Portraits of People and Places of Developing Countries: A literary analysis of the public faces of development as presented in popular literature.

Can the reading of a piece of popular literature, by an author and about a place of the Majority World, increase the general reader's awareness of contemporary themes of development?

Case Study: *A Small Place* (1988) by Jamaica Kincaid

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Masters of Philosophy
in Development Studies at Massey University,
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

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2006

Abstract

The literature that keeps me awake at night, containing written images that impress a certain public face of development, is the topic and exploration of this thesis. That the general public still lack in understanding regarding matters of development is key to carrying out this literature analysis. Images of the developing world are everywhere, and as such, an example of non-technical, non-industry specific creative writing is chosen for examination to highlight this point.

The short, punctuating and controversial 'essay' *A Small Place,* by Caribbean author Jamaica Kincaid, is the case study for this thesis. The literature review is in four parts presenting the idea of public faces of development, the importance of interdisciplinary study combining literature with the humanities, an view of the underpinning contemporary themes of development – focusing on foundations of belief as opposed to physical conditions of development situations, and an introduction to Jamaica Kincaid and issues in Caribbean women's literature.

Through the example of this case study, that takes its shape from close observations of the text, I conclude that popular literature has not only a literary place in ethnographic discussions, but an important historical and scientific place that helps the general reader to identify the difference between truth and fallacy represented in the various public faces of development.

for Richie, India, Ocean, Esperanza and Womb-Baby

Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude to my two supervisors, Manuhuia Barcham and Barbara Nowak. Thank you for a sweet friendship through email correspondence and encouragement at all the right times.

My sincere appreciation to all the teaching staff in the Development Studies programmes for your enthusiasm and passion for not only your topics, but also for this beautiful world. You have taught and inspired me to pursue truth in my studies and to write my interpretations and opinions of this truth.

Thank you to John Muirhead of the English Department and Dianne Simmons, author of *Jamaica Kincaid*, for your fascinating studies of Kincaid's work. Your work opened my eyes and mind to paths of investigation I would not have seen without your insight. Sincerely, thank you for your bold teaching and writing.

Thank you to Ruth and Clarence and my delicious siblings and loved ones for your support and interest in my work.

Love and thank you to my little family, Indy, Ocean and Espi. Through your lives, your suffering and your fascination for diggers, homeopathic medicines, and prayer ('they all are working'), you inspired an honest and enthusiastic investigation into the power of the written word. Ocean, thank you for still sharing our bed; you made the late nighttime slips into bed for me extra delicious.

Thank you Richie. Sharing life with you made the reading of this literature and the writing of these conclusions possible. I feel like I owe you a year's worth of dishes duty, but in reality, I know I owe you nothing. Love, it is as wonderful and as terrible as that. By the Lord's grace we have lived.

And finally to the subjects of such discussions as mine; to the people of the Majority World who are used in publicity generating images who never receive loyalties for your images nor the benefits of development. Forgive me if I too have exploited 'you' and 'your place'. I pray miracles for you in this lifetime, and Heaven in the one to come.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1) Background and Statement of the Problem

Among the general public there is a continued lack of understanding of development (Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004: 659). Conditions of silence and voicelessness for those whom poverty and the stigma of development affect are part of the problem, but there also exists the problem of the "...function of *hearing* or *listening*" and looking, seeing and believing "...on the part of those who wield oppressive power" (Boyce Davies and Ogundipc-Leslie, 1995: 3)[1]. As much therefore as the voice of the poor needs to be heard, ears and eyes need to be recipient to what is being communicated. Who is the one who has this potential to wield oppressive power? The answer is anyone who has choices available to them with regards to life, living, lifestyle. People who have options have power and have the potential to wield oppressive power over the poor by failing to use their eyes and ears and minds to recognize their plight. We are people who have options and power, therefore our ears and our eyes are the ones that need to hear and see, and ultimately *understand*, that there is representation by and for the poor.

'Development', 'underdeveloped', 'undeveloped' and 'overdeveloped' are industry specific words relating to a technical and specialized theory and practice. However, there is a public side to development, the part of development that "...faces outwards to a range of non-specialized publics" (Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004: 657). These public faces of development are what define a people or place and create identities and impressions for the viewer, the general public. Even in our digital age and era of impressive communication, there continues, as mentioned above, a lack of understanding of development. The problem is not that representation and information of development is not at hand for the general population, but is rather that awareness and an ability to analyze and interpret this public face of development is lacking.

2) Statement of the Hypothesis

Public faces of development are presented in everyday ordinary places: Appeal envelopes that arrive in our letterboxes, in the pages of the newspaper we peruse with espresso coffee from the coffee lands in

[1] References for this thesis will be given in the author-date system of parenthetical documentation that records the author's surname and the year of publication, and when applicable, a colon followed by a page number. This is the method of referencing most common in the discipline of development studies. I am aware that in literature studies the referencing method is different. But with the combination of these two disciplines, I have chosen the author-date system as I am most familiar with it and most of the technical references made for this research come from the field of development studies. However, so as not to make the text cumbersome with referencing in chapter 3, I have simply abbreviated the title of the work and entered the relevant page number. For example, a quote from the text of *A Small Place* appears as (*SP*: 50).

one hand, in news items on the television, in travel literature, photo albums and even music, to name just a few. The most obvious means of presentation is mass media and non-government organization (NGO) publicity and fund-raising campaigns. However, in less obvious but equally accessible places are the public faces of development presented in literature. I argue that a literary analysis and exploration of written portraits of people and places of developing countries can create development awareness and contribute to the general public's understanding of development.

The hypotheses I hold for this thesis are as follows:

1. That written portraits of people and places of developing countries present a variety of public faces of development;
2. That the contents of these portraits reflects contemporary themes of development;
3. That awareness and knowledge of development is readily available in non-industry specific, non-technical literature.

3) Importance of this Study to the Field of Development Studies

Not only is there a lack of understanding of development among the general public, but also among development practitioners (Everjoice, 2004 and Unwin, 2004). Massey University development studies research student Hannah Nash concludes her 1997 thesis[2] with a recommendation that further study of the "...political content of art and literature used for consciousness-raising in Third World countries would make an interesting study" (108). I add that not only is it interesting but it is an exploratory avenue by which we, the people with choices and power, may come to a greater understanding of development than if we were given only Human Development Indexes to read and other such "balanced account[s]" of development (Hall, 1979: 36).

Images created by words or the photographic process can "...mobilize people into action" (Moro, 1998: 78). Kim Phuc, known as 'the girl in the Vietnam photo', captured so powerfully on film[3], with naked skin burning by Napalm and her face stuck with terror, says "Remember how powerful a photograph can be. More powerful than any bombs. As powerful as love" (M.I.L.K., 2001: 161). Yet so often in the field of development studies, the *power* is the framework and structures deeply embedded in the theories and practice of global development (Crush, 1995). Because development ultimately affects people as well as environment and economics, we know that development discourse cannot merely be

[2] Nash, Hannah (1997). *A Novel Approach to Education and Development: Insights from African Women Writers.* Palmerston North: Massey University, Master's Thesis of Philosophy in Development Studies.
[3] The photographer of Kim Phuc as the victim-child of the Vietnam War is Nick Ut of Associated Press. Phuc and Ut have become life-long friends.

curtailed to systems of economics for example, or agrarian methods (ibid.). Whether we agree with the continuation of development or if we prefer to imagine a post-development world, there will always exist images of development. Conceptualizing these images into development discourse provides other avenues for exploring connections between the public faces of development and development's contemporary themes. Of course, all images are subjective. The image produced will always bear some level of connection to the author. Though it is important to consider whether a portrait accurately represents the persons or scene, or whether it is an impression of the author's interpretation of an event, it is more important to acknowledge that these images – with whatever biases – do contribute to a public understanding of development. The relationship between authors of these images and the public is enveloped in the impressing and connecting of their important messages to their readers.

The significance of this research for the field of development studies is that by discussing the various public faces of development, and providing tools for analysis and interpretation, we can begin to assert whether a particular representation makes a fair and honest connection between "'southern poor', development organizations, and northern individuals" (Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004: 657). With an increased awareness of the many different communications of the public faces of development we will also become more aware of the purposes and intentions behind such communications. For not all public faces of development are created equal; there is a need for such exploratory work as this.

4) Brief Historical Development of the Problem

As the development industry has burgeoned and changed over the last two decades, so also have the ideas and communications behind development. As new ideas grow and activities increase, the canvas of development, to use an art analogy, becomes ever more covered in complexities, things abstract, some realism, some surrealism, some idealism, creating a visual display of contextual impressions. As the public profile of NGOs has grown, so has the anti-globalism campaign, fundraising appeals to the individual household, and advocacy. The higher the profile an organization or a cause generates, the greater the impact of their presentation of public faces of development. So now, as the development industry has experienced exponential growth in contemporary history, there is urgency for legitimacy and transparency, not solely authority or specialty.

The study of fictional writing has a central place in the school of humanities. It is a place "...where all kinds of sociological and moral and historical questions can be raised" (Susan Sontag, in Wells, 2003: 60). These are exactly the types of questions that the public faces of development raise and by means of a literary analysis we may address some of these issues.

5) Personal Interest in the Problem

My personal interest in this problem of 'development awareness' originates from discussions with people about 'what it is I do'. Whenever I say I am a student of development studies, most of the time it is necessary to give a little explanation on what development is, and why I would be studying it. My fascination, not judgment, has grown as to how as a society we can be so uninformed with so little understanding of how globalization and development affects our lives and the lives of our international 'neighbours'.

Choosing Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* to conduct this literary analysis happened over two years ago. In 2003 I studied a 'travel literature' writing paper through Massey University, whilst conjointly continuing with my development studies papers. One of our options for study was Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*. The book delighted (and insulted, abused, offended and rubbished) me. I loved it. But I was very much alone with my sentiments. My fellow students had many reservations regarding Kincaid, and few chose to study her work. Many found the tone of her work unjustifiably angry, her continual rage almost infantile, and even the $20 for the price of 'such a small book' enough to deter students from an important study of post-colonialism. I felt that as students of literature, we were missing the point, the reason for Kincaid's work. Yet the reason wasn't beyond a literary analysis. It was right there, even made extremely personal with Kincaid's use of "you" in various sections of her work. So, in light of her work being so quickly dismissed, I have chosen it to illustrate the point that images of development are readily available, we just need to open our eyes to read and view them. We need to abandon any personal offence and truly listen to what 'others' may have to say about issues that concern them, and at times, be ready to hear that these very issues could be 'us'.

Had I more room to write this literature review, I would have cojoined the analysis of Kincaid's written text with photographic images contained in the M.I.L.K. collections, the Magnum exhibitions or the photographic portraiture of Steve McCurry[4]. In the M.I.L.K. collections, for example, the global representation of portraits of people and places creates an unusual harmony between images of 'First' and 'Third' Worlds, imploring interesting discussion around contemporary themes of development. All would make wonderful case studies for this thesis, or another of its kind, but for space restrictions I am limited to a single text.

This thesis therefore, is a literary analysis and exploration of the salient and subtle public faces of development as found in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*. The intended generalizability, or transferability of

[4] Steve McCurry photographed 'the Afghan girl', famous for her piercing green-eyed gaze peering out through a tattered, rusty-red head covering. Wherever you stand in relation to the photo, her eyes remain fixed on you. For some viewers, the experience becomes overwhelmingly personal.

this thesis, is that it will provide insight into recognizing, analyzing, and interpreting the public faces of development in ordinary, non-industry specific literature as well as other genres of communication.

6) Operational Definitions

Most writers on themes of development deem it necessary to clarify their personal choice of terminology – I am no different. I have intentionally restricted my use of the terms "First and Third Worlds" and have not at all made use of the terms "North" and "South". Of the former, I have never felt comfortable accepting these terms. The inception of their use was delivered in Point Four of the Inaugural Address President Truman of the United States of America made on 20 January 1949. The speech, and Point Four in particular, appeared to many as a speech of good will, honest intentions, foresight, planning, and compassion. My personal interpretation is that the speech has ruefully affected the way we in the Minority World accept and view those of the Majority. As Rist has said, it was an example of "opportunist deception", indeed, Point Four was "taken on board as a public relations gimmick, contrasting with the rather conventional first three points" (Rist, 1997: 70). I have used these terms here at the introduction of the work simply to use familiar terms to introduce more industry specific terms, Minority and Majority Worlds. Of "North" and "South", I think for the general public these terms can be ambiguous and imply an extensive geographical knowledge required for participation in development discussions. So for the remainder of the thesis I have use Minority and Majority Worlds in place of the more common First and Third Worlds, respectively.

The ideas presented here are my personal synthesis of a journey with Kincaid's text *A Small Place,* (having read the short 81 page text many times over the last three years), a review of the literature in four distinct areas, and a methodology comprising of a literary analysis of the text in question.

7) Delimitations of this Thesis

In this study, I have excluded dealing with the issues of tourism within less developed countries, albeit tourism and 'the tourist' are central to Kincaid's text. The primary concern of this thesis is with the public faces of development, some constructed *through* tourism, rather than an exploration of the issues of tourism itself.

8) Summary

From development studies literature we are shown that within the general population there is a continued lack of understanding of development. Through this thesis I propose to demonstrate that the public faces of development are contained within non-industry specific literature and that these faces of development reflect contemporary development themes. There is no lack of development information in non-technical circles, hence avenues for increased awareness and knowledge need exploration. The study of fiction in the school of humanities is important as it raises a myriad of sociological, moral, and historical questions that help address issues of development. Jamaica Kincaid's controversial text *A Small Place* will provide us with an abundance of discussion points associated with this topic.

In the second chapter of this thesis I review literature written about four broad themes associated with this question of the public faces of development. The four areas of discussion link to illustrate how development is 'framed'. In the third chapter I discuss and analyze how these various frames, or portraits of people and places, provide a public face of development and how an increase in awareness and understanding of themes of development can arise from a literature analysis of fictional writing from the Majority World. The fourth chapter concludes the thesis with a summary of the work, an outcome, implications for further practice within the field of development studies, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

Portraits of people and places of developing countries are literally everywhere and the presentation of public faces of development is wide and extremely varied. Public faces of development have always existed, as long as development has had history. These faces play "...a central role in mediating connections between 'southern poor', development organizations and northern individuals" (Smith and Yanacapulos, 2004: 657). Yet literature related to the topic is relatively new to the field of development studies. How the various public faces of development have been produced has evolved from production *within* the formal institutions and machinery of development, to production from *outside*. Yet, for all the technology and media and the hype of living in the 'information era', we still live in a world "...largely cut from cardboard images" (Pieterse, 1992: 235). The 'cardboard images' of the public face of development, that which is produced from 'outside', is the theme of exploration and analysis in this thesis.

Though the issue of public faces of development is addressed in such journals as *Journal of International Development issues* (indeed, the publishers devoted an entire issue to this theme), there is still relatively little actually being said about the phenomenon of the presentation of these public images, or any connections drawn between the images presented, the subject of the image, and the author. Instead, the public face of development is repeatedly drawn back into discourse *within*, rather than *outside*, the development industry. Smith (2004) in his paper researching the communication of development, comparing institutions within and outside the development industry, highlights the need "...to look beyond the formal institutions and machineries of development to understand the contemporary production of development's public faces" (741). This thesis is an early exploration of 'the beyond'.

An adequate and exciting review of the literature pertinent to our exploration and analysis necessitates coverage of the following four broad topics: (1) A Brief Overview of Public Faces of Development; (2) Selected Contemporary Themes of Development; (3) Interdisciplinary Study of Literature and Development Studies; and (4) An Introduction to Jamaica Kincaid and Issues in Caribbean Women's Literature. Discussion throughout the remainder of this chapter adheres to this sequence.

1) A Brief Overview of Public Faces of Development

There are two ways of categorizing public faces of development. First, there are the public faces presented by organizations, governments, advocacy groups, individuals, NGOs, international volunteers, ethical consumers, and media corporations (Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004: 657). Individuals or groups of authors and artists present the second category of public faces of development. The literature concerning the first group is relatively new to the field of development studies. The literature concerning the second

group is almost non-existent. Yet, the study of public faces of development is essential to understanding how it is that different constituencies of society engage themselves in the issues of development or how it is that yet still so many members of the general public are still so uninformed and lacking understanding of development issues (Live Aid, in ibid.). Development studies researchers Nash, Smith, and Yanacopulos, strongly imply in their recommendations for future industry[1] research, that the examination of the public faces of development as represented in art and literature is not only needed and full of scope, but also "...urgent" (Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004: 663).

According to these authors, the study of these public faces of development is urgent and required, it exists, and the people for whom it exists have access to it. So, why do the general public still lack understanding regarding development? Perhaps it is the on-going concern that there is no one set definition for, or pathway to (Corbridge, 1995: xv), development. Or perhaps it is confusion and idiosyncrasies that make it almost necessary for the general public to *not* get involved or try to understand. If development, and indeed development studies, is comprised of complex economic, socio-political and environmental problems, then according to Corbridge it is unlikely that a simple panacea for development will emerge. Therefore, the communication of the public faces of development will reflect the same. According to Smith (2004), "...public faces of development are most readily characterized by contradictions, and ... these are informed by a range of social, political, cultural and economic dynamics" (741). Is it no wonder that the general public recoil at the prospect of understanding something so complex and seemingly removed from their everyday existence?

What can presenters of the public faces of development hope to achieve? Can a portrait[2] relate context? If so, a context from whose perspective? And how can a portrait adequately portray all the *causes* of a context?

Public faces of development connect the subject of the portrait with an issue or theme of development, and with the viewer or reader. These increasingly complex public faces of development (Smith and Yanacapulos, 2004) are conveyed to an audience beyond the industry journals; to the audience sitting comfortably in their reading chair, picking up and caressing their new literary purchase of, for example, travel literature. Any one public representation of development could convey a myriad number of messages and serve a multitude of purposes. That which is presented in the name of development can be powerful and effective, producing both positive and negative effects. Therefore, the public faces of development matter. "That many development educators felt that the media reporting surrounding Live Aid had set back their educative work by ten years is testimony to the power of the media in producing a

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[1] 'Industry' referred to here and throughout the thesis, refers to the industry, or field of inquiry, of development studies.

[2] Throughout this text, portrait refers to a written or visual presentation of a portrait. A portrait can refer to either people or places.

particular public face of development" (ibid.: 663). Smith, in comparing institutions within and outside the development industry, goes one step further to find that the public face of development not only shapes the public's understanding of development matters, but is also shaped *by* general actors, processes and dynamics from not just within the development studies agenda, but from beyond (2004: 741).

This idea of *shaping* leads to the selection of contemporary themes of development for this review. These are themes that go beyond the traditional sphere of development studies. These are the principle beliefs and paradigms that underpin development action and advocacy.

2) Selected Contemporary Themes of Development

When we talk about the contemporary themes of development, generally we make reference to a country or region's levels of poverty, unemployment, inequalities between people groups, and situations such as adequate supply of safe drinking water to impoverished communities, squatter settlements in urban environments, sustainable agricultural developments, gender issues, health, and education, to name just a few key themes (Massey University 131.221: 2003). Jeffrey Sachs compares the contemporary themes of development to the Big Five animals to watch for on the African Savannah. For Sachs, the Big Five contemporary development interventions "...that would spell the difference between hunger, disease, and death and health and economic development" (2005: 194), are agricultural inputs, investments in basic health, investments in education, power, transport and communications services, and safe drinking water and sanitation. Though it is helpful to have a framework such as that proposed by Sachs, the list of potential indicators to define and measure development is infinite.

I propose for the purposes of this study that we consider the contemporary themes of development as those theories and beliefs that underpin the actions of transnational advocacy of development. I liken this approach to development to that of a painting. The canvas is the environment, the colours are issues as listed above, the brush is advocacy, but it is the feelings and vision of the artist that determine how the canvas, colours, and brush are used to produce the final image. These feelings, visions, and beliefs of the artist are parallel to the contemporary themes of development for exploration in this literature review. And as with a painting, the beliefs, feelings and vision of the artist are normally unknown to the viewer. The viewer interprets the art and forms some sort of opinion and conclusion about the ideas presented. The interpretation is never exactly the same as the intentions of the artist. But that's the way it goes with the visual and written arts, and also with interpretations of the public faces and contemporary themes of development.

Sometimes, paintings are used alongside text, as in the case of a picture-storybook. The world itself is like a giant storybook comprised of colourful, bold illustrations, and stories knitted together with words as delicious and rich as traditional Italian pasta sauce. Our individual reactions to this storybook will vary greatly. Because each of us holds our own beliefs and paradigms, we will read the book with different tools for interpretation. Written text and visual images contain a story, are set in a context, but for each viewer the interpretation and understanding of the images will be different.

One final analogy for the discussion of these contemporary themes is to consider the themes as I present them, as the skeleton behind that which I have already referred to as the 'public faces of development' – the face of development which faces out to the world, whether the world is looking for it to be there or not. Just as a human face has a skeletal system behind the veil that we refer to as the 'face', so the public faces of development have a skeletal system. The skeletal system I present is comprised of the following structures: that (1) Development is Framed by Objectivism and Subjectivism; (2) Domination Invokes Separation – the Widening Gulf between the Rich and the Poor; (3) Responsibility and Ownership in Development is for All; (4) Development is Afflicted with Paradoxical Beliefs and Repetition of Unsuccessful Processes; and finally (5) Development Involves Everyone. Each idea will be discussed in an exploratory and analytical manner. The remainder of section 2 adheres to this sequence ending with (6) Conclusion.

2.1. Development is Framed by Objectivism and Subjectivism

The various public faces of development are neither simple nor definitive, yet certain images – the starving African child, the dispossessed, emancipated female refugee – have become the 'frame' of much of the representation of development initiatives to the general public. The frame is 'resource poverty'. The people frozen in time in these images become objects in development discourse. Yet they are no less the 'subject', like you and I, the ones who objectify. The person as 'subject' is always completely human; the person as 'object' is emptied of emotions, dreams, physicality, purpose. In 1998 a journalist asked the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Anan, whether ...

> "...Africans shared the same human rights values as Europeans?"
>
> "Why don't you ask a mother in Rwanda what she feels about her child being killed by a death squad?"' (Cohen, 2001: 299) came the irritated reply.

This answer, which obviously *needed* to be said, shows that regardless of whether people represented in a public face of development are reduced to objects – emptied of emotions, feelings, longings, realities – it remains true, that these same people as subjects share a universal response to suffering and trauma. Recently, Win Everjoice issued a challenge to those of us frantically working within this object-subject frame of development. In an article titled 'Not very poor, powerless or pregnant: The African Woman forgotten by Development', Everjoice challenges "...[d]evelopment practitioners and policy-makers...to engage with this 'new' African woman.... I challenge everyone to go beyond this image towards a deeper

and more meaningful understanding of the realities of African women's lives" (October 2004: 61). The image to which she is referring is the one "so often used by international news agencies, the bare-footed African woman..." (ibid.). This poor woman, "without uttering a word...pulls in financial resources" (ibid.). In short, the popular frame of development is a cliché because it sells. Through this frame, even the most altruistic, philanthropic, self-denying person, 'others' the 'other' (Said, 1995). To create solidarity platforms in development, Everjoice says this will only ever happen if both sides of development come to a common space with honesty and without "othering the other" (October 2004: 64). Of the duplexity of otherness Trinh T. Minh-Ha words it perfectly:

> "The story of otherness and of marginality has recently become so central to theoretical discussion that it is difficult both to respond satisfactorily to the demand and to take on the dubious role of the Real Other to speak the "truth" on otherness" (1991: 185).

The frame for creating public faces of development is not as simple and definitive as the traditional images of poverty and powerlessness suggest. To break traditional frames of development is to look beyond the frame of resource poverty, and see, for example, that rights denials, and other violations, can be seen through different lenses (Everjoice, October 2004).

2.2. Domination Invokes Separation - the Widening Gulf between the Rich and the Poor

Economic globalization is a contemporary form of domination creating separation. It is incontrovertible that the gulf between the world's rich and the world's poor continues to increase. Although this widening gap has occurred within and between states, most obviously the gap has increased between 'developed' Minority countries and 'developing' Majority ones (Robinson, 2002: 68). McGrew argues that it is the forces of economic globalization that have marginalized and disenfranchised increasing numbers of people (2000: 355). Brecher agrees, defining globalization as "...cancerous, out-of-control..." (Kegley and Wittkopf 1995: 304). He says that the "...result of unregulated globalization has been the pillage of the planet and its peoples" (ibid.: 305). Robert Gilpin argues that despite whether a country has embraced liberalism, nationalism (mercantilism) or Marxism, "...the conflict among these three... positions has revolved around the role and significance of the market in the organization of society and economic affairs (Gilpin – in ibid.: 241). Nafziger and Auvinen argue that poverty, stagnation, unemployment, and inflation are all exacerbated by repression and economic discrimination (Nafziger and Auvinen, 2003: 30-50). Yet still, economist and popular hero for those ever increasing ethical consumers and economists, Jeffrey Sachs[3] (2005), holds his position that economic growth, with equitable distribution, is still the only way to put an end, once and for all, to poverty.

[3] Jeffrey Sachs 2005 book release has one of the most unambiguous titles in the bibliography of this study. The reader is at once presented with the hypothesis and conclusion of Sach's work – and the book does not deter from this mission, not once, throughout the entire read. The title: *The End of Poverty – Economic Possibilities of our Time.*

Economic growth and development alone are not sufficient for ensuring a raise in standards of living of the poor. Time and again[4], research shows that where economic development is present, not all peoples share in the benefits, nor are the shares equitable. "Development is often isolated to export-focused sectors of the economy, and profits are not used to build infrastructure, nor are they necessarily reinvested in the host country or allowed to trickle down to average citizens" (Wermuth, 2003: 182). For economic development to positively influence the whole community, Wermuth argues that more than economic success is required. He presents his argument in light of economic development positively affecting population health, however, his case is transferable to most other factions concerning development; environmental health, education, gender equality, housing and sanitation, and indeed all facets of everyday life. See table 1 for a list of dynamics required for 'wealth to equal health', and indeed, 'wealth to equal equality', and so on.

Table No.1: Refining the "Wealth Equals Health" Formula – Six Dynamics
The following list of [six] dynamics influence the relationship between economic development and population health: 1. A country's readiness for development 2. Internal development processes 3. The extent to which the majority benefits from development 4. The extent to which inequality increases with development 5. The effectiveness of civic-minded state policies 6. The epidemiology of the country

(Source: Wermuth, 2003: 171)

For economic progress to be anything more than a contemporary form of domination and subjugation, where the elite remain elite and the poor continue to struggle even with a rise in gross national product (GNP), then the above listed dynamics need to be present in the relationship between the general population and economic progress.

Some contemporary forms of domination, other than economic globalization, mirror slavery. For example, Deborah Eade, editor of *Development in Practice* journal, sites contemporary forms of slavery as "...women and girls subsequently coerced or forced into the sex industry", along with other forms of human trafficking (August 2005: 615). The exploitation of human beings is, in the case of human

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[4] The following selection of 'Dependency Theory' and 'World Systems' studies, carried out in the 1980s and 1990s, document economic growth in developing countries. The results show that economic growth often not only does not benefit the majority of peoples, but that it also can increase their difficulties. The researchers document increased inequality and conclude that the benefits of economic growth are normally concentrated among the economic elite. The studies include: Bornschier & Chase-Dunn 1985; Boswell & Dixon 1990; Braun 1997; Evans & Timberlake 1980; Jaffee 1985; London 1987, 1988; London & Robinson 1989; London & Smith 1988; London & Williams 1988, 1990; Stokes & Jaffee 1982; Wimberley 1990, 1991; Wimberley & Bellow 1992 (as cited in Wermuth, 2003: 182).

trafficking "...today's third largest criminal enterprise, after narcotics and arms" (ibid.). This domination and separation creates almost incomprehensible levels of deprivation. Another form of domination is that outworked by multinationals that find offshore labour more competitive than local labour[5]. Activists for the Anti-globalization campaign protest en masse and as individual vigilante consumers regarding the saturation of sweat-shops in Less Developed Countries (LDCs). Corporate myth-debunking popular heroes such as Naomi Klein (2000) and Anita Roddick (2000) have uncovered the lies of designer clothing companies and the exploitations by oil companies (the "agents of death" – (Roddick, 2000: 159)). And they have done so with hearts-bleeding, in the metaphoric language of their debut writings, and with non-conformist bravado[6], presenting their arguments even to the point of utter devastation, for example the ensuing murder of fellow Ogoni grassroots protestor, Ken Saro-Wiwa[7]. Any contemporary form of domination will have its subjugates, its equals to slavery of the past. But contemporary forms of domination will not liberate the oppressor any more than they will liberate the oppressed. Jeanne de Hericourt[8] said, "Where there is one slave there are always two – he who wears the chain and he who rivets it" (cited in ibid.: 162). History has already proven that domination, slavery, liberates no one.

2.3. Responsibility and Ownership in Development is for All

Development studies highlight the insurmountable requirement for responsibility and ownership for both the oppressed and those who oppress. Actors, as well as recipients of development initiatives, are ultimately responsible for their lives. Albeit hideously unjust to suggest that rape, pillage and slum landslides are the responsibility and ownership of those to whom such atrocities occur, it is necessary for victims to take responsibility for living with harrowing memories and traumas. Consider the responsibility and ownership that we must take as viewers of written or photographic images of devastation and tragedy in the Majority World. John Berger, photographic reviewer, notes that some people can be 'seized' by such images, yet "...I am aware that there are people who pass them over, but about them there is nothing to say" (Berger – in Cohen, 2001: 301). Being ruthlessly honest with ourselves, this is most certainly true of all of us at some point or other in our lives. "We sense a radical discontinuity as we

[5] For example, a European clothing multinational may employ Mexican workers to stitch "...together garments from cloth made in India that was cut into patterns in Indonesia. The final product may be sold in department stores in Los Angeles, Paris and other cities" (Wermuth, 2003: 45).

[6] "We were also vulnerable because we were so high profile. We were openly challenging the system, challenging the role of business. We were campaigning, we were loud-mouthed, we had attitude and we were making waves as well as big profits" – Anita Roddick commenting on just one stage of 'The Body Shop' journey in international advocacy (Roddick, 2000: 217).

[7] For a compelling and utterly disturbing version of the Ken Saro-Wiwa of Ogoniland story, read Roddick, 2000, pages 158-169. Equally disturbing is, in light of the above-mentioned story, to flick through the front pages of *National Geographic* magazine for the years 1997-2001 and meditate on the advertising campaign (using exquisite photographic portraits of people and places of developing countries!) used by Shell to promote their new transparency (which subtly covered over a multitude of sins).

[8] Jeanne de Hericourt (1809-1875), also know as Jenny P. d'Hericourt, was a French writer, women's activist, and physican-midwife. She lived her life with sympathy for victims and the oppressed. Hericourt helped form a society working for women's civil liberties, Société pour l'émancipation des femmes.

leave the frozen 'moment' of the photo to go back into our own lives.... The moment of agony was isolated, discontinuous from normal time and space" (ibid.).

So what about big business and the corporate response? What about those with extreme power to turn their observations and acknowledgement of oppression to a political critique of their market activities? Eade, again in an editorial, summarizes the purpose and activities of a new corporate movement: "The corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement has helped to bring issues of labour rights and environmental damage to consumers in rich countries, and to create pressure on companies to smarten up their act" (June 2005: 249). But there is no formula for responsibility and ownership. For one person or company to ascertain appropriate levels of response to injustice, exploitation or tragedy (or any other positive or negative result of development initiatives) is impossible. Any response is subjective and tinged with political judgments. Just as members of one family, raised with the same values and beliefs can reach very different conclusions at election time, so it is that people in the same subculture of class, language, culture, age, political views and location of residence, will reach very different conclusions about development ideologies and practice. However, as Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi suggest, big business and the corporate response, as well as that from *within* the development industry, should be to reframe and take new action on buzzwords such as 'participation' and 'empowerment'. The response is to shift the frame "...from assessing the needs of beneficiaries of the choices of customers or clients, to foster citizens to recognize and claim their rights and obligation-holders to honour their responsibilities" (2004: 1424). Furthermore, however, is as O'Neill (2000) points out that "...rights are meaningless, unless they are accompanied by acknowledgement of their corresponding obligations by those responsible for fulfilling them" (Williams, 2005: 89).

2.4. Development is Afflicted with Paradoxical Beliefs and Repetition of Unsuccessful Processes

From modernization theory of the 1950s through to Structural Adjustment Policies of the 1980s and Neo-liberalism of the 1990s and new millennium, all have focused on resource poverty as the main contributing factor to 'underdevelopment'. Everjoice asks, "Is resource poverty the lens through which we should look at women's rights denials and violations?" (October 2004: 61). Is not poverty more than just as issue of resources "...but includes violence, denial of person hood, silencing, marginalization, denial of choice and other freedoms (ibid.: 64)? Gerald Bloom further adds that "[p]overty is now seen as a dynamic process in which household responses to shock are important". For example, "[a]n episode of ill-health can be an important factor in a sequence of events leading a household into destitution" (Bloom, July 2004: 39). Yet as Addison, Mavrotas and McGillivray broadly conclude "... poverty would be higher in the absence of aid" (15 July 2005: 819). Resource aid and development do work. And, consistent with his message, Sachs concludes that "[e]conomic development works. It can be successful (Sachs, 2005: 73). Hence, the world needs aid and development to continue, and in greater measure if the much talked

about Millennium Development Goals[9] (MDGs) are to be obtained by 2015[10]. Indeed, the kindergarten lesson we all learned as infants – that one must *share* – is urgent for meeting the costs of minimum health standards in low-income countries (Bloom, July 2004: 40).

But development and aid haven't yet lifted millions from abject poverty. Still one sixth of humanity lives in extreme poverty without "...basic standards of nutrition, health, water, sanitation and other minimum needs for survival, well-being, and participation in society" (Sachs, 2005: 24). So which processes and patterns of development should be moved away from, and which should be embraced, or created? Bloom believes that a society's ability to cope with major challenges is the reason "for the growing inequalities between those who are benefiting from development and those who are being left behind" (Bloom, July 2004: 40). Sachs believes the "innovation gap is...one of the most fundamental reasons why the richest and the poorest countries have diverged" (Sachs, 2005: 62). Dwayne Woods questions whether the issue is "latitude or rectitude", the geographical or institutional, respectively, determinants of development (2004: 1401). If it is geographical, it is because "...the underlying assumption...is that dealing with hard environmental conditions will do more to foster better institutions and attract foreign capital than an excessive focus on good governance and protecting property rights (ibid.: 1411). If it is to be institutional it is because "...the promotion of the rule of law and the protection of property rights will enable governments to tackle the geographical factors that contribute to their nation's poverty" (ibid.: 1412). However, which ever focus prevails for Woods, an absence of violence is required as is political stability for any stages of amelioration to occur (ibid.: 1408). Acemoglu amalgamates both determinants in saying

> "...poor countries...often lack functioning markets, their populations are poorly educated and their machinery and technology are outdated or nonexistent. But these are only proximate causes of poverty, begging the question of why these places don't have better markets...and technology. There must be some fundamental causes leading to these outcomes, and via these channels, to dire poverty" (Acemoglu – in ibid.: 1402).

Eduardo Galeano, the controversial author of *Open Veins of Latin America*[11], says "...reality...show[s] that underdevelopment in Latin America is a consequence of development elsewhere, that we Latin Americans

[9] The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a framework of 8 goals, 18 targets, and 48 indicators to be achieved by 2015. The MDGs were "adopted by a consensus of experts from the Untied Nations Secretariat and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank" (www.unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp). See Appendix One for a list of the 8 goals.

[10] United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi A. Annan, comments on the conditions required for accomplishment of the MDGs: "We will have time to reach the Millennium Development Goals – worldwide and in most, or even all, individual countries – but only if we break with business as usual. We cannot win overnight. Success will require sustained action across the entire decade between now and the deadline. It takes time to train the teachers, nurses and engineers; to build the roads, schools and hospitals; to grow the small and large businesses able to create the jobs and income needed. So we must start now. And we must more than double global development assistance over the next few years. Nothing less will help to achieve the Goals" (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/#).

[11] *Open Veins of Latin America* is a book about political economy over five centuries that caused the pillage of a continent. Galeano asserts that the greatest praise ever received for his book came from military dictatorships that

are poor because the ground we tread is rich, and that places privileged by nature have been cursed by history" (Galeano, 1973: 289). Unwin argues that "...some progress could undoubtedly be made were donors and recipient governments alike to shift their attention [from an absolute understanding] to relative understanding of poverty and thereby to issues of equity and difference, rather than concentrating primarily on economic growth as the main driver for poverty elimination" (Unwin, 2004: 1520). We can see from this mix of opinions from a variety of authors that the answers to the questions of development processes are varied, paradoxical, and unrelenting.

2.5. Development Involves Everyone

Development, by its very nature, is today almost synonymous with 'catching-up' with affluent societies: the USA[12], Europe and Japan (Maria Mies, in Pojman, 2001: 499). However, Africa for example, has been the recipient of stringent and focused development efforts yet "...almost all of the indicators suggest that despite decades of development assistance the continent is actually less well off than it was 20 years ago. The growth model has failed Africa, and yet the rhetoric of growth continues to dominate" (Unwin, 2004: 1506). Studies in the United States of growing market forces reveal that quality of life is less today than it was ten years ago. As gross domestic product (GDP) grows, quality of life decreases (ibid.). Development then, either positively or negatively, directly or indirectly, affects everybody. We can take this a step further by saying that everybody affects development. As a contemporary theme of development, the thinking associated with outworking our lives as partakers in a global community requires sustained and committed efforts. As Galeano puts it, "...in this world of ours, a world of powerful centers and subjugated outposts, there is no wealth that must not be held in some suspicion" (Galeano, 1973: 289).

Development, underdevelopment, and overdevelopment are all real. Sensation, emotion, love, loss, and life itself are real. Hunger is real. As Maria Carolina de Jesus[13] wrote "Hunger is the dynamite of the human body" (ibid.: 304). We have already discussed how it is possible that we may all interpret the public faces of development and its contemporary themes in different ways. But we will have to think about it all and make it matter to us sooner rather than later. The signs of development, and underdevelopment and overdevelopment, are all around us. We can believe Galeano who says "[u]nderdevelopment isn't a stage of development, but its consequence" (ibid.: 308). Or perhaps we can

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banned the book. *Open Veins of Latin America* is unobtainable in his own country, Uruguay, or in Chile. In Argentina, authorities "...denounced it on TV and in the press as a corrupter of youth" (Galeano, 1973: 287).

[12] Though the United States is heralded in mainstream circles as a world-leader and affluent society, care needs to be taken in recognizing the *growing* number of poor and the *increasing* levels of economic inequality between classes. For example, a 1993 report revealed that 54 percent of single-parent families in the United States lived in relative poverty (below half the average income) compared with only 2 percent of single-parent Swedish and Japanese families and 21 percent among other OECD countries (Hewlett 1993, cited in Wermuth, 2003: 173).

[13] Maria Carolina de Jesus (1914-1977) was a Brazilian barrio dweller whose personal journals were published. She incurred a short, sharp ascent to fame and acclaim, but only seven years after her successes, died, a pauper, forgotten, returned to the barrios out of which she had been delivered.

follow the great musical legend Bono and his mentor Jeffrey Sachs who say that our global mandate should be to ensure "...that all of the world's poor, including those in moderate poverty, have a chance to climb the ladder of development" (Sachs, 2005: 24).

The black reality is that today World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and donor meetings take place in expensive hotels while the "objects" of their discussions remain in poverty (Moore and Schmitz 1995: 138). In whatever colour, reality is that development, for all its years of theory and practice, still subjugates terminally ill African HIV/AIDS patients by volleying key words such as 'inputs', 'objectives', 'empowerment', 'participation', and 'cost-effective' in the same sentences as 'creating enabling environments' and 'behavioural change' (Black, 1993). The people for whom these theories and processes are espoused remain without '...proper patient care, livable wages for nursing and medical staff, income support for the wife rocking on her haunches over the inert body of her husband, about to be widowed and with three small mouths to feed" (ibid.: 21). Reality is the number of terminally ill patients, who should be able to die in dignity, continues to burgeon; not only in far-away Africa, but Asia and right here at home in the Pacific. The reality of some development situations, such as HIV/AIDS in Africa, is simply too terribly "...hard to bear" (ibid.). For reality of development issues to truly establish itself in the hearts and minds of policy-makers and decision makers, what will it take? Must we believe Seabrook who says we really need something as serious as the plague "...to bring home to us the callous disregard we have shown in providing minimum conditions of citizen survival" (Seabrook, 1996: 9)? Seabrook points out that if there is money for five-star apartments in the world's megacities then there is certainly money enough for other housing and sanitation for the cities' poor. With this knowledge we can believe Galeano who says "Development is a voyage with more shipwrecks than navigators" (Galeano, 1973: 189).

2.6. Conclusion

Knowing that development is framed by objectivisim and subjectivism increases the number of questions we, as citizens of the world, will ask of the portraits and representations made to us of development scenarios. Our biases and judgments even frame the frame. Knowing this, we can begin to break the frame and see, perhaps for the first time, the truth and the fallacy of development situations that have been known to us. As domination continues to invoke separation, this breaking the frame will begin to reverse the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor. Within this process occurring, we, the actors and recipients involved, are taking responsibility and ownership of matters of development. Suddenly, we will see things we never saw before and will wonder why we never did and what has taken us so long to work out that truly the whole world is our neighbour; that the Golden Rule we were taught in kindergarten actually applies to such passive activities as the purchase of one's clothing, food, and entertainment, and to more proactive activities such as participation in advocacy and elections. Our eyes are opened to injustice, hypocrisy, and paradoxical scenarios. Suddenly, we realize that one good idea for one situation might just simply be that; a good idea for that particular situation. Not every development

initiative can be replicated or transferred to other situations. Suddenly, we need to think more than once. Even more than twice. We need to commit to undoing unsuccessful processes and confess our ignorance and arrogance. We need to shift our attention from being right to being involved. And the 'we' includes us all – no one is exempt from loving and caring and giving and receiving in a world full of neighbours.

This discussion of some selected contemporary themes of development gives prominence to the issue of awareness of the various public faces of development. The discussion requires that we examine our own understanding and beliefs about development whilst calling us to prepare for more urgent interpretations and analyses of portraits of development that we come across in our everyday world. Just one example of the places these many portraits are found is in fictional writing. Our next discussion makes an enquiry into the legitimacy and place of importance that a study of fictional writing has within the school of humanities.

3) Interdisciplinary Study of Literature and Development Studies

Can truth of society, and therefore development, be gained from literature? I must begin this section with the thought that "Reality is more fabulous, more maddening, more strangely manipulative than fiction" (Trinh T. Minh-Ha, 1991: 39). According to Alexander Kluge, "In more than one respect, reality is simultaneously real and unreal.... It must be possible to represent reality as the historical fiction it is. Reality is a paper-tiger. The individual does encounter it. As fate. It is not fate, however, but a creation of the labor of generations of human beings, who all the time wanted and still want something entirely different" (cited in ibid.: 141). Of fiction, therefore, we need not be afraid! Albeit, at times, it is hard to know which is less real – reality or fiction!

These created labours of the generations, this 'thing' in academic circles referred to as 'popular literature' (a 'good book' in non-academic circles...) is not, embraced by all schools of thought as a viable means for providing adequate data for sociology and development studies research. For example, the Structuralist view strongly opposes the possibilities of the extraction of truth and societal representation from literature. Structuralists[14] concentrate mainly on "...the *internal* qualities of literature – occasionally

[14] "...Structuralism sees truth as being 'behind' or 'within' a text, post-structuralism stresses the interaction of reader and text as a productivity" (Sarup, 1993: 3). Also, another definition by And Grundberg suggests that in structuralist theory, images and texts "...do not wear their meaning on their sleeves. They must be deciphered, or decoded, in order to be understood. In other words, things have a 'deeper structure' than common sense permits us to comprehend, and structuralism purports to provide a method that allows us to penetrate that deeper structure. Basically, its method is to divide everything in two. It takes the sign...and separates it into the 'signifier' and the 'signified'. The signifier is like a pointer, and the signified is what gets pointed to.... In a sense, it holds that the obvious meaning is irrelevant; instead, it finds its territory within the structure of things – hence the name structuralism"

in the open belief that literature has nothing to say about the larger society" (Hall, 1979: 13). Even just two to three decades back, popular literature in and of itself was hardly considered worth the paper it was printed on, let alone of any *value* to enquires carried out in the varying schools of humanities. Adorno and Horkheimer have argued, "...popular art was merely designed to provide sufficient escapism to keep the population in a drugged state" (Hall, 1979: 12). Of the culture that produces popular literature, they say it

> "...dresses works of art like political slogans and forces them upon a resistant public at reduced prices; they are as accessible for public enjoyment as a park.... The abolition of educational privilege by the device of clearance sales does not open for the masses the sphere from which they were formerly excluded, but, given existing social conditions, contribute directly to the decay of education and the progress of barbaric meaninglessness (in Curran et. Al., 1977: 378).

According to other schools of thought, for example Marxism and the English School of Literary Thought, the study of literary texts as socially, politically, environmentally, and developmentally relevant is not only possible but necessary. Literary critic F.R. Leavis has said that:

> "Without the sensitizing familiarity with the subtleties of language, and the insight into the relations between abstract or generalizing thought and the concrete of human experience, that the trained frequentation of literature alone can bring, the thinking that attends social and political studies will not have the edge and force it should" (1952: 194).

In a later work he asserts that "it is the great novelists above all who give us our social history; compared with what is done in *their* work – their creative work – the histories of the professional social historian seem empty and unenlightening (1972: 81-2). Professors of English, Anthropology, Women Studies and authors themselves, Janet Tallman, Roseanne L. Hoefel and Rose De Angelis all profess that authors of fiction literature, including therefore the term 'popular literature', are all ethnographers[15]. They are so

> "...by virtue of the fact that they write stories about people and their sentiments, about places and happenings, and about context. Characteristically, the ethnographer participates, either overtly or covertly, in the daily lives of a group of people, watching, listening, and collecting data that will shed light on the observed subject or subjects. In literature, the writer/observer share a piece of the other, and the overlapping pieces provide a window through which the reader may gain insights – social and cultural data – into particular cultures and societies" (De Angelis, 2002: 3-4).

Hall (1979), along with George Orwell (1970, Vol 4: 261), believes that "literature is an attempt bade by men to understand their social experience; *it is thus more of a witness to that particular experience than illuminating a fully balanced account of the complete social scene"* (Hall, 1979: 36 – italics mine). From the strength of these brief arguments, we can see that an analysis of popular literary texts offers the general reader as well as the student of development studies, a real and acceptable view of the actions and effects of development in practice and the ensuing realities for society in general.

(in Wells, 2003: 166-7). And finally, Terry Eagleton says "Structuralism is the modern inheritor of this belief that reality, and our experience of it, are discontinuous with each other" (Eagleton, 1983: 108).

[15] "Broadly conceived, ethnography is the study of culture: It seeks to provide a descriptive analysis of cultural arrangements and practices" (Ball and Smith, 1992: 5).

As much as literature often reflects reality, it also is an avenue for authors, artists, and readers alike, to explore relationships between language, society, and imagination and the webs that consciously and subconsciously bind them all together. "Literature can be used by researchers to examine the structure of relations between the individual and society, the processes of social change and, perhaps most important, the ways in which these are to be studied systematically by taking account of the meanings, as well as the causes, of social action" (Paul Filmer, in Seale, 2001: 284). Through this "...reflexive engagement..." (ibid.) of relationships, literature can transcend the society(ies), history, people, and culture that it represents. Rose De Angelis, professor of English and editor of the book series *Anthropology and Literature*, challenges students of humanities disciplines to "...look at reading material within social, political, and historical contexts and to see texts not as isolated artifacts, but rather as parts of a larger global and cultural matrix.... Literature becomes both a creation and creator of culture..." (2002: 2). "For these reasons, its systematic development within the range of research methods remains vital to the contemporary study of culture" (Seale, 2001: 284).

Creative literature contains explorations of society that the non-fiction writer has no license to use. "The dual role for literature and the repositioning of ...[development studies]... allows for a multiplicity of possibilities in reading, writing about, and interpreting people, places, and perspectives, real or imagined" (De Angelis, 2002: 2). De Angelis goes on to say that the investigation and analysis of a text is both literary and scientific – hence another strong point in favour of literary texts providing data and evidence for research assignments. She says, "...the process is literary because it allows the awakened imagination to reconsider and reconfigure the literary text, and it is scientific because the literary text establishes links between the work itself and values, institutions, and practices else where in the culture" (2002: 3). Through examples of literary analysis, anthropologist Janet Tallman "...demonstrates ... how fiction, like contemporary ethnography, places the literary at the service of the scientific and the scientific at the service of the literary" (ibid.: 4). Literary and Sociology theorist Allan Swingewood says that not only does popular literature, in particular the novel, deal with the same social, economic and political arenas as sociology, but that it also transcends the boundaries of sociology. "...As Art, literature transcends mere description and objective scientific analysis, penetrating the surfaces of social life, showing the ways in which men and women experience society as feeling" (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1971: 12-13). And Richard Hoggart, a theorist writing earlier still (1966) says that "[w]ithout the full literary witness the student of society will be blind to the fullness of society" (in Mackenzie, 1966, cited in ibid: 13).

The social study of literature involves two distinct approaches. Seale says one is the analysis of the "...social and cultural contexts in which literature is produced", and the second is about seeking "...knowledge that is contained within literature about the society in which it is produced and that to which it refers" (2001: 276-7). In summary, the two distinct approaches either seek knowledge *in* and/or

about the literature. Seale has termed these approaches 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' respectively. Allan Swingewood characterizes the intrinsic approach as a "...mirror image approach..." (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1971: 13) and the extrinsic approach as a "...social context of writing" approach (ibid.: 20). The mirror image approach, though seen to be revolutionary and 'new' to a field such as development studies, has in fact, according to Swingewood, "...a long and distinguished history: the French philosopher Louis de Bonald (1754-1840) was one of the first writers to argue that through a careful reading of any nation's literature 'one could tell what this people had been', while Stendhal, in a celebrated passage in *Le Rouge et le Noir*, wrote of the novel as a "'mirror journeying down the high road', sometimes reflecting 'the azure blue of heaven, sometimes the mire in the puddles'" (ibid: 13).

Therefore, according to these authors, both those for and against the study of fictional writing in schools of humanities, reality, in all its vulgarity, is represented in creative literature. In the following chapter I present a literature analysis of a piece of Jamaica Kincaid's creative writing, combining touches of both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches, confident of the importance of studies such as these for aiding understanding of development in the context of the real world.

4) <u>Jamaica Kincaid and Issues in Caribbean Women's Literature</u>

4.1. Jamaica Kincaid

"When I write I don't have any politics. I am political in the sense that I exist. When I write, I am concerned with the human condition as I know it"
(Jamaica Kincaid, in Boyce Davies and Savory Fido, 1990: 353).

In 1949, Jamaica Kincaid was born Elaine Potter Richardson to a poor family in St John's, Antigua[16] in the West Indies, part of the Caribbean. While most colonized places of the world, apart from Africa, achieved independence around the 1830s – 1870s, Antigua remained an English colony until 1981. Her family she has described as "...ordinary" (Simmons, 1994: 6):

> "My mother's family comes from Dominica; they were land peasants. They had a lot of land, which they lost through my aunt making a bad marriage and my mother falling out with her family. My mother says that my real father can't even read, but he made a lot of money.... The man I speak of as my father [in my works] is really my stepfather. I grew up thinking he was my father.... I know a sort of person who is my father. We see each other, but I can't get myself to call him "father". He's sort of typical of West Indian men: I mean, they have children, but they never seem to connect themselves to these children" (ibid.).

[16] Antigua is pronounced An-tee-ga.

Kincaid was educated in government schools and up until the age of nine, as an only child, she felt "...happy and loved" (ibid.) According to Cudjoe, the purpose of such a colonial education as hers "...was to prepare obedient boys and girls to participate in a new capitalist enterprise" (1980: 3). With the birth of the first of her three brothers and the ensuing lack of attention and devotion of her mother, and the onset of her awareness of Antiguans submissiveness to the British, she became, by her own admission, an "...unruly student" (Burrows, 2004: 72). This inherent dislike for colonialism meant that at age nine she refused to stand up at the singing of "God Save Our King". As punishment for such like acts, she was forced to copy out and memorize sections of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. At age five she was taught to read Shakespeare, Milton and Keats and found entertainment in the writings of the Brontë sisters (ibid.: 218). Kincaid says, "My whole upbringing was something I was not: it was English.... I had the best table manners you ever saw" (Cudjoe, 1990: 219). It wasn't until after 1966, at the age of 16 and estranged from her mother (Muirhead, 2003: 39), that she was sent to New York to work as an au pair and then discovered and read twentieth-century literature for the first time.

Kincaid never planned to become a writer; she didn't even realize such a profession existed. "I didn't know that people were still writing. I somehow thought that writing had been this great 'thing' and that it had stopped. I thought that all great writing had been done before 1900. Contemporary writers just didn't exist..." (Cudjoe, 1990: 218). Kincaid has said, "...The way I became a writer was that my mother wrote my life for me and told it to me" (Perry, Donna – in ibid.: 248). To write, according to Sylvia Wynter, "...was and is for the West Indian a revolutionary act" (Wynter, 1968 – cited in ibid.). Kincaid took on her new name as she began her career as a writer in 1973. She had always hated her name and since her family disapproved of her writing (ibid.: 218), it was an easy and logical thing to do. After writing for *The New Yorker* and stories also appearing in *The Paris Review* and *Rolling Stone*, she published her first book *At the Bottom of the River* in 1978. Further works include *Annie John* (1983), *A Small Place* (1988), *Lucy* (1990), *The Autobiography of my Mother* (1996), and *My Brother* (1997). Though Kincaid remains a citizen of Antigua, she now lives in Vermont, U.S.A. with her composer husband, Allen Shawn, and their two children, Annie (1985) and Harold (1988) (Campbell and Frickey, 1998, and Simmons, 1994).

4.2. Issues in Caribbean Women's Literature

Is the Caribbean a geographical expression alone, or does it incorporate a unifying of peoples, a notion of oneness between a hybrid of races, a blending of shades of skin, a peace? Caribbean professor, critic, essayist, and author of ten novels, Maryse Condé describes it this way:

> "There are many people who describe themselves as a Caribbean person and many foreigners who attest that they went to a place called the Caribbean. However, the truth is that the Caribbean, even as a geographical expression, is difficult to define. Some analysts include Florida, the Yucatan, and portions of Colombia and Venezuela in the Caribbean. Others exclude the mainland and concentrate on the islands. Even if you are in favor of the second interpretation, there is no racial unity in any definition of the Caribbean, since throughout the islands there are whites, Blacks, yellows, and every shade in between" (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 61).

The spatial technicalities of this 'geographical expression' are as follows:

> "The Caribbean or the West Indies is a group of islands in the Caribbean Sea. These islands curve southward from the bottom tip of Florida to the Northwest of Venezuela in South America. There are at least 7000 islands, islets, reefs and cayes in the region. They are organized into twenty-five territories including sovereign states, overseas departments and dependencies" (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Caribbean).

Campbell and Frickey, in the introduction to their work *The Whistling Bird,* tell of a little bird found only in isolated places of the Caribbean. This little bird, rare and wonderful, plain and beautiful, is called the "siffleur de montagne" with an affectionate name of "Le Solitarie" or "the whistling bird". The magic of this little thrush-like Le Solitarie is in its exquisite and powerful voice. The bird is bordering on extinction, but as it is now valued, it has the potential to survive, increase in number, and the result will be an increase in the bird song (Campbell and Frickey, 1998: 1). Let us consider the issues often contained in Caribbean women's literature in light of Le Solitarie. As more and more women writers from the Caribbean publish literary works, the themes and issues they discuss and portray gain greater exposure, wider critique, and deeper appreciation. Today, it is the English writers of the Caribbean that dominate the emergence of Caribbean women writers, "...chiefly owing to the imperialistic nature of the English 'first world'..." (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 4). Of other Caribbean nations, Francophone Caribbean still has not yet received the international acclaim the work deserves, and still even less so, the work of authors of Spanish-, Dutch-, and Portuguese-speaking countries (ibid.).

Caribbean women writers "...exist in different ethnological and ontological realms..." (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 6), and although there are similarities between the islands, there is also a great number of variances (Campbell and Frickey, 1998: 2-3). Though women who were born in the Caribbean produce the genre of work we discuss here, a great number of these authors now reside elsewhere, and their themes and issues are often from the view of 'looking back'. Because of the abundance of perspectives tangential to our topic, it is not possible to cover all aspects of the literature pertinent to our investigation. Unlike the rareness of the song of the little whistling bird, we will review themes more widely sung by the collective group of 'Caribbean women writers'. These themes are: (1) Post- and Anti-colonial Discourse; (2) Caribbean Disaspora; (3) The Question of Heritage and the Exploration of Self; and (4) Language as Power. The remainder of this section adheres to this sequence.

4.2.1. Post- and Anti-colonial Discourse

Post- and anti-colonial discourse focuses mainly on problems of identification with a place and a people, inequalities, and often, imbalances of power not only between races, but also between men and women *within* common races. Hodge poignantly arranges her words, suggesting that anticolonial discourse is "[t]he genesis of modern Caribbean writing,...[it is] a reaction,...against the enterprise of negating our world and offering us somebody else's world as salvation" (Hodge – in Cudjoe, 1990: 203). Of the literature that emerged during the 1960s, Guyana born author Janice Shinebourne says

Anglophone Caribbean literature raised debates of "...racial politics of the imperial and colonial experience...". These debates "...surfaced into national consciousness and put people in touch with their anger and pain..." (Shinebourne, in Cudjoe, 1990: 142). For example, in Jean Rhys' novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), her character, Bertha Antoinette Mason, is explained as being insane "...partly as the result of living in a colonized environment" (Niesen de Abruna, in Cudjoe, 1990: 95). Recurrent themes of these debates are those of identification "...within the colonial patriarchy..." and "...within the world of those who acquiesce to the colonials, and those who totally reject the ideas and ideals of the *other*" (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 5). Some Caribbean authors write introspectively regarding these issues, such as Jamaica Kincaid, who writes in English, and others, such as Merle Hodge, born in Trinidad, using the Creole language, are able to explore and affirm "...the experience of a specific collective" (ibid.). Both introspective and collective styles of writing serve an end purpose of exploration and learning using a postcolonial theoretical framework. Hodge states "...both kinds of writing rejoin the universal, if the writer achieves truth. Both kinds of writing are valid and necessary" (ibid: 53). However, Spivak warns that unless postcolonial writing is placed within a general frame it can become an alibi, "unwittingly commemorating a lost object. Colonial Discourse studies, when they concentrate only on the representation of the colonized or the matter of the colonies, can sometimes serve the production of current neocolonial knowledge by placing colonialism/imperialism securely in the past, and/or by suggesting a continuous line from that past to our present" (1999: 1). Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert advocates that a postcolonial theoretical framework should be only part of an analysis or exploration. "Postcolonial theories, like all mixed blessings, shall pass, but that insular space from which our writing can speak of the ethos of our peoples will remain. We leave it at our own peril" (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 168).

4.2.2. Caribbean Disaspora

"Disasporas are complex social groups, and our understanding of them has changed over time" (Robinson, 2002: 103). In Robin Cohen's (1997) book on diasporas, he identifies five different types of diaspora; victim diasporas, trade diasporas, labour diasporas, imperial diasporas and cultural diasporas. He classifies the Caribbean as a cultural diaspora. "Cultural diasporas have created shared cultural codes and styles which unite communities in their exiled status and lead to new de-territorialized identities" (of Cohen, in ibid.: 84). In referring to former British colonies, Niesen de Abruna describes these societies as places of "...extreme diversity and grave fragmentation of both European and African cultures" (in Cudjoe, 1990: 86). Therefore, can a post- and anti-colonial theoretical framework suffice to explore settings and relationships when a central theme to anti-colonialism is that of African-Caribbean peoples struggling to form an identity in the wake of colonial rule and the ensued independence? Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, author and professor of Hispanic Caribbean studies, argues that the construction of a Caribbean identity is difficult because of the many variances and contradictions in being 'Caribbean' and "...that the range and depth of Caribbean experiences cannot be adequately counted for in postcolonial

theorizing because of the very nature of the region's diversity" (in Burrows, 2004: 11). The question of diaspora and identity is imperative to the use of a post- and anti-colonial discourse framework. For example, where do Caribbean white people, like Jean Rhys - Dominican born in 1890, emigrated to England in 1906, and returned one time to Dominica – sit on the continuum of insider or outsider? Literary critic Burrows says Rhys' writings work to "...explicate the way history can wound and incapacitate, and will continue to do so if we do not critique 'the way it was'" (ibid.). Her works are important to the discussion of themes and issues in Caribbean women's writing, but is Jean Rhys an insider or outsider in the post-colonial discussions? Author, editor and actress Elaine Savory offers a distinction between women writers of the Caribbean writing in exile and ex/isle; "...the first a matter of literal separation between birthplace and place of work or domicile, the second a creative if painful space in which a women's writing becomes a means to construct images of progressively developing subjectivities" (Savory – in Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 176). Newson and Strong-leek call this questioning and challenging of accepted notions of self, gender, race and history as "[t]he complex portrayal of the contemporary diasporic women" (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 6). These questions simply raise *further* questions of identity in rousing issues of heritage and exploration of self.

4.2.3. The Question of Heritage and the Exploration of Self

The question of heritage and the exploration of self as outworked in Caribbean women's literature is mostly a process of recuperating the past while affirming multiple origins (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 6). Caribbean authors often deal with the confusion in women's identity, as author Beryl Gilroy testifies in her essay 'I Write Because': "I express my identity in the craft of writing" (Gilroy – in Cudjoe, 1990: 201). Labels, such as Anglo-, Native-, Indian-, exile, living abroad, living at home, all "attest to the challenges of being Caribbean women, writers, and scholars" (ibid.). For example, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, author Jean Rhys tells the story of "...'creolized' West Indian women, a group whose confusion in identity is rarely explored" (Niesen de Abruna, in Cudjoe, 1990: 94). Not only is there confusion in identity and heritage, but also strongly felt in the literature is a feeling of ambivalence. "The ambivalent feeling a person born in the Caribbean may feel toward his or her island...is not surprising. On one hand, it is home and the place where one has roots; on the other hand, it is a troubled and complex world unified by common concerns, yet racially divided. It is caught between the demands of modernization and a need to preserve its independence and cultural heritage" (Campbell and Frickey, 1998: 6). Interestingly, our case study, Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place,* is described by Elaine Savory as "[p]erhaps the most remarkable piece of Caribbean writing demonstrating ambivalence about an island (Campbell and Frickey, 1998: 6). As author Astrid Roemer thinks and laments, she concludes that for an author dealing with the question of heritage and the exploration of self to be successful, "one must let the other, the 'European', in; but that does not mean total acquiescence" (Newson and Strong-Leek, 1998: 7). Though the question of identity remains constantly open for exploration, and although the female Caribbean women writers who contribute to these discussion exist in "different ethnological and ontological realms, they all exist in

worlds which have, at one time or another, attempted to censure, silence, or ignore the ideals and interest of women" (ibid.: 6). The hybrid of Caribbean women's literature addresses some of the most difficult, and prevailing, issues of our time. And not just for the Caribbean or for groups of Diaspora, but for all – for we all at some point in our lives, when we care to think, question our own heritage and embark on an exploration of self. In development studies, these challenges and questions are fundamental to linking development discourse to the past, the present and the future of development initiatives. And herein these discourses, the public face of development burgeons.

4.2.4. Language as Power

If letting the other, the 'European', in to one's expositions on heritage and identity is not total acquiescence, then neither is use of the colonialists' language to write the expositions down. Newson and Strong-Leek defend those Caribbean writers who exclusively use the language of the colonials saying "...if one is to be heard, if one is to be read, one must often abandon the language of the native speaker" (1998: 7). But that is not to suggest that Newson and Strong-Leek advise *only* the use of the language of the colonials. To the contrary, "Language is power, and the ability to disempower others by devaluing their indigenous language has been a consistent problem with people living in the various parts of the Diaspora" (ibid.). The presence of indigenous and colonial languages is therefore strongly political. June Jordan states that "...language, its reward, currency, punishment, and/or eradication – is political in its meaning and in its consequence" (ibid.: 17). Hence, Caribbean writers such as Maryse Condé, Simone Schwarz-Bart, and Jamaica Kincaid "...argue that the authenticity of one's literature is expressed through one's language (ibid.: 4). Newson and Strong-Leek point out that these authors feel that their indigenous language is essential to "...articulate character, to celebrate invention, to validate culture, and even to support group consciousness" (ibid.). To Kincaid's abhorrence, her texts are written in the language of her oppressor; the only language Kincaid knows.

4.3. Conclusion

The themes of Post- and Anti-colonial discourse, Caribbean Diaspora, the question of heritage and the exploration of self-hood, and a view of language as power, are common in Caribbean literature. These many-faceted and many-layered themes are foundations laid for other explorations such as those of racism, sexism, and the strength of Caribbean women – the strength of both the writers and their subjects. These can be summarized as a collective view of relational interaction (Niesen de Abruna, in Cudjoe, 1990: 90). Campbell and Frickey warn that although these themes are common and produce certain patterns of representation, they "...should not be the object of broad generalizations. There are similarities as well as differences among the islands' geographical, historical, social, and racial features that account for common trends but also significant variances" (1998: 2-3). Therefore, each region's literary texts as well as each author's texts, require individual exploration for any analysis and conclusion to be

made in the light of development studies. Grouping Caribbean literature into one analysis would produce huge variances and create false assumptions (Merle Hodge, in ibid.: 3).

Just as the strength of Caribbean women repeatedly emerging from literary texts is "...a strength that often arises from necessity" (ibid.), I believe it necessary that we not ignore the literary expositions of struggles between the powerful and the powerless, and use the strength of these incredible texts to gain understanding about the conditions and consequences of development – both the conditions and consequences of past development activities and those of present and future initiatives. Herein these texts lie more public faces of development than perhaps we've cared to address. This is so because often we read a text simply for 'the enjoyment', that an analysis of recreational literature takes the fun out of a read. And often, we are so offended and defensive of ourselves and our past that we dare not consider these expositions as anything more than a fantastical nether-nether land of opinion or a hobby-horse of the author. We do this to the detriment of humanity. When we open our eyes and our minds to the expansion of our understanding of humanity and conditions of development, we become more aware of the many public faces of development.

In summary, most authors of post- and anti-colonial discourse write of the problems of identification with a place and a people, creating therefore another frame of development. Increased awareness of the public faces of development as represented in post- and anti-colonial discourse will enable the reader to analyze the issues of power imbalance, inequality, and subjectivity, to name just a few. Such a discussion will inevitably open the big, heavy door of Disasporas, a discussion that requires almost a tree-like frame with many branches, for breaking down the discussion. The issues of diasporic people groups are far wider and greater than the frame of post- and anti-colonial discourse, raising further questions of heritage, selfhood, and the use of language as power. These issues as presented in portraits of people and places of the Majority World advance a variety of public faces of development. Conducting a close study of creative writing from the Majority World with an awareness of just some of the issues contained within this genre of writing, will help the reader to see the various frames of development and to interpret and analyze the text both using and breaking these frames.

Literature is inseparable from history and culture. History and culture are inseparable from development studies. Let us now analyze Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* in the hope that such an act will help promote awareness and understanding of various public faces of development. And with a general public having greater understanding of the contemporary themes of development, we can hope for a more equitable and just global situation.

CHAPTER THREE – LITERATURE ANALYSIS - *A SMALL PLACE*

In this literature analysis I explore various public faces of development as presented in Jamaica Kincaid's portraits of people and places of Antigua. The literature analysis involves a discussion and analysis of the four chapters of *A Small Place*. I conclude that Kincaid's work, categorized as popular literature of the travel writing genre, is complete with presentations of various public faces of development and that these reflect many contemporary themes of development. I conclude with Kincaid's philosophical summation that although it seems surreal, "too beautiful", the places and especially the people of Antigua can remain whole even in the aftermath of colonial development and development's contemporary forms. In light of the public faces of development, this summation should remain central to the theory and outworking of development initiatives.

I begin with an introduction to the text then move to the discussion and analysis, ending of course with the conclusion.

I) Introduction to *A Small Place*

Kincaid's *A Small Place* is a punctuating indictment of historical and contemporary trauma inextricably linked to the period of white invasion[1]. The cultural and racial domination of European colonists and their slaveholding, slavetrading and even slave*breeding* ways[2], is presented as a recurrent pattern by the new postcolonial white tourist. Kincaid addresses the reader – presumably a white *New York Times* and *New Yorker* reader – in the inescapable second person 'you'. Many readers, offended and weary of Kincaid's anger, do not complete even the first two chapters of this tiny 81-page 'essay'. Hill, a reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote that the essay is "distorted by anger" that "backs the reader into a corner" (Hill – in Simmons, 1994: 136). And if the first two sections of *A Small Place* are an expression of Kincaid's rage for the oppressor, then the last two sections are the soul of her pain as she grievously and frankly portrays the postcolonial Antigua with its new native rulers as purveyors of colonial greed and oppression.

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[1] In the closing paragraph of *A Small Place,* Kincaid states that Christopher Columbus discovered Antigua in 1493 and that not too long after was settled by Europeans. I reserve quoting her here, leaving the power of her language for discovery in the discussion of this work.

[2] Barbuda, neighbouring island to Antigua, was first to leased to Christopher Codrington by King Charles II in 1685. Descendants of Codrington established Barbuda as a slave-breeding and slave-suppling island. Today most of Barbuda's inhabitants are descendents from Ibo, Yoruba and Ejo tribes of Nigeria and from Ghana, Gambia and Sierra Leone. British Parliament failed to name Barbudans in the Slavery Emancipation Act of 1834, therefore Barbudans had to free themselves by insurrections in 1834-35 (www.silvertorch.com/quizo/ant_quiz.htm and www.barbudaful.net/historicalnotes.html).

A Small Place may be categorized in many literary forms, but pushes at the boundaries of each of these, refusing confinement. For the literary critic, this is a fascination and a provocation; for the author, a phenomenal achievement. *A Small Place* can be described as an 'essay' and 'postcolonial travel writing' belonging to the sub-category that literary critic Korte describes as 'return travel writing' (2000: 153). Fiction and autobiography are other possibilities, presenting the dichotomy of 'autobiography as fiction' or otherwise said, 'fiction in autobiography' (Said, 1966). Published in 1988, *A Small Place* was written after Kincaid's first return trip to Antigua after an absence of some nineteen or twenty years since she left Antigua as a teenager to work as a live-in nanny in New York. Clues to the timing of this trip are presented in the first chapter in the discussion about "THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1974". "The sign that hangs there, and hangs there more than a decade later, with its unfulfilled promise of repair, ... perhaps in a world that is twelve miles long and nine miles wide (the size of Antigua) twelve years and twelve minutes and twelve days are all the same" (*SP:* 8-9). Though it is interesting to consider the timing of her writing, it is "...not important to what she has to say. Temporality is not an issue" (Muirhead, 2003: Section 2: 40).

Loss, the never to be retrieved, gone forever, sullied beauty and friendship never to be availed, loss, is the deepest underlying theme of Kincaid's *A Small Place.* For a book on the Caribbean, the reader would perhaps hope for some portrait of postcard perfect beaches and happy people, however paradisiacal charm could never be connected to the Antigua presented in Kincaid's work. No, the charm, at least for Kincaid and therefore her readers, is lost, lost with the incredible find made by Christopher Columbus. Freedom lost with slavery found. Identity lost with new arrivals to the land. Though the reader of *A Small Place* is hounded with accusations of "...continuing the exploitation begun by Columbus (Simmons, 1994: 1), even the staunch and heavy theme of colonialism still does not outweigh the loss in Kincaid's work. Kincaid's writing through the three main sections and small coda, is a severe treatment of the fall of a people, a paradise torn and shredded, leaving pieces of identity exposed to the harsh elements of criticism, development and change, and ethnic division. The lost paradise, certainly playing on the work of John Milton's *A Paradise Lost,* is inextricably linked to the exploitation and betrayal of foreign invaders. The narrator asks, "Is the Antigua I see before me, self-ruled, a worse place than what it was when it was dominated by the bad-minded English and all the bad-minded things they brought with them? How did Antigua get to such a state that I would have to ask myself this? (*SP:* 42).

Just as the book is divided into three chapters and a small coda, so our discussion and analysis will proceed accordingly. Chapter one is a study of objectification of a people group, that is, of Kincaid's own, the Antiguans. Chapter two draws a picture of the contemporary colonial oppressor – the white American, or worse, European, tourist. Chapter three is a paradoxical portrait of the entrapment of Antiguans by the very greed, personality and oppression under which they lived as a colonized people, and continue on in subjugation even as an independent nation. The final chapter is a statement of Kincaid's

own bewilderment and confusion as she contemplates "[t]he people in Antigua now" (*SP:* 80). In sum, each chapter presents a view of varying perspectives contained within public faces of development. Discussion throughout the remainder of this chapter follows the same order as the book.

2) Discussion and Analysis of *A Small Place*

2.1. The Relentless Attack – A Close Look at Chapter One

That development issues concern all people is inescapable in *A Small Place.* "...[Y]ou are a tourist, a North American or European – to be frank, white..." (*SP:* 4) – this is the accusation made to the reader in the inescapable second person 'you'. From the first pages, this unrelenting attack on 'you', the assumed white, privileged, tourist reader, is a powerful tool for creating awareness and a sense of responsibility. Public faces of development create awareness, and with awareness comes a decision to either 'live like you care' or to 'live like you do not'. So, if 'you' the reader thought this would be a nice little book on the Caribbean country Antigua, suddenly you are confronted with the truth of the feelings you had in your stomach the last time you took a holiday in the Pacific, Fiji for example. From Nadi airport heading out along Queen's Road to your resort just outside Sigatoka, you notice filth, poor, pot-holed roads, and not only bare, rundown houses, but bare, rundown houses sharing a compound with other bare, rundown houses and far too many people to have two per bedroom. There is that "...slightly funny feeling you have from time to time about exploitation, oppression, domination" (*SP:* 10). "You mustn't let it "...develop into full-fledged unease, discomfort; you could ruin your holiday" (ibid.). These examples express a sense of the relationship of the 'first-worlder' observing and thinking about the 'third-worlder'. This is development awareness; the very meager beginnings. One, 'you', may not yet be 'aware' of your thoughts and how they connect to the issues of exploitation, oppression, or domination. But there you are, they are acknowledged, and recognizing this public face of development expressed in this very first portrait of going to "...Antigua as a tourist..." (*SP:* 3) creates a frame for 'seeing what you see'.

The 'seeing what you see' is a topic of objectivism and subjectivism; in development studies terms this is called 'othering the other'[3]. Kincaid insists that the white tourists, 'you', see not only the country as picturesque and idyllic, but also the black Antiguans as objects as part of the picturesque, "...rather than as thinking, feeling human beings" (Simmons, 1994: 135). The following segments are quoted at length, the artistry in Kincaid's language making 'othering the other' unswervingly persuasive:

> "If you go to Antigua as a tourist, this is what you will see.... As your plane descends to land, you might say, What a beautiful island Antigua is – more beautiful than any of the other islands you have seen.... That water – have you ever seen anything like it? Far out, to the horizon, the colour of the water is navy-blue; nearer, the water is the colour of the North American sky. From there to the shore, the water is pale, silvery, clear, so clear that you can see its pinkish-

[3] For a full discussion on the 'other', read Said (1995) *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient.*

> white sand bottom. Oh, what beauty! Oh, what beauty! You have never seen anything like this" (*SP:* 4, 12-13).

And:

> "...you make a leap from being that nice blob just sitting like a boob in your amniotic sac of the modern experience to being a person...marveling at the harmony (ordinarily, what you would say is the backwardness) and the union these other people (and they are other people) have with nature. And you look at the things they can do with a piece of ordinary cloth, the things they fashion out of cheap, vulgarly colored[4] (to you) twine, the way they squat down over a hole they have made in the ground, the hole itself is something to marvel at..." (*SP:* 16-17).

Just as much as the white tourist is a subject – the one who leaves home, moves around, engages with others in conversation, reflects, thinks, feels – with Antigua and black Antiguans the object, that is, everything that is external to them as the subject, Kincaid also paints a fuller picture by impressing that Antiguans *also* occupy the subject position. As subjects, Antiguans reveal their real reaction to the sorts of "...incredibly unattractive, fat, pastry-like fleshed..." (*SP:* 13) objects these tourists really are:

> "...the people who inhabit the place in which you have just paused cannot stand you. That behind their closed doors they laugh at your strangeness (you do not look the way they look); the physical sight of you does not please them; you have bad manners (it is their custom to eat their food with their hands; you try eating their way, you look silly; you try eating the way you always eat, you look silly); they do not like the way you speak (you have an accent); they collapse helpless from laughter, mimicking the way they imagine you must look as you carry out some everyday bodily function. They do not like you" (*SP:* 17).

This presentation of both tourists and black Antiguans as object and subject requires of us a certain response, a certain 'reading' of the content of these paragraphs. This objectivism and subjectivism is all part of this presentation of the public faces of development; but is it a true presentation? Is not even Kincaid's observation and then memorization of events further winnowing the thought by writing it down on paper?

However Kincaid grants us some mercy in noting "You are not an ugly person all the time" (*SP:* 14). It is just the tourist who "...is an ugly human being" (ibid.). So we are forced to ask ourselves 'who and what is a tourist?' By Kincaid's impression, a tourist is someone who travels and reduces the landscape or townscape and the people who inhabit the area to mere objects, devoid of thought, opinion and feelings. It comes as a surprise to the tourist 'you' that 'they' (your objects) don't like you; "That thought never actually occurs to you" (*SP:* 17). Kincaid's impression of a tourist is developed further with the concluding remarks of Section One. The tourist believes that the "natives" see the tourist and harbour envy towards them. The tourist is capable of leaving their "...own banality and boredom" (*SP:* 19), and truly believes that the native envies the tourist's ability to turn the natives' "...own banality and boredom into a source of pleasure" (ibid.) for themselves.

This first section of *A Small Place* shows the reader how easily we can turn others into objects and how equally we ourselves can become objects by those whom we make *our* objects! In development

[4] The spelling irregularities between "colour" and "colored" appear in the text.

studies and practice objectivism can often lead to forms of domination; domination to forms of restructuring and having power and authority over those who have become our objects. The tragedy in this is that domination can begin so quickly, so early on in a development relationship. Awareness of this tendency is essential to ensure that development is a good thing, not an evil entity such as colonial imperialism simply repackaged as development. This public face of development, the lesson in objectivism and subjectivism, requires the reader to objectively consider their own biases and judgments. In this way, an increased awareness of development has occurred.

2.2. The Connection Between 'You' and 'Them' – A Close Look at Chapter Two

If the reader can grasp the connection between tourism and domination as presented in the first section of the book, then it is possible that the second section, with its reflections on imperialism and slavery, will succeed in delivering its powerful message of the devastation, cruelty, and on-going psychological and physical effects of slavery. To do this, Kincaid draws a connection between the European imperialists and the contemporary white tourist. European imperialists who dominated the Caribbean for centuries, were, like the white tourists, escaping themselves. Kincaid concludes a lengthy statement about the irrevocableness of the English and their bad deeds saying, "The English hate each other and they hate England, and the reason they are so miserable now is that they have no place else to go and nobody else to feel better than" (*SP:* 24). For Kincaid, the contemporary white tourist is the modern equivalent of the European imperialist. Both had to leave "...their precious England..." (ibid.), both carried the memories of home and peered through these wanting to turn the place "into England; and everybody they met they turned English" (ibid.). As the contemporary white tourist turns everybody and every place into an object by casting comparisons and judgments, objectification by European imperialists was far more literal; creating slaves of free peoples.

> "There is the Barclays Bank. The Barclay brothers are dead. The human beings they traded, the human beings who to them were only commodities, are dead. It should not have been that they came to the same end, and heaven is not enough of a reward for one or hell enough of a punishment for the other. People who think about these things believe that every bad deed, even every bad thought, carries with it its own retribution" (*SP:* 27).

Kincaid toils to present that both relationships, the tourist with the locals and the European imperialists with the slaves, are brutal, destructive and wrong. To Kincaid, it is completely reasonable that her readers should "...be wearing sackcloth and ashes in token penance of the wrongs committed...for no natural disaster imaginable could equal the harm they did" (*SP:* 23-24). Though the colonists have since left Antiguan rule under which she grew up, Kincaid maintains, "...nothing can erase my rage... for this wrong can never be made right" (*SP:* 32). The reader must accept this position Kincaid holds, for therein lies another public face of development. The face is less comforting or assuring than that of a rural peasant whose life has been greatly ameliorated by a development initiative which brought to her village a fresh water well, but equally valid, and equally the result of outside intervention.

With torrential force in her language, Kincaid meticulously and painstakingly points out that the continuation of these issues of domination and their on-going psychological effects is not a matter of racial difference. She sees the issue as a matter of allowing oneself to be lorded over, dehumanized by evil power relationships. One's race does not determine who will be a slave and who will be a master. And important to remember is that Kincaid is addressing the white tourist, that is, those that leave their home and objectify people and places as did the European imperialists of centuries past. These are the ones who "...murdered people....imprisoned people....robbed people" (*SP:* 35). But "[t]here must have been some good people among you, but they stayed home. And that is the point. That is why they are good. They stayed home" (ibid.). To be European is not to be an ugly human being. To be a European tourist, one who objectifies people and places, is. To be a black Antiguan is not to be a good human being, necessarily. For some black Antiguans have taken the lessons "...learned from you..." (*SP:* 34) and have learned how to "...imprison and murder each other, how to govern badly, and how to take the wealth of our country and place it in Swiss bank accounts..." (ibid.). That Antigua is now a corrupt society under tyrannical rule is not entirely the fault of European domination, but "...mostly..." (*SP:* 35). "...[F]rom afar you watch as we do to ourselves the very things you used to do to us" (*SP:* 36).

A "...putty-faced Princess from England..." (*SP:* 25) and "...some frumpy, wrinkled-up person passing by in a carriage waving at a crowd" (*SP:* 31) is the repulsion that even as a seven year old girl, Kincaid had towards white people and white flesh. Even though the "...English were supposed to be civilized,... [w]e felt superior, for we were so much better behaved and we were full of grace, and these people were so badly behaved and they were so completely empty of grace" (*SP:* 30). She writes in her anguish as just one of

> "...millions of people...made orphans: no motherland, no fatherland, no gods, no mounds of earth for holy ground, no excess of love which might lead to the things that an excess of love sometimes brings, and worst and most painful of all, no tongue. (For isn't it odd that the only language I have in which to speak of this crime is the language of the criminal who committed the crime?)" (*SP:* 31).

Kincaid implores the white reader to consider that they are responsible for crimes committed in the past *as well as* responsible for the continuation of domination through tourism. Yet at the same time, Kincaid is almost thinking out loud, trying to understand the effects of this domination and how it is that her own people also dominate and empty out other black Antiguans.

As she reflects, Kincaid is increasingly bewildered at her own people's lack of discernment at the injustices they suffered and racism they endured under colonial rule. As Simmons puts it, its almost "...as if in warm-up for the next section..." (1994: 138) that Kincaid runs through a list of remembrances of examples of racism. She reflects that her people never considered that the headmistress of a girl's school, "...hired through the colonial office in England and sent to Antigua to run this school which only in my lifetime began to accept girls who were born outside a marriage" (*SP:* 29), was actually racist when she

scolded the girls "...over and over again to stop behaving as if they were monkeys just out of trees" (ibid.). She was simply ill-mannered. And the people at the Mill Reef Club were just simply "...puzzling (why go and live in a place populated mostly by people you cannot stand?)..." (*SP:* 34). To these people with deplorable manners, the black Antiguans own good behaviour she describes as "...the proper posture of the weak, of children" (*SP:* 30). This she exemplifies as she reflects that a high white wall surrounded Government House on East Street and how "...cowed we must have been" for "no one ever wrote bad things on it; it remained clean and white and high" (*SP:* 25).

Kincaid draws this section of connection between white tourists and European imperialists to a close with a hard-hitting analysis of the present situation. The use of 'you' seems at its strongest here. Colonial schools and libraries were places that "...distorted or erased my history and glorified your own" (*SP:* 36). And so it is that Kincaid defaces colonialism. Contemporary issues of development studies are rattled off in one powerful sentence contained in Kincaid's closing paragraph:

> "But then again, perhaps as you observe the debacle in which I now exist, the utter ruin that I say is my life, perhaps you are remembering that you had always felt people like me cannot run things, people like me will never grasp the idea of Gross National Product, people like me will never be able to take command of the thing the most simpleminded among you can master, people like me will never understand the notion of rule by law, people like me cannot really think abstractions, people like me cannot be objective, we make everything so personal" (ibid.).

Kincaid is shy about being a capitalist, about being similar to those who for so long treated them like capital. Though slavery has ended, and no longer are her people traded like "...bales of cotton and sacks of sugar..." (*SP:* 37), the memory of it all lingers over her people, heavy, like the oppression of humidity after rain in tropical climates. This experience of oppression is so real and current for Kincaid that even the truth of the wonder and complete knowledge of her ancestor's exquisite, complex civilizations before slavery is no consolation, no comfort, at all. She is angry, this colonialism continues, both in white tourism and in the on-going psychological effects of slavery in her people and their ways.

Certainly, the varying public faces of development Kincaid presents stare us down; they send us cowering for the pleasant, the familiar, the place of no responsibility. We want to justify our well-earned holidays. We've never before thought of our mid-winter break as exploitation of the poor, objectivication of impoverished communities, or the continuation of slavery. Fiji for New Zealanders, Antigua for Americans and Europeans; why do we have to feel guilty for visiting these places and spending our money there? This is the sign we have become aware of the Majority World. That we 'other' others and that we ourselves are 'othered'. Next, we acknowledge, we accept truth. But do we protest, do we apologize, do we donate, sacrifice, stop, leave, or stay home? Do we do whatever it takes to live an authentic life in the light of the knowledge of these newfound truths?

2.3. The Paradoxical Entrapment of Antiguans[5] – A Close Look at Chapter Three

Exploring the paradox that seems to entrap Antiguans, Kincaid now turns her voice to describe a general personality of a people group dominated for centuries. Her return trip to Antigua seems poignantly marked by a certain day where she found herself "...standing on Market Street, looking up one way and down the other" (*SP:* 41). She asked herself:

> "Is the Antigua I see before me, self-ruled, a worse place than what it was when it was dominated by the bad-minded English and all the bad-minded things they brought with them? How did Antigua get to such a state that I would have to ask myself this?" (ibid.).

The paradox Kincaid sees is that she, along with her people whom she now observes, were raised believing a certain story about themselves and about their oppressors. The story about her and her people's placement and involvement in colonialism, where most things about them are erased, is a bitter awakening for those who have heard, and believed, a certain version (the oppressor's version) of the story. Here Kincaid faces a profound loss. The loss of the story (for it was false all along), and the loss of assurance in her people's ability to live a life different from the story taught them by the colonial power. She says in her reflection on Market Street, "...the answer on every Antiguan's lips to the question "What is going on here now?" is "The government is corrupt. Them are thief, them are big thief." Imagine, then, the bitterness and the shame in me as I tell you this" (ibid.). What does Kincaid now hold on to? She sees her people clinging to old beliefs in an attempt to hold on to something, anything. Even doing so at the cost of "...making asses of themselves" (*SP:* 43-44), as in the example of a Teenage Pageant she attended at carnival time:

> "What surprised me most about them was not how familiar they were with the rubbish of North America – compared to the young people of my generation, who were familiar with the rubbish of England – but, unlike my generation, how stupid they seemed, how unable they were to answer in a straightforward way, and in their native tongue of English, simple questions about themselves" (*SP:* 44).

This paradox of belief and identity that Kincaid grapples with over her people is real and clear in her own life. As Kincaid laments the demise of the island's library, she agonizes with her own paradoxical beliefs about a place she loved, with books she loved, filled with the stories (lies) of how perfect and wonderful the English way of domination was. Simmons hauntingly captures the dichotomy of Kincaid's lament by saying that she deplores "...not only the "corruption" of postcolonial government and a general sense of "things gone bad" but also the loss of a dream that was as beautiful as it was treacherously seductive" (Simmons, 1994: 139). Again, I quote this masterful sentence at length to allow Kincaid's lament its full impact:

> "But if you saw the old library, situated as it was, in a big, old wooden building painted a shade of yellow that is beautiful to people like me, with its wide veranda, its big, always open windows, its rows and rows of shelves filled with books, its beautiful wooden tables and chairs for sitting and reading, if you could hear the sound of its quietness (for the quiet in this library was a sound in itself), the smell of the sea (which was a stone's throw away), the heat of the sun (no building

[5] Diane Simmons coins this expression in her chapter "Masters and Slaves" in her book *Jamaica Kincaid* (1994), page 139.

> could protect us from that), the beauty of us sitting there like communicants at an altar, taking in, again and again, the fairy tale of how we met you, your right to do the things you did, how beautiful you were, are, and always will be; if you could see all of that in just one glimpse, you would see why my heart would break at the dung heap that now passes for a library in Antigua" (*SP:* 42-43).

Clearly, Kincaid loved her experiences of the library – she devotes another six pages to her memories there and the investigations she made into how it is that the library remains with it's legend pegged to the ruined building: "THIS BUILDING WAS DAMAGED IN THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1974. REPAIRS ARE PENDING" (*SP:* 42). Though her heart seems broken that the library is now situated above the dry-goods store with books stacked away in boxes "...gathering mildew, or dust, or ruin" (*SP:* 43), there is a chilling sense of loss and betrayal for her as she realizes the fundamental reason for the library's existence is to familiarize the Antiguan reader with all the greatness of the British. And this she so clearly can never again believe, though she seems unable to let go of the beauty in her memories. Her love for the library is like the love a battered wife holds for her husband. Surely this love is not the love that any development theorist or practitioner would wish for those involved in any development initiatives. Look upon this public face of development. Look at the bruises. Acknowledge their presence, like the irrefutable evidence of the ally's bomb having torn open the heart of an innocent civilian, and now, act.

As Kincaid continues to hold to a love gone sour, so her people cannot let go of the stories and connections to slavery times. In her observations, slavery is as real today as it was centuries ago, even though emancipation has long since been reality. As Kincaid glorifies the memories of her times in the library so Antiguans glorify the story of slavery. They speak of it

> "...as if it had been a pageant full of large ships sailing on blue water, the large ships filled up with human cargo – their ancestors; they got off, they were forced to work under conditions that were cruel and inhuman, they were beaten, they were murdered, they were sold, their children were taken from them and these separations lasted forever, there were many other bad things, and then suddenly the whole thing came to an end in something called emancipation. Then they speak of emancipation itself as if it happened just the other day, not over one hundred and fifty years ago. The word "emancipation" is used so frequently, it is as if it, emancipation, were a contemporary occurrence, something everybody is familiar with" (*SP:* 54-55).

Slavery, which reduced people to objects, emptying them of most things human as we have already discussed, was a severe form of degradation. The contemporary version of slavery, of degradation, is the island's Hotel Training School – "...a school that teaches Antiguans how to be good servants, how to be a good nobody, which is what a servant is" (*SP:* 55). Kincaid is bewildered that her "...people cannot see a relationship between their obsession with slavery and emancipation and the fact that they are governed by corrupt men, or that these corrupt men have given their country away to corrupt foreigners" (ibid.). Again, loss is paramount in this observation. Loss of dignity. Loss of dreams. Loss of ideals picked straight from the hearts of those who know what life, and living, are all about. Degradation is familiar, and like a shopper avoiding post-purchase-blues and always opting for the shop or product they know, even

though the product may be inferior to a newer product recently released, Antiguans, it seems to Kincaid, uphold degradation as an identity they can relate to and so continue to embrace and edify it.

Finally, two things compound her bewilderment into an inescapable cell of questions. First, her people seem to spend their energy turning the "everyday" into an event and every "event" into the everyday (*SP:* 56-57). Why, Kincaid seems to be asking, do they not channel their energies and power into exploring the conditions and paradigms, past and present, that determine how new generations of Antiguans will live their lives?

> "They go back and forth, exchanging places, and their status from day to day depends on all sorts of internal shadings and internal colourings, and the forces that manipulate these internal shadings and internal colourings are kept deliberately mysterious and unknown. And might not knowing why they are the way they are, why they do the things they do, why they live the way they live and in the place they live, why the things that happened to them happened, lead these people to a different relationship with the world, a more demanding relationship, a relationship in which they are not victims all the time of every bad idea that flits across the mind of the world?" (ibid.).

So, does this lack of understanding of the intricate linking of events and beliefs actually create a bearable and comprehensible picture for Kincaid? Bearable, yes; comprehensible, no. Her bewilderment seems to culminate in her soliloquy-like statement (for I am certain she would have to write this statement, whether or not she had an audience, in order for her own progression of thoughts to develop and eventually, hopefully, conclude):

> "I look at this place (Antigua), I look at these people (Antiguans), and I cannot tell whether I was brought up by, and so come from, children, eternal innocents, or artists who have not yet found eminence in a world too stupid to understand, or lunatics who have made their own lunatic asylum, or an exquisite combination of all three" (*SP:* 57).

Kincaid holds a certain view of how people of a small place view the world. Addressing of course her own people group, of Antigua, a small place, she says that such people cultivate small events and make every event small. They cannot see themselves in a larger picture nor can they explain why certain events happen to them. They cannot give an exact account of anything, anywhere, never understanding cause and effect. They do however, understand the artful picture story, told to them by others to cover over and avoid descriptions of the truth of certain events. It is this paradigm that prevents her people from establishing a "...more demanding relationship..." (ibid.) with the world.

Kincaid poignantly addresses the public face of development that shows that people of small places, of less developed places, do not really know what is best for them. That people of developing countries are a little naïve about worldly matters, about matters of importance. Yet the industry image of development is that the people of small places actually know best about what conditions of amelioration would be required to improve life for their citizens. Development theories and delivery mechanisms that espouse grassroots participation and empowerment have become catch phrases, even cliché, in recent years. Something becomes cliché when it is tried and true. Therefore, development theorists and practitioners really need to make no apology for espousing 'participation and empowerment'. There is a great deal of

irony in this observation by Kincaid, in that she herself is Antiguan, of a small place, and has an opinion, a raged-filled opinion, and an understanding of cause and effect upon Antigua pre- and post-independence. Her point then, made in her presentation of this particular public face of development, is like a baby's silent acid reflux. She makes her point about her people of a small place, the point comes up, it burns and has impact in its travels, but it disappears again as the reader remembers that Kincaid herself is a member of the people group she is describing. However, this same public face of development has the potential for acid reflux without the 'silent'. Then, it comes up, it comes out, it has impact, and then leaves a mess for some loving person to clean up.

2.4. The Final Prognosis and Diagnosis – A Close Look at Chapter Four

Despite everything Kincaid has observed, her final prognosis of her people and their ways, and the meaning to all the oppression and ongoing exploitation, is a mix of surrealism and realism. Of the place Antigua, she concludes that it "...is beautiful. Antigua is too beautiful" (*SP:* 77). So what can one conclude of a place that, despite everything suffered, is actually too beautiful? That sometimes, this place called Antigua seems just "...as if it were stage sets for a play, for no real sunset could look like that; no real seawater could strike that many shades of blue" (ibid.). Her prognosis cumulates with the thought that "[i]t is as if, then, the beauty – the beauty of the sea, the land, the air, the trees, the market, the people, the sounds they make – were a prison, and as if everything and everybody inside it were locked in and everything and everybody that is not inside it were locked out" (*SP:* 79). She has admitted in earlier sections of the essay that she would consider herself locked in – in the confessions that nothing can erase her rage and that nothing seems to be able to totally dispel the magic of her memories in the library as a child.

That Kincaid cannot deny Antigua is beautiful now, in an unreal way, and has always been beautiful, in an unreal way, is her realism. The stakes of her realism are pegged more firmly to the ground of her beliefs as she erects the canopy of facts, surrounding Antigua, again.

> "Again, Antigua is a small place, a small island. It is nine miles wide by twelve miles long. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. Not too long after, it was settled by human rubbish from Europe, who used enslaved but noble and exalted human beings from Africa... to satisfy their desire for wealth and power, to feel better about their own miserable existence, so that they could be less lonely and empty – A European disease" (*SP:* 80).

And a time came when masters left and slaves were freed, "...in a kind of way" (ibid.). This acceptance, this accumulation of surrealism and realism, takes the reader, without warning, without division of paragraphs or sections, straight to Kincaid's diagnosis:

> "...once you cease to be a master, once you throw off your master's yoke, you are no longer human rubbish, you are just a human being, and all the things that adds up to. So, too, with the slaves. Once they are no longer slaves, once they are free, they are no longer noble and exalted; they are just human beings" (*SP:* 81).

So to live then, with one's history, whoever we may be, is to live as neither a master nor a slave. It is to live without emptying others of themselves and to live not in fear of our own banality, boredom, and loneliness, but to live lives that are able to remain beautiful whilst containing moments of banality, boredom, and loneliness. That others can remain whole while we ourselves remain whole, without casting comparisons and judgments, is perhaps terribly idealistic, but a beautiful concept nonetheless. In light of the public faces of development, this concept should remain central to the theory and outworking of development initiatives. Though it may never actually be fulfilled in reality, its state of perfection is a benchmark to aspire to nonetheless for those involved in development processes. And that, as we have seen, is all of us.

3) Conclusion

To make a close reading of *A Small Place*, without any meditation on the public faces of development in Kincaid's painfully frank portrait, is only a reading. An exercise of pleasure; leisure for the mind. Perhaps the type one would pursue on a holiday in Fiji or Antigua. But with an analysis such as this, we have had to think about the public faces of development as presented in Kincaid's portraits of people and places of Antigua and how they reflect contemporary themes of development.

An analysis of the objectification of a people and place has shown how our simple, seemingly unbiased, non-political, non-judgmental, but perhaps slightly romantic thoughts of others, often reduce people and places from the subject of our thoughts to the object. Should this face of development awaken the general reader to their own biases and judgments, a new level of understanding of the issues of development has begun. Should the reader then grasp the connection between atrocities and crimes of the old imperialist regimes and those outworked through our contemporary tourism, then the reader has progressed to a level of understanding and awareness from which they will begin to consider *how* their actions may be contributing to the subjugation of others. This is an awakening to not only the evil of oppressor types, but to that which potentially lies within all of us; that there is in fact no difference between 'them' – the evil oppressor – and 'us' – the "boob in an amniotic sac of the modern experience" (*SP:* 16).

Within the author's portraits of Antigua and its people, Kincaid confronts the paradoxical entrapment of belief and identity both within Antiguans and herself. This public face of development, showing the entrenchment of loss, poignantly highlights to the general reader that perhaps people of less developed countries do not really know what is best for them. That development, all development, all that is done in the name of helping those who are too entrenched in devastation to help themselves, is necessary. That outside intervention might be the only hope for these less fortunate types. What the reader must

identify is that Kincaid is herself bewildered by this intricate linking of events past and present beliefs. The reader must see that Kincaid is in a crisis with this paradox. She unambiguously laments that her people do not ask themselves why they are the way they are, why they do the things they do, and begin to live the answer which will create a more demanding, non-victim relationship with the world. If the reader has grasped this, they understand that by outworking more domination by development initiatives, without engaging the voice of the oppressed, will only widen the gulf between the rich and the poor.

Kincaid concludes her essay more in a philosophical manner at the culmination of her thoughts, than in a statement of absolutism for the benefit of her audience. Her conclusion, she must hope, will be ours. Throughout the text, she writes boldly, honestly, fiercely, defending no one, saving no one's face – not even her own. That if humanity could cease to create division, cease to 'other' others, cease to objectify and cease to suppress and allow suppression, then all of humanity could remain whole. Remain the subject, free from comparisons, judgments, and subjugation. In this moment, the reader is almost stunned into reflection and meditation. Perhaps even beginning to blur the lines of surrealism and realism in their own immediate world. Here, the reader may return to page one to begin again this short essay, now applying the new awareness of public faces and a greater understanding of some of the contemporary themes of development.

CHAPTER FOUR – SUMMARY, OUTCOME, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter I summarize this study and rest my defensible conclusions. I end with the implications of these findings to the field of developments studies and, in the interest of providing meaningful directions for subsequent researchers in this area, in concise form I offer several suggestions for further study.

I) Summary

In this study I have attempted to determine whether the reading of a piece of popular literature, that is, non-industry specific literature, by an author and about a place of the Majority World, can increase the general reader's awareness of contemporary themes of development. The text for examination in this thesis has been Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*, elected because of the strong emotions it evokes in its readers. Some readers love it, some hate it, but regardless, it provides a rich text for analysis and a myriad of contemporary themes for an analysis and subsequent discussion of this type.

Though some literary critics have shelved the book before completing the first two of the four chapters, the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 reveals clearly that a fiction text such as Kincaid's proves invaluable, and essential, for students of humanities and for any persons interested in other people groups and places.

The public faces of development as produced from outside the development industry are key in constructing the ideas and opinions the general population form about people and places of the Majority World. Hence, an analysis of non-industry specific literature, where many of these public faces of development are presented, is full of scope and urgent for the field of development studies. The literature to date concerning these public faces of development is relatively scarce and new to the academic forum.

Of contemporary themes of development, the literature clearly shows that not only are the themes of intervention, for example in basic infrastructures, helpful and important for education on matters of development, but so too are the theories and beliefs that primarily *underpin* the actions of the development community. These theories and beliefs reveal how non-industry players are in fact involved in processes of development – regardless of one's awareness of these issues.

Literature is a place where attempts can be made to understand one's own, or 'other's' own, social experiences. Literature therefore often more accurately reflects reality than fully balanced, calculated

accounts of a social scene. Hence a study such as this is both literary and scientific providing a full witness to society; to the themes of development and of the people and places about whom such accounts are written.

Kincaid herself testifies that when she writes she is concerned with the human condition, as she knows it. Hence, her writing, and others in the realm of Caribbean female authors, explore common themes; themes of humanity which in turn are themes of development. These themes have a universal application, as humanity is just one humanity.

I undertook this literature analysis to provide a contemporary, defensible discussion that would offer a basis for exploration of the public faces of development and the awareness these raise regarding contemporary themes of development. I hoped to prove that awareness and knowledge of development is readily available to the general public. In relation to the central question of this thesis, asking whether reading a piece of popular literature, by an author and about a place of the Majority World, can increase the general reader's awareness of contemporary themes of development, I posited the following conceptual hypotheses at the beginning of Chapter 1:

1. That written portraits of people and places of developing countries present a variety of public faces of development;
2. That the contents of these portraits reflects contemporary themes of development;
3. That awareness and knowledge of development is readily available in non-industry specific, non-technical literature.

The following are the major findings that resulted from this literature analysis in relation to the above-mentioned conceptual hypotheses:

1) Kincaid presents a variety of public faces of development to the reader; faces that look in and objectify and faces of these very same objects as subjects, looking out also objectifying. The public face of development that shows there is no difference between 'us' (Kincaid's 'you') and 'them', highlights the connections between domination of the imperialist regimes and that which continues in our modern-day free world. That people of small places, of less developed places, do not really know what is best for them, is the heart-breaking, soul-destroying paradox of Kincaid's presentation. Because of course, 'they' do. As 'we' do. And as we have seen, the difference between 'them' and 'us' in naught. We are the same humanity, all with the same potential for evil and for good, regardless of whether we see ourselves as the dominated or the dominator. Therefore, the public face of development that shows how we may live without 'othering' the other, albeit idealistic, is, nonetheless, an image to keep in the forefront of our minds.

2) This variety of public faces as presented in Kincaid's written text reflects some of the contemporary themes of development that underpin development initiatives and activities. In

her portraits of the people and places of Antigua, Kincaid, in moments of unabashed anger and righteous rage, then moments later in shame and self-loathing, reflects the skeletal system of development as put forward in Chapter 2. The analysis highlights empirical evidence that development is framed by objectivism and subjectivism; that domination does invoke separation; that the responsibility of development actions and initiatives the world over is all of ours; that development is afflicted with paradoxical beliefs and hideous repetitions of unsuccessful processes; and that ultimately, development involves us all. Through both keeping and breaking the various frames of development, an analysis of Kincaid's text reveals how these themes present themselves in a variety of public faces of development. For example, development is seen as something done 'to' the people of Antigua, the traditions of which most Antiguans themselves have continued to outwork. Development is seen as outside intervention, as something foreign exploiting something local for the imagined amelioration or benefit of the recipient people and place. This is likened to the modern form of domination seen in contemporary tourism to romanticized, 'idyllic' Majority World places.

3) These public faces of development, and the contemporary themes they represent, are held within strings of words that form the paragraphs of this example of non-technical literature. An analysis of the work shows that these themes are presented for our perusal. But an analysis is not required for increasing awareness of these themes and issues. A reading, with intervals of meditation on the issues that are raised, is all it takes. A *close* reading; a reading with a personal involvement.

2) <u>Outcome</u>

As the work of Chapter 3 was essentially analytical and exploratory – the public faces and issues of development were described as they were identified through the close reading of the text– the chapter combined the literary data collection and analysis of findings. The implications of these findings took their shape from close observations of the text.

The foremost conclusion I draw from this study is that reading popular literature has a literary and ethnographic value, contributing immensely to our understanding of contemporary themes of development. This study, as well as the literature on the sociology of literature, indicates that although readings of non-technical literature are pertinent to the studies of cultures and humanities topics in general, the difficulty lies in encouraging readers to recognize, and then put aside, their own biases to facilitate a meditative position on the texts. I conclude that the general population will prefer to read non-industry specific literature mainly if it remains a pleasurable activity, like taking a holiday. We generally holiday where we can relax and feel ourselves becoming refreshed. If we read for pleasure, in

our leisure, then we are unlikely to sustain reading material by which we feel offended, insulted, misunderstood, and misrepresented. That is where technical literature has its place; it is less personal, therefore, as the old feminist adage goes, it is less likely to meddle with our politics. But popular literature that engages our defenses and evokes a personal response is that from which we will learn most about the cultures, and development situations, of our world. It is in meditation on atrocities of times past and current activities that the general public will begin to identify truth and fallacy contained within the public faces of development.

3) Implications for Practice within the Field of Development Studies

The findings of this study suggest that industry specific institutions need to incorporate popular literature into education frameworks. Industry actors need also to read popular literature of the people and regions within which they are conducting proposals and projects. The message is clear and the material is available. Re-education regarding the matter of non-technical literature is essential for serious students, theorists and development practitioners. Fiction should have an important place in the scholastic framework of the student of ALL humanities studies. The critical paradox and point of re-education is that all manner of truth lies within the pages of fiction.

4) Recommendations for Further Study

I recommend four courses for further study along these lines:

1) A study of the public faces of development as used by NGOs for their crisis appeals, special appeals, and annual appeals, between and within organizations. A comparative study should take place, comparing approaches and the various visual endorsements with a view of surveying actual results rendered.
2) A similar study should be conducted comparing regions of literature, or authors within a region, with a view of comparing the representation of the public faces of development.
3) As mentioned in Chapter 1, a photographic investigation involving portraits of people and places of developing countries, using a similar line of argument and hypotheses as presented in this thesis.
4) A study should be conducted now examining the backgrounds of the authors of these Majority World texts, including a comparative investigation of the circumstances of literary production and distribution. This more extrinsic approach should then lead to further comparisons of results rendered from intrinsic examinations (like this study) with those of the above-mentioned extrinsic approach.

With an immense desire to further 'read' (as I have illustrated, for all that should now entail), all the Caribbean and African and Indian and New Zealand texts I have had to leave to one side (albeit not entirely) as I conducted my detailed study of Kincaid's *A Small Place,* I must first thank 'you' my reader for having journeyed with me thus far. I trust that both you and I in our pursuit of academic excellence, and a broad and varied humanities education, will remember the importance of these texts in our study and in our conduct of development theory and practice. May we read and treasure non-industry specific literature not only in our moments of leisure, but when the heat is on, the deadlines are approaching, and the decisions, conclusions, and recommendations need to be made.

APPENDIX ONE

Details of the 8 Goals of the Millennium Development Goals[1].

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
Goal 5: Improve maternal health
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

(Source: www.unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp).

[1] For further details of the 18 targets and 48 indicators of the MDGs, see www.unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp.

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