ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: DANCING THE ARCHIVE: RHYTHMS OF CHANGE IN POST-VOLCANO IDENTITIES ON MONTSERRAT, WEST INDIES

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Doctor of Philosophy, 2016

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In this dissertation, I demonstrate how improvisations within the structures of performance during Montserrat's annual festivals produce "rhythms of change" that contribute to the formation of cultural identities. Montserrat is a small island of 39.5 square miles in the Caribbean's Leeward Islands, and a volcanic disaster in the 1990s led to the loss of villages, homes, and material possessions. The crisis resulted in mass displacement and emigration, and today's remaining population of 5,000 is now in a stage of post-volcano redevelopment. The reliability of written archives for establishing cultural knowledge is tenuous, and the community is faced with re-energizing cherished cultural traditions.

This ethnographic research traces my embodied search for Montserrat's history through an archive that is itself intangible and performative. Festivals produce some of the island's most visible and culturally political events, and music and dance

performances prompt on- and off-stage discussions about the island's multifaceted heritage. The festival cycle provides the structure for ongoing renegotiations of what it means to be "Montserratian." I focus especially on the island's often-discussed and debated "triangular" heritage of Irishness, Africanness, and Montserratianness as it is performed during the festivals.

Through my meanderings along the winding hilly roads of Montserrat, I explored reconfigurations of cultural memory through the island's masquerade dance tradition and other festival celebrations. In this work, I introduce a "Cast of Characters," each of whose scholarly, artistic, and public service work on Montserrat contributes to the shape and transformation of the island's post-volcano cultural identities today. This dissertation is about the kinesthetic transmission of shared (and sometimes unshared) cultural knowledge, the substance of which echoes in the rhythms of Montserrat's music and dance practices today.

DANCING THE ARCHIVE:
RHYTHMS OF CHANGE IN POST-VOLCANO IDENTITIES ON MONTSERRAT, WEST INDIES

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2016

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated
to the memory of

Daniel B. Kennedy, Jr.

Acknowledgements

I consider myself very fortunate to have been given so many opportunities for learning, in both formal educational settings and less formal ones. Throughout this dissertation-writing process, I have realized how many people have both directly and indirectly contributed their ideas and influences to this project. What have been even more challenging and enriching than the intellectual demands of this doctoral program have been the emotional ones—forcing myself out of my comfort zone, learning to go with the flow, and allowing myself to rely on the support of others.

I want to thank the professors that have guided me through graduate school. I wish to thank Dr. Catherine Foley at the University of Limerick for introducing me to the academic study of dance and encouraging me to push beyond the boundaries of Irish dance, which has led me in so many unexpected creative directions. I am grateful for the support of my dissertation committee members at the University of Maryland, each of whom I requested for their particular expertise and experience: Dr. Stephen Brighton in Anthropology, Dr. Faedra Carpenter in Theatre and Performance Studies, Dr. Esther Kim Lee in Theatre and Performance Studies, Professor Miriam Phillips in Dance, and Dr. John Lawrence Witzleben in Ethnomusicology. I would also like to acknowledge Professor Karen Bradley, who has mentored me throughout this program and has connected me to her wide dance network. I especially want to thank my advisor and committee chair Dr. Laurie Frederik for helping me push through each stage of this trying process with her demanding supervision and motivating enthusiasm. I also acknowledge the support of the UMD School of

Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies' International Initiatives program and the UMD Latin American Studies Center, both of which funded the initial stages of my fieldwork.

I had incredibly intelligent and witty classmates in this PhD program, and I looked forward to our grueling back-to-back seminars because I knew I would spend much of those meetings laughing until my face hurt. I could not have gotten through this program without our dissertation bootcamp sessions and dance parties. I am especially appreciative of the encouragement and inspiration I got from Jess Krenek and Allan Davis, two colleagues who became dear friends.

I must acknowledge, as a collective, all of the dancers, musicians, and artists from around the world who have influenced my creative process over many years. They are my teachers and friends, many one in the same. They are open-minded individuals who recognize the value of history and tradition but are not afraid of creativity and innovation. I learned as much (if not more) from our conversations and interactions when I was out dancing as I did when I was at home with my nose in the books.

Thank you, thank you, Montserrat. I was stunned by the hospitality of the people I met, from the moment I landed on the island and was welcomed "home." I must thank in particular: Flo Griffith, for filling in as my on-island mother; Gracelyn Cassell, for her research guidance and stimulating conversations on her breezy porch over fresh coconut water; and Herman "Cupid" Francis for shepherding me into the island's music community. A special acknowledgement goes to Rob and Barbara Field for taking me under their wing and keeping me smiling every day. I must also

thank Dominique Mbaye for taking time away from his family to make my ambitious idea for “Blended Rhythms” become a reality.

A couple of people in my personal life deserve special mention. I thank Martin van den Berg for always having total faith in me, and for his clarity, perception, and unwavering support. I thank Pablo Regis de Oliveira for showing me how much persistence can achieve, and for inspiring me to continue to seek unexpected collaborations in music and dance, in friendship and love.

My family—Mom, Dad, and Anthony. My parents taught me the importance of travel and the power of language and laughter. They never blinked an eye when I told them I was quitting my job in technology, going back to school for “performance studies,” and packing up to dance masquerades on a volcanic island. They have always trusted my instincts and allowed me to create my own path. My grandmother Ann C. Kennedy taught me to be “bold as brass,” and I am always guided by her quiet but elegant confidence as I face my own professional and personal challenges.

Finally, I want to remember Uncle Di, whose influence is woven throughout this project. He showed me how to chase my curiosities and keep a journal while doing so. From my first travel diary at age eight to this more formal one, these adventures are for you.

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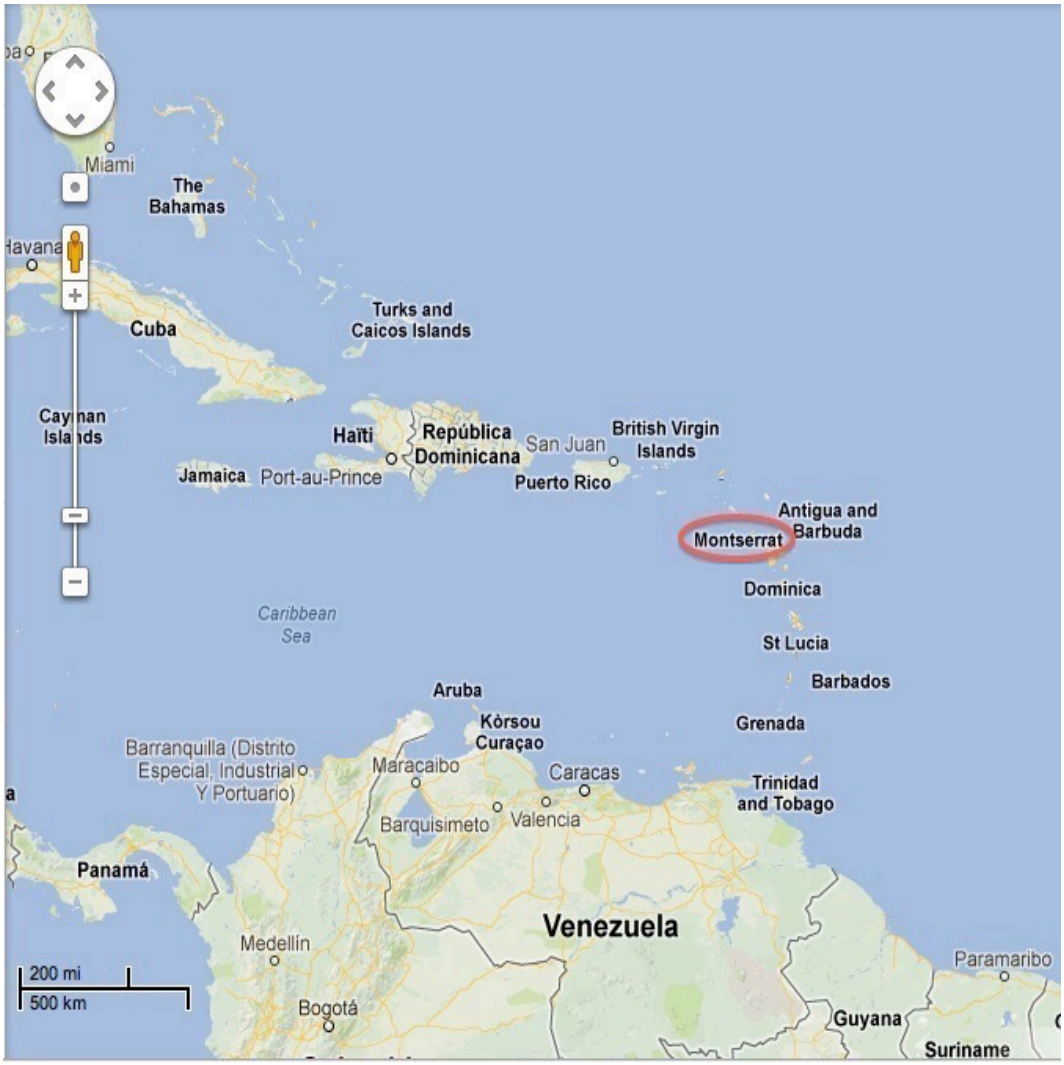


M.1. Map of Montserrat in the Caribbean. Montserrat is 39.5 square miles and has a population of about 5,000 residents. Travelers must travel to Antigua before taking the ferry or a small eight-seater plane to Montserrat. Image source: http://maps.google.com, accessed April 14, 2013.



M.2. Map of Montserrat's Exclusion Zone. Plymouth was the capital city of Montserrat before the volcano destroyed the southern two-thirds of the island between 1995-1997. This area is now called the Exclusion Zone and is often described as a modern-day Pompeii. Image source: http://www.clubtread.com/forumPix/410000/410861.jpg, accessed April 25, 2013.



M.3. Map of villages of Montserrat. This map shows some of the larger villages on Montserrat, including those in the southern areas, such as Plymouth (the capital), Kinsale, and St. Patrick's. All of these southern villages are now abandoned in the Exclusion Zone due to the volcanic destruction (see Map M.2). Government headquarters is currently located in Brades and a new capital city is planned for Little Bay. Image source: http://www.paradise-islands.org/montserrat/images/Montserrat-Map.jpg, accessed April 25, 2013.

Cast of Characters



Basil Chambers

Basil Chambers is from Montserrat and is the host of *The Breakfast Show*, which airs every morning on ZJB Radio. He often travels regionally and internationally as a representative of Montserrat. Known for his entertaining wit and stage presence, he is a popular emcee and performer at various island events. He is also a noted masquerade dancer, having begun dancing in his youth, and he continues to participate as a masquerade dancer and musician during festival events. Photograph courtesy of Basil Chambers.



Sir Howard A. Fergus

Sir Howard Fergus was born in Long Ground on Montserrat in 1937. He holds a Master's in Education from the University of Manchester and a PhD from the University of the West Indies. He has served in various political positions on Montserrat, including Chief Education Officer, Acting Permanent Secretary, Speaker of the Legislative Council, and De Facto Deputy Governor. He was awarded Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1995 and was knighted in 2001 for his service to Montserrat. He is considered Montserrat's historian and has published a number of historical works, including *History of Alliouagana: A Short History of Montserrat* (1975), *Montserrat: Emerald Isle of the Caribbean* (1983), *Montserrat: History of a Caribbean Colony* (1994), and *Montserrat in the Twentieth Century: Trials and Triumphs* (2001). He is also a distinguished poet and creative writer. Image source: https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151847512801398, accessed September 28, 2015.



James "Titus" Frederick

James Frederick (known as "Titus") is from the village of St. John's on Montserrat and he is the dance captain of the Emerald Shamioles masquerade troupe. He formed the Emerald Shamioles in the late 1990s to keep the masquerade dances alive after the island's volcanic crisis. In March 2014, he won the National Order of Merit for his outstanding work in the preservation of the island's masquerade tradition. When he is not dancing masquerade, he is a security guard at Montserrat's Public Works. Photograph courtesy of Oslyn Butler.



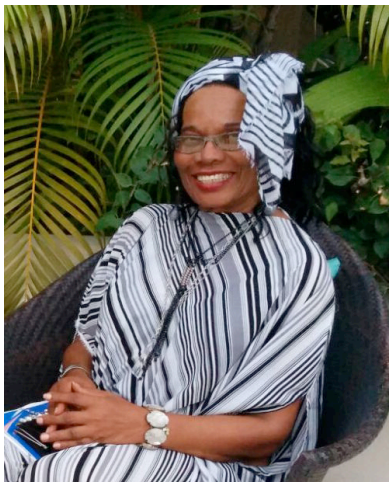
Herman "Cupid" Francis

Herman "Cupid" Francis is from Montserrat's village of Salem and is responsible for most music education on the island. He teaches a wide variety of instruments to children after school, he founded and directs the "Small Beginnings" youth music education program, and he leads the "Volpanics" community steel pan orchestra for adults. Mr. Francis is also the Coordinator of Culture for the Government of Montserrat's Culture Division and was the Director of Tourism at the Tourist Board in 2014. Cupid is a celebrated calypsonian and has won the Monarch crown four times since he began competing in the 1980s; he also organizes the Junior Calypso youth competition each year. He won an Order of Merit at Montserrat's 2014 National Awards Ceremony for his work in music education on the island. He is referred to as Mr. Francis in more formal situations, but friends generally call him by his calypso name, Cupid, which originated from his first calypso song called "The Elements of Love." Photograph courtesy of Herman Francis.



Yvonne Brade Julius

Yvonne Brade Julius is from the village of Davy Hill on Montserrat and she is currently the dance captain of the Ladies of Alliouagana masquerade troupe, which formed in 2012. She is also the acting Head Teacher at Brades Primary School. Photograph courtesy of Yvonne Brade Julius.



Rose Willock

Rose Willock grew up on Montserrat in the villages of Trials, Kinsale, Long Ground, and Ryners. She is known as the "Goddess of Radio" for her contributions to Montserrat's local radio and for her regional and international work in broadcasting. She is the host of ZJB Radio's *Culture Show*, which airs every Saturday morning, and she is also known for her activist work in women's rights and for her services as an arts educator and dance teacher. She attended the University of the West Indies and also completed professional studies at institutions in the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States. She was designated Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her contributions and was awarded the Order of Excellence at Montserrat's National Awards Ceremony in 2015. Photograph courtesy of Rose Willock.

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Introduction:

An Orientation to Montserrat

> "*Mommy, I hear a rhythm! Mommy, I hear a rhythm!* Put on your dancing shoes; get ready to jig to the drums of freedom! The pulsating acoustic rhythm of the masquerade drum, the steel drum, the iron band, the string band will make you stamp, will make you pound your feet, to the beat, on the street. Ladies and gentlemen…don't forget, it's Rhythm Night!"
>
> – ZJB Radio ad for "Rhythm Night," St. Patrick's Festival 2014

My first impressions of Montserrat's cultural identity were formed when I experienced Rhythm Night at the local St. Patrick's Festival in 2013, my first trip to the volcanic island. I arrived at the car park outside of Gary Moore's bar in Salem at around 6:00pm, just as the Volpanics Steel Pan Orchestra was beginning their performance. The group had set up approximately twenty-five steel pans on stands in a grassy area, and all members were dressed in shiny green and yellow shirts, some donning kitschy shamrock or leprechaun accessories. They played a range of tunes that were familiar to me, such as Irish-themed songs like "Cockles and Mussels," "Danny Boy," and "Fields of Athenry," along with some Caribbean party favorites such as "Hot Hot Hot," "La Bamba," and "Under the Sea." Locals and tourists gathered around the dimly lit space and some swayed gently in time with the music as they sipped on Carib beers and took videos and photographs with their smartphones.

I wandered around the space to get a feel for the atmosphere, and as I headed down the street to check out the food stalls, I heard another distinct sound as I approached Desert Storm bar at the other end of Salem village. It was the forceful beat of the big "boom" drum of the masquerades. This was the first time I

encountered Montserrat's masquerades in real life (not a YouTube video), and as I continued walking, I heard the unmistakable sound of the fife and snare drum that accompany the loud bass drum, playing spirited melodies and driving rhythms. I searched the crowd for dancers wearing the unmistakable masks and tall headdresses of Montserrat's masquerades, but I saw no one dancing except for a couple of locals dressed like everyone else in jeans and t-shirts, moving around in a small, loose circle in the middle of Salem's main road. At the time, I wondered if these middle-aged performers were "real dancers" or just locals "liming"—that is, drinking and having a good time in the streets. The whole affair was informal and clearly separate from the main staging area, where the Volpanics continued their performance of Irish melodies. (Watch and hear this transition in a video of the experience: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-rhythm-night-at-montserrats-st-patricks-festival-2013/, Video #1, time code 0:50-02:26.)

As I followed the crowd down the road, the Volpanics' "Danny Boy" faded in the distance, and I had a very clear sense that these impromptu masqueraders were somehow competing with the steel pans. They created their own sonic space and offered an alternative performance geared not to festival tourists, but towards locals specifically. I felt as though I had entered an entirely different realm: a space where the boundaries between "performance" and "just locals liming" disappeared, where the Irish and Caribbean steel pan melodies that were familiar to me were substituted for the rhythms of the masquerades that I had yet to explore. At this time and place, I felt that "Montserratianness" was momentarily unmasked in front of me.

From my perspective, the masquerade audience seemed to be primarily

comprised of locals, with no white tourists except for myself in sight, and the crowd grew as the musicians continued to parade down the street. Some spectators jumped into the dance circle for a few energetic steps before easing back out again, and there were always at least two people in the center, dancing and silently acknowledging one another. They hopped about and their shoulders moved up and down in time with the boom drum. They danced the distinguishable "heel and toe" step, the one that I had read about, that had supposedly derived from an Irish polka step. That night, in the dark streets of Salem, it looked like nothing I had ever seen before.

I headed back up the Salem road to Gary Moore's to find that the Volpanics had dismantled their pans and loaded them into a truck. Things were just quieting down after a performance by the local Rude Boyz String Band when a surprise act that was not on the official Rhythm Night schedule took over. Jalikunda, a six-person traditional music and dance troupe visiting from West Africa, tumbled out of their van with their *djembe* and *dun-dun* drums in tow. They jolted everyone awake with their infectious rhythms and spirited dancing. Members of audience seemed at first stunned and then ecstatic, and locals and tourists alike crowded around again and began dancing with more fervor than I had yet seen on quiet, subdued Montserrat.

That was the end of my second day on Montserrat, and at the time I knew no one on the island and almost nothing about Montserratian culture. But at that moment, as my eyes and ears tried to make sense of the conflicting sounds coming from the Irish melodies of the steel pans, the African rhythms of the djembes, and the Montserratian heartbeat of the masquerade drums, my research questions emerged: How do Montserratians construct and negotiate the many facets of their cultural

identity through music and dance? How do festival performances involving specifically African and Irish influences contribute to Montserrat's cultural development? What are the historical narratives that accompany these performances? How do Montserratians perform their complex cultural identity in often-contradictory ways for both local and foreign audiences?

From where I stood that evening of Rhythm Night, I clearly saw and heard the three sides of Montserrat's cultural "triangle," described by some locals as the meeting of Montserratian, African, and Irish elements. But I realized that the question was not so much how these identities connect or are reconciled during the island's festivals, but rather how they collide and are continually negotiated with others throughout the year. As the following chapters unfold, I utilize a variety of analytical frameworks that demonstrate such connections and collisions: (1) concepts of foreign versus local, (2) post-traumatic cultural identity formation, (3) place and materiality, and (4) intersections between archive and repertoire. This dissertation begins with a consideration of the more visible and audible traces of African and Irish cultures in the island's landscape and soundscape, and I trace cycles of tradition and "rhythms of change" that are generated by the crosscurrents of Montserrat's multiple identities.



Figure I.1. St. Patrick's Week and African Music Festival Banner. The 2013 St. Patrick's Week and African Music Festival website banner depicts women from the Emerald Community Singers dressed in the Montserratian national dress (far left) and African drums (far right), interspersed with masquerade dancers, steel pans, and shamrocks. The Montserrat Tourist Board posted this banner online at www.visitmontserrat.com in March 2013. (Image source no longer available online.)

Introducing Montserrat

Montserrat is an Anglophone (English-speaking) British Overseas Territory[1] in the Leeward Islands of the West Indies. It is a very small Afro-Caribbean[2] community of about 5,000 inhabitants; the island is 39.5 square miles, and gradually increasing due to the buildup of volcanic deposits on the eastern coast. They use the East Caribbean dollar (EC$ or XCD) for currency, which had an average exchange rate of about EC$1.00 to US$0.37 between 2013-2015. Currently, the only way to reach Montserrat is by taking the ferry (up to three hours, depending on the seas) or a small propeller plane (15-20 minutes) from Antigua, or else chartering a flight, ferry, or yacht from nearby Guadeloupe, Nevis, or Dominica.

Today, Montserrat's residential population of approximately 5,000 consists of about 92% of locals of African descent and 3% of European origin (primarily expatriates from the United Kingdom and North America). Montserrat's expatriate population is mostly comprised of citizens of the United Kingdom (U.K.), United States (U.S.), Ireland, and Canada, many of whom have retired on the island and live near the areas of Olveston, Woodlands, and Salem. The remainder of the population consists of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) nationals from neighboring islands

[1] Montserrat is officially an internally self-governing U.K. territory, though the United Nations Committee on Decolonization includes it on their list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The local government is a parliamentary representative democratic dependency with a multi-party system, including the People's Democratic Movement (PDM), which was elected to replace the party called the Movement for Prosperity and Change (MCAP) in 2014. The executive branch is comprised of three parts: the sovereign Queen Elizabeth II, a monarch-appointed governor (Adrian Davis from 2010-2015, followed by current governor Elizabeth Carriere), and a locally appointed premier (Reuben Meade from 2010-2014, followed by current premier Donaldson Romeo). There is also a nine-member legislative assembly, led by current speaker Shirley Osborne.

[2] Afro-Caribbeans are Caribbean people of primarily African descent. According to ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel, "Afro-Caribbeans, like Caribbean people as a whole, have traditionally been divided not only by insular geography but also by language and the political fragmentation of colonialism. At the same time, however, they have shared the general experiences of slavery, the cultural uprooting it entailed, and the direct roles of creating a set of new, creolized cultures" (2005, 6).

such as Jamaica, Haiti, Dominica, and Guyana, and also the Dominican Republic (not a member of CARICOM). A number of South Asian immigrant business owners from India and Sri Lanka also live on the island, many of whom run the local supermarkets. I further break down the social categories of Montserrat later in this chapter when I discuss concepts of "foreign" versus "local" on the island (Table I.1).



Figure I.2. Map of Montserrat in the Caribbean. Montserrat is 39.5 square miles and has a population of about 5,000 residents. Travelers must travel to Antigua before taking the ferry or a small 8-seater plane to Montserrat. Image source: http://maps.google.com, accessed April 14, 2013.

Today, Montserrat is still redeveloping after Hurricane Hugo destroyed much of its infrastructure in 1989,[3] and then in 1995-1997, just as the community was getting back on its feet, the island's active Soufrière Hills volcano ravaged the southern region, where the majority of the population lived at the time. Only nineteen people died in the volcano's pyroclastic flows, but the disaster resulted in forced abandonment of homes on Montserrat, leading to mass emigration to the U.K. and U.S., as well as the displacement of the remaining community to the northern (safer) side of the island. The population is about 5,000 today, whereas it was about 12,000 before 1989 and 10,000 before 1995. Explosions of ash in 1997 destroyed the capital city of Plymouth and resulted in the dislocation of 90% of the island's resident population from the southern area to the north or abroad (Clay et al. 1999).

Many of the residents of Montserrat who stayed on the island were left without adequate housing and remained at least partly dependent on external assistance. For Montserratians who migrated to the U.K. during the volcanic crisis, their citizenship status as members of a British Overseas Territory was ambiguous. Today, Montserrat has put aside the movement for political independence from the U.K. (popular in the 1980s and early 1990s) in favor of continuing to receive economic aid from the crown, but Montserratians still do not receive the full benefits of British citizenship. I was told that those affected by the volcano were offered little financial support to make the trip across the Atlantic, and some who emigrated described the discrimination and inequality that they experienced in terms of work and educational opportunities. In the U.S., Montserratian immigrants were initially

[3] E. A. Markham and Howard Fergus document official and personal descriptions, narratives, poetry, and photographs of the hurricane's effects on the local community in *Hugo Versus Montserrat* (1989).

granted "Temporary Protected Status" by the Department of Justice when the volcanic crisis began, but this was revoked in 2004 and many were forced to leave ("Montserrat Profile – Overview" 2015; "Temporary Protected Status" 2015).

After the volcano, the local economy was described as "virtually non-existent," apart from public sector projects funded by British aid. The island was also affected by poor response to financial regulation, which negatively impacted banking and insurance for residents.[4] (For a brief description of the effects of the volcano on Montserrat's economy and political system, and a summary of current redevelopment efforts, see Appendix A.) Today, the community continues to rebuild their economic and agricultural infrastructure while mourning the loss of their villages, homes, and cherished cultural traditions to the volcanic eruptions. The abandoned area is now described as a modern-day Pompeii, but unlike Mount Vesuvius' rapid 25-hour destruction of Pompeii, Montserrat's Soufrière Hills volcano continued to spew ash unpredictably over the course of two years (and lower levels of activity continued sporadically until 2010). Few have yet returned to these villages to clean up, and, unlike Pompeii, they have not constructed a museum-like exhibition of the damages for tourists to peruse.

In July 1995, just after the first eruption, the Montserrat Volcano Observatory

[4] Read a full report and evaluation of the volcanic crisis in Edward Clay et al.'s "Evaluation of HMG's Response to the Montserrat Volcanic Emergency," published by the Department for International Development (DFID) in December 1999. The report explained that a major reason for Her Majesty's Government's (HMG) slow response to the emergency was the uncertainty of the progress of the eruptions and the *ad hoc* approach to managing the crisis as it worsened. The Government of Montserrat (GOM) chose to deal with limited resources by adopting a "wait and see" and then "catch up" approach, and indecision and differences of opinion hindered the timely implementation of assistance programs (such as providing temporary shelter on-island and relocation and emigration services). Another problem was the basic lack of infrastructure for communication and management between the HMG and the GOM. The report offered suggestions to facilitate communication between London and the Caribbean and to advance economic reconstruction, especially of the private sector on Montserrat.

(MVO) was established as a monitoring and research center. The MVO publishes reports at least once a week that advise local authorities about the volcano's current hazard level based on seismic activity and other observed measurements. MVO vulcanologist Adam Stinton explained that low levels of activity have been the norm since February 2010, except for some ash venting in March 2012. However, close ongoing monitoring is crucial as future activity is uncertain and pyroclastic flows could restart very quickly without warning (June 9, 2015, e-mail message to author). Access to Plymouth and parts of the Exclusion Zone is prohibited, but in early 2015, previously restricted areas of the Exclusion Zone were deemed safe for excursions and opened up to public access. In prior years, the area was protected by security guards and was accessible only to those who registered at the local police station for a day permit.



Figure I.3. Map of Montserrat's Exclusion Zone. Plymouth was the capital city of Montserrat before the volcano destroyed the southern two-thirds of the island between 1995-1997. This area is now called the Exclusion Zone and is often described as a modern-day Pompeii. Image source: http://www.clubtread.com/forumPix/410000/410861.jpg, accessed April 14, 2013.



Figure I.4. View of Plymouth. This photograph from 2014 shows a view of the volcano (left, covered by clouds) and the abandoned capital city of Plymouth (far right) from the old Montserrat Springs Hotel in Richmond Hill. Some of the land is green and overgrown now, but much of the area is still covered in gray ash. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (January 11, 2014).

The Montserrat community now has the opportunity to develop a new post-trauma and postcolonial understanding of its national cultural identity, its transnational diasporic identity, and its relationship to the rest of the world. As an Overseas Territory, Montserrat is not technically a nation, but this dissertation addresses how the island "performs" itself as one by adopting national symbols and traditions. Their national motto is, "A people of excellence, moulded by nature, nurtured by God," which reflects how Montserrat strives for distinction as a country "emerging from disaster and in a phase of consolidation and growth" ("National Motto for Montserrat Selected" 2013). The Ministry of Culture and the Tourist Board

visually represent Montserrat with colorful images of the national oriole bird and national heliconia flower, and the national masquerade dance is also performed at nearly every official island event throughout the year. The national/territorial song "Motherland" was appointed in 2014 by popular vote; the lyrics were composed by local writers Sir Howard Fergus and Dr. George Irish, and the words reflect local values relating to nature, religion, children, and music (see Appendix B). The process of negotiating "national" symbols, traditions, and values contributes to a sense of national postcolonial identity, and it also boosts tourism through the commodification and consumption of the symbols that are selected to represent a diversity of meanings (Skinner 2006). This is important for the Montserratian community, which struggles to assert a common national image for a population that is surprisingly heterogeneous, multi-faceted, and conflicted, despite its small number.

In 2014, just over 10,000 visitors came to Montserrat, including foreign tourists and emigrants coming home to visit family and friends. Many came for the island's festivals, especially the larger ones at Christmastime and around St. Patrick's Day in March, and a handful of visitors also came for short excursions from neighboring Antigua (see Appendix D). Before the volcanic destruction, Montserrat frequently welcomed large Caribbean cruise ships, but today such visits are rare since the old port in Plymouth is no longer accessible to the public, and the facilities at today's main port at Little Bay can only accommodate small vessels.

In 2014, visitors to Montserrat spent about EC$22M (approximately US$8M) on lodging, car rentals, and restaurants (Appendix D). The island has only one hotel (Tropical Mansion Suites in Sweeney's) but there are plenty of guesthouses,

apartments, and villas available for rent throughout the year. Restaurants are scattered throughout the island, mainly around government headquarters in Brades or Little Bay, and a few are tucked away in Olveston, Salem, and Cudjoe Head. There is little shopping available and there are no chains—no McDonald's, no Walmart, no Boots pharmacy, and only two gas stations. Jeeps and RAV4s are the most popular rental vehicles and they are expensive but necessary to get around, if the financial means are available. The roads are hilly and winding, short but sudden rain showers break into the overwhelming heat, and the winds can be strong, so walking or bicycling is not for the faint of heart. Other options are buses and taxis, but buses sometimes run at unpredictable times and on unpredictable routes, and taxis are expensive.

Tourism on Montserrat is relatively small compared to the more developed islands of nearby Antigua & Barbuda, Guadeloupe, and St. Kitts & Nevis. The black sand beaches are beautiful but can be difficult to access and are not set up for tourists expecting a luxurious resort experience. The island has many recreational activities to offer, including: observation of the Soufrière Hills volcano at the Montserrat Volcano Observatory; hiking, diving, snorkeling, and fishing; and bird and turtle watching. In 2014, a newly re-formed Montserrat Tourist Board adopted a new festival marketing strategy to highlight the "gritty" side of Montserrat for eco-tourists and those seeking an adventure in the "real" Caribbean (Anita Nightingale, Director of the Montserrat Tourist Board, March 11, 2015, Little Bay, Montserrat, personal communication; "Go Off the Grid" 2015). The new strategy was in line with the recently elected Premier Donaldson Romeo's plan to "Turn Ash Into Cash," and his government (the People's Democratic Movement, or PDM) wanted to market the volcano and use it as a

resource for a "vibrant and sustainable future" ("This Caribbean Island Wants to Turn 'Ash to Cash'" 2015). The Tourist Board revamped their website to demonstrate this focus on highlighting "the gritty" and "the green" assets of Montserrat's natural landscape.

"Black and Green" on the "Other Emerald Isle"

Within the diverse network of the Caribbean tourism market, it is important for each island to distinguish itself from the others for regional and global recognition, and for the resulting economic benefits that result from that recognition. Especially among the smaller islands of the West Indies, each one differentiates itself by identifying the ingredients that make up "the dominant strands that produce the distinctively local flavor, the distinctively local syncretic patterning and social orderings, as well as the creative innovations" (Tambiah 2000, 179). Montserrat differentiates itself from its other Afro-Caribbean neighbors in the West Indies by highlighting its unique Irish heritage, dating back to the seventeenth century when Irish political and religious refugees settled on the island. As I discuss in Chapter 1, Irish presence in the Caribbean was widespread during the colonial era, but the Irish demographic was significantly higher on Montserrat. Because of this history, and because of the lush island's resemblance to the green coasts of Ireland, Montserrat has come to be known as the "Emerald Isle of the Caribbean." The national flag features the Union Jack in its upper left quadrant alongside the island's coat of arms: Erin (the white female personification of Ireland) holds an Irish harp in one hand while clasping a black cross with the other (Figure I.5). The flag itself depicts the

multivalent nature of official representations of Montserratian national identity, under the British sovereign and consisting of Irish and African components.

The Irishness of Montserrat is evident in the island's place names, such as St. Patrick's, Kinsale, and Cork Hill, which allude to similar place names in Ireland (the town of Kinsale is in Ireland's County Cork), and all three locations are now abandoned in the Exclusion Zone due to the volcanic destruction. Other remnants of Montserrat's Irish heritage come in the form of family surnames: Sweeney, Allen, Ryan, Griffith, and Galloway are prevalent names among this Afro-Caribbean community, whose ancestors supposedly adopted the names of their Irish masters upon emancipation. This is a common explanation for the presence of Irish names in the Caribbean, although the claim is up for debate (McGinn 1994, 21; O'Callaghan 2000, 224-225). The complex history of the Irish on Montserrat and their relationship to the African slave population has led to some references to the "Black Irish of Montserrat," a problematic concept that I discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

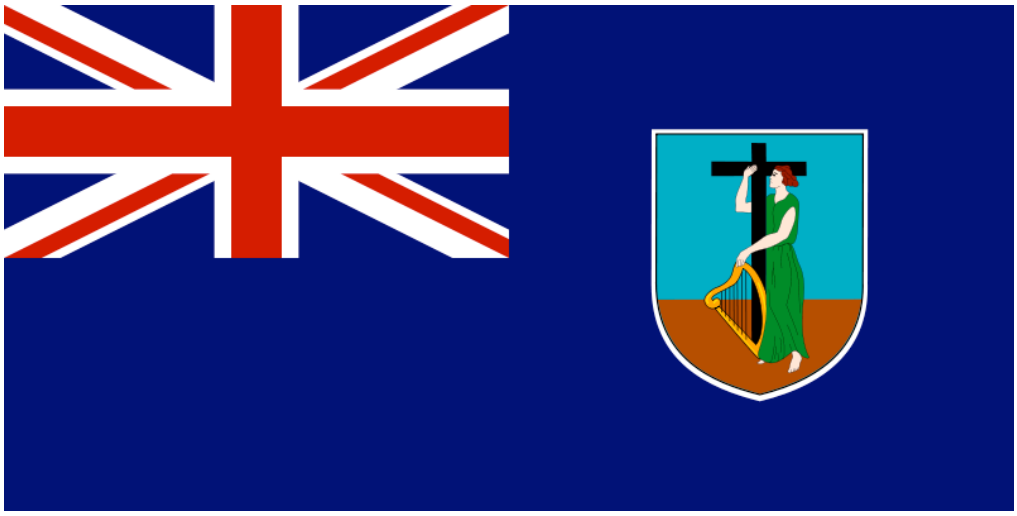

Figure I.5. Flag of Montserrat. Montserrat's national flag includes the flag of Great Britain in the upper left quadrant and Montserrat's coat of arms on the right side. The coat of arms features Erin (Ireland personified) holding an Irish harp and a black cross. Image source: http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/montserrat/mspics/flagpics/montserflag.png, accessed April 14, 2013.

Symbols of "Irishness" abound on Montserrat year-round—travelers receive a green shamrock stamp in their passports upon arrival and faded shamrocks decorate store windows year-round. Come March, however, the island becomes covered anew with symbols of Irish pride and St. Patrick's Day banners, accessories, and stickers. St. Patrick's Day became a national holiday in 1985 on Montserrat—the only place in the world besides Ireland where it is a national holiday—and eventually transformed into a 7-10 day festival, much longer than Ireland's own celebrations. Montserratians commemorate St. Patrick's Day not to celebrate pride for Ireland, but to remember the first attempted slave insurrection on the island in 1768—a major step in the movement towards emancipation, which was finally achieved in the British West Indies in 1834. It is a holiday during which Irish national symbols such as shamrocks and St. Patrick are adopted, but they are imbued with new meanings through Montserratian-specific cultural performances. During this festival, the connections and collisions between Montserrat's Irish and African cultural elements come to the fore when they become animated in music, dance, and other festival performances.

In 2013, an African Music Festival was added to the St. Patrick's Festival schedule of events for the first time. At a dinner reception for the new festival at the Governor's House, then-Premier Reuben Meade concisely encapsulated the often-repeated historical narrative of the 1768 St. Patrick's Day rebellion, and attitudes around it. He said,

> Part of the thing that a lot of people don't understand: 1768, we were still slaves. The Irish loved to drink green—what, beer?—on St. Patrick's Day, and our forbears thought, what a wonderful day to kill these people. But one of us sold us out, and the seven persons who started the revolution were killed, so we are in fact celebrating a failed revolution in 1768. But it is a very significant revolution, where as a people we are trying to free ourselves from

> slavery. Over the years, we have celebrated St. Patrick's as an Irish festival, but not the same way as they celebrate it in Ireland. We are celebrating a fight for freedom. We always saw the Montserrat-Irish connection. This year, what we have done is to close that triangle. So you have Montserrat, Ireland, and Africa (March 17, 2013, Governor's House, Palm Loop, Montserrat).

I squirmed in the audience while I listened to this explanation—he gestured towards me, the pale Irish American with the reddish hair, when he mentioned the "Irish" and their green beer. The discomfort motivated me to transform my project from a solely intellectual one to also a physical and emotional one, and I began to formulate this research project into one that would incorporate not only books and archives, but also the physical experiences of people, relationships, and movement.

It is this St. Patrick's Day narrative, with all its complications, controversies, and anachronisms, that I chose as a starting point to explore and question in my quest to understand Montserrat's complex heritage. St. Patrick's Day on the island has come to represent freedom in general rather than display specifically Irish pride, and the narrative of St. Patrick's Day on Montserrat diverges from Irish and Irish American versions to specifically highlight the parallels between Irish and African histories of oppression. It is by no means a non-controversial holiday, and it is not all smiles and harmonious singing, as the 2013 St. Patrick's Festival banner would suggest (Figure I.1). Some Montserratians are proud of their Irish heritage, but some reject it, and, in either case, most insist that their Africanness not be forgotten. As one local telephone caller exclaimed on a radio talk show during St. Patrick's weekend in 2013, "We're Africans! [...] We aren't Irish. We're Africans!" (*The Culture Show*, ZJB Radio, March 15, 2013). This project is about understanding how a single national identity is created, but it is also about plural individual identities—how

individuals express and understand their heritage in the context of the community.

As I describe in the chapters that follow, versions of the narrative that Meade recited at the African Music Festival reception have been debated in Montserrat's written archives for years, and it is a narrative that is annually negotiated and contested by the community through dialogues and debates surrounding festival events and performances. During St. Patrick's Festival, the appropriation of Irish symbols is evident in cultural activities—that is, the "paddywhackery" that includes wearing leprechaun hats, drinking Guinness, and listening to Irish songs like "Danny Boy" and "Cockles and Mussels" played repeatedly on the steel pans. The national masquerade dance is performed year-round, but during St. Patrick's Week it becomes part of the narrative of Montserrat's Irishness, when the dance is said by some locals to juxtapose Irish and African influences in Montserrat's cultural identity through a combination of West African dance postures and rhythms with Irish dance footwork and European instruments. These are among the performance practices that I examine throughout this dissertation, and I illustrate how they prompt important conversations that contribute to the successes and failures of the community to "complete the triangle" of its cultural identity.

Foreign versus local categories on Montserrat

When I first set out on this research project, I thought that my investigations into Montserrat's Irishness and Africanness would also necessarily be an investigation into the island's "whiteness" and "blackness." However, as my research developed, I realized that the performances that I observed—during festivals, at

masquerade performances, and in everyday life—contributed primarily to Montserrat's national and cultural identities, not necessarily racial identity. This is typical of the Caribbean, as cultural theorist Stuart Hall explains:

> Race is not a 'pure' category in the Caribbean, as it is, say, in South Africa, where it is legally defined and defined 'genetically' rather than socially. In the Caribbean, even where a strong white local élite is present, race is defined socially. Thus it enters into the mechanisms of social mobility and stratification via its visible registrations: physical characteristics, pigmentation, in some more indeterminate way, 'culture.' […] [It is] a social class stratification system in which the race-colour elements in the stratification matrix constitute the visible index of a more complex structure (1977, 170-171).

I observed that the use of Irish and African elements in performances of Montserrat's identity seems to be largely cultural in nature, and the incorporation of Irish influences in particular advances a nationalist agenda for future autonomy and regional distinction more than it contributes to a "desire for whiteness" (as in identity formation in the Dominican Republic, Candelario 2007) or a particular "racial project" (as in the United States, Omi and Winant 1994). Racial dynamics play a role in Montserratian society, and certainly influenced my experiences on the island, but I focus on elements of cultural identity rather than attempt to decipher racial codes, having not received explicit input on racial issues from community members. To ask "How Irish is Montserrat?" and "How African is Montserrat?" is to ask a combination of racial, cultural, political, and economic questions. In this research, I focus specifically on the cultural questions that are related to the rhythms of the island's music and dance practices.

As I explain in more detail in Chapter 1, Montserrat exemplifies the region's history of African/European/indigenous cultural creolization that is central to Caribbean identity formation (Abrahams and Szwed 1983; Hall 2010; Hintzen 2006;

Mintz and Price 1985; Misir 2006). Such creolization is not an absolute binary between two "pure" constructs, but it has been described as a "continuum" that represents the entanglement of African and European cultural influences (Brathwaite 1978).[5] When I started this research, I wondered whether or not the Irish element on Montserrat falls somewhere in the middle of "black" African and "white" European polarities to further entangle what is at each end of this continuum. The idea came from scholarship that has described the Irish as culturally "not quite white" (Curtis 1997; Dooley 1998; Erie 1980; Garner 2004; 2007; Ignatiev 1995), especially due to their fraught history of conflict with Great Britain. This literature suggests that Irish culture may fall somewhere in between African and British cultures to challenge the notion of a homogeneous white/European culture in the U.S. and the Caribbean. Irishness is part of the local heritage on Montserrat, but Irish culture is also foreign and associated with colonization of the island. I wondered: Is Irishness a sort of mediator between Britishness, as the sovereign power that governs the island, and Africanness, the "authentic" heritage of these Caribbean people? Does the appropriation of Irish cultural symbols like shamrocks demonstrate an appreciation for Irish culture, or is it a parody that represents a sort of "cultural victory" over Irish colonial culture? Does Irishness allow Montserratians to perform a simultaneous

[5] The term "creolization" and its cognates have specific meaning in the Caribbean context, as a variety of writers and scholars have described. For example, poet and literary critic Édouard Glissant wrote a series of essays in 1989 about the notion of *Antillanté* (French West Indian identity) in Martinique and other islands of the French Antilles. He writes that people must accept not only the African aspects of their identities (the attitude arising from the Négritude movement), but also the European ones. Glissant describes the synthesis not as "bastardization" but as a "productive activity through which each element is enriched" (1989, 8). For Glissant, creolization is an idea—rather than a category—that represents the transformational process of cultural self-discovery that leads to Caribbean unity and eventually to individual self-liberation. Additionally, the process of *Antillanté* requires orality: "The oral…is inseparable from the movement of the body. There the spoken is inscribed not only in the posture of the body that makes it possible (squatting for a palaver for instance, or the rhythmic tapping of the feet in a circle when we keep time to music), but also in the almost semaphoric signals through which the body implies or emphasizes what is said" (1989, 22).

acceptance and rejection of their distinct colonial history, contributing to the strategic formation of ambiguous attitudes towards that heritage and to other questions of cultural identity? Just how Irish is Montserrat, really?

I determined that the notion of a creolization continuum itself is an inappropriate model to describe cultural identity formation on Montserrat today. The island's particular approach to combining Irish and African influences in cultural performance is in line with ethnomusicologist Jerome Camal's notion of creolization not just as a theory, but also as a *process* of community negotiation (2011), and it involves more than just a negotiation between discrete cultural constructs. Even if some Montserratians today describe their heritage as a mix of Irish and African roots, they rarely use the term "Black Irish" or consider themselves "hybridized" (as described by Messenger 1967, 6). Despite what others in the community may think, each individual self-identifies in a variety of ways as local, foreign, or somewhere in between. Each person experiences the heritage he or she has chosen to accept—not in fragments, but as a whole. Local culture expert Rose Willock explained,

> Heritage has everything to do with [celebrating festivals]. Once you *accept* your heritage, by the way. I embrace all of my heritage. And I encourage others to do that, because it is all of who you are. And if you want to ignore some part of yourself, hell, you're not going to be whole, are you? (March 19, 2015, interview with author, St. Peter's, Montserrat)

As a foreign researcher on Montserrat, I wanted to know more about the parts that make up the whole of one's Montserratian heritage. Some of the questions that I encountered repeatedly during my fieldwork related to place and culture—that is, who or what is local, and who or what is foreign? The distinction is an important one for a small island community that struggles for global recognition, when few people

on the outside have heard of Montserrat or know where it is: "Oh, is that the one that had a volcano a while back?" or "Isn't Montserrat in Spain?"[6] Local writer and activist Elizabeth Piper-Wade stated in *MNI Alive* newspaper, "I know a country is it's [*sic*] people and the people are a representation of the country. Montserrat is no exception to that rule" (2015). But who are the people of Montserrat and who is allowed to represent Montserrat? Even before the volcano, the population had been affected by centuries of migration out of and into the island, and so it has long been important to distinguish between locals and foreigners—who belongs and who does not, who is Montserratian (locally pronounced "Mon-*sra*-shin") and who is not.

Before I introduce the analytical frameworks of my project, I first give an explanation of the social profile of the island, of the people who are the focus of this study. In Table I.1, I classify the different social categories that I identified on Montserrat between 2013-2015. I provide a description of the social group, common countries of origin, perceived racial and foreign/local categories, and estimated duration on the island. I was not able to obtain official information about such demographic categories (race, ethnicity, nationality, or social class) from the Immigration Office or the Governor's Office, and I was told that, in the absence of a Statistics Office on Montserrat, such data do not exist in official form. Thus these categories come from my own observations and experiences on Montserrat, speaking to people in formal and informal interviews, and watching how different members of the community interact with one another. These are distinctions that I have interpreted from what people on the island said or what I observed in their behaviors.

[6] In fact, when Christopher Columbus "discovered" the island in 1493, he named it after a monastery on a mountain near Barcelona called "Santa Maria de Montserrate" (Fergus 1983, 5).

Table I.1. Social categories on Montserrat (2013-2015)				
Description	**Origin**	**Racial category**	**Foreign/local category**	**Duration on island**
Montserratian-born	Montserrat	“Black”	Local	Long
Montserratian-born emigrants in U.K., U.S., etc.	Montserrat	“Black”	Depends on context*	Depends on context*
Long-term residents from neighboring islands	Antigua, Dominica, Trinidad, Nevis, etc.	“Black”	Sometimes local	Long
Asian business owners	China, Sri Lanka, India	Chinese and Indian, respectively	Depends on context*	Depends on context*
"Black" foreign workers/families	Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Lucia, etc.	“Black”	Depends on context*	Depends on context*
"Spanish" and French-speaking workers/families	Mostly Dominican Republic and Haiti, respectively	“Spanish” and “black,” respectively	Foreign	Often short
"White" foreign workers	United Kingdom, United States, Canada, etc.	“White”	Foreign	Often short
Expatriates	United Kingdom, United States, Canada, etc.	Usually “white”	Usually foreign, may self-identify as local	Usually long
Tourist, excursionist, or short-term visitor	International, usually U.K., U.S., Canada, or Ireland	Usually “white”	Foreign	Short

Table I.1. Social categories on Montserrat (2013-2015). This table shows my evaluation of social categories on Montserrat during my fieldwork period from 2013-2015. Groups are described in terms of country of origin, perceived racial category, perceived foreign or local designation, and approximate duration on the island. All of the categorizations described in this table are qualified in the text.

*The categorization “depends on context” is explained in the text.

Table I.1 shows some of the main social groups on Montserrat, but I must also qualify these classifications by describing the problems with distinguishing between locals and foreigners, Montserratians and non-Montserratians, and "blacks" and "whites." The point of this table is to show that such categories are important factors in social interactions on Montserrat—one should know his or her place in society—but the categorizations are by no means clearly defined. I fully recognize the problems with how this model dichotomizes "local" and "foreign," and I set out in this dissertation to problematize such categories.

The Montserratian-born—those that have lived their entire lives on the island, give or take a few years for off-island travel, work, or education—are unquestionably locals. Things get fuzzier in the definitions I gathered when considering the Montserratian-born who left the island as young adults and rarely, if ever, come back to visit; or the Montserratian-born who left as young children and have returned as adults to live permanently, for employment or in retirement, but spent their formative years off-island. The next category includes the Montserratian residents who were born on neighboring islands like Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia, Trinidad, or Nevis. They may or may not consider themselves to be locals, depending on how long they have lived or worked on the island; how much family they came with, left at home, or married into on Montserrat; and how much pride they have for their home island or their adopted island. There are also a number of Montserratian-born who may own another home on another island, may travel regularly back and forth, and may adopt that other island as primary home. They may choose to identify as, for example, Antiguan or Dominican, rather than Montserratian, for personal reasons.

Montserrat's community includes a handful of Asian business owners and workers. There is one Chinese restaurant (located in St. John's) that is owned by a well-established Chinese family; Rams supermarket is a long-established business (previously in Plymouth and now downsized in Salem) that is owned and operated by a family from Sri Lanka; other supermarkets such as Ashok's, King's, and Victor's are owned and operated by Indian and Sri Lankan families. These businesses also bring in contracted employees from India and Sri Lanka to work for a year or two. These families send their children to local schools and live as locals.[7]

A recent concern among the Montserratian community is the integration of foreign immigrants who have arrived since the volcano for job opportunities relating to redevelopment and reconstruction. Some of them are from Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, or St. Lucia and work in various sectors, including health care, education, construction, hospitality, etc. These people do not usually identify as Montserratian, though they may consider themselves more "local" than "foreign," depending on how long they have lived and worked on the island or if they are raising children there. There are also increasing numbers of Spanish-speaking immigrants from the Dominican Republic and French-speaking immigrants from Haiti. Both of these groups struggle with the language barrier and the "Spanish" especially tend to isolate themselves; the language barrier is a significant issue in schools for the children of

[7] For more about the history of Chinese immigration to the West Indies, see Walton Look Lai's *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838-1918* (1993) and *The Chinese in the West Indies, 1806-1995* (1998), Andrew R. Wilson's *The Chinese in the Caribbean* (2004), and Look Lai and Chee Beng Tan's volume, *The Chinese in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2010). For discussions of cultural identity formation processes for East Indians in the West Indies, see Arthur and Juanita Niehoff's *East Indians in the West Indies* (1960), Viranjini Munasinghe's *Callaloo or Tossed Salad?: East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad* (2001), Prem Misir's volume of essays, *Cultural Identity and Creolization in National Unity: The Multiethnic Caribbean* (2006), and Rattan Lal Hangloo's volume of essays, *Indian Diaspora in the Caribbean: History, Culture, and Identity* (2012).

these families (Gracelyn Cassell, May 2014, Woodlands, Montserrat, personal communication). Because of the language issue, French- and Spanish-speaking residents are usually considered to be foreigners.[8]

There are a significant number of higher-paid foreign workers from "white" countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, or Canada. These are often government employees who work in the Governor's Office or for the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) or the Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC). There are also researchers and scientists, usually from the U.K. and U.S., who work for Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO) or on other short-term or small-scale personal research projects in various fields, such as geography, history, archaeology, or anthropology (like myself). Many of these members of the community are "white," but that is not always the case. For example, they may be African, Black British, or African-American.

It would seem obvious that members of the expatriate community are foreign, but, in fact, many of them self-identify as locals because of the amount of time they have spent living on the island. Many of them bought property on Montserrat during the residential tourist boom in the 1960s and 1970s, and they have financially and personally invested in the island for up to fifty years. Many property-owning ex-pats are "snowbirds" who spend summers in their home countries in the U.K., U.S., or Canada, and escape to their Montserrat homes for the cold winters. A handful of ex-pats also own local businesses, including bars, cafés/restaurants, dive shops, or real

[8] Note the difference between "Dominicans" from Dominica and those "from Santo Domingo" in the Dominican Republic. The word "Dominican" describes someone from the island of Dominica and is pronounced "dom-ih-NEEK-en," as opposed to "dom-IH-nik-en" to describe a person from the Dominican Republic.

estate. Some of these bars are geared primarily towards ex-pats and tourists (with intentional or unintentional reputations as "white" bars) and some are popular with the local community as well. Some locals may consider these ex-pats to be "honorary Montserratians," and some may not—depending, perhaps, on whether they married a local and raised children locally, or if they forged strong friendships or made significant contributions to community development.

The one group that is undeniably foreign is that of the tourists, excursionists, or short-term visitors. Most tourists come from the U.K., U.S., Canada, or Ireland, and they may visit for as little as one or two days and up to a month or two. They often stay in villas or guesthouses and spend their days at the beach or on hiking or diving excursions. Other short-term visitors, however, include Montserratian emigrants now living in the U.K. or U.S. who return home to visit friends and family, especially for Christmas Festival or the St. Patrick's Festival. These Montserratian emigrants may or may not be considered full-fledged locals, but they are also not quite "foreign"—they may have lost their physical homes on Montserrat, but they have family on the island, they know how to interact with locals, and they may speak the local patois, allowing them to slip in as locals at home.

Skin color, of course, makes a big difference in how a person is regarded on Montserrat. Whites, no matter what their place in Montserratian society, are seen as a category of their own and are perceived to have certain advantages that the rest of the population does not have (and many certainly do). Most whites are not privy to "local" prices for lodging, vehicle rentals, or restaurants, no matter how much time they have spent on the island. Networking and "who you know" can make a

difference in these interactions, but not always.

My earliest impressions as a white American during my first trip to Montserrat were that all locals were by definition "black" and all foreigners were by definition "white"; it also seemed that all "whites" must be foreign. But this simplistic view, of course, is not the case. Social, racial, and ethnic categories are much more complex and are "mixed" in various ways, as the descriptions presented in Table I.1 above indicate. For such a small community, this society is surprisingly diverse and complex, but also not atypical due to the migratory and transnational character of most Caribbean islands (Goulbourne 2002; Gowricharn 2006), which incorporate African, European (Spanish, English, French, or Dutch), and indigenous cultural elements in various ways.[9] Every Caribbean island has its own social stratification codes that are part and parcel to discourses about national, racial, and postcolonial identity formation (e.g., Barnes 2006; Burton 1997; Candelario 2007; Moore 1997; Munasinghe 2001; Wirtz 2014). On Montserrat, describing who or what is "local" and who or what is "foreign" is an important part of the identity formation process.

I use the conceptual framework of "foreign" versus "local" to examine how Montserratians construct narratives and make sense of their cultural history through music, dance, and festival performance. In this dissertation, "foreign" and "local" are less fixed categories of analysis than they are fluid designations that are continually defined through practice and performance. Whether something is accepted as locally authentic or foreign and exotic, or rejected as inauthentic, unfamiliar, or unwelcome,

[9] Montserratians, like the people of other Caribbean islands, necessarily experience various degrees of (trans)nation(al)ism, as described by Krishna Seunarinesingh (2006): (1) diaspora nationalism (or the immigrant effort to assimilate with the host nation as they lose contact with home); (2) transnational nationalism (or the diaspora community's long-distance involvement in politics at home); and (3) transnationism (or the creation of lateral links across states and nations).

is a theme that came up again and again during my research period. I present examples throughout this dissertation to demonstrate how the community negotiates such questions through verbal dialogue and debates, as well as through juxtapositions of seemingly contradictory forms in music and dance performance. When I use the word "locals" or "local community" in the following chapters, I refer to the residents of Montserrat, or simply those who identified as members of the community during the time of my research. I use the term "cultural identity" (or its plural, "cultural identities") to indicate performances of identity by local individuals or small groups within the community, and I use the term "national identity" when referring to official government-sanctioned narratives and performances that are meant to represent the island as a collective whole. But even the distinction between official and unofficial narratives is difficult to define, since people on Montserrat often play and embody multiple roles simultaneously (such as government minister who is also performing musician and a teacher) and may oscillate between multiple perspectives representing multiple national, cultural, and personal identities or agendas as a result.

How a person is defined on Montserrat matters because it determines who is considered "authentic," who can become a national hero, who can document the island's history and contemporary culture, whose narratives are chosen to represent the national culture, and who can and cannot perform as a Montserratian.[10] The community is small, so identifying those who can act as cultural representatives

[10] To get a sense of who Montserrat chooses as its national heroes, see *Gallery Montserrat: Some Prominent People in Our History* (Fergus 1996), the Facebook group "Montserrat Heroes and Icons" (https://www.facebook.com/groups/349821958544607/), and the recipients of Orders of Merit, Distinction, Excellence, and National Hero at the National Awards Ceremonies in 2014 (http://www.gov.ms/2014/03/17/national-honours-and-awards-showcase/) and 2015 (http://www.discovermni.com/2015/03/six-honoured-at-national-awards/). The first local National Honours and Awards Showcase was presented at the Montserrat Cultural Centre on March 16, 2014.

locally, regionally, and internationally involves an ongoing and highly visible discursive process. This dissertation features a "Cast of Characters" (page xi) that I have selected as key figures for their contributions to the local cultural development of the island, either in scholarly fields of history and literature, or in performing arts and education. The work of these individuals shaped my understanding of Montserrat's cultural identity in significant ways, and readers should remember the names Fergus, Basil, Mr. Francis (or Cupid), Rose, Titus, and Yvonne because these characters and their work appear continually throughout this dissertation.

The volcano and post-traumatic cultural identity formation

One omnipresent character on Montserrat trumps all of the social categories described above—the volcano. The story of the volcano affects all members of the community, regardless of race, class, nationality, language, or ethnicity, and its activity in the mid-1990s severely altered the economic, political, social, and geographic profile of the island. Besides the physical, environmental, and economic devastation of Montserrat, the impacts of dislocation from Plymouth and other residential areas in the south, and the consequences of the massive immigration to the U.K. and U.S., were emotionally disruptive and traumatic for the local community.[11] In 1998, some Montserratian emigrants attempted to go back home after having fled the island during the volcanic crisis, but limited housing prevented significant

[11] Some of the day-to-day experiences of those living on the island during the upheaval from 1995-1999 were documented by resident Cathy Buffonge in her self-published four-volume series entitled *Volcano!* (1999; 2000; 2002). Buffonge chronicled the crisis from the first warnings in July 1995 to recovery efforts in 1999, and she included press releases from local authorities, the Government of Montserrat, and scientists from the Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO), alongside personal stories of family and friends in the community. The books read like an unofficial diary of Montserrat during that time—Buffonge provides detailed accounts of some of the difficulties experienced on the ground with housing, health services, and emigration when they were forced out of their homes.

numbers from returning. Today, the southern part of the island is still uninhabitable, and residents who stayed or came back have had to rebuild their lives in the previously sparsely populated northern area. Montserratians are proud of the villages from which they come, so residents from the southern villages that were affected by the volcano must find a way to maintain that village pride within the context of the nation as a whole as the island rebuilds. That is, the dislocation and dispersal resulted in a "leveling" of the community that partially transformed a village-based sense of "local" into a more collective and nation-based one. This transformation is only partial because Montserratians must form a strong national collective in order to rebuild, but it is still crucially important to remember the villages that were lost and to commemorate pre-volcano life. Thus, community members must negotiate between village politics and national politics, and that struggle is evident in the political debates that surround the festival and masquerade performances and everyday practices that are described throughout this dissertation.

After the crisis, Montserratian dramatist Yvonne Weekes (Director of Culture during the disaster) documented the psychological effects of the volcano on those relocated into temporary shelters. In her book *Volcano* (2006), she took a theatrical approach in her writing to describe how the community used storytelling, drama, and music for crisis management, and she especially emphasized the importance of laughter in both performance and daily life for the post-trauma coping process. Local scholar Dr. Vernie Clarice Barnes worked as a counselor during the crisis, and she evaluated the psychosocial effects of the loss and displacement experienced by Montserrat's community. She described the community's emotional response to the

volcanic disaster as "stress bussin'"—that is, diverting attention from post-traumatic stress through singing, storytelling, telling jokes, dancing, having sex, and eating and drinking. These "stress bustas" are communal activities that allow participants to externalize internal stress through "active coping" (Barnes 2001). Barnes' approach to understanding how local cultural practices like the masquerade dance played (and continue to play) a role in post-traumatic coping strategies is woven throughout the following chapters (especially Chapter 2) to illustrate the crucial importance of public performance.

According to sociologist Arthur Neal, a "national trauma" must be interpreted through public discourse, especially via mass media networks (1998), and creating a conversation about cultural trauma within a community allows individuals to negotiate the narratives that position them within the group (Eyerman 2004, 66-67). On Montserrat, radio is the primary form of communication—ZJB Radio waves are heard continuously throughout the day, while passing by house windows, sitting in the bus, and shopping in the supermarkets. Without listening to the radio, one would miss important updates about power outages, political debates, and festival schedule changes. In its music programming, ZJB emphasizes on-island talent when possible, preferring to feature local artists rather than imported music from Caribbean neighbors or from the U.S. or U.K. Radio announcers and talk show hosts create a space for locals and also Montserratians in the diaspora who are not able to physically interact with the island community to call in and participate in ongoing conversations and debates regarding current events, island politics, and cultural issues, including recent music performances and festival events. Frequent topics of conversation

explicitly refer to definitions of Montserrat's national identity, cultural heritage, returning home, shaping tourism, and promoting economic development.

My first impressions of Montserrat, before I ever visited the island, came largely from listening to web streams of Rose Willock's *Culture Show*, which airs on ZJB Radio every Saturday morning and creates a virtual atmosphere for callers on the island and in the diaspora to engage in conversations about the community. I listened to old archives of the show, and for the St. Patrick's Festival opening in 2005, Rose asked her listeners to call in to *The Culture Show* with definitions of heritage—not only from the dictionary, but for them, personally, as Montserratians. One anonymous caller responded,

> …We talk about Irish heritage and all these different things, and the [Irish and the African] intermixing. But then what role did we really play in the intermixing with the Irish? You know, we adopted their names, we maybe adopted certain lifestyles and cultures. Maybe religion also. All of these things, you know. But these are just a few little things, but when you look at heritage, you still have the negatives and you have the positive…. And most important, as in everything, Rose, we need to know who we are as a people. Because if we don't connect ourselves to our true foundation and our origins, we will not really have [a sense of heritage]. We always drifting, you understand? So when you say we balance the Irish and the African, we still have to say, what role did we play? And I'm saying, we have negative impacts, we embrace certain different heritage and culture which was not ours…what our forefathers left for us. [Rose Willock: It was more or less imposed, you are implying?] Yes. So these are the things we have to look out for, we really have to be analytical and break down and be realistic and deal with the truth all the time (*The Culture Show*, ZJB Radio, March 12, 2005).

The caller asks the important question, "What role did we play?" That is, how much agency did Montserratians, as a collective "we," have in defining their postcolonial Irish/African heritage, and how much agency do they have now to continue developing their own sense of post-trauma cultural identity after the volcano? The caller acknowledged both the positive and negative aspects of such identity politics,

and he encouraged the community to "be realistic" about their origins, neither accepting nor denying the island's history of colonization, slavery, and natural disasters, but instead espousing necessarily ambivalent and "drifting" attitudes as they address the present and future of Montserrat. Heritage for some Montserratians is also a matter of choice, rather than an imposition—another anonymous caller later discussed being equal parts Irish, African, and Scottish, explaining, "It's like…not knowing where your allegiance lies, so I decided to adopt a heritage. My heritage is pride in where I live, where I call my home: Montserrat" (*The Culture Show*, ZJB Radio, March 12, 2005). To promote post-trauma social integration in a dispersed society, this approach to cultural identity requires certain acceptance among the community, not just of oneself, but also of how others prefer to identify, and how "we," as a collectivity, negotiate multiple identities.

Ethnomusicologist Rebecca Miller's notion of "cultural ambivalence" explains how a community that has experienced cultural trauma has the opportunity to make aesthetic choices and regain agency as they rebuild their cultural identity, outside of the sometimes "limiting frame of heritage" (2007, 97). Expanding on Melville Herskovits' notion of "socialized ambivalence" (1971, 295), Miller defines cultural ambivalence as "the contemporary contestation of the meaning and significance of certain historic expressive modes…[and] a direct result of the syncretic processes and their subsequent formation (and re-formation) of identity" (2007, 20). Whether a trauma is political, social, or economic in nature, and whether it is man- or nature-inflicted, culture can be used to develop and negotiate new ideologies and values, even—or especially—when the simultaneous acceptance and

rejection of the pre-trauma past by members of the community have generated ambivalent attitudes towards that history. Miller specifically notes that recognition of cultural ambivalence includes an understanding of how African identities in the Americas and the Caribbean must be both invented and inventive in order to negotiate encounters between West African and European cultures, as described in Herskovits' *Myth of the Negro Past* (1958). In the Caribbean today, promoting festivals and cultural arts contribute to cultural autonomy, community solidarity, regional distinction, and, in the case of Montserrat, post-volcano cultural identity formation. Ambivalent and often contradictory attitudes towards incorporating other cultural identities (such as Irishness, Africanness, Britishness, etc.) into the notion of "Montserratianness" contribute to the island's economic and cultural redevelopment by prompting community dialogues. Cultural narratives—whether they are recited, sung, or danced—are crucial for restoring the community's physical and material losses through social performance, which is, importantly, immaterial and intangible.

My exploration of Montserrat's performances through the analytical framework of post-traumatic cultural identity formation considers not only how the collective memory of cultural trauma is made manifest through verbal dialogue and media such as radio and the web, but also through kinesthetic communication and live performance. In Chapter 3, I specifically examine the ambiguity of meanings in performances during Montserrat's annual festival circuit, including Christmas Festival in December and the St. Patrick's Festival in March, and the conversations surrounding them. These dialogues have allowed Montserratians over the years to repurpose cultural traditions as they have coped with successive traumas, from

slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to Hurricane Hugo in the late 1980s, and finally to the more recent volcanic crisis. Today, the embers of once-radiant festival celebrations and rich cultural activities simmer in the community's post-volcano memory—the festivals have survived, in spite of the challenges that have resulted from transformed spaces and lost material resources on the island.



Figure I.6. Abandoned suitcase in Richmond Hill. An abandoned suitcase with clothes, photographs, and letters left behind in a house in Richmond Hill in the restricted access/permit-only area of Zone C. (Unrestricted access to this area was granted in 2015.) Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 20, 2014).

Place, materiality, and intangible heritage

I was fascinated when I learned that few Montserratians have returned to their abandoned homes over the past twenty years to retrieve their possessions, even though areas of the Exclusion Zone are now accessible. Many left their homes behind in states of ashy disrepair, and I saw these remnants first-hand when I took an excursion to the abandoned village of Richmond Hill (Figure I.6). When I asked

people why they had not returned to gather their things, including family photographs, letters, and heirlooms, many simply shrugged and gave a noncommittal response: “Maybe some day. But not right now.” The sense was that some Montserratians do not want to look back, but instead stay busy and focused on the present and on future development, both personally and for the community.

The community boasts often of its resiliency to deal with the effects of the volcano, and the sense is that so much of Montserratian culture exists not in particular places or in material objects, but in the people and their cultural forms, which constitute the island’s “intangible heritage.” According to UNESCO, “intangible cultural heritage” (e.g., oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, and other forms of cultural knowledge) encompasses past and contemporary traditions that are passed from generation to generation and that maintain cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and inclusivity in communities (2003). The challenge for Montserrat in this period of redevelopment is to distinguish the island from the rest of the Caribbean in order to attract tourists while still maintaining a sense of “Montserratianness” that is rooted in the island and acceptable to the local community and diaspora. To be Montserratian involves being Caribbean, maybe with a bit of Irish, a lot of African, a touch of British, and probably a trace of something else—the formula will vary depending on whom you talk to and when and where you talk to them.

In an ideal world, “intangible” heritage would be sustainable without dependence on material and economic factors—but it does, of course, depend on these things. Heritage is often associated with place and materiality, value and worth, and a sense of ownership. Montserrat’s national cultural policy is concerned with

developing a "sense of self-worth and national pride," with an emphasis on the role of "intangible and material culture" in local and folk art forms, all of which rely on "training, research, and documentation" for cultural development and preservation ("National Cultural Policy," no date specified, draft in the author's possession). Included in the cultural backdrop described in the policy document are folk choirs, steel and string bands, masquerades, theatre, literature, visual arts, and festivals. As I illustrate in the following chapters, the literal and figurative rhythms of identity that are created through these traditions are crucial to Montserrat's intangible heritage, but they all rely on material resources—instruments, rehearsal spaces, costumes, props, and supplies—and are critically influenced by economic factors. Creating a collective vision of Montserratian culture, promoting cultural education, and encouraging community respect for these traditions all require strong infrastructural frameworks to support cultural development.

The aforementioned *Culture Show* discussion about heritage suggested that heritage might be where you call your home, but if that is the case, what happens when home no longer exists? Embedded in the problem of reconstructing Montserratian culture today is the island's post-traumatic sense of "homelessness," addressed in a question posed by geographer Tracey Skelton (2005, 63-78): "What happens to Montserratian identity when the place no longer exists or is rendered uninhabitable?" Are those homes and the material possessions left in them necessary to reconstruct the past? How do narratives of cultural identities and memories of such places help Montserratians bridge that past to make sense of present circumstances?[12]

[12] Geographer Lydia Pulsipher has studied Montserrat's landscape in great detail over the past forty years—she has investigated the effects of colonialism on the island's cultural and environmental

The practice of remembering through memorials and landmarks is essentially performative (Leerssen 2001), but on Montserrat, the volcano has highlighted the impermanence of "place." The island is always threatened with further destruction or other causes of dislocation, such that material space and landmarks (as the War Memorial, clock tower, and churches in Plymouth once were) cannot reliably act as narrative devices to remember the past. Therefore, traditions like the masquerade dance and other festivalized performance practices provide a choreographic architecture for communal memory. Festivals on Montserrat are "infinite rehearsals" that help the community reinvent itself within the island's postmodern landscape today (Gough 2012, 101-112). In the post-volcanic landscape, homes and memories are relegated to the Exclusion Zone, and new "homes" and memories are rebuilt through performance for Montserratians living elsewhere on the island and in the diaspora, "across the shifting borders of their imagined [circum-Atlantic] community" (Roach 1996, 207).[13]

In the following chapters, I use the analytical framework of place and materiality to examine when tangible elements of Montserrat's culture can be substituted for intangible elements in performance, but also when that substitution does not work. When archives are buried in ash or otherwise inaccessible, the island's process of rebuilding becomes focused on the narrative retelling of the past through

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landscapes (1977), identified social patterns in gardening practices in the Caribbean (1990), reconstructed Montserrat's landscape during the slavery and post-slavery eras (1999), conducted archaeological studies of Galways Plantation in the south (2001a), and evaluated the effects of the volcano on island's geography and culture (2001b). Her work has clarified geographical, architectural, and environmental patterns throughout history that continue to influence Montserratian culture today.

[13] Geographer Lisa Hill writes about how estrangement from home creates nostalgia for the "environmental refugees" that are living in Montserrat's diaspora communities in the U.K. (2014). She describes how the relationship between memories of home and sensory information (such as food, dancing, and singing) contributes to "cultural geographies" resulting from migration and transnational movement.

cultural performance, but even those performances rely on material resources (space, costumes, and instruments) in significant ways. I investigate how material archives and performance inform each other to produce the rhythms of stability and change that contribute to the landscapes and soundscapes that form Montserratian identities.



Figure I.7. Plymouth Catholic Church buried. This remarkable image shows the spire of the Catholic Church in Plymouth and the roofs of other buildings in the capital city, just barely visible above the layer of thick lahar (mudlike) deposits that resulted from eruptions in late 1997. Image source: http://www.photovolcanica.com/Pictures_V5/v5_hp10.jpg, accessed October 12, 2015.

Ashy archives, vibrant repertoire

What was lost during the volcano? Besides places, homes, and personal possessions, important documents and archives relating to the island's local history were also lost. In the upheaval caused by the pyroclastic flows that affected Plymouth in 1997, books and other documents that had been stored at the newly established library were displaced—some were sent to Kew National Archives offices in London and other libraries/offices in the U.K., and others were distributed to various individuals for safekeeping. My challenge was to locate the archival material relevant

to my research—the cultural history of Montserrat, including the music, the dance, and the festivals—but it was not always possible. Multiple searches on online databases indicated that the information that I sought about performance practices was not located in U.K. archives, and instead I focused on what I could obtain locally on the island. But, more importantly, my research focused on the repertoire of sounds and rhythms that fill in some of the cultural information that was displaced when archives were lost or perhaps never recorded. I found this information in music and dance performances on Montserrat, in the dialogues and debates on the community's ZJB Radio, and in everyday conversations and movements in the streets.

My first concern in the scholarly investigation of the history of Montserrat was the difficulty of documenting the island's cultural past and the inability to authenticate Irish and/or African retentions on the island due to a dearth of archival records (see Chapter 1). This uncertainty produces anxieties among some scholars researching Montserrat's past about the possibility of "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and cultural mythologies about which historians are wary. However, my research focuses on the specific role of performance in identity formation, through which invented traditions and cultural myths are just as (if not more) relevant as the "historical truth" (Akenson 1997). Taking such an ethnographic approach to studying a Caribbean society like Montserrat, with its complex colonial history and tangled cultural identities, is appropriate because, as Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot explains, the Caribbean is characteristically "heterogeneous" and "historical." That is, Caribbean communities cannot be described without reference to the colonialism in their histories and, as multiracial,

multilingual, and multicultural societies, they resist theoretical simplification. Caribbean people are well aware of their multiplicity and the "fuzziness" of cultural boundaries arising from the colonial past, and so an ethnographic approach to studying these communities must also take into consideration their ambiguous history (Trouillot 1992). Besides colonial papers, archival information such as diaries or letters written by Caribbean peoples—a "history from below"—is often undocumented or unavailable, volcano or no volcano. As Trouillot explains, there is ambiguity in historicity, or in determining not what history *is* but how it *works*: "For what history is changes with time and place or, better said, history reveals itself only through the production of specific narratives" (1995, 23-25). For this reason, ethnographic research fills in the voices and experiences of the undocumented and un-archived people that have lived and been affected by these histories.

Ethnography is also appropriate for investigating social memory, especially in performed manifestations of this memory. I am concerned with social memory and the ways in which dance and music performances in the context of festival and ritual, as well as everyday bodily performativity and habits, manifest embodied cultural memory today. Social habits are "legitimating performances" and the ritualistic and formalized nature of festival performance enacts remembrance through the form and content of performance (Connerton 1989, 35). Performances on stage and in daily life both reflect the bodily habits of a community—they can be used to express social values and re-enact cultural memories that cannot be verbally uttered. Performance is a "vital act of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated, or…'twice-behaved' behavior" (Taylor 2003, 2-3).

Performance is central to cultural historiography because that which performance allows people to *do* (rather than what *is* in the archives) provides a structure that maintains constant but also adaptable meaning over time.

The archive usually represents the endurance and survival of material culture, including historical documents and artifacts, but what happens when archives are lost or when written narratives are called into question? Performance theorist Diana Taylor describes "the repertoire" as embodied practices that substitute for "the archive" so that cultural knowledge is preserved. In my research on Montserrat, I draw on the theoretical framework of archive and repertoire to examine how the process of performing the archive is less of a substitution and more of an intersection. What happens when performances produce archival cultural material, when festivals become part of an active archival process for the local community, and when the search for the archive becomes a performance in itself? Taylor describes the shift from archive to repertoire as a shift from the written to the embodied and the discursive to the performatic. When do written national narratives become involved in both performative and discursive processes? She says, "The live can never be contained in the archive; the archive endures beyond the limits of the live" (2003, 173) and, in this dissertation, I look at the case of post-volcano Montserrat to examine these limits and question the nature of just what is "live" and what is "archive." As Taylor claims, there is no definite separation between the two. On Montserrat, a living archive is created as the community repeatedly performs—live on stage and in everyday life—elements of the island's archival narratives. In this way, ongoing debates about such performances of self-identity allow the community to evaluate the

elements that should or should not be included in the island's archive.

The methodologies that I utilize in this dissertation project reflect this emphasis on the embodied practice of cultural knowledge and on performance as a means of discoursing about archives that are lost, uncertain, or perhaps never written. Dance in particular can provide the "kinesthetic imagination" that enables transmission and transformation of reinvented memory through movement (Roach 1996, 26-36). The rhythms of music and dance can serve as a means of remembrance and reflection when tangible possessions are lost—left behind or buried in ash—and the "liveness" of the embodied performance creates a sense of history when material remnants are irretrievable or when what has been written is called into question. If, as Taylor says, performance enables that which has disappeared to be made visible, I would add that the performance of masquerade rhythms and other Montserratian sounds also enables that which has been silenced to be made *audible*. In dance, "the feet beat a tattoo upon the ground, answering to every word, and sometimes to every syllable of the rhyme" (Talley 1922, 296-297). Thus, through the masquerade dance, Montserrat's post-volcano landscape is "tattooed" with historical narratives and traumatic memories, and the rhythmic features of the dance echo across the dispersed community. The rhythmic quality of the masquerades and the cycles of festival performance are well suited to ideas of echo, repeat, and interruption as a means of re-creating cultural performance over space and time.

Dancing the archive

I focus on body and movement because I am a dancer. The motivation for this project emerged from my life-long dedication to Irish dance and more recent interest in various styles within the genres of West African, Afro-Brazilian, and Afro-Caribbean dance and music—as both a performer and an academic. My interest in searching for Irish influences in the Caribbean began around 2010 when I read Katherine Dunham's *Journey to Accompong*, the 1946 publication of her ethnographic journal from her fieldwork with the Accompong Maroons of Jamaica. She wrote of her experience at a local dance, during which she found herself doing a step that "could easily be compared to an Irish reel": "Hands on hips, we hop from one foot to the other, feet turned out at right angles to the body or well 'turned out,' in ballet vernacular."[14] I rushed to the library to find more literature about Irish presence in the Caribbean and I was drawn to Montserrat in particular after reading footnote after footnote about the island's Irish heritage, which is even more pronounced than Jamaica's, especially during its "exotic" St. Patrick's Day celebrations. But each footnote gave me the same short paragraph of information (described in Chapter 1), and I knew there must be more to the story.

In the spirit of full disclosure, I am a 30-something white woman (half Irish American and half Greek American) from Washington, DC who had never traveled to the Caribbean before my first trip to Montserrat in March 2013. I first went for the St. Patrick's Festival that year and it was everything I hoped it would be—shamrocks, black leprechauns, "Danny Boy," and Irish-like hopping in the Afro-Caribbean

[14] For more information about the culture of the Jamaican Maroons, see Kenneth Bilby's extensive *Jamaican Maroon Collection* at the Library of Congress (1983).

masquerades. Although the original impetus for my project was my desire to understand how experiences of the "Black and Green Atlantic" (O'Neill and Lloyd 2009) overlap, my perspective on the crosscurrents between African and Irish identities in Caribbean—and specifically Montserratian—culture evolved significantly over the course of my fieldwork. This dissertation traces that journey as I searched for Montserrat's archives in various modes of performance.

I spent an uninterrupted six months on Montserrat, from December 2013 to May 2014 (Christmas Festival and St. Patrick's Festival), plus one week in March 2013 (St. Patrick's Festival), one week in July 2014 (Calabash Festival), and two weeks in March 2015 (St. Patrick's Festival). During my fieldwork, I collected information using traditional ethnographic methods, including formal interviews, informal conversations, and participant observation of dance and music activities on the island. I kept a daily field journal in which I recorded observations and reflections, a digital database of photographs, videos, and audio files (along with transcriptions), and a scrapbook for tickets, festival programs, and other paper materials. I collected and organized digital materials, online archives, and web content related to Montserrat using the note-taking and tagging tool Evernote. The videos referenced by number in this dissertation, along with an additional selection of videos for those with time and interest, are available on my website at http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/videos-dancing-the-archive/.

Although archives and written documents are difficult to obtain on Montserrat due to the volcanic upheaval, I spent a significant amount of time in the Montserrat Public Library, poring through newspaper archives and theses written by researchers

about the island's geography, agriculture, history, and culture. I frequented the Montserrat National Trust, which always features an exhibit about some aspect of Montserratian history and where the staff was often able to provide me with books and records relating to the island's culture. I also visited and contacted offices at the Division of Culture, the Montserrat Tourist Board, the Governor's Office and the Immigration Office in search of information about festival attendance numbers and trends in tourism and migration. I was able to obtain some information from these sources and, in the case that records were not available, I drew information from newspaper reports and verbal accounts.

A crucial part of my methodological approach was what anthropologists refer to as "deep hanging out"—I made sure to attend as many social events as possible, whether it was an official community event or just friends meeting up for a drink. Even when nothing was going on, I found that some of my most thought-provoking conversations and interactions took place unexpectedly with strangers on the street when I decided to go for a walk or jog along the winding main road, just to get out of my hot mosquito-infested apartment. In such a small community, people do not remain strangers for long, and the many stories I heard from various people about growing up on the island, leaving the island, and coming back to the island all shaped my impressions of the many meanings of "Montserratian." I also incorporate some island gossip, which I realize is not traditional fodder for anthropological research; I do not present any gossip or rumors as "true," but rather as the substance of dialogues and debates that can be indicative of community attitudes and values. It was only after I had gained enough perspective from informal conversations that I arranged

formal interviews to verify my impressions with those in my "Cast of Characters" that are involved in music, dance, and cultural education on the island. I found that this approach allowed me to ask more targeted questions and engage in a more meaningful way, having built a foundation for rapport and friendship in the community.

Along the lines of traditional methodologies in dance studies, my research goal was active engagement with the community through rhythmic and kinesthetic (i.e., non-verbal) expression. In "Dancing in the Field: Notes from Memory," ethnochoreologist Sally Ann Ness describes the role of kinesthetic experience in fieldwork and the use of the body to establish ethnographic rapport as a means of "transcultural repositioning," especially for someone who is not a member of the culture in question (1993, 141). I used the simultaneous processes of transmitting and gaining cultural knowledge through the body in order to interact with the community in a non-verbal space (see Chapter 4). On Montserrat, I focused specifically on the masquerade troupes and attended their rehearsals, workshops, and performances as an observer and participant when possible. I attended Christmas Festival in 2013, St. Patrick's Festival in 2013, 2014, and 2015, and Calabash Festival in 2014, during which I observed calypso and soca competitions and participated as a performer in parades and various intercultural collaborations. I attended as many music and dance activities as I could during my time on the island, including the Montserrat Idol singing competition, ballet classes for children, ukulele and Tahitian dance lessons, pick-up basketball games, reggae jams at the fish market, and community steel pan rehearsals. By observing so many varied types of performances and activities, I was

exposed to new aspects of Montserratian culture and, as time went on, I began to identify trends that contributed to an ever-broadening understanding of the community.

Another important aspect of my research on Montserrat involved my role as an Irish dance teacher, which I describe and reflect on in detail in Chapter 4. During my six-month block of fieldwork, I organized a small program called "Blended Rhythms" that combined Irish dance and West African drumming classes for the local community. After the St. Patrick's Festival in 2013, I hired one of Jalikunda's West African drummers from Senegal to accompany me the following year, and together we taught workshops for children in schools and for adults in a local community center. Over the course of "Blended Rhythms," I kept a daily blog on my program website with photographs and videos from classes and performances, and I also promoted the program through Twitter, Facebook, radio interviews, and printed materials. (Online access, though spotty, is widespread on Montserrat.) While there was some concern among my dissertation committee about my authoritative role as a teacher during my fieldwork, I found that the work provided an advantage since I was able to experience the challenges of organizing cultural activities for schools and festivals, collaborate and trade ideas with local artists, and gain trust within the community. I did not merely "take" cultural information as a researcher, but I also contributed my own dance knowledge to the community.

When I was not on the island, I kept up with island news by listening to web streams of ZJB Radio web streaming, reading *MNI Alive* and other news publications online, monitoring a number of Montserrat-focused Facebook groups, and emailing

with friends living on the island. Montserratian radio in particular produces "sonic" archives by creating a space for dialogue and debate that transcends spatial boundaries as it is broadcast worldwide. It was through these sources that I gained further understanding of attitudes and experiences in the Montserratian diaspora, especially when this group of emigrants engaged in heated debates on Facebook or published opinion articles in local newspapers. Traveling to London or Birmingham to visit diaspora communities was outside of the scope of this dissertation project, but I have incorporated some of their voices and attitudes through their engagement with social media.

Chapter outline

I have organized the chapters of this dissertation in such a way as to trace my embodied search for Montserrat's archive. Each chapter provides a different lens for looking at how the island's cultural identity is shaped, negotiated, and contested. I start with an introduction to Montserrat through the history books—the information in Chapter 1 is the traditional "archive," especially with regard to the historiography of Irish and African presence. I demonstrate how even that which has been written and authoritatively published by historians and scholars (a group that includes both foreigners and locals to Montserrat) is part of a larger debate that becomes a social performance in itself.

In Chapter 2, I explore how the improvisational structure of the island's masquerade dance provides a means of post-traumatic coping and assertion of cultural identity for the Montserratian community. Masquerade performances

themselves are archives of cultural knowledge because of how they are reframed across space and time to satisfy evolving circumstances. The allusion to historical events through dance choreography relates to Taylor's definition of scenarios, or the "meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments" that are infinitely repeatable and provide a sense of "once-againnness" (2003, 28-32). They are formulaic performance structures that transfer the repertoire to the archive, as Taylor says, but they are also a means of transferring *from* the archive *to* everyday performances of self-identity. Traditional dance choreography always serves as a guide, but the fact that they are performed and, more importantly, *shared* by different people at different moments in time and in different places inevitably produces some measure of improvisation, variation, and even conflict in the process of encounter.

The masquerade dance is performed year-round and at all of Montserrat's festivals, which run on an annual calendar and create cycles for producing and adapting archival material at regular intervals each year. Chapter 3 is about the active archiving process that takes place every year at the festivals, especially at the Christmas Festival in December, St. Patrick's Festival in March, and Calabash Festival in July. The chapter is about how certain events that are included on festival schedules crucially provide opportunities to break, disrupt, or question the rhythms of the established cycle through community negotiations of cultural identity and values.

Chapters 2 and 3 are about how cultural identity is performed "on stage," when things heat up for the fast and "hot" dances of the masquerades and when everyone is "feelin' hot, hot, hot" (to quote the internationally famous soca party song by Montserrat's recently deceased calypso star, Arrow) during the festivals. But when

things cool down after the festivals are over, what are the everyday performances of cultural identity on Montserrat? In Chapter 4, I reflect on my personal experiences during the off-season on Montserrat, when I looked behind the scenes to try to learn more about the fundamental rhythms that constitute Montserratianness. I examine the masquerade rhythms, as well as rhythms of Africa and Ireland, through a variety of methodologies in passive observation/listening and more active participation, which provided me with often-conflicting perspectives. I describe how my own understanding of rhythm was disrupted when faced with "foreign" and "local" conceptions of sound in music and movement in dance.

The distinction between "hot" and "cold" is a theme that runs throughout this dissertation—what is performed when national fervor is "hot," and what sparks debates about what it means to be Montserratian? What are the cycles of hot and cold on Montserrat, between "festival fever" and daily life, between the quiet lull that transpires in between volcanic eruptions, between the moments of broiling in the Caribbean sun and the sudden downpours that cool the green landscape? I borrow Michael Billig's term "banal nationalism" (1995) to describe the "ideological habits" or everyday nationalistic routines that often go unnoticed or are taken for granted—like the green shamrock that visitors receive in their passport or the faded shamrocks hanging in the windows. "Hot nationalism," on the other hand, describes more "theatrical" displays of culture, such as the nationalism that is performed during Montserrat's annual festivals—through controversial calypso competitions that address national issues during Christmas Festival or by dressing up as Montserratian-Irish leprechauns for St. Patrick's Day. Musical nationalism (Turino 2000) especially

contributes to "hot" nationalism because of its emotionalism and ability to create non-verbal kinesthetic experiences that can encourage a community to value its heritage.

I close my dissertation with a concluding chapter about Montserrat's future archives and the people who will be responsible for preserving, creating, performing, and transforming them. Montserrat's future generation does not only include Montserratian youth, but also the immigrants who are arriving on the island in increasing numbers since the volcanic crisis for work opportunities related to redevelopment. The changing social profile of Montserrat creates new tensions that require reconfigurations of "local" and "foreign" categories in the community. I observed an emphasis on contemporary cultural encounters with nearby islands within the region, rather than on transatlantic historical connections with Ireland and Africa. As I demonstrate in this dissertation, Ireland and Africa are places that represent, in distinct ways, important aspects of Montserrat's heritage, but the local and regional connections are those that will drive future economic, social, and cultural redevelopment and autonomy for the island.

This dissertation is not only about how the rhythms of Montserrat generate a cycle of archival material that includes rhythmic crosscurrents of Africa and Ireland, but also how rhythms of change allow for improvisations, breaks, and disruptions that ensure the evolution of future archives for the post-volcano island. Historical and cultural information is embedded and embodied in the sounds, vibrations, and movements of the performers that I observed and worked with on Montserrat. The following chapters trace my rhythmic journey through Montserrat to piece together the archival fragments of this Emerald Isle of the Caribbean.

Chapter 1:

Searching for Montserrat's Archive: Irish and African Identities in the Island's History

> "There really is no excuse for us all to assume that the vacuum created by [our] losses makes us all trailblazers. It does not at all expunge the historical record. And where documents have disappeared, there is value in oral histories and shared memories."
>
> – Gracelyn Cassell, Montserratian educator and scholar
> Introduction to St. Patrick's Lecture, March 2015, Little Bay, Montserrat

Conventional academic research requires archival research. The quintessential marker of "real history" is written text, and we, as scholars, are thus compelled to seek, find, and interpret the "facts" left behind by previous generations. Although my interest in Montserrat concerns contemporary performance practices, best understood through ethnographic research methods, my first task was to review the literature, to learn the origin stories of current socio-economic realities, and to understand how local residents position themselves in history. As Gracelyn Cassell reminds us in the quote that opens this chapter, Montserrat has a history, even in the absence of complete archives, and it is important to acknowledge who and what has come before, whether it has been written down or passed down through oral traditions.

One of the challenges I faced while researching the history and origins of Montserrat was that archives were not readily available. The reason given to me, as I searched up and down the island for records of the masquerades, the St. Patrick's Day rebellion, the origins of Christmas Festival, or St. Patrick's Festival committee notes was that many things were lost or displaced during the volcanic upheaval in the late 1990s. In the catastrophic event that destroyed the former capital of Plymouth in

1997, the newly built library was abandoned and materials were stuffed into boxes, some sent off to London while more, I was told, disappeared into the backs of people's closets or left behind in the ashy remains of Plymouth. The volcano was the usual excuse given to me for the lack of historical records, but I found that even post-volcano information (such as quantitative data about recent festival attendance and budgets) was unavailable or inconsistent. If the archives were not buried under ashes or carted away to libraries in the U.K., where were they? I was told again and again to visit another office or talk to another person, and I always seemed to be in the wrong place: "Surely someone has the information, but it just isn't here." I ran around in circles, panicking that I would not find the archival records to back up my ethnographic findings.

Whether the information was lost, never recorded, or just inaccessible to me, the foreign researcher, I cannot be sure. I began to question the nature of an "archive"—does an archive have to be a physical document, or might I discover the same relevant information in alternative forms? After failing to locate all of the archival information I wanted to find, I concluded that the lack of documentation actually revealed some important information about the local culture. I realized that a written document might have no more authority than what various individuals told me, many of who disagreed and maintained that their version of the information was correct. I realized that a written document did not necessarily have more authority than what I saw performed in the masquerades and what I heard discussed about roots and heritage during festivals. I found pieces of Montserrat's historical archive in books and articles and part of my discovery certainly came from reading these

documents, but more often, I learned more about lived and performed culture by listening to ongoing debates about different versions written about this history. It was an ongoing and lively discussion among contemporary citizens: which narratives best represent their complex heritage? There seemed to be "national" and official narratives that were repeated by festival officials and government ministers, but in a community as small and fluid as Montserrat's, challenges and disputes were easily circulated.

The information I describe in this chapter shaped my earliest perspectives on Montserrat and my initial hypotheses about the island's Irish and African cultural influences. The experiences of African and Irish inhabitants on Montserrat were less harmonious than some (such as the Montserrat Tourist Board) would make it seem when they print images of smiling Montserratians in leprechaun outfits in tourist pamphlets, island brochures, and online festival promotions. This chapter explains how Irish and African people on Montserrat did not live in a vacuum, cut off from the rest of the world. As the population changed over time, relationships changed and hierarchies of power were adjusted due to events that occurred both on the island and elsewhere in the world. Montserrat was and still is subject to its own particular circumstances, but it also important to keep in mind the effects of transatlantic exchange that occurred throughout the region and how that history is recounted today.

My search for Montserrat's archive began in early 2013 when I first read literature that described how Irish- and African-based music, dance, and literature traditions have connected, intersected, and collided on Montserrat and throughout the Americas. This list includes scholars that have focused on the ways in which Irish

performers have exploited African or African American culture (e.g., blackface performance, see Lott 1993 and Roediger 1999; and Irish popular culture, such as the Irish dance show *Riverdance*, see Carby 2001), as well as others who have argued, on the other hand, that so-called "Afro-Irish" performance expresses a shared experience of oppression (e.g., early and modern tap dance, see Hill 2010 and Masten 2013; American popular, jazz, and blues music, see Onkey 2010 and Smith 2011). In particular, Peter D. O'Neill and David Lloyd's *Black and Green Atlantic* (2009) expands upon Gilroy's Black Atlantic theory (1993) to address the complexities of the African/Irish relationship in performance and the fraught history of solidarity as well as economic competition and cultural appropriation between these groups in the United States and the Caribbean. These authors complicate the African/Irish dichotomy and emphasize how racial and ethnic boundaries are always subject to movement and exchange. For example, Michael Malouf (2009a; 2009b) examines the cross-cultural politics and overlapping "black" and "green" diasporas of Ireland and Afro-Caribbean islands (including Jamaica, Barbados, and Montserrat), and he demonstrates that such solidarities are always "contingent, discontinuous, and fragmentary" (2009a, 163).

In this chapter, I lay out the history and origins of Montserrat as told by a handful of scholars, both on and off the island, who have focused on the island over the past fifty years and present themselves as specialists or history-keepers of Montserrat. Within the scholarship on Montserrat, each researcher contributes a unique angle to the island's historical narrative, whether that person is a native Montserratian, a visiting American anthropologist, or a British historian. Through

writing and/or political action, each scholar has played some role in the construction of Montserrat's contemporary narratives.

I begin with a look at fragments of Montserrat's history, starting with the island's first inhabitants and its "discovery," followed by the era of Irish and British colonization and, later, African slavery. I exclude most economic and political aspects of this history—though important for understanding Montserrat in general, my project focuses primarily on the island's cultural identity, and especially its African and Irish elements. I present the information that is crucial for understanding the debates that surround Montserrat's St. Patrick's Day celebrations and the island's intimate but multivalent relationship to Ireland, which, in turn, provides an understanding of sociocultural dynamics on the island more generally. I describe how the written history informs my work in the following chapters, in which I specifically examine how Montserrat performs the unwritten and negotiable aspects of its cultural archive through music, dance, and festival.

Early settlement of Montserrat

Before Montserrat was settled by Europeans, Amerindians[1] were the indigenous inhabitants of the island: Ciboney, Arawak, and Carib tribes originally came from Asia via the Bering Strait to North America, then to South America, and finally north again to the Leeward Islands of the northern Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean by way of Venezuela. The Caribs called Montserrat "Alliouagana," or "island of the prickly bush [aloe plant]," and evidence of their settlement has been found along the coasts in the form of pottery, religious relics, and agricultural tools

[1] "Amerindians" is a term that refers to indigenous peoples of the Americas.

(English 1930; Fergus 1975). Montserrat was first "discovered" in 1493 by Christopher Columbus, who named the island after a Jesuit monastery near Barcelona, Spain. Columbus' records indicate that his Indian guides told him that the island was depopulated of its Amerindian inhabitants and he sailed past, never actually setting foot on the island (Colón 1808, 608). Columbus stated that the Caribs did not occupy Montserrat by the time he found it, but this information leaves a few unanswered questions. Exactly when and why did they leave? And why did Columbus choose not to pull up onto Montserrat's shores? The reason for Columbus' lack of interest in Montserrat (and other small neighboring islands) is unclear in Montserrat's history books, as is the assertion that the island was completely uninhabited by the time colonists finally landed in the mid-seventeenth century. The written story of the indigenous in Montserrat's archive hits a dead end here.

Most historians claim that European colonists first settled Montserrat in 1633 when Irish Catholics arrived in order to escape religious persecution of Catholics on the mostly Protestant island of nearby St. Christopher, now known as St. Kitts (Fergus 1975; Gwynn 1929a; 1929b; 1932; Irish 1973). Irish diaspora historian Donald Akenson delved deeper into the records and found three more groups of white settlers that began arriving on Montserrat between 1631-1633: (1) Irish hostages who had formed a small settlement in the Amazon and were captured by Portuguese explorers before being transported to Montserrat and Barbados via Trinidad and St. Christopher; (2) Irish Catholics who were expelled from the colony of Virginia, encompassing the east coast of North America, from what is today Florida to New York; and (3) a group of colonists who were mostly from Munster province in Ireland

and came to Montserrat under the leadership of (the future first governor) Anthony Briskett, an Irish Protestant.

After initial settlement in the 1630s, more Irish arrived on Montserrat as political and religious refugees, fleeing Cromwellian persecution in Ireland in the 1640s and 1650s. Irish prisoners were deported from Ireland to Barbados, Virginia, and St. Christopher, and from there they eventually migrated to Montserrat, which had a reputation for being friendly to Irish Catholics. As a result of this influx of Irish migrants—an estimated 750-800 of the 1,000 colonists on Montserrat in 1650 (Akenson 1997, 35)—Montserrat has been described as the "most distinctively Irish settlement in the New World" (Gwynn 1929b), an idea that has become embedded in the island's national consciousness today. Gwynn noted,

> The names which have come to us suggest that the initiative came from the Munster [one of four provinces in Ireland] parts of Kinsale, Cork, and Youghal. Surnames such as Collins, Barry, Sullivan, Roche, Cormack, Callaghan, Driscoll, Ryan, tell a tale that is plain to Irish readers; and it can hardly be an accident that one of the three principal harbours on the island of Montserrat, first settled by the Irish in these very years, was known to the settlers as Kinsale[2] (1932, 219-220).

By 1678, the Irish lived all over Montserrat, but they tended to accumulate in the southwestern corner of the island (in a "horseshoe" shape around Plymouth and Kinsale, see Figure 1.1), whereas the English were the majority in the northern part of the island (Akenson 1997, 112-113).[3]

[2] Montserrat's Kinsale corresponds to the town in the southern part of Ireland with the same name. Ireland's Kinsale is located in County Cork, in the province of Munster, after which Montserrat's Cork Hill was likely named. The village of St. Patrick's on Montserrat is tied to Ireland's patron saint.
[3] This spatial distribution of Irish and English settlers meant that the southern region was more Catholic and the northern region was more Protestant. According to Akenson, the "Black Irish" tended to reside in the northern Protestant area, and he suggested that the reason for this may be have been that interracial couplings were less taboo in Protestant areas.



Figure 1.1. Map of villages of Montserrat. It is unclear whether Irish settlers on Montserrat first arrived at Sugar Bay in the south or Carr's Bay in the north, but it is possible that both harbors were used—the former by settlers from St. Kitts and the latter by settlers from Virginia (Fergus 1975, 8-9; Messenger 1967). The largest populations of Irish on Montserrat in the seventeenth century up until the twentieth century were in the south and west of the island, in Plymouth (the capital), Kinsale, and St. Patrick's. All of these towns are now abandoned due to the volcanic destruction. Image source: http://www.paradise-islands.org/montserrat/images/Montserrat-Map.jpg, accessed April 14, 2013.

Although Montserrat's first settlers were Irish Catholics, by 1636 the island's early governors were English or Anglo-Irish Protestants who administered under English colonial rule. The colonial social structure consisted of an English and Anglo-Irish planter class, Irish Catholic indentured servants and religious prisoners, and a large number of black slaves, whose dates of arrival are unclear but are estimated around the year 1654 (Fergus 1981; Goveia 1965). By the late seventeenth century, the majority of Irish indentured servants on the island had been released from their labor contracts and had moved up the social ladder to become independent landowners interested in developing the local sugar economy. The Irish in late seventeenth-century Montserrat were able to climb the social ladder, but Catholics specifically were subject to government restrictions—though allowed to vote, they could not hold any major positions in government. The Irish on Montserrat experienced some of the same inequalities as the Irish in Cromwellian Ireland, and this discrimination led to rebellions along religious, national, and class lines on both sides of the Atlantic. Akenson conjectured that the Irish on Montserrat may have been perceived as more dangerous than black slaves in the late 1670s (in a situation similar to that of Barbados, as explained below), based on the ethnic composition of the island, or what he referred to as a "fear of slave index," or the ratio of black to white males in an island's population. On Montserrat at the time, armed white (mostly Irish) males outnumbered black males, and he suggested that the Irish men felt secure in their ability to control slaves on their own plantations, despite experiencing sociopolitical discrimination within the wider context of Montserratian society at the time.

Montserrat has been described as the most Irish colony "ever" because the Irish made up the majority of the white population on the island during the late seventeenth century, and they were less segregated than they were on other islands that had higher percentages of Scotch and English (Akenson 1997, 105-107). Irish planters needed slaves to harvest the sugar fields and they acquired black African slaves to do the work. In 1678, there were nearly 1,900 slaves, about forty percent of the total population, the rest of which was white and mostly Irish. There is also evidence that some Africans arrived on Montserrat as early as 1635 with the first settlers, who would have brought their slaves with them from St. Christopher (Akenson 1997, 73-76). Little is known about the exact origins of the slaves that were transported from Africa, though a number of Montserratians that I talked to claimed Ghanaian heritage.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the English and Anglo-Irish ruling class discriminated against Irish Catholics, and the relationship between them deteriorated in Montserrat as it did for their transatlantic contemporaries in Ireland and Britain. By the middle of the nineteenth century, both Irish and African people were furnished with additional rights: Irish indentured servants on Montserrat earned full citizen rights and emancipation in 1828, and on August 28, 1834, the Slave Abolition Act of 1833 was passed to free African slaves throughout the British West Indies (Emancipation Day is commemorated on August 1st on Montserrat).

Irish presence in the West Indies

In order to give some perspective on the history of the Irish on Montserrat, I now broaden my focus to the archives that are specific to Irish presence in the West Indies region more generally and the historiographical debates surrounding them. Some are surprised to hear about Irish presence in the Caribbean, but scholars dating back to at least the early twentieth century have documented this history. In 1929, Irish Jesuit historian Aubrey Gwynn published a two-part review of Irish emigration to the West Indies between 1612-1643. Gwynn's evidence came primarily from personal diaries and letters written by Irish Jesuit missionaries in the West Indies who described seeing large numbers of "Irishmen" in the region, a group consisting partly of prosperous settlers and landowners, but mostly of religious refugees and indentured servants who were transported from Ireland and England and struggled economically and socially (Gwynn 1929a; 1929b; 1932). In the Leeward Islands (the northern part of the Lesser Antilles archipelago), the most "Anglo-Celtic" settlements were found on St. Christopher/St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua, and Montserrat, and, in the Windward Islands to the south, Barbados also had a strong Irish population. They were workers and colonizers, sometimes one in the same, and they moved from island to island, each of which had different social environments that were more or less favorable to Irish people. For example, a predominantly Catholic island would have been more favorable to the Irish than a predominantly Protestant one. On Montserrat in particular, "religious ambiguity" was reportedly common among the Irish population, such that their religious affiliations were flexible, depending on what suited them in any given situation (McGinn 1994a; 1994b). Because of their ability to

"slip through the cracks" of political, economic, social, and religious categorizations as they traveled throughout the Caribbean, the Irish did not dominate any one island in terms of colonial demographics (compared to "British" Jamaica, "French" Guadeloupe, or "Spanish" Cuba), but they were transcolonial and adaptable (Chinea 2007). That is, they were able to infiltrate throughout the Caribbean more discreetly than other white European colonizing groups such as the English, Dutch, French, or Spanish, because, as indentured servants and political prisoners who were usually placed on the disadvantaged end of society, they were forced to migrate often as economic opportunities arose on different islands.[4]

At this juncture, I must take a moment to address the issue of the "forgotten white slave" or the notion of the "Irish slave." Historiographical accounts of indentured servitude on the Leeward Islands and Barbados in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have described Irish servants as "slaves," which has effectively (and problematically) equated white indentured servitude with black slavery. In his book *To Hell or Barbados: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ireland* (2001), Sean O'Callaghan described Irish indentured servants in the Caribbean and the Americas as "human cargo," and he connected the miserable living conditions for Irish in Cromwellian Ireland with Irish servants in seventeenth-century Barbados. He referred to the "Irish white slave trade" and asked the reader to reconsider the perceived "complexion" of slavery in the Americas as it is seen today. He estimated that about 50,000 Irish servants crossed the Atlantic for destinations in the Caribbean and North

[4] Recent research investigating the history of social, cultural, and religious influences of Irish migrants throughout the Caribbean and Latin America can be found in volumes of the journal *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, published by the Society for Irish Latin American Studies (Binasco 2011; Brehony 2007; Chinea 2007; McGinn 2005; Murray 2009; Power 2007; Rodgers 2007; Walsh 2005).

America (as compared to the eleven million slaves taken from Africa). O'Callaghan raised important points about the mistreatment of Irish servants, but I think he went too far when he stated, "A slave is a slave, no matter what the colour of the skin," and went on to say, "We have to assume that [the Irish] were treated exactly as the African slaves were treated," even though he admitted the absence of any records or evidence to suggest this claim (2001, 86-88).[5]

From a similar perspective, Barbadian historian Hilary Beckles (1990) described seventeenth-century Barbados as a "dumping ground" for Irish political prisoners and Irish indentured servants who were stereotyped as "disobedient, lazy, and aggressive." Beckles reported that a British traveler described them as a "riotous and unruly lot," and letters and diaries indicated that the Irish were sometimes perceived as "more dangerous" than black Africans. These Irish servants were described by British travel writers as living in conditions more miserable than those of black slaves (Beckles 1986), and Cromwellian political prisoners who became servants on Barbados were described as "life servers" (Beckles 1990, 10).[6] When some Irish succeeded in owning land, said Beckles, they were placed on the lower end of the social scale and given fewer opportunities for upward mobility than other whites. I do not doubt this, but I believe that Beckles employed slippery rhetoric

[5] From a similar perspective, film writers Don Jordan and Michael Walsh (2008) traced the journey of "white cargo" from Great Britain (England and Scotland) and Ireland to colonies in the New World. Their sensational narrative reads like a riveting television documentary drama about the "forgotten history" of British brutality and exploitation of "white slaves" (among them, Irish and Scottish servants and England's indigents), alongside the well-documented and well-known history of black slavery in the Americas.

[6] See also Jill Sheppard's "A Historical Sketch of the Poor Whites of Barbados: From Indentured Servants to 'Redlegs'" (1974).

when he suggested that Irish servants (referred to as "Redlegs" or "Redshanks"[7] in Barbados) were "black men in white skins."[8] Upon the general emancipation of slaves in the West Indies in 1834, white indentured servants and black slaves competed with one another in the labor market, and Beckles noted that while white skin provided hope for the servants, skin color did not provide a significant economic advantage (1986, 18-19). However, I think it is important to keep in mind that indentured servants everywhere were contracted and not owned—they continued to exist as free human beings, however difficult the working conditions, and their skin color did provide some economic and political advantages.

Although the treatment of white servants may have been especially brutal in places like Barbados, it is important to avoid allowing this brand of historiography to color that of the entire Leeward Island chain, especially on Montserrat where conditions differed significantly. On Montserrat, whites (primarily Irish) outnumbered blacks, whereas the inverse was true on Nevis, St. Christopher, and Antigua in 1672-1678 (Akenson 1997, 105-111). Because the majority of the population on Montserrat was Irish, when Irish indentured servants were released from their contracts, they were given more opportunities for upward social mobility and became landowners—and slave owners—themselves. This is an important part of Montserrat's St. Patrick's Day narrative in which the African slaves, the forefathers of today's Montserratians, planned a rebellion against their Irish masters when they

[7] "Redlegs" or "Redshanks" was a term used in Barbados in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries to describe "one who has red legs…specially one of the Celtic inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands and of Ireland" (Sheppard 1974, 71).

[8] Beckles quoted anthropologist Thomas J. Keagy's 1972 article "The Poor Whites of Barbados" when he described the Irish servants as "black men in white skins." Even though the quote may call to mind Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), neither Keagy nor Beckles referred to this work about the racism against and dehumanization of blacks that has resulted from colonial domination around the world.

knew they would be celebrating the feast day of Ireland's patron saint.

In contrast to Beckles and O'Callaghan, Akenson argued vehemently against the notion of Irish slavery and victimization. The overall thesis of his book, *If the Irish Ruled the World* (1997), challenged the "moral amnesia" that he said is common in "Hibernicist" (pro-Irish) historiography: the tendency to favor the Irish and paint them as always victimized and never exploitative themselves. He said,

> One reason that the idea of the Irish-as-slave, or as proto-slaves, or as black men in white skins, must be resisted is that it conjoins with a stream in Irish historical writing that presents Irish settlers in various New Worlds as being passive emigrants, victims, and therefore blameless in their furtherance of the several imperialisms in which they participated (1997, 49-50).

He argued that Irish Catholics were not only not victimized, but they exhibited the characteristics of neo-feudalism that developed significantly on Montserrat during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Whether they started out among the colonizers or the colonized, he argued that all Irish eventually learned to be "ruthless" imperialists in the Atlantic world once given the opportunity.

When I explain the gist of my research to Irish American friends in the United States, a common response is interest in and enthusiasm about my apparent efforts to uncover the history of the "forgotten Irish slaves." I must be clear that this is not my goal, and I am careful when I describe my research to differentiate between Irish indentured servitude and African slavery in the Caribbean, especially within the historical context of my particular topic, Montserrat. My stance falls somewhere in between the arguments for and against the notion of Irish slaves because I observed such ambiguous and ambivalent attitudes about this history while I was on Montserrat. O'Callaghan and Beckles revealed important aspects about the harsh

mistreatment of white indentured servants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it is problematic to equate the experiences of Irish servants with those of black African slaves through the Americas, who suffered in far greater numbers. On the other side of the debate, Akenson presents detailed historical data about the social profile of the Irish on Montserrat during the colonial era that make an important distinction between Irish experiences on Montserrat compared to other islands throughout the Caribbean. However, I am also wary of the aggressive agenda that Akenson pushes for Irish imperialism, and he downplays the experiences of abuse and oppression of Irish indentured servants on the islands in order to argue that they later became ruthlessly vengeful slave owners.

In the end, determining who suffered more—the Irish or Africans—is an exercise in futility, but I am interested in how shared histories of oppression, traumatic loss, exile, and displacement between African slaves and Irish indentured servants throughout the Americas contribute to the transformation and reformation of a collective cultural identity and diasporic consciousness for Montserratians today. My goal in this dissertation is to demonstrate the how the community negotiates the connections and conflicts between Irish and African identities that are embedded in this history, and how they create local interpretations of Irishness and Africanness to serve various purposes. The relevance of this documentation of Irish experiences on colonial Montserrat as both "victims" and "victimizers" to my project is that it establishes a background for the sometimes ambivalent, conflicted, or contradictory feelings that some Montserratians feel towards the island's nationally proclaimed Irish heritage. Many Montserratians openly embrace both Irishness and Africanness

as part of their cultural identity—they are aware of a shared history of oppression between Irish and Africans, but they are also aware of the fact that the Irish on Montserrat became slave owners themselves. Both aspects are part of the national narrative that is recited, performed, and danced on Montserrat.

Despite the ambivalence and "amnesia" that Akenson described in Montserratian attitudes towards their Irish heritage, what intrigued me was to see how some Montserratians have adopted "Irishness" as a distinguishing feature of their national Afro-Caribbean heritage, on the only Caribbean island to do so. When tourists are around for St. Patrick's Day in March, many locals enthusiastically wear shamrocks, dress as leprechauns, and repeat heartwarming narratives about shared Irish and African histories of oppression. But is this really "amnesia"—have they really forgotten? Multiple copies of Akenson's book are prominently displayed in the Montserrat Public Library, so the information he put forth is made available to the local community. Why have so many today chosen to claim their Montserratian Irishness despite the documented history that paints Montserrat's Irish in a less-than-favorable light? How do they reconcile these conflicts in their cultural identity? The evidence presented in the following chapters demonstrates how they come to terms with such contradictory attitudes—and what happens when they do not.

When I looked behind the scenes—"backstage," during the off-season before and after the St. Patrick's Festival—I certainly sensed a palpable discomfort among this majority Afro-Montserratian population in identifying with "white" Irish culture. Even if the Irish may be perceived as "not quite white" and may fall somewhere in the middle of a "creolization continuum" in some scholarship (explained in the

Introduction), that fact is that both Irish and English groups colonized the island, owned slave plantations, and acted as oppressors of the island's African population.

The Messenger versus Fergus debate

As I describe in Chapter 3, St. Patrick's Festival is less a time to celebrate Montserrat's connection to Ireland and Irish culture as it is a time to reinitiate and continue an annual dialogue about what role Irishness necessarily plays in the island's cultural identity and in personal interpretations of Irish and African heritages. The issues that are discussed and negotiated during this time—both through verbal communication and cultural performance—stem from the crucial debate about the Irish and African retentions on the island today between two important scholars, American anthropologist John Messenger and Montserratian historian and poet Sir Howard Fergus.

The Montserrat Tourist Board promotes the island as "The Emerald Isle of the Caribbean" or "The Other Emerald Isle." These evocative titles, which link Montserrat and Ireland as transatlantic siblings, were popularized by John C. Messenger, an American anthropologist who conducted research on Montserrat in the 1960s and 1970s, and who is largely responsible for initiating and circulating the idea of Montserrat's connection to Ireland in scholarly circles outside of the island.[9] He argued that Montserratian culture was strongly influenced by the Irish due to the island's history of colonization by Irish settlers and the presence of Irish indentured

[9] John Messenger (1920-2010) was born in Wisconsin in the United States. He earned a PhD from Northwestern University in Anthropology and African Studies and held teaching positions at a number of universities, including Queen's University Belfast, Ohio State University, and University of Notre Dame. He conducted anthropological fieldwork in Nigeria, Ireland, Montserrat, and New Zealand.

servants. He built upon Aubrey Gwynn's assertion that Montserrat was the "most distinctively Irish settlement in the world" because of the prominence of Irish surnames (e.g., Allen, Ryan, and Galloway) and place names (e.g., Kinsale, St. Patrick's, and Cork Hill) on the island. Based on his anthropological fieldwork in West Africa (Nigeria in 1952), Ireland (the Aran Islands in 1960), and Montserrat (in the 1960s and 1970s), he made claims for a wide variety of Irish and African retentions on Montserrat in terms of language, religion, food and drink, household artifacts, storytelling, music, and dance. He pointed specifically to Montserrat's "Creole" dialect, which he compared phonetically to the Irish brogue, as well as their "motor habits." He claimed that the Irish influenced Montserrat's food (in the form of the national "goat water" stew, which he said was a replica of a recipe that his wife learned in Ireland), he connected stories about Irish fairies with Montserrat's jumbies or ghosts, and he pointed out that Montserrat's masquerade dance distinctly combined Irish and African elements (Messenger 1967; 1975).

In his widely cited 1967 article, "The Influence of the Irish on Montserrat," Messenger referred to mixed-race Montserratians of African and Irish backgrounds as "Black Irish": "The period of Irish occupation of Montserrat commenced in 1632 and ended before 1850, after which only the hybridized Black Irish remained" (6). Black Irish is the twentieth-century terminology used to describe the light-skinned people of Montserrat who have Irish surnames and, according to Messenger, speak with remnants of an Irish brogue. (For more scholarship that presents various interpretations of the notion of Black Irishness, see Carby 2001; Eagan 2006; Garner 2004; Miller 2000; O'Neill and Lloyd 2009; Onkey 2010; Williams 1932.) The term

is not commonly used by Montserratians today to describe themselves, even if they do claim direct Irish ancestry. However, it is worth taking three minutes to watch a short documentary from 1976 entitled, "The Black Irish of Montserrat: Irish Accents in the Caribbean," to understand how the myth of the Black Irish was presented to the Irish population around the time that Messenger published his research findings: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QHYFXDGf4Y (Video #2).[10,11]

Messenger's published observations on Montserrat were largely based on a seven-week fieldwork stint in 1965 (very short for an anthropologist). He left many provocative claims unexplored, and historians and anthropologists have criticized his work for its sweeping and biased generalizations, and for not meeting the standards of academic rigor, such as spending sufficient time on the island or indicating that he had conducted in-depth interviews with locals that could validate such claims (Akenson 1997; Berleant-Schiller 1991). He speculated about shared Irish and Montserratian traits (including their common predilection for alcohol), but did not probe any specific claim in great depth. He admitted that specialists in various fields—linguistics, archaeology, and ethnomusicology or dance anthropology—would need to assess each claim to see if they hold water. He began the process when, after leaving Montserrat in 1965, he brought photographs and audio recordings of the island's "Black Irish" to Dublin, where he said scholars were amazed by the physical and linguistic similarities to the Irish. But in his 1975 article, Messenger chose not to

[10] In 1976, Irish-language television network TG4 aired "The Black Irish of Montserrat: Irish Accents in the Caribbean" (now available on YouTube) to introduce Ireland to this "unique" race of people residing in the Caribbean.

[11] For more history about the "Black Irish" on another Caribbean island, see Joseph J. Williams, S.J.'s 1932 book *Whence the Irish in Jamaica?* The book traces the roots of common Irish names in Jamaica from Ireland, to Barbados, and finally to Jamaica.

dig further into the subject in the interest of "saving space" (295-296). Phonetician J. C. Wells later undertook the analysis and found no significant connections between Montserratian Creole and the Irish brogue (1980).[12] In the area of music, Messenger also pointed out the resemblance between the Irish frame drum (*bodhrán*) and the large "jumbie drum" and smaller African *babala* drum used in the island's ritual dances, but he did not present any historical data to connect them.

Messenger also saw vestiges of Irish set dances in the jumbie dances that were once performed (before the volcano) as part of the island's trance rituals in the local syncretic folk religion (similar to Haitian *vodou*, Cuban *santería*, or Brazilian *candomblé*; for example, see Daniel 2005 and Hagedorn 2001), and also in the quadrilles of the masquerade dances that are still performed today (see Chapter 2). He said that the Irish elements in the set dances had been "Africanized to the point of extinction" and it was unclear if the quadrille formations were actually Irish, or maybe English or Scottish (1975, 298). The line that caught my attention was his exclamation (punctuation his): "African music played with Western instruments serves dancers whose feet trace Irish patterns but whose bodies express African motor habits!" I was intrigued by the possibility of another creolized dance form that combined African and European styles and would require the body to inhabit and express rhythms from two or more disparate cultures. For example, the forms of: American tap dance (Irish and African; see Hill 2010); Cuban *danzón* (English, Spanish, and African; see Madrid and Moore 2013; Manuel 2009); or today's urban

[12] In his 1980 article "The Brogue That Isn't," J. C. Wells examined Montserratian Creole syntax, morphology, rhythms, intonations, vocabulary, and other speech patterns to determine its proximity to the Irish brogue. He concluded that it is no more similar than accents on other English-speaking Caribbean islands, such as Jamaica and Guyana.

house dance (a combination of already creolized forms including jazz, funk, hip hop, West African, and Afrobeat dancing, with additional Latin, Caribbean, and Irish influences). Messenger specifically mentioned that only someone with extensive experience with Irish and/or West African traditions would be able to distinguish elements of either in Montserrat's dance traditions. When I read that, I took it as an invitation to apply my deep knowledge of Irish dance and years of experience in a variety of "Afro-genic" (Daniel 2011) dance styles to the study of Montserratian culture. Would I find the striking connections that he so avidly championed? This dissertation (especially Chapter 4) traces my exploration of these embodied practices.

Messenger's publications about the island came out in 1967, 1973, 1975, and 1994, and although he did continue to visit the island periodically until his death in 2010, he did not publish further. He is still well known and widely remembered by the academic community and in cultural sectors on Montserrat. Unfortunately, his research archives, including photographs and audio recordings, are unavailable to scholars like myself who are interested in Montserrat's history and culture, especially his recordings of pre-volcano cultural events such as jumbie dances and masquerades.[13]

Messenger's speculations about Irish retentions on Montserrat prompted questions from the local community in a response led by Sir Howard A. Fergus.

[13] Montserratian scholar Gracelyn Cassell told me that she was trying to retrieve copies of the recordings from his elderly widow, who is dealing with his estate and has prioritized his more extensive African collections. British anthropologist Jonathan Skinner, who conducted his fieldwork on Montserrat in the mid-1990s, said that he received copies of some of Messenger's interviews and jumbie dance audio recordings from his visits to Montserrat over the years when he met with him during his research period. Skinner posted them online for public access ("Montserrat: Soundscapes of a Lost Montserrat," http://www.qub.ac.uk/montserrat/sounds/sounds.html) and I reviewed them, but unfortunately the recordings lack dates, names, locations, or any other contextual information. These archives are, like so many archives I searched for, dislocated and incomplete.

Fergus is a well-respected local historian, poet, educator, and politician from Montserrat who also addressed the prominence of the Irish in the island's history and national symbolism. Fergus did not deny the Irish influence on Montserrat's place names and family surnames, but he was skeptical about the historically reconstructed narrative that Messenger presented in his work. He attempted to correct the archive with his own series of publications. In his 1981 article, "Montserrat 'Colony of Ireland': The Myth and the Reality," Fergus recognized the "relatively fair skin of [Montserrat's] people" compared to populations of other islands in the region, but he opposed the notion of a "hybridized Black Irish" population (Messenger 1967, 6). He did not recognize a significant Irish influence on Montserrat's food, folklore, storytelling, or music and dance traditions. As far as Irish influences on Montserrat go, Fergus argued that, while Irish Catholic servants were also "dehumanized" in many ways by Anglo-Protestant landowners, they were not in a position to impose their culture on African slaves in any significant way. He recognized some strands of Irishness in Montserrat's culture, but simply concluded more research had to be done.

In his 1981 and 1994 colonial histories of Montserrat, Fergus drew from public records and colonial reports to delve into a more nuanced history of the Irish community on the island, from a Montserratian perspective. He distinguished Irish Catholic indentured servants from Anglo-Irish Protestant landowners from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. In so doing, he strategically aligned the Irish Catholic struggle for political and religious emancipation with the struggle of African slaves for basic human rights. He averted the issue of "forgotten Irish slaves" on Montserrat by asserting that the experiences of black slaves and Irish indentured

servants were simply incomparable: "both groups in their different ways hankered after freedom" (1994, 77). In this way, Fergus swept over the central contradiction in the St. Patrick's Day narrative—that is, commemorating a slave rebellion against Irish slave masters using symbols of Irish national pride—by pointing out that the holiday is about freedom for all.

In his public life as a politician and professor at the University of the West Indies (UWI) on Montserrat, Fergus focused his efforts in the 1970s on developing St. Patrick's Day into a national holiday on Montserrat. The idea was not to celebrate any particular affinity to Ireland, but instead to commemorate Montserrat's fallen heroes—the slaves that led the St. Patrick's Day rebellion in 1768 (described in the Introduction). In 1971, he began a campaign (largely through newspaper articles and poems) to make St. Patrick's Day a national holiday on Montserrat. He organized the first St. Patrick's celebration on the UWI campus in Plymouth in 1978 to include music, drama, poetry, and lectures. The event continued annually at the university center until 1984, when the Public Holidays Act was finally amended to include March 17th, St. Patrick's Day. The St. Patrick's Festival later migrated to the village of St. Patrick's in the south, where it became associated with the village of the same name. Today, after the volcano buried St. Patrick's Village under ash, the celebrations take place primarily in the village of Salem (see Chapter 3).

Fergus' agenda was (and still is) the promotion of Montserrat's earliest heroes—the first "national freedom-fighters" that rebelled against oppressive slave masters in the eighteenth century. He preferred to call March 17th "Heroes Day" instead, but the name was never government-approved, and it certainly does not

create the same allure for tourists as a "Caribbean St. Patrick's Day." Fergus' efforts to focus on the 1768 slave conspiracy has been seen by some as part of the larger nationalist and "Africanist" movement on Montserrat that was popular from the 1970s-1990s, before the volcano. Messenger, for his part, was critical of Fergus' rebellion narrative in his 1994 article:

> This may be a legend…and implied in it is that on this day the Irish would be vulnerable because of the drink customarily imbibed. To some locals, basing a festival on an unsuccessful slave revolt, possibly recorded only in untrustworthy legend, is as questionable as the effort by Afrophiles to change the name of the island [to Alliouagana]…(16).

Another scholar by the name of Jonathan Skinner entered the scene in the mid-1990s—the British anthropologist focused his fieldwork on postcolonial identities on Montserrat and he spoke with Messenger about this issue during the latter's annual vacation to the island. Skinner reported that Messenger was unhappy with how his writings had been "hijacked for other people's political ends such as those of Sir Fergus" (2004, 160). Messenger was sympathetic to Montserrat's Irish settlers and contemporary Irish and Irish American readers, preferring to focus on the island's "Black Irish," and not on the campaign by some on the island for Africanist revitalization. As a result, Messenger and Fergus are often presented in the literature as being at odds with one another, as being "Hibernicist" (favoring the Irish side of the story) versus "Africanist" (favoring the African slave side of the story).

After Skinner completed his fieldwork in 1994-1995, thirty years after Messenger made his observations and twenty years before my research, he described St. Patrick's Festival as an "ethnic spectacle" that was primarily used to attract white tourists to an exotic Afro-Irish Caribbean island. He said, "The only Black Irish

voices I came across came from the reverberations of Messenger's writings" (161). Based on my fieldwork in the post-volcano years between 2013-2015, I agree with Skinner. Some members of the community trace their genealogical ties back to Ireland, and they do so proudly.[14] But concrete evidence of a distinct community of light-skinned people who call themselves "Black Irish" is difficult, if not impossible, to find, especially with the local population at a third of what it was before the volcano, when both Messenger and Skinner conducted their research. The notion of the "Black Irish" seems more mythical than it does describe the real-life experiences of locals on the ground, and the idea seems more like a marketing campaign targeted towards Montserrat outsiders, especially the Irish and Irish American ones.

Historical truth or cultural fiction?

Although a historian like Donald Akenson prefers to pursue the "historical truth," I stress that there is value in accepting the uncertainties and contradictions that arise in Montserrat's performances of the island's historical narratives. Akenson closed his book about Irish settlement of Montserrat with the following sentiment:

> Professionally written history may be more accurate than are invented traditions, but usually it is less useful. The Montserratians have the right to create whatever fictions makes [*sic*] it easier for them to get through the day. One hopes that their inventions will be humane, generous, non-racist, and forgiving—for generous inventions of the past have the power of becoming self-fulfilling prophecies of the future (1997, 186).

My project is about exactly these cultural "inventions" that have developed from the historical narratives that the local community has or has not accepted. Unlike

[14] For example, Montserratian Joe Sweeney spoke extensively about his Irish roots during an interview with Rose Willock on *The Culture Show* on March 8, 2014. He explained that he resides in England, but returns every year to celebrate his Irish heritage during Montserrat's St. Patrick's Festival.

Akenson, I am drawn towards the messy "fictions" that Montserratians use to create and transform their cultural identities. I am interested in exactly what it is that helps them "get through the day," through the volcanic crisis, through the daily challenges that Montserratian people face in this period of redevelopment. I am specifically interested in the music and dances that serve this purpose and help to tell these stories. These cultural inventions come from both foreign and local influences, and they come together in conflicting ways that prompt questions about authenticity, tradition, and what is or is not accepted as Montserratian. The ongoing processes of negotiation and debate that occur as "invented traditions" are performed reveal how Montserratians today connect to the island's past and help them perpetuate and develop such traditions into the future.

It is Fergus' Montserratian version of the St. Patrick's Day narrative that is printed in Montserrat's history books and read and recited by schoolchildren on the radio each March. It is his version that is widely accepted on the island, while foreign voices are frequently silenced or ignored, or at least transformed into acceptably "local" forms by processes of community negotiation that I describe throughout this dissertation. Messenger's Irish-centric claims and the nuanced relationships that existed between African slaves, Irish servants, and English and Irish settlers throughout Montserrat's history, described by Akenson and others, tend to fall to the wayside or become entangled in what may be described as Montserrat's postcolonial and post-traumatic identity crisis today. Festival periods of "hot" nationalism are times for community dialogues and debates through which strands of non-local culture and history are woven together with local island traditions.

Through a combination of scholarly writings, poetry, and newspaper articles aimed at locals and tourists, Fergus has maintained a diplomatic position within the debate. He continues to fight for recognition of Montserrat's early freedom fighters, but he has also recognized the strategic use of Irish cultural symbols to distinguish the island within the Caribbean region. He wrote, "Erin [the female personification of Ireland] still features proudly on the Montserrat crest displaying her harp. This was perhaps arranged in the twentieth century…when the few leading whites needed something by which to portray the uniqueness of the Emerald Isle of the West" (1981, 337; see Figure I.5, page 14). He has also been critical of the "incipient distortion" of the St. Patrick's Day celebrations on Montserrat, which sometimes resemble the drunken and kitschy celebrations of Irish Americans. His concern is that this attitude diverges from the serious religious and political significance of a holiday that was originally meant to celebrate St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, and, for Montserrat, the island's earliest heroes. But when St. Patrick's Day, and the symbols that are associated with the holiday, can be construed in so many ways, when does the "distortion" go too far? The "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) created by Montserratians for the St. Patrick's Day holiday can serve both a pro-African (or "Africanist") and a pro-Irish ("Hibernicist") agenda, and, ultimately, a Montserratian nationalist agenda—whatever helps them "get through the day," as Akenson put it. It depends on how these traditions are contextualized within the local scene, and Montserratians can negotiate the contradictory aspects of the island's Irish and African heritage that are not included in official narratives through individual processes of commemoration, celebration, and performance.

Meanings of Irishness and Africanness remain unresolved in Montserrat's 1768 St. Patrick's Day rebellion narrative. After reviewing the literature at the start of this research, I was left asking many of the same questions that I had before I started: Who is Montserratian? How Irish are Montserratians? Why and how do they celebrate St. Patrick's Day? Is there Irish dance in the masquerades? The written records prompted more questions for me than they answered, and it is clear that material archives alone cannot solve ever-changing issues of identity. For Montserratians, the debates and the improvisations surrounding the archive are valuable, for maintaining the conversation and allowing for agency over the inevitable adaptations of their own personal identities.

My search for Montserrat's archive continues in the following chapters, in which I demonstrate how the island's national traditions, such as the masquerade dance and annual festivals, provide a space for different members of the community—local Montserratians, ex-pats, and foreign tourists alike—to grapple with these questions through dialogue and performance. The archive is "performed," such that elements of shared cultural material hold historical information that cannot be substituted by books, and performance, in turn, is an archival process that enables that which has disappeared or been forgotten to be made visible or "sensible" (Taylor 2003, 205). And while few are true trailblazers of tradition on Montserrat, this dissertation is about the live transmission of the archive through the island's culture-keepers and culture-makers, whose work not only exhibits the memories that are shared, but also prompts the debates that keep that history and culture relevant.

Chapter 2:

Rhythms of Change in Montserrat's Masquerade Dance

"Unless you understand Masquerade you can never hope to understand Montserrat because everything which is Montserrat comes from it. When you hear Masquerade music you forgive Montserrat anything, even not loving you back. It's the one thing the British haven't managed to take from us."

– Edgar Nkosi White, Montserratian writer and musician,
"In the Ghaut (A Parable of Montserrat)," *MNI Alive*, January 25, 2015



Figure 2.1. Emerald Shamioles at Calabash Festival. Dancers in the Emerald Shamioles masquerade troupe perform with their band at the Calabash Festival Grand Food Fair at the Lyme Centre in Brades. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 18, 2014).

On March 17th, the last day of Montserrat's annual St. Patrick's Festival, locals and tourists gather at the culminating Slave Feast event to commemorate the island's attempted slave rebellion on that same day in 1768. At the Slave Feast, festivalgoers enjoy local foods, buy handmade crafts, and watch artists perform music, dance, and poetry. Masquerade dancers form a circle among the crowds—the young performers wear grinning masks that dangle in front of their faces as they stamp and spin in the dusty street. Their bodies move polyrhythmically, their feet are quick, and their shoulders pulsate up and down. The troupe's captain cracks a whip that bites at the dancers' feet, and he urges them step faster, higher. They become more frenzied and energetic. As their feet punctuate the pavement below, there is an overall sense that they are floating just above the ground, occasionally dipping the body towards the earth and disrupting the rhythm of the dance. Their hands gesture in towards and away from the body, pointing in at the temples and then opening out into serving motions in front of them. They free their bodies in a dizzying trance of movement. The sound of the large masquerade "boom" drum vibrates through the space, the fife plays high-pitched melodies that dictate the dancers' steps and formations, and the goatskin snare drum emits driving rhythms that become increasingly "hot." The fife combines European-sounding melodies with the African-sounding rhythms of the drums, echoing the multiple voices that contribute to the community's historical narrative. The discrete physical and historical elements of Montserrat's masquerade dance combine to "remember" a "dismembered" community (Young 2005). It is one that has been divided and dispersed over centuries of trauma inflicted by both man and nature. These performers dance the archive, these dancers are the archive.

"Rhythms of catastrophe" in Montserrat's masquerades

This chapter is about the role of the masquerade dance in the formation, negotiation, and adaptation of Montserrat's contemporary cultural identity. Masquerade performances appear at all annual festivals, not just St. Patrick's Festival, and the visual and auditory elements of the dance tradition have come to represent the island's cultural landscape and soundscape. The masquerades have survived the island's many struggles and have arguably helped the community cope with those hardships. The evolution of Montserrat's masquerade dance as a staging of resilience and resistance against ongoing oppressions and threats reflects how the community has confronted many challenges, as the dance has been recontextualized from colonial and slave eras to the present period of post-disaster redevelopment.

In her St. Patrick's Lecture during the March 2015 Festival, Dr. Vernie Clarice Barnes borrowed from Merleau-Ponty's notion of culture as a collectivity to argue that the "scars" of trauma accumulate across generations and become embedded into the community's rituals and customs (2015). Montserrat's historical narrative is embedded in the masquerade dance, performed again and again to create a Tayloresque scenario, or a "meaning-making paradigm that structures social environments" (Taylor 2003, 28). And those changing environments, in turn, influence how the dance is repurposed and reformulated because masqueraders improvise within the external structures (i.e., the traditional steps, rhythms, and choreographies) of the dance to suit different contexts. Performance theorist Margaret Drewal says of ritual dance traditions, "Acquired, in-body techniques for use in performance do not necessarily constitute structures or systems of reproduction.

Rather techniques of the body should be understood as resources for negotiation that are deployed in performance by knowledgeable agents" (1991, 10). The masquerade dance is a "blurred genre" (Geertz 1980) that is defined by the interplay between the formulaic and the dynamic, between categorization and transformation. Dance also contributes to the construction of cultural heritage for "dancing pasts across several presents" through specific acts of "selection, omission, exclusion, transformation, and creation" (Buckland 2006, 17). As a blurred genre, Montserrat's masquerade tradition structure has remained flexible and transformative across space and time.

Montserrat's masquerade dance is said to date back to the eighteenth century, when African slaves on the island created what is now described as a parody of Irish slave masters dancing in celebration on holidays like St. Patrick's Day. The masquerade genre is not unique to Montserrat and different forms of the dance are widespread throughout the Leeward and Windward Islands. In *The Jumbies' Playing Ground: Old World Influence on Afro-Creole Masquerades in the Eastern Caribbean* (2012), Robert Nicholls describes how influences from West Africa and Western Europe were incorporated into the Afro-Creole masquerade traditions that permeate the Eastern Caribbean today. The exact origins of Caribbean masquerades are difficult to trace, but it is clear that the various styles developed on the islands through complex circum-Atlantic cultural interchange, dating back to the seventeenth century. It was not only the case that West African and Western European cultures encountered each other only in the Caribbean and the Americas; there were plenty of instances, beginning as early as the sixteenth century, in which African and European music and dance forms crossed paths in both directions through Africa and Western

Europe (Sublette 2004, 78-81). The paths of influence and exchange were not just lateral one-way, but also involved transatlantic ebbs and flows along imbalanced routes of power in multiple locations that now make it difficult to precisely trace historical connections in dance and music traditions on the islands.

Masquerade traditions are an important part of national cultural development on islands of the West Indies, and each island's masquerade form has its own unique features that set it apart from other islands. In *Caribbean Festival Arts*, Judith Nunley and John W. Bettelheim illustrate in colorful detail a wide variety of Caribbean masquerade traditions in order to demonstrate how the dances, and the festival events at which they are performed, contribute to local economic and cultural development, nation building, and regional unity in the twentieth century (1988). Masquerade parades are central features of the festivals, which attract large numbers of local, regional, and international tourists to the islands at Christmastime, pre-Lenten Carnivals, and other holiday periods. Large-scale regional events such as CARIFESTA (Caribbean Festival of Arts) give masqueraders an opportunity to compete with other islands for distinction, based on the most colorful costumes, most awe-inspiring leaps, and most intricate footwork.

On Montserrat, the structure of the masquerade tradition has allowed Montserratians to repeatedly repurpose the dance as they cope with what Barnes referred to as the ongoing "rhythms of catastrophe" (2015). The dance serves multiple purposes—post-colonial, post-disaster, and always emancipatory—to repeat the process of post-traumatic cultural identity formation and to negotiate new configurations of power in the face of ongoing threats behind various masks. The

masquerades on Montserrat relate to politics, economics, and nationalism, and they speak to issues of tradition and cultural authenticity within the local community.

The blurring of historical and cultural structures in the masquerade dance tradition—and the multivocality and fluidity of meaning that result—can be seen in the creative improvisations of practitioners. In this chapter, I first describe the structure and aesthetics of the masquerade dance, and then I introduce the people who dance masquerades on Montserrat today, including the "Emerald Shamioles," "Ladies of Alliouagana," and St. John's masquerade troupes. The performances of a number of masqueraders—some who are named and others who remain masked and anonymous—flow with the rhythm changes of contemporary life on the island. I focus on two dancers in particular: James "Titus" Frederick, the captain of the Emerald Shamioles and primary keeper of the tradition, whose efforts ensure the transmission of the masquerades to future generations; and Basil Chambers, an innovator on the tradition, whose creative performances ensure the ongoing relevance of the masquerades today. I describe historical paradigms of the masquerade dance tradition and explain how they are engaged in contemporary performances that contribute to a sense of "Montserratianness" today.

Repertoire and style

A typical masquerade performance on Montserrat consists of an opening march into the space, followed by seven dances, each with a distinctive melody and rhythm. Ideally, the dances are performed in sequence, but masquerade dance captain Titus told me that they can be danced in any order, and some may be omitted,

depending on restrictions in the performance schedule or space (2015). Music is provided by a group of three or four musicians who play the following instruments: a fife for the melody, a goatskin snare drum for the particular rhythm, a boom drum to keep the beat, and sometimes a shak-shak (shaker) for texture. In this section, I describe the choreographic structure of the masquerades based on three sources: (1) observations of performances by Montserrat's three troupes, (2) participant observation at rehearsals with the Ladies of Alliouagana troupe, and (3) interviews and conversations with the performers themselves. It will be helpful to watch a performance video (http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-emerald-shamioles-masquerade-troupe/, Video #3) and listen to the music (http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/masquerade-dance-music/) while reading this section for a fuller understanding of the visual and audible aesthetic of the masquerades.

The footwork of the opening "March" is a slow 3-step pattern, and the dancers line up to perform a pantomime step that is reminiscent of plowing sugar fields. They turn their sides to the audience and "step touch" side to side, alternately leaning forward towards the audience and then standing up straight again, swinging the arms forward and back. The opening March often ends with a step-hop or step-kick step to get into formation for the following quadrille sections, called "Cudjoe Head" #1, #2, and #3. A quadrille is a set dance typically performed by four couples in a square formation, but may also be danced by two couples facing each other when the number of dancers is reduced (called a "half set" Anglo-/Irish-based set dancing); each couple is made up of roles for a "lady" and a "gent." Caribbean quadrilles are reminiscent of

European set dances, but they have undergone a creolization process with African dance forms (typical throughout the Caribbean, as described by Daniel 2011; Manuel 2009; Szwed and Marks 1988) that separates them substantially from European traditions.[1] In the Cudjoe Head sets, the dancers continue the same 3-step pattern as the opening march, but with faster energy and a bit of a shuffling hop. During these dances, the troupe captain shouts out instructions to link right arms or to perform a "Ladies' Change" (dancers in the "ladies" part change places across the set). The call to "Move!" can have multiple meanings depending on the figures associated with the dance, which dancers must be able to recognize. For example, "One!" often calls for a right arm swing in these first three quadrilles. "Move!" might be a command that indicates that all should huddle into a tight quadrille formation and move in a counterclockwise circular direction, or it could call for the next soloist to take the stage in later sections of the dance performance. The dancers know from the context and their familiarity with the quadrille structures and the music what "One!" or "Move!" means at any given time.

The "Heel and Toe Polka" typically follows as the fifth section of choreography and the step is said to make Montserrat's tradition distinct from other masquerades. Dancers partner up and stand in two long lines so that couples face each other and move side-to-side while doing what is sometimes described as an "Africanized" Irish polka step. The Heel and Toe was once referred to as the

[1] Variations on European quadrille dances (which were popular in Italy, France, England, and Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) are widespread throughout the Caribbean. The creolization of African and European dance forms produced sites of contestation for racial, ethnic, and national identity formation across the Spanish-, French-, and English-speaking Caribbean. These dances are similar to other social dance forms across the United States and Canada that also originated from European forms, such as contra dancing and square dancing.

"Chigga-Foot Maya" dance because of its allusion to walking with chigger bugs in one's feet (Nicholls 2012, 130), but it is also the step that John Messenger referred to as unmistakably Irish (see Chapter 1). Rose Willock, known as an expert on local culture, also described the footwork of the Heel and Toe as originating from an Irish polka, picked up by slaves on Montserrat who mimicked their Irish masters (see "Montserrat: The Emerald Isle of the Caribbean [Part 6 of 9]," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S1PTFE93Ks, Video #5, time code 3:11-5:01).[2,3] In Chapter 4, I analyze the Heel and Toe Polka and other elements of Montserrat's masquerade dance in depth to evaluate the "Irishness" of the style.

The next dance in the masquerade sequence is a processional dance that is sometimes called the "Road March" or "Rumba."[4] It was traditionally the perambulatory dance performed during the Christmas festival period for the troupes to travel through the winding, hilly streets of Montserrat's small villages. The performers proceeded from door to door and collected money from neighbors to contribute to the troupe's funds, though sometimes coins were thrown directly at individual dancers who got to keep their reward (D. Ryan 2014). This Christmastime ritual is less common today partly because of the reduced and dispersed population and thus weakened village cohesion, but also because the dancers are young boys

[2] This video is part of a nine-part YouTube documentary created by David W. Seitz in 2010, based on St. Patrick's Festival in 2005.

[3] I heard the story about the Irish origins of the Heel and Toe Polka countless times during my fieldwork. When I mentioned to masquerade legend Titus during an interview that I am an Irish dancer, he responded, "Irish dancing? Okay! So you do the heel and toe like that," and then he demonstrated the step for me (2015). I can say that the Heel and Toe footwork came naturally to me, but the posture and distinctive shoulder bounce was much more difficult.

[4] The "Rumba" of Montserrat's masquerades bears no obvious resemblance to the types of rumba that I am familiar with. It looks and sounds nothing like a sultry Latin ballroom rumba or an Afro-Cuban rumba. In Cuba, the Spanish word *rumba* was originally synonymous with *fiesta*, or party, but later became defined as a specific musical genre and dance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Daniel 1995). It is possible that, as a processional dance at Christmas time, Montserrat's "Rumba" was associated with this "party" atmosphere in the early twentieth century.

who lack the stamina to march for eight or nine hours straight, according to Titus (2015). Today the Emerald Shamioles sometimes perform a modified stage version of the Road March, during which spectators have the opportunity to throw coins at the performers, and the boys dart across stage or performance space to collect them.

The last two sections are danced to Rhythms #4 and #5 and are known as the "hot" dances. Titus explained to me, "Warmer and warmer you call it. You light up. You gotta warm the body first up, up there. So when you reach to the last dance now, you get ready cause…the music is more hotter, and the feeling is in you" (2015). The movements rise to dizzying speeds, with masqueraders spinning in fast circles around each other, running from one side of the quadrille formation to the other as the captain yells, "Left right!" and "Right left!" Both of these final dances culminate in duets and/or solos by each performer in which they surrender completely to the rhythm and show off their personal styles, the ribbons of their costumes whirling off their backs behind them. Ladies of Alliouagana captain Yvonne Brade-Julius described the experience as liberating, especially with her face hidden behind the mask. This sentiment is demonstrative of the "liberatory potential" of Caribbean masquerading traditions, in which "resistance is only masked and momentary" (Reed 2007, 66). In a community as small as Montserrat's, many know who each of the costumed masqueraders is by his or her body shape or movement signature, but the masks psychologically provide a safe space for uninhibited self-expression. Soloists point to their temples and gesture out with serving motions that are reminiscent of bowing and scraping to a slave master; however, these movements also traditionally symbolize warding off evil spirits and liberating the oppressed body.

Table 2.1. Montserrat's masquerade dance	
Title	**Description**
March	Dancers slowly enter the performance space with three-step pattern Dancers line up to perform a pantomime of plowing sugar fields
Rhythms #1, #2, #3 / Cudjoe Head #1, #2, #3	Dancers form quadrille sets (four dancers per set) Figures include arm links, ladies' changes, and huddles
Heel and Toe Polka	Dancers form two long lines, facing each other Dancers perform "heel and toe" step, traveling side-to-side
Road march or Rumba (processional dance)	Dancers stand next to partner in two lines and travel forward and back Traditionally used to dance through streets and collect coins at Christmas
Rhythms #4, #5 / "Hot" dances	Dancers form quadrille sets (four dancers per set, faster than #1, #2, #3) Figures include arm links, ladies' changes, and huddles Dances finish with solos by each dancer

Table 2.1. Montserrat's masquerade dance. This table describes of each of the sections of the masquerade dance and some examples of figures, formations, and steps that are performed in each. A musical analysis of notated masquerade rhythms can be found in Figure 4.4 (page 200) in Chapter 4.

Both the Ladies of Alliouagana and the Emerald Shamioles follow the same basic choreographic structure described above, but there are notable differences in style. The Ladies tend to perform in more neatly organized quadrille formations and their movements are more graceful, while the young Shamioles are known for their fast spins and vigorous footwork. The women's dancing tends to be calm, but not without feminine flair—in the Road March dance, they advance by taking four big steps forward and four smaller steps back, gyrating the hips back and forth as they march. When the boys dance, they stamp their feet with determination to achieve the strength and speed that Titus requires of them in training. While there were a variety of personal styles before the volcano, the Emerald Shamioles aesthetic has been honed by Titus over the years to fit his own preferred (and highly acclaimed) style, since he has been the primary trainer on the island for the last twenty years. At the

same time, masqueraders are encouraged to develop and display their personal styles to maintain the expressive nature at the root of this traditional dance of liberation.

Performers reported that their primary reasons for dancing masquerade were (1) to keep the culture alive, (2) to keep fit, and (3) to simply express a love for the masquerade rhythms through dance. The original purposes of masquerades as danced in eighteenth-century West Africa are said to have been sacred in nature, performed as part of private rites of passages such as initiation rites, funerals, and weddings, but masquerades throughout the West Indies today have become secularized (Nicholls 2012). My research on Montserrat supports this idea: little mention is made by practitioners of the sacred origins of the masquerades, except when described in the context of Montserrat's traditional *jumbie* dance. The jumbie dance incorporated many of the same rhythms and quadrille sets as the masquerade dance, but was performed in private spaces as part of the island's folk religion.[5] The jumbie dance was associated with *obeah* (folk magic) practices and began to disappear in the twentieth century with the rise of Christianity.[6] I cannot comment extensively on the

[5] In his book *The Jombee Dance of Montserrat: A Study of Trance Ritual in the West Indies*, American anthropologist Jay D. Dobbin described the *jombee* (or *jumbie*) dance as ritual and social drama (1986). Dobbin was an anthropology student under the tutelage of John Messenger and also a Catholic priest. He admitted that his work stemmed from a particular bias: his primary concern was to write a "salvage ethnography" to preserve and document a folk religion that was waning (and has now disappeared) in Montserrat. Unlike Messenger, he made little mention of the island's Irish roots and the possibility that the jombee dance's quadrille-like formations might derive from Irish set dances. Instead, he set up a theoretical framework to discuss Montserrat's folk religion in terms of Victor Turner's notions of liminality and *communitas* (1982), but his analysis did not include descriptions of the dances themselves.

[6] During my fieldwork, I heard the occasional nostalgic mention of the jumbie dance (including "Montserrat Memories: Recollections of the Jumbie Table and Jumbie Dance" on ZJB Radio, November 29, 2015), and even some discussion of bringing it back (Meade, March 17, 2013), but, to my knowledge, no revivals have yet materialized. For more on the relationship between religion and *obeah* or "witchcraft" associated with traditions like the jumbie dance in the twentieth century, see Jonathan Skinner's article "Interning the Serpent: Witchcraft, Religion and the Law on Montserrat in the Twentieth Century" (2005). See also Nicholls for more information about how the rise of evangelical Christianity affected the sacred nature of Caribbean masquerading traditions (2012, 231-241).

jumbie tradition because it has apparently completely vanished since the volcanic crisis in the late 1990s, but today the masquerade dance is performed openly and described as the public and secular expression of the jumbie dance (Barnes 2015). Today the masquerade tradition serves a wider political and nationalistic function as Montserratians recognize the island's colonial and pre-volcano history through the narrative that the dances represent.

Who dances masquerade?

After the volcano, the masquerades survived the island's physical and cultural devastation, but barely so. In 2001, Montserratian researcher Eddie Donoghue predicted that the masquerade dance would soon be extinct due to the effects of modernization and the recent post-volcano dispersal of the island's population. But, in fact, a strong, albeit small, core group of masqueraders is still active on the island today. Donoghue was correct in some sense—masquerade troupes have changed significantly since the volcano, as I discuss throughout this chapter—but currently, masquerade dancers perform at every festival on Montserrat, including the three largest (Christmas Festival in December, St. Patrick's Festival in March, and Calabash Festival in late July), as well as smaller community events, such as St. John's Day (December 27th) in St. John's Village or the occasional "Fish Day" in Carr's Bay. They make an appearance at nearly every "national" event, especially when tourists are present, and are also commissioned to dance at some private events. At times they travel abroad (regionally and internationally) to perform as representatives of Montserrat's culture.

The number of masquerade performers has drastically decreased since the volcanic crisis, and the demographic of the troupes has shifted from adult men to young boys and middle-aged women. Before the volcano, there were multiple troupes (typically associated with a village, such as St. John's, Long Ground, Harris, and Trant's) but with the devastation and evacuation of the southern part of the island and the community disruption resulting from migration, only three troupes exist today in 2015, none of which existed before the volcano: (1) the Emerald Shamioles youth masquerade troupe, formed in the late 1990s by James "Titus" Frederick; (2) the Ladies of Alliouagana troupe, originally formed in 2001 by a PTA group of masquerading mothers that disbanded when many became pregnant, and later re-formed in 2012; and (3) a new youth masquerade troupe from St. John's Village that recently formed in late 2014 and first performed at that year's Christmas Festival. During my fieldwork on Montserrat, I saw these troupes perform multiple times at various events.

James "Titus" Frederick is Montserrat's most noteworthy masquerader today. At nearly 66 years of age in March 2015, he began dancing about fifty years ago in his home village of St. John's and began teaching the masquerades to children in the 1980s. He told me that he formed the Emerald Shamioles in the late 1990s as a way to "keep the culture alive" after the volcanic crisis, and his troupe performs locally and sometimes at regional and international festivals throughout the Caribbean and in the U.S. and U.K. He explained that his work is so highly valued in the community that the government has allowed him to keep his security job in Public Works past the normal retirement age in order to keep him on the island (otherwise he would

emigrate to Atlanta, where his wife lives most of the year). In March 2014, he won the National Order of Merit for his work with the Emerald Shamioles, described by the award committee as a "living role model in the masquerade tradition," and honored for "his dedication to the fine details of the dance, combined with a natural flair for teaching, [that] has ensured the success of his efforts over the years" (Montserrat Cultural Centre, Little Bay). Titus also told me that when he visits other islands in the region, his performances so impress the locals that he is sometimes asked to stay to teach his distinct Montserratian style. He implied that nothing compares to Montserrat's masquerades, especially when he performs them, and this attitude demonstrates the competitive nature that exists at every level of the tradition, from individual or village rivalries to regional inter-island spectacles (2015).



Figure 2.2. Masquerade captain Titus performs unmasked. Titus removes his captain's mask and vest and puts down his whip to perform a solo during the Calabash Festival Grand Food Fair. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 18, 2014).

There are also some individual adult male dancers on Montserrat who were active in masquerade troupes before the volcano and still contribute to keeping the tradition vital and relevant today. Dancers such as "Pops" Morris, Eric Fergus, Basil Chambers, and Reinford "Kulcha Don" Gibbons are noted masqueraders of local renown, but they are occupied with other responsibilities that make it difficult to devote themselves to the masquerades as completely as Titus does. Fergus is a famed masquerader from St. John's who initially helped train the Ladies of Alliouagana and taught them the quadrille formation choreographies. Basil Chambers explained that he, Kulcha Don, and some other masquerade dancers from various pre-volcano villages formed a troupe in the early 2000s called the "Hybrid Masquerades" after the forced dispersal of the community (2015). This troupe no longer performs officially because frequent travel and migration make it difficult to gather members regularly, but a group of these and other adult male masqueraders still dance at public events from time to time. I often saw Chambers, Fergus, Kulcha Don, and other older masqueraders jump into the middle of a masquerade street performance or an impromptu jam—often uncostumed and unmasked—to show off their moves and feed some spontaneous excitement into the event.[7] Basil Chambers especially contributes his own innovative flavor to the masquerades, as I describe later in this chapter.

Montserrat's post-volcano masquerades are unique from most in the West Indies because the island's troupes are primarily comprised of young boys and middle-aged women, with few adult men dancing in troupes today. This shift has softened the aesthetic of the dance significantly since the volcanic crisis because,

[7] For example, watch "Kulcha Don & Basil Dance Masquerade during St. Patrick's Day 2010 in Montserrat" at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpI_xBLkneA, Video #6 (posted by user *664stratlinkup*, March 18, 2010).

according to Basil Chambers, it takes away from the "fierceness" of the masquerades. In March 2015, the Emerald Shamioles troupe was made up of twenty-three boys under the age of eighteen and the Ladies of Alliouagana were about ten women around the age of forty and above; their four or five musicians were all adult males. The new St. John's troupe that formed in late 2014 performed with about eight boys and its own four adult male musicians at St. Patrick's Festival in 2015. The Ladies of Alliouagana welcome any women to attend their bi-weekly practices, and they want to recruit younger women and girls to carry on the tradition, either as dancers themselves or as mothers who can teach their sons and daughters.

The Ladies of Alliouagana provide a model for female masquerade dancing, and they want to encourage young girls to learn the masquerades, but they have so far been largely unsuccessful because of the pervasive idea that the masquerades is something that, some of the young girls told me, "only boys do." When I asked Titus about the notion that masquerades are only for boys and men, however, his wife jumped in to remind us that women used to dance in the masquerades in the role of the "Queen." Until the 1980s, a fair number of women (although still the minority) used to participate in adult masquerade performances and competitions in the role of as the masquerade Queen, wearing a regal dress and hat (Donoghue 2001, 25-27). Titus explained that he has no explicit rules against girls joining the Emerald Shamioles (and there has been a handful of them in the past twenty years), but the troupe that I knew during my 2013-2015 period of research was entirely male.



Figure 2.3. Masquerade Queen. The masquerade Queen dances with a troupe performing at the Vue Pointe Hotel in December 1966. This photograph was posted on Facebook group Vintage Montserrat, where commenters explained that the troupe was from Cork Hill and the Queen role was played by Donna Henry, then a young girl and now a librarian at the National Trust. Photograph courtesy of Sally Doria.

Transmission of the masquerade tradition

Masquerade troupe membership numbers tend to remain steady, but individual members alternate in the migratory flux. Membership turnover in the troupes is high due to emigration, frequent off-island travel, and other changes in family life. For the Emerald Shamioles, the children grow up and either pursue educational opportunities elsewhere or simply lose interest. Some dancers return after a hiatus where travel

takes them away from rehearsals and performances, but some do not, and are replaced by new dancers who must learn the steps and performance style anew.

I noted that the focus is on transmission of the masquerades to Montserrat's youth, who learn by example from older dancers. According to Titus, the children do not need to rehearse regularly because, he explained, they learn by watching their elders, indicating that kinesthetic transmission of this oral tradition and danced archive is crucial. Even without a regular schedule of formal classes, the idea is that children will learn through exposure to the masquerade drums. I heard many Montserratians comment that their children are simply born knowing how to dance masquerade—they are inherently drawn to the sound of the "boom" drum. But there is also recognition that innate ability is not enough and the community must ramp up its efforts to maintain the vitality and relevance of the tradition. The sense was that the families in the community create an environment for children to absorb the rhythms of the masquerades, but they must be formally trained to learn the choreographies and refine their style.

It is Titus' role to provide structured teaching of the masquerades, and he invites any child from the age of seven to participate in summer school workshops held at Brades Primary School, some of whom go on to join the Emerald Shamioles as full members. He is a strict teacher and demands precision in rhythmic timing, choreographic formations in the quadrilles, and foot placement in the steps. In terms of music training, noted calypsonian and musician Keithroy "De Bear" Morson offered masquerade drumming and fife classes for children in 2014, independent of the Emerald Shamioles. De Bear is also a demanding teacher who drills his students

with rhythmic exercises. The classes were sparsely attended, however, and when I went, there was rarely more than one student, and often a different student each week (see Chapter 4). Despite the inconsistency of formal classes, I often saw children either dancing masquerade outside of school or tapping out the masquerade rhythms on various surfaces—railings, countertops, or the basketball court. It was clear that at least some transmission of the tradition continues, regardless of the difficulty of finding trainers, rehearsal space, or expensive material resources like drums and costumes.



Figure 2.4. St. John's masquerade troupe around 1974. The pre-volcano St. John's masquerade troupe performs from door-to-door at Christmas around 1974. This photograph was posted on Facebook group Vintage Montserrat with a caption explaining that this is the famous Fergus family of the St. John's masquerades (the family of Eric Fergus, who is mentioned in this chapter and in Chapter 3 for his calypso song that refers to his experiences as a masquerade dancer). Photograph courtesy of Sally Doria.

Costumes and the visual aesthetics of masquerading

The aesthetics of masquerades that developed throughout the West Indies are largely rooted in West African dance traditions, and the masquerades developed around the European festival calendar since slaves were given license to celebrate based on their masters' holiday schedules, especially around Christmas, New Year's, and Easter. Nicholls describes how during these holidays, variations developed throughout the islands that include West African masquerade prototypes (especially from Guinea, Ghana, Senegal, and Gambia) and Western Europe mumming traditions (especially from Britain, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and parts of Scandinavia). In the West Indies today, masquerade forms include animal masquerades (horse, bull, bear, donkey, etc. disguises), bush masquerades (made of organic materials, such as straw or leaves), and stilt masquerades. Versions of masquerade characters such as the Straw or Raffia Bear, John Bull, Jonkonnu (John Canoe), and Pitchy Patchy can be identified throughout the Eastern Caribbean and can be traced back to both West African and Western European roots (Nicholls 2012). On Montserrat, the characters "Miss Goosie" and her partner "Mr. Goosie" are stilt masquerades (separate from the masquerade dance troupes), often referred to in the Caribbean as Mocko Jumbie—an effigy, or "supernatural scarecrow," that was traditionally meant to scare off ghosts (Nicholls 2012, 13). Miss Goosie and Mr. Goosie (a John Bull type character) disappeared from Montserrat's festival scene in the 1980s, but they returned in recent years, and their reappearances today represent the continuity and preservation of the stilt-dancing form of masquerades on Montserrat. They also connect the island of Montserrat to the tradition as it is performed throughout the wider West Indies region.



Figure 2.5. Miss Goosie and Mr. Goosie on Festival Day. Stilt characters Miss Goosie (right, with a real cigarette smoking in her mouth) and Mr. Goosie (left) dance around the stage to soca music on Festival Day during Christmas Festival. In 1989, calypsonian Pat "Belonger" Ryan sang "Bring Dem Back" to lament the recent loss of the stilt characters. She sang that "culture shouldn't be a mask," but that they should be proud of their heritage and should preserve it on Festival Day, and every day (Skinner 2004, 85-86). Miss Goosie did finally return in recent years and in 2014, her "husband" Mr. Goosie (as emcee Basil Chambers referred to the John Bull character) joined her on the Festival Day stage. The annual presence of these masquerading characters represents the visible preservation and resiliency of Montserrat's heritage. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (December 31, 2013).

The shared aesthetics of East Caribbean masquerade forms center around inversions or rites of reversal, parody, play, "dressing up" (exaggerated realism and enhancement) or "dressing down" (pantomime), realism in disguise, and multivocality (Nicholls 2012, 7-76). Montserrat's masquerade troupes are similar to Jonkonnu in terms of performance tropes such as code switching and allegory (Reed 2007; Walker 2008), and their elegant and stylish costumes fit into the paradigm of "dressing up." The tradition of multivocality—the performance of multiple stories and multiple interpretations of those stories—is visibly demonstrated in the performers' multipatterned, multitextured, and mutable or recyclable costumes. All

performers wear floral-patterned yellow (Emerald Shamioles) or red pants (Ladies of Alliouagana and St. John's troupes, each with different patterns) with matching tunics decorated with lace, beads, and small mirrors (when available), and long brightly colored ribbons flow behind them as they shuffle and hop in comfortable sneakers. The tunics are modeled after the clothing of female house slaves and developed out of the masquerade tradition of role reversal, both in terms of gender and of social class, in that house slaves were more associated with "whiteness" than were field slaves (Donoghue 2001, 8). Traditionally, such "cross-dressing" and role reversals were said to render invisibility, create disguise, or ward off jumbies or ghosts (Nicholls 2012, 12-13). Montserrat's masquerade dancers "fluff" the ribbons behind them as they move to create an impressive flying effect, and the colors of the ribbons are symbolic of slavery, freedom, and hope (costume designer Ann Marie Dewar, March 21, 2015, Olveston, Montserrat, personal communication; D. Ryan 2014).

Montserratian headdresses are unique in comparison to other Caribbean masquerades because the tall cardboard miters are similar to the headwear of Catholic bishops (Donoghue 2001, 9)—which, I add, is similar to the type of miter seen in St. Patrick's iconography and thus visually alludes to island's distinct Irish Catholic history. The headdresses are covered in bright Christmas wrapping paper and the dancers' mesh masks are painted pink or orange with grotesque minstrel-like faces painted on them. Traditionally, masks were worn to ensure anonymity, imitate a jumbie ghost, or represent an inversion of power (Nicholls 2012), and Montserrat's masquerade masks possess defined features that suggest the dance's mimicking of Irish slave masters. The masks do not depict black or brown faces, but rather pink or

orange ones. When I first saw Montserrat's masquerades, I assumed that the pink/orange faces hinted at a performance of Irishness as "not quite white," somewhere in between the African/European creolization continuum (Garner 2004; 2007; Ignatiev 1995). Montserratians I spoke with did not describe the masks in this way, but Nicholls addresses the issue and explains that such masks were not typically overtly "white," so as to avoid being too explicitly racial in the eighteenth-century plantation era (2012, 55). In this way, race and culture are ambiguously defined, such that no group or individual is unsusceptible to mimicry or lampooning. The pigmentation indicates an intention to subtly reverse racially defined roles, and the transracial nature of the masks refers to the multiplicity of meanings embedded in masquerading aesthetics and tropes.



Figure 2.6. Emerald Shamioles line up at Calabash Festival. The Emerald Shamioles line up in order of height and perform in costume at the Calabash Festival Grand Food Fair. They wear yellow floral-patterned costumes with ribbons, masks, red Chuck Taylor sneakers, and Christmas paper-wrapped headdresses. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 18, 2014).



Figure 2.7. Ladies of Alliouagana on St. John's Day. Members of the Ladies of Alliouagana masquerade troupe in costume on St. John's Day (December 27th) in St. John's village. Their costumes are made of a red (rather than yellow) patterned fabric with mirrors sewn on the shoulders and back, but they wear the same style of masks and headdresses as the Emerald Shamioles. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (December 27, 2013).

Today, all of the masquerade costume elements are subject to availability and funding and the troupes rely partly on financial support and gifts from the Montserratian diaspora. The Emerald Shamioles have a small budget from the Government of Montserrat's Ministry of Culture that fluctuates from year to year, but this amount barely covers basic expenses, much less full costumes for all its members. For example, the troupe received just EC$1,000 (about US$370) for the year 2014. The beads, which can be found in the Mardi Gras section of any party store in the U.K. or U.S., are impossible to find on the island and must be brought in as gifts by friends and relatives (D. Ryan 2014). The specialty brand red Chuck

Taylor shoes worn as part of the Emerald Shamioles uniform must be specially ordered and are too expensive for many Montserratian families to afford on their own. Chuck Taylors are a new addition to the masquerade costume in recent years, and the shoes indicate the "multitemporal heterogeneity" (García Canclini 1995) of the dance, as it evolves over time when more contemporary elements are fused with older traditional elements. The costumes come from traditional West African and Western European masquerade prototypes, but they incorporate modern fashion out of necessity and stylistic choices, and they become more uniform as the tradition is incorporated into the national imagery.

The exterior appearance of masquerade troupe costumes is of utmost importance for national representation of the community of Montserrat. When material resources such as costumes or rehearsal space are scarce, it becomes difficult to convey and refine the deep cultural information that is embedded in the dance—the performing body alone is not enough to convey that information. Those that are already familiar with pre-volcano masquerades can watch uncostumed and unmasked dancers and simply hear the rhythms from afar to have certain memories and feelings evoked. However, when I, a foreigner, first saw the uncostumed masqueraders dancing impromptu on the streets at Rhythm Night (described in the opening of the Introduction), I knew I was witnessing something significant, but I did not have the visual context clues or the background knowledge to interpret it. I just saw "locals hopping around." Masquerade troupes before the volcano wore uniform masks and costumes according to village (as shown in Figure 2.4, page 101), but some photographs I saw showed more costume variation within troupes than is seen in the

troupes today. After the volcano, making sure that these elements are uniform is even more crucial for creating a sense of "shared" memory for the nation-building community—something that all recognize as distinctly Montserratian. The "national appearance" of the dance (Reed 2010, 139) encourages visual recognition of masquerade costumes and choreographic structures as part of the national identity formation process. The external structures and material components described above are crucial for the visual archiving process, as they provide a national landscape and soundscape for Montserrat that is distinct from other islands.

From village rivalries to national cohesion

In the early twentieth century, the masquerades were highly visible in the community: troupes from different villages danced in the crossroads and competed against one another in an interactive and emotionally compelling event. Today, however, public masquerade presentations more often take place on a "national" stage or more formally designated performance area, rather than in the streets.[8] The masquerade troupes have been rebuilt since the volcanic crisis from a top-down national level—as a cultural artifact that must be preserved as a means of "performing the nation" (Askew 2002). Because it is no longer the responsibility of villages to support the masquerades with financial contributions and volunteers, the Government of Montserrat's Division of Culture must now invest in the masquerades to keep them alive. However, with so many other economic challenges and the island's continued dependency on British aid, it is difficult to winnow funds into cultural arts initiatives

[8] Masquerade troupes are still hired to perform at private events, such as celebrations at private homes around Christmastime.

(as it is everywhere) and prove their significance to the community.[9] Those that support the masquerades present them as a "national treasure" that can represent the island (as described in a draft of their "National Cultural Policy," no date specified, draft in the author's possession) and will provide more economic benefit if developed as a product to entertain tourists.

Montserrat's post-volcano masquerades have undergone some process of folklorization for consumption by locals, emigrant, and tourists (Olson 2004). Such commodification on a national level, however, does not mean that the masquerades are solely about making money or are any less "authentic" now—rather, authenticity is rendered vague and unpredictable through such touristic spectacles (Bruner 2001). Part of the power of masquerading traditions is their ability to "reveal geographical movement accompanied by generic movement" and jump across boundaries as performance spaces adapt (Reed 2007). As Katherine Hagedorn (2001) demonstrates in the context of Afro-Cuban *santería*, the recontextualization and commercialization of a ritual tradition are not necessarily incompatible or negative processes. Delmaude Ryan, who is Montserrat's Minister of Education and Culture (2014 to present) and Emerald Shamioles coordinator, explained to me that she is committed to bringing cultural development back to a more grassroots village level, and possibly into the primary school curriculum (2014). The idea is that traditions like the masquerades would be preserved as national artifacts, but also handed to people in the community's larger villages (such as Salem, Brades, and Lookout) to keep them alive

[9] In *Sponsored Identities*, Arlene Dávila describes a similar situation in Puerto Rico, where cultural nationalism is complicated by the island's territorial/postcolonial relationship to the United States and by attempts to juggle alternative cultural identities with nationalistic definitions of authenticity (1997). The challenge involves political, economic, and sociocultural concerns as Puerto Ricans determine who is responsible for producing, financing, and marketing national cultural events and activities.

and evolving. However, achieving this goal would require a significant restructuring of the island's political and educational systems that is not yet feasible at this moment in the redevelopment process.[10]

The image of a unified national dance would likely attract more from government pockets than one that is segregated by village politics because it would benefit the island as a whole. However, sustaining the vitality of the dance is difficult without the excitement of inter-village competitions. Before the volcano, masquerade troupes from every village gathered to compete during the Christmas Festival and they were known for their fierce rivalries. The troupes were organized according to a specific hierarchy, from the dance captain and master musician at the top, to the Chief Mate (whose job it was to spy on rivals), the Warrior (who worked to raise competition standards), and the "Mischief" (a particularly talented young boy with promise of becoming the future captain) (Donoghue 2001, 22-25). Today, however, this hierarchy has disappeared due to decreased participation in the masquerades, and only the official role of troupe captain (who is also the teacher) remains. The Emerald Shamioles dance in lines ordered by height, roughly approximate to age, but besides older and more experienced dancers helping out with the younger ones, there is otherwise no hierarchical organization within the troupe. The loss of the competitive

[10] During the discussion immediately following the 2015 St. Patrick's Lecture by Dr. Vernie Clarice Barnes, a Montserratian woman who worked as an educator on the island declared that training in masquerade dance and music must become part of primary school curriculum, instead of remaining an extra-curricular activity. She said, "There are some truths there that we—let me use the word in its most positive sense: we need it for the *indoctrination* [her emphasis] of our youth" (March 12, 2015, Little Bay, Montserrat). There was concern among the discussants that most people outside of Montserrat only knew about the more famous Haitian slave revolt led by Toussaint Louverture from 1791-1804, even though Montserrat's 1768 rebellion preceded it by nearly twenty-five years. Though Montserrat's rebellion failed, the educator stressed that it was a model for other successful rebellions that finally led to slave emancipation in Britain's Caribbean colonies in 1834. It is for this reason that the masquerades are an important part of Montserrat's national consciousness and cultural pride.

aspect in the masquerades has eliminated the need for a particular hierarchy, and roles such as Chief Mate and Warrior are irrelevant without the need to refine the troupe for competition.

Before the volcano, masquerade dancers took to the streets in their elaborate costumes and competed aggressively with other troupes. Some members of the community remember these encounters as intense battles and have memories of children running in fear of the masqueraders, though others deny this or do not remember it this way. Today, however, rather than interact directly with other dancers and spectators in the streets, Montserrat's three troupes usually perform on stage or in a designated space apart from the audience. Traditionally, the captain cracked his whip to keep spectators from interfering with the dancers, but today there is little danger of such involvement when the dancers perform on a proscenium stage. When they dance in a street performance, most of the audience stands back respectfully.

The development of this "national" dance indicates a shift from a less participatory to more theatrical context (Reed 2010). The physical distancing of the audience from performers reflects how the effects of the volcanic disaster have created an emotional distancing from the tradition. Elder spectators gaze at the dancers and clap along nostalgically while young children stare mesmerized by the whirling of the colorful ribbons, and smiling tourists watch with guarded interest through smartphone camera screens. There is the occasional disruption by an enthusiastic member of the crowd (usually an older male, perhaps an ex-masquerade dancer) who is unable to resist dancing to the beat of the big "boom" drum, but there is generally little physical interaction between the audience and performers.

Among those I spoke with, it was generally agreed that the elimination of inter-village masquerade competitions takes away from the excitement and dynamism of the tradition. At the New Year's Festival event in 2014, I overheard some mutterings and spied some eye rolls as the Emerald Shamioles took to the stage for their long eight-section performance. I sensed a certain fatigue among audience members, including both locals and ex-pats, who had heard these same repeated rhythms and seen these same dances by this same troupe at every cultural event on the island in recent years. I was reminded of anthropologist Jesse Weaver Shipley's reference to "fatigue" in the context of Ghana's azonto dance as the "unmooring [of] signs of belonging from the cultural contexts that are supposed to give them meaning in the first place" (2013, 383). This does not mean that the masquerades are no longer relevant—that is far from the truth—but with the loss of villages, and thus the unmooring of troupes from those villages, and the loss of competition between them, the Montserrat masquerades have clearly lost some of their pre-volcano vitality.

With just one national troupe over the past twenty years, the Emerald Shamioles have performed alone, their territory undisputed but also displaced, dislocated, and unstable. The Ladies of Alliouagana pose no competition to the boys' troupe—in fact, some of the Ladies are mothers or aunts of the young masqueraders and work with the Shamioles to foster the boys' growth as dancers. Thus the Emerald Shamioles has definitively been the national troupe, the one that is invited to all local events (and off-island events, when such opportunities arise) to represent Montserrat. However, the new troupe from St. John's was recently formed in late 2014 has its own dancers, and even its own set of musicians. A major barrier to the formation of new troupes

has been the lack of different musicians to play for each group, so it is noteworthy that the St. John's troupe does—a sign of potential growth for the masquerades in general. If they continue to grow, and if other village-based troupes form out of a more grassroots approach to cultural development, they may challenge the dominance of Titus and his Emerald Shamioles in coming years. It will be interesting to see if the structure, aesthetic, and competitive nature of the Montserrat masquerades will redevelop with these potential rivalries.



Figure 2.8. A young masquerader picks up the captain's whip. A young masquerade performer dances briefly with the captain's whip in between sections of the Emerald Shamioles performance at the Calabash Festival Grand Food Fair. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 18, 2014).

The captain's whip and representations of violence

Donoghue described Montserrat's masquerade dance as a rite of reversal that was traditionally performed at Christmastime and on Emancipation Day (August 1st). He explained that the dance served as a safety valve put in place by plantation masters in the eighteenth century so that slaves could release pent-up aggressions in a

non-threatening environment, their identities hidden behind masks. The masquerade narrative gave performers ritual license to "act out"—they wore masks for anonymity and carried cart whips like those of the slave drivers, which they used to beat delinquent dancers and interfering audiences. This idea is in line with Bakhtinian theories of the "carnivalesque inversion" involved in masquerade traditions like Jonkonnu (Reed 2007, 67), when the boundaries between public and private spheres are called into question and grotesque parodies serve to both mock figures of authority and renew the spirits of performers (Bakhtin 1984). Slaves performed the masquerade dance during carnival periods in order to attain a sense of agency in a reversal of power hierarchies.

In Montserrat's masquerades, there is an unmistakable reference to the tradition's roots in the island's slavery era: the captain wears a ring in his mask's nose and carries a long cart whip made of plaited cow skin.[11,12] Traditionally, the whip is said to serve multiple purposes: to drive away evil spirits from the dance space, to punish a mischievous troupe member, or to bring order to a frenzied dance that has spiraled out of control (Donoghue 2001). Titus and Basil Chambers both told me that they remember either being whipped or seeing other dancers whipped throughout their early dancing years; Chambers told me he was lashed at least twenty times as a young masquerader (2015).

[11] According to Nicholls, Montserrat's plaited cow skin whip is a harsher type of whip than the plant fiber whips of masquerades on Antigua or the Virgin Islands (2012, 60).
[12] Ladies of Alliouagana captain Yvonne Brade-Julius told me that she chooses not to carry a whip, although she does have one. She explained to me that she has not yet learned to crack the whip and yells out instructions instead, preferring to be an active dancer in the troupe rather than a more passive director who calls out the formations (2015).

Today, however, the whip is a representation of a history of violence, not a re-creation of that violence. During my fieldwork, I heard the crack of the whip often, but only to direct dancers or to create an effect—never to actually whip a masquerader. The young dancers today are generally unfazed by the captain's whip—in fact, they are eager to crack it themselves when they get the chance to hold it, and their improvised dancing becomes more vigorous and inspired in its presence. In an Emerald Shamioles performance on New Year's Day in 2014, for example, Titus cracked his whip angrily as he yelled out commands to his young masked dancers, who responded by running across the stage and dancing as directed (see video: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-emerald-shamioles-masquerade-troupe-at-festival-51/, Video #4, time code 1:21-1:26). His movement appeared harsh and the sound was startling, but everyone on stage and in the audience knew that the whip was ultimately non-threatening.

The captain's whip crack is a performance of authority that urges members of the troupe to dance for the entertainment of spectators. When performed for white tourists, this performance is, to me, uncomfortably reminiscent of the history of slave traders and owners forcing Africans to dance for their own entertainment on ships and plantations (Manuel 2009; Reed 2007, 66; Sublette 2004, 57-58). However, locals I spoke to did not refer to this history and instead emphasized the sentimental value of the dance, as a means of remembering pre-volcano life on Montserrat. They know that the threat of a lash from the whip is not a real one, but it provides an impetus for performers to dance with more strength and determination. There is an unexpected juxtaposition of violence and innocence when the Emerald Shamioles dance: the

captain cracks his whip and barks commands into the children's faces, but the young ones are also undeniably cute as their small bodies gyrate with such intense movement. Despite the allusions to violence, the performance produces nostalgic memories of pre-volcano Montserrat for locals a friendly spectacle for tourists to enjoy.

The whip in the hands of the masquerade dance captain signifies when the "slave" dancer attains agency over his body and situation, and he exerts control over the other dancers in a parody and reversal of the master-slave relationship. Whereas the enactment of the master/slave relationship in the masquerade dance has been traditionally theorized as creating subjectivity for victimized ancestors, contemporary performances reframe the tradition as an intangible cultural artifact—something that is preserved through individual bodies in order for Montserrat as a collectivity to assert its national identity. Some audience members may appear to suffer from masquerade fatigue, but when members of the older generations who have pre-volcano memories are asked about it, it is clear that the dance is still relevant, entertaining, and highly valued. As a "scriptive thing"[13] (Bernstein 2009), the whip not only "invites" masqueraders to dance, but it also prompts performers and spectators alike to remember the island's history and to reconsider a narrative that shapes the community's understanding of itself over time. The importance of disguise and rites of reversal has diminished and the aggression in the dance has been tamed, and the masks, costumes, and whip cracks are merely representative of that past. The

[13] In her article "Dances with Things: Material Culture and the Performance of Race," Bernstein describes a "scriptive thing" as an object that comes with a script, or a culturally implicit understanding of what is to be done with that thing. She says, "An object becomes a thing when it invites a person to dance" (2009, 67–94).

effect is an entertaining and compelling spectacle that contributes to Montserrat's national, postcolonial, and post-volcano identity formation at this crucial juncture in its history.

Masking, unmasking, and pappyshowing

The question that proponents of the masquerade dance today must address is: How must dancers today and in the future balance tradition and innovation so that the masquerades remain relevant to the community? In her St. Patrick's Festival lecture, Dr. Vernie Clarice Barnes repeatedly showed a photograph of a Montserratian man dressed in a leprechaun costume for St. Patrick's Day. Each time she showed him, she asked the audience to ponder and re-ponder whether the example signified a desire to be "Other" (i.e., white or Irish) or if it was a demonstration of "anansification," or artful mimicry. Anansification refers to Anansi, the trickster figure of African folklore and is defined as a sort of "signifyin'"—Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s term for tricky wordplay, or using metaphorical, ironic, or teasing tropes like "doing the dozens" or "your mama" jokes (1988). These linguistic tropes are related to the idea of utilizing "hidden transcripts" (Scott 1990) as a means of subversive disguise,[14] and anansification is a similar, but non-verbal and embodied, performance of mockery in order to get "one over" another.[15] Barnes suggested that "pappyshowing," or

[14] James C. Scott's describes techniques in the subversive arts of political disguise as "disguising the message" and "disguising the messenger." In the former, the actor is identifiable but the message is ambiguous or cryptic; in the latter, the identity of the actor is masked or concealed, but the message is clearly threatening or confrontational. When anonymity is impossible, one may resort to other linguistic strategies such as euphemisms, grumbling, or sarcasm as a means of "disguising the message" (1990, 138-156).

[15] Another example of an embodied form of resistance is the Afro-Brazilian martial art of *capoeira*, described as a fight disguised as a dance and developed by slaves in Brazil as early as the sixteenth century. The notion of *malandragem* relates to the ostensibly friendly trickery that *capoeiristas* use to

mocking, the Irish—whether through a parody of "Irish polkas" by slaves in creation of the masquerade Heel and Toe step or by dressing up in leprechaun disguise on St. Patrick's Day—has been a coping strategy for Africans on Montserrat since the 1768 St. Patrick's Day rebellion.

Barnes recognized the value of this coping strategy to a point, but she was concerned that the tactic may mask as-yet undiscovered aspects of community identity as the island enters a new phase of postcolonial and post-volcano redevelopment. One reviewer of the lecture asked an important question in the article "Masquerading, Pappyshowing and Memory" in *Discover Montserrat* the following day (March 13, 2015): "Is Montserrat a nation which continues to wear masks rather than confront the system which has caused us to desire to identify with our Irish slave masters rather than our African ancestors?" The question suggested that Montserratians could continue to hide behind masks—masks of Irishness, perhaps—and surrender themselves to the masquerade rhythm. The concern was that doing so would inhibit the development of national confidence for a community that identifies today more with contemporary Afro-Caribbean culture than with a colonial Irish past.

I respond to Barnes' reviewer that wearing masks is not necessarily incompatible with "confronting the system." I have described how masked performance can provide moments of agency to victimized bodies, and now I demonstrate how the masquerading trope of pappyshowing can provide innovative opportunities beyond the traditional structures of masquerade performance for bold

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deceive and attack an opponent. For example, see Barbara Browning's *Samba: Resistance in Motion* (2008), Lewis Lowell's *Ring of Liberation: Deception Discourse in Brazilian Capoeira* (1992), and Maya Talmon-Chvaicer's *The Hidden History of Capoeira: A Collision of Cultures in the Brazilian Battle Dance* (2008).

satire and assertions of power. The masquerades provide an opportunity for the Montserratian community to perform the struggle to negotiate the island's history given its current circumstances. As anthropologist Michael Taussig says, mimesis "provides a welcome opportunity to live subjunctively as neither subject nor object of history but as both, at one and the same time" (1993, 255); it furnishes "the power of the copy to influence what it is a copy of" (1993, 250). Montserratians can dance the Heel and Toe and dress up as leprechauns, but so in doing, they have the subjective potential to influence how their performances are interpreted.

Masked performance is not only a passive means of attaining a sense of agency in a safe space, but it can constitute real social transformation through powerful public statements arising from subtle artistic and political manipulations (Aching 2002). That is, it is possible to address the serious history of the masquerade dance, and the sensitive questions it raises about power and identity, through seemingly harmless comedy and entertainment. Embedded in the masquerade tradition is the ability to perform with ambiguous intentions and produce ambivalent interpretations. This ability contributes to the "chaotic plurality" involved in the formation of multiple identities that is crucial to postcolonial subject formation—Achille Mbembe describes how such a representational system is never fixed so that the subject engages in practices that are ambiguous and flexible, even when those practices are governed by rules (1992). In Montserrat's masquerades, these rules are the choreographic structures of the dance, and the multivocality embedded in the tradition allows performers to safely express multiple personas and attitudes through the dance at different times and to diverse audiences, who can interpret these performances in

many different ways.

The problem with the "fatigued" masquerades today, as I see it, is that there is little to compare them to on this dispersed and isolated island. There are few dancers remaining on the island, there are no competing troupes, and there are few opportunities to interact with masqueraders from other islands in the West Indies because of difficult access to and from Montserrat. If the masquerades are all about parody, pappyshowing, and assertions of agency through role reversals/manipulations, then it will be difficult to assert power or authority over someone/something, or compete for mastery of skills, when that someone/something is undefined, absent, or misplaced. Cultural identity formation and national distinction comes from experiences of difference, or encounters of the familiar with the foreign or unfamiliar—a theme that runs throughout this dissertation.

I expand on these theoretical concepts with ethnographic examples from the performances of Montserratian radio personality and masquerade dancer Basil Chambers. Chambers is a performer who embodies the concepts of multivocality, pappyshowing, and anansification—all tropes which are said to be central to masquerading, but none of which I saw at performances by the Emerald Shamioles or Ladies of Alliouagana. As a modern-day master of verbal trickery, Chambers, in his work as both a local radio host and a masquerade dancer, exhibits a playfulness and wittiness in his performances that illustrates the continued relevance of the tradition in contemporary Montserratian society. Chambers incorporates age-old paradigms of humor, parody, irony, and other improvisational performance tactics in order to address the modern needs and tastes of Montserrat's diverse audiences. He refers

back to Montserrat's history and reminds spectators what is at stake if that history is forgotten. In these final examples, I demonstrate how Chambers improvises within the constraints of the dance's eight-part choreographic structure and creates ambiguous meanings that allow for multiple interpretations by various audience members—whether local or emigrant Montserratian, ex-pat, or visiting tourist.

I have explained how the whip has sometimes provoked violent behaviors in the masquerade dance in the past, but, as Chambers demonstrated in the middle of an Emerald Shamioles performance on New Year's Day in 2014, its bite can also have a fun and humorous connotation.[16] The Emerald Shamioles performed at the Festival Day variety show, and Chambers (the pseudonym of "Krismuss" during that year's Festival) was the emcee, with the responsibility of keeping the mood festive and fun. He was dressed in a flamboyant masquerade-adjacent costume made of tinsel, red and green plaid trousers, a feather warrior headdress, and Hawaiian lei, and he was simultaneously moderator, performer, and commentator. In the masquerade performance, Titus used his whip to send the boys scurrying to collect coins thrown on stage by spectators during the Road March dance. The crack of the whip was startling and Chambers jumped back in mock surprise. He followed with a comedic parody of the basic masquerade step as he danced alongside masquerade master, Titus (see http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-emerald-shamioles-masquerade-troupe-at-festival-51/, Video #4, time code 2:37-2:59). Chambers danced

[16] Gregory Bateson's theory of play examines the development of human communication and especially *metacommunication* to determine when "this is play" or "this is not play"—when something is a "nip" and when it is a "bite": "The playful nip denotes the bite, but it does not denote what would be denoted by the bite" (1972, 180). There is a hierarchy of meaningful structures in human communication and metacommunication, and, in a similar way, Clifford Geertz describes the difference between a "wink" and a "twitch" to explain how a wink is not only a physical action, but also a cultural gesture. Adding a parody to that wink is an act of ridicule that adds yet another layer of sociolinguistic construction to the action (1973, 3-32).

the steps with fluency, but his upper body language suggested a light mockery of the whip-yielding captain, and he took a few deep bows as Titus walked off stage, as if to indicate that the performance was his, he had won, and the stage was still his domain. As Krismuss, he "pappyshowed" his own dance abilities as he objectified Titus, using theatrical movements that were clearly informed by the masquerade style but were also humorously reminiscent of a magician controlling his subject. The audience laughed and clapped, as he effectively detracted from the serious history to which the masquerades allude in a performance of authority over the troupe's esteemed captain.

Chambers' satire was not antithetical to the masquerade dance—in fact, the multivocality that he demonstrated is central to the East Caribbean tradition, as I have discussed. On Montserrat, I rarely saw anyone interact with the masquerade dancers in such a boldly creative way because, as I have said, the dance is more often presented today as a national cultural artifact to gaze upon respectfully from afar than as a mutable and living community tradition to interact and interfere with. As a former masquerade dancer, Basil Chambers is well positioned to perform such satires because he knows the dance's traditional structures and he can perform the steps with confidence, but his work as a radio personality and emcee also prepare him to connect with his community with his quick thinking and improvisational wit. During my fieldwork, I noticed that Basil uses these masquerade tactics every time he is in the spotlight—he is not afraid to poke fun at anyone, if just for a laugh.

When I asked Basil about his contributions to the masquerades today, he denied that he is a comedian, but instead an entertainer who brings the pre-volcano "fierceness" back to the performance. He emphasized that the tradition is a very

serious ritual and he said that audiences today do not get to see the "real thing," such as the whippings and chasings of traditional masquerades. Chambers explained that he "pappyshows" himself when he is on stage for the purpose of making people happy, but I note that his performances also suggest an acute awareness of his audience and what they need to see in order to recognize the transformative value of the masquerades. The masquerades are not set in stone. His parodies and meta-parodies subtly remind spectators of the multiplicity of meanings embedded in the dance that circulate through narratives of the Montserratian community.



Figure 2.9. Titus and Basil dance masquerade on New Year's Day. Emerald Shamioles captain James "Titus" Frederick (left) and Basil "Krismuss" Chambers (right) dance masquerade at the New Year's Day festival performance at Festival City. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (January 1, 2014).

Zooming out to the wider frame of festival stage, I see Chambers' satirization as a recontextualization of the dance for the post-volcano community of Montserratian spectators, who now see the masquerades not so much as a vital performance of their enslaved history, as Donoghue described, but as a (perhaps tired) national tradition that is threatened with imminent extinction. Chambers makes the masquerades

relevant to a dislocated post-disaster community that now feels the stress of the volcanic displacement more acutely than the sting of the slave driver's whip. It is significant that Chambers, dressed in his own creative adaptation of a masquerade costume, added his own entertainment component to the New Year's performance, and through his mockery of Titus, he reminded the audience that the masquerades are about fierce satire and pappyshowing. He entertained all audience members—local and visiting Montserratians, ex-pats, and tourists—but it was local Montserratian adults who would have most fully understood his multi-layered performance as more than just comedy, because they had the historical and cultural context for it. This type of meta-satirical performance on the masquerades suggests why Donoghue's 2001 prediction of the tradition's eminent extinction has so far proven false. The masquerades are about people—live bodies that have creative, innovative, and sometimes subversive capabilities.



Figure 2.10. Basil dances the captain's role at Calabash Festival. Basil Chambers dons Titus' vest and wields his whip to temporarily take over the role of captain. He directs the young dancers and enacts a performance of authority that provides a contrast to Titus. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 18, 2014).

It is notable that Titus, as the troupe leader, actually allowed Chambers to reframe the masquerade dance in this parodic way during the 2014 New Year's Day performance. Chambers sometimes asks Titus if he can take over the role of captain temporarily (Figure 2.10), and the young boys follow his lead without question, but Titus indicated to me mixed feelings about Chambers' interferences. He said that he generally appreciates the help with organizing the dancers, but he also sometimes worries about the safety of the boys when Chambers gets too excited, cracks the whip too hard, and "tries to mash up de dance" (2015). The relationship between the two characters is significant because it demonstrates a sort of agreed-upon rivalry that is part of the masquerade tradition—and, to me, that tension is fun to watch. Whereas Titus promotes the dance through his teaching of the traditional structures of the masquerades to Montserrat's youth, Chambers disrupts the dance with his improvisations and satires so as to keep performances exciting, innovative, and relevant.

Improvisation, adaptability, and live commentary are critical elements in the masquerade aesthetic that give dancers the freedom to reinterpret the dance over time. The improvisational element allows performers like Chambers to play with the dance and instill new meaning in each performance, according to current circumstances. This is important in the transmission of the masquerades—besides Titus' focus on the crucial structures and techniques of the dance in workshops and rehearsals, Chambers contributes by setting an example in performance for how to innovate on the tradition. When the young dancers watch older masqueraders like Chambers experiment with the tradition, they are also exposed to how they themselves might also someday tweak

the tradition to suit their own purposes by inserting their own humor or parody into the act. They see that they have the opportunity to both follow and resist the masquerade dance script, and they can achieve agency through their own creativity and improvisations on this historical paradigm.

A modern-day parody of Irish dance

I conclude this chapter with a short vignette that prompts a consideration of how Irishness is incorporated into the bigger picture of masquerading on Montserrat today. I have not yet addressed the claim made by Messenger (1967) and so many others, as part of the oft-repeated national masquerade script that initially drew me to Montserrat, that the Heel and Toe Polka step comes from Irish dance. In Chapter 4, I break down the nuts and bolts of basic masquerade steps *vis-à-vis* their Irish counterparts to analyze that claim from the perspective of a movement analyst, but here I describe my experience of a modern-day parody of Irish dance that follows the theme of pappyshowing described in the previous section. The experience made me reflect on the power of "masquerading" tropes to recontextualize and repurpose the tradition at a contemporary festival event.

As I have described, it is part of Basil Chambers' job, as a radio personality, local celebrity, and popular emcee at national events, to be keenly aware of his audience and community. I myself fell victim to his satirical wizardry while he was hosting the St. Patrick's Day Slave Feast celebration in 2015. I had been invited by the St. Patrick's Festival committee to perform a short Irish dance on stage, and after my performance, Chambers picked some local faces out of the crowd to have a go at

Irish dancing. Among them was Kulcha Don, who, in everyday street clothes, impressed the crowd with his high jumps and fast footwork. While my solo dance was politely received with quiet applause, Kulcha Don's ensuing performance brought down the house. While on stage, I clapped along happily and laughed at the performance, but later, I realized that his performance was not only a Montserratian attempt at Irish dancing, but also a fun and light-hearted Montserratian *parody* of Irish dancing.



Figure 2.11. Irish dance performance on St. Patrick's Day. Basil Chambers (left, dressed in shamrock trousers) invites local Montserratians, including masquerade dancer Kulcha Don (in red trousers), from the crowd to imitate Kate Spanos' (right) Irish dance performance at the 2015 St. Patrick's Festival Slave Feast. The other dancer is Gary Morton from Montserrat and the fiddler is Andreas Tholl, visiting Montserrat for the first time from Denmark. The Montserratian dancers sport Irish-inspired leprechaun hats and I don a headband in the Montserratian national dress pattern—an interesting reversal of cultural headwear. Photograph by Pablo Regis de Oliveira (March 17, 2015).

Why did Basil use this strategy on me? He used a traditional paradigm that has worked time and time again, but he recontextualized it to fit the particularities of current circumstances. Certainly it was a fun and entertaining way to structure the day's events, but Chambers' strategy could be construed as an updated version of mocking the Irish. Hand-picking local Montserratians to one-up the performance of this Irish American visitor may be more relevant to audiences today than an outdated mimicking of eighteenth-century Irish slave masters. Did this represent the "desire to identify with Irish slave masters" that Dr. Barnes' reviewer was concerned about, or was it more about taking ownership over my performance of Irishness on a Montserratian stage? I would not go so far as to say that my jig was an intrusive "threat" to the Montserratian version of St. Patrick's Day, but I certainly felt like a foreigner who was put in her place. As an Irish American dancing Irish steps, I represented a sense of Irishness that some Montserratians are uncertain or ambivalent about. Basil knew this, and by inviting my imitators on stage, he created the stage for a Montserratian interpretation and manipulation of that foreign sense of Irishness. He achieved his goal of entertaining his audience, but, in the tradition of expressing multiple voices and perceptions through masquerading, he also made an important point for those aware of the complex historical debates about Irish influences on Montserratian culture.

Repeating the script that the masquerade dance has Irish elements is part of Akenson's concern about Montserrat's "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). It is an origin story that is almost impossible to verify as fact by historical records, but the point is that such repetition is a strategy to deal with uncertainties,

ambivalent attitudes, and questions of authority. The parody trope imbues masquerade practitioners with power and agency over their situation, whether it is in the masquerade dance itself or in another social situation entirely. A modern-day parody of Irish dance in street clothes makes perfect sense—no one gets hurt, everyone laughs, but it makes a powerful statement about what is and what is not Montserratian.

The improvisational nature embedded in the external structures of the masquerades means that dancers can integrate a diversity of people and circumstances into the traditional script and, in so doing, contribute to the continued development of Montserrat's archive. The dance itself is a form of archive, as I have demonstrated in this chapter, but masquerade performances and the strategies that they produce also play a role in the archival process that takes place at the annual festivals, when the island community documents and negotiates contemporary issues and concerns. In the next chapter, I discuss how annual festival activities play a key role in the process of establishing a reliable calendar of events that brings people back home, joins diverse audiences, and engages the community in dialogues and debates about cultural identities on the island.

Chapter 3:

Montserrat's Annual Festival Calendar: Negotiations of Identity Through Musical Dialogues and Debates

> "You are a wonderful audience. And I know that a lot of you are judging. That's what I like about it. Remember that the judges' decision is final. But at the end of the day, we can quarrel, argue, fight about it. Because we can! And then we move on. Because life moves on. Okay? So when the competition done, let's have a fierce fight about it. Who you think win, who you think can win. And then after that, we go to the bar, have a drink, go on."
>
> —Basil Chambers, emcee, 2013 Calypso Monarch finals, Montserrat

Creating an annual festival calendar is important for Montserratians to exhibit their island's national identity, as well as the multiple cultural identities that are embedded within the community. Established annual festivals contribute to the production of an archive of community issues and also demonstrate Montserrat's resiliency to persevere, as a collective, through the many challenges the island has faced. Even in the midst of the worst of the volcanic activity in 1997, Montserratians still organized their annual Christmas Festival—the festival was small, but the important thing was that it happened. The celebrations provided an outlet from the stresses of the volcano, and calypso songs performed in that year's competition reflected shared community concerns about the recent damages and evacuations (Buffonge 1999).

Even though many Montserratians left the island during the worst two years of crisis from 1995-1997, some also came back during this same time period—there has always been a constant coming and going as the community has dealt with the flux of

dislocation. Today, the annual festival cycle keeps Montserratians coming back to reconnect with their homeland and community, even if their houses were destroyed. Besides the parties and family reunions, festivals on Montserrat provide a way to commemorate the villages and material possessions that were lost, through visible, audible, and tangible displays of culture. These performances evoke memories of pre-volcano life and create a forum for negotiating post-volcano identities.

Festivals provide opportunities throughout the year for Montserratians to discuss and debate how they are represented locally, regionally, and globally through cultural performance. As I demonstrate in this chapter, some performances are explicit on-stage commentaries related to social or political issues, whereas other performances prompt pre- and post-show conversations on the radio, on social media, and throughout the island community about issues of identity, authenticity, and representation. In the previous chapter, I laid out the important role of masquerade dancers as performers of Montserrat's historical archive, as well as the masquerading tropes that ensure the continued relevance of the tradition, and it is crucial to remember that masqueraders are a central feature at every festival on the island. The "hot" dances of the masquerades contribute to the "hot" nationalism (Billig 1995) of the festivals, especially Christmas and St. Patrick's Festivals. Masquerades are a form of archive, present at every festival, and the ongoing process of establishing and maintaining a festival cycle ensures a continual archiving for Montserrat. The improvisational element embedded in the masquerade structure is also evident in the festival calendar, as the cycle necessarily adapts as island circumstances change. Masquerade performances and other annual events such as the Calypso Monarch

competition contribute to that active archival process which, in turn, contributes to the island's ever-developing cultural identity as years pass.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how the festivals are especially contested and indicative of the island's strategies for dealing with trauma, the pains of migration, and questions of identity. The basic premise behind festival is that it is a time for Montserratians to narrate the stories that bring the community together. Radio personality Rose Willock explained that festivals are essentially about making people happy—they are in keeping with the local "maroon"[1] tradition of volunteerism and working together as a community to produce joyous celebration. She said that people come home from the U.K., U.S., and other parts of the diaspora to re-experience these stories during the festivals (emphasis mine):

> The ones from here, they come back because where they are now—they don't have it. And this is where the culture comes in. You come back to roots! You come back to regain your culture, to regain your roots, or whatever. You touch base, and to remind you again that *in the place where I come from*, I can still know that *at a certain time of year*, I can still enjoy St. Patrick's, and we can enjoy the success of our freedom fighters initially who tried to fight our way to freedom (March 19, 2015, interview with author, St. Peter's, Montserrat).

Willock's comment alludes to a utopian sense of "imagined community" (Anderson 1983)—the idea that a "nation" is formed through a kind of "unisonance" that arises from a synchronicity of time across the community. In this case, the notion of "imagined community" suggests that Montserratians both on the island and in the

[1] "Maroon" communities in the Caribbean refer to runaway slaves who formed communities and survived independently. The traditions that stem from these communities during the slavery era have persisted in some island mentalities throughout the Caribbean, including Jamaica, Haiti ("marron" or "mawon"), Dominica, and Montserrat. For more the maroon mentality on Montserrat, see Lydia M. Pulsipher's "Our Maroon in the Now-Lost Landscapes of Montserrat" (2001).

diaspora simultaneously experience the same sense of Montserratianness, rooted in the homeland, where they must return to re-experience it at the festivals.

Rose's comment is certainly part of the festival experience, but what is missing is the idea that such cultural narratives mean something different to different members of the community, who frequently disagree about the origin stories of these roots and how they are told. Gracelyn Cassell's opening quote from Chapter 1 about the value of "shared memories" when archives are lost is an important point, but it is also important to consider what happens when memories clash or when pieces are forgotten over time. Homi Bhabha points out in *Nation and Narration* that although a nation's narrative develops through repetition, this process necessarily involves cultural difference and "iterative forgetting" (1990, 291-321). In contrast to Anderson's theory of imagined communities, which is suggestive of a nation that exists within homogeneous and simultaneous empty time, García Canclini argues that a nation arises out of its "multitemporal heterogeneity." That is, the nation is a hybrid culture that develops as certain events create "breaks" that disrupt the continuity of the community over time and space (1995).[2] Narratives are lived and performed by bodies at a particular place and time, and what is lost or forgotten over time is as important as what is remembered. The national narratives that are performed during festivals are not monolithic texts, but are "dialogical and even polyphonic" producers of culture that shift traditional boundaries (Guss 2000, 10).

[2] In *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (1986), Partha Chatterjee suggests an alternative nationalist framework to Anderson's modular notion of "imagined communities" for non-Western, third world, and/or postcolonial nations. He proposes a Marxist/Gramscian dialectic, comprised of a "problematic" and a "thematic," that complicates colonial discourse and subverts the authority of the political and intellectual framework of modernity.

The dislocation caused by the volcanic crisis is perhaps the most recent significant "break" that has forced Montserratians to reconsider the meaning of festivals in what it means to be Montserratian. Before the volcano, festival activities traditionally took place in specific towns and villages on the island, such as Plymouth or St. Patrick's Village, which are now buried in the Exclusion Zone (like the masquerade competitions, as described in the previous chapter). In her studies of performance and ecology on Montserrat, Kathleen Gough explains how, since the volcanic crisis, places and landmarks have become mnemonic devices in Montserrat's "postmodern landscape." She argues that festivals on Montserrat provide a space and time for reassembling the cultural memory of a dispersed community: "Every year brings a succession of new performances reassembled out of old fragments" (2012, 110). This chapter addresses how the villages that are now inaccessible have become imbued with memories and are tied to nostalgic notions of home and origins, and how decisions about where a festival event should take place are highly debated.

Gough's postmodern interpretation addresses the repetitive nature of a festival cycle, and I am also concerned with the personal experiences and contributions of individuals within the local community who perform at and participate in the island's annual festivals. How do festivals provide a positive and flexible space that is subject to multiple interpretations by diverse audiences? Festival reassembles the fragments of Montserrat's collective past, yes, but like any rewriting of history, that assemblage in scholarly literature often represents and often glosses over conflicting identities and personal values. Is it ever really possible for the community to become wholly harmonious or renewed as a result of festival? Most literature about theories of

carnival focuses on how festivals unite a collectivity or create *communitas* (Turner 1986), in line with Rose's comment about finding one's roots at the island's local festivals. And this is certainly the case for Montserrat—in its overall public form, festivalgoers comment on the powerful unifying experience of festival. But individuals also wholly experience and negotiate their own identities and personal contradictions within the context of the larger community, and in this small community, their voices are easily heard and their disputes are easily circulated.

In this chapter, I focus on the instances when the festival performances do not quite fit the national image or national narrative. I am interested in when they stir up contradictions and controversies, when there is a break in the cycle, when the usual rhythms of festival are interrupted, when the notion of "Montserratianness" is questioned, disrupted, or uprooted in heated debates. I report on the individuals that I spoke to and interacted with during the particular place and time of my fieldwork, and it is these voices and these bodies that shape my own understanding of Montserrat's festivals and the dialogues surrounding them.

Bacchanal time in the West Indies

Before I delve deeper into festivals on Montserrat in particular, I must discuss why festivals in general are so important throughout the West Indies region of the Caribbean.[3] Festivals and carnivals symbolize the cultural profile of an island and, taken as a whole, they reflect the wide diversity of island cultures present in the

[3] Today, the West Indies region refers to the Bahamas, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and the Leeward Islands (from Puerto Rico south to Dominica, including Montserrat) and the Windward Islands (from Dominica south to Grenada). Each island has its own festival cycle that contributes to national, cultural, and economic development.

region. There is no clear distinction between the words "festival" and "carnival"—the words can be used interchangeably at times—but festivals generally take place around Christmas and New Year's, and carnivals around Lent. In addition to Christmas and Lenten celebrations, Muslim Hosay celebrations also take place on some islands during the month of Muharram (the first month of the Islamic calendar). There are a number of Caribbean festivals that are based in Hindu or Muslim religions, such as Phagwa (or Holi), Diwali, and Eid-Ul-Fitr in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Suriname. Other festivals are focused specifically on music, such as the jazz festivals of St. Lucia and Barbados, and the reggae festivals of Jamaica (Nunley and Bettelheim 1988). On many islands in the West Indies, festivals are organized around the Christian calendar as a result of European colonization—some take place ahead of Lent (the period before Easter), such as Trinidad's famous Carnival, while other islands' festival celebrations take place around Christmastime (such as Jamaica's Jonkonnu festival or Montserrat's Christmas Festival). Despite this historical association with religion, however, today's Caribbean festival events themselves tend to be more secular in nature, though religious concerns certainly come into play during the parties and celebrations, as I describe later in this chapter.

The carnival period in the West Indies is often described as "bacchanal time," deriving from Bacchus (the Roman god of wine), and it is an opportunity to "jump up," "mash up de place," and "wine" (i.e., wind your waist, a sexually provocative dance similar to "twerking"). To "play mas" means to parade exuberantly in feathery, glittery, and often-scanty costumes that feature mosaic, collage, patchwork, and high-contrast patterns. Masquerade dances are also popular and they feature a cast of

characters specific to each island, such as Pitchy Patchy, Mocko Jumbie, John Bull, stilt dancers, "fancy dress" characters, and animal disguises such as bulls, bears, and donkeys (Nicholls 2012). As I discussed in the previous chapter, dressing up in mas and masquerade costumes provides participants with an opportunity for role reversal—to perform a particular social status (often not their own) and the contrast between different social classes, genders, or ethnicities. Other common features among festivals of the West Indies are competitions in the popular Afro-Caribbean genre of calypso, in which performers take to the stage armed with lyrics that are poignant social commentaries. Musical events include competitions in steel pan, an instrument that originated in Trinidadian ghettoes and spread throughout the region, and high-energy "jump ups," or soca (or "soul calypso") street parties.

Festivals in general provide opportunities for economic development through cultural entrepreneurship—local communities can express and capitalize on their hybrid cultures, which are often a mix of African, European, East Indian, and indigenous influences. Islands throughout the West Indies include annual festivals as core parts of their economic, cultural, and educational development plans. Festival arts play an important role in the economic development of local islands and the West Indies region in general, and studies of festivals and the cultural tourism that they attract can inform public policy, educational initiatives, or be utilized for political independence movements (Nunley and Bettelheim 1988). The events create jobs and, as local, regional, and global tourist attractions, they provide income distribution and foreign exchange. Festival arts also provide opportunities for children and young adults to apprentice under musicians, dancers, artisans, and other craftspeople, and

they are meant to be enjoyable ways of involving the community in cultural development ("The Social and Economic Impact of Carnival" 1983). Sir Howard Fergus argues that, in line with other analyses of Caribbean festivals, Montserrat's festivals and arts are an important part of the island's redevelopment, and he says that niche markets such as music tourism and nature tourism are valuable commodities that the local government should recognize and financially support (2012, 123-127).

Festivals as a whole contribute to a sense of regional unity in the West Indies, or the notion that "all a we is one," as they say on the islands. At the conference called "The Social and Economic Impact of Carnival," held at the University of the West Indies in St. Augustine in Trinidad in 1983, speakers used terms like "dynamic multi-ethnicity" and "plurogeneous," "multi-cultural," "multi-racial," and "harmonious" to describe carnival.[4] But despite the emphasis on harmony and community in some interpretations of festival, it is important to keep in mind that different festivals represent different meanings for different social groups and, ultimately, for different individuals. Carnival creates a period of public discourse, which is playful and can even sometimes be subversive, though rarely revolutionary: "Carnivalesque discourse challenges official discourse but does not become its replacement" (Alonso 1990, 188). In the following sections, I describe how

[4] Islands usually organize their own local festivals, but periodically a multi-island event called Caribbean Festival of Arts (CARIFESTA) is organized in order to gather together artists, musicians, and dancers from across the Caribbean and Latin America. The first CARIFESTA took place in Guyana in 1972 and its original goals were to: (1) inspire artists to create; (2) stimulate regional identity and cultural development; (3) educate Caribbean communities about neighboring cultures; and (4) celebrate the ethnic and racial diversity of the Caribbean. Events included drama, music, dance, visual art, crafts, folklore, literature and storytelling, and educational exhibitions. Subsequent CARIFESTA hosts have included Jamaica, Cuba, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, and the Bahamas. Montserrat is too small (in terms of square mileage, population, and infrastructural capabilities) to host such a large regional event; St. Kitts & Nevis is the smallest island to host CARIFESTA (in 2000).

Montserrat's festivals follow a cyclical annual structure through which dialogues arise in different ways and to varying extents. How does Montserrat differentiate itself from its neighbors through its festivals? Is the sentiment "all a we is one" felt all the time? What is the impact of challenges to official national narratives? When are public expressions of collectivity disrupted by private individual experiences and interpretations during festival events?

Montserrat's festival cycle

Before I get into the debates that arise during Montserrat's festivals, I need to present an overview of the annual cycle and where each festival fits into the larger picture. Table 3.1 shows the Montserrat Tourist Board's 2014 calendar, with details about when and where each festival started and took place in 2014, and a list of typical activities during each. I focus my ethnographic research on Montserrat's two largest festivals: Christmas Festival in December and St. Patrick's Festival in March, which includes the short-lived African Music Festival (2013-2014). I have chosen to analyze these festivals because of the ways that the performances relate to this dissertation's themes about foreign versus local representations and about place and materiality. These festivals are well-established annual traditions, with the exception of the African Music Festival, which I expected to take hold on the island, but did not, as I explain later in this chapter. Montserrat's other festivals have influenced my overall understanding of the island's annual festival cycle but they are not discussed in great detail. These include: the Calabash Festival in July, Cudjoe Head Festival on Emancipation Day in August, and the Alliouagana Festival of the Word in November.

Table 3.1. Montserrat's festival calendar in 2014			
Title	**When/where**	**Official start**	**Activities**
Christmas Festival	Early to mid-December until January 1st Festival City, Little Bay	1962 in Plymouth	"Jump ups" and street parades Calypso and Soca Monarch competitions Community reggae, string, and steel band concerts; caroling Masquerade dance performances; mas costume competitions
St. Patrick's Festival	7-10 days leading up to St. Patrick's Day, March 17th Primarily Salem Village	1972 at Montserrat Secondary School, Plymouth; 1984 in St. Patrick's Village	Freedom Run and Freedom Hike Dr. George Irish Lecture Series Junior Calypso competition Rhythm Night (string bands, steel pan, masquerades) St. Patrick's Catholic Dinner Rum Tour St. Patrick's Day Parade, Showcase, and Slave Feast National Awards Ceremony (first in 2014)
African Music Festival	Last weekend before St. Patrick's Salem Village	2013 (cancelled in 2015)	Primary school workshops with visiting African bands Performances by visiting African bands and local calypso/reggae artists
Calabash Festival	One week in mid-July Primarily Brades and Little Bay	2006	Grand Food Festival (local foods, arts, crafts; masquerades) Music By the Bay (calypso/soca/reggae, string band, and steel pan) "Jog and Stroll" and nature hike Dr. George Irish Lecture Series
Cudjoe Head Festival	August 1st (Emancipation Day) Cudjoe Head Village	1989	Calypso/soca/reggae, string band, steel pan, and masquerade performances Bike and road race
Alliouagana Festival of the Word	One weekend in late November or early December Primarily Little Bay	2009	Art, writing, and music workshops; short story competition Lectures/readings by local and visiting scholars on a conference theme Nature hike; hosted tours of National Trust and National Museum

The estimated attendance and budget of each festival gives a sense of the scale of Montserrat's festivals.[5] Table 3.2 presents a summary of estimated budgets, visitor numbers, and visitor expenditure for Montserrat's larger/longer festivals—Christmas Festival, St. Patrick's Festival, African Music Festival, and Calabash Festival. The budget information included in Table 3.2 for each of the larger festivals has been pieced together through data provided by committee members and presented in newspaper articles. The amount of public government funding for the three largest festivals is often indicative of the perceived importance of those festivals as part of the island's cultural development initiatives. But sometimes a "smaller" festival may receive as much, if not more, funding as a larger festival due to donations and sponsorships from the private sector, which indicates how much people in Montserrat's local and diaspora communities also value and support the smaller or less established annual festivals. External grants also support the festivals, but organizers must apply for them each year, and the challenge is to maintain the same or higher level of planning and activity each year without stable and reliable funding sources from year to year.[6]

[5] It was difficult to obtain official budget information from some festival committees. Sometimes I received no response to requests for information, or the data that I did receive were incomplete or unclear. The data presented here have been adapted from a variety of sources and are meant to provide an idea of estimated scale, not exact numbers.

[6] The Calabash Festival and the Alliouagana Festival of the Word were launched with sizable start-up grants from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the British Department for International Development (DFID), respectively. The Calabash Festival received a grant from OECS for private sector development in its first year (Florence Griffith, May 13, 2014, Brades, Montserrat, personal communication), and the Festival of the Word received EC$100K from the Tourism Challenge grant sponsored by DFID and the Government of Montserrat (Gracelyn Cassell, September 8, 2015, e-mail message to author).

Table 3.2. Festival budgets and attendance in 2014			
Festival	**Estimated Budget**	**Estimated Visitors**	**Estimated Visitor Expenditure**
Christmas Festival	EC$240K from DOC + donations/sponsorships EC$642K spent	2,076 visitors in December 136% higher than average month ~300-600 at each large event	EC$4.5M in Dec., 20% of total annual 144% higher than average month in 2014
St. Patrick's Festival	EC$10K from DOC + donations/sponsorships (Expenditure data unavailable)	1,163 visitors in March 32% higher than average month ~100-300 at each large event	EC$3.2M in Mar., 14% of total annual 74% higher than average month in 2014
African Music Festival	EC$50K from MDC, EC$270K from MTB + EC$50K donations/sponsorships EC$185K spent	(Same visitor data as St. Patrick's) ~600 attended one-night event	(Same visitor data as St. Patrick's)
Calabash Festival	EC$5K from DOC + donations/sponsorships (Expenditure data unavailable)	856 visitors in July 3% lower than average month ~150 at each large event	EC$1.6M in July, 7% of total annual 16% lower than average month in 2014
Alliouagana Festival of the Word	EC$10K from DOC + EC$12.5K donations/sponsorships EC$10K budgeted, EC$22.5K spent	856 visitors in July 3% lower than average month ~150 at each large event	EC$1.6M in July, 7% of total annual 16% lower than average month in 2014

Table 3.2. Festival budgets and attendance in 2014. This table shows the estimated budgets and visitor statistics for Montserrat's Christmas Festival in December, St. Patrick's Festival and African Music Festival (both at the same time in March), Calabash Festival in July, and Alliouagana Festival of the Word in November. Christmas Festival receives the most local funding and brings in the most visitors—primarily Montserratian emigrants living in the U.K. and U.S. and returning home for the holidays. The St. Patrick's Festival is the second largest and has focused in recent years on attracting tourists from the U.K., U.S., and Ireland. In addition to a small amount of government funding, each festival relies heavily on sponsorships and donations from local businesses and community members. (Abbreviations and sources listed on the following page.)

Table 3.2 data are adapted from the following sources:

- Estimated festival visitors and expenditures adapted from monthly visitor count and expenditure data provided by the Montserrat Governor's Office (September 14, 2015, e-mail message to author). See also Appendix, Table A.D.1 and Diagrams A.D.1 and A.D.2.
- Event attendance numbers estimated from personal observation and local polls.
- Christmas Festival budget and expenditure data from *Discover Montserrat* online newspaper ("Montserrat Annual Festival racks up more than $600,000 in bills" 2015).
- St. Patrick's Festival budget data estimated from conversations with festival committee members; repeated requests for official budget and expenditure details from the St. Patrick's Festival committee received no response.
- African Music Festival budget and expenditure data provided to the author by Kato Kimbugwe at the 2014 African Music Festival committee debrief meeting (April 9, 2014, Brades Government Headquarters, Montserrat).
- Calabash Festival budget data provided to the author by festival organizer Florence Griffith (May 4, 2014, Brades, Montserrat, personal communication); requests for expenditure data received no response.
- Alliouagana Festival of the Word budget and expenditure data provided to the author by festival organizer Gracelyn Cassell (September 8, 2015, e-mail message to author).

Abbreviations:

DOC = Division of Culture (Government of Montserrat)
MTB = Montserrat Tourist Board (Government of Montserrat)
MDC = Montserrat Development Company (Government of Montserrat and DFID)
DFID = Department for International Development (U.K.)

Exchange rate (2014): EC$1.00 ~ US$0.37; EC$1,000 ~ US$370

I received documentation of monthly visitor counts and expenditure for the years 2011-2015 from the Governor's Office on Montserrat. I found that Christmas Festival and St. Patrick's Festival make a significant difference in visitor numbers in December and March, but other smaller festivals do not attract significantly more visitors than the average month.[7] Visitor expenditure is a major data point of interest since festivals are ultimately about tourism and attracting visitors to spend money on accommodations, restaurants, and vehicle rentals on the island.[8] Visitor counts also provide important data, but sometimes what is more important for smaller festivals than the number itself is the value of the visitors who come to the island through "good will." For example, Gracelyn Cassell explained that there are three people who own homes on Montserrat and return each year for the Alliouagana Festival of the Word, bringing a handful of friends each time (September 8, 2015, e-mail message to author). The expenditure and publicity gained from even one new visiting couple on Montserrat is considered highly valuable, especially during the smaller festivals when island activity is low.

Many of the activities that were included on the schedule in 2014 (Table 3.1) are annual traditions that persist from year to year and are priorities in terms of budgeting for festival events. Montserratians, both living on the island and coming home from abroad, would miss these central events if they were removed from the

[7] Although I obtained monthly visitor data, I did not find records of participation numbers at each of the festival events and activities. Many events are not ticketed, and often no such data are recorded. In addition, festival audiences are fleeting and fluid as they move in and out of festival spaces—they wander in for an hour or are only on the island for a day. I have estimated the participation scale of each festival based on requests for attendance estimates from community members and based on my own observations.

[8] There are few opportunities to spend money on Montserrat besides food, lodging, and transportation (all very expensive for tourists). The island has a couple of souvenir shops (at the National Trust and near the airport), but there are few other shopping locations that attract foreign visitors.

schedule. For example, what is Christmas Festival on Montserrat without the Calypso Monarch competition? What is St. Patrick's Festival without a Slave Feast commemoration on March 17th? What is any festival on Montserrat without masquerade dancing? And, most importantly, what is Montserrat without any festivals? These are the constants that are required to tell the story of Montserrat one year after the next.

Christmas Festival

I focus first on Montserrat's Christmas Festival (commonly referred to as "Festival") because it is the biggest, most established, best funded, and most confidently "Montserratian" festival. More than any other festival on the annual calendar, this one is about celebrating the island's established cultural identity, and there tend to be fewer debates about what the festival's official purpose should be. As a whole, it is, simply, to celebrate Christmas, to celebrate Montserratianness, and, as Rose Willock said, to make people happy. However, there are also plenty of opportunities for debate within particular events, especially when it comes to issues of cultural authenticity and other social or religious questions.

Christmas Festival is based on the Trinidadian model of Carnival, but on Montserrat it was moved from the pre-Easter Lenten period to Christmastime. Roman Catholic French settlers introduced carnival to Trinidad in 1785, and after emancipation in 1834, the holiday period became a time for recently freed Africans to gather in the streets to engage in revelry and parade in extravagant costumes. The Trinidadian model of festival arrived on Montserrat in 1962 when it was initiated by

the civic organization known as the Junior Chamber of Commerce (or Jaycees). Montserrat's Festival takes place from early to mid-December and continues until New Year's Day (Fergus 2012).

In its first decade, Montserrat's Christmas Festival was loosely organized on a family or small village level, but in 1970, Mary Tuitt, the First Lady Minister and Minister of Education at the time, pushed for a grander, more established, and more economically profitable annual Christmas Festival. Committees were formed so that planning out the calendar became more centralized and a portion of government funding went to a festival budget. However, the new approach still held on to the "spontaneity" of a community-based festival by supporting village-specific events, such as St. John's Day in the village of St. John's on December 27th. Festival chairman Cedric Osborne (serving from 1970-1986) executed Tuitt's ideas and managed committees of local volunteers to schedule events. Over the years, a number of local organizations have supported the festival with costume troupes and musical entertainment, such as Sunrise Productions, Bijoux Productions, the Volcanics Mas Movement, St. Augustine School, and the St. John's Action Club. Community groups such as the Rotaract Club, Youth Workers, and various church organizations also provide support. Today the festival has its own distinct history, traditions, and flavors that result from the creative contributions of local artists, musicians, designers, and organizers (Fergus 2012).



Figure 3.1. Miss Goosie on Boxing Day in 1967. Stilt character Miss Goosie performs on the Festival stage on Boxing Day (December 26th) in Sturge Park in Plymouth in 1967, before the volcano. She looked different then than she does now (see Figure 2.5, page 103)—taller, and with more of a masquerader-like costume with ribbons rather than the knitted wool shawl and cigarette-smoking doll's head that she has today. Photograph courtesy of Sally Doria.

A number of activities have persisted on the Christmas Festival schedule since the early years: the Calypso Monarch semi-finals and finals, the Queen Show (a "Miss Montserrat" beauty pageant), masquerade troupe performances (and competitions in pre-volcano years), the Jump Up/Street Parade, and Festival Day performances on December 31st. Larger events usually take place at what is referred to as "Festival Village" or "Festival City," which was originally located at Sturge Park in Plymouth and has now moved to the Little Bay playing field area in the north. A number of festival events also take place in other locations across the island. For example, traditional carol singing has always been a central part of Christmas Festival, and although the host village may change from year to year, the event is a

way to bring together the community from all over the island. Children of all ages act out the Nativity scene, professional and amateur musicians take to the stage to serenade the audience, and local community choirs such as the Emerald Community Singers and church groups sing carols and folk songs.

Festival Day on December 31st and New Year's Day on January 1st feature colorful floats, glittery costumes, pageantry, and prizes; steel bands, string bands, and masquerade drums playing local melodies and rhythms provide the festival soundtrack. Mas costume troupes compete for the best costume, which feature bright colors, feathers, beads, and, sometimes, national symbols such as the Montserrat flag or shamrocks. The festival culminates on New Year's Day, when the musical hits of the season are reprised on stage and a plethora of gifts and cash prizes are presented to the year's festival "royalty": the Calypso Monarch, Soca Monarch, Road March Monarch, Festival Queen, Miss Teenage Montserrat, and Festival Princess. January 1st is also the official "Jump Up" day, when festivalgoers take to the street and dance for hours behind a lorry blasting out soca music from huge speakers tied to the back. All of these activities contribute to the notion of "all a we is one"—the aforementioned motto that pervades throughout Montserrat and the West Indies.

As far as audience is concerned, the organizers and promoters of Montserrat's Christmas Festival are not only focused on entertaining locals and attracting foreign visitors to the island, rather, they are primarily focused on bringing Montserratian tourists back home for the holidays. Christmas is the time that Montserratians living abroad in the U.K. and North American diaspora reunite with friends and family at home. Bringing Montserratians back home is also important for showing those who

left the island how they are redeveloping and progressing in the wake of the volcanic crisis. For those who cannot afford to travel to Montserrat for the holidays, ZJB Radio becomes a platform for those who left to call in and wish family and friends a "Merry Christmas" and "Happy New Year."

Christmas is also the time when white ex-pats fleeing the cold months in the U.K. and U.S. travel to their winter homes on Montserrat starting around November or December, in time for the Festival kickoff. As I discussed in the Introduction, these "snowbirds" are not quite locals and not quite foreigners, as many of them have been living on the island for a few months of every year for as many as fifty years. Fergus noted that it is no coincidence that the establishment of Festival occurred around the same time as Montserrat's increase in resident tourism in the 1960s (also common throughout the West Indies—e.g., on Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, Antigua, and St. Lucia), so Festival has always been an important link between tourism, economics, and the cultural development of the island (2012, 125). While local support and international tourism are crucial, a successful Festival relies heavily on large numbers of Montserratian emigrants and snowbirds returning to the island for the holidays.

The number of visitors that come to the island for Festival indicates how cultural activities contribute to Montserrat's economic redevelopment goals and investment in future cultural development. As Sir Howard Fergus remarked, "Festival is not just about 'the boys and girls come out to play'; it is not just about mas and masquerade, it is about raw indigenous materials and investment" (2012, 124). Christmas is the most profitable time of year, as visitors spend money on restaurants, accommodations, and rental vehicles. The Government of Montserrat's Division of

Culture attributed a significant portion of the annual budget to Christmas Festival and additional funding came from local business sponsorships such as shops and supermarkets (Ashok's, Karishma, Ram's, etc.) and mobile providers (Lime and Digicel) whose advertisements circulated through online streaming, TV, radio, press releases, banners, and printed promotional materials. Bingo is also a very popular pastime on the island (where gambling is otherwise prohibited) that helps raise some funds for Festival each year. Money is needed to create promotional materials (flyers and radio ads), to construct the large festival stage and keep its lights on, to compensate performers and reward winners of competitions, and to create elaborate costumes out of expensive materials.



Figure 3.2. "Emerald Splendour" mas troupe on Festival Day. Members of the "Emerald Splendour" mas troupe (sponsored by Bijoux Productions) wave Montserrat flags and model their costumes on stage for Festival Day. Their outfits feature shamrocks, Montserrat island-shaped appliqués in the national madras dress pattern, and green, orange, and yellow feathered and beaded headdresses. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (December 31, 2013).

Calypso fever during Christmas Festival

In keeping with the Trinidadian carnival tradition, Montserrat's Festival involves various types of "masking" or "dressing up." In addition to the masquerade dances described in the previous chapter, festivalgoers can also participate as performers and/or spectators in mas costume parades, queen pageants, and calypso competitions. Traditionally, dressing up, or "playing mas," during carnival was a rite of reversal when African men and women became kings and queens for a period of time. Classic performance studies theorists have described carnival as a period of playful liminality that replaces traditional hierarchies with "multiframed anti-structures and spontaneous *communitas*" (Turner 1986, 124). In a similar way, Da Matta's structuralist model of Brazilian Carnival represents an inverted universe where public and private spheres converge and their boundaries are blurred. According to these theories, the result of such annual hierarchical inversions is renewal—the creation of something new until the cycle is repeated the following year.

In the small community of Montserrat today, Christmas Festival is more about creating a sense of *communitas* and maintaining traditions, and less about explicit class and role reversals. Fergus describes Christmas as "a season of goodwill, acquaintance, renewal and reinforcement of family ties" (2012, 133) that has grown out of a tradition of volunteerism and community. "Dressing up" is a communal activity that anyone—local, ex-pat, or even visiting tourist—can participate in, and, as I described in the previous chapter, masking today is apparently less about individual disguise and anonymity (as it was in the past) than it is about preserving

the traditions of this post-volcano community. However, precisely because Montserrat is so small, the focus on *communitas* does not mean that individual voices are silenced or personal expressions are suppressed. The stage is a place where literal masks are not necessary to challenge or improvise on a tradition. In line with James Scott's notion of "disguising the message" (1990, 138-140), performers are not anonymous but music and dance performance allow for a type of "masking" that creates a space for them to question customs and values through disruptions in the cycle, while still maintaining the core traditions embedded that cycle.

At no time is this practice more apparent on Montserrat than during the Calypso Monarch competition at Christmastime. Although some on Montserrat would prefer to keep the focus of Christmas on its religious significance, calypso music undoubtedly takes over on the island as a popular aspect of Festival. Radio airwaves are saturated with the year's new calypso songs and speculation about who will win the crown at the end of the festival season. The lyrics that are sung on the calypso stage spark important dialogues and debates about current political events, social and religious values, and questions of identity on Montserrat. I see calypso performance as a type of "archiving" of community issues and annual news—any topics that received attention during the past year are fair game for the calypso songwriter, and it is also sometimes the case that an issue receives extra attention as the result of a calypso song. Radio talk shows before, during, and after the competition invite performers, songwriters, and commentators to discuss the year's calypso songs, and community members call in to express their personal opinions. These songs and the conversations surrounding them are a performed documentation of concerns from the

Montserratian community over the past year. In the following pages, I show how calypso plays a significant role in the festival cycle and in Montserratian identity overall. An entire chapter could be dedicated to this topic, but I briefly go into some detail about the range of issues and debates involved in Montserrat's calypso competition because the examples present a snapshot of the island's recent social and political concerns and how some members of the community have addressed them.

Montserrat's calypso competition begins in early December, before Christmas Festival officially opens, with about thirty contestants. The competition is open to all adults, male and female, and many entrants are seasoned veterans, but others may be newer to the game. Traditionally, each calypsonian dons a nickname, such as "De Niceness," "Dynamite," "Iceman," or "Fyah." The nickname can change from year to year, but it often sticks and may even persist off-stage (such as Herman Francis, Cecil Lake, and Justin Cassell, who are commonly referred to year-round as "Cupid," "Cepekee," and "Hero," respectively). Sometimes the performer writes his or her own songs, but more often a noted songwriter (often Cupid, Cepekee, or Hero) is hired to write the lyrics, melodies, and/or arrangements.[9]

There are three rounds: each competitor sings one song during the elimination round in early December and about half make it through to the semi-final round. A few days before Christmas, the semi-finals take place on the big stage in "Festival City" at the Little Bay playing field and during this round each performer sings a

[9] Musicians Cecil "Cepekee" Lake, Herman "Cupid" Francis, Justin "Hero" Cassell have played various roles during Christmas Festivals over the years. Cassell began performing in the 1950s and Lake and Francis began their musical careers as young calypsonians in the 1980s. All three have continued to support the festival over the years in both artistic and administrative positions. When I attended Christmas Festival in 2013, Francis was the reigning monarch and Lake led the Black Rhythms Band, which provided all of the music for the calypso competition. All three have written many of the calypso song entries in recent years, and Lake won Best Songwriter in 2013.

second song in addition to the one they sang during eliminations. Ten competitors are sent on to the final round, which takes place during Festival, a few days after Christmas Day, and they perform both songs again. The reigning monarch, crowned the previous year, makes his or her first appearance of the year during the finals, having kept his or her two songs under wraps throughout the season. This is the most heavily attended event of the festival season, as audiences have speculated on the reigning monarch's song topics, and they want to see if he or she will be able to defend the crown. At the finals, calypso performers pull out all the stops—costumes, stage props, audience participation, and any other stunts to make the performance as creative and memorable as possible. By this point, most audience members have heard the songs played on the radio so many times that they can belt out the lyrics and jump around along with the performers. The winner is crowned with the prestigious title of "Calypso Monarch" at the end of the night, and all finalists receive some award and/or monetary compensation according to their finishing place.

Besides providing an entertaining spectacle, the calypso competition is taken very seriously by performers and spectators. Performers are judged on the use of sound and delivery, word play, double entendre, and the use of local creole versus standard English.[10] Calypso is an oral tradition that is found throughout the East Caribbean, and singers use the genre to make social or political commentary on national, racial, or religious issues in their community. The calypso stage provides a

[10] For example, Montserrat's famous calypsonian Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell sang a popular calypso song in the 1970s called "Montserrat English" that proudly details aspects of the island's culture. He peppers the lyrics with words and phrases from the local creole: "People think that it's wrong / To talk real Montserratian / They say it ain't right grammatically / Dey can't find them words in no dictionary / Call it bad language / Despising we heritage / But don't care if dey call we foolish / Dis is Montserrat English." (Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell provided this transcription to Jonathan Skinner, who published it in his 2004 book *Before the Volcano* on page 87).

platform for taking a stance on one side or another of an issue, and by taking on a calypso persona and adopting a sobriquet, the performer dons a sort of "mask" through musical performance that allows him or her to freely comment on society. Robert Nicholls describes calypso as a vehicle for social commentary, and he explains that calypso or "kaiso" comes from "carisos," or songs of Bamboula dances in West Africa that address proper social behavior (2012, 220; see also, Dudley 2004). A calypsonian is regarded as a "social philosopher" and a "mouthpiece" of society: "The calypsonian…acts as a mirror for the society and provides the population with a voice and a platform" (Warner 1982, 87). In Montserrat's 2013 calypso competition, singers addressed a range of social, economic, and political issues, including: "A Share of the Wealth" (Steve "Iceman" Weekes), "Reparation for the Black Man" (Devon "Rakatang" Williams), "End Child Abuse" (Maggie DeTouche), and "We Need a State of the Union" (Donavier "De Niceness" Piper-Malone). Others provided the soundtrack for "feting" in the bacchanal atmosphere, such as "Tempo Tempo Tempo" (Joy "Dynamite" Williams).[11] Others had a comical tone, such as ex-pat Rob "One Note" Field's 2012 "Dig a Tunnel," a tongue-in-cheek suggestion to build a tunnel between Montserrat and Antigua to avoid the unreliable ferry and propeller plane; his 2013 hit "No More Rum" was about the woes of waking up with a hangover and a strange lady after an all-night island rum binge.[12]

[11] The Soca Monarch competition runs alongside the Calypso Monarch competition and provides a platform for more raucous celebration. The competition involves some overlap of entrants and even recycling of songs from the calypso competition. Contestants come prepared with a slower song for the "groovy" section and a faster one for the "up tempo" section. Soca lyrics tend to be repetitive and participatory, often in a call and response format. Songs such as "Wine Up On Me" (Shamrock), "Free Up Yourself" (Sly), and "Tempo Tempo Tempo" (Joy "Dynamite" Williams) provide the atmosphere for such "wining" and "feting."

[12] Rob "One Note" Field is a British ex-pat who moved to Montserrat around 2006; it is rare that a white ex-pat will enter the calypso competition, and he was the only one to perform in 2012, 2013, and



Figure 3.3. Baptiste Wallace sings "Dracula System" at in the 2013 calypso competition. "Triple King" Baptiste Wallace achieved an unprecedented sweep of all three Festival Monarch competitions in 2013, winning the Calypso, Soca, and Road March crowns with his hit song, "Dracula System" (Appendix C.4). Singing lyrics written by Cecil "Cepekee" Lake, the Dominican-born fisherman-turned-calypsonian commented on the ways that the government and other big businesses like Fly Montserrat airlines "suck your money," and "the prices in the shop, never ever drop." Wallace's stage act at the calypso finals and semi-finals featured energetic dance moves and a masked Dracula character that bounced eerily and haphazardly around the stage. (Skim through a sample of other performances from the 2013 Calypso Monarch Finals: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-calypso-monarch-finals-2013/, Video #7.) Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (December 20, 2013).

Some issues are less controversial than others (who wouldn't want to end child abuse?), but some can really touch a nerve. In 2013, Eric "2+2" Fergus (introduced in Chapter 2 as a masquerade dancer) used the calypso platform to plead, "Don't Judge Me," and to celebrate "Jah Jah Time," both of which addressed the controversial issue of participating in the calypso competition as a Christian. In

2014. Even though his songs later became popular radio hits, he did not pass the elimination round in either year.

"Don't Judge Me," he asked, "Is it wrong for a Christian to take part in festival? Do you think calypso rhythm is evil?" because of the belief by some on this overwhelmingly Christian island that singing calypso is not accepted by the church (see Appendix C.1 for full lyrics). He reminded the audience that he "grew up in St. John's, beating masquerade drums," in an attempt to remind the audience about his authentic and indisputable Montserratianness as a masquerader from St. John's, a (still extant) village in the north that is famous for its masquerades.

Through calypso, Fergus tried to establish himself within the island's sometimes-conflicting calypso, masquerade, and gospel cultures, and in this case, the boundary between his calypso "mask" and his real life local persona was disrupted such that he could have experienced serious ramifications off-stage. His lyrics rekindled heated discussions on ZJB Radio and throughout the community—after Christmas Festival on January 27, 2014, Basil Chambers mediated a discussion on his *Breakfast Show* on ZJB Radio during which callers expressed varying opinions about whether Christians should participate in the calypso competition. Some were critical of Fergus' songs ("Gospel shouldn't have been a part of any competition!"), but most praised him for simply raising the important issue of spirituality during Christmas when other performers focused on the "revelry" and "feting" of the holidays.

Other calypso songs in 2013 dealt with issues of cultural pride that are hard to argue with, such as Rondell Meade's nostalgic and nationalistic "I Believe in Festival" (Appendix C.2) and "He Cyant Hide He National Pride," which were both popular but did not elicit considerable commentary from the local community. However, not all songs expressing love and pride for Montserrat were debate-free.

For example, Alexander "AJ" Cassell sang an anthem-like song called "Our Land" (Appendix C.3) with the following chorus, penned by his uncle Justin "Hero" Cassell:

> This is my land, it's your land
> Together we stand
> Patriotism, nationalism, we have a national song
> So we all can sing along
> This land is ours, we wear the colors as a symbol of our proudness
> We are surely blessed

Such sentiments are ostensibly indisputable, but AJ's performance sparked a lively debate about what it means to be an authentic local calypsonian on Montserrat: What is "ours" and who are "we"? Is it always true that "all a we is one"? AJ Cassell is the son of Montserrat's arguably greatest calypsonian and soca star, Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell, who died of cerebral cancer at the age of 61 in 2010. Arrow famously wrote and performed the international hit "Hot Hot Hot," which is recognizable across the globe by its catchy chorus line, "Olé olé, olé olé, feelin' hot hot hot." His twenty-something son AJ was raised and musically trained in the United States, and he told me that he was interested in pursuing a career in rock music (March 28, 2014, Carr's Bay, Montserrat, personal communication). I saw that rock 'n' roll aesthetic come across in his calypso performance, and there was some discussion during the 2013 festival season that the young leather-clad mohawk-coifed singer was too "polished" in terms of his trained voice and slick appearance to be an "authentic" calypsonian (*The Breakfast Show with Basil Chambers*, ZJB Radio, December 20, 2013). Perhaps his style was considered too "American" or "rock" to be accepted as Montserratian calypso. Some members of the community, however, also recognized that AJ's take on calypso meant that he might be the best potential commodity for Montserrat, one of the few voices that might "travel" globally and

represent the island the way his father did. The issue of authenticity was of course never resolved, but the context of this apparently non-controversial song about national pride raised deep internal debates among the community about who could musically represent Montserrat and how they could do so authentically.

These examples demonstrate how the calypso competition creates movement between the festival stage and the community at large. Conversations heard on the streets are made public on stage, and stage performances, in turn, stimulate debates in the streets, in homes, and on the radio. Music is a crucial platform that engages local and diasporic audiences to negotiate important questions of identity, authenticity, what is "foreign" versus "local," and moral values. The snippets described above are meant to illustrate how the community uses calypso each year to clarify and also disrupt local contemporary notions of Montserratianness as a whole, as a "we." In the following sections, I turn to the St. Patrick's Festival and African Music Festival, when the community breaks Montserratianness down into "Irish" and "African" components and attempts to incorporate representations of these other "foreign" cultures into the island's local identity.

St. Patrick's Festival

If Christmas Festival is primarily about negotiating issues that are relevant to the local community through events like the calypso competition, St. Patrick's Festival is about tying together and unraveling the tangled Irish and African threads embedded in Montserrat's history and culture. After Christmas, it is the second largest festival—in 2014, St. Patrick's Festival attracted about 32% more visitors to

come in March than in other months (Table 3.2; Appendix D). St. Patrick's Festival is more in line with the type of modern-day carnival that Caribbean sociologist Kim Johnson describes as an ongoing reconfiguration of freedom, not through role reversals, but through reversals of cultural stereotypes (1983). In 2015, the festival's slogan was: "Definitely Irish, Confidently African, and Distinctly Montserratian." St. Patrick's Week is a time to commemorate the eighteenth century African slave revolution, to recognize the island's Irish heritage through the use of Irish national imagery (shamrocks, Guinness, and leprechauns), and to attract foreign tourists to Montserrat to participate in this Irish/Afro/Caribbean St. Patrick's Day "like you've never experienced it."[13] As I discuss in this section, questions of cultural identity during St. Patrick's Festival also force the dislocated and dispersed community to deal with today's challenges of maintaining local traditions in a transformed space, after the volcano destroyed St. Patrick's Village. I also discuss how materiality, and the lack thereof, is created and dissolved through the sounds, vibrations, and rhythms of embodied performance.

The idea for the St. Patrick's Festival began in 1972 with a "Know Your Past" program at the Montserrat Secondary School that commemorated the St. Patrick's Day rebellion of 1768. The small program continued for a few years and by 1978, St. Patrick's Day was an annual event at the University of West Indies campus in Plymouth where students and faculty celebrated Montserrat's first freedom fighters

[13] The Montserrat Tourist Board touts Montserrat as the only place in the world besides Ireland where St. Patrick's Day is celebrated as a national holiday and, unlike Ireland, Montserrat's festivities last for ten days. There is also a St. Patrick's Day parade on the Caribbean island of St. Croix, but St. Croix itself claims no specific ties to Ireland. The day is simply about drinking, partying, and attracting tourists. (See the St. Croix St. Patrick's Day Parade website: http://www.stpatricksdayparadestcroixvi.com/.)

through drama, poetry, music, and dance. March 17th was declared a national holiday on Montserrat in 1984 by the Public Holidays Act, largely as a result of Sir Howard Fergus' campaign to set aside a day to remember Montserrat's early heroes (see Chapter 1). In 1984, Margaret Mary "Annie" Dyer-Howe (Minister of Education and Culture from 1983-1984) pushed to have the first official St. Patrick's Festival take place in her home village of St. Patrick's in the southern part of the island. As she explained on a special "Festival Fever" radio series in the weeks leading up to St. Patrick's Festival in 2015, the festival was about establishing a new cultural activity day of celebration for the southern area, much like St. John's Day in St. John's Village in the north (ZJB Radio, January 27, 2015). St. Patrick's Festival distinguished the village of St. Patrick's from other villages on Montserrat, and it was a communal time that families and friends came together to share food and music.

The first St. Patrick's Festival schedule included events that combined religion, culture, and history: a St. Patrick's Day Catholic Mass, a local music concert, and a special lecture organized by Fergus to celebrate and educate the community about the efforts of the slaves on Montserrat. The first festival also included four key activities that have been a part of every St. Patrick's Festival ever since: the Freedom Run (marking the slave uprising for freedom), the Slave Feast (cooking and serving local food from the "old days"), an exhibition of items and artifacts used by forefathers, and a street "jump up" (a soca dance parade in the early morning hours). Each festival since 1984 has had slightly varied schedules, give or take a few activities, but these four elements are always included on the calendar. The sense is that, without them, St. Patrick's Festival would not be complete.



Figure 3.4. St. Patrick's Day Slave Feast. Festivalgoers and masquerade dancers wearing masks and costumes gather in Heritage Village in Salem for St. Patrick's Day festivities. The Slave Feast is a time to commemorate Montserrat's slave ancestors—the event is set up to resemble a "maroon community" of communal sharing, performances feature local and visiting artists, and vendors set up stalls to sell local foods and crafts. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 17, 2014).

The St. Patrick's Festivals that I attended in 2013, 2014, and 2015 were all similar to each other, with only a few variations in events. Each year I heard the same recitations made by schoolchildren during "Family Reading Time" on ZJB Radio as they read excerpts from Fergus' history books about the St. Patrick's rebellion and the festival's traditions. I also attended the annual St. Patrick's Catholic Dinner, featuring a large buffet of Montserratian foods, an Irish sing-a-long led by Father George (the pastor of Lookout Catholic Church who is originally from County Cork in Ireland), and performances of traditional and original Irish tunes by the Martin Healy Band visiting from Dublin.[14] Each year the Emerald Community Singers folk choir gave a

[14] Martin Healy is an Irish musician from Dublin who has been attending Montserrat's St. Patrick's Week since 2006. He returns every year, usually self-funded but sometimes on a small grant, such as in 2014 when he received some financial support from the Premier's Office of Montserrat and Culture Ireland (March 17, 2013, Little Bay, Montserrat, personal communication). His band has become a

concert of Irish and Montserratian themed songs, along with an appearance by the Martin Healy Band at intermission. In the car park behind Gary Moore's bar in Salem (renamed "Heritage Village" for St. Patrick's Week), Rhythm Night featured steel pan, string band, and masquerade dance performances, and at the Slave Feast vendors sold handmade crafts and local foods—the national "goat water" stew, jerk chicken, fried fish, duckna (a sweet potato and coconut treat), curried rotis, and fresh coconut water. The Slave Feast is an annual commemoration of Montserrat's earliest heroes with more performances by masquerades, string bands, and steel pan orchestras. Other events throughout the week included a nature hike, the Freedom Run and Walk, and a Rum Tour of the island's pubs (popular with tourists).

The first National Awards Ceremony also took place during St. Patrick's Festival in 2014 to honor some of Montserrat's most valued political, social, and cultural workers. Among the honored over the past two years were some of my Cast of Characters: James "Titus" Frederick for his work with the masquerades (2014), Herman "Cupid" Francis for his work in music education (2014), and Rose "Goddess of Radio" Willock of *The Culture Show* for her contributions to cultural development and women's issues (2015). St. Patrick's Week is a time to salute Montserrat's both historical and contemporary local heroes, who have contributed to the island's ongoing development. It is a time to connect people and places—near and far, present and past—through the musical, danced, and culinary local traditions that have formed in the community over the years.

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staple of the week's festivities, performing for free every night of the week at bars all over the island. The Martin Healy Band, usually comprised of some combination of musicians on guitar, fiddle, whistles, button accordion, and *uilleann pipes* (Irish bagpipes) are a familiar and expected sight on the island in March. They play a repertoire of Irish ballads and airs such as "Cockles and Mussels," "The Wild Rover" and "Inisheer" from year to year.

Contention and change in the politics of place

Besides those onstage during St. Patrick's Festival—the celebrated local heroes and the performers—members of the organizing committee who work behind the scenes are also centrally important. It matters where committee members are from, and their relationship to the festival can be a source of contention. For example, in January 2015, local government officials (newly elected in late 2014) replaced the original St. Patrick's Festival committee with a new one, and the repercussions revealed apprehensions among the community about whom or what is considered "local" and what is "foreign." I found out about the committee upheaval through Facebook, from reading the heated comments that Montserratians living on the island and in the diaspora posted about the removal of the festival's long-serving organizers. Some commenters were upset about the replacement of the committee by the "bunch of newbies" who were said to lack experience and knowledge about the early foundation of the festival that was laid in the village of St. Patrick's, now buried under ash. One commenter posted:

> Ever hear if it's not broken do not try to fix it? I look down in disdain when i see valuable resources like Kafu and Geraldine Cabey, Donna Mae Riley-Lee, Lynette Cassell, Clifton Riley, Teacher Sarah Ann, to name a few are not being Tapped into to keep this Unique Celebration intact! This is an Event which Started in St Patrick's Village! I Shudder at the direction this is headed! Shudder! ...Then again a NY me live! Me Buy Ticket and Me Cancel Ticket! (January 14, 2015, Facebook group "You Know You're Montserratian When….")[15]

The issue was that the people who helped organize the festival for many years in the recent past were apparently cast aside in favor of a committee consisting of four

[15] The entire online conversation about the 2014 St. Patrick's committee changes can be accessed on the "You know you're Montserratian when....." Facebook group page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/136606163094197/permalink/754718854616255/ (accessed January 14, 2015).

"foreigners" and only two Montserratians, neither of whom were from the traditional village of St. Patrick's (which no longer exists today). It did not matter that they were from another village on Montserrat—they were considered almost as foreign coming from other parts of the island as from other parts of the world because their roots were not in St. Patrick's. Montserratians are proud of the villages from which they hail (especially those villages that have been lost), so where someone is from and where something is held is of utmost importance. Place matters. This debate is about the politics of place—where festival planners are from and where festival events will be held. Certain concerns must be taken into account, such as logistical ones (i.e., proximity to participants' homes or a central location, since transportation is difficult and expensive for some), as are concerns relating to heritage and tradition (i.e., where the festival event has *always* been and who has *always* planned it).

St. Patrick's Festival is strongly associated today with St. Patrick's Village because of its history there, but it is important to remember that the celebrations have not always taken place there. The festival has moved around over the years and committees have always included organizers from a number of pre-volcano villages, including Kinsale, Parson's, and Fairfield (Dyer-Howe 2015). A few years after the first festival took place in St. Patrick's Village in 1984, the celebrations temporarily moved back to Plymouth, where performers reenacted the slave rebellion at the old War Memorial. But the memory of St. Patrick's Festival in St. Patrick's Village has become more important in recent years because of the community's recent dislocation. On the morning of St. Patrick's Day in 2015, ZJB Radio aired over an hour of memories recorded by local residents who remembered St. Patrick's Day in

St. Patrick's Village—the people who hosted, the neighbors who came, the crowds, the foods that were served, the church activities, the cricket games, the music that was played and the dances that were danced. Overall, memories were about the family that was created and lived happily together in St. Patrick's, and shared that happiness on St. Patrick's Day ("Memories of St. Patrick's Village" 2015).

The memories of this place is now a crucial element in how the community conceptualizes St. Patrick's Festival, and during the "Festival Fever" show on January 27, 2015, one anonymous caller was concerned about how they could "transfer" the original concept of the festival from the southern to the northern side of the island. Twenty years after the volcanic crisis, this concern is still at the forefront—the caller suggested that the festival necessarily changed with relocation to the north, but that it is also critical to maintain as much of that original atmosphere today. It is difficult for someone like me, who has only seen the ashy remains of Plymouth and St. Patrick's from afar (from the sea, from a helicopter, from an afternoon visit to the Exclusion Zone) and in photos from the past, to imagine what life was like in these once-vibrant towns in the south. However, I got a sense of these important landmarks by hearing nostalgic descriptions by those who are old enough to remember pre-volcano island life and compare it to contemporary circumstances, and I also saw, heard, and danced the remnants of St. Patrick's Festival traditions that have been uprooted and transplanted further north. The importance of seeing and feeling the substances of the festivals is crucial because they provide tactile symbols of Montserrat's heritage on stage that maintain meaning across transformed spaces.



Figure 3.5. Irish dancers wearing the national dress in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Girls dancing in the 2014 St. Patrick's Day parade wear outfits featuring the national dress pattern, as well as shamrock stickers and head boppers. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 17, 2014).

Perhaps the most recognizable and striking backdrop for each of the island's festivals and national events is Montserrat's national dress—a madras pattern of green, gold/orange, and white. Although the green and orange colors are recognizably Irish to those familiar with Ireland's flag, they symbolize something different for Montserratians. Costume designer Ann Marie Dewar organized a National Dress Search during the St. Patrick's Festival in March 2003, and male and female outfits featuring the cotton cloth were chosen to represent "the various contributions of ancestors and settlers to [their] social and cultural moorings."[16] The colors of the

[16] The female outfit was designed by Sonia-Meade Swanston and Pat Ryan, and the male outfit was designed by Donna Henry. While no mention of the similarities between these colors and the green, orange, and white Irish flag are mentioned in the official documentation of the national dress search, the cloth provides a compelling backdrop for St. Patrick's festivities that call to some minds (like mine) the island's Irish connection. There is, however, explicit mention of the symbolic associations of the green, gold, and black colors with Africa, the primary heritage of Montserratians. The pattern was chosen from among a wide variety of entries, most of which incorporated even more colors, such as blues, reds, and pinks ("The Origins of Montserrat's National Dress," 2015).

deeply researched design reflect the island's values of peace and harmony, maintaining natural resources, and encouraging faith, creativity, and courage ("The Origins of Montserrat's National Dress" 2015). Those that wear the national dress perform Montserratian pride, and the material itself provides something tactile that the community can hold on to and to which they claim ownership.



Figure 3.6. National dress "coronation." I finally purchased my first national dress accessory on St. Patrick's Day in 2015, on the two-year anniversary of my first visit to Montserrat. For me, this "coronation" was a "performative utterance" (Austin 1962) that signified the connections I had made with people on the island. I finally felt comfortable to wear something so symbolic of the island and was pleased to own something that made me an "honorary Montserratian," as the vendor proclaimed me. Photograph of Kate Spanos by Pablo Regis De Oliveira (March 17, 2015).

The first time I attended St. Patrick's Festival in 2013, I saw vestiges of Irish-themed celebrations everywhere as I wandered around the quiet streets during the day, before activities got started in the evening. I saw faded shamrocks in store windows, "Happy St. Patrick's Day" banners in restaurants, and dusty misshapen Guinness bottle caps on the sidewalks. I was curious about these "banal" (Billig 1995) symbols of Irishness that seemed so out of place on this Caribbean island, and I

developed this dissertation project because I wanted to learn more about the story to which these symbols alluded. My questions were echoed in the following song, "Shamrock Hanging from my Window" by Montserratian musician Randy Greenaway, repeated again and again on ZJB Radio during St. Patrick's season:

> Should I have a shamrock hanging in my window to remind me—
> We're connected?
> Because Ireland in Europe and the island of Montserrat
> Have many things in common—
> Names and traditions, fife and fiddle, played by the musicians
> Ireland in Europe and the island of Montserrat—is this evidence enough?
> Rhythm and romance, in the Irish jig and the heel and toe of dance.

The voice of Greenaway singing this melody in the recording sounds hesitant and unsure—he sounds nostalgic for a time in Montserrat's colonial history that he never experienced directly, but that he senses is an important part of his self. During St. Patrick's Festival, leprechaun costumes and other "paddywhackery" contribute to the "hot" nationalism of Montserrat's Irishness, but throughout the rest of the year, the faded shamrocks hanging in the windows become "banal" and unremarkable. How are these material symbols of Irishness on Montserrat used in different ways at different times of the year to represent the island's connection to Ireland?

By itself, a shamrock hanging in the window is not evidence enough to prove the connection between the two "Emerald Isles." Irishness on Montserrat must be explained and made conspicuous through explicit narratives told and performed during the St. Patrick's Festival, and the various "masks" and costumes that Montserratians put on make that connection visible. In March, the national dress connotes not just Montserratianness, but Montserratian Irishness, especially when it is combined with leprechaun costumes, kilts, and shamrock-everything. Is dressing up

as leprechauns an appropriation of Irish symbols that gives Montserratians agency over their own cultural identity? Are they "playing Irish," similar to Philip Deloria's notion of "playing Indian" (1998), in an inversion of colonial power that contributes to their own national identity formation? Or is such masking a type of "subaltern mimesis" (Taussig 1993) that relinquishes power to "the Irish"—which may symbolize the colonizer, the West, or some other oppressor? Or does it represent just another "shamrock hanging in the window"?

In Chapter 2, I started a discussion about Dr. Vernie Clarice Barnes' St. Patrick's Lecture in 2015, in which she described the masquerades as a coping strategy to mask identities. A reviewer asked if performing Irishness (by, for example, "dressing up" as leprechauns) signified a desire to identify with Irish slave masters rather than slave ancestors ("Masquerading, Pappyshowing and Memory" 2015). I now reconsider this discussion in the context of St. Patrick's Festival in particular. During the post-lecture discussion, local journalist Nerissa Golden encapsulated her concern with "playing Irish" in the following quote:

> …if you look around at the way we market ourselves, we put lots of emphasis on this Irish part of us, this identity that's really not ours. And we keep pursuing this desire to be something other than who we clearly are. We continue this masquerade, not just the ones that wear the masks, but this actually is a country of mask-wearing people! […] What's going to be the process of us finding out who we really are beyond all these masks that we wear? How much of the four hundred years do we keep, or how do we transform it so that going forward it is actually helpful for us, and not a continuation of this coping, just to survive, just to make it through another day? (March 12, 2015, Montserrat Cultural Centre, Little Bay, Montserrat)

It is not my place to answer these questions, but I can say that the contradictions that arise from the multivalent ways that Montserratians perform Irishness and use Irish symbols on St. Patricks' Day indicate that the community is in an ongoing process of

negotiation. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Donald Akenson was dismissive of the invented traditions that help Montserratians "get through the day" (1997, 186), and, as Golden said, they must be cautious about coping just "to make it through another day." However, I see the negotiations that take place during St. Patrick's Festival as a crucial part of Montserrat's festival cycle that provide opportunities to address issues of place and materiality (and what happens when they are lost) and issues of identity—what is local, what is foreign, who belongs and who does not.

Performing Irishness each year on St. Patrick's Day provides a clear economic benefit to the island and distinguishes Montserrat from other Caribbean islands, but at some point does this form of masquerade start to hinder cultural development? Is Irishness fundamentally at odds with the other two points on Montserrat's triangle—its African and Afro-Caribbean heritages? If the "Irish" side of Montserrat's national identity has its own festivalized assertion each year, then what about the other historical population that was brought to the Caribbean—the Africans? What happens when Irishness and Africanness encounter one another during festivals on the island today, and is there a way to reconcile the apparent conflicts between them in Montserrat's cultural identity? In the following section, I explore what Irishness and Africanness mean in Montserrat, and how the festivals create a space and time for reconfiguring and renegotiating these elements in local cultural identities.



Figure 3.7. Basil Chambers in "paddywhackery" on St. Patrick's Day. At the Slave Feast on St Patrick's Day in 2015, Basil Chambers rides a donkey in full "paddywhackery," including shamrock-patterned pants, shamrock sunglasses, and an oversized tie that reads: "Eat, Drink, and Be Irish!" Photograph courtesy of the Montserrat Governor's Office.

African Music Festival

In Montserrat's annual festival calendar, there is a time designated to celebrate Montserratian Africanness—it is the Calabash Festival in July, established in 2006 by local businesswoman Florence Griffith. This festival's theme is "celebrating our African heritage," and it is about remembering and educating the community about pre-volcano life. During Calabash Festival, local artists sell jewelry, purses, bowls, and instruments made of the calabash gourd—hollowed, dried out, and often decorated with designs and words. The calabash fruit itself is derived from Africa and symbolizes the island's strength, resilience, and versatility. These artifacts serve as

reminders of a more prosperous Montserrat, before the volcano, and of the roots of the island's people, before they were brought across the Atlantic from Africa.[17]

Calabash Festival is primarily about Montserratian interpretations of Africanness, as African culture has developed locally over the past four hundred years. Committee organizer Florence Griffith told me that one of her goals has been to host musicians directly from Africa, but the committee has not yet managed to procure enough funding to do so. In 2013, however, a new "African" themed festival did just this. The event was called the African Music Festival and was incorporated into the St. Patrick's Festival week of activities in March. The first African Music Festival featured two acts: a Francophone folk pop singer from Mauritania named Daby Touré and a troupe of six West African drummers/dancers (originally from Senegal, Ghana, and Ivory Coast) called Jalikunda that was managed by a small British entertainment company. The following year in 2014, Jalikunda returned for an encore performance and Oliver "Tuku" Mtukudzi from Zimbabwe and his band The Black Spirits were invited as the headline act. It was the first time that any of these musicians had visited Montserrat and they had no prior connection to the island. There were plans to bring in bands from Rwanda for the 2015 festival, but unfortunately funding did not come through and the African Music Festival was cancelled in what would have been its third year.

[17] For more information about the Montserrat Calabash Festival, see the Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Montserrat-Calabash-Festival/237577586271136.



Figure 3.8. Jalikunda performs during St. Patrick's Week. Jalikunda West African Drumming & Dance Troupe performs at V's Bar (decorated with an Irish flag and shamrock balloons) in Cudjoe Head Village for St. Patrick's Week. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 15, 2013).

The African Music Festival was the brainchild of Kato Kimbugwe, who explained during the festival's first opening ceremony in 2013 that it was his goal to establish the festival as a permanent part of St. Patrick's Week (March 17, 2013, Governor's House, Palm Loop, Montserrat). He hailed it as the first of its kind in the British West Indies (BWI)—he claimed that never before had an African band performed in the BWI, though it was common on nearby French islands like Guadeloupe and Martinique (see Evans 2014). Kimbugwe, an economist from Uganda, was posted on Montserrat in 2010 as the island's representative for the U.K.'s Department for International Development (DFID), and he explained that when he arrived, he realized that few people on the island knew where Uganda was. Thus, he wanted to do something to educate Montserratians about life in Africa, and

he started a weekly ZJB Radio program called "African Journeys" which featured music from all over the African continent for the listening audience of Montserrat to hear. The African Music Festival grew out of this radio program and it was included under the "umbrella" of St. Patrick's festivities in 2013. Colin Riley, the 2013 St. Patrick's committee head and then-Minister of Education, explained that they included it in St. Patrick's Festival because they recognized the importance of "how the rhythms of Africa transfer across the Atlantic" in parallel with the island's transatlantic connection to Ireland (March 31, 2014, Brades Government Headquarters, Montserrat, personal communication).



Figure 3.9. African Music Festival logo. The African Music Festival logo features a black map of Africa and Montserrat's coat of arms, featuring Erin (the female personification of Ireland) holding an Irish harp and a black cross. Image source: http://www.montserratafricanmusicfest.com, accessed August 23, 2013.

The introduction of the African element into St. Patrick's Week was meant to help Montserrat more fully tell and also "accept" the story of African and Irish relations around St. Patrick's Day. One of the African Music Festival committee members, Jonette Silcott, explained to the *Spirit of Montserrat* (ZJB Radio's online news publication) that "[The African Music Festival] makes so many links to so many different entities. I think we tend to forget the ancestry in relation to our African roots" ("Montserrat Links Its African and Irish Ancestry" 2014). The St. Patrick's Festival was definitively crafted to expose Montserratians and their visitors to the island's multifaceted heritage, and the original idea behind the African Music Festival as a part of that initiative was to incorporate an African element that would round out the festival's overarching goal of educating the community about the island's "triangular" heritage—Irish, African, and Montserratian. The African Music Festival committee suggested that the exclusion of African music in previous years was an oversight, and bringing in artists from the African continent was a long overdue recognition of the African side of Montserrat's Irish/African heritage.

In the first year of the African Music Festival in 2013, the event was hugely successful and well attended, and I heard rave reviews among the local community. The free performances drew large crowds, and both local and tourist audiences danced wildly, enthralled by the African beats. The lasting effects of the festival were so promising that the two-day event was already touted as an "annual" festival by the African Music Festival committee in its debut year, even though it had yet to prove its endurance. It was confidently inserted into the festival cycle by word before it had been established over many years of tradition. After its successful first year, the

committee drummed up enough support for the following year's African Music Festival to raise about $320K from the Montserrat Development Corporation and Tourist Board, plus EC$50K in donations and sponsorships from local and international businesses (Table 3.2).

In 2014, the committee brought back the popular Jalikunda band that had the crowds dancing in a frenzy the previous year, but community response to the second annual festival was just lukewarm. Ahead of the performances in 2014, I heard some mutterings among residents when word got out that Jalikunda would be returning for a second year. Yes, they loved the energy that the band brought the prior year, but people expressed resentment relating to (1) the idea that Jalikunda was no longer a novel act and the organizers should instead bring in someone new, and (2) the idea that local performers were being cast aside in favor of these expensive international and foreign acts. If the African Music Festival committee was not going to invest in something new, then why send the money out of the island to these African artists who, incidentally, resided in the U.K.? As Montserrat is still an Overseas British Territory, sending money that is allocated for developing local cultural activities back to the U.K. is problematic.

When Jalikunda performed for their second year in 2014, I observed that the audience did not dance as much or as energetically, and afterwards I heard people say that the group was not as vibrant as it was before and that the spark that had everyone so excited the previous year was generally lacking in their performance. After a great first-time success, expectations for this second-time performance were nearly impossible to live up to. From my perspective, the band was as exciting in 2014 as it

was in 2013, but I could sense the fatigue among the local audience, who stood back or wandered while tourists still danced wildly up front below the stage. Among the locals, I sensed resistance to establishing a new annual tradition, especially one as expensive as the African Music Festival. Was inviting and paying for popular and expensive bands like Jalikunda year after year just setting up the island for disappointment when funds would inevitably run out in future years? Indeed, despite plans to bring in new bands from Rwanda in 2015, what would have been the third African Music Festival was cancelled at the last minute due to "budget issues" (Anita Nightingale, Montserrat Tourist Board Director, March 11, 2015, Little Bay, Montserrat, personal communication).

What I found interesting after Jalikunda's second-year performance was the general sense, not of disappointment, but rather of relief that this new potential annual event should fall flat. I interpreted the harsher criticism of the second year's performance as a strategy that allowed people to remain emotionally detached. In her St. Patrick's Lecture in 2015, Dr. Barnes described the notion of Caribbean "self-sabotage" that resonated for me in relation to the observations I made after the second African Music Festival:

> So we're moving on, we're moving on. I mentioned that emotion-focused thing…then sabotage! They claim that somebody revealed the plot about the uprising of 1768…so they said it was an act of sabotage. And I know a professor that would prefer to say that there's one thing you can rely on Caribbean people to do—sabotaging. You can make things not work, you know? And we continue to do that. It's a coping mechanism which we develop at a particular time, but it might not be as appropriate now, now that we continue to sabotage ourselves, sabotage each other. Not good for development, is it?

What happens when the festival cycle breaks or fails, and when it is allowed, or even forced, to break or fail? The repetitive cycle of the annual festivals is crucial for telling Montserrat's story year after year, but such "breaks" are also important for signaling when it is time to move on. In this case, I believe that sabotage may not be so bad for development, as it allows the community to determine when they can just move forward and not get caught in yet another cycle. This sort of "sabotage" occurs when "masks" that represent a foreign sense of, for example, Irishness or Africanness, are no longer necessary—when what is already present in local representations is deemed enough. That is, why would Montserratians have to assert their Africanness through foreign acts when they are already "confidently African," as the 2014 St. Patrick's Festival slogan stated?

Perhaps the African Music Festival failed not only because it was not yet established, but also because it was also unnecessary for asserting an "authentic" African identity—no one disputes that Montserratians have an African heritage, and Africanness certainly does not distinguish Montserrat from other Caribbean islands. Caribbean Africanness is performed, for example, through the masquerades and calypso—that is, through the reenactment of West African music and dance traditions, which reveals the interwoven movements and tapestries of sound that result from centuries of circum-Atlantic cultural transmission (Reed 2007, 81; Zeleza 2010). The African bands could certainly come to Montserrat for residents to simply enjoy their music, but the performances were not presented as such. Instead, they became politically entangled in the story about Montserrat's African cultural heritage. Perhaps the translation failed because Jalikunda's African musicians were unfamiliar

to this distinctly Afro-Caribbean community, and they performed an exciting but foreign African Africanness, not the Montserratian sense of Africanness that had evolved over the past four hundred years. Or perhaps the African Music Festival failed because funds simply ran out that year; or maybe it was the basic fact that Kimbugwe, the founder and principal organizer, was re-posted for a job elsewhere and left the island in late 2014 before the 2015 festival was fully fleshed out. The reason is likely a combination of these hypotheses—different reasons for different people created a conflict that made it impossible for the African Music Festival to continue in Montserrat's festival cycle.

When the African Music Festival was not included in St. Patrick's Week in 2015, local residents noticed the gap in the schedule and the lack of "big acts," but the St. Patrick's Festival was just as celebratory as always. Local musicians and dancers—especially youth—had more time in the spotlight in the absence of foreign performers. People also remarked about how many more Montserratians came home for St. Patrick's in 2015 than in recent years. Based on attendance at the culmination of the festival at the Slave Feast, residents noted that this year indicated a shift away from attracting foreign tourists and towards inviting emigrants back home for St. Patrick's Week, like at Christmastime. Residents commented that it was like the days in St. Patrick's Village. It was a return to community roots and traditions—an interesting outcome for a new committee that was initially criticized for its foreignness. Perhaps the new committee took the initial criticism and ramped up efforts to make the festival more "local," or perhaps members of the community pushed for a more communal atmosphere in reaction to the committee change.

Nevertheless, attitudes suggested less of a search to resolve tangled Irish and African elements, and more of a celebration of Montserratian culture as a more complete lived experience. The result was a palpably calmer, more confident, and less self-conscious atmosphere that festivalgoers commented on.

Keeping it local and looking at "weself"

Local writer, poet, and musician Edgar Nkosi White commented on the cultural contradictions that arose during the 2015 St. Patrick's and African Music Festivals. He was a featured performer at the St. Patrick's Festival's opening night, and he introduced his spoken word and African drumming performance with: "You know what I love about Montserrat? The hypocrisy!" Accusing the Montserratian community of hypocrisy may initially come across as an insult, but the next day, he published the following clarification in an *MNI Alive* editorial entitled "The Mad Men of Montserrat":

> Great care must be taken this 20th year [since the volcanic disaster] in Montserrat, especially with how we record our culture. Take care that we don't sanitize it to death. The road to hell, as I always say, is paved with good intentions. We no longer need the approval of Britain to breathe or fart. Historians beware! […] We are ourselves and without apology. […] We love and grudge at the same time. And always will (March 13, 2015).

He went on to say that the "hypocrites" of Montserrat, the masqueraders, the "mad men of Montserrat"—those whose identities or agendas cannot quite be pinned down or explained—are what make Montserrat vital and unique. He emphasized that the community is a conglomerate of people, many of whom identify simultaneously with different, sometimes conflicting, groups, but this by no means makes them mask-

wearing hypocrites. Or maybe it does—but that is okay because, as I have discussed, there can be power in the mask.

The twentieth anniversary since the volcanic eruption signified a time to source local talent and look at "weself" (as they say in the Caribbean to express unity) in order to further the healing process through continued cycles of performance. Rose Willock told me that, for her, it was important to include the Irish, the African, and the Montserratian elements because ignoring one or more aspects of one's multi-faceted heritage or cultural identity prevents one from finally healing and "becoming whole." She described her own family as "rainbow colored," a patchwork quilt, and those who call themselves Montserratians may also be African, Irish, English, Indian, Spanish, Portuguese, or Caribbean—Trinidadian, Guyanese, Jamaican, or Haitian. This imagery of the "happy family" and "imagined community" is reassuring but idealistic, and thinking about Montserrat's heritage as multicultural fragments patched together—as in the common concept of a "melting pot" or "salad bowl"—does not entirely address the issue. As Edgar Nkosi White said, make sure not to "sanitize it to death." The situation in Montserrat may be better described by Lo and Gilbert's adaptation of Pavis' hourglass model (1992) for intercultural exchange in performance, in which a two-way flow between cultures allows for power disparities and allows for intentionally constructed hybridity, cultural contradiction, and sociopolitical negotiation (Lo and Gilbert 2002). In memory, Rose is absolutely correct—festivals are remembered and anticipated as a time of "we-ness," when families and neighbors come together to share food, music, and dance. In the

moment, however, individuals do not experience festival in the same ways—they argue as they compete for authenticity and decision-making power.

In response to Rose's description of Montserrat as a melting pot of cultures, local culture expert Franklyn "Daddy Algie" Greaves commented that, while other cultures are welcome to add to the mix, the most important ingredient in that local recipe must be Montserrat ("Montserrat Memories," ZJB Radio, November 29, 2015). That is to say, Montserrat—as it is defined as a place, an archive of traditions, and a community of people—must remain prominent. When festivals are kept local, the events are more exciting, conversations are more vital, and the local community exhibits more interest and personal investment. When calypso songs are about abstract themes like nationalistic pride, audiences are less enthusiastic than when they cover topics that challenge, question, or disrupt particular aspects of Montserratian identity in daily behavior. When the masquerades exhibit inter-village or personal rivalries, locals are more invested emotionally than when they are performed on a national stage and presented as an uncontested cultural artifact. When Montserratians perform their own interpretations of Irishness and Africanness—not those imported from Ireland or Africa—their festivals become more confident and dynamic. This is not to say that foreign visitors or influences are not welcome—they most often are, but they simply cannot replace local community expressions. A festival becomes a part of the cycle when it provides an annual opportunity to dialogue and debate about local concerns through such performances—not to resolve them necessarily, but to keep the conversations going and to keep local community development moving forward.

When I looked around during my first St. Patrick's Festival in 2013, I saw a lot of shamrocks, djembes, and smiling Montserratian faces in tourist brochures and public performances, but I still had many questions about how Montserratians apparently reconciled the contradictions embedded in their heritage as it was presented to me, the tourist. In this chapter, I have described how Montserratians engage amongst themselves within the local community to encounter these challenges, but what about those on the outside? How can a foreigner come to understand the complex dynamics that characterize Montserrat? In my fieldwork approach, I stood by and listened—I listened and danced—until I started to grasp how these fragments come together and break apart again. In the following chapter, I focus on these phenomenological experiences during everyday life on Montserrat, when the "hot" rhythms of festival cooled down during the off-season.

Chapter 4:

Dancing to Listen:
Navigating Rhythmic Soundscapes on Montserrat

> "I love this Irish music…I think I like it because I have a little Irish in me…. I like it the way I like masquerade music, you know, the African music? It's infectious, it makes you want to dance."
>
> — Local shopkeeper, Brades, Montserrat, March 16, 2013

I begin this chapter with an experiential anecdote from the St. Patrick's Festival in 2014 to introduce the phenomenological discoveries that I made during everyday life on Montserrat, after one festival ended and the next one began. The St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2014 was a procession of motley troupes, including, in order of appearance, the Emerald Shamioles masquerade troupe, local representatives from the newly opened Sankofa organic garden dressed in plant-derived costumes, myself with a small group of Irish dance students, British scientists from the Coral Cay marine conservation group, and the West African drummers of Jalikunda. From my perspective in the middle of this cavalcade of dancers marching through Salem Village, I saw the parade encapsulate the multidimensionality of Montserrat's cultural identity: they are Irish, they are African, they are earth and they are sea, they are local and foreign, and what makes them Montserratian is that the boundaries between these elements are never clear.

As I skipped along with my Irish dancers in the middle of the parade line, I could hear the masquerade drums ahead of us and the West African drums behind. Each set of rhythms floated into and out of my perceptual space—an "acoustemology

of flow," to use Steven Feld's term. (Watch and listen to the video I took while in the parade: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-st-patricks-festival-2014/, Video #8, time code 2:07-3:50.) I poetically use the words "floating" and "flow" in hindsight, but at the time it was jarring, and I was so confused that I ended up dancing some disjointed, awkward, and, yes, *hybridized* dance as I tried to incorporate all of the rhythms I heard into my own body. The soundscape created an alternate way for me to interpret the Montserratian experience: it was "a fusion of space and time that join[ed] lives and events as embodied memories" (Feld 1996, 91). The parade was not so much "emplaced" (as Feld says) in the streets of Salem, as it was a fluid and dynamic space for understanding how Montserrat's cultural memory can persist, not just through local annual cycles, but also through disjunctive breaks in the spatial and temporal rhythms of events.

In this chapter, I pursue this phenomenological approach to describe Montserrat's culture through my everyday ethnographic experiences with the rhythms and vibrations of the island—outside of the "hot" dances of the masquerades, outside of calypso fever, and outside of the "hot" nationalism of the festivals. What happens when Montserratians are not "feelin' hot hot hot"? How do these everyday cultural dynamics play out when things cool down during the time in between festivals? And how do community members learn to reproduce that experience of "heat" when it comes time to do so, when the cycle comes around again?

What had first intrigued me about Montserrat was how the community presented and apparently negotiated their Irish, African, and multiple Caribbean heritages into one Montserratian identity. I realized over time that performance

reveals a process of negotiation that is never fully resolved, and the popularized dichotomy between African and Irish identities in particular on Montserrat is artificial. So far this dissertation has been about my search for Montserrat's archive—by reading academic history books and articles, and by observing masquerade and other "hot" festival performances—but my research was also dependent on participation in music and dance activities on the island. I participated in parades, concerts, and parties during festivals, and I also took part in classes and practices during the off-season, as both a teacher and a student. This reflexive chapter traces my embodied search for the archive as I played, danced, listened, and learned to perform parts of Montserrat's cultural identity. This chapter is about transmission from one body to another and the kinesthetic experience of feeling the vibrations of the community through music and dance.

During my fieldwork, I navigated Montserrat's rhythmic soundscapes by interacting with people in a variety of settings and how I discovered that actually feeling the rhythms allowed me to share certain experiences in more tacit forms—from the inside out in a truly embodied way. As a dancer, I am interested in how dance as an embodied form encompasses a wide range of sensory information and how linguistic and visual representations do not account for an entire cultural experience (Crosby 1997; Grau 2003; Ness 1992; Sklar 1991). I am particularly interested in the ways that music and sound induce movement and, in so doing, a sense of place and time. In *Learning Capoeira: Lessons in Cunning from an Afro-Brazilian Art*, Greg Downey describes the process of "singing the past into play" in *capoeira*, and he explains that the martial art/dance is a "functional poetry" that

brings history and memory into the present. Music in particular enables members of the community to experience a "shifting" sense of identity across time and space—they remember the past through the songs and rhythms of capoeira (2005, 85). Ethnomusicologist Tomie Hahn similarly describes how the music of Japanese *nihon buyo* places the dancer in a temporal soundscape, between "actuality" and "simultaneity." She says, "sound provides a dynamic, immersive 'space' for dancers to orient themselves both within a physical space and within time" (2007, 116). Hahn's notion of "simultaneity" and "actuality" describes exactly my experience of Montserrat's festivals—as powerful producers of *communitas* (Turner 1986) and "imagined community" (Anderson 1983), but also subject to the "multitemporal heterogeneity" (García Canclini 1995) of a hybrid culture that may be interrupted by conflicting individual voices and contemporary expressions in performance that push up against the boundaries of traditional structures.

I have addressed the themes of place and materiality in the context of written archives, masquerade dances, and festival activities, and, in the context of post-volcano Montserrat, I am concerned with the instances in which places and materials are lost, damaged, or unreliable. For all of the idealistic and nationalistic rhetoric of this post-volcano "imagined community" (which has its value), Montserrat's cultural development is, in actuality, still very much dependent on limited space and material resources—transportation from place to place is an issue, power outages are common, and instruments and costumes are expensive and often unavailable. Despite my initial optimism and hope for finding an easy "blending" of Irish and African identities on Montserrat, I faced daily challenges on the ground that revealed the struggle of that

process. While I like to think that the bulk of the island's "archive" can live in an otherworldly space—in an "imagined community" or in a sonic or kinesthetic perceptual realm—the reality is that music and dance activities are still very much subject to material and economic factors. In this chapter, I describe the instances in which movement and rhythm can substitute for place and materiality as cultural transmitters, but I also recognize the times when this substitution does not work, and how both the successes and failures of such transmission contribute equally to cultural development.

As Steven Feld says, emplacement is intertwined with the senses: "as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place" (1996, 91). Here I am interested in the senses, and particularly in the synesthetic mixing of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic information. This is not to say that Montserrat's culture can be deciphered through some sort of elegant process of sensory integration—the process of understanding requires the jarring experiences when people and ideas clash, or when the rhythm of events is disrupted. For me, this process became most evident when I confronted the challenges of synchronizing melody and rhythm during music and dance classes, and when I tried to incorporate new rhythms into my body. As a trained dancer, breaking down and "unlearning" artistic habits is a different challenge than learning anew with no dance or music experience. This chapter explains how I kinesthetically experienced the juxtaposition of foreign and local elements that I primarily observed at the festivals, as described in the previous chapters. I describe how my experiences of teaching Irish dance, practicing African djembe, learning masquerade, and struggling with steel pans oriented (and

disoriented) me within Montserrat's cultural landscape. I begin with a discussion of the insights that I gained from my interactions with the Montserratian community relating to local and foreign music/dance rhythms, and in the second half of the chapter, I delve into the specific topic that drew me to Montserrat in the first place—an in-depth comparative analysis of the masquerade dance and Irish step dance.

Decoding Montserrat's rhythms

As a dance ethnographer, I wanted to learn something about Montserrat's rhythmic traditions, so I took lessons in masquerade drumming, participated in rehearsals with the Ladies of Alliouagana masquerade troupe, and practiced and performed with the Volpanics Steel Pan Orchestra. It was important that I learn to "imitate" the culturally specific music and dance forms of Montserrat—not only to hear and feel the music, but also to learn the appropriate technique in a sort of "social apprenticeship" in listening and movement (Downey 2002, 504). I was a beginner in all three, but it was not difficult to get involved. I simply contacted the instructor or person in charge and was allowed to regularly attend classes and rehearsals. However, there were very few masquerade classes for me to attend. While I would have loved to dance for eight hours per day and become a true "apprentice" of the masquerades, that opportunity was simply not available. The Emerald Shamioles did not hold regular rehearsals and the Ladies of Alliouagana only met every other week. I took the infrequency and informality of rehearsals as data about the island's approach to traditional arts education. Herman "Cupid" Francis described his memories of pre-volcano music education: "There were no trained percussionists or anything like that,

you'd just beat to the rhythm as you see fit, and there would be one piano in the corner and the children would gather around and sing" (2015). That is, rhythms were learned primarily through live and informal transmission between multiple community members, as opposed to notation charts, music theory, or training drills in a teacher-student relationship. Today, classes are more formal as a result of the efforts of educators like Mr. Francis and trainers like Emerald Shamioles captain Titus, but they still maintain this emphasis on oral tradition.[1]

I started with steel pan lessons. I had seen the instruments at various events during Christmas Festival and St. Patrick's Festival but had no idea how they worked. The instruments originate from early twentieth-century Trinidad and were originally made out of oil drums when African percussion instruments were banned or unavailable. Today the instruments are widely popular throughout the West Indies and they are used to play a variety of musical styles, including calypso, jazz, pop, and classical.[2] Steel pan musical arrangements incorporate a range of pan types, including tenors, seconds, guitars, cellos, and bass. The tenors (sopranos) are the smallest and highest-pitched pans and usually play the melody. Seconds (altos) and guitars

[1] Herman "Cupid" Francis is the primary local educator dedicated to teaching music on the island, although there are a number of local teachers who support him, as well as a constant stream of foreign teachers who come and go. He leads the Small Beginnings music education program for schoolchildren, steel pan orchestras in the island's primary and secondary schools, and organizes the annual Junior Calypso competition during St. Patrick's Festival in March. In addition, a program called the Sir George Martin Fellowship was also developed in January 2012 through collaboration between Montserrat Foundation UK and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. The annual fellowship funds a visiting musician—an alumnus of the Guildhall School's Master's program—to teach music to the community of Montserrat. Sir George Martin—the famous former manager of the Beatles, founder of Montserrat's now-abandoned AIR Studios, and also an alumnus of the Guildhall School—conceived of the fellowship (see https://musicalmontserrat.wordpress.com/abouttheproject/). In 2012, Martin went to Mr. Francis and Montserrat's then-Director of Education to develop the program curriculum and decided that the fellow would assist Mr. Francis, create a youth choir, and offer basic education in a variety of instruments to schoolchildren and adults (Francis 2015).

[2] For an in-depth description of the history and performance practices of steel pan on Trinidad, see Shannon Dudley's *Carnival Music in Trinidad: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (2004).

(baritones) are two-pan parts that are larger and lower-pitched and usually play "strumming" harmonies that give "shape" to the songs; cellos are three-pan baritone parts that provide another set of strumming harmonies. Finally, the bass part is a set of six full-size oil drums that provide a resonant harmonic backdrop and fills out the sound (Dudley 2004). Each pan part is played with a pair of increasingly larger sticks or batons with a rubber pad on one end. In the Volpanics, a drummer also often accompanies the group on a drum kit to hold down the beat.



Figure 4.1. Volpanics Steel Pan Orchestra rehearsal. The Volpanics Steel Pan Orchestra, led by Herman "Cupid" Francis, rehearses at the Old Primary School in Salem. Tenor pans are on the far left, with seconds to their right, and guitars and cellos behind them. Bass drums are in the far back corner of the room. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (January 13, 2014).

Mr. Francis started to teach steel pan classes for children and adults on Montserrat in the early 2000s. He grew the program out of summer workshops taught by visiting instructors from Trinidad that were offered through Montserrat's Youth & Sports Department in the 1990s. The guest musicians taught and performed for three weeks each summer, but the pans would remain locked up in storage for the rest of the year because few on Montserrat had the time or motivation to practice. Mr. Francis explained that because there was no one on Montserrat to teach the instruments, and the cost of regularly bringing Trinidadian instructors to the island was too extravagant, he volunteered himself to teach. In the early years, he learned along with the students and started Montserrat's Junior Steel Orchestra in 2004. Today Mr. Francis leads a steel orchestra at each primary school—St. Augustine, Brades, and Lookout—and some of his young adult students also formed their own group called "Genesis" in recent years (Francis 2015).



Figure 4.2. Tenor steel pan and notation. A tenor pan (marked with notes) and a notation book. Each note can be played in a high octave (outer circle) or low octave (inner circle). Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (July 15, 2014).

A few years after the Junior Steel Orchestra was formed, some of the teenagers who had graduated from the secondary school wanted to continue playing pan, so Mr. Francis started the "Volpanics Steel Orchestra" for adults. Today, the Volpanics has about twenty active members and is open to the entire community. The group is comprised of local Montserratians, CARICOM nationals (from Jamaica, Guyana, etc.), and ex-pats from the U.S., U.K., and Canada. Mr. Francis invited me to sit in on a Volpanics practice at the Old Salem School one Monday night during my first month of fieldwork, and I observed the rehearsal from afar until he called me over to take a closer look at the pans. In a matter of minutes, I unwittingly found myself standing behind three big cello pans, awkwardly holding the sticks and trying to learn how to "roll" them to achieve the nice resonant sound that is so particular to steel pan. I was frustrated, but Mr. Francis explained to me that musical knowledge was not required, and, in fact, most members came with no prior musical experience.

I continued to attend weekly practices, and it soon became clear that I was expected to play with the group at the St. Patrick's Festival in a couple of months. It was recommended that I come to rehearsal with a small notebook, a pen, and maybe a clothespin or two to keep the pages from flipping in the strong winds that passed through the drafty meeting space. I scribbled down letters and symbols to notate the dozen melodies that were thrown my way. Everyone jotted down the songs using their own notation system—all learned the melodies by ear and then painstakingly transcribed them with letter notation and whatever symbols made sense to them.

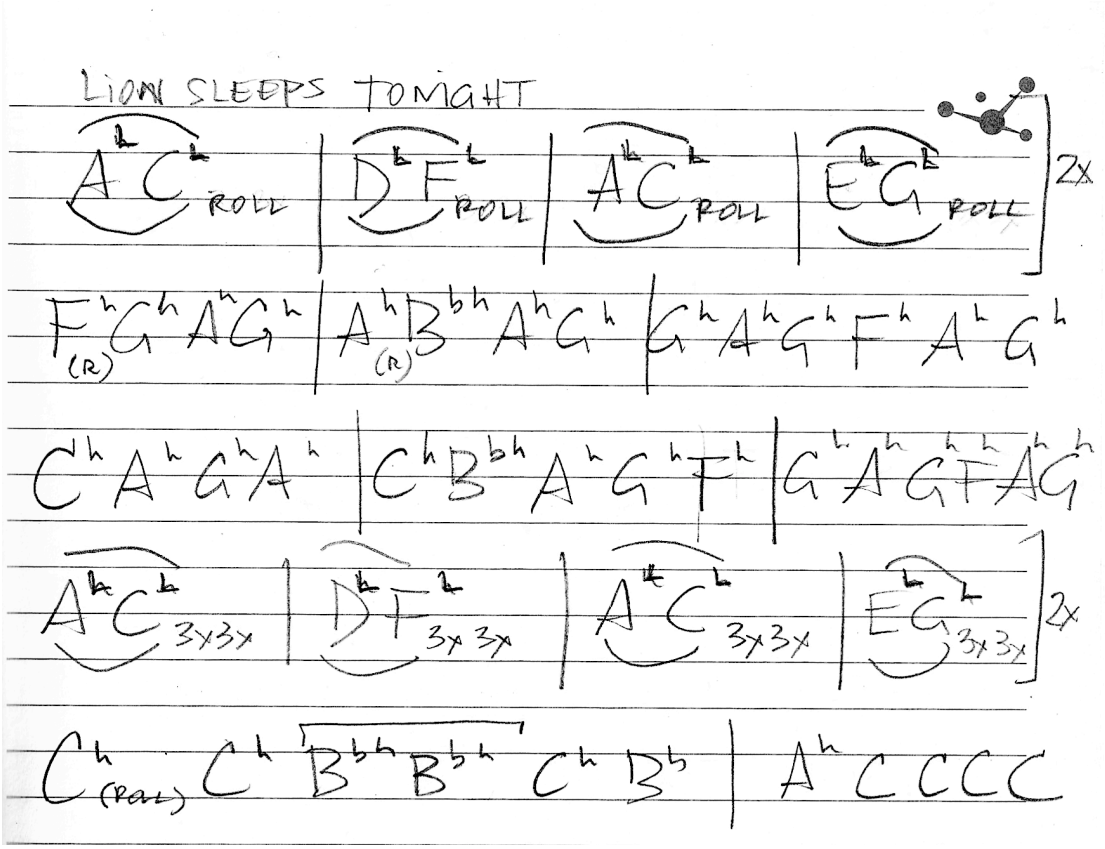

Figure 4.3. Tenor steel pan notation for "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." This is my tenor pan notation for "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," based on notation received from another Volpanics tenor player. I incorporated elements of notation that fellow band members taught me, as well as some that I created that have meaning just to me: the arcs indicate a 2-note chord (one note with each hand), the superscript "h" means "high octave" (played on the outer part of the pan), and the subscript "(r)" indicates a "roll" of the batons. This notation system primarily provides only the melody; rhythm and dynamics are learned mostly by ear and familiarity with the song.

During my fieldwork, the Volpanics played a large repertoire of songs, including local Montserratian songs such as "Motherland" (the national/territorial song) and "I'm Proud (to be Montserratian)," as well as international hits such as "La Bamba," "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," and "One Love," and contemporary American pop songs such as John Legend's "All of Me" and Pharrell Williams' "Happy." The group was usually preparing for an upcoming performance, whether it was a big festival concert, an appearance at a party at Montserrat's only hotel, Tropical Mansion Suites, or another small private event like a wedding or birthday party.

Before St. Patrick's Day, the practices focused largely on Irish melodies such as "Danny Boy" and "Cockles and Mussels," and before Calabash Festival, more traditional Montserratian songs were the priority, such as "Calabash" (a local folk melody) and "Hot Hot Hot," the world famous song sung by the much-celebrated Montserratian Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell and a staple of the island's musical soundscape. But, really, anything in our notation books was fair game at a performance, as Mr. Francis might call out a song even if we had not practiced it in months, so we had to be prepared for anything.

I continued to attend Volpanics rehearsals for the duration of my fieldwork in 2014 and I performed with the group during St. Patrick's Festival, Calabash Festival, and various other community events throughout the year. It was difficult to learn how to hold the sticks correctly and I never did manage to get a loud clean sound out of the pans. After about a month of playing the cello part, I was "promoted" to the tenor part because the group did not have enough people playing the melody. It was easier for me to pick up the melodies than the harmonic accompaniments since I was already familiar with many of the popular tunes, but I was not familiar with Mr. Francis' arrangements. Even on the tenor part, I often found myself unable to grasp how the melodies fit into the harmonies. For example, I was very familiar with the melody for the international hit "No Woman No Cry" by Bob Marley, but I was thrown off-rhythm because the harmonies played by the seconds and guitars sounded strange to me, and I felt that they divided the rhythm in unexpected ways. As ethnomusicologist Shannon Dudley explains, the reason for this is that the conventions of steel pan arrangements are polyrhythmic and create "texture" between

the orchestra's different parts—the melody at the frontline (tenors), the strummed sounds (seconds, guitars, and cellos), and the bass line. Unlike the calypso or soca rhythm, which provides a strong beat that is easy to dance to, steel pan arrangements are less "smooth," or less on the beat, because of the complex harmonics that are involved between the various parts (2004, 66-69).

I am not a musician nor do I have a musician's mind, so I eventually decided to approach the instrument as a dancer. Over time I learned to "dance" while I played (literally and figuratively) and became more attentive to the orchestra as a whole as I understood my place in it. Despite the fact that my mental schemata[3] for thinking about the music and rhythm were different from others, based on my cultural biases and artistic tendencies, I created a way to attune myself to the orchestra. I learned to listen with my entire body, and eventually my sense of steel pan rhythm improved. Just like the personal expressions that I observed during the festivals and especially in the masquerades, this embodied experience was a step towards better understanding how an individual voice and body could contribute to and fit into the collective, the community at large. Through the rhythms of music and movement, I learned to negotiate my own place within the workings of the whole.

Even more challenging for me was learning the masquerade drums, which incorporated rhythms that were entirely foreign to me. One morning I heard an advertisement on the radio for children's masquerade drumming lessons so I called the number and asked if I could observe. The instructor was Keithroy "De Bear"

[3] Jean Piaget's cognitive theory includes schemata, which are building blocks of intelligence that are used to organize knowledge. A schema is defined as "a cohesive, repeatable action sequence possessing component actions that are tightly interconnected and governed by a core meaning" (1952). A schema is a mental representation of the world that determines how one interprets and responds to different situations.

Morson, a noted calypsonian and masquerader who spent his time between Montserrat and Antigua. I drove to the industrial park in Brades for my first class, located in a small trailer that held some chairs, a piano, and a few drums and other small instruments. De Bear was there with one student, a young boy who was about ten years old, and they were sitting across from each other, each in front of a snare drum and holding two wooden drumsticks. The boy was learning the "first" and "second" masquerade rhythms (Cudjoe Head #1 and #2) and Bear asked him to sing the rhythms repeatedly ("brah pah, prah dah pah, prah dah pah dah") before allowing him to try them on the drum. The boy concentrated hard and was visibly frustrated after messing up many times, but he promised he would practice every day until next week's lesson. I ran home and practiced what I could remember, singing to myself and using the ends of two pencils on the kitchen countertop.

The following week, no one was there except for a wandering goat. This was an ongoing problem in my attempt to learn masquerade drumming—classes were inconsistent, and attendance (by both students and the instructor) was spotty due to travel, illness, work, school, etc. I went to the lesson about twelve more times but it was cancelled all but twice for one reason or another, and finally De Bear informed me that classes would be suspended until they received more funding from the Ministry of Education. Still, the classes I went to were enough for me to get a sense of how masquerade rhythm patterns are structured and taught. For example, I learned from Bear that Rhythms #1 and #2 are related, as are #4 and #5, and the opening March, Rhythm #3, the Heel and Toe Polka, and the Road March/Rumba rhythms are all unique.

Figure 4.4 shows the goatskin snare drum/kettle drum notations of a selection of five out of the eight masquerade rhythms: the March, Rhythm #1 (also known as Cudjoe Head #1), the Heel and Toe Polka, the Road March (also known as the Rumba), and Rhythm #5 (the last dance, and the second of the "hot" dances). All of the rhythms are in 4/4 time and follow specific patterns according to each of the eight dance sections (described in Table 2.1, page 92). The snare drum is accompanied by a fife that plays the melody, a "boom" drum that provides a steady beat on every beat of the measure (except in the March, during which the boom drum plays on *one* and *three*, giving the music a slower march-like feel), and the shak-shak provides percussive texture. The patterns and accents (indicated by a ">") described in these notations provide a guide for learning the snare drum rhythms, but they are subject to variations in structure and dynamics when played live. For example, as I learned in my lessons with De Bear, the snare drum patterns respond to the melodic calls of the fife, or the drummer may improvise rhythm variations at will. The two measures notated for the opening March and the Heel and Toe Polka alternate when played, sometimes one directly after the other, or else repeated one or more times before going on to the next. The "driving force" of Rhythm #5, the last of the "hot" dances, is visible in the notation: the tempo is significantly faster (approximately 165 beats per minute, or BPM, compared to around 120-130 BPM in most of the other rhythms) and there are no accents.[4] The variations in the repeated beamed note groups of Rhythm #5 illustrate the drummer's small but tricky improvisations.

[4] The approximate tempos (beats per minute, or BPM) of each rhythm are estimated from the CD-ROM recording as follows: (1) March, 119 BPM; (2) Rhythm #1, 125 BPM; (3) Rhythm #2, 126 BPM; (4) Rhythm #3, 133 BPM; (5) Heel & Toe Polka, 126 BPM; (6) Road March, 128 BPM; (7) Rhythm #4, 153 BPM; and (8) Rhythm #5, 165 BPM.

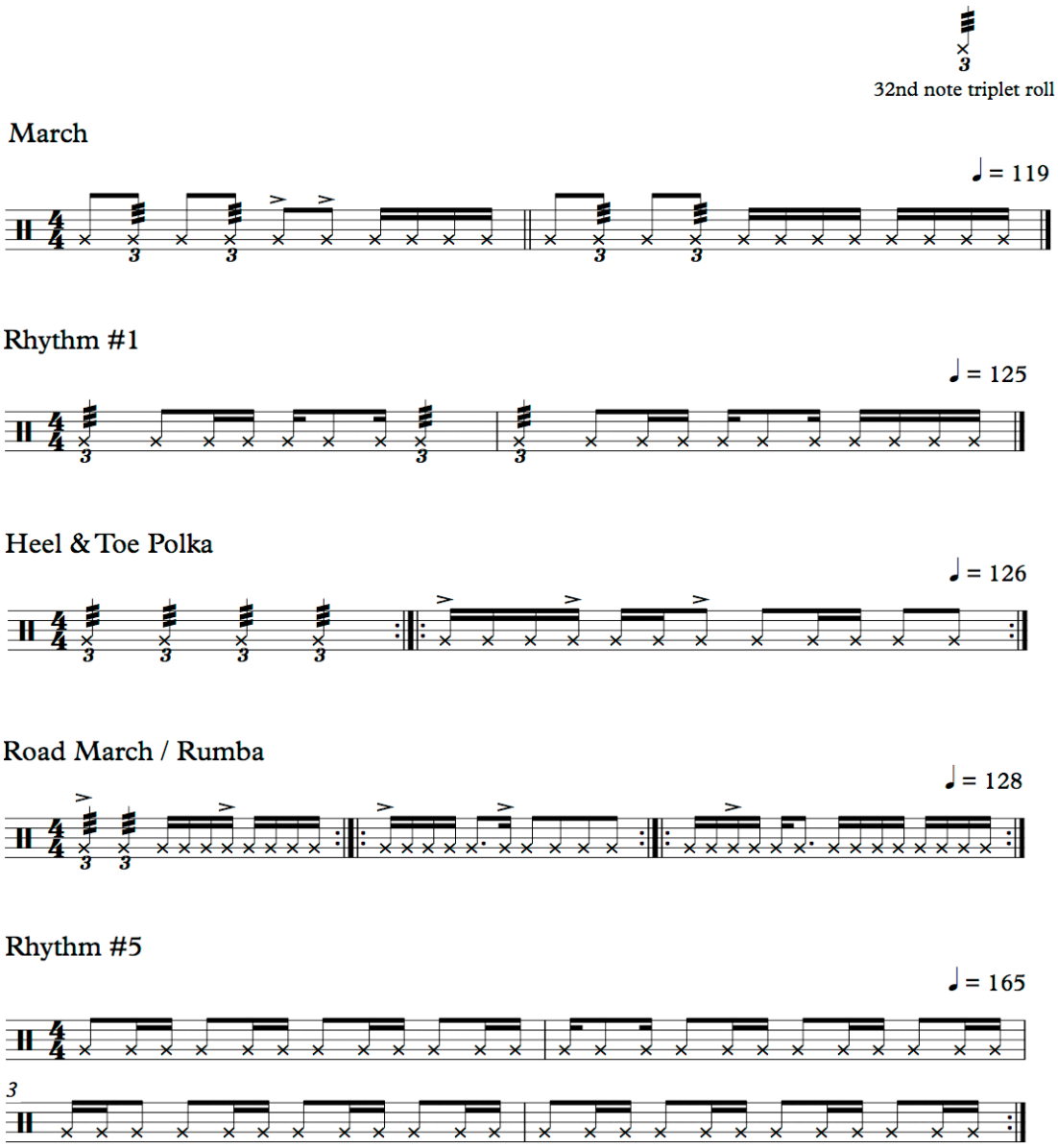

Figure 4.4. Masquerade rhythm notations. These notations were transcribed from a CD-ROM of Montserrat's masquerade music, provided to the author by ZJB Radio. These are the basic patterns identified in the goatskin snare drum part in the March, Rhythm #1 (Cudjoe Head #1), the Heel and Toe Polka, the Road March/Rumba, and Rhythm #5. The tempo markings are metronome approximations based on the CD-ROM recordings. Listen to the masquerade dance rhythms at: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/masquerade-dance-music/. Transcriptions courtesy of Julia Topper (Musicology & Ethnomusicology Division, School of Music, College Park, MD).

I have documented these rhythms using musical notation, but I never saw any written notation during my lessons. Instead, I learned to "sing" the rhythm with "brahs," "pahs," and "dahs." The entire process was oral/aural—as is common in many oral traditions, each of which has its own, sometimes codified, system of syllables to represent different percussive sounds. I wanted to write down what I learned and practice the details of technique, such as which hand to use to make each sound, but I was told that it did not matter, as long as the rhythm was correct. I was only told to keep my wrists loose and to keep singing the patterns in my head. Bear also showed me the "real" drum that they use in masquerade—not the cheap metal snare drums that we practiced on, but a handmade goatskin kettledrum that was kept aside for performances. He played it for me but explained that the sound was cold and dead because it had been sitting in the dark closet; it would not produce that indescribable "sweet" sound of the masquerade unless it were played outside in the hot sun during a festival or parade. It was the heat, he said, that created the right circumstances for producing the rhythm and the appropriate dynamics.

One day, De Bear pulled out his masquerade fife during one of my lessons to teach me how to respond to the fife's call with the snare drum rhythms. Even though I had seen and heard the masquerade dance many times, I did not realize until this moment that the fife and drum engage in a call-and-response conversation. He played a specific melody phrase and I tried to respond with the appropriate masquerade rhythm on the snare drum. Like with the steel pan, I had trouble syncing up the melody with the rhythm. I understood when Bear sang the rhythms and I could echo them easily with my voice, but when he played them on the drum with all the rolls,

ornamentation, and "feeling," they sounded unrecognizable. Just as when I heard the masquerade band play during the festivals, I heard a nice flow, but when I myself was required to respond and interact with the fife, everything became a jumbled unintelligible mess. During my lessons, I had no pre-existing mental schema for interpreting these rhythms—I could not organize the sounds in my head and I had no idea how they fit in with the fife melodies. Looking at the rhythm transcriptions later (Figure 4.4), however, I realized that the fife-drum conversation is nonrandom and based on a crucial understanding of the masquerade's melodic and rhythmic vocabularies.



Figure 4.5. Masquerade exhibition at the National Trust. Traditional masquerade instruments and costume elements, including the fife (right) that plays the melody and goatskin snare/kettle drum (left) that responds with a "sweet" sound when played outside and warmed by the sun. This display was part of an exhibition of Montserratian culture at the National Trust in Woodlands. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 27, 2014).

Years of practice are required to learn the structures of masquerade music and absorb its stylistic dynamics. When I sang the different rhythms with De Bear, I felt that I understood the logic of the masquerades, but when I tried to play them by myself, I realized that there is more to the masquerades than logic. As both Bear and Titus (see Chapter 2) explained, you need the sun, you "light up," the "hot" feeling is in you. And this "feeling" is learned through the accumulation of experiences at festival events and in other social interactions. This is why the festival cycle described in Chapter 3 is so critical, and this is why masquerade presence at festival performances is essential. How else could one learn how to create—and recognize—the experience of "lighting up" with Montserratianness?

Again, like with learning the steel pan, I tried to deepen my understanding of musical rhythm through dance and movement. I took the information I had gleaned from my drumming revelations with me to masquerade dance rehearsals with the Ladies of Alliouagana, who met every other Tuesday in a classroom at Brades Primary School. The practice was led by troupe captain Yvonne Brade-Julius and was usually attended by four or five women, including myself. I observed very little correction or commentary at their practices, in contrast to what I observed at workshops and performances of the Emerald Shamioles. Titus and his captain apprentices were stern teachers who used verbal and physical corrections to hone the technique of the students, as more is at stake for the Emerald Shamioles when they perform locally, regionally, and internationally to proudly represent Montserrat's "national" masquerade tradition. The Ladies of Alliouagana, on the other hand, expressed that they dance primarily for enjoyment—they reported that they joined the

troupe for exercise and because they simply loved to dance. The rehearsals reflected that enjoyment—they were relaxed and informal, although each dancer took the tradition seriously.

At the start of each practice, Yvonne pressed play on the CD player and we danced straight through all eight masquerade dances without stopping once for instruction or correction. Yvonne barked out the "One!", "Move!", and "Ladies' change!" commands and I was pulled from place to place throughout the quadrille set, thrown into fast swings, guided through promenades, and pushed out front when it came time for solos. After about twenty minutes, the whirlwind was over, and the Ladies were finished—sweating, panting, and smiling. We went outside for fresh air to cool off and discussed topics such as costumes, recipes, kids, and some gossip.

After each practice, I ran to my car to scribble notes and record voice memos in an attempt to document what I had learned and capture the disorientation that my Irish dancer body had just experienced. I had sweated along with them, but I never became proficient enough to generate that distinctive "heat" that is the masquerade dance. I was still focused on the steps, the awkward positions, and trying to settle into the masquerade rhythms that I could not keep up with, despite my years of experience as a trained dancer. The dancing and the drumming classes informed each other, but for me it was an ongoing process of alternating between comprehension and confusion about the rhythms of Montserrat. Through my attempts to blend Montserrat's rhythms with the rhythms that I already knew, I experienced encounters between the familiar and the unfamiliar that led me to recognize where my own personal and physical biases lay, based on my previous dance training.

Blending rhythms

When I first visited Montserrat for St. Patrick's Festival in March 2013, it was immediately clear to me that there was a strong emphasis on the arts among island residents. I saw music and dance everywhere—children sang on stage, the Volpanics steel pan orchestra performed during Rhythm Night, and the young Emerald Shamioles masquerade troupe danced throughout St. Patrick's Week. That year, I also attended a special drumming and dance workshop taught by Jalikunda, the West African troupe that was visiting Montserrat for the first annual African Music Festival. Music students from St. Augustine Primary School attended the workshop in Salem and the children were excited to bang on the djembes that the band had brought with them. They wanted to learn more of the rhythms and dances, but time was limited because, as is typical on Montserrat, the band was only passing through the island for a few days.

During that first trip, I repeatedly heard the catchphrase "completing the triangle" to describe the blending of Montserrat's Irish, African, and Caribbean cultures. The idea inspired me to brainstorm a program to offer free workshops for children and adults in the community that would combine Irish dancing and West African drumming. After I returned home, I emailed a proposal to Kato Kimbugwe of the African Music Festival committee and Herman "Cupid" Francis at the Culture Division; I called it "Blended Rhythms," and I proposed launching the workshops the following year during my fieldwork, starting in January 2014 and leading up to St. Patrick's Festival in March. I explained that Blended Rhythms was inspired by the "mixing" of Irish and African cultures that I had seen during the joint St. Patrick's

and African Music Festivals that year. I described Blended Rhythms as a cultural initiative that might "drum up community" and encourage local participation in the next St. Patrick's Festival. Both Kimbugwe and Mr. Francis were enthusiastic, and the latter offered to help with registration and securing venues for classes, rehearsals, and performances. I asked Dominique Mbaye, one of the members of Jalikunda (who had no previous connection to Montserrat), to return to the island for the two months leading up to St. Patrick's Festival 2014 to teach West African djembe classes, and he agreed to the offer.[5] I developed the combined Irish dance and African drumming workshops as an experiment through which I could gauge local community response. Who would participate—locals, ex-pats, adults, children? Would participants identify more with Irish or African traditions, or would they be equally interested or disinterested in both? Would our traditions be regarded as completely foreign, or would one or both be somewhat familiar? Would the program prompt conversations about Irish and African cultures in Montserrat's "triangular" heritage?

We initially planned to teach once a week at each of the four schools on Montserrat (Lookout, Brades, St. Augustine, and the Secondary School), and once a week in the evening for adults at the Old Primary School in Salem. The details of the classes were announced on ZJB's Community Diary (a fifteen-minute community news bulletin repeated five times daily), in radio interviews with Basil Chambers and Rose Willock, and on the evening news on ZJB throughout the week before the workshops began. I ran an online blog (http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/) and registered social media accounts (Twitter: https://twitter.com/MontyRhythms/

[5] Dominique Mbaye and I negotiated a fee, and I compensated him for his work, travel, and accommodation from my own funds.

and Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/BlendedRhythms/) to distribute schedules, updates, and photos and videos from our classes and performances.

In early January 2014, we made in-person announcements at each of the four schools about the free after-school classes that we would be offering over the next two months. In the first week, we had about twenty students in each class at Brades/Lookout Primary School in Lookout[6] and about twenty-five students in each class at St. Augustine Primary School in Palm Loop in Woodlands. The numbers were so overwhelming at the start (and too high to accommodate with our limited number of drums and the small size of the classrooms) that we had to divide the classes by age so that the younger children had a half hour lesson, followed by a forty-five-minute lesson for the older students. Participation at Lookout School tapered off significantly as the weeks went by, but we maintained a strong cohort of students at St. Augustine School and Brades School, thanks to strong support from the faculty and parents. On our first day at the Montserrat Secondary School (MSS), only one student showed up at the drumming class and none at the dance class due to transportation issues and conflicting bus schedules, so the Blended Rhythms program did not continue at MSS. Attendance at the schools was very inconsistent—each week we lost some students, but we also had curious new students wander in from time to time. By the time St. Patrick's Week came around, we had about five or six dedicated dancers and about the same number of drummers at each of the three schools who were willing to perform on stage and in the upcoming parade.

[6] At that time in early 2014, Lookout and Brades Primary Schools were combined at the Lookout campus due to remodeling of the Montserrat Secondary School, whose students had temporarily taken over the Brades campus. Students returned to their respective campuses in mid-February, and Blended Rhythms adjusted its schedule accordingly by adding a separate weekly workshop for Brades students alone.



Figure 4.6. West African drumming lessons at St. Augustine Primary School. Dominique Mbaye of Senegal teaches the basic rhythms of West African djembe drumming to students at St. Augustine Primary School. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (January 20, 2014).



Figure 4.7. Irish dancing lesson at Lookout Primary School. Kate Spanos teaches a "roll in" from an Irish social dance to students at Lookout Primary School. Photograph by Dominique Mbaye (February 22, 2014).

We opened up both the Irish dance and African drumming classes to all students, but enrollment at the schools worked out such that dancers were exclusively girls and drummers were almost all boys. Some of the boys, especially those that I knew were masquerade dancers, peeked into the dance classes with curiosity over the weeks, and I encouraged them to join in. They picked up the steps quickly but were also cautious and shy, especially when some of the girls laughed at them for dancing. As for the drumming, I noticed that older girls rarely joined in the djembe classes, although a couple of younger girls (around age five or six) happily banged away with the boys. I was surprised because I had seen the boys dancing in the Emerald Shamioles masquerade troupe, and I had seen both boys and girls participating in the school steel pan orchestras, but the trend suggested a clear divide—boys were not expected to dance and girls were not expected to drum.

We had a large turnout for the first evening of adult classes at the Old Primary School in Salem. We had about twenty-five drumming students (mostly women, but about a quarter men), most of who stayed and also participated in the Irish dance class afterwards. About half of the students were ex-pats from the U.K., U.S., and Canada and the other half was comprised of local Montserratians or Caribbean immigrants from Jamaica, Guyana, and Haiti. Some participants had little or no previous experience with music or dance, but a number of them participated in other cultural activities on the island, such as the Volpanics Steel Pan Orchestra, the Ladies of Alliouagana masquerade troupe, and the Emerald Community Singers. Adult participation was also inconsistent and tapered off significantly as the weeks went by, resulting from a variety of factors, including: lack of transportation (Salem was far for

those living further north), busy and irregular schedules, the occasional island-wide loss of power, and simple loss of interest. We often had surprise guests—young men who wandered in after playing basketball on the court outside, or visiting tourists who heard about the classes through the grapevine. I could not to establish a regular cycle of workshops, and I never knew who or what to expect. I stopped planning ahead and instead improvised on the spot in order to cater the classes to those who showed up.

Our biggest practical challenge was "wrangling" the drums, or getting them from place to place. Because we had no funds to buy instruments, we had to find drums on the island to use, and Mr. Francis put out a call to musicians all over the island until we managed to collect about fifteen conga drums and one djembe.[7] We stored the collection of congas in our apartment's living room, and we transported them to and from class in our rented Jeep, with the help of Mr. Francis. When we arrived at the schools, the young students— some of them not much taller than the drums themselves—ran to help us carry the instruments to the classrooms. But the drums belonged to the community, not to us, so over time, the original owners asked us to return their congas, or the drums would be commissioned for another big community event. Eventually, we were left with about a third of the congas we started with. Wrangling the drums was the hardest part of the job, but it was a satisfying team effort that required coordination between multiple parties. I learned first-hand how Montserrat's maroon tradition of volunteerism (that Rose Willock had told me about) works in practice—the community shares and circulates resources across the island.

[7] We would have preferred to have more djembes since the techniques used to play conga and djembe drums differ significantly, but Dominique assured us that they would be suitable for teaching beginners. We won a small grant from the "Awesome Without Borders" chapter of the Awesome Foundation to purchase two small djembes for "Blended Rhythms"; we ordered them in early January 2014, but they did not arrive until the day after I left Montserrat in mid-May.





Figures 4.8 and 4.9. Blended Rhythms workshops for adults at the Old Salem School. The first adult Blended Rhythms workshops at the Old Salem Primary School: West African drumming with Dominique Mbaye (above) and Irish dancing with Kate Spanos (below). Photographs by Kathleen Spanos (January 14, 2014).

At the end of the program, the Blended Rhythms students had a number of opportunities to perform throughout the St. Patrick's Week of Activities in 2014. Adult Irish dancers performed an eight-person *céili dance* (social dance) called "The Siege of Carrick" with live music from the Martin Healy Band from Dublin at the Emerald Community Singers' "Shamrock Cabaret." On the African Music Festival stage, before the main acts Jalikunda and Oliver Mtukudzi performed, a group of about ten adult Blended Rhythms drummers performed some rhythms (*assiko*, *kassa*, and *sinte*) from the program curriculum, and they kept going even when the lights and speakers went out in the middle of the performance due to a power outage. St. Augustine School dancers also performed at the St. Patrick's Catholic Dinner and dancers from Brades and Lookout Schools participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Slave Feast celebration after the parade gave Blended Rhythms dancers (both adults and children) an opportunity to perform throughout the day. The performances were impromptu and informal, and the performers jumped on stage at various times when emcee Basil Chambers invited them to demonstrate what they had learned over the past two months. We danced to whatever music was available on stage at the time—high-powered local soca music, the Irish reels of a British tourist's fiddle, or the djembe rhythms and *kora* (West African harp) melodies of Jalikunda. Some of the adult Blended Rhythms performers were upset or frustrated with the lack of organization and informality, but it was indicative of a trend: we repeatedly found ourselves in positions that required improvisation, creativity, flexibility, and resourcefulness.

I recognized from the beginning of Blended Rhythms that I was putting myself in a tricky position of authority while I was simultaneously conducting ethnographic research, and I took a careful approach to my teaching. My Irish dance classes focused on basic steps and choreographic formations, and I was relaxed about certain rules of step dance technique—I did not nag about the usual Irish dance standards of straight arms, crossed legs, or turned out feet. I realized that my young students were entirely unfamiliar with Irish dance—none of the children had seen or heard of *Riverdance* (the show that introduced many to Irish dance and became a global phenomenon), they had no context for it, and when they first saw me dance and they called it "Irish tap dancing." I chose not to correct them or dwell on technicalities, which was initially difficult for me since my own Irish dance training was so focused on these details.[8] Rather than force a foreign technique on my students, the lessons were more about interactive and creative collaboration in the classroom. I focused less on the visual attributes of the dance and more on repeating elements of rhythm—for example, I incorporated vocal chanting of the steps into the classes ("kick kick, one two three") to keep the students engaged and cooperative. (This method of singing steps is common in Irish dance pedagogy.) I had chosen recorded Irish music to use during the classes (including traditional Irish groups such as Solas, Flook, Danú, and Liz Carroll), but the screaming children often made the CD player inaudible and the music was ignored. Instead, we focused on making music with our bodies and integrating our voices with our feet.

[8] A typical class in the competitive Irish step dance tradition that I was trained in involves countless drills and disciplined repetition of steps. Students often dance one or two at a time, while the rest of the students are expected to wait their turn quietly in a line in the back of the room. The instructor often chases students across the floor while they dance, yelling out corrections.

Dominique's djembe classes also involved repetition of basic West African drumming patterns, such as *kassa*, *sinte*, *assiko*, and *sounou*, and students learned to identify and play breaks in the rhythms. He did not harp on technique or use any form of notation, but he taught with rhythmic syllables from the West African tradition to describe different djembe patterns: "padimpa petem padimpa," "kakangka kankakankaka," and "bambambam bambambam." His teaching style was also collaborative—he would play the rhythm a few times for demonstration and then the class would echo, sometimes as a collective and sometimes one at a time for individual correction, either playing or singing or both. In short, Dominique and I both taught our workshops based on the premise that a fundamental understanding of rhythm was a language that we could all share.

I identified some "blending" of Irish, African, and Montserratian rhythms that arose organically from creative improvisations by students and contributed to a "rhythmic conversation" between different movements and percussive elements. I noted which of the new and "foreign" elements the students recognized as similar to dances or rhythms that they already knew, and how they modified them to make them their own. For example, older students innovated some of their own variations on the steps I taught them, such as volunteering to add a body roll or sway of the hips (a no-no in Irish step dancing) to create their "salsa" version of a basic Irish *sean nós* ("old style") step, in which the leg alternates between crossing in front of the body and stepping out to the side (see http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-irish-dance-workshop-at-st-augustine-school/, Video #9). The drumming students also added their own flavor to the classes by spontaneously chanting Montserratian folk

songs in time with the djembe rhythms. For example, one afternoon, boys at Lookout School started belting out the lyrics to the calypso hit of the Christmas season—2014 Monarch Baptiste Wallace's "Dracula System"—while they played the assiko rhythm. It turns out that assiko is rhythmically related to the soca/calypso rhythm (see Figure 4.10 and watch http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-west-african-drumming-workshop-at-lookout-primary-school/, Video #10). It was significant that assiko inspired this outburst, but rhythms such as the West African sounou or sinte, or the Irish jig or reel, did not. Assiko shares the "rhythmic feel" of Caribbean calypso and soca, described by Shannon Dudley as an intuitive response to the music, through movement, dancing, or singing, that is required for understanding calypso/soca (2004, 48-49). This improvisation by the young students indicated that they kinesthetically recognized the basic rhythmic connection between assiko and soca, without any lecturing or verbal prompting, and they made the West African rhythm their own by singing the latest local calypso/soca hit on top of it.[9]

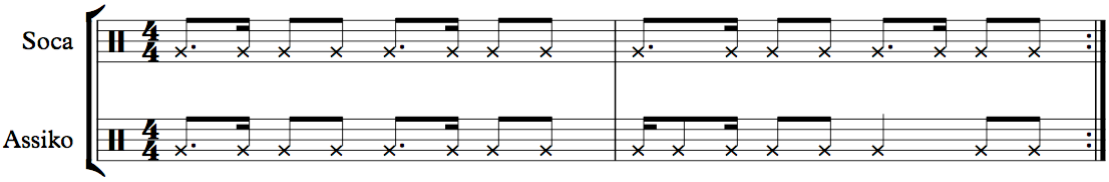

Figure 4.10. Soca and assiko rhythm notation comparison. This notation comparison shows the fundamental similarities between the basic soca and assiko rhythm patterns. I learned the soca rhythm notation from online instructional videos, and I have transcribed the assiko rhythm from Blended Rhythms classes. Both in 4/4 time, the basic pattern includes a dotted 8th note beamed with a 16th note, followed by two beamed 8th notes, and repeated twice per measure. A variation is introduced in the second measure of the assiko notation. Both soca and assiko are subject to many variations, of course, but both are rooted in the same basic groove shown in the first measure.

[9] The assiko rhythm/dance is popular in Senegal, especially on Gorée Island off the coast of Dakar, where Blended Rhythms instructor Dominique Mbaye was born and raised. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Gorée Island is known for being the largest African port on the Atlantic slave trade route to the Americas. Further research would be required to determine the origins of both assiko and soca, and any historical connections between the two in the West Indies and West Africa.

One of the few times that Blended Rhythms achieved a full "exchange" of all three Irish, African, and Montserratian rhythmic languages was one night after the adult workshops at the Old Salem School. After class, an impromptu jam materialized on the basketball court outside of the school and I found myself dancing a combination of Irish dance and the Heel and Toe with some of the Ladies of Alliouagana, while Dominique played his djembe. No one ever commented on what the "triangular" collaboration meant or what the exchange felt like—we just laughed as we tried to imitate each other's moves and had fun with it. As a dance academic, I am used to long conversations about the meanings behind such intercultural exchanges, but the silence was significant because there was simply nothing remarkable to comment on at that time that was not already addressed in the rhythmic conversation that we had just had. We tacitly acknowledged the similarities and accepted the differences between our distinct Irish, African, and Montserratian styles.

I experienced many such illuminating rhythmic conversations throughout my fieldwork, but verbal conversations about such experiences rarely occurred. Initially, I had notions that I might contribute to Montserrat's "green" and that my own initiatives might spark some dialogues or debates about cultural identity, like those that arise among the community during St. Patrick's Festival. After I made the circumstances and opportunities for blending rhythms possible, instead of forcing it, I tried to let go of the steering wheel as best I could and allow the intercultural exchange to flow as naturally as possible. Although my original concept arose from academic conversations about the connections between Irish and African traditions on Montserrat, I made the decision to not explicitly discuss history or emphasize these

connections as part of the program. I did not want to force the issue in conversation and instead wanted to see what I could learn through "kinesthetic empathy"—the social interactions and embodied engagements that result from sharing the rhythms of dance and music (Reynolds and Reason 2012). I said nothing about possible connections between Ireland and Montserrat or between Irish steps and the masquerade's Heel and Toe, although I did teach them a "heel toe heel" step that has similar elements. I added no commentary about the possible connections to the masquerade step and received no commentary back. I felt that the children responded as children do—they easily incorporated the new rhythms into their young bodies without thinking too much about how foreign or unfamiliar they were to their home culture. The adults in Blended Rhythms were well aware of my research interests, and some provided me with further information outside of class, but the classes themselves were focused only on the movements and rhythms.

I made the conscious decision to engage with the community through sharing my knowledge of Irish dance, even though I knew it was a non-traditional anthropological approach—more so because it was held at the beginning of my fieldwork and not at the end as a gesture of reciprocity, which is the usual practice in anthropology. I knew from the start that my objectivity would be compromised but, in addition to being a dance ethnographer, I am an artist/performer who best connects to people by sharing dance and music. I noted how my teacher status changed the behavior of the students in attendance (the children called me "Miss Kate") and my relationships with parents and other community members during the workshops and after they were finished. I found that my contribution to the community helped me

build some rapport and a personal connection with local residents and their children that I would not have had otherwise. After the classes ended, many parents, schoolteachers, and other residents had positive things to say about the free workshops—they thanked me for my contribution, told me that the children enjoyed the classes, and said that I was "well-respected" on the island because of my work. They asked me if I would continue the program the following year, but although I tried to secure funding to do so, the money did not come through. As such, Blended Rhythms did not become part of Montserrat's established music and dance cycle.

When I asked adult participants for feedback on the Blended Rhythms workshops, dancers and drummers told me how much they enjoyed the classes—whether or not they were particularly interested in Irish or African cultures, the exercise "got them through the week" and kept their spirits high. I found that the adults who were already involved in other cultural activities (steel pan, masquerades, Emerald Community Singers, etc.) were the most consistent attendees because of their general interest in music and dance. The older girls in my Irish dance classes told me they came because they loved dancing, any kind of dancing. The younger children (ages 6-10) were simply intrigued by the classes, especially when they saw us arrive on the school campus with a Jeep full of congas each week—me, the white American woman with the loud shoes, and Dominique, the dreadlocked African man with the loud drums. In the end, Blended Rhythms was semi-successful but also not a huge hit with the local community; the free classes were appreciated and provided entertainment, but they were also not impactful. It was clear that we were just another pair of foreigners passing through temporarily.

Is Montserrat's masquerade dance Irish?

If there was one question that I was qualified to answer as I embarked on this dissertation project, it was whether or not there are pronounced Irish dance influences in the masquerades of Montserrat. The quadrille formations are unmistakably European in origin (whether Irish, Scottish, English, French, or other; see Chapter 2), and this has been widely documented by other scholars (e.g., Daniel 2011; Manuel 2009). In this section, however, I analyze the specific footwork and dynamics of the dance based on my observations and my phenomenological experiences while learning the masquerades as an Irish dancer. I do this analysis to address two questions: (1) how Irish is Montserrat's masquerade dance, and (2) what are the ingredients required to make Montserrat's masquerade dance so "hot"?

I am primarily trained in contemporary competitive Irish step dance, a genre that originates from the Munster province of Ireland and features fast intricate footwork, high jumps, a rigid upper body posture, and strict rules about keeping the knees and legs crossed, the feet turned out, and the toes pointed. This form of step dance is the one that developed into the sexier contemporary "show" style that started in the mid-1990s with popular Irish dance shows like *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance*. Old style step dancing is the more traditional precursor to modern-day step dancing and comes from Munster counties such as Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary—the footwork is a bit simpler and more elegant than today's athletic step dancing, the rhythms are more melodic and tied to specific tunes, and the body maintains a more relaxed posture. I am also trained in sean nós dance, which literally means "old style" dance (not to be confused with old style *step* dancing) and comes from Connemara in

the west of Ireland; the style is relaxed, more emotionally connected to the music and the musician, and is almost entirely improvisational. Festival style dancing from Ulster province in Northern Ireland, especially around Belfast, is a distinct Irish dance style that combines elements from Irish step dancing, ballet, and Scottish highland dancing. These styles all incorporate both "hard shoe" (with fiberglass toes and heels for loud percussive sounds) and "soft shoe" (in ballet-like pumps for light and graceful movements) dances, except for sean nós, which is usually danced in leather-soled or metal tap shoes and is entirely percussive. Finally, céili dancing is Irish social dancing that involves figures to form long lines, quadrille-like squares (called "set dances"), or big circles of couples; the footwork is generally simple but may incorporate some step dance and/or percussive elements. All of these traditional and contemporary styles are still danced today, and I draw on my knowledge of all of them to evaluate the Irishness of the masquerades.

Aubrey Gwynn has suggested that the majority of Irish settlers on Montserrat likely came from Munster province because popular surnames on Montserrat (Ryan, Roche, Allen, etc.) are typical of counties in that region of Ireland (1932, 219-220). Thus, I begin my examination with a comparison between the basic masquerade 3-step pattern and the basic "threes" of Munster-style step dancing, both of which are used to move through quadrilles and other spatial formations in 4/4 time.[10] The contemporary Irish step dance tradition that I am familiar with today was "invented" in the 1920s, as part of Ireland's Gaelic League's nationalist agenda, so seems more likely that any Irish influence on eighteenth century masquerade dancing would have

[10] All eight of Montserrat's masquerade dances are in 4/4 time. Irish dances most frequently use the following rhythms: reel (4/4), jig—also known as double jig (6/8), single jig (12/8), slip jig (9/8), hornpipe (2/4 or 4/4), and polka (2/4).

come from "old style" Irish dance—that is, step dancing from Munster dating back to the seventeenth century (Brennan 2001; Foley 2013), which allowed for a looser body carriage and more improvisational creativity. I draw on my knowledge about old style step dancing as a guide, but my analyses are necessarily based in my experience with learning masquerade steps through a body that was trained in modern Irish dance.

I begin my comparative analysis of Montserrat's masquerade dance and Irish step dance using Labanotation. The Laban movement system encompasses: (1) Labanotation, a notation system use to record and analyze human movement (Hutchinson 1977; Kinkead 1995; Laban 1950; 1970; Marriett and Topaz 1986), and (2) Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), a more multidisciplinary method that borrows from anatomy, kinesiology, and psychology to describe, visualize, analyze, and document movement (Bartenieff and Lewis 1980); and (3) Motif notation, based on a combination of Labanotation symbols and LMA-based descriptions of body dynamics and style (Guest 2007). Both the masquerades and Irish dance are so-called "step styles,"[11] and I start with Labanotation in order to zoom in on the similarities and differences between basic footwork before moving onto body carriage and dynamic postural comparisons using LMA and Motif notation. I notate only the most basic and prominent elements of the steps, as they would be taught to a beginner, and I omit the finer details of the steps and their stylistic ornamentations in order to allow for easier visual comparison of the relevant elements for those unfamiliar with Laban systems.[12]

[11] Alan Lomax referred to "step styles" in his much-debated Choreometrics project as those that focus on leg- and foot-based patterns of movement. (See John Bishop's 2008 compilation of Choreometric films that features cultural dance forms from across the world, *Rhythms of Earth: The Choreometric Films of Alan Lomax & Forrestine Paulay*.)

[12] Text commentary is not typical in movement notation scores, but I include comments and annotations for the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with the Laban movement system.

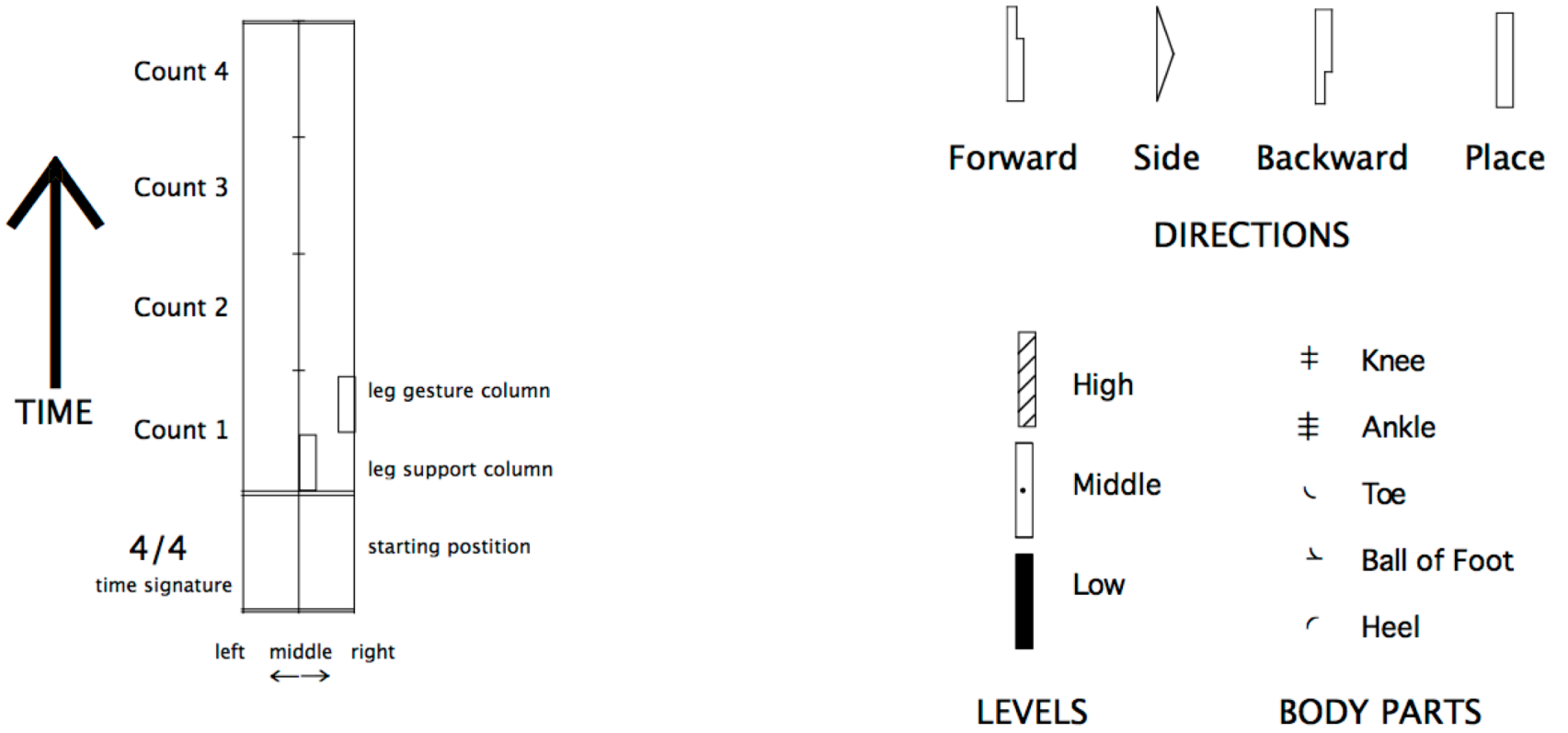

Figure 4.11. Labanotation key for symbols used. The staff on the left shows how to read Labanotation—from bottom to top. In this example, the time signature is 4/4 so there are 4 beats/counts in the measure. The staff is divided into left/right sides of the body and the small boxes show where leg supports and gestures are placed on the score (leg supports near the center line; leg gestures on the outer part of the staff). The symbols on the right show directions of movement (forward, side, backward, and place/no movement), shadings for levels (high, middle, and low), and symbols for parts of the leg and foot. (For more on Labanotation, see Hutchinson 1977 and Kinkead 1995.

I have created Labanotation scores to compare the most basic versions of the dances' 3-step patterns performed at moderate speeds (see Figure 4.12). Watch the basic 3-step patterns of the masquerades (http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-boys-masquerade-class-basic-3-step-pattern/, Video #11) and Irish dance (http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-irish-dance-threes-basic-3-step-pattern/, Video #12). Both steps can be danced in place, forward, or backward, but are most frequently used to advance through the space. In the masquerades, dancers remain grounded with the knees slightly bent, and they only slightly hop in the first beat of the measure, if they hop at all. The gesturing (non-supporting) leg makes a small gesture, a low kick that presses the flexed foot back towards the ground in preparation to take weight for the next iteration of the pattern. In the "threes" of Irish dance, the first beat of the measure is a big hop during which the pointed foot of the gesturing (non-hopping) leg flicks up high to kick the rear, and the entire pattern is performed high on the balls of the feet. The hop in Irish dance is an essential feature of the 3-step pattern, whereas in the masquerades, the hop is optional and depends on personal style or the energy dictated by the music. A clear differentiation between the upper and lower leg is visible in the forced angularity of Irish dance, whereas the moderate and relaxed flexion of knees and ankles in the masquerade dancers' legs create a more "curved" look. The feet follow the same rhythmic pattern but the main difference is in the spatial pull of the dance—Irish dancers pull up from a narrow base on the vertical dimension, while masquerade dancers push down from a neutral low base and also utilize horizontal (side to side) and sagittal (front to back) space.

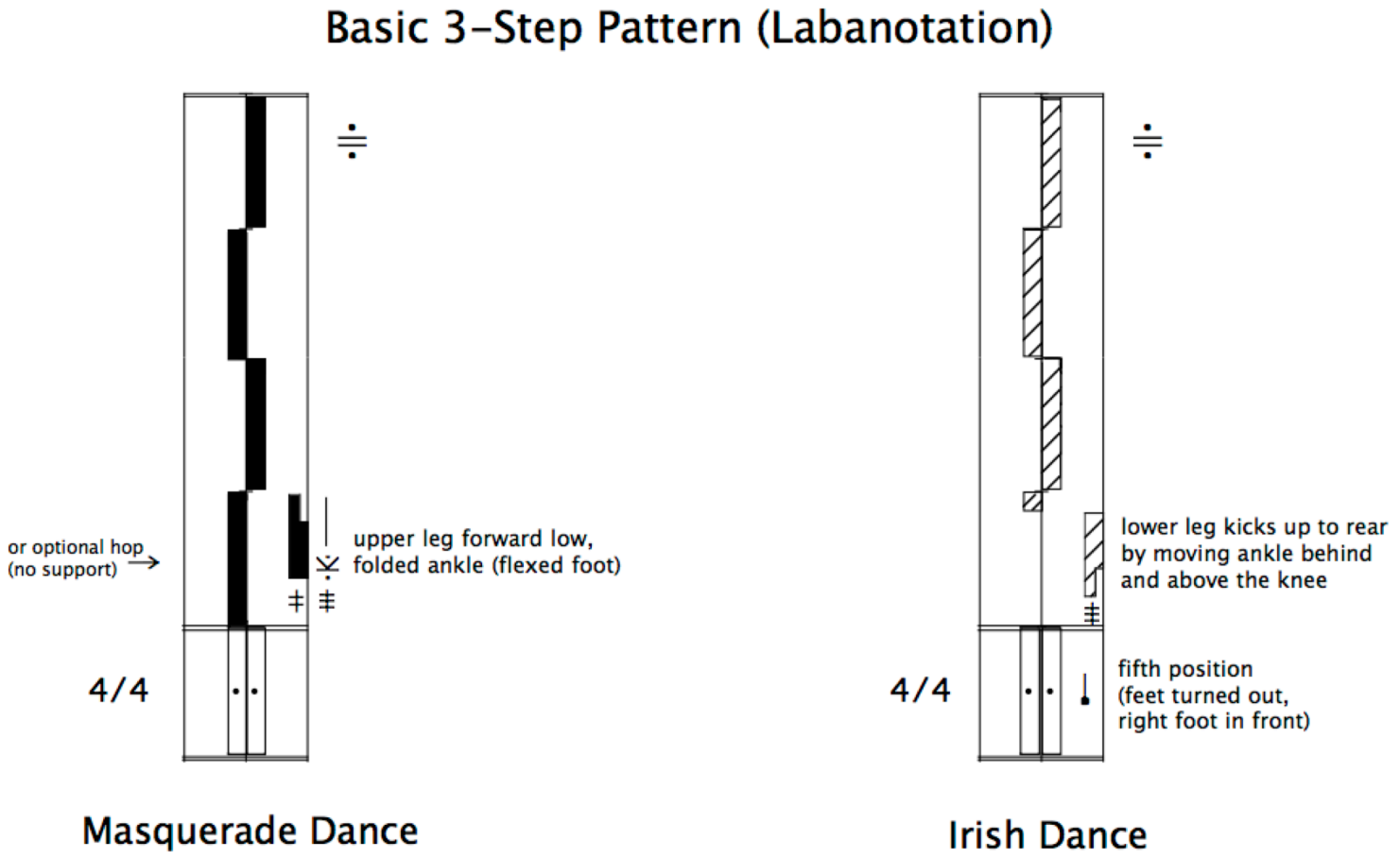

Figure 4.12. Labanotation analysis for basic 3-step patterns. The main difference is the level at which the step is performed—high on the toes in Irish dance and low (with a slight bend in the knees) in masquerade dance. In Irish dance, the first beat of the measure is a big hop on one foot, with the gesturing (non-hopping) leg kicking up high at the back with the foot pointed. In the first beat of this pattern in the masquerade dance, the knee moves slightly up and forward and the flexed ankle lifts (sometimes with a small kick) before stepping down. Masquerade dancers either keep the supporting leg on the ground or else add a small hop on the first beat of the measure.

As for the Heel and Toe Polka, it is possible that the step came to Montserrat with the island's Irish settlers, but it is unlikely that the term derives from the era surrounding the 1768 St. Patrick's rebellion because polka-like dances were not referred to as such until the nineteenth century in Bohemia in Central Europe (Zíbrt 1895). The masquerade polka step is similar to some simple elements of hornpipe steps that I have done in Irish dancing (usually in 2/4 or 4/4 time), though I and peers that I consulted with have never specifically heard of a "heel and toe polka" in either Irish step dancing (solo reels, jigs, slip jigs, and hornpipes) or Irish céili set dancing (which includes polka, hornpipe, reel, jig, and slide sets in quadrilles for four couples). There is also no reference to "heel and toe" steps in any of the authoritative texts for Irish music, step dance, and céili/set dance (Breathnach 1971; Brennan 2001; Murphy 1995; Ní Bhriain 2008).[13] The heel-toe footwork is certainly reminiscent of traditional Irish step dance and sean nós styles, both of which rely heavily on heels and toes for their percussive character, but the footwork could just as easily be related to other styles from the British Isles, such as Scottish highland dancing or English Morris dance, both of which also make use of heels and toes for lateral sideways movement. There are plenty of "New World" examples of heel-toe polkas with exactly the same pattern ("heel, toe, one two three") as the masquerades—for example, in American line and square dancing, Canadian folk dance, and even Australian bush dancing. In these "New World" dances, the step likely originated in

[13] Pat Murphy's authoritative manual for Irish set dancing (most of them in quadrille formation) does not describe any steps or figures that use heel and/or toe footwork. In the introduction, Murphy describes a number of common steps, but none among them involves a heel and toe polka; the "polka step" is simply described as a "one two three" step used to shift weight and move through the set. Throughout the book there are references to "gallops," stamps, sidesteps or "sevens," battering or "tapping it out," but nothing with a heel or a toe in any type of dance—polka, hornpipe, reel, jig, or slide (1995).

Ireland or the British Isles, but I have found no examples that are still danced today in Ireland. The "Heel Toe Polka" of an American barn dance (derived from Scottish, English, and/or Irish origins) is a good comparison for Montserrat's Heel and Toe Polka (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46K4V6xmOww, Video #14), and I also found a documented performance of a "Heel-and-Toe Polka" (also known as "the Bohemian") that does not specify the country of origin, but was reconstructed for the Library of Congress in 1998 from a late nineteenth-century dance manual (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZzLG4ahynA, Video #15).[14] The heel-toe footwork of these performances is nearly identical to Montserrat's Heel and Toe Polka but the key difference is in the vertical stress: the masqueraders dance down into the ground, whereas the performers in the videos pull their knees and thighs together to hop up towards the ceiling, just as I would perform the step as an Irish step dancer. It is also notable that the rhythm of Montserrat's Heel and Toe Polka is played in 4/4 time, not in the 2/4 time signature of a traditional Irish polka tune.[15] Montserrat's Heel and Toe likely has European origins, but its "polka" name would have been designated retroactively (not in the eighteenth century) and included in the lore of Irishness in the island's national tradition.

[14] The dance was reconstructed by Elizabeth Aldrich from a description in the dance manual *A Treatise on the Elements of Dancing* by T. Erp. Sichore (1891, 58-59). For more information about the video clip and similar Heel and Toe Polkas, see http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/dihtml/divideos.html#vc064.
[15] Irish polkas are dance tunes that are usually played in 2/4 time, with an off-beat or upbeat accent (one and *two* and three and *four*), and at a tempo of 130 beats per minute (BPM) or faster. A polka is subdivided into groups of fours and the accompaniment is double-timed so the tempo must be slow enough to support the underlying double-time accompaniment—i.e., the melody is "one two three four" and the accompaniment is "one and two and three and four" (Alex Boatright, September 22, 2015, e-mail message to author).

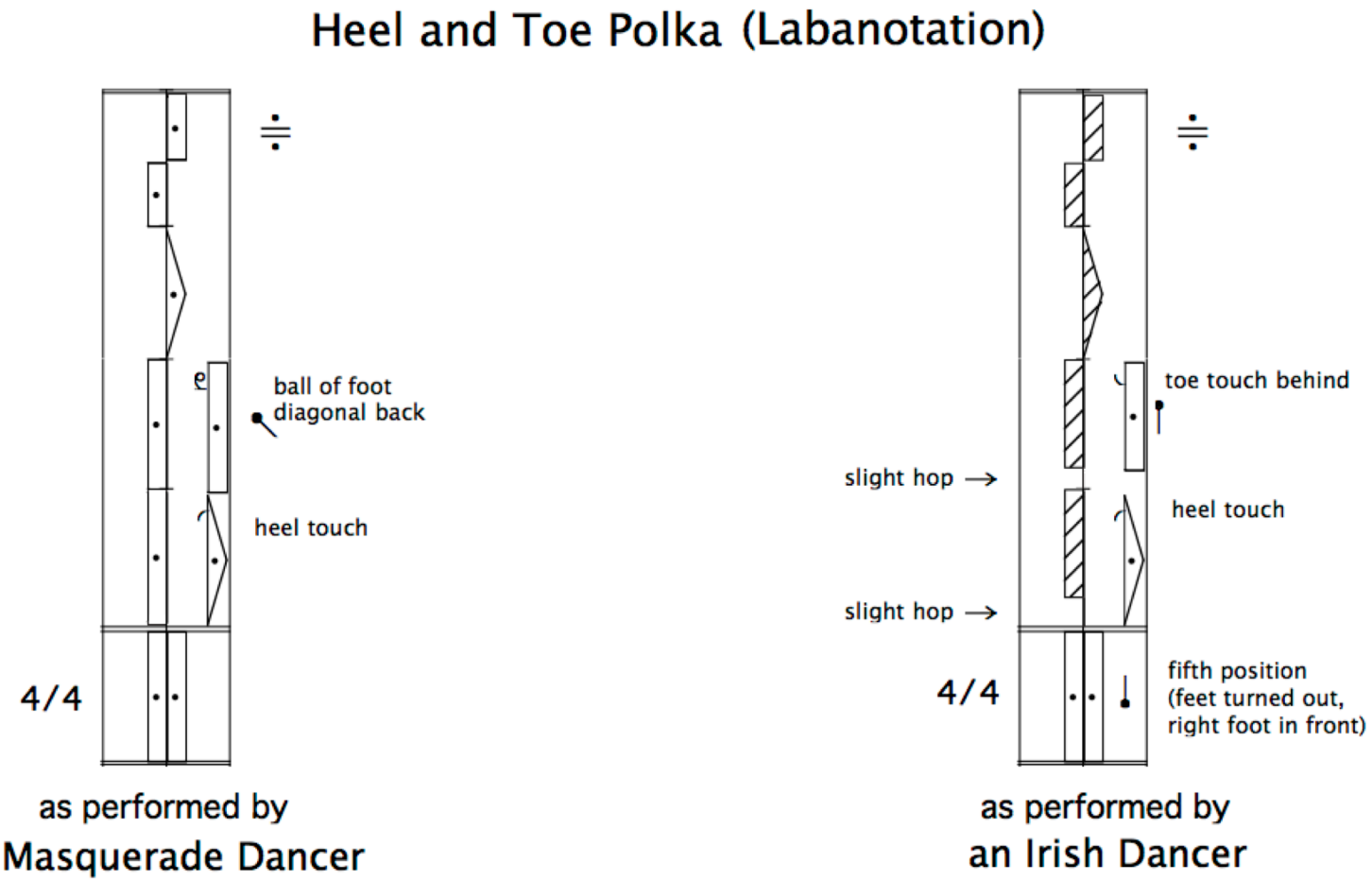

Figure 4.13. Labanotation for the Heel and Toe Polka step. The rhythmic patterns of the steps are identical but, as in the 3-step pattern (Figure 4.12), the main difference is the level at which the step is performed—high on the toes in Irish dance and lower (at middle level) in the masquerade dance. Dancing higher on the toes, an Irish dancer would perform this step with more buoyancy and hops than the typical masquerade dancer. However, the masquerade Heel and Toe is danced higher than the masquerade basic 3-step (Figure 4.12)—i.e., there is less of a bend in the knees in the Heel and Toe Polka, and the body is more upright.

I have given the myth of the masquerade dance the benefit of the doubt, and I have notated the pattern to reflect how an Irish step dancer (myself) would perform it today (Figure 4.13), since I do not have a specifically Irish "heel and toe" step to which I can refer. In my notation, the primary difference, again, is the lower level of the masquerade style, the smaller (or nonexistent) hop, the shuffling of the feet, and more relaxation in the knees to create less tightness/rigidity between the legs and allow for more connection with the ground (see http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-emerald-shamioles-masquerade-troupe-heel-toe-polka/, Video #13). Compared to the other masquerade steps, however, the Heel and Toe Polka is danced more upright, at middle level rather than low level, and with more of lateral glide along the horizontal dimension than a vertical push down. Thus, the step is performed with more stylistic commonalities to Irish, Scottish, or English dancing than the other masquerade steps in Cudjoe Head #1, #2, and #3, or in the "hot" dances. I propose several reasons for this: (1) the step could have been passed down that way over the centuries; (2) it could be a deliberate attempt by more recent inventors/innovators of the tradition to look more "Irish"; or (3) it could simply be the mechanics of the heel/toe movements that require a more upright body posture.

I must note that the basic 3-step masquerade pattern is not dissimilar to other 3-step patterns danced to a 2/4 or 4/4 rhythm (i.e., "and one two three," "kick one two three," or "hop one two three") that are found in any number of dance styles coming from African, African-derived, or Native American traditions—in fact, the posture of the body in Montserrat's masquerades is more similar to these genres. The stamping

and spinning that masqueraders do is reminiscent of some Native American dancing found in the United States, and many West African dancers that I consulted with mentioned that the steps are especially similar to traditional dance forms from Ghana. Ghanaian dance expert Mustapha Braimah recognized many elements in Montserrat's masquerades in dances that he was familiar with—for example, a heel/toe pattern performed by priests and priestesses in the *Tigare* ritual dance by the Ga people of Southern Ghana, some basic 3-step patterns in the *Takai* dance of the Dagomba people of Northern Ghana, the serving motions of the arms in dances of celebration and commemoration such as the Ewe tradition of *borborbor*, and the fancy dress costumes in the Christmastime *kaa-kaa-motobi* masquerades of the Takoradi people (October 15, 2015, College Park, MD, personal communication). At first glance, I see pronounced similarities in videos of recent performances of these dances, but there are also significant differences in specific patterns and body posture that make Montserrat's masquerades distinct. Further research would be required to conduct a full comparative analysis to determine historical and contemporary connections between Montserratian and Ghanaian dance. Many Montserratians told me that they traced their ancestry back to Ghana, so the connection between the dance traditions is likely and must be evaluated in more depth.

I question, as do other dancers, how to trace and make connections between apparently similar steps that are danced in distinct culturally specific forms (Dils and Albright 2001; Grau 2005; Kealiinohomoku 1983; Phillips 2013). In addition to my Irish dance background, I have also trained in West African and various Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Brazilian styles for the past ten years. Because of the posture of

the body while dancing masquerade, I found that the overall feeling was much more similar to dancing Afro-Caribbean styles, especially Jamaican dancehall and reggae because of the way that the shoulders bounce polyrhythmically and the knees lift up to emphasize the upbeat of the music.[16] When I danced masquerade, I tilted my torso slightly forward so that my center of gravity was lower in the abdomen (rather than just below the sternum, as in Irish dance) and pushed down to the ground instead up pulling up. Like in dancehall, I felt my torso contract between the frame created by my knees below and my shoulders above. For me, altering the traditional verticality of Irish dance movement to a more horizontal dimension and incorporating arm movements (held directly in front of the torso, rather than falling down straight to the sides) and the shoulder bounce added postural challenges and polyrhythms that made steps like the 3-step pattern and the Heel and Toe visually and kinesthetically very different. It was distinctly harder for me to perform what could have been fairly simple footwork for a trained step dancer.

The fundamental differences between masquerade dance and Irish dance performance are in the body attitudes and dynamic qualities of movement (including Body Effort), which can be represented with Motif Writing, a notation system based in Labanotation and Laban Movement Analysis (see Figures 4.15 and 4.16). The most obvious difference between masquerade dancing and Irish dancing is the directional pull of the body. Again, in the masquerades, the torso tilts forward and the center of gravity is low for a more grounded aesthetic; in Irish dance, the body is vertical and

[16] Dance scholar Christopher A. Walker describes how dancehall has evolved in Jamaica out of a "refashioning" of traditional dance forms like the Jonkonnu masquerade tradition "for the inclusion and development of new [traditional and folk movement ideas] to express contemporary society" (2008, 66). Contemporary dancehall and reggae dance require similar body attitudes and rhythmic qualities to those of traditional masquerade dances.

the dancer's center is at the higher center of levity, for a lighter and more lifted aesthetic. Masqueraders utilize a horizontal and sagittal plane (especially while spinning), while Irish dancers pull up and push down in the vertical space (i.e., even when turning, the pivot is on the vertical axis). In terms of Effort qualities, masquerade dancing generally involves shifting between configurations of Strong Weight, Indirect Space, Sustained Time, and Free Flow movements; Irish dance is the opposite, requiring configurations of predominantly Light Weight, Direct Space, Quick Time, and Bound Flow (Figure 4.15). The Indirect quality of Space Effort in the masquerades relates to the tradition of incorporating multiple perspectives, and the fluctuations in Flow Effort hint at the dance style's adaptability. This analysis is in line with my experiences with masquerade dancing as more varied and adaptable, in contrast to competitive Irish step dancing, which tends to be rule-based and more inclined towards maintaining tradition than allowing for personal innovation. The predominant Effort dynamics of the masquerade dance are performed with diminished intensity, allowing for more variability and easier shifting between Effort configurations. In Irish dance, shifting configurations of the predominant Effort qualities of Light Weight, Direct Space, Quick Time, and Bound Flow are performed with high intensity throughout, and exceptions tend to occur only for the purpose of further highlighting and intensifying that aesthetic. For example, Irish dancers briefly use Strong Weight to push into the floor and quickly hop back up, lending to the extreme lightness of the dance in general.

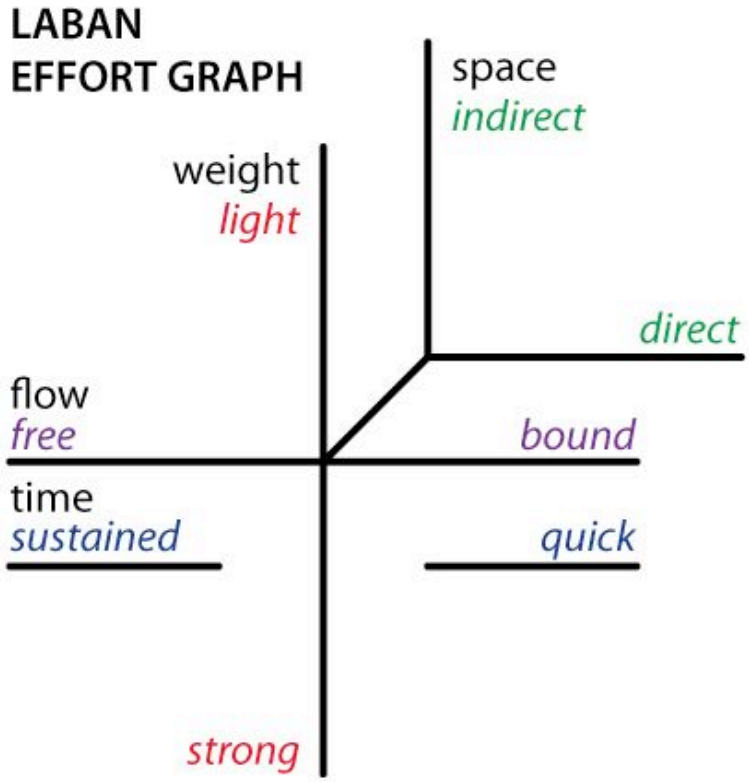

Figure 4.14. Laban Movement Analysis Effort graph. This diagram shows the Effort factors of Time, Weight, Space, and Flow. Effort elements of sustained/quick Time, strong/light Weight, indirect/direct Space, and free/bound Flow are placed on opposite polarities. Time, Weight, and Space are the categories of Effort Action, or Action Drive, which can be combined to create different dynamic qualities of action (float, punch/thrust, glide, slash, dab, wring, flick, and press). Flow, on the other hand, describes the dynamic quality of continuous motion (Bartenieff and Lewis 1980). Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Laban-effort-graph.jpg, accessed September 25, 2015.

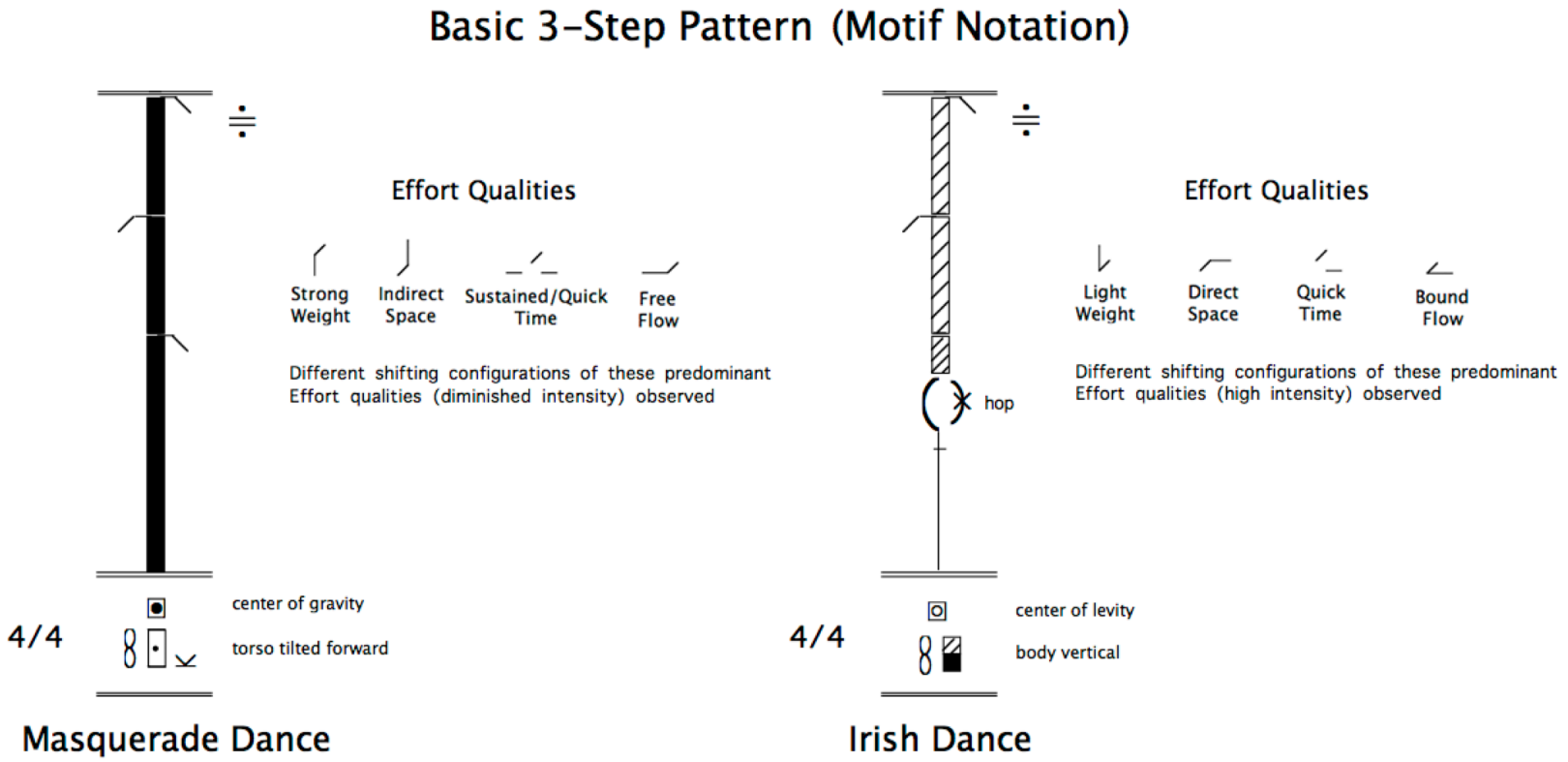

Figure 4.15. Motif notation for basic 3-step patterns. As in Labanotation (Figure 4.12), the difference in level is clear (low in masquerade dance and high in Irish dance), but this Motif analysis also describes body attitude and dynamics. The body attitude, or "home base," for masquerade dancers is a low center of gravity with the torso tilted forward; Irish dancers lift up from the center of levity and keep the body vertical by pulling up on the vertical axis. An Effort analysis of the basic 3-step pattern reveals that masqueraders tend to perform different shifting configurations of two or three predominant Effort qualities at a time with diminished intensity, indicating increased dynamic variability. For example, in the 3-step pattern, masquerade dancers tend to shift between Sustained and Quick Time and syncopate their steps. Irish dancers also perform shifting configurations of two or three Effort qualities at a time throughout the basic 3-step pattern, but with high intensity, demonstrating a more rigid technique and less dynamic variation. Although the Irish dance aesthetic is predominantly defined by moments of extremely Light Weight, Direct Space, Quick Time, and Bound Flow, dancers pass through other Effort qualities in order to achieve those extremes. For example, they momentarily use Strong Weight to push into the floor to hop up, and thus achieve the lightness that is typical of Irish dance.

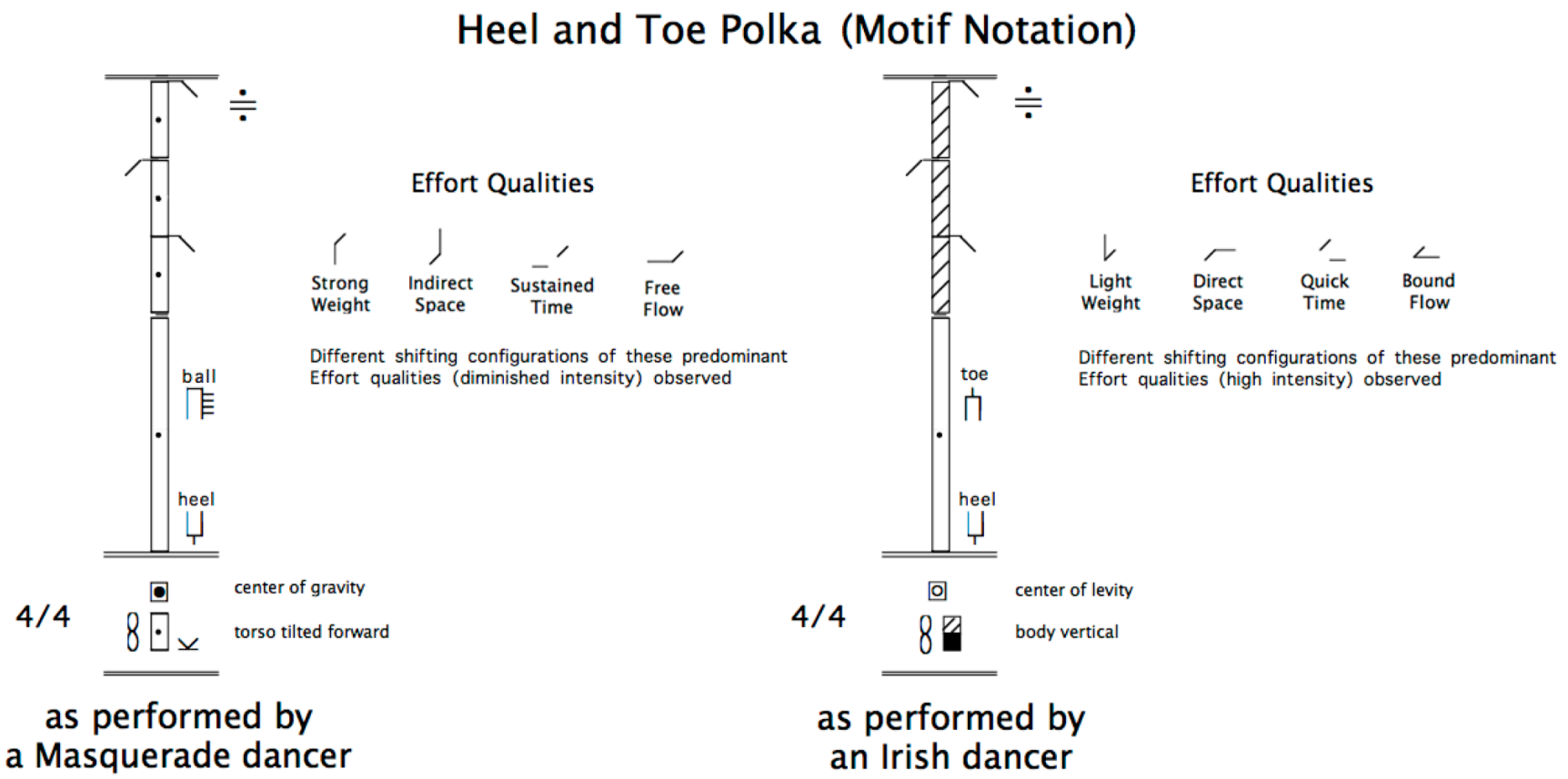

Figure 4.16. Motif notation for the Heel and Toe Polka step. This Motif notation of the Heel and Toe step reveals the general Effort dynamics of masquerade dancing and Irish dancing—that is, masqueraders generally dance in shifting configurations of Strong Weight, Indirect Space, Sustained Time, and Free Flow, and Irish dancers generally dance with Light Weight, Direct Space, Quick Time, and Bound Flow. The Heel and Toe step footwork is exactly the same in both of these notations, but the performed Effort qualities are on opposite ends of the spectra. This analysis indicates that even if masquerade dancers and Irish dancers perform the same footwork, the body positions and dynamics that are typical of each style/technique are visibly and kinesthetically distinct.

I use Motif notation as a tool to describe the general Effort qualities of Space, Weight, Time, and Flow in each dance style, but these broad categorizations, as I have notated them here, are too restrictive to encompass all the possible stylistic innovations of individual dancers. The movement is not about the "external structures" (Drewal 1991, first mentioned in Chapter 2 in the context of masquerade performance) of the dance—that is, the movement is not about what is visible in the Labanotation of the steps or calculated from an "etic" point of view.[17] Instead, it is about the improvisational "feeling" of the dance, the "hot" dynamics, and the intention embedded in the cultural material of the dance. Just like with any new dance form, a beginner student must first recognize the biases that stem from her own natural movement habits and then learn to embody the "groove" of the new dance. This groove is the swing of the dance and dictates how body weight shifts and where the center of gravity is located—somewhere between the upper chest down to the pelvis. In Irish dance, the pull up from the center of levity in the chest gives an impression of lightness; in West African dance, the pull down from the center of gravity in the lower abdomen grounds the body. Other examples from rhythmic and "groovy" dances include: the passionate tension in the chest and shoulders that counteracts the intricate stamping footwork in Spanish flamenco; the deceitfully easygoing torso swing of the *ginga* in Afro-Brazilian capoeira; the pulsating "jack" of the chest in urban house dance. These are the ways to lock into the rhythm of the

[17] Kenneth L. Pike's notion of "etic" versus "emic" in linguistic contrastive analysis refers to how outsiders (e.g., anthropologists, social scientists, linguists, etc.) describe cultural meaning versus how natives know or understand that information (1967). An etic point of view would be one that describes a system outside of the native conceptualization. Dance anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler uses these terms to discuss how linguistic methodologies can be used to study cultural dance forms as structured movement systems and systems of cultural knowledge (2000).

dance and express cultural information that would otherwise remain hidden in the footwork and positions of the body.

I went to Montserrat with a very specific Irish/Irish American bias, not only in terms of my scholarly research goals (in what books and at what festivals could I find Irishness on Montserrat?), but also in terms of my physical preferences for bodily movement and listening to rhythm. Even if I were able to be completely objective intellectually, it was impossible to slip out of the subjectivity and "body prejudices" (Moore and Yamamoto 1988, 67-96) formed by the movement habits I gained growing up as an Irish dancer in the United States. This subjectivity turned out to be an advantage in my research because I learned to recognize when my assumptions about what I read, saw, or heard did not correspond to what I felt. This bias became most apparent when I tried to embody the masquerade rhythm, and I had the same challenges of marrying melody and rhythm that I had in steel pan and masquerade drumming. When Irish step dancers and sean nós dancers perform—choreography or improvisation—they follow the melody of the tune and, from that, they create their own percussive rhythm to accompany the music. They are not drummers in the sense that they provide a steady beat—instead they provide an ornamental alternative pattern to complement the melody. In step dance in particular (unlike the improvisations of sean nós), pre-choreographed rhythms fit into the melody like pieces of a mathematical puzzle, and that logic is more important than any sense of dynamics or "feeling."[18] But in the masquerades, and in so many expressive forms of

[18] I do not mean to say that all Irish dance is unexpressive. However, in my experience, competitive Irish step dancers are trained as athletes to *not* be expressive and to be as stoic as possible in terms of body/torso dynamics; it is the feet that do the talking. Old style step dancing and sean nós are more relaxed and improvisational styles that leave room for humor, wit, and emotion.

movement, that "hot" feeling is what the dance is all about.

When I first tried to dance masquerade, I picked up the footwork but not the unique dynamic and rhythmic qualities of the dance. Just as when I first heard the familiar melodies of the steel pan and of De Bear's masquerade fife, I assumed that I knew how the rhythms logically fit in, but I quickly learned that I needed to retrain my ear to hear like a Caribbean steel pan player, like a masquerade dancer. I had to put aside my foreign biases and assumptions and open my mind and body to experiencing the music not like an American Irish dancer, but like a Montserratian. I had to keep in mind (and body) all the history that I had learned about Montserrat, all the narratives I had heard during festivals, and all the joyful and frustrating experiences I had had while navigating the island each day. It was about learning to flow with island life and learning to adapt when that flow was inevitably interrupted.

Did I successfully crack the rhythmic code of Montserrat? Of course not. I cannot say with any certainty that the basic masquerade 3-step or the Heel and Toe has definitively Irish origins, as opposed to any other European or West African foot-focused dance style. I would have to do a broader analysis to compare Montserrat's masquerades to other masquerades of the West Indies to determine if it is distinctly more Irish than others, and I would need to do more in-depth comparative analysis to trace any connections to West African—especially Ghanaian—dance forms. But the important thing here is that, no matter the origins of the dance and the technical disconnects between Irish and Montserratian dances and rhythms, the Heel and Toe Polka is a central part of the lore of Montserrat's Irishness today, and that story is valuable in itself for performing the island's national narrative. Absorbing the

information that is necessary to embody that narrative beyond the "logical structures" that dictate the rhythms and technique of the tradition is crucial for performing Montserratianness when the festivals come around again.

What I have described in this chapter is my kinesthetic discovery of cultural difference, the instances in which my own cultural constructs—physically trained into my body—were challenged and disrupted. These are the times when I learned to "dance" my place in the context of the island's social circumstances, as an individual negotiating my own questions of identity through interactions with the wider context of Montserrat. As ethnomusicologist Tomie Hahn points out, theory is unraveled through experience, and ethnographic fieldwork is a "dance of disorientation," rather than a straightforward introduction to a foreign culture (2001; 2007). My encounters with Montserrat's rhythmic soundscape were jarring, and with each break or disruption to my understanding of time, rhythm, and cycles, I learned a little bit more about what it means to be or not be Montserratian and how foreign my understanding of cultural rhythms—Irish, African, or Montserratian—really was. In line with Feld's aforementioned connection between sense and place, I sensed the place of Montserrat, and, in the process, Montserrat made more sense to me. Through Blended Rhythms, I saw how Montserratians (especially children) incorporated foreign elements into local understandings of culture through their own spontaneous creative improvisations in performance. The music and movement notation charts in this chapter cannot teach anyone to achieve the "hot" feeling of the festivals' masquerade and soca beats, but they do reveal some of the elements that must be trained in order to do so, and to understand the context from which that feeling arises.

Chapter 5:

Performing Reconfigurations of Community for Montserrat's Future Archives

> Montserrat's culture still rings with the melody of Europe and the rhythm of Africa…. The Emerald Isle is more than a name, it is a beauty of culture and history.
>
> – Sir Howard Fergus,
> "This Emerald Isle," *Montserrat News*, November 18, 1994



Figure 5.1. Montserratian students wave to Irish students. Students at St. Augustine Primary School smile and wave into the camera during a transatlantic Skype encounter with Gaelscoile d'ide Primary School in Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 12, 2014).

For the St. Patrick's Festival in 2014, a reporter named Graham Clifford from the *Irish Independent*—one of Ireland's largest national newspapers—visited Montserrat to report back home about the island's Irish connection. As one of his news features, he set up a transatlantic Skype encounter between two primary schools on the two "Emerald Isles": St. Augustine Roman Catholic School on Montserrat and

the Gaelscoile d'ide Primary School in Fermoy, County Cork in Ireland. St. Augustine School is the only Catholic school on Montserrat and had done more than the other two primary schools on the island to commemorate St. Patrick's Day: the campus was elaborately decorated with shamrocks, Irish flags, and ornaments featuring Montserrat's green/gold/white national dress pattern. For the event, the children also wore the national dress, along with paper headbands with shamrocks pasted to them. Some of Montserrat's biggest personalities came out to support, including Rose Willock, who wore bright neon green from head to toe. Among the crowd was a flurry of cameramen from ZJB News, the *Montserrat Reporter* newspaper, and the *Irish Independent*, which meant that the conversations and performances that took place at the event were recorded for the multiple archives, this transatlantic connection documented for both Montserratian and Irish audiences.

All students of St. Augustine (about 120 schoolchildren, from grades K-6) gathered in their large outdoor assembly area around Clifford's laptop camera. The smiling faces of about twenty-five Irish seven-year-olds at Gaelscoile d'ide Primary School were projected onto a small screen, and Clifford and the teacher in Ireland prompted the children to speak into the camera about their favorite hobbies, school subjects, and their daily class schedules. The Irish students spoke about hurling (their national sport) and sang a song in Irish called "Trasna na dTonnta." The Montserratian students had rehearsed a number of performances for the Skype event, including songs and prayers in the Irish language that they had learned from an Irish

visitor (including the song, "Óró, sé do bheatha abhaile"[1]), a steel pan performance, and a traditional Irish céili dance that I had taught to the Blended Rhythms students at the school. The Emerald Shamioles marched into the space to give an on-camera masquerade demonstration, and St. Augustine teacher Sarah Allen offered the oft-repeated explanation of the dance's origins. She explained to the Irish students that Montserrat's masquerades were rooted in African dance but an Irish influence was fused into their Heel and Toe Polka step.[2]

Clifford explained that his idea behind the transatlantic Skype encounter was to allow Irish and Montserratian children to learn about the link between their two countries by sharing bits and pieces of their cultures. Students at St. Augustine with Irish surnames were asked to approach the camera to explain that they were also Allens, Ryans, and Rileys, but over the course of the call, it became clear that the Irish and Montserratian students had few things in common besides the connection they had in name, and the simple fact that they were all kids who liked to sing and play. The Montserratian students were aware of their historical connections, and many could recite by heart passages from Sir Howard Fergus' books about why Montserrat celebrates St. Patrick's Day, but it was not clear that they (especially the youngest ones) entirely understood the purpose of the call. The Irish students, for their part, expressed more interest in what it would be like to live on a Caribbean island with an active volcano.

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[1] "Óró, sé do bheatha abhaile" is an Irish folk song dating back to at least the nineteenth century, and it was later popularized during Ireland's nationalist movement in the twentieth century. "Óró" means "cheer" and "sé do bheatha abhaile" means "welcome home."

[2] Skim through a video of performances at the Skype event at St. Augustine School to get a sense of the atmosphere: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-irishmontserratian-skype-encounter-at-st-augustine-school/, Video #16.

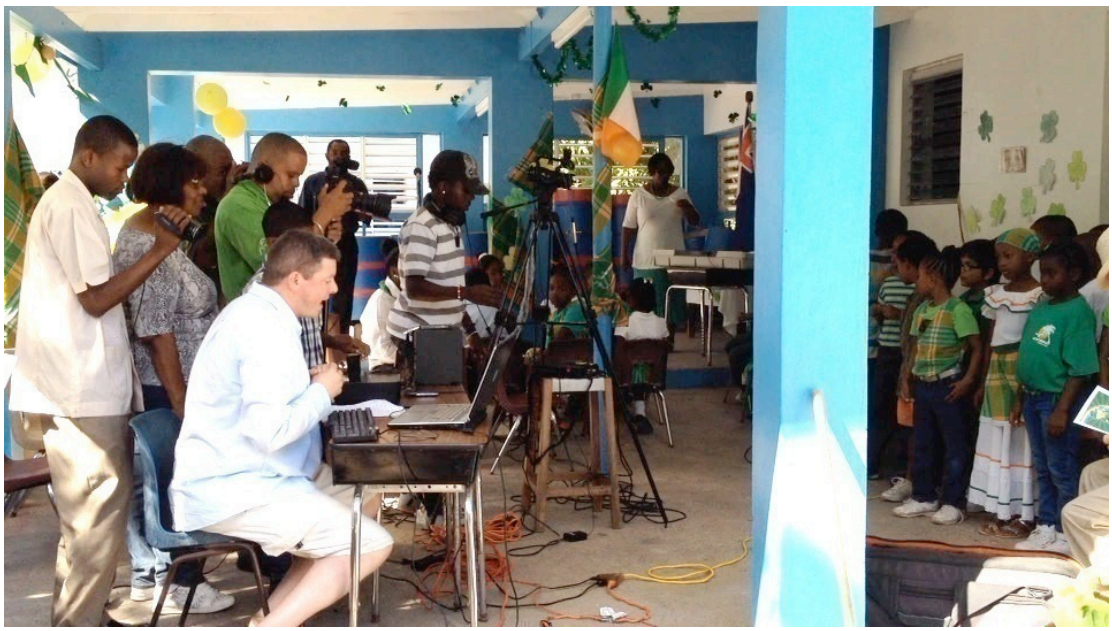

Figure 5.2. Transatlantic Skype call at St. Augustine School. The transatlantic Skype encounter took place in the St. Augustine Primary School assembly area, decorated with shamrocks, Irish flags, and the Montserrat national dress pattern for St. Patrick's Day. Graham Clifford (center) took the helm behind his laptop and was surrounded by teachers, parents, and cameramen. The projection screen was on the far right, behind the students who were solemnly gathered to recite an Irish prayer. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 12, 2014).

Clifford and the teachers in Ireland and Montserrat made the intercultural encounter between the students possible, but the historical context for the connection between the two islands was unclear. Technical glitches kept interrupting the Internet connection and the disruptions in communication made the transatlantic distance between the two seem even vaster. It was difficult to gauge the Irish students' reactions to the Montserratian performances because of the blurry screen, and they saw only the details that Clifford was able to (and chose to) capture with the camera built into his bulky laptop. What was clear, however, was that Fergus' St. Patrick's Day narrative did not make it in one piece to the small classroom in Ireland—certainly not the parts about the 1768 revolt that details how the slaves set out to kill their Irish masters. Montserratian students are taught Fergus' history in school, but a

tamer and more sanitized version was crafted during this friendly encounter between children. Suddenly, we had gone back to the smiling faces of the "Black Irish" on the St. Patrick's Festival banner that I was so excited to see during my first trip to Montserrat (Figure I.1, page 4), and we had moved far away from the Montserratian people that I had come to know over the past year. Still, the *Irish Independent* and the *Montserrat Reporter* published footage from the event and distributed it across their respective islands, Ireland and Montserrat, effectively placing the encounter into the historical archive of Irish/Montserratian connections.

If I had observed this Skype encounter during my first trip to Montserrat, or only seen the newspaper articles and media footage that came out of it during the early stages of my research, I would have been thrilled to see this unexpected meeting of Irish and Afro-Caribbean cultures. Like my first experience of Rhythm Night in 2013 (described in the Introduction), the event would have fit neatly into the structure of Montserrat's triangular heritage, as I initially understood it. Instead, after having completed a few months of fieldwork, what I learned through experience was that the triangle model was much too simplistic to encompass all of the complexities of Montserratianness in everyday island life. I saw how Ireland was presented as a crucial part of Montserrat's cultural heritage that was important to introduce to the young St. Augustine students, but I also saw how Ireland had become a geographically and temporally distant connection. This time I wondered, what will these children take away from this experience and what will be the role of Irishness in the narratives placed in Montserrat's future archives? How do such models and

categorizations of identity fail to work for Montserrat now, and how must they be reconfigured to address the island's present and future challenges?

Any consideration of an archive must also be concerned with how it will be preserved and adapted in the future. This concluding chapter reflects on the future of Montserrat's archive, one that is placed in the hands of Montserrat's children and other members of the next post-volcano generation. In this dissertation, I have talked about the historical narratives that have been constructed by various scholars, the traditional choreographies of the masquerades, and the established cycles of the festivals. I have also discussed the rhythms of change that disrupt and destabilize a sense of Montserratian national identity in spite of these structures. I have addressed how archives are performed and how performances are archived, and I have introduced individual people on Montserrat who oscillate between the archive and the repertoire of performance. I have discussed performances of identity in moments of "hot" nationalism and performances of everyday life when things "simmer down." Finally, I have shown how such performances adapt over time and how they change after being uprooted, dislocated, and dispersed across space. As Montserrat continues to rebuild after the volcano, transmission of these traditional histories and performance structures, and the ability to improvise and innovate on them, is crucial—and, of course, inevitable.

In this denouement of my journey to locate Montserrat's cultural archive, I turn now to describe initiatives that are in place to promote the ongoing and future renegotiation and reenactment of cultural identities narrated by that archive. I present two more examples from my fieldwork that demonstrate how the youth of Montserrat

(both Montserratian and non-Montserratian) today are given opportunities to reinterpret and redefine multiple cultural identities in ways that have the potential to resist a simplistic local/foreign dichotomy. The first example is the Junior Calypso competition, held during St. Patrick's Festival every March, during which children are taught the structures of calypso performance. As children, these young calypsonians still parrot what adults tell them to say and do, but I am interested in the circumstances that adults create for them to discover national categories and thus learn how to become engaged citizens who are capable of future sociocultural transformation through this performance tradition. The second example is Montserrat's first on-island encounter with the masquerades of neighboring Guadeloupe, through which I explore a confrontation between two different masquerading traditions that arise from a common regional structure. The encounter reflects Montserrat's recent focus on regional tourism (Galloway 2014; Robinson 2015a; Semper 2015), as the island attempts to situate and distinguish itself within the West Indies. Both of these final examples involve exposing children to different types of cultural exchanges that have the potential to complicate the kind of "sanitized" (to use Edgar Nkosi White's word, quoted in Chapter 3 on page 181) encounters created by the Tourist Board or that I saw at the Skype encounter. Such exchanges suggest how people on Montserrat will continue to preserve, create, perform, and transform the island's historical narratives as a means of further complicating social categories in the community's changing social profile.

Preparing children to become engaged citizens

Twenty years after the volcanic crisis in 1995-1997, anyone under the age of about twenty-five is too young to clearly remember the disaster or pre-volcano life. Still, these young people are very aware of the mountain's looming presence, as it is visible from many locations on the island and it is the pervading topic of many discussions throughout the community (Hastie 2014). I realized how aware Montserratian children are of the volcano when, one afternoon, I was playing on the beach at Little Bay with a local friend's seven-year-old son. I was surprised to find that, no, he did not want to build a sandcastle like I had suggested, as I had done as a child in the U.S. Instead, he proceeded to build a tall "sand volcano" that he promptly "put out" with a pail of water. I asked him if he was afraid of the volcano, and he replied no, but he excitedly explained to me that he could see the mountain from his bedroom window. He would be the first to know if it were exploding, he told me proudly. I realized that even though this boy was too young to have actually seen plumes of ash spewing from the volcano and destroying the landscape, he was very much aware of its presence and the danger it posed. He was aware of the volcano's significance in Montserrat's national narrative, and he indicated that he was ready for another catastrophic eruption that would, perhaps, reenact and confirm the story he had been told by his family and teachers. In line with the island's pride in its resiliency, Montserratians had survived the volcano once, and his attitude suggested that he was prepared to survive it again.

The volcano casts a shadow over the entire island and infiltrates into the post-disaster consciousness of the whole community, from children to adults. During my

fieldwork, I noticed that Montserratian adults often spoke fatalistically about the island's future, referring to the time it would take to reach economic and cultural redevelopment goals in terms of "one hundred years from now," "not in my lifetime," and "maybe for my great-grandchildren." More specifically, they talked continually about the need for the community to "bring themselves up" from the volcano. My impression of attitudes on the island towards teaching their children was that the youth must face the uncomfortable facts of the island's history so that they learn to prepare to cope with future suffering. Throughout my research, I questioned the extent to which children were exposed to this history, how they learned it explicitly through recitations and implicitly through training in performance styles, and how the circumstances created for them by parents, teachers, and the community prepared them to face future social, economic, cultural, or environmental challenges.

In schools on Montserrat, I noticed that teachers did not sugarcoat difficult political or social topics. I often heard Montserratian children speak (and sing) articulately about political and social issues like poverty, sexual abuse, disease, and labor rights without any shyness or reservation. I saw a focus on preparing children to become engaged as citizens not just of Montserrat, but also of the Caribbean region and the globe. The idea was to create opportunities for young people on the island to more actively engage with the community, and also encourage young students to travel and gain education and work experience elsewhere, with the goal of having them return to Montserrat to contribute to national development as local entrepreneurs, educators, economists, doctors, architects, or artists ("Montserrat Doesn't Just Need People" 2015; Robinson 2015c).

In my research, I am concerned with how Montserrat's youth are trained to engage in these topics through the island's traditional performance styles, outside of the classroom and outside of history books from the island's archive. Children learn to recite Montserrat's historical narratives by rote in school, but they also learn to embody the cultural mores of the island through festival traditions like the masquerades and calypso. I have already discussed the transmission of Montserrat's archive through the masquerades (Chapter 2), and the importance of training cultural rhythms into young bodies from an early age (Chapter 4). Yet another means of transmitting cultural knowledge to young people on Montserrat is the Junior Calypso competition that takes place during St. Patrick's Festival.

The Junior Calypso competition is a forum for the island's youth to explore adult topics dealing with politics, economics, and sociocultural issues in the community, as the adult calypsonians do at Christmas. Any child who is enrolled in school on Montserrat (from the age of nine to about seventeen) is eligible to compete, and Herman "Cupid" Francis has played a central role in the training of young calypsonians since the competition was first organized in 1999 by the Montserrat Union of Teachers. The tradition of calypso in the West Indies is by definition about socio-political commentary (as discussed in Chapter 3), but in most competitions throughout the region, contestants are free to sing about any topic of their choice. Mr. Francis explained that Montserrat's Junior Calypso competition is unique because it includes an educational component: while their second round song is open, the children must prepare their first song around an assigned theme relating to youth issues, such as "Character Counts" (2014) or "Ideal Montserrat" (2015). In the Junior

Calypso competition, the children's songs become a performance of their research: they must go out to research the assigned topic, discuss the theme with peers and elders, and then come back to write and rehearse their songs. Local calypsonians such as Herman "Cupid" Francis, Keithroy "De Bear" Morson, and "Pops" Morris act as mentors to the young performers and help them write their lyrics and music. Contestants are then judged on diction, lyrics, and stage performance, and audience appreciation also plays a role in final rankings and awards.

In the competition held during the March 2015 St. Patrick's Festival, the theme was "Ideal Montserrat," and in the first round the contestants dreamed about what Montserrat's future might look like. They looked into a "Crystal Ball" (V-Tech) and envisioned a "Future Paradise" (Dragon K), they implored Montserrat to "Start Producing" (Mighty Chico), and they encouraged Montserratians in the diaspora to come back home in a song that riffed off of a popular Montserratian slogan: "Still Home, Still Nice" ("Montserrat Nice," Princess Shiva). In recent years, first round songs addressed a variety of contemporary social health issues: one singer petitioned the community to "Move all the asbestos…move all the problems affecting us" ("Move All The Asbestos," Mighty Soca, 2014), and another asked the audience, "What you go do…when Ebola come for you?" ("Watch Out For Ebola," Janel Acosta, 2015). Young calypsonians in recent years also asked their audiences to support labor unions ("Workers Stand Up," Mighty Soca, 2015), develop better access to Montserrat ("Easy Access," Sugar T, 2015), say no to drugs, and, importantly, "respect your father, respect your mother, respect your sister and your

brother…show respect" ("Show Respect," Lady K, 2014).[3]

Through the Junior Calypso competition, young Montserratians not only learn about current issues affecting their community, but they also take part in an age-old tradition that teaches them how to voice opinions and concerns about those issues on a national stage. I was impressed by how poised the children were in front of an audience—though some of the young ones were cute and shy, most performed with great confidence and demanded to be taken seriously. Eight-year-olds "wined" their hips unabashedly like adults and strutted across the stage with the same fervent rhythm that I had seen at the adult competition at Christmas Festival. In some ways the event was similar to, say, a beauty pageant in the United States because it was clearly arranged by teachers and parents to put these miniature model citizens on stage. However, the Junior Calypso competition was also distinct from such pageants, which are primarily focused on appearance, because of the sociopolitical content of the performances and their attention to the current concerns of the small community. Even if the children did not write their lyrics alone, the research tasks assigned to them required that they understand the significance of their topics.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 3, calypso is a tradition through which Montserratians confront, question, and challenge current circumstances, which are then inserted into the island's annual archive of national issues. The local community was less invested in the winner of the junior competition than the adult one, but it was clear that those in the audience supported the training and education of these young

[3] Second round songs in the 2015 Junior Calypso competition tended to deal with more lighthearted themes, such as the lore of Montserrat's Runaway Ghaut (a local spring which claims: "If you drink from this burn, to Montserrat you will return"; "Runaway Ghaut," Dragon K, 2015) and "becoming Irish for one day" on St. Patrick's Day ("Irish 4 a Day," Sugar T, 2015).

stars. The overarching national issue here was youth development and education, and the goal was to shepherd them into the community through the calypso tradition. The junior calpysonians exhibited their engagement with adult topics, and their optimistic performances suggested Montserrat's path to becoming a "future paradise." Through the preparation process for the competition each year, children learn the national categories necessary for them to engage with the local community as responsible citizens, and their mentors also train them to develop their own individual voices and creatively express their own opinions through song. Those that go on to perform calypso, as adults, will carry on the archival tradition in the context of new and adapting challenges on the island.

Promoting a maroon mentality through performance

I did not hear much controversy surrounding the Junior Calypso competition during my fieldwork, except when it came to non-Montserratian immigrant children entering the contest. There had been a handful of young "foreign" calypsonians over the years whose involvement in the competition was rumored by some to be received with mixed reviews. In March 2015, Janel Acosta, a fifth form student at the Montserrat Secondary School, entered the Junior Calypso competition for the first time.[4] At seventeen years old, he was by far the oldest contestant, but he was especially conspicuous because he was born in the Dominican Republic, one of a growing number of Spanish-speaking students to enter Montserrat's school system. In "Thank You Montserrat," he thanked the community for "the education" and "the

[4] Acosta had actually entered the adult calypso competition in 2013 and 2014 with his songs "Thank You Montserrat" and "Watch Out for Ebola." His first year competing in the Junior Calypso competition, however, was in 2015.

motivation" to aspire to new opportunities that his family did not have on their native island. He repeated, "Thank you, thank you, Montserrat! You saved me! You saved me!" The nationalist lyrics were clearly written with the aid of his mentor, but it was notable that he took the opportunity to voice gratitude on Montserrat's national platform. He sang with great conviction in his newly adopted language of English, as he struggled to pronounce the words and embody the bounce and swing of the calypso rhythm.

Acosta's performance in the Junior Calypso competition spoke to a growing population of immigrants seeking work on Montserrat who come from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and other Spanish- and French-speaking Caribbean nations. Since the volcanic crisis, Montserrat has experienced not only an exodus of its own people emigrating to the U.K. and U.S., but also an influx of immigrants from the region who are attracted by work opportunities in Montserrat's (re)development sector—in areas such as construction, hospitality, health care, and education. The integration of Spanish- and French-speaking cultures (and also English-speaking Jamaicans and Guyanese) is one of the bigger challenges that Montserrat faces today.

Some local Montserratians that I talked to regarded these immigrants as a threat to the safety and cohesion of the tight-knit and tranquil island. However, Montserratian activist Elizabeth Piper-Wade responded to the suggestion that the island's "newcomers" are to blame for the increasing crime rate in her article "My Reflections: Life on Montserrat, Do Not Get It Twisted" in *MNI Alive*, in which she thanked those who have come to help develop the country and keep it "viable" (2015b). In essence, she returned the gratitude that the young immigrant Acosta

expressed in his calypso song. Rather than blame these "outsiders," she pointed instead to the local government's responsibility to control crime and corruption. In terms of cultural development, immigrants do not necessarily pose a threat to the "purity" of Montserratian culture or weaken the categories that "define" Montserrat's national postcolonial and post-volcano identity. Instead, cultural diversity creates "the potential for these constructs to transform restrictive definitions of identity" (Dávila 1997, 250). My research on the masquerades and festival culture demonstrates that encounters between familiar and unfamiliar cultures provide contrast and may eventually lead to increased understanding, even in moments of conflict.

Local educators Rose Willock and Gracelyn Cassell said that the solution to the integration of diverse identities on Montserrat is more sensitivity to linguistic and cultural differences.[5] In the schools, for example, teachers report increasing problems with bullying between the children of these immigrants, especially across the linguistic divide of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students (Gracelyn Cassell, May 2014, Woodlands, Montserrat, personal communication). Willock and Cassell encourage not only language education among both Montserratian and immigrant communities, but also cultural collaboration through the exchange of music, dance, and other cultural arts traditions. As I have discussed, Willock's philosophy is based on the Caribbean maroon tradition, arising from a tradition of

[5] Rose Willock frequently invites schoolchildren into the studio with her during her weekly *Culture Show* program, and her intergenerational discussions enable listeners to get a "sense of the culture…of who we are as a people" (2015). She was a teacher before turning to media broadcasting, and her focus is always on education, especially youth empowerment. She wants to create positive memories for children so that "when they become adults and get stressed out, they can think of some part of their childhood that brings about some measure of relief or happiness or something" (2015). She advocates for education through her radio show, and by supporting local cultural initiatives, and she believes that allowing children to develop as part of a group transmits self-confidence and a positive outlook on the world to the next generation.

communal sharing. She explained that in a maroon community, "people come together and help each other out…. We do it collectively, and everybody benefits" (2015). Maintaining such collective thinking is challenging because, after so many Montserratians left, more Caribbean "non-nationals" (non-Montserratians) from the region began to enter the community with their own cultural values. She went on to say, however, that the moral values of those from Guyana or the Dominican Republic may not be all that different from Montserrat's—they may be expressed differently in terms of language or terminology, but share an underlying meaning. Willock suggested that such meaning may be uncovered through cultural traditions, and so community education through music, dance, and arts is crucial.

Such cultural initiatives are already taking place. Willock mentioned that she has involved immigrant children from Guyana in kite-making projects for past Kite Festivals, and she uses dance and drama to work with youth in the Spanish-speaking community that has accumulated in the area around the village of Davy Hill (2015). Another example is the Montserrat Secondary School's invitation to students from the Dominican Republic to perform some of their traditional dances at the island's Commonwealth Day[6] celebrations in March 2015 as a way of celebrating and sharing their own "foreign" (non-Montserratian and non-Commonwealth) culture. Ingrid Osborne Christopher, a teacher at Brades Primary School and one of the Ladies of Alliouagana, also expressed interest in involving more children in the masquerades through the schools, including both Montserratian and non-Montserratian students, as

[6] Commonwealth Day is a celebration of the Commonwealth of Nations, the intergovernmental organization of former or present-day territories of the British Empire. In the Montserrat Secondary School's Commonwealth Day celebrations in 2015, countries represented from the Commonwealth of Nations included Guyana, Ghana, Singapore, Trinidad & Tobago, and Australia ("Colour, Music and Pride at MSS Commonwealth Day Festivities" 2015).

a means of teaching about local culture (July 19, 2014, Little Bay, Montserrat, personal communication). Rose Willock was optimistic that the arts will help eliminate discord among Montserratian and immigrant children, and encourage integration of the community at large. The maroon structure is flexible enough to incorporate a different configuration of "locals" and "foreigners" within the Montserratian collectivity, but just how this structure is adjusted requires careful negotiation. The idea behind these initiatives is that, within the Caribbean region, there are many distinct manifestations of similar traditions and values, and so the community must look for common ground through which to explore and appreciate cultural differences.

A close regional encounter: Montserrat meets Guadeloupe's masquerades

Through my fieldwork, I understood that Montserrat has been less connected to the region since the volcano, largely because of the closure of the main seaport and airport, which were downsized and relocated to Little Bay and Gerald's, respectively. The result of difficult access to the island has been isolation and a struggle to form or reform cultural links with neighboring islands in the region. Thus, it is significant that such a regional encounter occurred on Montserrat, a few days after the 2015 St. Patrick's Festival ended. Gracelyn Cassell, through the University of the West Indies Open Campus on Montserrat, spearheaded the first cultural exchange with neighboring island Guadeloupe (a Francophone French Overseas Territory) on Montserrat, based on the theme "So Near and Yet So Far."[7] Members of Montserrat's

[7] The theme "So Near and Yet So Far" came from Guadeloupe's Caribbean Week event in 2009. That year, Gracelyn Cassell, as head of the University of the West Indies Open Campus on Montserrat, was

"Le Cercle Français" (French language circle) and the Alliouagana Festival of the Word committee helped organize the daylong event, and a contingent of French-speaking locals, ex-pats, immigrants, and even tourists visiting the island were enlisted as tour guides and translators. The visit involved ferrying in tourists from Guadeloupe to see the abandoned town of Plymouth, visit the Montserrat Volcano Observatory, walk through the gardens at the National Trust, and sample Montserrat's national dishes. At the end of the day, a crowd gathered at the Cultural Centre at Little Bay for a colorful exchange of Montserrat's three masquerade troupes (the St. John's masquerades, the Ladies of Alliouagana, and the Emerald Shamioles) and a troupe of masqueraders called "Les Masques de Vieux-Fort" from Guadeloupe. First the troupes performed separately, but at the end of the event, all of the costumed performers danced on stage together in a dizzying array of patterns and steps. (Skim through a video of the masquerade performances at the Montserrat/Guadeloupe encounter: http://montserratrhythms.thekatespanos.com/video-irishmontserratian-skype-encounter-at-st-augustine-school/, Video #17.)

The cultural exchange was significant because many Montserratians reported that they had never seen the Guadeloupean masquerades on the island before, despite Guadeloupe's proximity (confirmed by Pat Ryan, October 23, 2015, e-mail message to author). Even Titus, who has toured regionally and internationally as a representative of Montserrat's masquerades, told me that he had never seen their

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asked by CORECA (Contact, Research, Caribbean) to bring a contingent from Montserrat to participate in Caribbean Week on Guadeloupe. The Montserratians presented a masquerade dance performance, and a conversation about bringing a Guadeloupean masquerade troupe to Montserrat was initiated and finally brought to fruition in 2015 (Gracelyn Cassell, "A Cultural Experience with Masquerades from Guadeloupe and Montserrat," March 21, 2015, press release draft in the author's possession).

particular masquerades (March 21, 2015, Little Bay, Montserrat, personal communication). The performances became an opportunity for cross-cultural communication that required little translation—it was clear from performers' costumes and steps that the dances shared common roots, but they had been adapted in significantly different ways throughout history, perhaps with different French or British (or Irish) colonial influences. The masqueraders from Guadeloupe wore patterned cloths like the Montserratians, but they wore plaid rather than floral patterns and the colors were not uniform—some plaids were primarily green/teal, while others were pink, orange, or blue. The masks and headdresses were aesthetically similar, but the Guadeloupean costumes featured different accessories, such as crowns and feathers. The Guadeloupean dancers were lighter on their feet and they used their hips and arms to sway gracefully from side to side while they did their own version of a 3-step pattern, whereas the Montserratian dancers stamped more staccato steps into the ground with their arms jutting forward and shoulders pulsating up and down. The Montserratians dancers demonstrated clear quadrille formations, and the Guadeloupean performance was more freeform.

At the end of the demonstration, all of the performers joined together on stage, and the Guadeloupean and Montserratian bands competed for audible space as they drowned out each other's rhythms. The dancers only cautiously interacted at first, but eventually they seemed to become more comfortable and began trading steps. Things began to heat up, and one of the Ladies of Alliouagana and another female Guadeloupean masquerader even began to jokingly "wine up" on each other. The performance ended abruptly when an older Guadeloupean woman collapsed in a heap

in the middle of the crowded stage, apparently due to dehydration or heat stroke in the fervor of the dance. She was unmasked and carried outside to get some fresh air, amidst mutterings that she had become possessed by jumbie spirits. Whether the cause of her collapse was natural or supernatural, the incident indicated to me that something momentous had occurred—the exchange had brought some vital heat and excitement to the Cultural Centre at Little Bay that afternoon.



Figure 5.3. An exchange of masquerades from Montserrat and Guadeloupe. Masquerade performers from Montserrat and Guadeloupe dance on stage together during a cultural exchange event held at the Montserrat Cultural Centre at Little Bay. Photograph by Pablo Regis de Oliveira (March 21, 2015).

Since the Montserrat/Guadeloupe masquerade encounter in March 2015, there have been at least two more ferry visits (in July and August 2015) that brought Les Masques de Vieux-Fort from Guadeloupe back to Montserrat (Gracelyn Cassell, September 6, 2015, e-mail message to author). I recognize the significance of adding such encounters to Montserrat's post-volcano archive because they are compelling performances of similarity and difference within a common regional tradition. The

Guadeloupean masquerade performances offer a fresh perspective to those who have only seen—or are only used to seeing—the Emerald Shamioles and the Ladies of Alliouagana in recent years. The exchange that I saw was unlike Graham Clifford's transatlantic Skype encounter for the *Irish Independent*, which was an attempt to recreate Montserrat's historical connection to Ireland, but which lost something in the translation across the vast geographical and cultural distances between the transatlantic siblings. The Montserrat/Guadeloupe masquerade encounter struck closer to home—the masquerades were familiar but different enough to spark curiosity and dialogue. And, unlike the Irish children projected on the blurry screen at St. Augustine School, the Guadeloupean masqueraders were live and present. Guadeloupe is "so near and yet so far" from Montserrat, whereas Ireland is just far.



Figure 5.4. Montserratian masqueraders watch Guadeloupean masqueraders. Young Montserratian masquerade dancers gather around a table to watch Guadeloupean masqueraders with interest during a Montserrat/Guadeloupe cultural exchange held at the Cultural Centre in Little Bay, Montserrat. Photograph by Kathleen Spanos (March 21, 2015).

In the middle of the Guadeloupean performance, I looked behind me and saw a crowd of young Montserratian masqueraders watching with great interest, peeking out from underneath their masks. They had become very engaged in the encounter—much more so than during the transatlantic Skype call with the students in Ireland. There was commonality here that I interpreted as a closer connection to islands within the region, compared to the more chronologically and geographically distant connection to the other Emerald Isle across the Atlantic. After the event, I heard comments from locals about how much more exciting and impressive the Montserratian dancers were than the Guadeloupean ones, suggesting that some of that competitive nature in the masquerades had returned. Locals expressed intense pride in their national tradition when faced off with another.[8] There was none of the masquerade "fatigue" that I had noticed at other festival events, when there were no rivalries and nothing to compare the performances to.

Remapping politics of place

Working the regional angle is appropriate for Montserrat, which exists in a liminal space as a struggling "nation" territory that strives to maintain its distinct island traditions, but is still too dependent on economic aid and political oversight from the United Kingdom to do so autonomously. (Puerto Rico, as a political territory of the United States, is engaged in a similar struggle to assert national authenticity

[8] Irish dance scholar Catherine Foley describes a similar phenomenon in changing perceptions of Irish dance on local, national, and global levels (2001). She explains how the global commodification of Irish step dance through popular shows like *Riverdance* have revitalized national pride in the tradition, as well as acted as a catalyst for "marginal dance practices," or those outside of the realm of competitive step dance that was popularized in the 1920s by the nationalist programs of the Gaelic League. Although Montserrat's masquerades have yet to reach *Riverdance*-levels of fame, it seems possible that more regional encounters could inspire a similar revitalization of the island's traditional dance.

and cultural identity; see Dávila 1997.) At this time, it is difficult for Montserrat to establish an independent national infrastructure without British support that is stable enough to gain global recognition through industries like agriculture and tourism, and it is impossible to self-sustain on a solely local level.[9] It is also difficult for Montserrat to rebuild without the help of "newcomers" who arrive seeking work that will contribute to the island's reconstruction, especially if Montserratians themselves do not return from the diaspora to do so ("Montserrat Doesn't Just Need People" 2015). Thus, building regional cooperation for trade, tourism, employment, and cultural exchange with neighboring islands is a feasible solution for the continued development of Montserrat.

Reviving a maroon mentality on Montserrat and maintaining the East Caribbean notion that "all a we is one" requires creative approaches to bringing cohesion to a diverse community. To speak idealistically about intercultural peace and understanding is easy, of course, but confronting the challenge of rebuilding a cohesive community is more difficult in practice. From what I have understood about the pre-volcano community, I see the challenge as related to an expanded reconfiguration of Montserrat's politics of place. That is, the leveling of a local inter-village community organization by the volcanic disaster has necessitated a reconfigured concept of national identity that can fit more fluidly into the regional East Caribbean network. My research took place amidst this transition from village-

[9] Many local newspaper articles and blog posts in recent years have addressed the conflicts that have inhibited Montserrat's redevelopment, especially with regard to the relationship between the local Government of Montserrat (GOM) and the British government. For example, see "Is Montserrat Immobilized in Post Volcanic Ash?" (2015) and Jeevan A. Robinson's series of editorials about the relationship between the GOM and the U.K.'s Department of International Development (DFID) (2014a-e; 2015b; 2015c; 2015e).

level politics to an increased focus on rebuilding the nation, and, as I have discussed throughout these chapters, the process of negotiation was apparent in the performance traditions that I studied. When I talked to locals about their masquerades and festivals, some expressed hope that the village-level organization would return for the benefit of preserving the spirit of Montserrat's local culture. However, it was also clear that looking outward to connect to the region more broadly was necessary for working towards economic and political autonomy. A suitable strategy for maintaining the vitality of local cultural traditions on Montserrat is to welcome people with similar, yet distinct, traditions from the region (such as the visiting Guadeloupean masqueraders or immigrants living on the island) to participate and collaborate with Montserratians through cultural performance. In this way, diverse traditions are preserved, but performers and keepers of those traditions are also continually challenged to create, innovate, and build upon the structures of traditional performance.

Epilogue

Rather than focus on a singular national *identity* in this dissertation, I intentionally chose to emphasize the plurality of cultural *identities* that are expressed within the post-volcano community of Montserrat. I observed and experienced a multiplicity of cultural expressions by people within the Montserratian community who often play multiple roles and express multiple viewpoints regarding the island's "national identity." People such as Mr. Francis, Titus, Basil, Yvonne, Rose, and Sir Howard Fergus from my "Cast of Characters" all apply their particular artistic, activist, and scholarly talents to promoting the arts for a more effective cross-cultural education that takes into account local traditions alongside diverse regional and global considerations. The focus on children is especially important because their young bodies and minds are ripe to take on the cultural information that is taught to them. They are open to merging a variety of diverse cultural imports with their own, whether those cultures are African, American, British, Canadian, Chinese, French, Ghanaian, Guadeloupean, Guyanese, Haitian, Indian, Irish, Jamaican, or Montserratian.

My dissertation research began as a project that was primarily concerned with Irish and African identities in Montserrat's history, but I discovered throughout my fieldwork that encounters between many diverse identities form the island's sociocultural environment today. I not only examined the effects of the volcanic disaster on the music and dance traditions that narrate the history of Irish and African influences to "close the triangle" of Montserratian cultural identity, but also how a

variety of cultural influences contribute to coping strategies for different groups and individuals in the wake of the crisis. As I explained in the last chapter, the next generation of Montserratians is subtly pressured to preserve the island's archive while also welcoming an increasingly diverse community that includes incoming immigrants and regional visitors. I demonstrated throughout this research how the social categories that I described in Table I.1 (page 22) are fluid and unstable, and I concluded that the binary concept of "local" versus "foreign"—while a useful analytical framework for exploring how such categories are continually negotiated through cultural expressions—is ultimately inappropriate for determining who or what is Montserratian. Through music, dance, and festival performance traditions, Montserratians resist the false dichotomies that define "local" and "foreign" or "Irish" and "African" categories.

A variety of cultures—not just Irish and African—has been incorporated into Montserratian culture through a process that has continued over many years and to varying extents for different members of the local community. I focused on the cultural implications of the divide between who is seen as "local" and who is seen as "foreign," although I recognize that there are also, of course, many political and economic factors at play. Such categories have proven disastrous and violent in other parts of the world, so it was important for me to understand just how Montserratians confronted and debated these categories through performance. I demonstrated throughout this research how the negotiation of such categories is an ongoing process that involves community decisions about who is to be included or excluded from distinctively Montserratian traditions. I explored the question of ownership through

various lenses: Who is allowed to write and perform the local narrative (Chapter 1)? Who can teach the masquerades and who can innovate on the tradition (Chapter 2)? Who has the right to take part in festival, and in what capacity (Chapter 3)? How are bodies primed to inhabit Montserratian rhythms, and what is the struggle to overcome cultural differences through kinesthetic empathy and understanding (Chapter 4)? How are narratives preserved for future generations, and how are they continually challenged through encounters of cultural difference (Chapter 5)? How foreign is too foreign? What sorts of innovations and improvisations can be accepted into existing structures and cycles of local traditions, and which cannot?

The research presented in this dissertation contributes to a variety of scholarly conversations. This work fits first and foremost into the field of performance studies, as I looked at Montserratian performance as a paradigm for examining the island's postcolonial and post-traumatic processes of national and cultural identity formation. I largely examined these questions through Diana Taylor's notion of archive and repertoire (2003), especially through the intersections between live performance and aspects of the archive that narrate Montserrat's cultural history. I collected archival materials that contributed to what I saw, heard, and felt while on the island, and, in turn, I incorporated those experiences into my understanding of Montserrat's written and unwritten archival processes. My personal experiences with the local rhythms of Montserrat corresponded to the observations I made during the island's festivals, and such experiences corroborated—or sometimes countered—the historical accounts that I read in books or that I heard from people on the island.

I took a decidedly self-reflexive approach to my writing and I struggled openly to work through my own cultural biases and "body prejudices," as discussed in Chapter 4. By embracing my subjectivity in this way, I built upon embodied research methodologies common in the fields of ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology (music and dance anthropology) that require the ethnographer to necessarily question the effects of one's own individual body within the workings of the larger community body. When I discussed, in the previous chapters, the process of negotiating individual identities during festivals, I described the process of each festivalgoer's attempt to find his or her place within the whole—including my own—whether local, foreign, or most likely in some category in between. The framework for creating cycles of festival traditions can adapt to encompass a diverse and migratory community, and through these cycles, each community member can decide where they fit in on Montserrat. Sometimes individuals play along with the orchestra and dance along with the troupe, but other times they create disruptions, question the norm, or innovate within already-established traditions. The substance of these negotiation processes develops throughout the year, in the "cool" times between festivals—sometimes through dance and music, but primarily through the simple rhythms of everyday island life. Then, when it comes time for festival, "hot" performances of Montserratian identity are ready, once again, for public display.

I hope that my research contributes to the further development and understanding of Montserrat's cultural archive, both by members of the community and those outside it. At the very least, I provided some documentation of festival events between 2013-2015—information that can be difficult to access from outside

the island community—and I hope that my analysis of these events prompts further dialogues and debates among those interested in Montserrat's festival culture. In addition, my research is culture-specific—many researchers who travel to Montserrat today are scientists studying the volcano, geographers examining the post-volcano landscape, or economists strategizing redevelopment plans. In my work, I focused on identifying elements, patterns, and structures in music, dance, and festival performance traditions that provide the "rhythms of change" that are necessary for the island's cultural development in a post-volcano context.

My research is ultimately about the question of impact. My fieldwork focused on tracing an archive through embodied research—how the archive is created, who creates it, who it is created for, and who has the authority to change or impact it. Montserrat is a unique case because it is such a small community where even small impacts, disputes, and breaks in traditional cycles are evident. Though small, however, Montserrat's cultural redevelopment processes also relate to much bigger issues through the island's transatlantic connections, as a British territory "nation" in the West Indies region of the Caribbean, and with historical Irish and African diasporic connections that distinguish the island within larger regional and global networks. The volcano, in particular, had a significant impact on how notions of space and time are structured and restructured on Montserrat, and I demonstrated how such transformations are visible in their festivals and music and dance traditions. This case study of Montserrat contributes to an understanding of similar cultural dynamics in postcolonial and/or post-traumatic societies in other parts of the world.

One of my concerns is that my research findings will not be accepted into Montserrat's archive, or that my work will be dismissed entirely. However, the questions of acceptance and who has the authority to write or perform Montserrat's archive are exactly the questions that I explored throughout this dissertation. I showed how multiple cultural influences and individual voices play a key role in the writing and performance of Montserrat's cultural history, especially within the island's festival cycle. Including diverse cultures in the festivals is not new since the volcanic crisis, but new and old influences tend to flow in and out of the island's established cycle. Just as my Blended Rhythms program came and went, so do countless other similar cultural initiatives. In a community as small as Montserrat's, each individual body that steps foot on the island can create ripples that may smoothly wash into island life or may disruptively crash against the borders of national identity. Time will tell who or what is able to make a significant impact that will push cultural development forward, but I am certain that the more successful ones will be those that harmonize with—and also creatively build upon—the already-established structures of the island's local music, dance, and festival traditions. People will continue to flow into and out of the community and will have bigger or smaller impacts on Montserratian culture, but the dominant elements and patterns of performance described in my research indicate some of the structures necessary to blend into the rhythms of Montserrat's archive—or, as I like to say, to dance Montserrat's archive.

I went to Montserrat with many pre-conceived ideas about what I hoped to find there. I chased after the archive, panicked when I could not find it, and then, with patience, I watched fragments of it unfurl in front of me as I interacted with people on

the island. I immersed myself within the local community, only to find that "local" was a masked and nebulous concept. The idea that people do not fit neatly into categories is not surprising, of course, but, in this dissertation, I have shown how this ambiguity is enacted through performance by real bodies, on the ground. Through my research process, I danced to the ever-changing rhythms of Montserrat's archive, that volatile entity that never ceases to shift and transform as it moves throughout the dispersed community.

Appendices

Appendix A: Redevelopment on Montserrat

The information in this appendix provides some context for understanding the difficulties faced by the island of Montserrat as it attempts to continue economic and cultural redevelopment while still dependent on the United Kingdom. Successes and failures depend in large part on the ability or inability of people within the community to agree and move forward with projects, and also on the ability to receive the proper amount of financing or aid to support those projects ("Is Montserrat Immobilized in Post Volcanic Ash?" 2015). While annual events like the festivals should provide a stable source of economic, cultural, and tourist activity, procuring a stable source of funds to support them is an ongoing challenge.

Economy and industry

Ten years after the volcanic disaster, the island's GDP was estimated in 2006 at $43.78 million with a real growth rate of 3.5%. In 2013, approximately 75% of GDP was attributed to the service sector, with about 23% in the industry sector and about 2% in agriculture. Major industries on Montserrat include tourism, rum, textiles, and electronic appliances. Agriculture suffered when crops and fertile land areas were destroyed by the volcano's pyroclastic flows (in 2003, ash fall destroyed 95% of the crops on the ground; "About Montserrat" 2012), and the island now imports much of its fruit and vegetable produce from nearby islands like Dominica. However, farmers grow their own cabbages, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, and hot peppers to sell in local supermarkets. The island also exports some

agricultural goods like peppers, limes, and other plants (for more details, see "Chapter 1: Montserrat – A Profile" 2011; "Montserrat Economy Profile 2014" 2014; "Montserrat Profile – Overview" 2015).

In 2013, Montserrat imported about US$30 million in goods, including machinery, transportation equipment, food, and fuel. The island continues to be dependent on external aid from the British government through the Department of International Development (DFID), as well as other foreign sources. In 2013, the European Union disbursed a US$55.2 million economic aid package to boost the island's public finance and economic management, as well as promote reform of the public sector ("Montserrat Economy Profile 2014" 2014). Prospects for redevelopment depend on predictions for volcanic activity and public sector construction. In 1998, the Government of Montserrat eased its policy on entry requirements for CARICOM nationals seeking permits for employment opportunities in order to alleviate labor shortages and thus expedite reconstruction ("Regulations for Employment in Montserrat" 1998).

Tourism

A primary focus of Montserrat's post-volcano redevelopment initiatives in 2013-2015 was attracting tourists (primarily from the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, and Canada). *Caribbean Journal* reported a nearly 25% jump in tourism on Montserrat in January-March 2014 (2,355 tourists logged), compared to the same period in 2013 ("Montserrat Sees Jump in Tourism" 2014). The Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC) also hoped to attract foreign investors (primarily

from the United Arab Emirates and China) because of the island's political stability as a U.K. territory and due to its diverse natural environment. The MDC pointed towards opportunities for development in the new capital town around Little Bay and Carr's Bay, including hotels, residencies, and other businesses in a new marina center (http://www.investmontserrat.com/, accessed February 2015, website no longer available). However, Montserrat's status as a British Overseas Territory has been a deterrent to potential investors because the island is unable to offer economic citizenship like other nearby islands such as St. Kitts & Nevis; the MDC reports that the restriction has prevented about $62 million in investment (Britell 2014).

After the People's Democratic Party (PDM) took over the Government of Montserrat in September 2014 elections, the newly elected Premier Donaldson Romeo announced a plan to "Turn Ash into Cash" by taking advantage of the island's natural resources. The geothermal energy project—which was initiated during Premier Meade's previous tenure—would be a major opportunity to harness volcanic resources and "turn a negative into a positive." Geothermal energy would not only greatly reduce exorbitantly high electricity costs on Montserrat, but the island would also be able to export this renewable energy to nearby islands and thus promote regional cooperation (G. Ryan 2014; "This Caribbean Island Wants to Turn 'Ash into Cash'" 2015).

The tourism sector also focuses on highlighting Montserrat's natural environment as a means of attracting visitors ("Creating New Tourism Attractions on Montserrat" 2014). In June 2014, the Government of Montserrat announced big changes for the Tourist Board—the MDC and the Tourist Board merged in an effort

to “enhance the contribution of the tourism sector to economic activity” (“Montserrat Tourist Board and Montserrat Development Corporation Merged” 2014). ZJB News reported that the reason for the merging was that the Tourist Board had been unable to meet its goals in recent years due to limited resources and a “weak institutional framework,” whereas the MDC had been showing promise with continued new town development at Little Bay. The goals of the merging included better integration of “destination marketing, investment promotion, and infrastructure development.” The Tourist Board moved to MDC offices up the road in Little Bay, where as Montserrat’s Division of Culture—a branch of the local government that had previously operated in conjunction with the Tourist Board—stayed put and began to work independently of the Tourist Board.

Redevelopment projects

Redevelopment plans underway between 2013-2015 included a new capital at Little Bay; there were plans to build a new port that would be able to accommodate larger ferries, cruise ships, and cargo ships (Sloan 2015). Besides the new capital, port, and marina around Little Bay and Carr’s Bay, there were also plans to build an 80-100-room hotel, to add to the one hotel on the island (the 16-room Tropical Mansion Suites in Sweeney’s) and the smattering of rental villas and small guesthouses (McCallister 2014).

In March 2014, the Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC) reported plans to be “on the road to self-sustainability by 2020” (Britell 2014); a few months later in July 2014, another MDC representative reported a more ambitious goal to

attain at least 50% self-sustainability by 2016 (McCallister 2014). Just before Premier Reuben Meade's party (Movement for Prosperity and Change, or MCAP) was voted out of office (in favor of the People's Democratic Movement, or PDM) in September 2014, he presented a budget of EC$160 million (about US$59 million) for "Restoring Growth, Expanding Opportunities" for the 2014-2015 year. His primary goals were the stabilization of economic growth and job creation; major projects included building a geothermal energy plant (G. Ryan 2014), port and new town development, hospital construction, and road improvements. Other priorities included universal healthcare, national insurance, housing, education, and agriculture (Robinson 2014a).

Many redevelopment projects were stymied after a scandal emerged in late 2014. Local news media reported potential financial fraud involving the Government of Montserrat (GOM), DFID, and the MDC. Allegations involved procurement practices and lack of transparency and accountability within the GOM, as well as the possibility of bribery and kickbacks in government financial and contractual negotiations (Robinson 2014b). The MDC was also specifically implicated for its handling of procurement guidelines (Robinson 2014e) and came under scrutiny in late 2014, when media reported whistleblowing on the apparent misuse of DFID funds by the MDC. In response, GOM and DFID replaced the MDC board and suspended all DFID programs in early 2015 while they reviewed allegations and ran audits on the MDC (Robinson 2015b). The effect of the scandal on cultural development was the fact that, in May 2015, DFID and the GOM abruptly shut down the MDC and fired the Director of Trade & Investment and the new Director of Tourism after less than a year on the job (Robinson 2015d). Tourist Board projects were put on hold and the

future of the newly developed marketing strategies became uncertain amid ongoing reviews. Some expressed the belief that DFID might hinder true economic development on Montserrat by placing too many demands on the island and slowing down projects (Robinson 2015e). The ongoing challenge for Montserrat is to find a proper political balance between the GOM, the U.K. government and DFID aid, and the local community in order to encourage economic and cultural redevelopment progress.

Appendix B: Lyrics for "Motherland," Montserrat's Territorial Song

Lyrics written by Sir Howard Fergus and Dr. George Irish
Selected by popular vote in 2014[1]

Oh Montserrat, proud Motherland
Your children raise your standard high.
In toil and tears to serve you well,
The emerald jewel from God's hand.

CHORUS:
Oh Montserrat, by nature blest
To you your children sing
Come well or woe, come friend or foe
To you your people cling.

Rise up and make our country great
With art and skill and sacrifice
With masque and drum we celebrate,
Triumphant masters of our fate

We sing our land in harmony
May God be her eternal guard
And make Montserrat a house of hope,
A haven in the Carib Sea.

No pestilence shall mar your shore
No fount of sadness overwhelm
A people striving under God
Their spirits free forevermore.

[1] The lyrics to "Motherland" and other candidates for the national/territorial song were posted online on the Government of Montserrat's website: "Learn With Us! Sing With Us! Montserrat National Song," http://www.gov.ms/2013/07/18/learn-with-us-sing-with-us-montserrat-national-song/, posted July 18, 2013, accessed August 25, 2013.

Appendix C: Calypso song lyrics from 2014[2]

1. "Don't Judge Me"
Performed and written by Eric "2+2" Fergus

Is it wrong for a Christian to take part in festival?
Do you think calypso rhythm is evil?
Is it wrong for a Christian to use the calypso stage
To deliver a positive message?
Well, I use this forum to open tradition
I'm not saying anything vulgar, just using calypso culture

CHORUS:
So don't judge me, my brother, don't judge me
I grew up in St. John's, beating masquerade drums
So don't judge me, my sister, just love me
I think we losing we culture
I think we losing what really matter
Every man has his calling
Yours might be preaching
I am festival, I'm supporting my carnival
You see, so brother, don't judge me

Every Sunday morning in church, we sing and rejoice
Giving thanks to the father with one voice
Calypso rhythm we use to reach the population
More than a few in the church congregation
So tell the critics, listen to the lyrics
If you want people to change, use the format of the widest range

[CHORUS]

Jesus walked the beach and talked with the Pharisees
Despite that the Pharisees all condemn him
We as Christians should never breathe in solitude
My people, that's the wrong attitude
So use the best vehicle to reach out to young people
With a message of revival, calypso is not antisocial

[CHORUS]

[2] Lyrics transcribed by the author (unless otherwise noted) from ZJB Radio and recordings of live festival performances in December 2013 at Festival City, Little Bay, Montserrat.

2. "I Believe in Festival"
Performed by Rondell Meade

I believe in Festival, I believe it is something special

It's our way of life, our cultural celebration
It's about keeping alive our customs and traditions
By the kings of artistic creation
Our Festival deserves national recognition
A cultural industry, promoting commerce and economy

CHORUS:
I believe in Festival, I believe it is something special
It brings out the mas and the revelry
It brings out our creative ability
It's the mas and talent, pulsating rhythm, keep the people jammin'
It's the mas and movement, fetin' and a jammin', jam until a morning
These are 'bout masquerades, the New Year's Day parade,
I believe in Festival
It's people on the go to the calypso show
I believe in Festival
Depending on the mas, man you're bound to laugh—yes!
Oh yes, I believe in my Festival

Looking back on where it began, from slavery to plantation
Now we've reached maturity in Festival, much is on
A major event, let's take it to the next level
And show the whole world it's worth and it's value
And those who contributed must be included

[CHORUS]

Festival has benefits, it's just like education
You make a material investment and social interaction
It's more than just the acts, song and dance
Festival is dynamic, it has significance
A window to the future, let's cherish it forever

[CHORUS]

3. "Our Land"
Performed by Alexander "AJ" Cassell, written by Justin "Hero" Cassell

The flames of national pride will never subside
It's an eternal fireball, burning in us all
It's our motivation, to look to a new horizon
We have capabilities, overcome adversities
A people of excellence, molded by nature, nurtured by God

CHORUS:
This is my land, it's your land
Together we stand
Patriotism, nationalism, we have a national song
So we all can sing along
This land is ours, we wear the colors as a symbol of our proudness
We are surely blessed

Now is the right time, change the paradigm
Whether you are an activist, optimist, or pessimist
Policies must be inclusive, our efforts collective
Local or national, your inputs fundamental
A people of excellence, molded by nature, nurtured by God

[CHORUS]

We held on to Motherland, said no to England
Eighteen years in the trenches
Slept on floors and benches
Working hard to rebuild, some even got killed
Perseverance and resilience gave us a second chance
A people of excellence, molded by nature, nurtured by God

[CHORUS]

4. "Dracula System"
Performed by Baptiste Wallace, written by Cecil "Cepekee" Lake[3]

I've been working night and day
For the same ole salary
Although I get pay, it makes me angry
Food prices in the shop
Never ever drop
Inflation on my heels, can only eat one meal

CHORUS:
Wanna cry, wanna cry, wanna cry, wanna cry, can't take it no more
What am I, what am I, what am I, what am I, what am working for
Dracula, take you money
Dracula, suck your money
Dracula, take your money
Dracula, suck your money
I try to make a dollar from a fifty cents
In this Dracula system, it makes no sense
Dracula, tek you money
Dracula, suck your money
Dracula, tek your money
Dracula, suck your money
Afraid the Dracula
No like the Dracula
Afraid the Dracula
No like the Dracula

I tried to make amends, budget wisely
No luxuries, only necessity
Man a baal, utilities tek all
Can't stretch the dollar any further

[CHORUS]

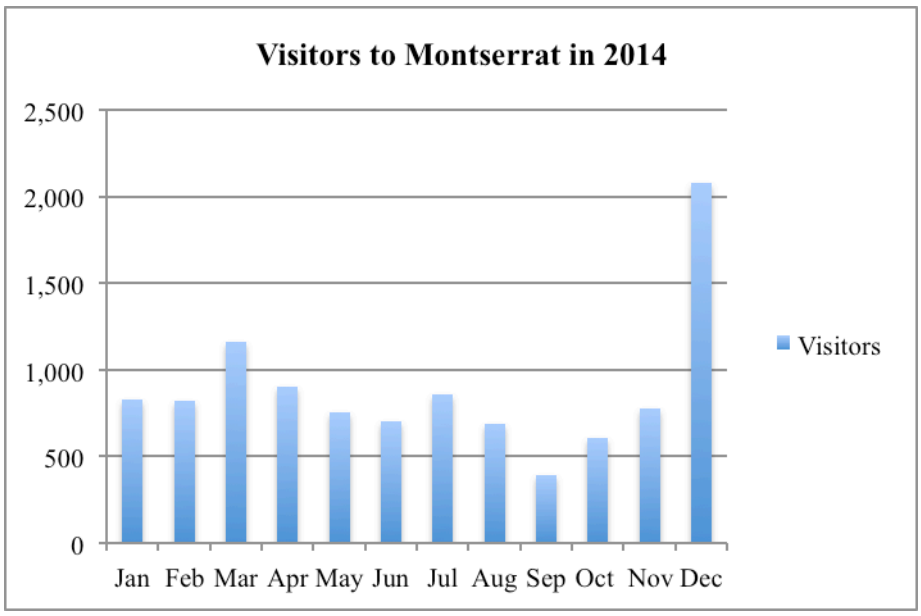
I check the central bank for information
Dwight Venner was frank, it's a damning situation
The talk on the street, can't make ends meet
Money have no value, no use to me and you

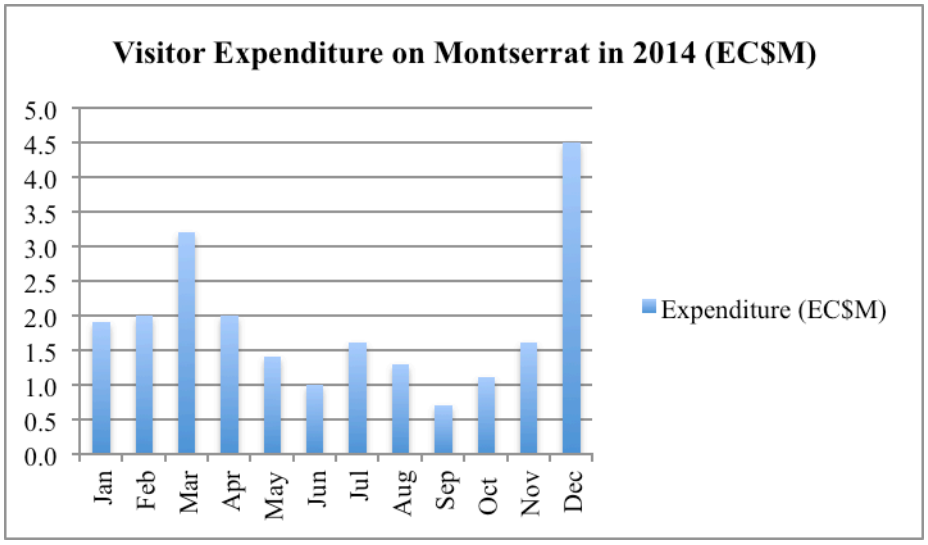
[CHORUS]

[3] Lyrics posted on *The Montserrat Reporter* website on January 17, 2014 (http://www.themontserratreporter.com/dracula-system-the-calypso/), accessed October 23, 2015.

Table A.D.1. Total annual visitors and expenditure in 2014														
	Jan	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Total**	**Average**
Visitors	**828**	**818**	**1,163**	**901**	**752**	**703**	**856**	**689**	**391**	**602**	**774**	**2,076**	**10,553**	**879**
% of total	8%	8%	11%	9%	7%	7%	8%	7%	4%	6%	7%	20%		
# - average	-51	-61	284	22	-127	-176	-23	-190	-488	-277	-105	1,197		
% of average	-6%	-7%	32%	2%	-14%	-20%	-3%	-22%	-56%	-32%	-12%	136%		
Expenditure (EC$M)	**1.9**	**2.0**	**3.2**	**2.0**	**1.4**	**1.0**	**1.6**	**1.3**	**0.7**	**1.1**	**1.6**	**4.5**	**22.3**	**1.9**
% of total	9%	9%	14%	9%	6%	4%	7%	6%	3%	5%	7%	20%		
# - average	0.0	0.1	1.3	0.1	-0.5	-0.9	-0.3	-0.6	-1.2	-0.8	-0.3	2.6		
% of average	2%	8%	72%	8%	-25%	-46%	-14%	-30%	-62%	-41%	-14%	142%		

Table A.D.1. Total annual visitors and expenditure in 2014. The bolded row shows the number of visitors and how much they spent for each month in 2014. Additional statistics describe the monthly percentage of the total year and comparison to the average month. For example, 11% of the total annual visitors visited in March 2014, 284 more than the average month and 32% higher the average month. In September 2014, only 4% of the year's visitors came, 488 fewer than average and 22% lower than average. The most active and profitable months for visitors in 2014 were March (St. Patrick's Festival) and December (Christmas Festival); the least were June, August, and September. Source: Visitor count and visitor expenditure data provided by the Montserrat Governor's Office; additional statistics (percentages and averages) calculated by the author.





Figures A.D.1 and A.D.2. Visitors and visitor expenditure on Montserrat in 2014. These bar graphs illustrate the data presented in Table A.D.1. It is clear in these diagrams that December was by far the most active and profitable month for Montserrat in 2014; March came in second, but with approximately half the number of visitors as December and about 70% of December's monthly profit. Source: Visitor count and visitor expenditure data provided by the Montserrat Governor's Office; charts rendered by the author.

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