Comparative Reflections of Post-Colonial Jamaica: Counternarratives of Three Jamaican Women Academics at Home and Abroad

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Abstract

Using Walter Rodney's (1969) Groundings as a methodological framework, this manuscript centers the experiences of three Jamaican women academics navigating the post-diaspora, and examines how studying and working in the U.S. shaped their perceptions of race, class, and coloniality. These women navigated tensions associated with living and working in the homeland and the hostland. This study explores the impact of their search for home (both in the homeland and in the hostland) on their understanding of race, class, and privilege after being born and raised in Jamaica. The notion of their collective coming of age is really their own intellectual awakening and transformation of their own positionality inside and outside of Jamaica.

Keywords: *post-diaspora, post-coloniality, Jamaican women*

The push and pull factors of Caribbean migration have long been attributed to colonial economic growth (e.g., the Windrush era in the UK), serving in World Wars I and II, globalization, notions of upward social mobility, and schooling. Caribbean women are central to understanding the evolution of migration practices and scholars like Dunn and Scafe (2019) explore the multiple roles they play in shaping new homelands in the diaspora. The concept of the diaspora is troubled by anthropologist and social theorist Michael Laguerre (2017) as being both different in the homeland and subaltern in the hostland. His purposeful shift to the term *post-diaspora* is an attempt to symbolize the practice of belonging equally to both the homeland and hostland country. Our narratives trouble Laguerre's thinking as we argue that ultimately, we may find ourselves home(less) given the inequities for Black women in both the homeland and hostland.

Much of what is written about Black women academics in post-colonial Jamaica is attributed to some of the formidable Caribbean scholars like Sylvia Wynter, Elsa Goveia, Eudine Barriteau, Lucille Mathurin Mair, and Verene Shepherd, to name a few. What is not explicitly questioned is the notion of being a first-generation, Afro-Jamaican and multiracial, post-colonial academic woman. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of three Jamaican women (living in the United States and Jamaica) who previously studied, worked, and lived in the United States, and explore its impact on our understanding of race, class, and privilege after being born and raised in Jamaica. The notion of our collective coming of age is really our own intellectual

awakening and the transformation of our understanding of our own positionality inside and outside of Jamaica.

Our definition of being first-generation, post-colonial citizens derives from our parents being born within a colony that gained independence prior to our birth. We were among the first generation of children born in a newly independent nation-state. Each of us describe our collective struggle with colonial humiliation, delayed economic mobility due to gender and age discrimination, and the tensions of an evolving post-colonial context. We also explore tensions associated with professional mobility and the implications for home, hostland, mothering, and being transnational academic professionals. We find ourselves constantly asking, *do we stay*? Or *do we go*? This paper centers on our emotional labor while we wrestle with the theoretical framing of post-diaspora (Laguerre, 2017) and Caribbean post-coloniality (Puri, 2004). Our conversations are a continuation of previous historical discussions among women to challenge what it means to be a post-colonial citizen through our writing and research, and through our collective reflections and dialogue. We stand on the shoulders of sista scholars before us like Elsa Goveia, Lucille Mathurin Mair, Sylvia Wynter, Eudine Barriteau, and Verene Shepherd, who championed unrecognized and impactful work that we commit to continuing. We also bring our identities as mothers to the forefront, because it is typically not captured and certainly not foregrounded in the current literature.

The three participant researchers are no strangers and share a combination of relationships that include friendship and colleagueship. Saran and Raquel were friends from a very young age in Jamaica and continue to be friends and colleagues now as Professors in Higher Education working at U.S. institutions. Shani and Raquel went to the same high school together, and while they were not very close friends in high school, they had a positive relationship and acquaintanceship. Shani and Saran knew of each other when both worked at a higher education institution in Jamaica, but both did not work in the same department. While working on another project, Raquel came across Shani's work years later and found out she went on to earn a Ph.D. in the U.S. and became a historian. At the time, Raquel realized much of Shani's work incorporated many of Raquel 's interests. Raquel then reached out to both Shani and Saran and invited them to embark on a project exploring their individual and collective experiences as Jamaican women who are first generation, post-colonial Jamaican citizens working in and across higher education institutions both at home and abroad. This project brought us together and solidified a collective friendship and kinship built on explorations of our identities and experiences. We utilize Walter Rodney's (1969) Groundings, as a methodological framework, as we seek to understand what it means to work through home in a post-diaspora context. We conceptualize this piece as a collective reflection emerging from a series of interviews that took place over the course of eight months. For us, we mobilize sisterhood as a tool of resistance against colonial institutions that frame our understanding of legacies of colonialism emerging from a series of conversations around the following questions:

1. What does it mean to be a first-generation post-colonial citizen working within higher education, and living within, and outside of a Jamaican post-colonial state?
2. How do we navigate the tensions associated with being ourselves and creating "home"—within the post-diasporic condition?

In the following sections we provide an overview of our individual identities, outline the framework used, and discuss where we are located historiographically. Next, we highlight the methodological approach we engaged in, and discuss the findings from our study. Finally, we discuss moving forward and our call to future researchers interested in engaging in similar work.

Uu Wi Bi[1]: Identities Constructed in the Contested Spaces of Homeland and Hostland

Raquel

I identify as a multiracial Jamaican woman, my main identities are Black and South Asian. I am the daughter of parents still living in the homeland. I live and work as a professor within higher education in the United States. My Jamaican ethnicity is part and parcel to who I am, and the navigation of my identity in shifting contexts has evolved over time. Navigating the world as an immigrant woman brings with it several tensions. Always perceived as too foreign in the host land, and too foreign for the homeland, never quite fitting in anywhere and constantly searching for and redefining what and where home is. The experience is further complicated by being highly educated, attaining a certain level of educational privilege many do not have, while simultaneously being minoritized in a country (the U.S.) that makes it clear I am wanted on terms other than my own, and only when it is convenient. Quickly returning to my reality of producing and disseminating knowledge, teaching others (mostly different from myself) to think critically, ask questions, be unapologetic, and contribute to transforming the world all while navigating and negotiating identity, space, place, and the notion of home. Wrestling with tensions is not something new for me, in fact arguably I have done this my entire life both inside and outside of Jamaica.

Feelings of isolation presented itself even when I lived in Jamaica, but has been further complicated and amplified since moving to the United States and navigating new citizenship in a host land that still feels so far removed from my own. My earliest memories in Jamaica include both memories that bring me warmth, and those that make me cringe in shame. Unfortunately, those memories are tied mostly to shaming within education systems, where discipline was used as a tool to control and "put yuh in yuh place," as opposed to one focused on growth, development of unique learning styles, and support for trajectories outside of what is deemed to be the norm. Becoming an academic has allowed me in many ways to heal and make sense of the academic wounds I endured in my younger years in Jamaica. It has allowed me to be to others what I did not have, and chart my own identity as an agent of change to those wounded by systems intended to harm and/or discipline.

Working in community with, and experiencing kinships with, friends and colleagues like Saran and Shani has affirmed that I am not alone, and has also allowed me to understand the connection with our individual and collective experiences to theories of post-colonialism. Working within higher education in the U.S. has been both a place of comfort and contention. I continue to grapple with citizenship, and the meaning of home…while understanding the fluidity of identity and location, and recognizing that home does not necessarily mean physically returning to my homeland, which is ever changing/unrecognizable and mostly unsupportive of the new me. However, the deep nostalgia and longing for returning somehow still lingers.

1. Throughout this manuscript we use Jamaican creole (Patois) in some of our headings. See the table in the appendix that highlights the English translations for the phrases we used as headings throughout.

Saran[2]

I enter this space as a first-generation, post-colonial citizen, born to parents of a colony who currently reside within that former colony, Jamaica. I am an Afro-Jamaican, cis-gendered woman who was raised, educated, and later worked in higher education and paid taxes in Jamaica. I am a mother first and a scholar thereafter that strives for the elusive dream of finding balance. Growing up in a small community in Harbour View (Jamaica) meant everyone knew everyone. The humility of sleeping on the foam sofa as your bed had no significance as the concept of wealth was elusive as a child. I never went hungry and when the light or water would turn off, it was because the community would lose access. When the hurricanes would flood our homes, bridges and schools, we worked together to rebuild. We were a community on the outskirts of the capital city and the commute was 30 minutes without traffic. I always saw the sea on my commute and never took for granted the symbolism of what water was to freedom. As a child, I knew two Jamaica's: the Jamaica that was home and utopic with its rivers, waterfalls, and Caribbean Sea as my weekly playground; and the Jamaica that held on to a legacy of abuse since the occupation of the Spaniards in the 15th century. If I employed magical realism for a moment, a literary writing style that marries elements of realism coupled with fantasy, I would envision Jamaica as a single mother. She is a mother with many scars, petite in size but mighty in her demeanor. What she has seen over time and endured has broken her spirit and left her loveless. She loves her children, provides for (when she can) and protects them, but it's a selfish-love that doesn't warm the soul; where you know she has been hurt far too many times for her to be hurt again. She is weary but strong and works hard to provide, harder than any other neighbor, but she has been beaten, raped, and taken for granted. I love the mother that Jamaica is but recognize her limitations to love me back the way I need. So instead, I mourn my Jamaica and grieve the parts of her that I needed to keep me safe as a child, and now I understand what she has gone through and therefore know she could never truly love me in return. I will forever be her proud daughter, provide for her as she ages with grace, but I cannot heal where my trauma exists. So I have decided to love her from a distance. As I grapple with being a guest in my hostland (the USA), I reconcile tensions of never belonging and the continuous search for home while feeling home(less).

Shani

I identify as an Afro-Jamaican woman working in the fields of museum studies and history in a higher education institution in Jamaica. A granddaughter of men whose bananas were underpriced by the United Fruit Company, farmworkers in Cuba and America, and workers in the 1960s United Kingdom. I am descended from grandmothers who single-handedly raised families through the sale of land, sewing, internal migration and domestic work, who went without so that their children could be more than their circumstances. Their realities reflect rural poverty of Jamaica during decolonization and independence. Consequently, my intellectual interests and the ways in which I define myself are informed by their sacrifices throughout the mid-nineteenth and twentieth centuries that sought to push and pull my family out of poverty. I, therefore, recognize that my ability throughout my academic and professional career to move back and forth between the US

2. Adapted from Stewart, S**.** & Ferguson, S. (2024). Krik? Krak! Groundings, Liming, and Ole Talk: Understanding Caribbean Decolonial Research Methodologies In R. McMillian & P.A. Pasque (Eds.), *Advancing Qualitative Inquiry Toward Methodological Inclusion, (pp. 178-194).* Routledge. doi: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003462224-19

and Jamaica before deciding to settle in Jamaica is a privilege shaped by a home life that centered education as integral to upward social and economic mobility. I pursued doctoral studies in the US and returned home after, however, being frustrated with the rigidity of the work environment, I returned to the US to pursue postdoctoral studies. Despite my time in the US, a longing for home, and an unwillingness to mould my intellectual interests to the vagaries of the US academic market ultimately shaped my return, knowing, however, that my interests and my intellectual evolution that provided a nuanced understanding of Jamaican society did not quite fit in Jamaica except that I felt that by returning I re-entered a space that I could be just me, could give back to my country and honour the sacrifices of my forefathers. That said, I live in a spiritually lukewarm space, keeping my feet planted in Jamaica but my gaze moving back and forth between Jamaica and the global community.

Ou wi kum fi bi: Defining Post-Coloniality as the Post-Diaspora

This study employs a hybrid framework of post-coloniality specific to the Caribbean (Puri, 2004) and in particular to creolization (Brathwaite, 1978; Hall 2010) in Jamaica, as well as an understanding of the post-diaspora condition by Laguerre (2017). Post-coloniality within the Caribbean is understood as "the reality of a transnational (but not post-national), global set of relationships and experiences" (Dalleo, 2004, p. 355). Both the politicization and hybridization of the term post-coloniality is symbolic of inequities as well as a continued search for equality as well as its commitment to anti-colonialism. The term provides both a spatial, regional, and temporal understanding of the Caribbean in respect to colonialism, which characterizes the colonial economic exploits of the region. Creolization by Barbadian poet and Caribbean historian Kamau Brathwaite (1978) may provide a better framing to understand the present and post-modern hybrid formation of cultures within Jamaica as a result of forced cohabitation in the colonial context. Sociologists Zacharias and Mullings-Lawrence (2021) indicate that cultural theorist Stuart Hall (2010) reminds us that the "process of creolization always entails inequality, hierarchization, domination and subalternity" (p. 100). Both concepts pulled together provide an analytical lens to use Groundings as a methodology that is culturally significant to the region, to the purpose of the paper, as well as to our onto-epistemological framing of ourselves (described above). Given our immigrant and migrant journeys moving outside of Jamaica and returning to Jamaica, and leaving again in some cases, we position the concept of the post-diaspora by social anthropologist Michel Laguerre.

According to Laguerre (2017), "post-diaspora is an emancipatory move, refuting not the connection with one's place of origin, but rather one's unequal status vis-a-vis homelanders and hostlanders" (p. 22). The post-diasporic condition refutes any notion of marginality or minoritization as it posits equal membership in both the hostland and homeland. Laguerre goes on to describe four practices of post-diaspora: 1) re-annexation, "in which former diasporans have reintegrated the jurisdictional space of the national territory" (p. 23); 2) return migration, in which former diasporans return to live in their homeland; 3) redrawing of borders, in which a po(r)tion of the foreign territory becomes a part of the national territory; and 4) cosmonational membership and integration, in which a cosmonation is formed when "homeland and diaspora form a crossborder multisite nation" (p. 23). The three authors of the study have practiced both re-annexation as well as return migration as all three resided outside of their homeland and returned to live at some point in the hostland. Post-diaspora allows for a better understanding of how each author operated within the homeland and hostland. The hybridity of the Caribbean post-colonial and post-diasporic conditions provide the study a deconstructive framing in which to examine the complex post-colonial

context and legacy of colonialism rooted in the authors' experiences. This framing allows the authors to examine historical events, customs, practices, and norms, and situate them between spaces of belonging and spaces of subalternity.

We wi de ina ischri: Defining Post Independent Jamaica through Histories of Gender and Economic Inequality

Our study sits at the intersection of three historiographical trajectories in Jamaican history: the study of womanhood, education, and post-independence. At the center of each historiographical analysis is the conclusion that Jamaican society, and by extension the English Caribbean, is a society grounded in the exploitation and underdevelopment of its people. While not comprehensive, we locate ourselves within a historiography that points to the inability of former colonies to shake the foundations of an economy and society steeped in sexual violence and discrimination, oppression, and trauma as the legacy of histories of enslavement continues to shape Jamaican society today (Beckles, 2013; Beckles, 2021). Consequently, we are products of socio-economic, cultural, and political context grounded in inequity and our journeys are ultimately shaped by the abilities of our forefathers and mothers to pivot in the face of insecurity.

With the violent displacement of indigenous peoples by the arrival of the Spanish (1494), the first enslaved Africans (1509) and the British (1655) (Morales, 2004; Dunn 1972), plantation slavery became the foundation of Jamaican society. Sustained by violence, racism, and greed, plantation slavery depended on the sustained free labour of forcibly enslaved Africans as well as continued access to land. The insatiable demand for enslaved labour led to the expansion of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and fueled the development of Britain (Williams, 1944/2021). Legislation further enslaved the progeny of any African born in the Caribbean through their mothers, thus creating a biological institution tied to enslaved African motherhood (Mair, 2006; Morgan, 2004).

While early demand for African labour initially targeted men, historians such as Jennifer Morgan (2004) have argued that the plantation economy in the Caribbean relied heavily on enslaved African women as they provided critical back breaking labour in the field and played an important biological role in reproducing enslaved individuals, especially after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 (Bush,1990; Morgan, 2004; Turner, 2017). Concerns about high infant mortality and low fertility by the planter class both during slavery and after Emancipation are linked to the survival of an agricultural society as well as ongoing discourse around social control and sociopathology of productive labour (De Barros, 2014). The continued preoccupation of the white oligarchy about access to cheap labour in the 1840s led to the development of indentureship schemes. Chinese, Indian, and liberated Africans were introduced into Caribbean societies to push down wages and create competition between newly imported populations and the existing black populations (Look Lai, 1998; Schuler 1980; Shepherd, 1994; Roopnarine, 2018). Post-Emancipation Caribbean society, therefore, was framed around the continued exploitation of labour and land for the survival of the sugar economy. Consequently, the law, education, religion, and health regulations, policies, and institutions became tools of social control in Jamaican society with the goal of restricting the movement of emancipated populations and redirecting their labour and that of their children into the survival of the Caribbean economies (Bryan, 2002; De Barros, 2014; Jemmott, 2015; Moore & Johnson, 2004). Education, therefore, played an integral role in training populations to continue to function in an exploitative economy while allowing the white oligarchy to retain its political, economic, and social power.

Education was and still is a particularly contested site. The 1833 Negro Education Grant marked the beginning of a formal education system in the Caribbean, albeit one committed to maintaining inequality in Jamaica, and by extension the region (Campbell, 1967). Funding infrastructural development, schooling was conceptualized as moral training through religion and basic access to reading, writing and arithmetic (Gordon, 1963). General opposition to education policy throughout the nineteenth century argued that book learning 'spoiled' the agricultural workforce, thereby making them inadequately suited for working in an agriculturally based economy (Elgin, 1845). African-Jamaican parents, however, systematically withheld their children's labour from traditional sites of employment, such as sugar plantations, by sending them to school and including them in the family's economic efforts (Jemmott, 2015). Scholar Shirley Gordon's (1968) review of the regional education commissions that occurred between 1838 and 1938 revealed that regional approaches to education were piecemeal and shaped by personalities often committed to an education system that supported the regional agricultural economies. Similarly, political scientist Joseph Woolcock (1984) argues that reforms to education during the independence movement continued to replicate historic social divisions of labor in the transition from an agricultural to a manufacturing-based economy, thus continuing to perpetuate unequal access to education within the island.

Chronic underfunding of education as well as social services was an ongoing issue in British Caribbean colonies. British colonial economic policy was predicated on the basis of self-sufficiency. Colonies financed development out of earnings from exports and balanced budgets. The imperial government, therefore, provided very little assistance except in instances of emergency such as natural disasters, fires, or epidemics, or in extreme cases where colonies had significant financial hardship (Abbott, 1971; Bourdillon, 1944; Frost, 1945; Morgan 1980; Wicker, 1958). By the 1930s, colonies were unable to fund economies thus generating a global imperial crisis (Bolland, 1995; Macmillan, 1936). Colonial policy, therefore, was forced to evolve during the first and second world wars to do two things. First, to see colonial development as integral to the expansion of the British economy for the export of its industrial products; and secondly, by 1944, to see colonial development as integral to ensuring the overall well-being of Caribbean peoples, especially after the West Indian Royal Commission of 1938 (Simey, 1946; Wicker, 1958). The establishment of the Colonial Development Welfare Fund, therefore, became integral to the decolonization movement in the Caribbean. Education stood at the forefront of the transformation of the well-being of Caribbean people. One of the integral projects that emerged was the founding and funding of the University (College) of the West Indies (UWI) (Taylor, 1951).

Conceptualized as providing comprehensive access to tertiary education for the professionalization of both men and women in the Caribbean, The U(C)WI granted degrees as a department of the University of London until 1962, when it became an independent degree granting institution. Responding to social and public health demands of the region, the first 33 students entered the faculty of medicine at the Mona Campus in Jamaica, while the Extra Mural program provided important training interventions in adult education in contributing islands (Fergus et al., 2007). As the institution expanded its reach through the addition of landed campuses in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, one of its most important contribution is the fostering of Indigenous Caribbean (rather than West Indian, which is a colonial construct) intellectual perspectives of history, politics, and society, which responded to the wave of political change in the region (Goveia, 1969; Higman, 1999). The UWI, however, does not exist in a vacuum. Despite its existence, colonial legacies and historic socio-economic, gendered, class, and racial hierarchies continue to shape both the institution and the region. Nonetheless, decolonization, Black power movements, the Cold War, public

health crises, and gender debates, to name a few, shaped the evolution of Indigenous Caribbean intellectual thought.

These indigenous Caribbean scholars argue that political decolonization throughout the 1960s and 80s failed to dismantle the historic economic structures that tie the region to Europe. Political theorist Louis Lindsay in "Myth of Independence" (1975/2005) argues that constitutional independence is not economic independence and that politically constructed symbols of independence are important to manipulate the population to accept and legitimize the new status quo. Cultural theorist Rex Nettleford (1970) and political scientist Maziki Thame (2017) posited that this independence project elevated an idyllic Black peasantry over a militant, radical Black project to embrace Brown nationalism, which is a political project that promotes Jamaica as a mixed (hybrid/brown) conservative nation. Consequently, the implication for the rejection of Black radical traditions is that independence failed to engage in the reordering of society to allow for equitable access to resources, land, and economic freedom. This rejection of radicalism (Thame, 2011) functions as a form of intellectual violence of which tensions about race, class, and political identity formation is only one component of the legacy of trauma and colonization in Jamaica. Anthropologist Deborah Thomas (2011) posits that violence is integral to the formation of the colonial state, and by extension the postcolonial state and its continued manifestations is a result of class formations and the construction of citizenship. Consequently, literary and cultural scholar Paula Morgan (2014) argues that "historical trauma overlays…contemporary manifestations of violence and continuously shape society" (p. 10). Our understanding, therefore, of postcolonial citizenship is one that is deeply intertwined with the socio-economic, cultural, and gendered legacies of colonial oppression and the trauma that emerges from it.

The excavation of voices of Caribbean women is especially integral to our reflection on what it means to be first-generation post-colonial Caribbean citizens operating in the post-diaspora. The re-writing of Caribbean history upended and decentered imperialist understandings of Caribbean culture, history, and identity by centering the diverse experiences of regional populations (Goveia 1969; Higman, 1999; Hutton et al., 2018*)*. Excavating women's voices and actions is a political act that disrupts notions of hegemonic masculinity and collective memory in post-independence Caribbean scholarship. It is within this context that Elsa Goveia's pioneering work on Caribbean history in the 1960s, as the first Caribbean historian appointed to the U(C)WI, yielded scholars such as Mathurin Mair (supervised by Goveia), Verene Shepherd, and Bridgette Brereton, all of whom are part of a genealogy of scholars and scholarship that have given voice to African-Jamaican women's political activism which dismantled slavery, resisted oppression, led Black power movements, maintained Afro-Caribbean cultural practices, and transformed Caribbean societies long before Adult suffrage in 1944. Verene Shepherd's lecture in 2014 *The Politics of Memory: Historicizing Caribbean Women's Political Activism* calls for us to recognize that agency and activism must be a key part of any discussion about women's political practices. Caribbean women have been at the forefront of social and political change since European occupation of the region (Shepherd, 2019). Citing Goveia, Shepherd posits that contemporary discussions of Caribbean feminism and women's activism must be viewed within the historical lens of agency and activism by women (Shepherd, 2019). More importantly, she shows that it is important to understand the factors that shape women themselves, to better understand their political and intellectual decisions.

Sociologists Medwinter and Rozario (2021) argue that Caribbean womanism rather than feminism is a more effective tool for de-colonial analysis as it creates bridges between the diaspora and the region. They similarly argue that centering Caribbean women's lives, activism against

multi- dimensional oppression linked to histories of slavery, indentureship, colonialism and economic inequity, and their scholarship provides a basis for understanding how the Caribbean diaspora navigates hostland. Both theoretical perspectives identify the continued gendered, intellectual and infrastructural trauma, and violence that undergird Caribbean women's experiences. As both participants and authors, we see ourselves as building a bridge between the Caribbean and the diaspora by grounding ourselves in a history that intersects with violence, oppression, and inequity and examining its impact on our identity as Caribbean women and mothers moving between homeland (Jamaica) and the diaspora.

Mobility through migration, access to education, lobbying for maternal leave, and responsive policies are some of the key contemporary responses to resist post-colonial and institutionalized post-independence oppression. Our reflection evolves out of the legacies of activism against gendered violence and trauma in the colonial, post-colonial, independence, and post-independence moment. Trauma emerging from the shared experience of mothering in academia within the post-independence moment is the motivating factor that guides our intellectual interests and interventions as we locate ourselves within a larger legacy of women's activism in Jamaican history.

Ou wi a tink bout dis: Engaging in Critical Groundings

In wrestling through our understanding of our own collective postcolonial subjectivity, we reflected on some of the unsung and highly overshadowed works of Caribbean intellectuals who foregrounded Caribbean epistemologies and methodologies that have shaped our sense of being within the Caribbean diaspora. We turned to a relic and iconic figure in post-colonial Jamaica, Walter Rodney and his methodology, "Groundings." Rodney, as a pan-Africanist and scholar of Black consciousness used groundings as a method to educate the people and the masses (Lewis, 1991). Rodney remarked about the methodology,

> I would go further down into West Kingston and I would speak wherever there was a possibility of our getting together. It might be in a sports club, it might be in a schoolroom, it might be in a church, it might be in a gully. (Those of you who come from Jamaica know those gully corners). They are dark, dismal places with a Black population who have had to seek refuge there. You will have to go there if you want to talk to them. I have spoken in what people call "dungle," rubbish dumps, for that is where people live in Jamaica. People live in rubbish dumps. (Rodney, 1969, p. 64)

Borrowing from Walter Rodney, in her book titled, *Decolonizing Qualitative Approaches for and by the Caribbean*, Stewart (2020) defines groundings as "a style of conducting focus group interviews that is authentic to the Caribbean context, to reason and derive consciousness from collective wisdom where the lines of power are blurred between the researcher and researched" (p. 5). Groundings refers to a deeply immersive, community-oriented approach to understanding and analyzing social phenomena, in particular Afro-Caribbean socio-economic and political dynamics. Using reasoning sessions as data collection methods, Groundings involve listening to and documenting oral accounts as valuable sources of information and insight. Reasoning sessions, or more commonly termed *hol' a reasonin,* include a bidirectional flow of knowledge where there is sharing of knowledge with community members, thereby empowering them and recognizing their expertise in their own lives and experiences (Stewart & Ferguson, 2024). For data analysis, Ground-

ings involves a consciousness-raising or a heightened consciousness of the socio-political and economic structures affecting the participants or community understudy. Rodney's approach was deeply rooted in a critique of colonialism and imperialism, and this perspective guides the interpretation of data and narratives collected.

Groundings is an ideal methodological approach for this study because of its meaning and embodiment of the post-colonial and consciousness-raising ability to integrate criticality, collaborative excavation, and illuminate our individual and collective stories and lived experiences from a post-colonial Jamaican subjectivity (Stewart & Ferguson, 2024). More so, groundings present a unique, Jamaican-grown, postcolonial departure from the traditional form of western-Eurocentric qualitative approaches. In using the reasoning sessions over Zoom, we were able to exercise extreme vulnerability while divulging our authentic lived experiences, at the expense of exposing ourselves within systemic and hegemonic bourgeoisie.

Reasoning Sessions

Due to the pandemic, the reasoning sessions took place over Zoom from January 2022 to August 2022. The participant researchers engaged in a total of 10 reasoning sessions on Zoom that ranged from one to two hours each. Each session was recorded and transcribed. During the first reasoning session, we developed general probing questions that guided each session. These questions included topics on our individual identities being born to parents of a former colony, our educational experiences in 1980s Jamaica, the nation-building, socio economic and political discourses of the time, our migration patterns and journeys, and the gendered hierarchies and patriarchal structures that governed our communities and households. Those questions allowed us to start our conversations broadly and then focus on areas that we felt were most important. Our conversations were dialogical, and fluid, each session allowed us the opportunity to explore ourselves as individuals but also as a collective unit, understanding the intersections of our shared experiences. We listened keenly to each other's stories, we allowed for the tangential and anecdotal Jamaican proverbs, memories and belly-full of laughter to be fully present and centered within each reasoning session. Each of us took turns answering questions by sharing our experiences, and then we asked questions, probed, made connections, and utilized opportunities to comment on each other's experiences and find shared examples of how we similarly or differently moved through these documented instances. We also engaged in critical reflection, documenting specific examples and connecting those to our post-colonial and post-diasporic subjectivity more specifically.

Consciousness-Raising

Each reasoning session was transcribed and shared amongst each of us for review. We then had joint table reads of the transcripts to make sure our accents, patois, and idioms were translated accurately. Important to note is that while we spoke predominantly in patois, as academics we are prone to code-switch in and out of standard academic English to patois and vice versa. We transcribed the reasoning sessions in standard academic English for ease of reference to our readers. Our data analysis process included keenly listening to each zoom session and discerning commonalities throughout each of our stories, and memoing our experiences within our deeper consciousness-raising process. During each reasoning session, as we drew on similar consciousness-raising topics, we noted them as points to further interrogate and deconstruct together to see where there were similarities and points of dissonance in our interpretation and reasoning. Conventionally, this

process would be compared to coding, in which we analyzed first cycle and second cycle codes, and collapsed codes into thematic patterns. However, the analytical process of consciousness raising requires us to move beyond a traditional cyclical process of seeing how words repeat themselves but to consider the idiomatic relations within the larger socio-political constructs of our narratives. Initially, we were able to derive 33 idiomatic relationships that led to a sequencing of three patterns in our narratives. This is a deeply culturally, decolonizing approach to research methods that allowed us to analyze our narrative from our collective Jamaican consciousness. For each derived consciousness-raising topic, we then revisited the topic from the respective transcripts to build and expound on. At the end of the reasoning sessions, we divided the transcripts amongst each other and reviewed them prior to the next reasoning session. We then engaged in cross-transcript analysis by trading transcripts and honing in on the consciousness-raising topics and their supporting stories. Three major consciousness-raising themes emerged in our study: 1) Tools of Historical Oppression and its Consequences: Living with Colonial Humiliation in Post- Independence Education System; 2) Wait Your Turn: Delayed Economic Mobility for Young Educated Women Through Gender and Age Discrimination; and 3) Locating Ourselves and the Associated Tensions of an Evolving Post-Colonial Context. Throughout data analysis, we paid careful attention to how post-colonial histories influenced our experience specifically as Jamaican women. Several measures were taken to increase trustworthiness of the findings in this study. First, all three authors met to discuss all transcripts and thereafter the three emergent consciousness-raising themes, and process together as a group to reflect on the biases we brought to each stage of this project and engage in peer debriefing (Agyemang et al., 2018). Second, we anchored our experiences heavily in previously documented post-colonial theories and Caribbean literature that illuminated experiences that closely resembled those we were seeking to make sense of. Lastly, we all engaged in a continuous process of critical reflexivity and kept memos throughout the data collection process which allowed us all to document our memories, and reactions to each part of the research process.

Wat wi nuo se?

Based on our collective sensibilities, the following consciousness-raising themes were identified reflecting Caribbean post-coloniality as well as the post-diaspora condition: 1) Tools of Historical Oppression and its Consequences: Living with Colonial Humiliation in Post-Independence Education System; 2) Wait Your Turn: Delayed Economic Mobility for Young Educated Women Through Gender and Age Discrimination ; and 3) Locating Ourselves and the Associated Tensions of an Evolving Post-Colonial Context.

Tools of Historical Oppression and its Consequences: Living with Colonial Humiliation in Post-Independence Education System

Through the process of groundings, we have to come to realize that our individual experiences are also shaped by legacies of colonial humiliation. We define colonial humiliation as the mobilization of tools of oppression such as corporal punishment by persons in positions of power and/or seniority to shame, embarrass and reinforce a false sense of control. These weaponized tools have their origins in enslavement and post-emancipation manipulation of legislation and institutions such as the church and education as tools of social control. Colonial humiliation closely

reflects the various weaponized tools that the elite used during the period of enslavement to reinforce their power and control of status in the colony. We each experienced aspects of colonial humiliation primarily through educational institutions; groundings, as a methodological framework allowed us to understand that we were not alone in these experiences. Through our conversations we shared similar descriptions of shaming in education and use of corporal punishment as control, which we then concluded resulted in a humiliation that can only be described as colonial because of the appropriation of historical practices in the contemporary context. As Raquel stated during one of our groundings,

> I often felt bullied, banished, and not supported in most of my schooling…My teachers wanted me to conform in a way I didn't know how to, and silenced me. So whenever I pushed back there was this…."but who are you" to question me, the holder of knowledge sentiment evident in most of my teachers [pedagogical approaches]…I was tormented through my high school years especially.

That same sense of shaming would be echoed by Saran who expressed that even working at the university held many tensions of shame and purposeful embarrassment. Being perceived as a woman who was too young to be a lecturer though very qualified meant that she was not readily accepted or viewed as valuable. In these scenarios, youthfulness was equated with presumed incompetence and inexperience. She stated

> The shaming, you know…was really really powerful just hearing it and that real tension that lingers from the shaming within educational pipelines and systems, and how that manifested later on…I think I felt the same way while working at the university. It was very difficult to navigate.

Shani went on to express that the university can create "trajectories for upward mobility [but is] rigid and not responsive," while Raquel echoed sentiments of feeling rejected by the very system that educated her and explained how it felt to navigate a constant tension of feeling as if she did not belong. Surviving colonial humiliation is to operate within an educational system but not actually belong, and/or be valued. For us, these experiences were reminiscent of the plantation economy where one's labour is integral to an institution's survival, but not valued for one's humanity and/or creative genius. The culture of belonging to these reincarnations of the plantations begins at the early childhood level where respect for authority is enforced through corporal punishment. The instances of corporal punishment are etched in each of our primary school memories as either conduits for excelling, or fear of failure. Saran described vividly while in grade 4 receiving a lower grade on a math test and the teacher asking each student to line up for their beatings by using a ruler. Saran outlines,

> We had to go to the front of the classroom and line up one person behind the other and depending on the number of questions you got wrong, that determined how many beatings you received by the teacher. Thankfully, I only got two wrong but for those who had all 10 wrong, I remember vividly how they cried and pulled away their hand from the beating…some children had to switch palms because the first was too red and blistered.

Corporal punishment was both a source of shaming as well as control and power through violence. It echoed similar practices to those during colonialism and in particular enslavement. Schooling was arguably a complex space of teacher-led violence and colonial humiliation. We acknowledge the ways in which the contemporary early childhood education system has evolved away from the use of corporal punishment in learning, our personal experiences with corporal punishment in our schooling informs the ways in which we navigated authority in school and currently as academics operating in post-independence institutions still steeped in colonialism. We also recognize how our individual and collective experiences have been shaped by our histories involving humiliation and fear.

Wait Your Turn: Delayed Economic Mobility for Young Educated Women Through Gender and Age Discrimination

Within our discussions, we came to a shared definition about what coloniality means within a contemporary context. We define coloniality as present-day systems and practices inherited from colonialism to reinforce social differences and inequalities. Within the Caribbean context, migration is an important tool to disrupt generational poverty and provide opportunities for upward economic and social mobility. For us migration, was a valuable tool to expand intellectual offerings and provided both social and economic mobility. However, the homeland is not static during our absence. Rather, us, as migrants, and the homeland are both evolving and our perception of ourselves and our place in home is not always received with open arms. Migration especially for education alters our understanding of how we function within and outside Jamaica. For us, we encountered upon return behaviours that suggested that our presence was a perceived threat against those who stayed, particularly if one studied in the US. It was a tension that seemed subconscious—as operating in the workplace was a minefield of navigating social value based on where a doctorate was earned—that is a foreign doctorate vis a vis a local doctorate. This experience is nuanced and can be determined by one's gender, age, social and economic capital. We note that not everyone has this experience. Groundings revealed that we used migration differently, as a vehicle to determine accepting or rejecting tensions in the lived experience of our return. What we describe below is one component of that social tension which is epitomized in the phrase "Wait your Turn." This term was expressed verbatim by all three authors in reference to their re-migration to their homeland and functioning in the work environment. Saran expressed,

> I genuinely believed I could not return [home] without a Doctorate. I genuinely believed that and I think that had to do with my father's parenting that he knew and understood very, very well about the inequities in gender roles in Jamaica and he saw that, and the only way you can come back home is if you are going to be as competitive as any other man out there. And one of the things that stood out to me was you will have to out rank them, outperform them and still recognize that you are going to be asked to wait your turn.

The colloquial term of "wait your turn" is often used against younger women regardless of their experience or education level. There was an ageist assumption bred within coloniality, that the young must wait their turn to access upward social mobility and other opportunities. Similarly, Shani expressed, "The same thing was conveyed to me after I came back from my Doctorate on study leave and returned, and one of the things I was told was 'I must wait my turn.'" Saran went on to explain that when first job-hunting in Jamaica and meeting with some of the adjunct and

assistant lecturers, the presumed gatekeepers are "the barriers to returning home…I remember the very same people who sat with me saying "you will need to wait your turn." They said to me unequivocally "you will need to wait your turn, you are just coming out with your Ph.D., you need to wait your time basically." The reference here to wait your turn, was to Saran's job application for the lecturer role as the person providing advice was adamant that she should expect to receive an assistant lecturer role which is normally given to persons without the Ph.D. This statement was often made by older female lecturers who had earned their degree through the university system, but overwhelmingly spent over a decade to earn their Ph.Ds while being an assistant lecturer or tutor. They were constantly overlooked and made to believe that they must wait their time. Similarly, Raquel expressed similar sentiments when she returned home to work for a few years and was told that she needed to "wait a while" to be elevated to higher levels at work, even though she brought innovative ideas, unique energy, and credentials to the table. Navigating 'wait your turn' for us produced an overwhelming feeling of frustration and gendered based trauma reminiscent of the role of the female subaltern subjected to gendered trauma by the state of coloniality in a post-colonial and independent nation-state. As a consequence, this frustration ultimately creates a migrationary impulse that often propels return to hostland.

In the unpacking of "wait your turn" we recognized that the act of becoming mothers further complicated our experience as returning migrants to post-independence Jamaica. We found our shared experiences to be centered around economic insecurity and the stress during and after pregnancy to be profoundly disillusioned. As we grappled with the tensions inherent in "wait your turn" we identified the below sub theme.

Economic Insecurity, Stress and Disillusionment: Navigating Motherhood in a Post-Independence Context

Our shared mothering experiences have shaped our responses to home—both inside and outside of Jamaica. We understood motherhood to be a precarious identity shaped by histories of trauma and poor health outcomes for the majority of the women—regardless of race—living in Jamaica during slavery, emancipation and the early post-independence period. In each period, mothering was integral to the survival of the economy but identities such as Black motherhood was rejected by plantation owners prior to 1807 as pregnancy and high infant mortality made it an unprofitable investment. However, after emancipation, Black motherhood was further discriminated against as the elite undermined Black and indentured Indian parents' rights to control their children's labor in the face of significant economic insecurity. Caribbean mothers' continuous contestation of the paradigms of legal, education, public health, religious, and social control means that it is a profoundly political yet emotionally draining identity.

We contextualized our approach to mothering during our groundings, by acknowledging the historical context in which motherhood functions, and how it evolved as the post-independence moment. We see ourselves as products of our own mothers attempts at mothering. The philosophies we hold are created in response to our experiences as our mothers learned to mother. Allowing for us to situate our becoming mothers in both foreign homelands and in our hostlands. We expressed the jarring feelings of returning home as mothers which revealed insecurities about protecting our children. Saran notes

> I returned to Jamaica as a mother…I left Jamaica not as a mother and I returned to Jamaica living as a mom and I think that is jarring to be quite honest with you because the utopic

> feel of returning home as a mom revealed all the insecurities of not being able to protect your children…My role as a Mom is situated within absolutely growing up in Jamaica but heavily situated with being in the US and then returning back to Jamaica both that the original need was to raise them [children] home. Only to return home and realize how much trauma is embedded at home…The trauma from our own mothers and, we parent how we were parented. It's very difficult to break cycles like that…extremely difficult but that's also really important because our mothers grew up in a colonial Jamaica.

Raquel noted the constant struggle she feels of mothering outside of the homeland in terms of feeling guilty for not raising her children in Jamaica so they can experience Jamaican culture firsthand, and wrestling with the tensions of bringing her daughters back to the homeland to navigate the things she did when she was younger. She reflects "It's hard to think about the reality of bringing my children into a context where they would have to jump through hoops the way I did, and face many of the obstacles I did…decades later." Shani stated, "Because mothering requires you to put yourself behind in the list of things, you then have to become a lot more unsentimental about stuff if they don't add significant value." The cis-patriarchical dominance of coloniality was centered in our reflection as we described the tensions of being an academic mother and the primary caregiving responsibilities while also maintaining a career. Saran explained

> Having those real tensions to conform, not to conform, being kinda placed in this box… And I find that it's a larger war that women were facing with all of the submissiveness, the crazy patriarchal dominance and hegemony that still is pervasive…Women do not have equal rights, let's just be honest about that in Jamaica.

When discussing our experiences [Saran and Shani] of being pregnant in Jamaica while working at the university, Shani remarked in response to an unaltered work schedule that "there is an expectation that we are not to succumb to stress [despite being pregnant]…African-American women are saying stress is killing us postpartum [but in the workspace] stress is killing us anyway…" Saran followed her in commenting,

> Being a pregnant woman in Jamaica is one of the most unhealthy decisions, let's just face it…The regard for women and their fragility…It is absolutely insane in Jamaica. You know what it is though, it is the legacy of colonial history … "the breeda women dem." We are not far removed from that generationally in that there are not enough laws…to protect pregnant women in our society.

Culturally and anthropologically, many within a Jamaican context like the idea of seeing pregnant women and honour it as a fragile state, however this romanticizing or support of pregnant women does not translate into the work environment except in extreme cases. Our comments highlight the tension between the social value of the pregnant woman and the economic value of the woman in the workplace who is pregnant. So, there is an enhanced social value but a diminished economic value. Since "Wait your turn" results in diminished access to economic mobility, pregnancy further exacerbates economic instability in the work environment.

Locating Ourselves and the Associated Tensions of an Evolving Post-Colonial Context

Our groundings are anchored in searching for homeland and living between the liminalities of the homeland and hostland. We describe this theme as the multiple stages of our moving between states of belonging and functioning within the diaspora, and feelings of exclusion. The post-diaspora realities (colonial humiliation, wait your turn, economic precarity, general disillusionment) that we all faced include returning to a home that grew without us—returning however, did not exempt us from experiencing longing for utopic, child-like memories of home. When those memories of home meet reality, a sense of deep disappointment takes over and we have been left with being in a constant state of liminality unable to be or feel truly at home.

Searching for the Homeland

Migration propelled us to look for opportunities that would uniquely position us for upward mobility within the homeland. Upon our return home, we began our search for acceptance, recognizing that what we conceived in our minds about return did not match the reality—we now occupied an ambiguous space within our homeland. Both Raquel and Shani discuss the desire to return home to Jamaica and the constant tensions of wanting to be home, versus the reality of being home. Raquel states

> I wanted to go home and make a difference, that's the main reason I entered [and won] Miss Jamaica and then I got this door slammed in my face because I was this young out of the box thinker, believing I was coming back to Jamaica and would be welcomed with open arms…We want home, we are on this quest to find and put together this puzzle and connect the pieces of our identities, our histories in the homeland. Yet, we can't get it from home and we can't get it from the hostland here [USA]…It's almost like piecing together things that continue to leave this gaping hole inside.

Shani, who also did her Ph.D. in the United States commented, "It became that kind of struggle because you want to go back home but I knew going back home to the previous work environment would not provide the intellectual independence and wiggle room to flourish." Yet Shani believed that she could only be whole within the homeland. Saran discusses the tensions of not belonging to either the hostland or the homeland and living in a constant state of searching for the new foreign homeland. She states

> Realizing that we never belong to either space fully, because there is this ebb and flow of what is home and what is not home anymore and within that level of post-diaspora, it is that we belong to the diaspora…We are in many ways in this unsettled feeling…It felt like honestly you were being chained to a system that you didn't create, I'm using chained very loosely because it felt like you were being subjugated to some form of oppression [by making a decision to return home] but you couldn't name it even though you are trained in these things cause it's so subversive…

Our search for homeland, therefore, was a search for acceptance and belonging that emerged in response to the rejection of our own perception of how we could occupy and participate in the homeland. The frustration, and the deep disappointment that we faced ultimately forced us

to redefine our expectations and turn our gaze outward (away from home). Migration for us, therefore, became not just a mechanism for social and economic mobility but a recrafting of what home is, and how we construct belonging to a home.

Living between the Liminalities of the Homeland and Hostland

At some point the decision to return to the hostland became clear for us. Through our groundings we recognized that it is the frustration that provided us with moments of clarity that required us to dispense with the dream and reorient our visions of functioning within the homeland—this was essentially redefining our role and space within home, and accepting the space we occupied within both homeland and hostland. For Raquel, she described the sense of escape in returning to the hostland and highlights:

> For me, foreign was an escape. I never knew what it was like but I felt like if I could go to this place, I could untap this brilliance and all my potential…that Jamaica stifled…At the end of my reign {as Miss Jamaica}, my aim was to run as far as I could from Jamaica, go where I wouldn't have to be shamed, talked about, picked to piece. So, there is this difficult loneliness that I think I have always felt…Feeling like you never ever belong, even in that space you consider home…

Similarly, for Saran, the decision to leave was a form of escape. She explained,

> I just could not sustain the craziness from my institution, in many ways it was a rejection because I felt like there was nowhere else, but I had to leave, there was nothing else I can accomplish there. It is when you start getting into roles of leadership, you either conform and [be] completely blind to those atrocities or you reject the system and end up being hoisted out the system, its one or the other.

Though Shani now lives in the homeland, her survival depends on her ability to be fluid through choosing which spaces to occupy. Her approach was shaped by a mentoring experience with an older woman who also chose to return and navigated the tension of her perception of her place upon return, its rejection, and the reality of return. It was this mentorship that forced her to consider occupying 'in-between-spaces' that transcend or work around the rigidities of mainstream academia in Jamaica. It requires a gaze that is local, regional, and international—keeping one foot in and one foot out of home. It is not a blind acceptance of the homeland's reality, but a pragmatism that requires alertness, networking, and a responsiveness to change. Shani, however, notes that there is always an element of precarity occupying in-between spaces, as the homeland can reject whichever identity has been constructed by an individual, by systematically working to undermine its success. She acknowledges that at some point she may have to re-evaluate her position.

In addition to Saran's frustration with the work environment, the crime and violence that is pervasive at home added to the need to redefine home. Class and social capital did not protect us from the threat of crime…it encroached on everyday life through the sounds of gunshots. Redefining homeland and our place within it was essential to protecting our families as mothers as well as our own humanity. Saran shared

> where I lived…to have my girls know what gunshots were from a very young age. [My daughter] in particular always knew when there was gang war and violence and I didn't realize how much it affected her until we re-migrated] and she made a comment to me that "it is so quiet here, I haven't heard one gun in the last month, not one." I took the silence for granted.

Raquel and Shani agreed with Saran's sentiment about violence, as the homeland was a place where they and their families both experienced violence firsthand. We all experienced a pivotal moment that demanded a repositioning of ourselves and the redefining of our relationship with our homeland, as well as navigating push factors to re-migrate. These experiences for escape were riddled with humiliation, trauma, and even violence which distorted our constant need, and search for home. It is important to note that living in the hostland for Raquel and Saran does not mean they are free from tensions and feelings of exclusion—in fact, living in the hostland now requires navigation of racism and exclusion that leaves them in a unique state of in-betweenness.

Wa wi a se: Rethinking Post-Colonial Citizenship as Transnational Jamaican Academic Women

This work serves as a starting point of critical engagement about our lived experiences with the Caribbean post-colonial and post-diasporic conditions. Discourse about Caribbean post-diaspora is often omitted and/or othered, where the three of us do not usually see ourselves reflected in the literature. Much of this work is excavative in nature and seeks to push forward lost Caribbean identities or identities on the verge of extinction. However, as scholars, we too form a part of this long history of mobility that characterizes Caribbean identity. Encouraging more scholars to locate themselves in the post-diaspora, by naming and speaking about their experiences can open doors for change and further intellectual curiosity. As we reflect on our study, we recognize that to be a first-generation, post-colonial Jamaican citizen working within higher education, means being reminded of academic trauma over and over, and being invited to move past it by encouraging others to take part in their own journeys of becoming. It means accepting our own journey and situating that understanding within the context of post-colonialism and our new realities of the hostland. It means realizing the double-edged sword of what education is when it is identified as the mode for upward social and economic mobility out of poverty, and also when it entraps individuals in systems of exploitation, trauma, and oppression. To transcend colonial infrastructures in the post-colonial/post-independence space is to encourage through mentorship and sisterhood support systems: providing opportunities to grow and transcend.

We also understand that being a first-generation, post-colonial citizen living within and outside of a Jamaican post-colonial state means understanding that feelings of being an insider-outsider is inevitable, and that nostalgia of something never experienced is tied to a longing for something that no longer exists, never existed, or is vastly different from what previously existed and/or was experienced. It is also about accepting that we exist as outsiders even in the spaces where we once were accepted, and that returning home may come with it, the realization that we would have to recreate community, as our understanding and vision of Jamaica would need to be renegotiated.

We navigate home outside of the diaspora (working on and through home) by acknowledging our own experiences, remaining true to self, taking the bits and pieces that are resonant, leaving those that are not behind, and engaging in recreation of a home that transcends time, space,

and place. Also, by preserving home in ways that feel and are real and fusing that with new experiences that are emancipatory and unlimiting. By being unapologetic about the outsider component, we aim not to romanticize it, but to speak to the tensions of occupying this space of being an insider-outsider and understanding how that limits how we enter these spaces. Returning home comes with the recognition that there is always a need to be grounded and to be aware of a larger context; accepting a state of constant evolution or flux; honoring lessons learned from experiences; and always being aware of the historical and contemporary factors that serve to replicate inequality, oppression, and trauma. Home is finding balance, a safe space of peace, reflection, recovery, and community.

Finally, by examining how our role as mothers are shaped by a post-diasporic experience and implications on our children, cultural challenges associated with raising the next generation include being worried about losing our "Jamaican" identity because of location and being worried for our children not being able to experience being Jamaican in the same ways as we did, as they will be too American to be Jamaican and too Jamaican to be fully American, straddling their own liminalities between the homeland and hostland. Identity in this case being tied to memories of food, village, customs, music, and environment juxtaposed by a sincere desire to protect them from violence and harm that plagues Jamaica. Living in the U.S. has brought an acute awareness to us of the fragility of identity and the ways in which institutional and structural racism undermine efforts to provide our children with an empowered childhood. Constantly worrying about what it would mean to have children in the U.S. and feeling from early on that it was not viable. Recognizing though that as mothers, living in the "homeland," does not come with guarantees. Our preoccupation is still racialized, classed, and gendered. Motherhood, or the act of mothering, is deeply political, it is a deliberate commitment to transformation that has no guarantees. As we underscore the need to rethink citizenship and our independence, we argue that counter narratives need to be developed that (re)define home and citizenship, reframe and contextualize, and perhaps even reclaim independence. We challenge politically infused notions of identity and citizenship by centering voices not traditionally engaged in the archive, public spaces and academia along with developing a re-definition of home and understanding one's identity fully. On a political or macro-level, the counternarratives must start with Jamaica redefining herself as fully independent and a republic.

We wi a go? Framing A Collective Identity for Transnational Academic Women

This study reiterates that we are embarking on new ground of (re)creating a framing for how we understand Jamaican transnational academic women who are first generation post- colonial citizens. Our act of resistance is capturing *our* collective stories through Rodney's (1969) groundings. Groundings, as a methodology, rejects colonial, anti-Black and white supremacist ways of constructing knowledge. It centers the personal through an empowering methodology that allows us to see ourselves, and our experiences as valid to understanding the community and our place within it. We encourage women who come after us to consider these framings, so they see how their own histories of colonial humiliation, delayed economic mobility because of gender and age discrimination, and the tensions of an evolving post-colonial context, along with their own narratives and stories, can be more expansive. This type of scholarship is relevant to educators more comprehensively as it supports ideologies for the inclusion of lived experiences as affirmations of who we are entirely, both inside and outside of our professional lives. Recognition (and acceptance) of multiple identities, as well as nuanced experiences can allow educators to show up

authentically and leverage their whole selves as a launching pad for elevating their own consciousness, and the pursuit of unconventional ways of teaching and learning.

We stand on the shoulders of many women before us who were monumental to Jamaica's history but taken for granted or rendered inconsequential to nation-building and our epistemic sustainability. We name the Jamaican academic women Sylvia Wynter, Eudine Barritea, Verene Shepherd, Lucille Mathurin Mair, Elsa Goveia, who labored tirelessly under duress and unprotected by policies but steadfast in their work, assertions, and unwavering pursuit of knowledge production for and by the people. As we contribute to the work of trailblazers who set the foundation for us, we present our own truths, our own politics of memory, and name the colonial humiliation, the role of gendered trauma related to the constant state of coloniality and our collective post-diasporic realities of Caribbean post-coloniality. We recognize this is not everyone's truth and it will be contested, but it is our collective re/historization of home.

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Appendix

Jamaican Creole (Patois) to English Translation

JC translation using JLU-Cassidy	English
Uu wi bi	Who are we?
Ou wi kum fi bi	How did we get here?
Ou wi a tink bout dis	How are we thinking about the matter?
We wi de ina ischri?	Where are we in history?
Wat wi nuo se? Wat wi a se nou	What do we understand now?
Wa dem a se	Reasoning/Meditating/Philosophizing
We wi a go	Where are we going? Thinking about the future

Websites used to help with translation:

Jumieka Languij: Grama/Jamaican Language: Grammar
Jumieka Languij: Vokiabileri/Jamaican Language: Vocabulary