Bill's response was to emphasize his place connection ("I'm from Louisiana. I'm a Louisiana Garcia."). Within the interview, he also emphasizes that the idea of his speaking Spanish was laughable, here pointing out his Blackness in demeanor and appearance ("I speak spook man. [*Laughter*]"; "Look at me."), illustrating that both assumptions about racial identities and responses to these assumptions are often based on several factors.

Some migrants allowed these instances of mis-placement to go uncorrected, as a type of situational passing (Roth 2012). For example, Scott also has chosen to occasionally take advantage of the diversity of the racial and ethnic landscape in Los Angeles by letting people assume what they will about his identity: "…but if people assume and don't ask then I don't put it out there for people. They can think whatever they think, in L.A. you can be a number of different things." As noted in Chapter 3, this sometimes occurred to migrants' benefit, such as when looking for housing or employment. This characteristic was also documented for Cane River Creoles in the 1960s, a group to which Scott has a family ties (Woods 1972).

In some cases, the usage of place (either at a regional or national level) was ultimately a way of shutting down the negotiation of identity and leaving the power on the migrants' side of

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[27] Although Bill pointed to his appearance as a reason why he would not speak Spanish, his olive skin and generally Latino or non-Black appearance that I observed in combination with his last name likely fit Mexican American expectations for a fellow Spanish-speaking person.

the interaction. As noted in the section on Resistance to Identity Encounters (see page 196),

being called out as 'other than' was a source of frustration for many migrants, and many dealt

with it on a situational basis. For example, although John is willing to explain his identity

sometimes, here he describes how he might reply to someone when he is feeling less tolerant:

> Or sometimes I answer people like that. "What are you?" I say, "Well, what do you
> want?" You know, if I feel really in a bad mood or something […] . Yeah. You know,
> "Well, what are you?" "Well, what are you? What do you want? I'm an American." You
> know, essentially, that's really what I am, you know? Like the French are French and the
> Germans are Germans, you know, and I'm an American from America. (John,
> Black/mixed ancestry/Creole culture, second generation)

John's response echoes Eva's sarcastic tone (see pages 206-207) as he turns the question back on

his questioners ("Well, what are you?") and implies with his comment that 'what he is' may not

be up to him, or that he will meet resistance to his proclamation of who he is ("What do you

want?"). In other words, the external categorization by others will structure that assessment of

who he is. Also, John's comment demonstrates an element of nationalism to his identity ("I'm an

American from America"), but he is also drawing a contrast to other countries such as France or

Germany where national identities are believed to prevail ("French are French and the Germans

are Germans").

In summary, migrations from one location to another create the need to explain identities

that originated in another region of the country and do not quite translate to the new place's

racial structure. This is similar to international immigrants who face challenges like these in their

host country. This is ironic because Louisiana migrants are engaging in only interstate migration,

and Creoles have such a long history in the United States. As a result, place and place identities

influence how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and modified. Place specifies what type

of Black person one is, or explains why an individual may not fit an outsider's understanding of

what Black is. Place explains what Creole is for those who are unfamiliar with it. Migrants are

also mis-placed in these interactions, assumed to be non-native, requiring them to assert their belonging through, and to, American places. Social markers such as accent, appearance, and surnames are used to create an image of what Black Americans are like, and when Louisiana migrants do not meet these expectations, the request for negotiation ensues.

CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the following questions: How is the meaning of Creole constructed and used by migrants in Los Angeles? How are racial and ethnic identities constructed? How are these identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are they affected by migration? The first question was answered by examining the definitions that migrants used for Creole in Los Angeles. In the first section, I showed how racial mixture, cultural, and place narratives ran throughout the definitions of Creole constructed by these migrants. For most migrants, Creole took the form of an ethnic group within the Black racial category. The narratives drew on the perceived physical bases of race, ancestry, the colonial history of Louisiana, and phenotype. Definitions spanned from very vague summaries of the traditionally used combination of Black, French, Spanish, and Native American, to using specific facts from family genealogies and published histories. Phenotype was also used to define Creole and highlight the racial mixture narrative in two ways: emphasis on more White phenotypical features and emphasis on Black or a diverse range of phenotypical features.

There were two forms of cultural narratives analyzed here: one that incorporated a combination of racial and cultural narratives, and a second that was more explicit about Creole not being racial. The combination acknowledged the racial mixture, but also highlighted the culture that came from this mixture. Some versions privileged the cultural explanation more, and others conflated the two elements so that they were harder to disentangle. The second type of

cultural narrative was more adamant about Creole not being racial at all. These definitions

highlighted the specific cultural elements of Creole that would not allow for a racial definition,

such as religion, traditions, food, and language. Phenotype was also used to distance the

definition from race by emphasizing the diversity of appearances ranging from more Black to

more White. The cultural narrative was often used as a response to the idea asserted by others

(insiders and outsiders) that Creole was a racial category in and of itself.

Place was an important feature of defining Creole precisely because the racial mixture

and culture that developed was so closely tied in with Louisiana as a place, particularly its

colonial history. Some of the first generation's use of place was about residential patterns and

distinctions within New Orleans or other areas in Louisiana. For the second generation, naming

the state of Louisiana or a specific city as a point of origin for Creoles was important in defining

the term.

This chapter illustrated the way that Louisianans outside of the state have transported the

definition of Creole. These findings demonstrated that there is some consistency in how Los

Angeles migrants define Creole and how it has been observed in the literature on Creoles in

Louisiana. The respondents' racial mixture narrative used the classic list of ancestries that have

been connected to Creole: Black, French, Spanish, Native American, as well as others

(Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Jolivétte 2007). To be certain, cultural elements such as

language, food, and religion have been part of the definition treated by this literature as well.

However, while other recent research vaguely suggests that a connection to Louisiana is

important for migrants, I demonstrated that Louisiana as place took on a new meaning outside of

the original context by becoming a narrative part of the explicit definition intertwined with racial

and cultural narratives (Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972). Furthermore, migrants for

the most part did not use Creole in overtly separatist ways (Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972). This may have been a reflection of the current racial atmosphere that validates multiracial, multiethnic, and diverse backgrounds (Brunsma 2005; DaCosta 2006).

This chapter also found that there was some intergenerational consistency within the definition. There were only mild distinctions in how these narratives were constructed by the first and second generation, illustrating the power of collective memory (Zerubavel 1996). The close-knit mnemonic community that migrants and their children lived and interacted in (as described in Chapter 3) contributed to passing on the meaning of Creole to the second generation. This was demonstrated by the second generation's understanding of how being from the place of New Orleans was a proxy for Creole and vice versa.

On the other hand, the generational distinctions in the use of the narratives, such as the second generation's heavier use of the racial narrative and historical sources may be due to a more limited knowledge or familiarity with Creole culture. This is due to living away from the original geographic site where the culture and this group emerged and having this information filtered through the mnemonic community (Woods 1989; Zerubavel 1996). Although most of the second generation had a fair amount of exposure to Louisiana culture as it was practiced in Los Angeles, the kinds of culture they described were somewhat generic compared to the first generation's experience. The second generation was also removed from the racial politics of Louisiana and living under Jim Crow that contributed to their parents' generation defining Creole as more cultural in Los Angeles. This relationship between generation and culture also echoes the use of symbolic culture by later generation White ethnics (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Gans 1979; Waters 1990) or multiracial individuals (Jimenez 2004; Khanna 2011). In this case, the racial narrative represents a distilled version of what Creole means in the Los Angeles

context. The use of historical and documentary sources is a kind of stand in for a lack of actual first hand cultural content. That is, when the culture gets thin, these racial and historical explanations stand in for it (Cornell and Hartmann 1998).

The remaining research questions were answered in the second major section by examining migrants' experiences with identity encounters. How are racial and ethnic identities constructed? For some, Black identities were readily modified with Creole as an explanation of ambiguous appearance, racial mixture, and/or as cultural identity, or Black was used with a mixed race modification. For others, a Black identity was more prominent, with Creole placed in the background. In fewer cases a more singular Black identity with no real place for Creole was preferred. Those that used Creole as a primary racial and ethnic identity usually had ties to Cane River. Their views about the identity, distinguishing Creole from African Americans, were similar to those found in research that focuses on Cane River Creoles or Creole activists (Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972).

Like multiracial individuals and immigrants, Louisiana migrant identities were often constructed in interactions where they had to negotiate identity encounters with strangers (Harris and Khanna 2010; Khanna 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). Consistent with the American racial structure, Louisiana migrants most often conceptualized identity primarily in racial terms—they constructed firstly racial identities, and then secondly, ethnic identities (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Omi and Winant 1994). Being institutionally and interpersonally racialized as Black was particularly important as the literature suggests. But appearance, ideas about ancestry, definitions of Creole or identity categories, situational variability, and change over time were other factors that shaped how Creole and mixed identities were used in combination with Black identities.

How are these identities affected by mixed ancestry? This data illustrated that mixed ancestry influenced identity in several ways. Like American multiracial individuals and immigrants from countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, or Africa with a history of racial mixture and ambiguity, mixed ancestry shapes identity through ambiguous phenotypes. Racial ambiguity in others causes people to become "disoriented" because of the rupture to their preconceived understandings of what members of specific groups look like and the racial structure that shapes those assumptions (Omi and Winant 1994:59; Van den Berghe 1985). The experiences of these migrants showed that in response to this disorientation, various situations call for and allow for different layers of racial, ethnic, and regional explanations of identity where the rule of hypodescent does not always prevail. This led migrants to explain their appearance using racial mixture and Creole narratives, even though the majority chose to identify primarily as Black (Harris and Khanna 2010; Khanna 2011; Okamura 1981; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005). But racial ambiguity also influenced identities by contributing to a desire to be viewed as Black despite their ambiguous appearance; or shaping the tools used to construct Black identities (like multiracial individuals and middle class Black persons who perform Black identities in specific ways, such as purposefully using Black English), reaffirming the significance of Black racial identities as noted in previous research (Davis 1991; Harris and Khanna 2010; Khanna 2011; Nagel 1994; Okamura 1981; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1990, 1991).

Racial mixture also affects identities because it offers a variety of ancestral choices sources to draw from in the construction process. While most of the Louisiana migrants in this study are also racialized as Black or non-White and are subject to the very real manifestations of racism in the United States, Creole is something that they sometimes use to elaborate on or

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modify a Black identity. This varies by different contexts and situations, in a way that is also similar to White ethnics and first-generation multiracial persons (Alba 1990; Harris and Sim 2002; Jaret and Reitzes 1999; Okamura 1981; Waters 1990). Creole is a kind of symbolic ethnicity used on a situational basis for many of the migrants I spoke to, but in a different way compared to middle class, socially mobile White ethnics who are not adversely racialized in American society and can choose to be ethnic when they want (Waters 1990:164-165; Roth 2012). For example, migrants make decisions about how to simplify or expand on identity on census forms or in official contexts based on definitions of the situation, the constraints of the choices available, perceived intentions of questioners, or even individual moods (Nagel 1994; Waters 1990, 1999).

Finally, this chapter addressed the question of how racial and ethnic identities are affected by migration. Migrations from one location to another create the need to explain identities that originate in one region and do not quite translate to a new place's racial structure. Like more contemporary Black immigrants, Louisiana migrants negotiated Black identities and the social markers often used to construct those identities (Bailey 2006; Foner 1985; Richards 2008; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999). Social markers such as accent, appearance, and surnames took on specific meanings associated with places in order to create a particular image of Blackness (Roth 2012; C. A. Sue 2009). And when Louisiana migrants did not meet expectations of Blackness in one way or another, requests for more information and negotiation ensued. Migrants were also mis-placed in these interactions, or assumed to be non-native, requiring them to assert their belonging through, and to, American places. This was likely a result of the diverse local racial structure Los Angeles, which has been shaped by contemporary immigration. The similarities between immigrants and Louisiana migrants are ironic because the

latter engaged in only an interstate migration, with Creoles having such a long history in the United States. As a result of this mismatch in the understanding of racial and ethnic markers, place often modified race and ethnicity in the construction of identities. Place specified what type of Black person one was, or explained why an individual may not have fit an outsider's understanding of Blackness. Place explained the meaning of Creole for those who were unfamiliar with it.

This chapter ultimately contributes to various literatures. It adds to the understanding of how identities are constructed among a segment of the population who engaged in a mass interstate migration. This has been understudied in the Great Migration literature (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemann 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Marks 1989; Phillips 1999; Tolnay 2003). It illustrates both the flexibility and the rigidity of racial and ethnic rules and boundaries in America and the ways that they are constructed and negotiated. The chapter also provides the empirical contribution of examining a U.S.-born group that constructs identities in ways similar to, but not completely covered by the literatures on multiracial individuals, African Americans, or Black immigrants. And in analyzing this unique case it provides insight on how race and ethnicity are understood in the United States. Racialization as Black continues to be an important factor in the everyday and identity construction experiences of persons with Black ancestry, but identities have various layers that can be exposed situationally.

Louisiana migrants differed from some Black immigrants in the choices they made in constructing their identities. In contrast to research on Black immigrants (Foner 1985; Waters 1999), most respondents did not report using personal social markers such as accents or surnames to distinguish themselves in an isolating way from African Americans. Only a handful of migrants I interviewed, generally with connections to the Cane River area, reported using

Creole in a way that explicitly distinguished themselves from African Americans. These migrants were more like the Creole activists interviewed by Jolivétte (2007) and the Cane River Creoles studied by Woods (1972).

In fact, for the most part, the instances of being called out as different in the Los Angeles context were experienced as more problematic than beneficial. In contrast to Black West Indian and other immigrants who often resist being classified as Black Americans, many respondents struggled with their self-identifications as Black Americans not always being validated by outsiders (Habecker 2012; Waters 1999). In this regard the experiences of the Louisiana migrants I spoke to, especially those in the second generation who were socialized in the Civil Rights/Black era period were more similar to experiences of ambiguous multiracial individuals who desire to assert a Black identity (Brunsma and Rockquemore 2001; Khanna 2004, 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). This was also observed among some African immigrants and Louisiana Creoles in the 1970s (Domínguez 1986; Sánchez Gibau 2005). And while many migrants did use a historical narrative of racial mixture to distinguish Creole from other mixed race or Black people in their definitions of categories, Creole as an identity was generally not used in this way.

My findings also differed from some accounts of Creoles in Louisiana and Los Angeles who came of age during the pre-Civil Rights era where Creole was used to distance from Blackness (Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005; Woods 1972). The data demonstrated that for migrants in the contemporary period who came from New Orleans and other cities in Louisiana (including Cane River) Black identities were prominently featured in how they make sense of identity internally and in interactions with others—a contrast to the narrower portrait that focused on Cane River Creoles (Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972). Gaudin's (2005) historical study

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argues that the New Orleans Creoles she interviewed and studied through secondary sources had the tendency to submerge their Creole identities and unflattering comments about African Americans, skin color, and class in "mixed company," that is in front on non-Creoles (p. 276). I only occasionally got this sense in my interviews. Compared to Gaudin (2005), my data was gathered almost ten years later (in the case of secondary sources even longer), with all Los Angeles residents, and first- *and* second-generation migrants. Second-generation migrants recalled sometimes subtle, sometimes not so subtle admonitions to 'marry your own kind' and similar sentiments. But many migrants now critically reflected on the colorism and negative racial politics found among some Creoles, currently and in the past. The overall picture found in my data suggests that Louisiana migrants with Creole ties may be moving on from separatist views. In this case, most migrants, I believe, were trying to be careful about overly privileging Creole above Black given their experiences coming through the Civil Rights era. So they reverted to cultural explanations to deemphasize what insiders and outsiders alike have perceived as an obsession with skin color and racial mixture.

I come to this conclusion while also recognizing that migrants' approaches to identity may be a reflection of the current period where a combination of Blackness and ethnicity are at least superficially appreciated by most. The increased currency of multiracial identities and attention being paid to racial and ethnic identities of Black immigrants in the current period has also been viewed as problematically obscuring racial hierarchies (Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2006; Brunsma 2006; DaCosta 2006; Habecker 2012; Harris and Sim 2002; Pierre 2004; Roth 2012). So understanding that this may be indicative of the colorblind era in the American racial hierarchy helps to keep the significance of racial inequalities and hierarchies in view. Thus I try to counter the analysis on cultural narratives of ethnicity among Black people in America that

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has been argued to obscure the power relations inherent in how racial and ethnic identities are constructed (Pierre 2004).

The next chapter further expands on the role of place in the lives and identities of Louisiana migrants.

CHAPTER 5
"WHAT IT MEANS TO MISS NEW ORLEANS": THE MEANING OF HOME AND THE MECHANISMS OF PLACE ATTACHMENT[28]

"Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans," I knew that song by heart because she'd play it over and over and over again.
    —Iphigenia, second generation

These words from a child of New Orleans migrants capture a glimpse of the memory of what it was like to move almost two thousand miles from home to a new and very different place—Los Angeles. The tune, first popularized by versions sung by Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday in 1947, describes missing the place, but also missing the sights, smells, sounds, feelings, and ultimately the people of New Orleans—specific features associated with the place. According to the song, the nostalgia for the place grows stronger the longer one stays away. Its sentiments were salient to a community of migrants in Los Angeles to which Iphigenia and her mother belonged. They also were similar to those feelings of homesickness likely experienced by millions of southern migrants during the Great Migration era (Boehm 2009; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996). Although promises of a better life outside of the South were being pursued, Iphigenia's mom was missing home and constantly playing this song reminded both of them of how far away from that place they really were. But it also helped them to solidify their connection to the place they were from.

The song hints at key elements of the answer to this puzzle. The experiences and interactions in the place that was home make it significant in the minds of social actors. These are also the things that they miss when they are gone. In response to their homesickness, and as the song suggests, nostalgia for those experiences is an important mechanism in compensating

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[28] The title is a reference to the song, "Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans" written by De Lange and Alter (1946).

for the loss and keeping the feelings of attachment strong. Another mechanism of maintaining

their connection to home was periodically returning home, revisiting and creating new memories

and experiences about which they could be nostalgic. This created a cycle of nostalgia and

renewal that fed their attachment to Louisiana, the place that was home.[29]

This chapter contributes to answering the following three broader questions of the

dissertation: How were the migration and settlement processes experienced by these migrants?

What did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? And how are racial and ethnic identities

affected by migration? I build on Chapters 3 and 4 and further examine the role of place in the

lives of migrants. Chapter 3 illustrates how the mnemonic community was established in Los

Angeles and begins to point to its importance for migrants' sense of connection to Louisiana.

Here I argue that interaction in this setting works as a mechanism that contributes to Louisiana

place attachment by creating a Louisiana-centered interactional potential, particularly for the

second generation. In chapter 3 I also show how individual and collective nostalgia for a

Louisiana-centered interactional past were supported in the migrant residential and business

concentration. Here, I examine more closely how nostalgia works as a mechanism for restoring

place attachment. This chapter also examines how temporary visits back to Louisiana, what I am

calling post-displacement interaction, work as a mechanism that contributes to the interactional

past that migrants use in constructing and restoring their place attachments. In chapter 4, I

examine how racial and ethnic identities are constructed by migrants and find that place has an

important role in modifying them. Here by focusing on their emotional connection to place and

examining place attachment, I show how Louisiana-centered place identities used in modifying

racial and ethnic identities are possible.

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[29] Migrants often spoke of their actual hometowns by name (e.g. New Orleans), but sometimes they used their hometown interchangeably with the state of Louisiana.

In the remainder of this chapter I first provide a brief review of important terms from the place attachment literature examined in Chapter 2. I then introduce post-displacement interaction, my conceptual addition to place attachment that helps to understand how migrants construct place attachment. The analysis is organized by generation. In the first section, I illustrate how the mechanisms of (1) nostalgia and collective nostalgia, and (2) visits back contributed to restoring, and maintaining first-generation migrants' place attachments and place identities in response to the displacement of migration. Invoking the ideas of home, homesickness, pride in place, and the lack of substitutability of Louisiana within their narratives indicates the migrants' place attachments and identification. In the second section, I compare two types of second-generation approaches to place attachment: one that is migrant-oriented and a second that is a children-of-migrants perspective. I show how the mechanisms of (1) interaction with the mnemonic community, (2) nostalgia and collective nostalgia, and (3) visits back contributed to creating, restoring, and maintaining second-generation migrants' place attachments and place identities. The indicators of using home, pride in place, and lack of substitutability of Louisiana were important for the second generation as well.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW: MEASURING PLACE ATTACHMENT AND POST-DISPLACEMENT INTERACTION

Chapter 2 introduced the distinct but interrelated concepts of place attachment and place identity (Lewicka 2008). Place identity is "an interpretation of self that uses environmental meaning to symbolize or situate identity" (Cuba and Hummon 1993a:548). This meaning is influenced by experiences and interactions in specific environments/locales/places (Hochschild, Jr. 2010:622). Place attachment is an emotional connection to a physical place that results from experiences and interactions related to that place (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Hummon 1992:262; Kyle and Chick 2007; Low and Altman 1992; Milligan 1998, 2003; Trentelman 2009). Interactional past

and interactional potential are two mechanisms that link interaction to place attachment (Milligan 1998). It can be a positive, negative, or neutral emotion (Cochrane 1987; Milligan 1998; Relph 1976; cf. Trentelman 2009:201; Wiborg 2004). The main distinctions between place identity and place attachment to note are in how these relationships to place are defined and expressed: place attachment refers to the emotion of feeling attached to a place that results from experiences and interactions connected to a place and place identity uses experiences and interactions connected to a place to construct identity.

Both place identity and place attachment can also be multilayered, as in being identified with or attached to two places at once but for different reasons (Hernández et al. 2007; Hummon 1992; cf. Milligan 1998; Relph 1976; Wiborg 2004). For example, a person could be attached to one city because she has family ties and was born there, but attached to another city because she likes living there. Place identity and place attachment can also be associated with multiple scales of place, as in identifying with one's dwelling while at the same time identifying with the community or region in which that dwelling is located (Cochrane 1987; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Hernández et al. 2007; Hidalgo and Hernández 2001; Lewicka 2008).

In this chapter I look more closely at the indicators of place attachment. The existence and strength of place attachment can be assessed in different ways. One approach measures place attachment by determining if actors associate a place with home. Home is a type of place that has special significance for people as a site of attachment (Lewicka 2011; Relph 1976:39). Home often refers to places at the scale of the dwelling, but it also has symbolic meaning that reaches beyond dwelling places (Bogac 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a; Lewicka 2011; Wiborg 2004) and even beyond place (Lewicka 2011; see detailed review in Mallett 2004; Relph 1976; Tuan 1975, 1977). For example, places at the scale of community (Bogac 2009; Cuba and Hummon

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1993a, 1993b; Hummon 1992; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974) and region (Cochrane 1987; Cuba and Hummon 1993a; Wiborg 2004) are associated with home either through quantitative measures or by examination of symbolic meanings. Cuba and Hummon (1993a), for instance, consider "at-homeness" to be a construction of attachment although they are ultimately studying place identity (p. 549). Using this framework they find that migrants felt at-homeness in multiple levels of place and in different configurations depending on factors such as residential mobility and patterns of social participation (Cuba and Hummon 1993a:549).

A second, and somewhat related, approach suggested by Lewicka (2011) is that homesickness, or distress after leaving home, can be considered a measure of the strength of place attachment to a hometown. This is because place attachment based in social and physical ties to a home place predicted homesickness (McAndrew 1998; Scopelliti and Tiberio 2010), thus linking the two emotions. Sorrow about moving is also used as an indicator of place attachment (Mesch and Manor 1998).

A third approach is that pride in a place would indicate attachment to it (Mesch and Manor 1998). Mesch and Manor (1998) use pride in living in a neighborhood as one of three variables to capture place attachment. They find that the degree of pride is positively associated with home ownership, education, local social relationships, and satisfaction in the physical and social environment. Measurements using scales of pride in region that contain overlapping conceptualization with place attachment are used as indicators of place identity (Bonaiuto et al. 2002; Carrus et al. 2005).

A fourth approach is that place attachment can be indicated by the level of "substitutability" of one place for another, or the degree to which a place can or cannot be substituted by another (Milligan 1998:6, 7; 2003). This perspective draws on place dependence,

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which is an assessment of how one place can satisfy a person's needs compared to another place (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Stokols and Shumaker 1981; Trentelman 2009; Williams et al. 1992). While this view is appropriate for certain settings, such as when trying to understand a choice between two places of attachment, using it alone does not readily allow for multiple or multilayered attachments. Hence, I use it in combination with these other indicators.

A fifth approach is that strength of attachment can be viewed in terms of a range of positive and negative, self-conscious and unselfconscious reactions to and experiences of place on an U-shaped spectrum. For example, at the strongest and positive end of the spectrum, connection to place may involve complete, taken for granted immersion by actors; the second-strongest level of attachment could be a self-conscious appreciation for the meanings, physical features, and activities of place; or a third-strongest being simply an interest in the physical features or environment of a place (Cochrane 1987; Relph 1976:54, 55; Tuan 1980). At the other end of the spectrum may be purposeful alienation from place, a strong and negative emotion toward place; the center represents the weaker attachments (Cochrane 1987; Relph 1976).

Because attachment can occur in a multilayered way (Cuba and Hummon 1993a), it is important to combine methods of assessing the existence and strength of place attachment that allow for attachments to multiple places and/or attachments that can change in strength and character over time (Cochrane 1987:7; Relph 1976:62; Tuan 1980). In this case, place attachment would be evident if migrants spoke of Louisiana or other sites in the state-region in connection with home, homesickness, pride in the place, or how Louisiana could not be replaced by Los Angeles. The strength could be partially assessed by examining the conscious or taken for granted nature of these feelings.

Post-Displacement Interaction

In addition to nostalgia discussed in Chapter 2, I propose that post-displacement interaction, such as a return visit, is another mechanism for repairing place attachment after displacement. This is a kind of intermediary interaction—temporary or occasional—in the original site of attachment that occurs after the initial displacement. These return visits can support continuity with the past (Bogac 2009:276; Brown and Perkins 1992; cf. Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport 2000; Mazumdar et al. 2000:329). Post-displacement interactions are shaped by the existing interactional past and potential, the displacement itself, the nostalgia for the lost place, and the interaction in the new site. After its completion it then becomes part of the interactional past and can be a new source of nostalgia, infusing more complex meaning into that place.

This conceptual expansion that I put forward is needed to analyze a case of displacement that is not completely permanent (in contrast to a case of destruction, for example), but obstacles to returning still render the place as lost. An example would be the case of migration where the pathways to returning to the place of origin remain open but distance makes it hard to return. Interactional theory of place attachment can be applied to various kinds of places and circumstances, but requires this extension because other cases often involve a complete break from the place of attachment, or unlike this chapter do not account for the role that occasionally returning to the place might have in creating new interactional past and place attachment (Milligan 1998). Furthermore, many studies of place attachment and displacement that employ interactional past and/or interactional potential do so in a cursory manner and do not engage with the theoretical implications for these processes or post-displacement interaction (Bogac 2009; Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Reasons for these omissions might be due to the types of displacement examined that did

not allow for return visits, such as instances of permanent physical displacement; symbolic or cultural displacement; or mere threats of displacement. For example, like Milligan (1998), several analyze cases where displacement is of a permanent type. In these cases, disaster situations render the original place of attachment drastically changed or destroyed (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cox and Perry 2011). Another example of permanent displacement is that of refugees who do not have regular access to their homeland because of their refugee status and the circumstances of their leaving (Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Symbolic and cultural displacement can be permanent in the sense that the original place as it is known to actors is no longer available for interaction (Hummon 1992:269; Ocejo 2011). This complicates the issue of returning to a site, since these types of displacement are not caused by physical movement. For example, early gentrifiers in the Lower East Side neighborhood experienced a cultural and social displacement due to further gentrification (Ocejo 2011). They still lived in that place, but the site they were attached to had changed and was in the process of changing even more, thus it was permanently lost.

Cases where there is only threat of displacement also do not provide the opportunity to examine the issue of post-displacement interaction. For example, in Hochschild's (2010) case, the circumstances do not include a complete or physical break of place continuity. Rather it is the threat of displacement and continuing to interact in the place while actively negotiating belonging to it that emphasizes the place attachment and what it would mean if displacement were to occur.

In studies where non-permanent displacement is analyzed, the implications of post-displacement interaction for place attachment are also not always addressed (e.g., Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). However, some studies of displacement, place attachment, or immigration do

suggest that post-displacement interaction may be important for repairing place attachment, even if they are not working within Milligan's interactionist framework or do not directly address the theoretical significance. For example, Brown and Perkin's (1992) secondary analysis of several cases of displacement suggests that migrants' maintenance of ties to the hometown while living in another location is a coping strategy for displacement. However, they note it might be a rare occurrence. King, Christou, and Teerling (2011) note that return visits as children by second-generation Greek immigrants were important sources of a sense of attachment to their parents' homeland. Bogac (2009) studied place attachment to the place of origin and the resettlement location among Turkish Cypriot refugees who relocated to a Greek Cypriot portion of their island region and did not have access to their old homes for decades. When borders finally opened up for visiting (but not for moving back to original region) those who made return visits found that their homes and the area surrounding them were left destroyed or badly damaged and they felt as if they had no homeland to return to (Bogac 2009). Despite the limited opportunities for, and the negative experiences during, post-displacement interaction, that study suggests that visits strengthened migrants attachment to that homeland (p. 276).

Even studies focusing on returning but with contrasting conclusions provide insight to my application of an interactionist theory of place attachment. For example, Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport (2000) illustrate that returning to the homeland is an important theme in the narratives of migrants, but that return visits in the case of Russian student-immigrants to Israel did not ultimately strengthen attachment to that place. Rather, they focus on how visits aided in deconstructing nostalgia through a process of linking with the familiar, highlighting the negative features of the place, and reflecting on personal growth in new home. While the visits quenched the temporary desire to reconnect with home, they did not result in a stronger attachment to it.

This case illustrates the importance of interrogating the different ways that post-displacement interaction shapes relationships to place.

In summary, post-displacement interaction is temporary or occasional interaction in the original site of attachment that occurs after the initial displacement and that can support continuity with the past. It then becomes part of the interactional past, and can be a new source of nostalgia, infusing more complex meaning into that place. Generally, though, while several studies discuss various forms of displacement they do not examine post-displacement interaction as a significant mechanism that contributes to maintaining an attachment to place.

In the case examined here, migrants' temporary returns to Louisiana and engagement in post-displacement interaction would add to the interactional past, providing new experiences and memories that would strengthen the place attachment to Louisiana (Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011). This post-displacement interaction would also be influenced by and take advantage of the interactional potential in Louisiana. The visiting by the first generation would be an intentional way of trying to bridge and preserve their attachment to their home place. This would also be a particularly important source of interactional past for the second generation (cf. Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011). Most of the second generation had spent time in Louisiana through visits back as kids and in a couple of cases living in Louisiana as adults. For some, visits were regular parts of family vacations, and for others they seemed to be either more sporadic or did not begin until the respondents were older. The second generation's early visits would not be out of personal necessity or choice—it would usually be by their parents' choice that any of the second generation visited Louisiana at all until they became adults. Regardless of the intent or frequency, this interaction would be useful in creating the memories of Louisiana as a place that their parents were from.

**"WHEN THEY SPEAK OF NEW ORLEANS, THEY SPEAK OF HOME":
DISPLACEMENT, NOSTALGIA, AND POST-DISPLACEMENT INTERACTION**

After experiencing the displacement of moving across the country, interstate migrants were able

to restore and maintain attachment to their place of origin through at least two related

mechanisms: nostalgia and post-displacement interaction.[30] The analysis is presented in three

sections that cover corresponding steps in this process: displacement, nostalgia, and post-

displacement interaction. First, I examine how migrants experienced the displacement event

(disruption of place attachment) as a loss of interactional past and potential, indicated as

homesickness or missing home. Second, I examine how the mechanism of nostalgia is used to

contrast the interactional past and potential of Louisiana with that of Los Angeles. Third, I

examine how the mechanism of post-displacement interaction is used to add to and renew access

to the interactional past and potential of Louisiana. Three indicators of the restoration of place

attachment after displacement are discussed across the two mechanisms: (1) migrants' pride in

their place of origin; (2) the continued use of home to refer to Louisiana; and (3) that Louisiana's

role as home was not substitutable by Los Angeles. The place attachment that was described by

most migrants was strongly related to the social ties that they had established and left in

Louisiana. Ultimately, missing home motivated nostalgia and it motivated migrants to return

home—this cycle of missing home, nostalgia, and interaction contributed to a restoration of

place attachment.

Missing Home: Evidence of the Displacement Event

The homesickness and missing home reported by migrants is simultaneously an indicator of

place attachment and evidence of the disruption of place attachment. Through displacement

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[30] A third mechanism, interaction with the mnemonic community will be discussed in the section on the second
generation beginning on page 241.

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migrants' access to memories of their interactions (interactional past), and their understanding of

the potential for interaction in that specific home place (interactional potential) was disrupted.

The sense of loss experienced in this displacement was very much intertwined with the

disruption of social ties with interactional partners involved in creating the interactional past and

potential.

Many respondents spoke about missing home intensely when they first left. Across these

examples it was apparent that the homesickness that migrants felt persisted at least for several

years after leaving Louisiana. The difficult adjustment period illustrates the power of their

original attachment to home. Betty (age 79, arrived in 1956) describes her experience of this as

she prepared for one of her early visits home:

> No I didn't like it right off the bat. I got homesick. I got homesick. I was here two years.
> And I said, "I'm going back. I don't think I'm not going back to California." [My
> husband] said, "You're not?" I said, "Yeah I might have to leave you there." [*Laughter*]

This extreme form of missing home and sorrow about leaving it to the point of wanting to go

back is evidence of the original attachment to the place, and the loss of place continuity and its

associated attachment (Brown and Perkins 1992; Lewicka 2011; McAndrew 1998; Mesch and

Manor 1998; Scopelliti and Tiberio 2010).

Family ties were an integral part of the aspects of interaction that migrants were

homesick for.

> […] the first three years I cried and cried and cried, and my husband said, "Oh, Estella,"
> he said, "don't cry. If you want to, we'll go back." I said, "No. I don't want to go back."
> He said, "Well, please stop crying." But sometimes I'd just sit and tears would just roll
> down because I missed the family. (Estella, age 79, arrived in 1961)

> I left my family. I didn't want to leave my mom, you know, but I left and it took me a
> long time to adjust out here. (Cordelia, age 73, arrived in 1957)

Estella and Cordelia illustrate that family and place were intertwined with generating the

homesickness ("I missed the family"; "I didn't want to leave my mom"). Social ties (and often

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family ties) are a central factor contributing to a strong place attachment (Cuba and Hummon 1993a; Lewicka 2011). Memories and experiences (interactional past) made with family during the early part of people's lives can be among the most meaningful and repetitive, even if mundane—leading to place attachment (Bogac 2009; Cochrane 1987; Lewicka 2011; Milligan 1998). The displacement severed the interactional past that connected the memories and experiences with family to Louisiana.

Likewise, the interactional potential had been disrupted. The expectations of interacting in Louisiana with family on a daily basis were no longer viable. While these passages do not directly illustrate the physical features being missed, missing family implies it because Louisiana Creoles (especially in New Orleans) tended to live near one another, even once they were married. The physical layout of the close-knit Seventh Ward in New Orleans facilitated frequent and extended interaction between family members (Anthony 1978; Gaudin 2005). Missing family is thus linked to missing features of New Orleans that make it possible for family to remain in close contact.

Restoring Place Attachment through Nostalgic Contrasts

The disruption of place attachment brings into relief the things about a place that were valuable and are often framed in nostalgic terms (Cochrane 1987; Davis 1979; Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Milligan 2003; Ocejo 2011). Nostalgically remembering the interactional characteristics of place—the interactional past and interactional potential—served as an emotional link to their home and a key mechanism in the process of recreating their place attachment connected to Louisiana while in the Los Angeles setting. In crafting this nostalgia-driven attachment, some respondents drew upon the interactional contrasts they found between the two sites and contrasting the home status of Louisiana rather than Los Angeles. Their restored attachment was

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expressed in their nostalgia narratives as a sense of pride in their hometowns, home state, and region; the continued use of home to refer to these locations; and the inability of Louisiana to be substituted (Bogac 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Lewicka 2011; Mesch and Manor 1998; Milligan 1998).

Nostalgia for place-specific modes of interacting was influenced by the interactional past and a sense of the interactional potential. For example, Cordelia characterizes home positively in this way:

> Being from Louisiana, there's a certain warmth, a certain friendliness, a certain—that we brought with us. I'm proud to be from where I am because I guess the way we were reared to care. We were reared as, like I said, it's all a strong sense of family, a strong sense of morality. You know, we were given all this that we brought out here and everybody I knew is like this and this is what we came with and being out here, you know. (Cordelia, age 73, arrived in 1957)

Nostalgia for the interactional past is illustrated here by Cordelia's positively framed invocation of her upbringing ("reared to care," "strong sense of family, a strong sense of morality"). She attributes these characteristics to being from this specific place. Nostalgia was also experienced for the lost quintessential characteristics of the place that were associated with the types of people or interactions one might encounter in the place of origin, or the interactional potential ("warmth, a certain friendliness," "morality," elsewhere she describes a "zest for living").

Like Cordelia, Estella's attachment to home is also based on her nostalgia for the interactional past and interactional potential:

> I'm from the South and I'm not ashamed to be from the South. The South was a wonderful place at one time even though there was discrimination. Because there were wonderful, warm, loving people who came from the South. So, I liked the South and we always enjoyed going back home. (Estella, age 79, arrived in 1961)

Estella's recollection of her interactional past in her home place was positively characterized despite some of the negative realities of interaction in a Jim Crow state ("wonderful" despite segregation). The interactional climate and characteristics of interactional partners found in the

place (interactional potential) were also favorably recalled ("wonderful, warm, loving people").
Estella illustrates how the strength of this kind of nostalgic feeling for Louisiana helped migrants
to overcome even negative memories of their home region.

The loss of these features of interaction in Louisiana were amplified and repaired by the
process of observing the interactional contrasts in Los Angeles:

> I don't know, I find Louisiana people, that was one thing, I guess I can go back to when I
> moved here, I found people very cold here and I came from the warmth of the South, the
> friendliness of the South, and you bring that with you. You learn how to live around these
> people, but you got so many of your own kind here [...] . (Cordelia, age 73, arrived in
> 1957)

In Los Angeles people were "cold" compared to the "warmth" of Louisiana (interactional past).
Also implicitly captured in her nostalgic description is the kind of warm interaction that could be
expected (interactional potential) in that locale ("the friendliness of the South"). The contrasts
between migrants *in* Los Angeles ("Louisiana people," "your own kind") and persons *of* Los
Angeles ("these people") employs place as a way to effectively define desirable and undesirable
interactional partners in the new locale, nostalgically restoring attachment to her home state.

Likewise, Estella also used nostalgic contrast, but in her case she did not directly
compare the interactional characteristics between Louisiana and Los Angeles. Instead her
contrast between the two places lies in their statuses as home or not home: "We always
considered New Orleans home. Maybe one day I'll consider here home."

Migrants' restored place attachment was expressed in these narratives in three ways: (1)
as a sense of pride in their place of origin; (2) the continued use of home to refer to Louisiana;
(3) and the inability of Louisiana to be substituted. First, restored place attachment was evident
as pride in Louisiana or specific cities (Mesch and Manor 1998). For example, both Estella's and
Cordelia's attachment to Louisiana was expressed as pride in being their home place ("proud to
be from where I am," "not ashamed to be from the South"). Second, restored place attachment

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was indicated by migrants' continued use of home to refer their place of origin. For example, Estella still "considered New Orleans home" after spending most of her life in Los Angeles. Third, and related to the continued use of home, is that Louisiana was not substituted by Los Angeles as a significant home place attachment. For example, Estella's nostalgic contrast between New Orleans as home and Los Angeles as not home indicated that the former was not replaced in her mind.

These examples also demonstrate how attachments are connected to nested scales of place. While there is some level of attachment to the broader region of the South, there is also a more specific attachment at the state or city scale—illustrating how place attachments can be multilayered (Cuba and Hummon 1993a; Hidalgo and Hernández 2001; Hummon 1992; Lewicka 2011; Relph 1976; Wiborg 2004).

Visiting Home: Restoring Place Attachment with Post-Displacement Interaction

Visiting the homeland has been linked to strengthened place attachment (Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011; cf. Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport 2000), suggesting that post-displacement interaction has a hand in restoring and maintaining place attachment after a discontinuity in place. Like other Great Migration era migrants, visits back—especially in the early years after migrating—were important to many Louisianan migrants for tempering the homesickness they felt and served as another mechanism for restoring place attachment. The visits were a physical link to the place they had left and allowed migrants to replenish their stores of interactional past and sense of interactional potential that they could draw from once they returned to Los Angeles. During these visits, mnemonic synchronization and the interactional layout of Louisiana were sometimes used to optimize the interactional experience. The restored place attachment was made evident in these passages by the continued use of home referring to Louisiana, and the low substitutability

of Louisiana. Two types of social ties—familial and recreational—were key to how the mechanism worked to restore place attachment.

Replenishing Interactional Past and Interactional Potential

A full resolution to displacement (e.g., literally moving back to the place) was not required because the feeling of attachment that migrants had gained from interacting in Louisiana with family and friends was partially renewed by this mechanism. Post-displacement interaction brought migrants in close proximity to the location associated with the interactional past. Estella and Cordelia describe how they compensated for the break in continuity of place by visiting often.

> And every year—I don't think we missed a year—we went home. Home is New Orleans. [*Laughter*] (Estella, age 79, arrived in 1961)

> I was back and forth all the time. I was in the city of New Orleans three or four times a year [*laughter*], whenever I could get there, you know. And my mom and dad would come out here, so we saw each other a lot. (Cordelia, age 73, arrived in 1957)

These repeated and frequent visits would be the logical source of new memories (interactional past) that migrants could draw on once they returned to Los Angeles.

Post-displacement interaction also temporarily restored their access to the potential for interaction and allowed migrants to renew their understanding of the type of interaction that could be expected (interactional potential) in Louisiana. Many migrants optimized the interactional potential of New Orleans by arranging their visits back during Mardi Gras season, engaging in mnemonic synchronization.

> […] we decided we were going to go every year for Mardi Gras because it was parties galore. Every night they had a ball that a club was hosting, and so we decided we would do that and we did that for 22 years. We went every Mardi Gras for 22 years and we even joined a club down there and we rode the floats in the parade. That was kind of fun for us, you know. (Hubert, age 82, arrived in 1956)

> […] we went to their balls a couple of times when we went back and trying to touch bases with people that we left, […] we would see some of our friends, and that was—

that's what I like going back to. (Betty, age 79, arrived in 1956))

Celebrations such as these allowed Creole migrants returning to New Orleans to rejoin their community for "synchronized access to their collective past" (Zerubavel 1996:294). In this type of visit, the interaction is not mundane but focused around a concentrated dose of symbolic meaning associated with the place.

During post-displacement interaction migrants were also engaging with the interactional layout of the city, negotiating use of the social features and physical layout to facilitate a specific type of celebratory interaction ("it was parties galore"). As Betty noted, the Mardi Gras balls were social ways migrants were able to be in proximity with many of the people they knew and left behind all at one time. Parades make use of the physical environment and bring participants out to socialize in the narrow and storied streets of their youth. The atmosphere of the city during this time of year was quintessentially New Orleans. Visiting during this season was a way to reinforce the attachment based in this specific kind of celebratory interaction ("that's what I like going back to") (see Milligan 1998).

The way that the mechanism of post-displacement interaction works here to restore place attachment is by contributing to positive memories (interactional past) and to creating a certain kind of "character" of the place that influences the expectations (interactional potential) of Louisiana (Cochrane 1987:17; Milligan 1998). In these examples it is tied in with the interactional layout and mnemonic synchronization in New Orleans. These experiences armed migrants returning to Los Angeles with renewed interactional resources that went to work in conjunction with their nostalgia (and sometimes nostalgic contrasts), contributing to the restoration of their Louisiana place attachment until their next visit.

Role of Social Ties

In these examples, two kinds of social ties contributed to motivating place attachment, the post-

displacement interaction, and the restored place attachment: those motivated by family/friendship relationships and those motivated by recreation. Oftentimes migrants spoke about visits being most frequent when they still had immediate family in Louisiana, such as parents and siblings. And in many cases, when parents were aging the visits were more frequent to facilitate caregiving. For example, like Betty, Hubert, and his wife, many other migrants had familial ties to Louisiana—their parents and/or other family members continued to live there after they moved out to Los Angeles. Betty further explained the interconnectedness of family ties and her choice about when to visit, "I used to love going there during their life because my mother was a Mardi Gras person."

Recreational ties also overlap with family/friendship ties. The form of interaction organized around recreation, for example Mardi Gras events, put migrants in proximity to many social ties at once, including family. Hubert described how his yearly visits to New Orleans, which were initially driven by wanting to see family there, continued even after parents had passed on. Hubert and his wife also participated in events surrounding Mardi Gras and created social participation ties by joining a social club there, and continued this for more than two decades. Likewise, Betty's participation in Mardi Gras balls when she visited incorporated reconnecting with her social ties ("trying to touch bases with people that we left").

Indicators of Restored Place Attachment

The restored place attachment in these post-displacement interaction passages was indicated in two ways: (1) by the continued use of home to refer to Louisiana, and (2) the low level of substitutability of Louisiana. First, migrants continued to refer to Louisiana as home. For example, Estella confirms that New Orleans remained home by speaking of it as such in the present tense (see page 238). She associates the post-displacement interaction with the irony (indicated by her laughter) that after so many decades of living in Los Angeles she still refers to

New Orleans as home. Another migrant, Bernadine (arrived in the mid-1950s), sat in on parts of her husband's interview and here explains the persistent significance of the hometown in the lives of most migrants:

> There was always a connection. There's always been that connection. Anyone that's from New Orleans—I don't know of any person that's from New Orleans that still doesn't refer to it as home. When you say home, you're talking about New Orleans. You know, if you're going to visit New Orleans, you say, "I'm going home," and if you're in New Orleans, you say, "I'm going back to Los Angeles." I don't know why, I've been here 50 some years, but when I leave New Orleans I'm back to Los Angeles, when I leave here I'm going home, and most people, when they speak of New Orleans, they speak of home. Very few people they'll just say New Orleans. Most of them are going to tell you home.

The use of "home" in this passage indicates an emotional tie to the place—a clear place attachment. Though not describing a specific account of post-displacement interaction, she is illuminating how the visits back and forth are a constant occurrence over the 50-odd years she has been in Los Angeles. She explicitly describes how the "home" reference has remained salient among migrants. In her view, this is common practice within the migrant community. The use of home to refer to New Orleans after so many years is similar to research on involuntary migrants who demonstrated persistent attachment to their homelands even after decades in a new site (Bogac 2009; Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Second, and related to the persistent use of home in these examples, New Orleans (or Louisiana more broadly) cannot be substituted, indicating a very strong place attachment (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Milligan 1998; Williams et al. 1992). For example, Bernadine explained that New Orleans' role as home could not be usurped by Los Angeles ("if you're going to visit New Orleans, you say, 'I'm going home,' and if you're in New Orleans, you say, 'I'm going back to Los Angeles.'"). Interestingly, this runs counter to much of the research that indicates increased length of residence would lead to place attachment (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Lewicka 2011).

"THEY CALLED IT HOME": CONSTRUCTING PLACE ATTACHMENT THROUGH MNEMONIC INTERACTION, NOSTALGIA, AND POST-DISPLACEMENT INTERACTION AMONG THE SECOND GENERATION

Even though the second generation's experiences with Louisiana differed from the first generation's, the place left an indelible imprint on the second generation. Like the first generation, home was an important framework for understanding their relationship to Louisiana. The ideas of "home" and being "from Louisiana" that emerged in the data are very much related to attachment to place (Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Tuan 1977).

Some of the second generation used one or both of these phrases to talk about their relationship to Louisiana. The second generation had two distinct ways of explicitly and implicitly expressing their place attachment using the framework of "home" to refer to Louisiana. I will discuss two ways that second-generation respondents talked about their relationship to Louisiana, though there is some overlap between the two: (1) Some Louisiana-born respondents demonstrated an attachment to Louisiana that was *migrant-oriented* by using "home" to refer to Louisiana, and/or express a sense of being "from Louisiana" from their own point of view. And (2) some California-born respondents demonstrated a *children-of-migrants* perspective on attachment to Louisiana by using the phrases "home" or "from Louisiana" to describe their parents' relationship to the place, and vicariously through them, their own relationship to Louisiana.

In this section on the second generation, I begin with an analysis of the indicators of place attachment since this is where the difference between these two groups of second generation becomes most apparent. I examine three indicators of place attachment for the second generation. These were (1) continued use of home, (2) pride in place, and (3) the low level of substitutability of Louisiana. I then examine three mechanisms that were important for supporting place attachment for the second generation. First, because of the second generation's

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relatively limited experience with Louisiana, the mechanism of interacting in the migrant community was important for contributing to their sense of place attachment. Second, like the first generation, nostalgia was also important for the second generation, but worked slightly differently between the two types of second-generation forms of attachment. And third, post-displacement interaction was also an important mechanism for some of the second generation, although in a different way than for the first generation.

Evidence of Place Attachment: Continued Use of Home

As with the first generation, the continued use of home indicated a place attachment to Louisiana. The second generation demonstrated two different ways of indicating their place attachment to Louisiana, which informs the comparison: (1) a *migrant-oriented* use of "home" and "from Louisiana" from their own perspectives and (2) a *children-of-migrants* oriented use of "home" from their parents' perspectives.

The migrant-oriented use of home was, like the first generation, something that peppered the interviews in a natural way (Richards 2008). Albert (age 58) arrived in Los Angeles in 1963 with his family and he had a definite memory of living in Louisiana. His family was from Cane River, a very close-knit and more rural area of Louisiana. Here he recounts how as an adult he and his family started a newsletter catering to the Creole/Louisiana migrant community in Los Angeles and their counterparts in Louisiana.

> Just sitting around the kitchen table, then finally saying, "Look, we need some kind—we see the need for some type of communication." See we always are very interested in knowing what's going on back home, you know. Well, back home is interested in knowing what's going on out here, see especially with our community. See, and so we saw the need there.

Albert's was one of the most concretely-demonstrated attachments to Louisiana through the use of "back home" many times in his interview. He uses the phrase twice in this passage describing the reciprocal relationship between the sending and receiving communities, with Louisiana

("back home") as the anchor. Here, the desire for the lost interactional potential of Louisiana ("what's going on back home") drove the creation of a systematic form of communication that would allow him, and other members of the displaced "community" to stay attached to it in some way. This also indicates his awareness of a collective generation of migrants who experienced a similar disruption of place and place attachment.

The second-generation migrants with a children-of-migrants interpretation of Louisiana as home used it in a different way compared to those who had a migrant-oriented place attachment.

> "They'll say, 'folks from home.' That's the phrase they usually say, or use." (Zaida, age 41, parents came in 1946 and 1963)

> But the first trip I remember as a young, young kid probably around maybe 9, 10, 11 years old, going back and my parents talked about going home, they called it home, you know. (Danny, age 50, parents arrived in 1956)

Zaida demonstrates how the word "home" is used by her parents to refer to the place and as a place-based euphemism for the Creole people of Louisiana in the Los Angeles context. Similarly, Danny demonstrates that for this group of the Los Angeles-born second generation the parents' point of reference influences the way that they speak about Louisiana themselves. They are both explicit about the reference to home being from their parents' point of view. Thus it is in interaction with parents that the expectations and meanings (interactional potential) associated with New Orleans are set up.

Other accounts further illustrate how the first generation's talk of home helped define the second generation's idea of a hometown and usage of the phrase.

> […] my first experience of understanding that my mom's family did migrate was conversations of always hearing about home. What I find was even though she liked the fact that it was cleaner and the schools were, you know, all the different resources were here and so forth, I don't think she ever left that fact that that's still home. This was where they lived, but that was always referred to as home. […] So, but if I had to say bottom line, it was, even today, that's still home. […] This is where we've been raised,

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but that was home for her. (Nina, early 50s, mother came in 1942)

> Growing up, it was always referred to as "home," so it wasn't a problem for me at all to move out there and I had a good experience while I was out there for a little while. […] Like I said, my mother always refer to it as home like, "Oh, I'm going to go home. I'm going to go back home," and you knew where she was talking about. She wasn't talking about [states street address in Los Angeles], she was talking about New Orleans. (Kyle, age 41, parents came in 1960)

Both Nina and Kyle are explicit about how their mothers continued to view New Orleans as home, and not Los Angeles. Nina's consciousness was left with an indelible mark about where "home" was for her mother. Kyle illustrates how prominent his parents' view of Louisiana was for shaping his own expectations of New Orleans. The influence of his mother's relationship to home even eased his own temporary move from Los Angeles to New Orleans as a young adult. These second-generation migrants demonstrate an attachment to Louisiana through their parents, as children of migrants.

In contrast to those with the migrant-oriented perspective who spoke of home from their own experiences, those second generation with a children-of-migrants perspective indirectly related to Louisiana came to know what the meaning of home was from their parents' point of view—it served as a sort of stand-in for the interactional past and helped to define their sense of Louisiana's interactional potential. The "sociobiographical memory", or the ability to experience events that one did not experience through group membership came into play (Zerubavel 1996:290). In their own narratives they spoke about how their parents (the original migrants) viewed Louisiana as a way of describing the significance of the place in their own lives.

The Place Is Not Substitutable

A related indicator of place attachment is that Louisiana is not substitutable by another place (Milligan 1998, 2003). The second-generation migrants who were born in Louisiana regarded Louisiana and their interactional past there as having a low level of substitutability, much like the

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first generation. For example, Albert's contrast above (see page 243) between "back home" (Louisiana) and "out here" (Los Angeles), suggests that the connection to Louisiana is so strong that the place where he currently lives is still not thought of as home even after 48 years—back home could not be replaced (Milligan 2003). Similarly, another migrant said about her eight years growing up in New Orleans: "I wouldn't want to give that away. I wouldn't sell those memories for a million dollars" (Faydra, age 64, born in New Orleans, migrated 1952). There is an explicit indication of the irreplaceable nature of New Orleans.

The theme of Louisiana not being substitutable was less directly obvious among the children-of-migrants group, although it was implied in some of the passages. For example, at the end of her quote above, Nina says: "even today, that's still home. […] This is where we've been raised, but that was home for her." There it becomes clear that for her mother, Louisiana would not be replaced by Los Angeles.

Although I have constructed these two categories of respondents as distinct, the complexity of place attachment and identity is evident in some cases, and particularly here for this indicator of substitutability. For example, Iphigenia, a native-born Louisianan, is a contrast to both the *children-of-migrants* and the *migrant-oriented* groups. She had a greater interactional past in Louisiana than most of the *children-of-migrants,* coming to Los Angeles from New Orleans in 1956 at age eight and visiting her hometown frequently as a youngster because her father still lived there. Yet unlike the *migrant-oriented* group, it is only through her mother's eyes and relationships that she talks about Louisiana explicitly as home. At times, though, she exhibited a strong attachment to the region of origin. For instance, when talking about the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, Iphigenia expresses how New Orleans holds a special place in her consciousness.

Yeah, and I guess I didn't really appreciate it as much or didn't realize how much I appreciated it even though I could never—I don't think that I could live there. When Katrina hit, that just did—it just did something to me. Even though I lived out here most of my life, it was like—like I told you, when I saw the Circle Market flooded, it was like a piece of me was gone because that whole neighborhood—who woulda ever thought that that city would be flooded like that.

Although her attachment was mainly through her mother's perspective, being from New Orleans was an integral part of her identity, so much so that she was altered after its destruction by Hurricane Katrina—she said that the images of the destruction "did something to me...it was like a piece of me was gone." This was a more final kind of loss than moving away was because access to the interactional past and potential in those locales of the city seemed to be destroyed, and it triggered a sense of disruption in place attachment tied in to specific scales of place that comprised a broader regional attachment: a piece of the built environment ("when I saw the Circle Market flooded"), "that whole neighborhood," and "that city" (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cox and Perry 2011; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b). Her overall relationship to Louisiana was more about a place identity, a way to define herself based in place, rather than a place attachment to a place of residence (Bogac 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Lewicka 2011; Milligan 1998).

Pride in Place

A third indicator of place attachment shared by the first and second generation is pride in place (Bonaiuto et al. 2002; Carrus et al. 2005; Mesch and Manor 1998). For the migrant-oriented second generation, the use of pride in place had to do with a sense of authenticity in their relationship to Louisiana. Here John (age 50, born in New Orleans, migrated with his parents to Los Angeles in 1960) comments on the unrelenting significance of having been born in Louisiana and he says:

Oh, it's great. It's great. I mean, I feel great that I wasn't born in L.A. I don't know why, you know, but I'm just glad I wasn't born here and that I have a connection to some other

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place that's home, you know? And even though I've lived here longer than I've ever lived there, and I've never really even lived there, other than going there in the summer, you know? But, I was born there and it's where I think of myself as being from, even though I'm really from L.A., you know? I mean, I've been here since I was 3 years old, you know, 47 years; but, it's where I'm from. It's where I was born and it's uh, you know, it's great to have a connection to something like that. You know, I mean, it's nice and when you go places and you talk about it with folk who are from New Orleans—say, "Yeah, I was born there." They're like, "Oh." You know, that makes you even more legit, you know, in a way. You know, "Oh, you were born—," you know, so that makes you more the legit with that crowd. You know, that you were born there, you know? So, and I'm really proud of that, you know, that I was born there.

This is a wonderfully explicit account of what the idea of being *from Louisiana* could mean for respondents. He literally states his pride in that fact ("I'm really proud of that"). But more than that, being born in Louisiana awards legitimacy when interacting within the Louisiana migrant community ("makes you more the legit with that crowd"), even though his residential experience ties him to Los Angeles ("even though I'm really from L.A."). He is extolling the virtues of being a migrant, and espouses the migrant-orientation of being attached to a place other than Los Angeles ("glad I wasn't born here and that I have a connection to some other place that's home"). He demonstrates that part of his pride as to do with the inability of Louisiana to be substituted—it would not do to be born elsewhere.

As John's account suggests, some of the migrant-oriented second generation expressed their pride in being "from Louisiana," but it was in conjunction with a sense of having a connection to two places.

> I'm prideful of the fact that, you know, I'm not homegrown. You know, and if anybody asks me, I'll stand right—jump right up and tell them, "No, I'm not from here, but I'm from here now because I've lived here so long, but it's like being from here, but I'm from Louisiana." (Calvin, age 57, born in Louisiana, migrated 1958)

> Somebody asks, I refer to where I was born. You know. I've been in L.A. long enough to say that I'm from L.A. if I wanted to. But it wouldn't be the truth. So I mean, I'm from New Orleans. And then have the benefit of two identities actually if you could put it that way. But yeah, I'm proud to say that I'm from New Orleans. I have no hang ups on that. (Cyril, age 67, born in New Orleans, migrated 1946)

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Like John, Calvin and Cyril claim Louisiana as home. Calvin is "prideful" that he is not a "homegrown" Los Angeles native. Cyril's attachment is also evidenced as pride ("I'm proud to say that I'm from New Orleans"). At the same time, however, they describe somewhat existing in a space with one foot in Louisiana and one foot in Los Angeles because they feel their length of residency could give them a claim to being Los Angelenos ("now because I've lived here so long"; "long enough to say that I'm from L.A. if I wanted to"), yet they definitely perceive themselves as native Louisianans.

This *in between* position is in some ways similar to international immigrants who adopt a hybrid ethnic and American approach to their relationships to place and identities (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Waters 1999). Cyril makes the connection between place attachment and identity here as he explains that he feels that he essentially has "two identities." He claims New Orleans as his foremost place identity, presumably based on the weight of meaning that an interactional past of being born in a place has for him ("the truth"). Then secondly he admits that he could also legitimately claim L.A. if he wanted to because of his long-term residency. And Calvin elaborates:

> I don't, you know, if someone asks me where I'm from, I stand up [*inaudible*] for Louisiana. "Any Louisianans in here?" "Yep. Right here." "Where'd you live?" And I tell them, you know, "I live in the country." I also lived in the town, lived in New Orleans and lived in Algiers, lived on the other side of the river, West Bank. Still have family there and friends there. I still go to visit. Still enjoy being there, but I love coming back home. I like being home. I like being—I like saying that I'm from Louisiana, put it that way. Yeah. (Calvin, age 57, born in Louisiana, migrated 1958)

As evident here, Calvin claims both Louisiana and Los Angeles as home. He is proudly a Louisianan when asked by others ("I like saying that I'm from Louisiana"). Recalling the specific places ("country," "town," "New Orleans," and "Algiers") where he lived and still visits within the larger region of Louisiana is important in claiming an authentic origin there—these places are

the sites of his interactional past there. Yet, in the context of returning from visiting Louisiana he says, "I like being home," perhaps referring to his attachment to his dwelling place or living out his daily routines in the city of Los Angeles. This illustrates different types of place attachment: one that is related to a place identity of being from Louisiana, and another that is related to attachment to Los Angeles as dwelling place. While these migrants seem attached to two places for different reasons, they are mainly only describing a place identity associated with Louisiana (Cuba and Hummon 1993a; Hernández et al. 2007; Hidalgo and Hernández 2001).

The Mechanisms of Individual Nostalgia, Collective Nostalgia, and Migrant/Mnemonic Community Interaction

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the establishment of the migrant community laid the groundwork to also function as a mnemonic community in Los Angeles, a group of people that collectively shape what is remembered (Zerubavel 1996:289; 2003). These communities can be families, organizations, or a generation of people who had collective experiences in a given time and place (Davis 1976; Milligan 2003; Zerubavel 1996). People learn how to understand their experiences and memories, what they should remember and forget, by listening to the recollections of members of these communities (Zerubavel 1996:286; 1997:87; 2003:5). In this case, there is a collective nostalgia that is generated by the mnemonic community. Here I focus on how two key mechanisms, (1) interaction with that mnemonic community of migrants and (2) nostalgia, both individual and the collective nostalgia generated by that interaction, contributed to the second generation's sense of place attachment to Louisiana.

Respondents who were old enough to have clear memories of Louisiana exhibited individual nostalgia about their birthplace, which supported their migrant-oriented place attachment. For example, Faydra was born in New Orleans and came to L.A. in 1952 when she was about eight years old. She used "back home" and "home" referring to New Orleans several

times throughout the interview.

> But I do, I love New Orleans. Even though it's changed. And those who didn't want to speak because I wasn't the right color, I don't care about that either. [*Laughter*] You know we didn't care because we had our own family, you know, we had our own little group. And they were there. And we were tight-knit. And we looked out for one another. […] And I always say to this day that, well New Orleans wasn't really what you would call country, but I feel, you know, I really think that being able to experience walking barefoot down the street, goin' to the corner store and buying my penny candy and not worrying about getting picked up off the street or anything, and eating a snow cone on a cold, a 5 cent snow cone on a hot day, and sitting on the porch and swinging and battin' mosquitoes, and all that stuff, I wouldn't even, I wouldn't want to give that away. I wouldn't sell those memories for a million dollars. […] So yeah, it was a nice life. And sometimes I even regret that I didn't really grow up there. (Faydra, age 64, born in New Orleans, migrated 1952)

This passage is a wistful reminiscence of what it was like to be a child in New Orleans. There is a longing tone to her narrative that reveals a strong experiential attachment to the locale ("I love New Orleans. Even though it's changed"). She expresses nostalgia for the interactional past there—the interactions she had with family, the lack of negative interactions with strangers ("not worrying about getting picked up off the street or anything"). She also expresses nostalgia for several forms of interacting with the natural and built environment ("eating...a 5 cent snow cone on a hot day," "walking barefoot down the street," "the corner store," "sitting on the porch and swinging and battin' mosquitoes"). This is all despite the negative aspects of skin color prejudice that she experienced there as a darker skinned person in the Creole community, highlighting a characteristic trait of nostalgia: the ability to exist in the face of or cover over negative memories (Davis 1979; Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Milligan 2003).

Growing up amidst the concentration of migrants in Los Angeles was not uncommon for many of the second generation. Being exposed to the people "from back home" in the Los Angeles context was important for instilling this sense of Louisiana as home among both sets of the second generation. For example, John, who demonstrated his affinity for migrant-oriented place attachment recalls:

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I remember everywhere we would go, there was someone from back home the places that we went. Big, we would leave Transfiguration on Sundays after mass and go to Big Loaf Bakery on Jefferson, which was owned by a New Orleans family. When we would go to social events, it was at Ashton's Shatto on Slauson, which was owned by Ashton Jones, another family from New Orleans. Every New Year's Day my Aunt [First and last name] gave an event at her place. One o' the girls that I dated and eventually married, [First and last name], was a family from New Orleans. So my cousin [First and last name] used to get all o' my hand-me-down clothes, so I used to get clothes from my cousin [First name], so there was always someone from back home in your mix, you know, somehow. (John, age 50, born in New Orleans, migrated with his parents to Los Angeles in 1960)

John connects the concept of "back home" with people in Los Angeles also being from New Orleans ("someone from back home in your mix"), and with places in Los Angeles that catered to the community ("someone from back home the places that we went"). The association of "back home" and these people and places in Los Angeles, demonstrates a nostalgic tone. The meaning of, and John's sense of memory about, Louisiana seemed to come from the exposure to and interaction with other migrants in Los Angeles (through the collective nostalgia) more than from the limited actual interactional past that he experienced during visits to Louisiana. The range of people in the mnemonic community was wide-reaching—they could be relatives, friends, or business owners. The exposure to the mnemonic community through interactional layout of Los Angeles where migrants lived, worshipped, went to school, socialized, and conducted business in close proximity was continuous ("Sundays"; "social events"; holidays like "New Year's Day"). It created Louisiana-centered expectations for interaction (interactional potential) that facilitated a Louisiana place attachment.

As was apparent from John's excerpt, the way the physical layout was manipulated by migrants (the interactional layout) was such that the interactional potential of Los Angeles could contribute to restoring and maintaining a migrant-oriented place attachment for the second generation who were born in Louisiana. This migrant concentration was so Louisiana-centered that in a few cases it also contributed to creating a migrant-oriented place attachment for second-

generation migrants who were born in Los Angeles. While their displacement from Louisiana

was not literal (it happened before they were born), they felt as though they also had a very

strong connection to Louisiana as individuals, not only vicariously through a parents' vantage

point. Kyle, who was one of these migrants recalls:

> So it was unique, it was interesting, it was different, and it felt special to be a part of this subculture, this group where everybody you knew was from Louisiana and I really enjoyed it. It felt like something special to me to know all these people from Louisiana and know that my parents knew them from when they were kids way, way over there and now their kids are friends way, way over here. [… B]ut I enjoyed it and had a lot of fun and it almost made me feel like a dual citizen of both California, which was my heart and joy and my pride and I was all about the Dodgers and Lakers and Rams and everything growing up, but it almost made me feel like, "Oh, I'm a dual citizen of Louisiana, I'm also from there," and in many ways that was home, too. (Kyle, age 41, parents came in 1960)

As in John's narrative, it seems that on the surface the nostalgia is directed toward Los Angeles,

but it is actually for the Louisiana-centered interaction that he experienced this community.

Kyle's connection to Louisiana emerged at least partly through his interaction with the migrant

community in Los Angeles as a proxy for Louisiana. Echoing Calvin and Cyril, a noteworthy

piece of this passage is the idea of being a "dual citizen." Although he says that he "almost" felt

this way, he did view both places with the lens of "home" in some regard. Ironically, he uses

being a fan of the Los Angeles sports teams as the proof of his California nativity. And in

comparison, his attachment to Los Angeles itself seems to be more superficial than the way he

describes his attachment to Louisiana that developed from his socially enmeshed experience of

the Louisiana migrant community in Los Angeles. This idea of "dual citizen[ship]" is parallel to

Cyril's "two identities," yet for Kyle it has different bases of affiliation (interactional versus

birth).

Some of the second generation saw the mnemonic community as important from their

parents' perspectives. Iphigenia, who had a cross between a migrant- and children-of-migrants

oriented place attachment, recalls:

> Iphigenia: […] But that's the part that I'm glad that even though she missed New Orleans that there were so many people from New Orleans that came here.
> Betty[31]: That helped.
> Iphigenia: It was like you were still at home.
> Betty: Yeah. It helped a lot.
> Iphigenia: Because you still had a big social circle.
> (Iphigenia, age 60, born in New Orleans migrated in 1958)

The network of her mother's friends ("big social circle") made her aware of the concentration of migrants in Los Angeles. It also was a kind of support for the homesickness that she witnessed in her mother when they first resettled. She uses the phrase "home" to describe the benefits of the concentration of migrants filtered through her mother's perspective ("It was like you were still at home").

The significance of living and interacting within the mnemonic community as a mechanism for place attachment is accentuated when looking at cases where that exposure to the mnemonic community was limited or absent. In those cases, access to the collective memory and collective nostalgia was also lacking (particularly for the second generation who did not have as much of their own Louisiana interactional past material to draw on). For example, Audrey recalls:

> So they'd go to church. And church would be—that's where we learned about a lot of that stuff, too, at least in New Orleans. It's very connected to the Catholic church, and—. So I didn't go to Catholic school. I wasn't in the circles. And so I kind of missed out on that New Orleans experience. So I had to kind of—I had to fill in a lot of gaps. I didn't, you know. I think if I had done that, it would have been—I would—you know, it'd be different. I would know more. So I went to public schools and, you know. So I was sort of disconnected from the very specific New Orleans experience. (Audrey, age 46, second generation, parents migrated in 1941 and 1956)

By linking the parishes in Los Angeles to "New Orleans experience" Audrey highlights the power of collective memory and nostalgia within the mnemonic community. That Audrey felt

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[31] Betty is Iphigenia's mother.

"disconnected from the very specific New Orleans experience" also illustrates the importance of collective nostalgia for fueling place attachment. Several others who demonstrated a weaker attachment to Louisiana ranging from a more surface interest in the physical features, environment, or the culture of a place to a general disinterest (Cochrane 1987; Relph 1976:54, 55; Tuan 1980) also reported being on the outskirts of the migrant community in one way or another. This ranged from living outside of the residential concentration, not being involved in the parishes, or having a non-Creole parent or spouse (Harris and Khanna 2010; Lacy 2004; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000).

The literature on immigration that points to residential concentrations as important for developing the second generation's sense of connection and identification with their home country is instructive here (Butterfield 2004; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Richards 2008). Residential concentration is usually linked to cultural exposure as the mechanism that keeps social structures, practices, and ethnic identities associated with those practices salient (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Richards 2008; Roth 2012). This is a similar mechanism found for multiracial persons and middle class Blacks whose cultural exposure determines how identities are constructed (Harris and Khanna 2010; Lacy 2004; Smith and Moore 2000). For example, for some second-generation West Indians, constructing immigrant and island-affiliated identities was feasible because of their immersion in Brooklyn West Indian communities, where the concentration was so dense that many viewed it as another island (Butterfield 2004; Richards 2008). One of these studies points to the role of collective storytelling and memory as part of what makes this immersion contribute to island identities, but does not quite flesh out how the mechanisms work (Richards 2008). The density of the Louisiana migrant concentration as respondents in Los Angeles have described it, and the role that it played for second-generation

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migrants is similar to the conditions found in Brooklyn, and has contributed to a Louisiana-affiliated place attachment and place identity for many. In this case, the mechanisms of interaction with a mnemonic community and nostalgia at the individual and collective levels have been demonstrated as important for how second-generation migrants who had limited experience with their parents' homeland are able to restore or create, and maintain a place attachment. Focusing on the place attachment adds another layer to understanding relationships and identities connected to place that the immigration literature usually does not address (Mazumdar et al. 2000).

Post-Displacement Interaction

The next mechanism examined here is post-displacement interaction. While less frequent and often connected to their parents' visits, post-displacement interaction also contributed to the attachment of some second-generation migrants. The post-displacement interaction adds to or creates new memories and experiences in the original place, supplementing the interactional past associated with that location. Post-displacement interaction is used to renew the understanding of the type of interaction that can be expected. It also renews access to physical features of the original place.

Many of the second generation with the migrant-oriented place attachment spent time visiting Louisiana when they were young and as adults, and in some cases spent extended time once they were adults. Most often this time was organized around visiting family. This exposure gave them more interactional past to draw from in constructing their place attachment. For example, above, Calvin associated his place attachment to Louisiana with his visits, saying, "Still have family there and friends there. I still go to visit. Still enjoy being there […] ." Faydra's passage above demonstrates a depth of physical experience gained from both her childhood

years, and her trips back to visit family. She valued the interactional past there so much that she

described the desire she had to pass on those same experiences on to her own children, which

could only be accomplished by sending them on frequent visits back to New Orleans with their

grandmother ("I feel sorry for kids who never got a chance to experience that. So I'm glad that

my kids did.").

The descriptions of visits back often included some distinct characteristics about

Louisiana that were not available elsewhere.

> Now, there is a definite distinct lifestyle back home, because I go back home quite often, you know. And even though, I'm—you know, may have traveled 2,000 miles to go back home, my aunt expects me, no matter how many miles I travel, to come to her house, OK? She's not going to come see me some place else. I go see her. And that's what we do, you know, we—if I'm there, then I'm expected to go visit this one, that one, that one and the other. And not only that, I visit them, "Come stay for dinner. Come eat something. Come, you know, sit and talk," you know, and that's just the mentality. (Albert, age 58, second generation, arrived in 1963)

> […] 'where else can you go to Mass and you're related to everybody in the church?' I said, 'I love it.' [*Laughter*] And it's true. You're just related to everybody there. (Claudine, age 69, second generation, arrived in 1942)

Both Albert's and Claudine's attachments to their small hometown of near Cane River was very

much tied in with extended family relationships. Albert's frequent returns home throughout

adulthood where he spent time visiting family was "distinct." For Claudine, the repeated and

frequent experience of interacting with a critical mass of Louisianans who were also extended

family members continuously created positive memories of and expectations for the place.

Furthermore, one of the key similarities between the two migrants born in Los Angeles

who exhibited migrant-oriented place attachments, Kyle and Alan, was that they lived in

Louisiana for some time as adults. For example, Kyle lived in Louisiana for approximately a

decade after law school, and started his own family there before returning to Los Angeles. Thus

his own interactional past was bolstered by residency as an adult, which influenced his strong

attachment to Louisiana.

Further evidence of the power of post-displacement interaction is found in the descriptions of Louisiana provided by these migrants and how they worked in conjunction with nostalgia. For example, migrants like John spent summers visiting because his grandparents still lived there, and he continues to visit every few years as an adult.

> New Orleans just has charm. It has romance, it has history, you know? […] It has panache about it, you know? You go up St. Charles Avenue and, you know, the look of the sidewalks are all messed up and the streets are full of holes and no one seems to care because it's just—it creates a certain charm. You know, you go on Magazine Street and, you know, there's balconies hanging off of all the buildings and everything looks old and antique looking. […] Yeah. It has a charm about it. It's a Caribbean city. You know, it really is, it's a north—like [my friend] said, it's a northern Caribbean city, you know? I mean, you could go into certain cities in the islands and walk through the French Quarter and they look the same, you know? And even all the rest of the city—you know, the look of the houses and the streets, you know, and then—and certain things that you would see down there that you would never see here in L.A. Like even when we would go down there as kids in the '70s, in the late '60s, there were still vegetable guys. There was still a guy who would come down the street collecting rags. The ragman with a horse; and there was still a guy coming down at this, with a horse pulling a cart selling produce, you know? (John, age 50, born in New Orleans, migrated with his parents to Los Angeles in 1960)

John's portrait of New Orleans demonstrates both nostalgia for physical aspects of the built environment, and the depth of his familiarity with the city that he gained over the years of many visits. His post-displacement interaction provided him with much material to draw from to construct his migrant-oriented place attachment.

This association between post-displacement interaction and place attachment also held true for some of the second generation with a children-of-migrants perspective. Nina illustrates how her initial visit to New Orleans during Mardi Gras (a mnemonically synchronized post-displacement interaction) for her formal introduction to Creole society through one of the social clubs was integral to her place attachment.

> So I guess the first time I went to New Orleans—I was born here—I went to New Orleans was when I was in high school. I made my debut with one of the social— […]

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Social groups, the Old Men Illinois, right, and what I found was, which I didn't have here, was the sense of community, you know, the—we were always going to somebody's house. Everything was around food, which was good. I had no problem with that, but everything was come over and eat. You know? So—and that was different than here. We didn't do it, even though we had, you know, we ate and had dinners and things at home with family stuff, but no matter where you went, someone wanted to sit down and feed you and that's what you did. You'd visit—I mean I can't say we, you know, when I went to New Orleans, my first experience, you know, I toured different things. I met different families and that was good. I'm not—but I'm just saying that's the difference that I see that that was home. It was about community. It was about me being introduced to, you know, the different people that my mom knew when she was there and who she grew up with as opposed to the city as a the landscape. (Nina, early 50s, mother came in 1942)

Nina's first post-displacement interaction for her debut in one of the social clubs was motivated at least partially by her parents' social ties in New Orleans. It was also shaped by the celebratory interactional layout of the city during Mardi Gras season that facilitated meaningful interaction with friends and family through the formal (debut ball) and informal introduction to Creole society ("no matter where you went, someone wanted to sit down and feed you"). The place attachment ("that was home," and her "sense of community") developed from interaction with people of and in the place where her parents were born, people who her mother had a bond with (social ties), rather than an individual attachment or one connected solely to the physical site ("as opposed to the city as a landscape"). Even though the original interactional past was limited for these second-generation respondents, the experience that they did have access to through post-displacement interaction was important for their development of place attachment. In other research on place attachment and migration, second-generation refugees who did not have any experience in their family's homeland did not demonstrate attachment to that place (Bogac 2009).

The mechanism of post-displacement interaction seemed to at least partially determine some of the difference seen between the migrant-oriented and the children-of-migrants groups. Those with less experience visiting Louisiana viewed it through the filter of their parent's

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experiences because that was the access to the interactional past that they had. Those with more first hand interactional past had more material they could draw from both nostalgically and otherwise in constructing their place attachment (Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011).

Compared to the first generation, the place attachment described by the second generation occurred with the limited interactional (past) experience that they had there as children (Milligan 1998, 2003). Second-generation knowledge of what to expect in future interactions (interactional potential) in Louisiana was also limited (to only visits), but continued to hold an important place in their consciousness. The second generation had a diverse set of attachment outcomes. Mainly Louisiana-born respondents used the migrant-oriented approach. Many had spent time in Louisiana either in their first years before migrating and/or through visits back as kids. Some respondents stayed with grandparents while their parents were getting set up in Los Angeles; others had extended visits during the summers. This contributed to their memories of the place laying the groundwork for their attachment to it as adults. Some of these migrants who were older recalled some of the contrasts between their old and new homes; some described periods of adjustment—new schools, new kids, new racial and ethnic groups, their accents or linguistic peculiarities drawing attention to their status of being from somewhere else. Like the older members of their cohort, those too young to remember much eventually became aware of a collective sense of loss of the "interactional potential" in Louisiana through their exposure to the migrant community. This gave them the fuel to forge their nostalgia for Louisiana and their strong, if abstract, attachment to it as a sort of home, thus creating a migrant-oriented place identity of being from Louisiana. This kind of identity framework is similar to an immigrant-oriented identity that some first and second-generation international immigrants maintain once in their host society.

The second approach, one that takes a children-of-migrants oriented view of talking about attachment to Louisiana was expressed by using the ideas of home and from Louisiana but explicitly linking them through their parents as intermediaries. This pattern was exhibited by mostly Los Angeles-born respondents, and one Louisiana-born respondent. For the most part, the respondents who used this convention did not have as much experience (interactional past) in Louisiana because they were not born there—visits back at various points in their life cycles contributed to personal memories that they had there, but these were less frequent than the migrant-oriented second generation. Yet despite this they still seem to channel some of the collective sense of loss of the interactional past and access to the interactional potential that they witnessed with their parents into their own relationship to Louisiana, and it is an irreplaceable component in how they relate to and identify with place through attachment (Zerubavel 1996).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I illustrate how Louisiana as a place is saturated with significance for migrants and was used as the object of a place attachment. The mechanisms of (1) nostalgia and collective nostalgia, (2) interaction with the mnemonic community, and (3) visits back contributed to creating, restoring, and maintaining first and second-generation migrants' place attachments and place identities in response to the displacement of migration. Invoking the idea of home, homesickness, pride in place, and the lack of substitutability of Louisiana within their narratives indicated the migrants' place attachments and identification. There were two types of second-generation approaches to place attachment: (1) a migrant-oriented approach and (2) a children-of-migrants approach.

The disruption of place attachment created a homesickness, which many first-generation respondents described feeling intensely when they first left. Interactional characteristics (such as

warmth and respect) of Louisiana were a basis for a nested state-regional pride, which at times drew upon the contrasts that they found between Louisiana and Los Angeles, and contributed to their attachment to Louisiana. The displacement from Louisiana was experienced as a loss of these features of interaction and the ability to interact with people in the accustomed manner. It brought into relief the things about a place that were viewed as valuable (Cochrane 1987; Davis 1979; Milligan 2003). They also described a sense of pride in their hometowns and that Louisiana could not be substituted. The mechanism of nostalgic recollection of the interactional characteristics and nostalgia for access to the physical characteristics that facilitated this kind of interaction was a method of compensating for the loss of place and restoring place attachment (Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Milligan 2003).

The second generation did not generally describe this direct sense of loss because they were so young, or not even born when their parents migrated. In contrast to the first generation, their attachment was not based in homesickness and relied on less concrete facets of interaction. For example, the first generation talked concretely about whom and what they missed about Louisiana; they spoke about Louisianan characteristics that they showed pride in having and which contrasted with their new setting of Los Angeles. On the other hand, both second-generation groups' talk about Louisiana was much more abstractly nostalgic as a whole.

But Louisiana still took the place of home for many. Those who were born in Louisiana experienced a migrant-oriented use of home based in their own memories and feelings for the place. Those who were born in Los Angeles generally had a more distant, children-of-migrants oriented attachment filtered through their parents' talk of home. Like the first generation, pride in and lack of substitutability of Louisiana were also used by some of both groups of migrants, but more so by those who had the migrant-oriented attachment and in a way that demonstrated a

stronger connection to the place. Individual and collective nostalgia for Louisiana contributed to creating and maintaining the place attachments they did exhibit.

The Louisiana-centered migrant community and interactional layout of Los Angeles was especially important for both groups of the second generation in creating an alternative interactional past from which to draw in constructing their place attachment. The community of migrants in Los Angeles served as a "mnemonic community" for the second generation, a source of memories about the place that was home and the feelings that they had about leaving it (Zerubavel 1996). The ability to interact with a tight-knit community of Louisiana people (including their parents) contributed to the sense that they were attached to that place as well.

The displacement and homesickness encouraged first-generation visits back as a mechanism for maintaining an attachment to Louisiana. The post-displacement interaction by the first generation was an intentional way of trying to bridge and preserve their attachment to their home. The feeling of attachment that migrants had grown to expect from interacting in New Orleans with family and friends (interactional potential) was temporarily renewed or restored through visiting. Periodically bringing themselves in proximity to the place of attachment contributed to a cycle of interaction and nostalgia that refreshed and maintained the place attachment.

Many respondents whose visits to Louisiana were initially driven by their social ties continued even after family had moved or passed away. Arranging visits during Mardi Gras season was one way to synchronize "access to their collective past" and take advantage of the interactional layout of New Orleans during this time (Zerubavel 1996:294). Parties, parades, and other gatherings made use of the already close-knit physical layout of the city (particularly in the Seventh Ward and Tremé neighborhoods where many migrants came from). These features of

the environment contributed to a special interactional potential and facilitated celebratory interaction to fuel nostalgia upon returning to Los Angeles.

Visits back to Louisiana were even important for the second generation. Many of these respondents had an attachment to Louisiana that was significant despite the lack of residence experience there with the majority of their lives being spent in Los Angeles (cf. Hernández et al. 2007; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Lewicka 2011). Post-displacement interaction allowed them to create their own interactional past there, and gain a sense of the interactional potential that their parents were homesick for, thus (re)creating a place attachment to Louisiana as home. Unlike the first generation, their childhood visits were not out of personal necessity or choice—it was by their parents' choice that any of the second generation visited Louisiana at all as children. However, several continued to visit as adults as well. This mechanism, particularly the character of the visits back during their formative years, may have contributed to the differences in attachment between the migrant-oriented and children-of-migrants groups. For the children-of-migrants group, they seemed to be either more sporadic or did not begin until the respondents were older. Despite the differences, the result of visiting for both generations, with the memories it generated, was to continue the attachment to place, building on the interactional past and accessing the interactional potential of Louisiana.

This chapter contributes to answering three of the research questions of this dissertation. First, how were the migration and settlement processes experienced by these migrants? The migration experience disrupted Louisianans' emotional attachment to their hometowns and state. But settling in a migrant concentration and collectively and nostalgically remembering aspects of their places of origin restored attachment to Louisiana. Second, what did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? Being from Louisiana had an emotional significance in Los Angeles. The

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attachment to that place structured every day activities for many. It was a point of pride in a city full of migrants and immigrants. For many, being from Louisiana could not be substituted. It in turn influenced how they constructed identities. Third, how are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? Taking a closer look at the place attachment migrants had provides insight to how the place identities discussed in chapter 4 could be developed, and why they would be so key in modifying racial and ethnic identities. Using Louisiana as part of the way they interpreted themselves in the context of Los Angeles was a symbol of their emotional attachment to the place where they migrated from.

By examining how Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles maintain attachment to their place of origin through nostalgia, interaction with the mnemonic community, and post-displacement interaction, I contribute to the literature on place attachment, immigration/migration, and Creoles. Where most studies in the sociological vein that use Milligan's (1998, 2003) work on place attachment do so in a more peripheral manner (e.g., Borer 2010; Hochschild, Jr. 2010; Kato 2011; Ocejo 2011), I confirm that the mechanism of nostalgia is important, but in ways beyond hers and others' findings. I illustrate that place attachments have different trajectories, extending her theoretical framework to include post-displacement interaction and interactional layout. For example, displacement that is not permanent creates different circumstances of dealing with loss and restoration of place attachment. I find that there can be constant renewing of the cycle of interaction and nostalgia because periodic interaction in the old place feeds and renews the nostalgia for it. Generally, while much research using this interactionist framework discusses forms of displacement it does not examine post-displacement interaction as a mechanism that contributes to maintaining an attachment to place. The interactional layout concept helps to explain how actors negotiate and bridge the physical features of Louisiana and

the interaction that occurs there. In this case the interactional layout made the experiences in Louisiana after displacement more effective in restoring the place attachment.

This chapter also adds to research on im/migrants' attachments to new and old sites by showing how long-term migrants are able to successfully continue place attachment connected to their places of origin from the position of their new site through nostalgia, interaction with a mnemonic community, and the additive interaction of temporarily returning (see also Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011; Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport 2000; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). While the existing literature touches on the role of enclaves and return interaction, they do not systematically focus on how they work as mechanisms in the place attachment framework. Much of the place attachment literature focuses on short-term migrants, recreational visitors, and disaster victims and do not account for role of return visits home (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Williams et al. 1992). Examining loss of place from the perspective of leaving a place voluntarily also provides a different perspective compared to ethnographies on neighborhood loss and nostalgia where actors negotiate displacement while staying within the site as it changes around them (Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Ocejo 2011).

This chapter also adds to the migration, immigration, and Black identities literature because it focuses on how the mechanisms of residential concentration and interaction within a migrant community influence im/migrant identities using an innovative framework. Other research on immigration and racial identities has pointed to cultural exposure as important for constructing identities associated with a place or community of origin (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Harris and Khanna 2010; Lacy 2004; Portes and Rumbuat 1996; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Smith and Moore 2000). My case demonstrates that in addition to acting as a context

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for socialization, the emotional meaning of place generated through the processes of displacement, restored place attachment through individual and collective nostalgia, interacting with co-migrants, and temporarily interacting in the original place are important factors for how migrant identities are constructed.

Finally, this focus on the emotional life of migrants provides another perspective on how migration and settlement were experienced during the Great Migration, confirming that emotional ties to home were important (Boehm 2009; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996). While the scant research on Creoles outside of Louisiana has shown that migrants have tended to maintain connections to their place of origin through migrant residential enclaves (Flamming 2005; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989), they do not always provide systematic analysis of how this is achieved or the role that it plays in facets of their experiences other than cultural preservation. The focus is often on the racial and ethnic identities Creoles, and on the cultural components of that group's membership. But by examining how Louisiana migrants maintain attachment to their home place through nostalgia, mnemonic community interaction, and post-displacement interaction, I show that in addition to a complex racial and ethnic history and identity, there are place-based components to their experiences in Los Angeles. These findings also demonstrate that place, and Louisiana in particular, has intense emotional significance in their settlement experiences, in their identity construction, and in their lives many years after the migration.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

This dissertation is an exploration of the construction of contemporary racial and ethnic identity, but it is also an exploration of identity construction in the context of a historical internal migration in the United States. It answers the following research questions: How are racial and ethnic identities constructed and modified? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? What did being from Louisiana, and for those who had the connection, being Creole mean in Los Angeles? And how were the migration and settlement processes experienced by these migrants? I argue that racial and ethnic identity in this case is a product of the interplay between local and national racial structures and meanings, collective memory and nostalgia, and place-based interaction.

The answers to these research questions are derived from my analysis of a collection of life history interviews conducted with 47 migrants and children of migrants who came to Los Angeles from Louisiana during the Great Migration period of the 1930s through the early 1970s. My findings show that for the majority of Louisiana migrants in this study who have Black ancestry, many also have a connection to Creole ancestry. Through the in-depth interviews with migrants in their own homes and communities, this dissertation demonstrates the multiple ways that Black and Creole ancestries are understood in relation to each other, and how they are used to construct identities. Creole has been described as a historically multiracial ethnic group, meaning a group that has emerged as a result of generations of mixture of putatively distinct racial groups and distinct ethnic groups resulting from colonization and slavery in North America (Jolivétte 2007). This view recognizes attributes associated with both race and ethnicity (Jolivétte 2007; Nagel 1994:152-153). But it also must be viewed as an ethnic group *within* the

larger Black racial category. The power of race and racialization in the lives of most migrants with Creole ancestry has positioned it as such.

Most of the migrants in this study constructed Black identities modified with Creole and Louisiana-based identities. A smaller proportion of migrants had Creole-only, or Black-only identities, but Louisiana-based identities were important for these migrants as well. In addition to the factors associated with racialization, identities were constructed using a combination of ancestry, visible ethnic and racial markers (such as surnames, phenotype, and culture), and place-based factors. A connection to Louisiana was a constant force for many of the migrants, shaping an attachment to and identification with the place that has persisted over many decades and across generations. Migrants established an enclave that supported collective memory and collective nostalgia for Louisiana through Louisiana-centered interaction. This contributed to place attachments and identifications associated with Louisiana that were used by migrants to modify Black and Creole racial and ethnic identities in Los Angeles.

The dissertation forms a nuanced account of the layers of racial and ethnic identity construction for native-born Americans with Black ancestry. It also reveals how migration from one location to another and relationships to place influence the social meanings of racial and ethnic identities. The study also contributes to understanding the meaning and usage of Creole in Los Angeles.

EMPIRICAL CHAPTER SUMMARIES

I present the empirical evidence of this study over three chapters. Chapter 3 is a portrait of the Louisiana community in Los Angeles and contributes to answering the questions: How were the migration and settlement processes experienced? And what did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? I demonstrate that during their settlement of Los Angeles, migrants created a

Louisiana-centered enclave within the larger Black migrant concentration in the city (Abrahamson 1996; cf. Portes and Jensen 1987). The enclave hosted the mnemonic community, a concentration of people who engaged in collective memory and nostalgia for home based in their shared status as Louisianans, and for most their shared connection to Creole ancestry too. Their residential, church, and business concentrations supported a Louisiana-centered lifestyle; and they maintained strong ties between the lifestyle and the geographic place they occupied during the height of the Great Migration.

The concentration was shaped by the traditional patterns observed in the Great Migration more broadly, where pioneers and chain migration paved the way for settling in a new place, and residential segregation limited the areas where migrants could live (Bond 1936; Chapple 2010; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; MacDonald and MacDonald 1964; Marks 1989; Robinson 2010; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000; Wilkerson 2010). But two key interactional mechanisms were also important in the residential, church, and business concentration in Los Angeles: (1) interaction with the mnemonic community and (2) the Louisiana-centered interactional potential of Los Angeles. The concentration in turn helped to reinforce collective memory and nostalgia for Louisiana, setting the stage to restore migrants' place attachment (see Chapter 5). The enclave was an important factor in passing on the collective memory of migration, and of belonging to migrant community in Los Angeles for the second generation.

Being from Louisiana meant, for most, being a part of a migrant community that determined multiple facets of daily life—from where one lived, went to school, worshipped, and conducted business. It meant being reminded of a connection to a regional homeland other than Los Angeles on a regular basis. By looking at these interactional and emotional aspects of

migration for Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, this chapter demonstrates the complexities of Black migration during this period that are suggested by historical studies as important, but are often not examined in detail (Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010).

In Chapter 4 I examine the following questions: How is the meaning of Creole constructed and used by migrants in Los Angeles? How are racial and ethnic identities constructed? How are these identities affected by mixed ancestry? How are they affected by migration? I show that there are several narratives that Louisiana migrants use to define Creole. The migrants' constructions of Creole meanings are often contextualized by explaining to outsiders who Creoles are. In doing so migrants rely on racial mixture, cultural features, history, phenotype, ancestry, and place narratives. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive types of explanations, but tools that they draw on depending on the situation. The ideas about racial and ethnic categories that are used in the Creole narratives are also related to how migrants with Black and Creole ancestry construct their identities. For most, identities are often constructed situationally in interactions with others where ambiguous appearances or other ethnic/racial markers draw questions. Black identities are often modified by Creole cultural or mixed racial identities. In addition, multiple ancestries, socially-mediated appearance, surnames, language, and racialization as Black are important factors in how migrants construct their identities. Place is also important to how migrants modify Black identities, often using it as an explanation of racial and ethnic markers that are picked up on by outsiders to question their Blackness. These Black, Creole, and Louisiana identities are constructed in ways that are similar to, but not quite like any one of groups discussed in the literature on White ethnics, Black identities, multiracial persons, and immigrants with Black ancestry.

Finally, Chapter 5 contributes to answering these three questions: How were the migration and settlement processes experienced by Louisiana migrants? What did being from Louisiana mean in Los Angeles? And how are racial and ethnic identities affected by migration? Migration and settlement were experienced as processes of displacement and restoration of attachment to place. I illustrate how three mechanisms, (1) interaction in the mnemonic community, (2) visits back, and (3) collective memory and nostalgia, contribute to maintaining migrants' place attachment and place identities in response to displacement. First-generation respondents' attachments to and identification with Louisiana are indicated by their use of the idea of home or homesickness, pride in place, and a lack of substitutability of Louisiana within their narratives. Second-generation respondents indicate their place attachment by using home, pride, and a lack of substitutability as well. The second generation expresses their place attachments in two ways: a migrant-oriented attachment and a children-of-migrants oriented attachment. Louisiana remains a significant place for migrants over time. The attachment to that place structured their settlement, but also how they related to place emotionally in constructing their racial, ethnic, and place identities.

The thread across all of the chapters is the argument that racial and ethnic identities are a product of the interplay between local and national racial structures and meanings, collective memory and collective nostalgia, and place-based interaction. The roles of local and national racial structures were particularly evident in Chapter 4, which discussed how the meanings of Creole and the racial and ethnic identities were constructed in Los Angeles. The roles of collective memory and nostalgia, and place-based interaction were demonstrated in all of the chapters from settling, interacting within Louisiana-centered communities, constructing identities, and constructing relationships to place.

EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Through the study of Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, and in this case mainly Creole migrants, this dissertation addresses questions of how racial and ethnic identities are constructed and affected by mixed ancestry and migration. But why study Louisiana migrants in this location? This dissertation provides an empirical example that is unique, but also that is analytically strategic for five important reasons. First, research is lacking on cases of how non-immigrant Black racial and ethnic identities are constructed in the United States. Second, the Great Migration created a mass movement of people and circumstances that would provide new arenas for the construction and negotiation of identities. Third, Los Angeles was a unique destination for the Great Migration economically, as well as racially. Fourth, Louisiana migrants made up a great proportion of the new Black residents in Los Angeles during this period. And fifth, Louisiana's racial history provides a complex and sociologically intriguing context from which its migrants moved and had to that point constructed their racial and ethnic identities.

The complexity of this case, including the mixed ancestry and interstate migration, cannot be explained by any one branch of the race and ethnicity literature. This study lies at the nexus of the work that addresses White ethnicities, Black identities, multiracial individuals, and immigration. It also contributes to the place attachment literature, the Great Migration literature, and the literature on Louisiana Creoles.

Contributions to Race & Ethnicity Literature

My dissertation finds that racial and ethnic identities of Louisiana migrants are constructed in ways that are similar to findings for White ethnics, African Americans and Black immigrants, and multiracial individuals' identities (Chapter 4). For example, White ethnics have a mix of ethnicities to draw from, which is often done in symbolic ways (Alba 1990; Gans 1979; Waters

1990). But this literature often argues that this mode of constructing identity is not available to people of color, especially those with Black ancestry. In contrast, Chapter 4 shows that Louisiana migrants with Creole ancestry sometimes use Creole in ethnic ways to situationally modify Black identities. They often use narratives of racial mixture as a way to describe their backgrounds in a symbolic way to outsiders. For others, the use of Creole sometimes emerges of the desire to acknowledge distinct ancestries that are part of their interpretation of Creole history or their specific family history.

In this regard, the findings from Chapter 4 also demonstrate that Louisiana migrants with Creole ties do not fit completely within the literature on African American identities. These migrants' socialization and racialization as Black (both within the Jim Crow South before migrating and in the Los Angeles racial structures) does shape the tendency to identify in racial terms primarily, and to assert Black identities before an ethnic identity. However, they also acknowledge Creole as an ethnic component to their racial identities. This can involve recognizing an explicit mixed ancestry narrative of Creole, and/or recognizing individual ancestries that are part of Creole history. These findings for Creoles are unlike those reported generally for African Americans, where non-Black ancestry is unimportant (Nagel 1994; Waters 1991).

On the other hand, Louisiana migrants also construct identities in ways that are similar to how Black immigrant identities are constructed because of the history of multigenerational racial mixture. For international immigrants with Black ancestry, an immigrant or ethnic identity is often constructed in local host society contexts, but their homeland racial structure still plays a role in how they identify (Butterfield 2004; Habecker 2012; Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Waters 1991, 1999). Similarly, local racial structures in Louisiana and Los Angeles interplay with

national ones in this process where various racial markers, and narratives about racial mixture, cultural mixture, and place are used to explain Louisiana migrants' identities in a setting outside of their origins. Yet, unlike some contemporary Black immigrants, this was not generally reported as a way to distance from African Americans (although it was reported that "others" with Creole ancestry used this strategy) (Habecker 2012; cf. Richards 2008; Roth 2012; Waters 1999).

Louisiana migrants with Creole ties also sometimes construct multiracial-oriented identities. This is particularly the case for migrants who use Creole as a primary identity. They draw on some similar factors that are used by bi- and multiracial individuals, like racially ambiguous appearance (Harris and Khanna 2010; Khanna 2011; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002). But as I find in Chapter 4, Louisiana migrants also draw on the historical narrative of racial and cultural mixture, not just one parents' ancestry. This is a contrast to biracial or multiracial persons because their racial mixture is usually of just one generation, which differs from the racial mixture that often goes back many generations for Louisiana migrants with Black and Creole ancestry. I also find that this use of multiracial narrative was emergent over time, matching the increased public awareness and acceptance of racially mixed identities (Brunsma 2005; DaCosta 2006; Gaudin 2005; Khanna 2010).

This dissertation also contributes to the race and ethnicity literature in the way that migration and place are implicated in constructing racial/ethnic identities. In the White ethnicities and Black identities literatures, the discussion of place is often about socialization, cultural exposure, and authenticity in creating identities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Jackson 2001; Lacy 2004; Smith and Moore 2000; Waters 1990). Similarly, in the multiracial literature the use of place is about how socialization and cultural exposure to other non-White co-ethnics or more

diverse contexts shapes identities (Harris and Khanna 2010; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2002; Smith and Moore 2000). Often the multiracial literature does not consider the role of regional context for ways that biracial identities are constructed (Khanna 2011). But the immigration literature suggests that place influences racial and ethnic identity construction through interpretation of home and host racial structures, interaction with other social actors, contexts of socialization, and changes in place which shift the meanings of these categories. It also suggests that migrants sometimes construct identities that are oriented toward their countries of origin even while in their host countries, with place taken for granted as part of how ethnic and racial labels are constructed (e.g. Dominican ethnicity references the country of Dominican Republic). These country-based identities are interpreted to be a result of translation and reapplication of home racial structures to the new setting (Roth 2012). And they may sometimes be used as a way to distinguish themselves from being racialized in a negative way (Roth 2012; Sánchez Gibau 2005; Waters 1999).

This is a similar process for interstate migrants. Examining migrants from one state living in another demonstrates how place contributes to constructing racial and ethnic identities because in this case, migrants use Louisiana or their hometown as a place in modifying racial/ethnic identities. But the relationship to place is an additional process through which racial and ethnic identities can be modified or contextualized, as suggested by an application of the literature on how place attachments and place identities are constructed, restored, and maintained interactionally. As I demonstrate in Chapter 5, place attachments and place identities are constructed and modified in interaction with the place itself. Louisiana migrants had specific experiences, memories, and expectations of interaction associated with their place of origin and had strong emotional connections to that place. A key emotion was place attachment, making the

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homeland an integral part of how they related to place in new settings. A migrant's leaving their home, despite the anticipated advantages, caused a feeling of disconnection, and oftentimes longing for that place. Interaction with fellow migrants with whom place-centered collective memories and collective nostalgia were shared, backed by return visits to Louisiana, restored a feeling of attachment and identification with that place in the new setting. This kind of place attachment or identity may be used in lieu of, in addition to, or to modify racial and ethnic identities, where migration from one place to another creates the circumstances for migrants to figure out new ways to identify and define themselves to others, as I demonstrate in Chapter 4. Place is used to explain ambiguous racial and ethnic markers like appearance and names, and the meaning of Creole to outsiders. For many migrants, a Louisiana place identity is an ever-present part of how they function in Los Angeles.

Contributions to Place Literature

My dissertation also adds to the place literature. In Chapter 4 I demonstrate how place identities modify racial, ethnic, and migrant identities. In Chapter 5, I examine the mechanisms that contribute to migrants' attachments to new and old sites. I show how nostalgia, interaction with a mnemonic community, and the additive interaction of temporarily returning contribute to long-term migrants' ability to successfully restore place attachment connected to their places of origin from the position of their new site (see also Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). This fills a gap because much of the literature on place attachment and place identity and immigration does not generally consider racial and ethnic identities (King et al. 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). Furthermore, much of the place attachment literature focuses on short-term migrants, recreational visitors, and disaster victims and does not account for role of return visits (Chamlee-

Wright and Storr 2009; Cuba and Hummon 1993a, 1993b; Williams et al. 1992). Examining loss of place from the perspective of leaving a place voluntarily also provides a different perspective compared to ethnographies on neighborhood loss and nostalgia where actors negotiate displacement while staying within the site as it changes around them (Kasinitz and Hillyard 1995; Ocejo 2011).

Additionally, where most studies in the sociological vein that use Milligan's (1998, 2003) work on place attachment do so in a more peripheral manner (e.g., Borer 2010; Hochschild, Jr. 2010; Kato 2011; Ocejo 2011), I confirm that the mechanism of nostalgia is important, but in ways beyond Milligan's and others' findings. In Chapter 5 I illustrate that place attachments have different trajectories, extending Milligan's (1998, 2003) theoretical framework to include post-displacement interaction and interactional layout. For example, interaction that is not completely cut off from the site creates different circumstances of dealing with loss and restoration of place attachment. I find that there can be constant renewing of the cycle of interaction and nostalgia because periodic interaction in the old place feeds and renews the nostalgia for it. These return visits are suggested by the Great Migration and immigration literatures as an important factor for migrants maintaining ties with their homeland, although they do so outside of the place attachment framework (Boehm 2009; Gregory 2005; Hine 1991; Phillips 1999; Richards 2008). But, while much of the research using this interactionist framework discusses forms of displacement it does not examine post-displacement interaction explicitly as a mechanism that contributes to maintaining an attachment to place (Bogac 2009; King et al. 2011; Mazumdar et al. 2000; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2009b). And my interactional layout concept helps to explain how actors negotiate and bridge the physical features of Louisiana and the interaction that occurs there (Milligan 1998, 2003). In this case the

interactional layout made the interactions in Los Angeles and Louisiana after displacement more effective in restoring the place attachment.

Contributions to Great Migration Literature

This dissertation also adds to the literature on the Great Migration by focusing on little-researched areas of this experience (Boehm 2009; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000). Sociological accounts of the Great Migration out of the American South tend to frame it aggregately as a story of demographic shifts, labor migration, assimilation, residential segregation, or entrepreneurship (Blauner 2001; Gregory 2005; Lieberson 1980; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000). There is still comparatively less known about the factors that shaped the migration and settlement experience itself, particularly for specific state-groups of migrants (Boehm 2009; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003; Tolnay et al. 2000). Scholars of the Great Migration call for more qualitative research on why destinations were chosen by individuals, how migration was experienced, what it was like for migrants to settle in their new locations, with oral history identified as a crucial data source (Boehm 2009; Marks 1989; Tolnay 2003). Furthermore, few of these studies systematically examine how children of southerners understood migration experiences similarly or differently from their parents, only occasionally including the recollections of children of migrants (Boehm 2009; Hine 1991; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999).

By contrast, examining the practical, interactional, emotional, and generational aspects of migration for Louisiana migrants in Los Angeles, the dissertation's analysis of life history interviews presents one case that illustrates the disaggregated complexities of Black migration during the second phase of the Great Migration. In addition to considering the role of migrant networks, chain migration streams, and residential segregation, in the migration and settlement

process, Chapter 3 adds a focus on how collective memory and nostalgia for place contributed to building migrant concentrations.

In addition, despite the South being such a distinct region (Gregory 2005), there is not much attention paid to how identities and interstate migrants' state-specific cultures were constructed, casting their lives in the homogenous terms of the "southern", "Black", or "African American" experience (Bond 1936; Gregory 2005; Lemke-Santangelo 1996; Phillips 1999; Rutkoff and Scott 2010). I add to the literature by focusing on how Louisiana migrants from the Great Migration period construct racial, ethnic, and place identities in Los Angeles (Chapter 4). And I also examine the relationship to the home state that migrants had after migrating (Chapter 5).

Contributions to Creole Literature

Finally, this dissertation also contributes to the literature on Louisiana Creoles by adding contemporary empirical research. Much of the research is historical or based in fieldwork from the 1980s or earlier (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996b; cf. Gaudin 2005; Hirsch and Logsdon 1992; cf. Jolivétte 2007; cf. Parham 2008, 2012; Woods 1972, 1989). As the first academic study entirely focused on the Los Angeles migration, this dissertation also adds more, as well as contemporary sociological research on Creoles outside of Louisiana (e.g., Anthony 1995 cited in Daniel 2002:86-88; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Woods 1989).

Chapter 3 demonstrates a new perspective on the establishment of the Los Angeles concentration by focusing on the role of nostalgia and other emotional aspects of connection to place in building that enclave. The previous research on Los Angeles Creoles offers descriptions of the migrant enclave, including lists of Creole businesses and church concentrations, and discussions of the cultural practices preserved within that context (Gaudin 2005; George 1992;

Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989). But unlike my third chapter, most of this research does not go into analytic depth about how they were established, the emotional meaning that these institutions had, and the role that they had in the lives and identities of Louisiana migrants.

For example, my research supplements Woods's (1972, 1989), Gaudin's (2005), and Jolivétte's (2007) with a rich qualitative account of how migrants and their children experienced their settlement. My study also presents new interview data that goes beyond Cane River and Creole activists by widening the scope to migrants from New Orleans and other cities in Louisiana, is not limited by drawing on one family, includes migrants who arrived after Woods's data was collected, and systematically analyzes the children of migrants' perspectives on migration and settlement (Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Woods 1972, 1989). In Chapter 3 I show that Louisiana-centered interaction within the mnemonic community was important for constructing and relating to the migrant concentration, and that nostalgia and collective memory for Louisiana were in turn supported by the migrant concentration.

Chapter 4 of this dissertation also adds to the literature by contributing a systematic analysis of the current meanings and usage of Creole in Los Angeles (Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Woods 1972, 1989). I demonstrate the multiple narratives that persons with ties to Creole ancestry use in defining the term. These narratives, particularly those drawing on racial mixture and culture, are similar to those used in the literature on Creoles in Louisiana (Domínguez 1986; Dormon 1996a; Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007; Parham 2012). But I also show that there are distinct ways that the movement from one place to another shapes the definitions, making Louisiana prominent in how Creole is defined in Los Angeles.

In Chapter 4 I also examine how identity construction for most Louisiana migrants is a multilayered process, resulting in a combination of Black, Creole, and Louisiana identities. Place

is an important way of constructing and modifying identities in conjunction with Creole. In this argument I focus on identity encounters, interactions where identities are constructed in response to questions from others. This is not a focal point of previous research, although these kinds of encounters are mentioned peripherally in other studies (Gaudin 2005; Jolivétte 2007).

My findings are also a departure from Jolivétte's (2007) study of Creole activists from around the United States associated with the Creole Heritage Center, many of whom had personal or political agendas related to having Creole recognized as a race. While some of my respondents shared the view of Creole as a primary racial and cultural identity, most did not and represent a more diverse approach to incorporating Creole into their lives partly because they were not sampled solely from a Creole organization. Furthermore, Jolivétte's (2007) findings focus on the argument that Native American identity is emergent within the Creole community, which I did not find to be nearly as prominent amongst my respondents.

Gaudin's (2005) dissertation is a historical study, and although she takes up the question of the meaning of Creole identity in the contemporary period, it is largely from the perspective of Creoles living in Louisiana, and relies mostly on secondary sources cited in the journalism and other limited literature available for the Los Angeles perspective. She finds that Creole identity, characterized by Creole exclusivity, is based in understandings from Louisiana's past. It is reserved for private consumption among other Creoles in the aging generation who came of age during Jim Crow. While I see some evidence of this private consumption in my findings, I also demonstrate that Creole is still used in certain settings in identity encounters with outsiders. While there is some boundary work between themselves and African Americans reported by my respondents, their dilemma, particularly for younger first generation and the second generation, was often about trying to fit in with the wider Black community. Another boundary dilemma was

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being cast as foreign, and asserting their belonging to American places. Furthermore, Louisiana as part of a place identity was sometimes used interchangeably with Creole, perhaps as a racially uncharged substitute for Creole. But it also was related to the emotional attachment that many first and second-generation migrants demonstrated.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Finally, I'd like to point to three areas of future research that could expand this work. First, a comparison with non-Creole migrants from Louisiana would be an important expansion. Although I kept my recruitment methods open to non-Creole migrants I was unable to locate comparable numbers of Black and White migrants from Louisiana. This is an important finding in itself, and points to the possibility that a significant number of Louisiana migrants may have had Creole ties (Domínguez 1986; Gaudin 2005; George 1992; Rutkoff and Scott 2010; Woods 1972). But, including more Black and/or White migrants would provide a key comparison with respect to the role of place and the factors involved in constructing racial and ethnic identities of migrants. This comparison would help answer the question of whether my findings are a result of a Creole effect? Second, comparisons with migrants from other states in Los Angeles would also help to determine if the results found here are a result of Creole connections or a specific effect Louisiana. If other states' migrants had similar relationships to place, this would be significant for understanding the role of place relationships in the Great Migration experience. For example, were Texas clubs an indicator of a similar place effect? Third, a comparison with another Louisiana Creole destination such as the Oakland/East Bay area of California would help determine if these findings are a result of Los Angeles' racial context or in differences in the selectivity of migrants to both locations.

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