

THE PRESERVATION OF THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANT HERITAGE

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CAPSTONE ABSTRACT
THE PRESERVATION OF THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANT HERITAGE

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Historical preservation plays a significant role in community building and ethnic identity. Focusing on Afro-Caribbean immigrants, this capstone investigates how immigrant families and communities structure themselves through literally works, civic, and social engagement. Specifically, this capstone discusses how immigrant families have prospered and suggests the contributions, tributes, and perseverance of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants should be recognized by historians. Additionally, it includes the different types of historical preservation that can be used to establish the legacy and heritage of the Afro-Caribbean people. In the larger American society there has been a tendency to forget and vagueness for identifying, distinguishing, and cherishing the historic preservations of the Afro-Caribbean immigrant. My goal is to shed light on how Afro-Caribbean immigrants, specifically those who are English-speaking, are a group where further research and scholarship is warranted.

With the entry of Afro-Caribbean immigrants into the United States of America, this group added their diverse customs, distinctive traditions, and professional qualifications to our culturally pluralistic society. These Afro-Caribbean immigrants, specifically English speaking, people reside in various cities in the United States, and within these cities display of deep, vibrant mixture of culture, heritage, and tradition. The impressive narration of this story has been infused in fictional works such as *Brown Girl, Brown Stone* (Marshall, 1981). This story provides a rich detailed tale of the lives of an Afro-Caribbean immigrant family. Marshall creates the characters to come alive as they adjust to the new surroundings of the United States. The significance of written narratives like Marshall's illustrates how Afro-Caribbean writers gain empowerment, authority, and reflection by examining their own cultural lives in America. Scholars such as Dr. Carol Boyce Davies praise such literacy works and state (Boyce, 2002), "These narratives have their own separate textualities, and are deliberate attempts to break through the tiredness, fake linearity, and posturing of academic discourse." Boyce, and other Afro-Caribbean scholars recognize the cultural value of this growing authentic ethnic traditions.

Marshall's story takes place in New York, however Afro-Caribbean live throughout the United States. According to the Migration Policy survey (2009), 34.2 percent of the Caribbean people born in the United States reside in the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island area. A large portion (30.2) also reside in the metropolitan areas of Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and Pompano Beach, Florida, A very small subset of Caribbean immigrants (3.3) reside in the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy areas of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Thomas (2012) reports, “Today the 1.7 million Caribbean-born Black immigrants represent just half of all Black immigrants in the country; most come from Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic. About 80 percent of Black immigrants are fluent in English.” These statistics are wisely illustrated in the details of the exceptional family story of *Brown Girl, Brown Stone* (Marshall, 1981) which paints a vivid story of the domestic lives of a first generation Afro-Caribbean immigrant family. Marshall documents through her words to share the plight and victories of her Barbadian family. Here she points out her family’s levelheadedness;

“The West Indians slowly edged their way in. Like a dark sea nudging its way onto a white beach and staining the sand, they came. The West Indians, especially the Barbadians who had never owned anything perhaps but a few poor acres in a poor land, loved the houses with the same fierce idolatry as they had the land on their obscure islands” (Marshall, 1981).

Equally important, the Afro-Caribbean immigrant population came to the United States between the 1900’s and 1960’s with the expectation of being fully recognized, credited, and accepted as new residents. However, racial discrimination was prominent before and during the early civil right period in the 1960’s. Similarly, overseas, race relations in the United Kingdom was also prevalently discriminatory. Darcus Howe, British broadcaster reports, “Issues on race and immigration are at large in the national press. Fifty years ago, vast numbers of Caribbean men and women responded to Britain's desperate need for immigrant labour and settled in the inner cities of the UK to revive and extend the service and manufacturing industries. The 1958 race riots in Notting Hill went

hand in hand with these outpourings of racism” (Howe, 2008). Issues of acceptance and employment affected both groups in the United States and Great Britain.

This experiences of dispossession has been documented in the lives of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants, and there is a continuous need for historical preservation to grow. Hurley argues, “Historical preservation has enormous potential for enriching the urban experience. And at its best not only in figure read local economies which strengthens community by nurturing the deeper attachment to plays, greater levels of social cohesion, and collective agenda for local development” (Hurley, 2010). According to Bodnar (1986), “People use history and memory to create mythical narratives with symbols and heroes that articulate a point of view in the present”. Nevertheless, there has been a distinct forgetfulness and vagueness for identifying, distinguishing, and cherishing the historic preservations of the Afro-Caribbean immigrant within the world of scholarship. Like the Afro-Caribbean’s before them, the Africans were being assessed as a model minority by the beginning of the twenty-first century. No study fails to bring up the educated, professional pre-migration socioeconomic backgrounds of a substantial proportion of this group. The brain drain is often a concomitant theme of the new African diaspora. Indeed, educated professionals are a large proportion of this group of immigrants (Johnson, 2008).

Currently, Rutgers University has a department for scholarly research with Caribbean Studies. This department the Critical Caribbean Studies Department identifies, documents, and preserves the rich and detailed histories of Afro-Caribbean Americans. The Critical Caribbean Studies (Rutgers, 2014) at Rutgers aims to foster multi-disciplinary research about the Caribbean to allow a better understanding of the region

and its people from a variety of perspectives. Affiliates conduct research on such diverse areas as diaspora and transnational studies, migration and immigration, and literary. In the summer of 2012, Critical Caribbean Studies also became an affiliated group of the Center for Cultural Analysis at Rutgers University. In addition, to the program at Rutgers, there are scholars who have stated the need to challenges the misconceptions of Caribbean people. Dr. Hernandez-Ramdwar argues, “A critical lack of awareness around alternative histories and world geography is one of the first problems to be addressed in the classroom. Educators can move to discuss misperceptions of realities regarding Caribbean peoples, and to challenge and debunk the myths surrounding the multiple realities and great variety of Caribbean experience” (Hernandez-Ramdwar, 2005).

Brooklyn, New York has a customary community celebration in the form of a large community gathering. Kasinitz argues (1992) the role and participation of the Caribbean American Carnival, “Its’ (Carnival) role as a time when people play with the idea of identity; it is a moment where one can question and redefine. Moreover, this gathering is a form of historical preservation and interpretation, as it is an annual cultural celebration brought through the art form of Caribbean carnival. The carnival cultural festivities include steel drum performance, dancing, and costume marching parade. Moreover, in New York City, the annual Caribbean American Carnival is the largest parade in New York City. The celebration is held on Labor Day. It is carefully planned and rallied. The assembly of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants at this occasion will bring forth a great crowd and attendees of this gathering use this space as way to connect with old and new friends. Many people gather to along the corridor of the Eastern Parkway Blvd to catch a glimpse of the perfumed smells and effervescent sounds from “back

home”. People in brilliantly colored costumes adorned with feathers and sequins danced down to the cheers of more than one million spectators. This spectacular public events which generate millions of dollars in revenue, are the clearest expression of the development of strong Afro-Caribbean communities and a defined Afro-Caribbean identity. One Daily News reporter describes the action, “The parade route estimated around two million. Dressed as butterflies, suns, warriors, and hawks, the marchers were strapped into costumes so tall and wide that several weighed up to 60 pounds. They shared beers and sodas as they marched in groups, or masses each one trying to outdo the next louder music, glitzier masks and wilder moves” (Alvarez, 1995).

Over the years, this parade has been used to gain political interest and concern for the Afro-Caribbean New York City residents. Politics and the parade have played a part in the role of Afro-Caribbean New York City politicians. The 2000 (Johnson, 2008) Census revealed that the non-Hispanic Afro-Caribbean population grew almost 67 percent in one decade. In (Persaud, 2010) the census counting year of 2010, the West Indian American Carnival Association teamed up with the United States Census and CaribID to ensure that political message of unity was spread and that community members did not simply partied but “jumped up and counted” for something. The message of carnival to be prevalent in the Caribbean today.

Typically, on the Caribbean island of Trinidad, there are carnival celebrations during the period of Lent. Hence, with the spirit of continuing traditions, the birth of the spirited carnival evolved in New York City. It was in the early 1920’s, in Harlem where the first Caribbean carnival was showcased. Trinidadians came together and wore traditional costumes in their homes.

The Brooklyn Museum notes, “These celebrations took place during the traditional pre-Lenten period. In the mid-1940, Trinidadian Jesse Waddle (sometimes spelled Wattle), organized a street festival held on Labor Day, on 7th Avenue in Harlem” (Brooklyn Museum, 2013). This change from Lent to Labor Day, shows the influence of American democratic secular culture on Afro-Caribbean immigrants.

On September 1, 2014, the parade continued to serve as a historical preservation and representation of Caribbean culture. It is important to note, 2014 marks its 47th year of celebrating – “the ultimate expression of Caribbean Pride and Culture” (WIADCA, 2014). The organization West Indian American Day Carnival Association (WIADCA) hold new leaderships with Mr. Thomas Bailey. He and his team have been working diligently throughout the year to preserve the WIADCA brand, build and strengthen community/sponsor relations. According to the website, “ - expanding the 5-day New York Carnival week through year-round community activities, which now include over 20 programs and projects from February through December – providing entertainment, arts education, employment, youth and family services” (WIADCA, 2014). It is predicted that through the growth of these projects, those individuals who are Afro-Caribbean will be engrossed in a sense of cultural pride. However, the New York Times reports sparks of violence have effected participation from the Afro-Caribbean community members but the overall parade attendance and participation have been constant (New York Times, 2012).

Similarly, other neighborhoods that are in the New York City region are utilizing community members and carnival settings as a form of historical preservation and interpretation. During the fall of 2013, the Camden County Historical Society, located in

Camden, New Jersey held an exhibit of Latino heritage. The exhibit was called *Stitching Hispanic Culture Together*, and was to honor the dress and dressmakers of the Camden County Latino Community. Together, the West Indian Day American Parade and the Camden County Historical Society events must remain and continue to celebrate the historical preservation of people from the Caribbean diaspora.

Many of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants came to America in search of the American dream of work and security. Their dreams are to work and to be homeowners in America, as Marshall notes in her novel, many of these immigrants came with professional training and talents that were used in their home country. The prospect of employment in the United States was immensely alluring and appealing. Between 1920 and 1950, the number of Caribbean immigrants increased by more than 540 percent. (Portes, 1994). Their earned income was used as wealth for providing for their families back home. Afro-Caribbean immigrants came from countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad, and the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. Similarly, between 1981 and 1980, an estimated 1.2 million Caribbean immigrants arrived in the United States, which is about 1000 percent larger than the number of arrivals between 1921 and 1930 (Portes, 1994).

Thomas (2012) reports that today, the majority of Caribbean immigrants who come to the United States as permanent residents are admitted based on family ties. Black immigrants are perhaps the least visible, but most articulate and active of these ethnic constituencies (Bryce-Laporte, 1979). In historical context, the forced migration of enslaved Africans has been documented. In DuBois (1999) scholarly work, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America*, he argues, “Between the 1500s and the 1860s, at least 12 million Africans were sent to the

Americas. It is probable that about 25,000 slaves were brought to America each year between 1698 and 1707. This brutal forced migration changed the face and character of the modern world.” Black scholars agree that slavery shaped America’s economy, politics, culture, and fundamental principles. For most of the nation’s history, American society was one of slave holders and slaves (Horton, 2009). This picture is represented in the cultural and literacy histories of the African Americans.

At the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States became a main destination for Afro-Caribbean migrants, because moving and transitioning to Europe was considered a good idea for opportunities for economic advancement. Thomas (2012) notes, “Successive generations have used migration as a means to improve living standards and to mitigate the economic hardships of the post-slavery period.” In the process, increasingly large numbers of Caribbean Blacks migrated to destinations in Europe, primarily in the United Kingdom (Elissa, 2005). Again, when the United States lifted the quota requirements on immigration, many Afro-Caribbean immigrants moved to the United States and settled in numerous states. This wave of Afro-Caribbean immigrants moved to the United States and settled in numerous states. This wave of Afro-Caribbean immigration was documented not as carefully documented by American social historians.

How the Other Half Lives is a book of graphic depictions, sketches, photographs, and statistics that illustrates the lives of the New York immigrants. Senior host of National Public Radio, Robert Siegel states, “*Jacob Riis: Shedding Light On NYC's 'Other Half'* (2008): -“Riis documented block after block of tenements house the working-poor immigrants of the city, including Italians, Irish, Germans, Jews, Czechs

and Chinese.” Riis had an understanding for ethnic relations, and he wanted to show the dreadful dwellings of the immigrants. Nevertheless, Riis masterpieces do not include referencing to Afro-Caribbean immigrants. Another example of historic preservation for New York City immigrants is The Lower East Side Tenement Museum. Museum staff member Zach D. Aarons states that many residents were European (Aaron, 2013).

Furthermore, the Tenement website states, “The Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City invites the diverse people from its surrounding neighborhoods to share their stories of migration and immigration. The staff hears moving accounts of alienation, loneliness, confusion and frustration. The Tenement Museum preserves and interprets the history of immigration through the personal experiences of the generations of newcomers who settled in and built lives on Manhattan's Lower East Side, also called “America's iconic immigrant neighborhood” (Tenement, 2013). However, many of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants resided in the neighborhood of Harlem, which is located in the northern section of New York City. During the early 1920s, there were areas known as "Negro tenements" on West 130th Street. (Gill, 2011). The population of Harlem during the period of Great Migration, according to Gill (2011), came from the American South, West Indies, and Caribbean to take advantage of Harlem’s modern housing stock, and other enticing economic conditions. Blacks fleeing the poverty and racism of the American South and West Indies arrived uptown and began buying their own homes and starting their own grocery stores, laundries, cigarette shops, newsstands, bookstores, florists, funeral homes, newspapers, churches, orchestras, nightclubs, and even an all-Black cricket club (Gill, 2013). Harlem

is also home to the largest African American Day Parade, which celebrates the culture of African diaspora in America (African, 2013).

With the demands of the changing early twentieth century Harlem community, the Schomburg Center opened in 1925 as a special collection of the 135th Street Branch library. The Division first won international acclaim in 1926 when the personal collection of the Puerto Rican-born Black scholar and bibliophile, Arturo Alfonso, was added to the Division. The Schomburg Center collection included more than 5,000 books, 3,000 manuscripts, 2,000 etchings, and thousands of pamphlets (Schomburg, 2014). The Schomburg serves the general public to host readings, discussions, art exhibitions, and theatrical events The Schomburg Collection is considered as consisting of the rarest, and most useful, Afrocentric artifacts of any public library in the United States (New York Public Library, 2013).

The historically Black university community is another venue that realized the demand for Africana Diaspora historical preservation. Located at Howard University in Washington, DC is the Moorland Spingarn Research Center. Its focus is to continue with the commitment to preserve the legacy of people of African descent for this and future generations (Howard, 2013). In 1914, Dr. Jesse E. Moorland, a Black theologian who was an alumnus and trustee of Howard University, donated his private library, which reflected the efforts of African Americans to take a leadership role in the documentation, preservation, and study of their own history and culture. Dr. Moorland's (Battle, 1998) collection provided the catalyst for the centralization of the University Library's other Black related materials, which became known collectively as the Moorland Foundation. In 1946, Howard University acquired the large personal library of Arthur B. Spingarn, an

attorney, social activist, and prominent collector of books and other materials produced by Black people. The *Moorland-Spingarn Research Center* (MSRC) is recognized as one of the world's largest and most comprehensive repositories for the documentation of the history and culture of people of African descent in Africa, the Americas, and other parts of the (1998) world.

As one of Howard University's major research facilities, the MSRC collects, preserves, and makes available for research a wide range of resources chronicling the Black experience (Howard University, 2013). Moreover, Washington D.C. will house the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which was created in 2003 by an Act of Congress, establishing it as part of the Smithsonian Institution. It is scheduled to open in the year of 2015 (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2013). The National Museum of African American History is belated and overdue; however when it is open for the public, it will serve to continue to conserve and collect of artifacts relevant to those of African descent. An important recommendation would be that thus museum include documentation of the Afro-Caribbean heritage.

Florida's Afro Caribbean immigration was very prevalent after the first Afro-Caribbean immigrants arrived to work on farms during World War I (insert citation here). Many of the immigrants worked as laborers in term of providing resources for the military personnel. One foundation that marks this time period is *The Kislak Foundation*, established in 1984, which is a private, nonprofit cultural institution engaged in advancing knowledge and understanding of world cultures and history. The Kislak collections are primary resources.

Residents in the United States felt either that immigrants either placed a threat to the current society, or that they were greatly needed to be a part of the work mainstream. Sociology professor Justin Berg argues, “White Americans may fear the loss of employment opportunities because of the presence of illegal immigrants, who may be willing to work the same jobs for less money” (Berg, 2009). In the mid-1960s, the new United States legislation abolished the system national holders, which favored immigrants from Europe. Instead, immigrants were admitted on the basis of the need for their labor, giving preference to those with family in the United States. The result was a flood of new immigration drawn from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. As stated previously, many of Afro Caribbean immigrants contributed positively and they should not be seen as a danger to the United States.

As a result of the cultural traditions that Afro-Caribbean brought to the United States, and their participation in American society and as Afro-Caribbean immigrants began to see other opportunities worldwide, the sense of identity also shifted. As West Indians traveled abroad in search of economic opportunities and resources, all too often they found themselves living in societies in which blackness is more devalued more than it was at home, and they faced significant barriers because of their race. Upon arrival in the 1960s, the Caribbean immigrant was faced with America’s current climate: segregation. Additionally, major Afro-Caribbean publications like the *Amsterdam News* and the *Boston Chronicle* reported at length on the racial injustice on Blacks and Black immigrants. Dr. Violet Showers-Johnson, History Professor and Director of the Africana Studies Program at Texas A. & M. argues, “Studies of pre-civil rights Afro-Caribbean communities. from Irma Watkins-Owens's *Blood Relations* (1996) to Philip Kasinitz's

(1992) *Caribbean New York*) and Violet Showers Johnson's *The Other Black Bostonians* (2006), discuss how foreign blacks experienced these restrictions, which landed them in predominantly black neighborhoods in major cities like New York and Boston” (Johnson, 2008).

Within their own homeland, the ideology of segregation and radical racism was not always as severe. Consequently, many of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants experienced homesickness and depression. However, many of them prevailed and embraced the Civil Right Movements with marched alongside Revered Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Likewise, upon his arrival to America in 1916, the Afro-Caribbean journalist, activist, and orator Marcus Garvey envisioned Black nationalism and Pan-Africanism movements, and thus founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL). He founded the Black Star Line, part of the Back-to-Africa movement, which promoted the return of the African diaspora to their ancestral lands. According to David Van Leeuwen, “Gravy began to spread a message of Black Nationalism and the eventual return to Africa of all people of African descent. His brand of Black Nationalism had three components—unity, pride in the African cultural heritage, and complete autonomy. Garvey believed people of African descent could establish a great independent nation in their ancient homeland of Africa (Van Leeuwen, 2003). Both Garvey’s Back to Africa movement and Dr. King advocacy and struggle for civil equality illustrate the African American quest for personal and collective dignity; especially as directed toward access to opportunity.

Equally important, research studies are finding immigration trends that indicate an urgent support for the Afro-Caribbean immigrant. An example of this is given in Jackson et al. (2007):

“Among Afro-Caribbean immigrants, immediate family and extended kin play significant roles in the migration of individuals, assisting in the financing of initial migration, caring for the children of absent parents, assisting in settlement, and obtaining employment. It is feasible for immigrants to have lower reported life satisfaction and happiness if their migration goals and aspirations are unmet. Recent research has also suggested that people who are 45 years or older who immigrate to the United States and who age within the U.S. context versus their homeland, report lower levels of well-being.”

Further academic research regarding the Afro-Caribbean immigrants needs to be fulfilled by sociologists and historians. It is important to tell the story of this community. Citizens of Afro-Caribbean immigrant community should be able to both support and benefit from historical preservation. Again, support has been vaguely offered to Afro-Caribbean immigrants and even to the “second generation”

America comes to grips with the increased diversity of its population, it is important to pay attention to those places where an existing tradition of managing diversity runs deep. New York City’s history of successful immigrant integration is a resource for immigrants who settle there. Perhaps it could also serve as a resource or model for new destinations struggling with these complexities of diversity as scholars such as Waters and Kasinitz state, “New York City’s history of successful immigrant integration is a resource for immigrants who settle there. Perhaps it could also serve as a

resource or model for new destinations struggling with the complexities of diversity (Waters, 2013).

Men and women of Afro-Caribbean descent have recently played prominent roles in national and New York City politics. Between 1900 and 1930, the first wave Caribbean immigrants arrived in Harlem and Brooklyn and quickly came to dominate politically. Many of the New York Black elected officials and civil servants were of Caribbean descent, along with several of the first Black politicians to win national office. For example, the late Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was of Barbadian and Guyanese heritage (Brownmiller, 1971). In 1968, Shirley Chisholm made history by becoming the United States' first African-American congresswoman, beginning the first of seven terms in the House of Representatives. After initially being assigned to the House Forestry Committee, she shocked many by demanding reassignment. She was placed on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, eventually graduating to the Education and Labor Committee. In 1969, Chisholm became one of the founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus (1971).

The rising political power of the Afro Caribbean immigrant is most prevalent today. Demographically, the Afro-Caribbean immigrants reside in cities where their political power is widespread. In the realm of political participation, historical preservation, and interpretation is necessary and essential. White House Correspondent, Cynthia Gordy argues, "In recent years, with more African and Caribbean people coming to the United States to flee political strife, civil violence and natural disasters, new groups are entering as refugees or asylum seekers" (Gordy, 2011)

Historic preservation and interpretation as it relates to Afro-Caribbean immigrants can be met with efforts to preserve, conserve, and protect buildings, objects, landscapes, and other artifacts of historical significance. Afro-Caribbean immigrant history can be represented, documented, and expressed with significant historical preservation, collection, and interpretation. Recently, there have been gains in cultural heritage management with digital archiving. Moreover, the identification and maintenance of significant cultural sites, communicating with the government, academic institutions and community members will play a key role in preserving, collecting, and interpreting.

Professor Kevin Thomas and The Migration Policy Institute have greatly documented the populations of the Afro Caribbean Immigrants and continue to do so. Thomas (2012) argues, “Black Caribbean immigration to the United States is rooted in strong historical, cultural, and economic linkages. While Afro Caribbean immigrants are overrepresented among less educated and underrepresented among the highly educated, they report having strong English language skills. They become United States citizens at higher rates. Black Caribbean immigrants exhibit high levels of labor force participation and report higher earning.” The Black Caribbean immigrant should always be included in honoring and celebrating the history and heritage of their immigration plight within the larger context of the history of all African-Americans. There is a need for the development of virtual museums, historical societies, and landmark preservation. Second generation Caribbean born people will be able to use these collections, artifacts, and digital stories to teach future generations. Utilizing literature is also suggested. National, state, and local constituents should continue to seek of collecting, preserving, and

interpreting materials and information pertaining to the Afro-Caribbean immigrant and their roles in building community.

Research materials on the history of Florida, the Caribbean, and Mesoamerica, with special emphasis on native cultures, their contact with Europeans, and the colonial period to about 1820 are now more available in the Kislak Center for Special Collections. (Kislak, 2013). The foundation's digital archiving, indicates that "Florida growers needed Caribbean labor more than ever with wartime demands for foods for United States troops and also for allies. Using black laborers from the Bahamas, Jamaica and other West Indian islands allowed labor brokers and growers control over a labor force that could be threatened with deportation which could not be exercised with American-born workers (2013).

This form of historical preservation and digital archiving is managed by Florida International University with technical supports of the University of Florida. The Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC) is a cooperative digital library for resources from and about the Caribbean and circum-Caribbean. The dLOC provides access to digitized versions of Caribbean cultural, historical and research materials currently held in archives, libraries, and private collections (DLOC, 2013). The dLOC continues to support its goals of ensuring digital preservation of Caribbean materials and providing increased access. It is recommended that partnerships with other universities and educational institutions be established.

The city of Boston has also made some progress with the historical preservation of immigrants. Social scientist and sixth President of Hostos Community College of The

City University of New York Dr. Félix Rodríguez argues, “Boston has an increased hostility towards immigrants. They need to be locales of enjoyment, of intellectual excitement and, most of all, of invitation for change” (Matos-Rodriguez, 2001). Another form of historical preservation that is currently being implemented is at the University of Massachusetts, which occupies the Center for African, Caribbean and Community Development (CACCD). The Center is a university wide, interdisciplinary academically based program associated with the Africana Studies Department in the College of Liberal Arts that offers regional research programs in Africana Studies. It serves as an applied research and community service center associated with the Department of Africana Studies in the state's only urban university (Massachusetts, 2013). Additionally in Boston, within the Northeastern University Library is the Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists, which was established in 1969 as a division of the National Center of Afro-American Artists. The Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists is an art museum dedicated to the education, promotion, exhibition, and collection of African, Caribbean, and Afro-American fine arts worldwide. It is one of only two Afro-American art museums in the United States, and it is the only art museum in New England dedicated exclusively to African, Caribbean, and Afro American fine arts. The previously mentioned institutions do provide a slice of historic interpretation and preservation; however, considering the state of Massachusetts is a significant and historic geographical space in public history and historians, there is a necessity for expanding.

The history of Afro-Caribbean American Americans in some specific ways is similar to many other immigrants groups in America. Their historical experience

represents a struggle for socio-cultural, political representation, and explicit call for acceptance and recognition. There must be a committed attempt to preserve its heritage.

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