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Relocating Home: Second-Generation East African Women's Twitter-Use as sites of Homeplace, Identity, and Memory

Beza T. Fekade

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RELOCATING HOME: SECOND-GENERATION EAST AFRICAN WOMEN'S TWITTER-
USE AS SITES OF HOMEPLACE, IDENTITY, AND MEMORY

by

BEZA T. FEKADE

Under the Direction of Dr. Lia T. Bascomb, PhD

ABSTRACT

Homeplace, a concept credited to bell hooks (1991), was conceptualized through the practice and resiliency of Black women as they historically transformed the home as a space for reclamation of resistance and freedom. Through digital and social technologies, home is capable of manifesting outside of heteronormative meanings regarding spatiality and assumed gendered roles. This study explores second-generation East African women's utilization of Twitter as a diasporic tool for homeplace, identity, and memory. This research incorporated a qualitative-phenomenological approach by interviewing ten participants from the ages of 18-26 in the United States, followed by a textual analysis of Twitter. Through coding cycles of transcriptions, key hashtags and phrases were pulled from participant's interviews to guide the textual analysis. This research explores ways digital spaces are utilized and whether they provide adequate, fulfilling, and freeing manifestations of identity and home that are not often permitted to African diasporic communities in their realities.

INDEX WORDS: Homeplace, Digital Space, Memory, Second-Generation, East African women, Diaspora

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BEZA T. FEKADE

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Georgia State University

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May 2019

DEDICATION

Two years ago I would have never imagined writing and completing a thesis in graduate school, let alone conducting a study that reflects so much of who I am and who I come from. This thesis is in honor and celebration of the many women in my life who have guided me, shaped my mind, spiritually and emotionally, and stood as pillars in the home. To my mother especially, thank you for your strength, resilience, and dedication you have exhibited throughout my life. Only now am I beginning to understand your life and significance outside the construct of being a mother, and it is with all my love to continue to grow this relationship stronger and more fruitful as time allows us to. To all of the Black women in my life, from family to chosen family, you have all meant so much to me; I hope the work in this research reflects at least a glimmer of the light you have each given me.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this to my late father. Your belief in my ability, mind, and impact, are etched in my being, and although I have waned on my belief in myself, I can always hear you, motivating me throughout every step. I only hope I continue to make you proud and stand firm in the light you saw me in.

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1 INTRODUCTION

“And you can’t even be you up in your home”
-Solange, *F.U.B.U.* (2016)

According to Webster’s Dictionary, home is defined as a place of residence. This definition oversimplifies and obscures the societal and historical implications that impact ways communities understand and replicate a home environment. Home can mean many things for many people. It can have historical, cultural, ethnic, and/or religious implications that shape it’s structure, dynamic, and function. Particularly for second-generation communities, growing up in an immigrant household encompasses numerous factors. And often, the reasons for migration by second-generation communities’ families, such as political strife, asylum, and better opportunities, dictate the structuring of a home.

Home for civilians often invoke kinship, blood ties, a birth connection to an ancestral past, so although social and political national identities are constructed, they are deemed natural (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Horowitz 1985). Yet, how does this become ruptured for immigrants and refugee communities? As a second-generation East African woman, home, for me, has meant a redefined concept of place, locality, and space for temporal maturation, growth, and familial intimacies; a site that moves within and out of heteronormative constructs; a physical site that has the ability to obstruct lives rather than bind them; and a space bound to memory. However, home can be stagnant for immigrant parents, despite their migration; “the overwhelming majority remain linked, in one way or another, real or imagined, objectively or subjectively, to their native land” (Levitt et. al, 2002, p. 44). To what extent are these attachments sustained by generations of their children, especially when they are raised in different social and cultural contexts? Home becomes a site of wayward navigation for second-

generation East African women as they're trying to attain what comes so easily to their parents while incorporating cultural and social influences in their hostlands.

In her piece, "Homeplace (a site of resistance)," bell hooks (1991) analyzes the home environment, riddled with historical remnants of racial apartheid, domination, and sexual oppression specifically for Black women and girls, as a site for renegotiation and empowerment. A home became a site "where one could freely confront the issue of humanization, where one could strive to be subjects, not objects" (hooks, 1991, p. 384). Hooks (1991) described her grandmother's home as a space where she learned dignity, integrity of being, faith, and where it made life seem possible. Historically, Black women in the United States provided service to white households, yet they still conserved enough energy to nurture and care for their own families and communities (hooks, 1991). This tension between the private and public, heightens the necessity for Black women, like hooks' grandmother, to cultivate a space of love and solace for their own survival. Hooks signifies Black women as resourceful figures for the sustainment of the home; "that homeplace, most often created and kept by black women, that we had the opportunity to grow and develop, to nurture our spirits" (p. 384). Through this reworking, homeplace differentiates itself from home, as a continuous process of resiliency, sociality and community. Hooks recollects a history of survivals that have occurred in the past in order to recover and/or realize the value that Black women possess, in the past and presently. Hooks remembers her grandmother and countless other Black women who forged and created sites of care because their value accrues well after death. The relationship between past, present, and future functions as a temporal guide to navigate new and differing ways Black women globally are enacting homeplace, and what it means for the valorization of their existence through multiple generations.

Hooks derives her conceptualization of “homeplace” from a Black Atlantic/North American experience, therefore it’s important to understand that when applying “homeplace” to East African communities, it may result in very different interpretations. For second-generation East African women, it is important to keep in mind the ethnic, cultural, and racial differences regarding upbringing, home-life, identity, and intergenerational temporal sites of resistance, and how they are replicated or transmitted on the web by this population. Second generation East African women’s understanding of their ethnicity and culture, and in turn, race, gender, class, and the diaspora, may reflect starkly different assumptions in comparison to hooks’ Black Atlantic lens. Regardless, the differences in application of “homeplace” only help to expand hooks’ work to a global context, and help identify ways diasporic communities enable “homeplace” respective to their culture, ethnicity, and upbringing.

Hooks’ work and this research is in homage to our mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, cousins, and daughters who transform home into homeplace. But also, this research strives to re-imagine what homeplace can mean beyond sites of the household, gendered roles, and domesticity. As R&B singer Solange (2016) professes in her song “F.U.B.U.,” “And you can’t even be you up in your home”; oftentimes home can mean pain, displacement, trauma, isolation, and hurt. The song, situated within her magnum opus, *A Seat At The Table*, is an allowance for empowerment and an exclamation on the extremities of blackness and being. The title of the song is an acronym, “For Us, By Us,” defining the kind of mobility and power Black communities can inhabit and proclaim. Contextually, Solange defines “home” as country, and “you” as Black Americans. Through racial subjugation, it is no wonder Black communities, specifically women, have managed to manifest homeplace despite the negation of a “home” (country/nation). To extend Solange’s meaning even more specifically and subjectively, if home

meant an actual household riddled with pain, dysfunction, or even isolation, how are Black women functioning as agents to create a homeplace elsewhere, or even, beyond spatiality? Where do Black women engage with homeplace beyond the home? The double bind of a lack of home through nationhood, and the lack of a home through intimate constructions, may offer insight to why homeplace must redefine itself beyond the household.

The work that hooks provides is integral to expand where other places of resistance can occur, such as online. In a social context where only a few images of nuanced, various identities of blackness exist in public discourse, digital online spaces offer a more viable alternative (Mainsah, 2014). In such a setting, sites such as Facebook and Tumblr, provide vital “diasporic resources” (Brown 1998) for community and self-representation. Recent research concludes that the individual experiences of racism and alienation at local and national levels contribute to social and digital media becoming alternate places for community and belonging (Mainsah, 2014). Black women no longer need to upkeep a household or perform gendered roles in order to create sites of resistance, nor do they need to physically own or possess a house. This research examines how second-generation East African women utilize Twitter as a diasporic technology for homeplace, identity, and memory amongst second-generation East African women. Through this exploration, ideas and conceptions around humanity, blackness, memory, and intergenerational influence, will unveil how second generation East African women utilize digital media as a construction of homeplace.

This study explores an intimate examination of familial and cultural influence, how it manifests on Twitter, and whether the intersection of identities (ethnicity, race, gender, a child of immigrants) necessitate the importance of a digital space for homeplace, expression, and a re-appropriation of identity. For second-generation East African women to redefine their identities,

imagine their futures, and cultivate new conceptions around homeplace, spatiality, and resistance, this study offers generative work around temporality, sociality, remembrance, and Black women as critical agents of survival and care.

1.1 Background

According to a 2013 Pew Research Center survey, second-generation Americans account for 20 million of the United States population. For the purposes of this study, I use second-generation to refer to U.S.-born adults who have at least one immigrant parent. In the 2013 Pew Research Center survey, Black second-generation communities accounted for only 4% of that 20 million population, which amounts to 800,000 people. By studying second-generation East African women, it further narrows the population. This research tackles a population that is rarely examined. By analyzing their utilization of Twitter as a diasporic technology for homeplace, memory, and identity, it provides new and additional research on the African diaspora, within the construct of digital spaces.

For context, when discussing East African women, it is in reference to the countries highlighted in Figure 1 below:



The countries highlighted above include Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, and Tanzania. Specifically, when any reference to the horn is made throughout this research, it refers to the countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia which reside in the horn of the African continent. Each country has its own history and culture that shape its perceptions around race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and so forth. Therefore, the participants of this study each share and reflect a subjective narrative regarding not only their families, but their respective ethnic histories.

In March of 2018, the Pew Research Center also released a study on the statistical demographics of social media usage. Around 88% of 18-to 29-year-olds indicated they use any form of social media, however young adults from 18-24 years old are likely to use platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter, as opposed to those in their later 20s. By race, 69% of

Black young adults in the United States use at least one social media site. Based on gender, 73% of women use at least one social media site. Forty percent of adults ages 18-29 use Twitter, specifically, twenty-four percent of women and twenty-six percent of Black adults. These statistics do not reflect or acknowledge the percentage of Black women using Twitter. However, exploring their engagement through this research specifies the significance of digital media as a tool for homeplace, identity, and memory.

Scholars categorize Black women bloggers as a historical legacy of Black women writers who are innovative (Steele, 2011) and adept at harnessing Black technical and cultural capital (Brock et al., 2010). Black women are integral to cultural and social influence in the United States, and their use of digital media is significant to their identity and understanding of their generational heritage. Through photos, opinion threads, likes and/or retweets, second-generation East African women, and Black women at large, are establishing their cultural capital and diasporic fluidity through virtual realities.

Along with forming identity, homeplace and digital media forge a critical relationship for second-generation communities as they navigate converging worlds. Digital media expands homeplace beyond the home to new realms of intangible spatiality. Negotiating place and inhabitation becomes muddled, however, the digital world provides real, intangible space for belonging. The “internet homepage” enlists users to become discursively emplaced (Alinejad, p. 96, 2013). Alinejad (2013) analyzes second-generation Iranian communities and their practices of inhabitation through digital means. After conducting fieldwork for twelve months in Los Angeles, Alinejad (2013) notes the significance of media technologies as situated in the social and material environments in which the usage takes place. For example, Asa, a second-generation Iranian, is an artist; she makes music videos to go along with her songs. Asa’s music

video for her song “Tehrangeles,” which can be viewed on YouTube, situates her as a driver in her Iranian Westwood neighborhood. The flamboyant, stylized recreation of her intersecting worlds, Los Angeles and Iran, repurpose her identity and others like her (Alinejad, 2013). Through visual aid and digital technology (YouTube), space and home are re-appropriated in accordance to one’s perspective. Alinejad’s (2013) analysis shares important research on ways second-generation communities illustrate their new relationships they produce with “old centers and symbols of the city” (p. 100). Alinejad (2013) explores further the relationship between home and social media, and how Asa is redefining places within Los Angeles that she grew to know from her parents’ generation as he states, “invoking LA’s most recognizable Iranian and American points of reference embeds this second-generation way of locating home in the local cityscape while making use of social networking platforms” (p. 100).

Alinejad’s research centralizes physical locality by exploring the relationship between cityscapes and digital media. Like Asa, other second-generation communities are cultivating spaces of familiarity and belonging through digital networks like Twitter, but how they do this pertaining to cultural, societal and racial implications will vary. Although Asa utilizes a social media platform, it is through the production and marketing of her content without much engagement unless from fans or listeners. In contrast, Twitter elicits mutual interaction, curated feeds and posts, and self-exploratory measures to post, comment, and retweet information that pertains to a users’ interests, beliefs, and identity. Still, Alinejad’s (2013) work is conducive to understand how place influences engagement with Twitter, and how homeplace is expressed, imagined, and created.

Second-generation East African women, and Black women throughout the African diaspora, are situated within intersectional structures such as race, ethnicity, gender, and so on,

magnifying the usefulness of a digital space. Their engagement with digital media, as opposed to Asa and others within her community, may reveal different reasons for utilization that is specifically critical for the sustainability and nurture of Black women. For bell hooks (1991), homeplace offers Black women who “feel they have no meaningful contribution to make, women who may or may not be formally educated but who have essential wisdom to share, who have practical experience that is the breeding ground for all useful theory” a feeling of importance and significance through their informal practices (p. 389). Black women are contributing in informal ways to share, express, and cultivate meaningful praxis on digital spaces, extending hooks’ sentiments beyond the home, and to newer heights of homeplace.

Second-generation East African women, like other communities, are a reflection of multiple generations as they re-appropriate cultural heritage and identity. It is a continuous process of looking back and looking onward, in order to exist as freely as possible, in the present. Their particularly unique experience, positioned within and outside of a U.S. context, create a transnational connectivity amongst their families and community. Homeplace marks an opportunity to create new forms of connectivity beyond the household and how new cultural manifestations move beyond the spaces second-generation East African women are raised in. This community has the opportunity to redefine transnationalism and diasporic connectivity outside of their families, communities and geographic location; however, these elements still impact the ways they navigate digital spaces, and how they interpret themselves and others. Diasporic resources and transnationalism morph into more accessible means and practice through virtual realities, creating what Alinejad (2013) defines as, “postmodern geographies.” Alinejad (2013) defines this as a metamorphosis of “homeland” into a “virtual space—rhetorical country,” that can be applied to various diasporas on the internet (pg. 96).

As the world continues to become a place of digital discourse and technological advancements, online networks have the opportunity to become spaces of alternate, counter-hegemonic constructions of identity formation, memory, and exchange of diasporic resources for certain communities. In addition, digital spaces are becoming virtual reclamations for home and belonging. Examining how this is particularly manifested within a specific Black second-generation population expands research of home and diaspora, and how the Internet becomes vital for East African women.

1.2 Problem Statement

Second-generation East African women's understanding of their humanity, gender, ethnicity, and race may mirror their performative digital personalities on Twitter. Examining the limits and opportunities Twitter provides as a conducive site for deconstructing essentialist ideas of ethnicity and race is integral to this work.

This study examines a population within the African Diaspora as they experience and maneuver co-existing intersecting worlds (hostland and home region), and how these experiences are mediated, understood, influenced, and processed in a digital space. This is the basis of the study that will be fleshed out into concepts of identity, memory, diasporic resources, and forging homeplace through intangible means. Through qualitative methods, specifically interviews and a textual analysis of Twitter use, this study centers second-generation young adult East-African women's positionality. This exploration and study will provide a broader perspective on constructions of humanity, diaspora, and the usefulness of digital media, as well as its shortcomings.

1.3 Purpose and Nature of Study

Based on John Creswell's (2007) text, *Qualitative Inquiry*, this study utilizes a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell, a phenomenological approach is most appropriate when a researcher is studying something that all participants have in common or experience (Creswell, 2007). This research analyzed second-generation East African women from the ages of 18-26 that utilize digital media; their experience is uniquely significant to their lives. The data collected by The Pew Research Center stated that 24% of women in the United States are using Twitter, 26% of Black Americans use Twitter, and 40% of all young adults from ages 18-29 years old use Twitter. Since this study is deriving its research from young adults, ages 18-26 is an adequate age range to target a young, but maturing population that is likely to use Twitter based on the percentages provided. This research is exploring the phenomena of second-generation East African women and their interactions with digital media. This study utilizes a transcendental phenomenology that "consists of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon" (Creswell, p. 60, 2007).

The research design incorporates one-on-one interviews with ten recruited participants, as well as a textual analysis of Twitter using key words and hashtags derived from interviews with participants of the study. Second-generation East African women's tweets, likes, retweets, comments amongst users were coded in accordance to the themes of the study and interview transcriptions. Creswell (2007) recommends for a phenomenological study that the sample size range from 5-25 participants. A qualitative study must obtain data that sufficiently describes or explains a phenomenon of interest, and a sample size that addresses the research questions posed in the study. Therefore, recruiting ten participants for this study, reaches the suggested sample

size in order to obtain reliable information for the research. This design is appropriate because it highlights personal narratives and insights from second-generation East African women. Deriving hashtags and common trends that participants suggest and discuss in their interviews helped to examine the application of Twitter in order to compare and contrast the participants' experiences and uses with the networking site and how others engage with content. With these two differing data sets, the study explores how much Twitter is a diasporic tool conducive for the construction of homeplace, identity, and memory. The research analyzes the relationship amongst homeplace, identity, memory, and digital spaces, and how much or how little they impact one another. Twitter's affinity to these relational factors provides insight on ways the site is manipulated in ways that are helpful and transformative for Black women.

My positionality, as a second-generation East African woman, puts me in a difficult position to separate my experiences with the analysis and feedback of the participants. Husserl's "epoche" concept requires researchers to separate themselves from the study, allowing for unbiased analysis (Creswell, 2007). However, my personal connection to the research makes it easier to create themes, formulate codes, and interpret meanings that the participants share. Research, especially those that deal with Black communities, is never strictly objective; our personal is political. disregarded the limits and agency of enslaved Africans and, sequentially, generations to come.

It's important to preface this research with an intentional and ethical understanding of the subjective realities of Black life, and how this work strives to understand and be mindful of the political, societal and philosophical precedence of our existence and dehumanization. Thus, my own proximity to this specific research is not necessarily a shortcoming but a crucial aspect to carefully and considerately examine a community I am a part of.

1.4 Significance

The proposed study delves into a population, second-generation East African women, with intersecting factors: cultural and familial heritage, language, race, gender, ethnicity, and converging worlds of home and hostland. The possibility of digital spaces as grounds for identity and symbolic homeplace, memory, and diasporic resources, is explored through Twitter's interface as a site for self-expression and content creation.

Aside from the population and concepts applied within this study, this research has an opportunity to unveil the possibilities of digital humanities within Black Studies, and how new technologies are not necessarily changing but re-working historical trends of liberation, survival, and sustainability. As stated by bell hooks (1991), the home became a space for resistance particularly by Black women; how does technology infiltrate this to not only re-imagine homeplace but continue a legacy of our ancestors and generations before us? The future of Black lives is tied to new technologies; revealing how this relationship manifests and is engaged with is crucial to reveal new forms of contributive material Black communities are participating in, for survival, healing, and/or resistance. Despite this research tackling a small population within the diaspora, this research is reflective of the uniqueness and possibilities of technology and how it can expand diasporic interaction, connection, and develop new modes of academic inquiry within Black Studies. Black Studies encompasses a growing interdisciplinary field, and addressing the impact of technology on Black communities is vital to understand cultural transformation, creation, and accessibility. Digital media can provide avenues for archival works on the web, making them accessible to communities that are not in academic spaces.

Lastly, this research investigates memory, particularly cultural and familial memory, to investigate how temporality redefines what it means to remember, memorialize, and value Black communities beyond their existence on earth. Hooks' grandmother's reclamation of space allowed hooks to honor and remember her existence through the complex relationship of sociality and remembrance. Hooks recovered the unrecognized socialities of Black women in the United States and simultaneously uncovered new ways other Black diasporic communities can and already engage with memory-work. This research taps into many possible uses of digital media by Black populations throughout the diaspora, to understand whether intangible and virtual spaces provide opportunities that are inadequate, impossible, or inaccessible in Black people's realities.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How are second-generation East African women re-defining "homeplace" through their engagement with Twitter?
2. How does their application of Twitter replicate a "diasporic resource"?
3. How, if at all, do second-generation East African women perform discursive practices of memory and cultural identity on Twitter?

This study investigates several intersecting aspects (homeplace, memory, identity, and diasporic resources) as it relates to Twitter-use by second-generation East African women. Determining how Twitter may be a conducive technology for the re-production of homeplace as a new, altering, yet similar space of resistance as coined by bell hooks (1991), will be in conjunction with specific ways this population is imagining and creating home through measures of memory and identity. Diasporic resources will be explored through the database of Twitter itself, and

whether the social networking site functions as a diasporic resource tool. Constructing, through deconstructing Twitter-use, these three questions regarding diaspora, homeplace, identity, and memory will flesh out definitions around blackness, humanity, space and place, cultural identity, generational influences, and imagined spaces for the present and future.

Since this study is utilizing a qualitative, phenomenological approach, the research questions are posed to reflect open-ended, exploratory hypotheses. The research is bound to the investigation of whether second generation East African women utilize Twitter in a way that repurposes homeplace beyond definitions and norms around domesticity and physical spatiality; by asking subsequent questions regarding memory, identity, and diasporic resources, it explores how users are creating semblances of home through their own subjectivity.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Homeplace as a space for resistance, introduced by bell hooks (1991), is reflective of Black women's resilience, in and especially outside of academic and institutional spaces. It resides in the places and people who often think they do not have much to offer or do not have the intellectual capital to provide something useful; yet they do. As cornerstones and foundations of the home, of a temporal site for growth and experience, Black women upkeep families spiritually, emotionally, and mentally, often at the expense of their own well-being. Although this research wishes to think and imagine home beyond normative structures of domesticity that often imply gender-binary norms and behaviors, hooks' (1991) analysis is significant to show how ordinary spaces of habitation enable powerful, transformative measures of resistance, particularly amongst Black women.

This study will utilize the communal and solidarity aspect that is apparent within hooks' work to relate it to Alice Walker's (1983) Womanist perspective as the framework for this research. For clarity, and to expand beyond hooks (1991), Black women's transformative practices can and will be examined beyond spaces of domesticity and gendered normative behaviors to demonstrate various ways Black women are creating sites of resistance that are seen as unorthodox and in opposition of societal standards, yet continue a legacy of productive sites of resilience. The women hooks (1991) speaks of are in relation to the women in this study. The subjects in this study have an opportunity to reveal new ways they are creating space for resistance and care, not necessarily similar to the women hooks speaks of, but an extension and re-definition of hooks' theorization, to suggest that other Black diasporic communities re-imagine and shape their ideas of homeplace specific to their subjectivity.

Alice Walker's (1983) Womanism is situated within and also outside of Black Feminism, a fluid, continually redefining lifestyle removed from customary concepts around feminist traditions. Walker describes Womanism through descriptive ideals and experiential circumstances. She defines it as being, "From the black folk expression of mothers to female children...usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous, or *willful* behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered 'good' for one" (1983, p. 22). She breaks down the definition of "Womanist" into four categories, loosely termed but also bound to everyday-ness, relatability, and community. Walker (1983) notes the intimacy and fluidity of "Womanism," stating, "a woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually...prefers women's culture.... sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually...committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" (pg. 22). She centers the importance of experience and the subjectivity of Black women, particularly ordinary practices

that are shared within intimate and/or interpersonal relationships often read or interpreted in academic spaces as inadequate for analysis or study.

Walker's work frames the practices of second-generation East African women as intimate, practical, fluid, and inclusive transformative measures. Homeplace becomes a site of Womanist praxis on the web, where Black women are engaging with one another online. Walker's (1983) conceptualization challenges and expands hooks' idea of homeplace beyond physicality, territorialization, and domesticity; her Womanist perspective, because of its fluidity, allows negotiation around space and place to manifest through practical and influential engagement from Black women's participation on the Internet.

This research will engage with a Womanist lens by analyzing the engagement and interaction of second-generation East African women through discursive practices such as comments, posts, tweets, retweets, and likes. Through Walker's definition, terms of endearment, colloquialisms, and exchanges of comments between the designated population will be extracted to note their informal practices of Womanist ideals. By analyzing second-generation East African women's engagement with each other on the web, it further adds and expands on hooks' piece, particularly its recovery of marginalized and shadowed socialities. Displaying and investigating second-generation East African women's informal practices posits their engagement as a retrieval of importance and existence for themselves, generations before, and generations to come.

Walker's "Womanism" is almost like a shot in the dark, aimlessly aiming at everything unseen, unheard, ignored, or considered invaluable. It's ordinariness and use of intimate regularities of life create space for Black women of any sexual orientation, ability, religion, ethnicity, nationality, documented status, gender identity/expression, and all those who are often

on the margins, or not in the picture at all, within Feminist ideologies. It is no wonder, eight years after Walker's definition of Womanism, hooks' (1991) conception of homeplace echoes valorization of transformative practices within sites of everyday life. Womanism will frame my analysis of second-generation East African women's interaction and engagement on the web with one another as they redefine homeplace, identity, memory, and diasporic resources.

1.7 Definitions

This study incorporates two integral terms that are crucial to this work; "homeplace" and "diasporic resources." Homeplace, as stated previously, is defined by bell hooks' (1991) theorization as a site of resistance for Black women. Although this research is rooted in her idea, it pushes to expand homeplace beyond territorial sites of the household, beyond normative functions of domesticity, to intangible spaces like Twitter, and outside of a Black Atlantic and/or Transatlantic framework.

Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) discusses the relationship between Black America and Black British communities to explore how the articulations of diaspora vary, differ, intersect, and interact. Brown derives her concepts from Paul Gilroy, particularly his diaspora discourse that moves beyond a fixation on migration, displacement, and a reclamation of a central homeland, towards a focus on raw materials that Black communities create and draw from to formulate their own cultures (Clarke et al., 2006). "Diasporic resources," as Brown names them, can be raw materials, cultural artifacts or an exchange of them. This study will explore how Twitter functions as a "diasporic resource" through the virtual exchange of cultural artifacts amongst users.

1.8 Limitations, Delimitations, Assumptions and Scope

For the most part, participants' knowledge and/or practice of homeplace and diasporic resources were unrealized or not named as such, however, through their own subjective naming and definitions, this study extracted key codes and words that are in relationship to the major concepts and themes of this study. Although language and naming is significant, it is equally important to pull from other interpretations presented by participants; labels and conceptual definitions were not crucial within interviews. How they colloquially expressed their sentiments around digital space, home, and identity, were all significant to this work and in honor of Walker's Womanist perspective. It is the casual, unknowingly transformative work, that drives this study.

The overall study centers second-generation East African women concerning their digital media practices and how they re-cultivated homeplace through work around cultural identity, memory, and diasporic resources. Through participants' words and sentiments, this study found commonality and extension of hooks' (1991) site of resistance, and a continuation of fluidity on the idea's and definition presented by Alice Walker's (1983) Womanism.

This chapter discussed the influential work of bell hooks' (1991) "homeplace: a site of resistance" as a foundational piece to ground the premise of this study. Her work offers guidance on the principles of this research and some points of contention that will push normative gender roles, functions, and spatiality of place and home. Through Alice Walker's (1983) Womanist perspective, the participation of second-generation East African women on the Internet is analyzed and reworked as transformative, practical measures of interaction. As a qualitative, phenomenological design, this approach guides the research questions and hypotheses to

incorporate exploratory investigations around the themes of this study, forging new ideas around homeplace and digital media.

The following chapter introduces literature on the constructions of humanity and blackness, cultural identity, memory, the African diaspora, first and second-generation socialization, and digital communities presently constructed.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examines four aspects of the study: Humanity's Misnaming and the African diaspora; Cultural Identity, Reconfigurations of Home, Diasporic Resources and Memory; First and Second-Generation Immigrant Ethnic and Racial Socialization; and Digital Communities as presently constructed by diasporic communities. Each provide context on the concepts of humanity, identity, and diaspora, to introduce why and how Twitter becomes a diasporic resource for memory, identity and homeplace. Compartmentalizing these categories helps establish relationships amongst socialization processes, how the African diaspora is viewed, how it is shared and created within diasporic resources, and therefore, how Twitter infiltrates this process to provide a technology for a continuous practice of identity construction and familial and cultural memory by a small subset of the African Diaspora.

2.1 Humanity's Misnaming and the African Diaspora

“What does it mean to be a human?” Answering this question has become more complicated the further along scholars, intellectuals, and the general population study and inhabit this world. Lewis Gordon, in *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*, discusses and analyzes historical events that swayed the tide of society, and particularly Black communities across the globe. Gordon (2008) states that compounding factors in 1492, such as the voyage by Christopher Columbus, the end of occupation of Black and/or Arab Moors in Spain, and Portuguese explorer Vasco De Gama setting sail to India (the first link between Europe and Asia), resulted in the formation of the Western world, or what is known as the period of Modernity. The Western world, during Modernity, figuratively constructed regions of the world; Europe and its opposite, Africa, the Colonies (eventually United States), and the mystical Asian

continent. These symbolic categorical regions allowed for physical enactments of imperialism, colonization, and enslavement. Gordon (2008) writes:

The European began to develop a sense of the self in which there was supposedly a primal, mythical exemplification of wisdom itself, and the place that became the epitome of this sense of self became Hellenic civilization, a place whose foundational role took racialized form in nineteenth-century scholarship on the history of philosophy (pg. 5)

Gordon presents historical context on early workings of race, dating back to the sixteenth century. He notes, in his academic journal article “Africana Philosophy under the Weight of Misguided Reason” (2012), the enslavement and near genocide of native populations in the Americas, with eventual scholars such as Bartolomé Las Casas debating with Gines de Sepúlveda regarding native populations suitability for enslavement, gave way to the Atlantic Slave Trade. The debate concerned the treatment of American Indians in the New World after the colonization of the Americas; Sepulveda argued that American Indians were “natural slaves,” whereas Las Casas, a Dominican theologian, believed all were human (2012). This is deemed as one of the earliest moral debates concerning colonialism and the human rights of colonized peoples. A mutual agreement sufficed, and although Native Indians were not enslaved, it led to the justification for other groups to be subjugated to such incivilities.

Difference based in race began to hold stock for Europeans. Modernity and its philosophical advancements introduced racial categories and separations of human and sub-human. There were the Europeans or whites in contrast to the African/Black, as well as Indians and Asiatics (Gordon, 2012). However, these racial caste systems were not consistent or stable, instead through historical observations, “blackness [was] merely an ideology historically determined and thus, variable” (Magubane, pg. 823). During the late 1700s and early 1800s, Englishmen at a time speculated whether the ethnic group Xhosa should be classified as Black, but were convinced the “pale-skinned Irish most definitely should be” (Magubane, pg. 283). In

both cases it shows the inconsistencies of race, classification, and subordination. Therefore, historical context plays a significant role in how communities, nations, and ethnic groups, to this day, self-identify racially. When it comes to second-generation East African women, it's pertinent to take note of the varying ways this population may identify.

Beyond the variability of racial categorizations, historical events such as enslavement and colonialism cemented racial castes, and speculations of classification were validated by the expansion of Western imperialism. These classifications and eventual subordinations led way to an existential situation for Black populations worldwide. Gordon refers to it as a peculiar melancholia, which he defines as “subject-constituting attachment to a loss” and of not belonging where one belongs (Gordon, 2012, pg. 84). Therefore, notions regarding humanity created an oxymoronic situation when discussing and delving into the understanding of Black identity, especially during the early periods of modernity. Second-generation East African women similarly experience the reality of melancholia due to their race, but also due to their inhabitation of belonging within the confines of their parent's culture and nationality and their hostland. They are forced to forge new conceptions of their social standing and community.

Gordon writes, “For the black, born of the modern world, there is the formation of the self through foreclosed loss” (2012, pg. 85). Second-generation East African women's experiences merely shed light on a different yet similar experience of loss amongst Black communities, illuminating the violent impact modernity and ontology had on the obstruction of Black life, symbolically and structurally. In conjunction with theoretical advancements, physical exploitations of subordinate groups (enslavement, colonialism, imperialism) backed by philosophical explanations, exacerbated issues of identity, the self, and humanity. Europe and the

Western world created a Hellenic culture to shape the thought of its people, and to create the African and yet, deny that the African is human.

In Sylvia Wynter's (2007) "On How We Mistook The Map For The Territory," she argues for a re-examination of the self where the concept of being human no longer requires an "other." Historically, there's been a misnaming of human that prescribes "absolute being" only to white cis-het middle to upper-class men. Therefore, through these false and misleading definitions, society and civilization has only understood or strived to be understood as human through strict, exclusive parameters. Wynter (2007) calls for an intellectual revolution that enables the "other" to re-articulate the foundational meanings of human. Second-generation East African women engage with possibilities of redefining the self through discursive means on the web, however, do they merely reiterate historical constructions of humanity rather than a constructive re-naming? This is a continual, critical struggle of blackness and Black life. The "zero-denominator," the existence of non-existence, must attempt to redefine themselves through the cyclical denial of their lives from outward interpersonal and structural subjugation.

Rendering second-generation East African women's practices on Twitter as celebratory measures of blackness undercuts the potential and capacity of their work. Instead it could be argued that digital media can be manipulated by Black communities to live beyond and/or outside of the realities and constructs of their worlds, where users formulate new ways to survive.

The ontological makings of blackness coincide and speak to the constructions of the African diaspora, which help to situate the subjectivity of Black life regionally, ethnically, and culturally. The term, *African diaspora*, was not widely used until the midway point of the 20th century, when numerous African nations were gaining sovereignty (Shepperson, 1993). Many

thinkers, writers, and scholars began using this term to express concern of the status of African descendants across the world and their respective communities (Shepperson, 1993). Shepperson (1993) mentions German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel as the most influential proponent that Africa “held no historical part of the world,” “no movement or development to exhibit,” and was “only on the threshold of the World’s history” (p. 42). These sentiments are consistent with the negation of Black life in order to structurally uphold normative conceptions of humanity and society.

Africans’ and African descendants’ intentions were rooted in defending their humanity, throughout the world. Shepperson (1993) writes that this idea has not changed, and the work of African diasporists old and new is grounded in the interests of Africans, their descendants, and the progression of humanity. The term, African diaspora, as historicized by Shepperson, investigates differing experiences of anti-blackness across the globe, and requires evolving, growing, and continuous contributions to what it means to understand the African diaspora’s workings. The African diaspora explores communal experience, yet requires movement, dexterity and difference. Second-generation East African women’s positionality understand themselves through a specific lens, highlighting the overall malleability and expansiveness of the African diaspora.

Paul Gilroy is critical to the development of “diaspora,” particularly in the Black Atlantic. A British historian and scholar, Gilroy warns against narratives of ethnic history and concludes that black tradition in terms of nations exclude people who do not fit those spaces (Helmreich, 1992). Gilroy argues that hegemonic constructions of community, within a British context, have collapsed “nation” into “race” and conflated “cultural” with “biological heritage” (Helmreich, 1992). He denies the precedence of nationhood and boundaries, rather, he hopes to

construct race based in kin and place. In his belief, African diasporic identity and history crosses borders and nation-states, and he finds that the Black Atlantic provides a more encompassing field of cultural production. Gilroy theorizes diaspora “as multiple complicated processes of positioning in relation to a sense of belonging vis-à-vis the creation of psychic, symbolic, and material communities and home(s) in the sites of settlement” (Campt, 2002). Still, the residual effects of enslavement and migration remain crucial elements to the articulations of diaspora (Campt, 2002). Gilroy’s theorization is prioritized as a model of diasporic theory for African descendant’s, which can leave glaring holes to other communities who may not align with the historical precedent of enslavement and/or migration. In the case of second-generation East African women, their inability to connect to the historical effects of enslavement due to their own specific historical background, inhibits their ability to encompass Gilroy’s diaspora. However, Gilroy’s re-direction from the continent as an originary homeland, allows for more mobility within his parameters of the African diaspora. Although second-generation East African women have a direct connection to their homeland, Gilroy’s definition allows for a fluid outlook on how they construct their communities, identities, and diasporic connectivity that is not solely based on geographical proximity.

Helmreich (1992) is quick to note Gilroy’s glaring holes, primarily his exclusion of nation-states while simultaneously depending on genealogies and patriarchal lineages. Gilroy discusses the unity of the Black Atlantic through the experience of Black men on ships and at Afro-Caribbean-British discos (Helmreich, 1992). Black women, in this case, are insignificant to African diasporic identity and experience. The work of Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) in later sections of the Literature Review will further elucidate these holes pertaining to gender.

Gregory D. Smithers' (2011) work on the autobiographical writings of Maya Angelou, Barack Obama, and Caryl Phillips expands Gilroy's ideology. The narratives and stories of Angelou, Obama, and Phillips, for Smithers, reflect fragmented identity formations amongst the African diaspora, pushing for a decentering of a central homeland, Africa, that expands and serves as testimony for the nuance of Black identity in various parts of the world. Smithers (2011) writes that "such tropes tend to disengage Blacks from the social, economic, and political structures that continue (and more immediately) to oppress, marginalize, and inform images of Africa and identity formation in the far-flung reaches of the Black diaspora" (Pg. 501). The stories shared on Twitter by second-generation East African women are fragmented depictions of the diaspora; their narratives of their families, culture, ethnicity, and identity, encapsulate their understanding of their society, their socialization, and themselves.

Smithers (2011) discusses the work of Paul Gilroy and how he explored his Black diasporic context by analyzing themes of home, identity and belonging, in order to rid the African diaspora of cultural and racial essentialisms. Gilroy questioned the symbolism and literary use of Africa as a temporal site for "absolutist conceptions of cultural difference allied to a culturalist understanding of race and ethnicity" (2011, pg. 486). Instead of aligning with a biological concept of identity, Gilroy proposed a transnational framework that was contingent on understanding what it meant to be Black in a diasporic context (Smithers, 2011). Gilroy emphasized that scholars should understand the Black Atlantic as a single, complex unit of analysis in the modern world (Smithers, 2011). The Black Atlantic offers a microcosm of sorts on how intersecting cultural, social, national, and political factors structurally reconfigure the diaspora respectively, and Gilroy's persistent disengagement of Africa as a source of "home" offers perspective and insight on how other Black diasporic regions throughout the world are

cultivating their identity. Second-generation East African women highlight the diversity of the African diaspora outside of the Black Atlantic, just as Angelou, Phillips, and Obama do with their autobiographical accounts, suggesting that Gilroy's work can be transmittable to other spaces and regions.

Smithers (2011) writes that the autobiographies of Angelou, Phillips, and Obama, share a diasporic framework that is geographically flexible and accounts for African migrations throughout the world. Their positionality and social standings create fragmented narratives of Black diasporic identity. Smithers' (2011) analysis re-constitutes Gilroy's work of diaspora and diasporic identity as a complicated process of identity formation, not rigid nor binary, but fluid, and ever-changing. Second-generation East African women on Twitter articulate their experiences and narratives, unknowingly constructing what the African diaspora can mean within imagined spaces of digital networks. These are merely possibilities; examining the extent to which this is applicable is the intent behind the research and will influence future research regarding the limits of Twitter, digital spaces, and virtual communities.

Brent Hayes Edwards (2003) expands work on the African diaspora as he examines the exchange of theory, thought, and experience amongst African American and French Black scholars in his text *The Practice of Diaspora*. Like Smithers, Edwards argues for the dexterity of diaspora, moving towards articulation that allows for gaps of difference and movement amongst identities, ethnicities, and experiences of being Black. Analogous to a human body, the joints connect limbs together, marking sites of difference and similarity that creates dexterity, movement, and creation; this place of movement allows for difference, and understanding through the connection of Black solidarity. Similarly, second-generation East African women

differ ethnically and culturally, and their engagement with Twitter offer insight on these differences, and the subjectivity of the African diaspora entirely.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's (1993) book, *Moving the Centre*, expands the ideas of Smithers and Edwards. Ngũgĩ writes primarily on language, however throughout the text he explores and re- alters how Africans and African descendants of the diaspora should express, share, and learn about each other in order to encourage multiple points of perspectives.

Ngũgĩ (1993) professes that the African diaspora has been stripped of its names and languages, which for him are the two immediate symbols of self-definition. He emphasizes an eradication of white supremacy through a reclamation of identity, pride, and self-actualization. Ngũgĩ mentions the influence of Western/European subjugation of Black life, stating, "... imperialism, both in its colonial and neo-colonial stages, is the one force that affects everything in Africa-politics, economics, culture, absolutely every aspect of human life" (Ngũgĩ, pg. 83, 1993). Like the work of Wynter (2007), Ngũgĩ professes the profound impact of modernity on the African diaspora, and in turn, how communities should respond within this sociality of negation and inhumanity.

Ngũgĩ advocates for a pluralist society filled with many centers of thought, where hegemonic standards of how to think, speak, and conceptualize aren't limited to constructs in proximity to whiteness. It is difference that binds the African diaspora together. Like Brent Hayes Edwards, the practice of diaspora is at work, and a practice of articulation across transnational communities and spaces allows for a diaspora of nuance, understanding, and most importantly, solidarity based in acceptance of diversity. His ideas offer second-generation East African women the mobility and accessibility to construct their identities, language, and digital

realities outside of the limiting definitions and misnaming functionality of white heteronormative constructs.

Ngũgĩ's concepts are similar to Véné Clark's (2009) in her piece "Developing Diaspora Literacy and Marasa Consciousness" where she coins the term "Diaspora Literacy," which means to understand and interpret multi-layered narratives, stories, and meanings of work and experience by numerous communities within the African diaspora. With this in mind, second-generation communities are capable of harboring and experiencing multi-layered conceptions of the self and community. Clark also defines the term "Marasa Consciousness" as a movement and change (*Marasa*) to serve as a metaphor of the profound differences in environment, social organization, and language encountered by enslaved Africans in the Americas (Clark, 2009). It urges to break free of the binary, of the permeating idea of what blackness means. Clark explores a re-examination in diasporic interaction, not being homed in on hostland to homeland (Africa), but a third variant, a connection between multiple hostlands that eradicates the abstract symbol of Africa as the only foundational point of commonality and culture. This breaks open the connectivity of the diaspora, where communities like second-generation East African women inhabit a multiplicity of influences that offer varying interpretations of blackness.

Clark's, Ngũgĩ's, and Edwards's work emphasizes the dexterity within Black diasporic life. But taking the next step in exploring rigid and historical definitions of humanity based in precedence, can open the door even wider, to new and untouched expressions of identity, not contingent on the binaries influenced by modernity, as Wynter suggests. The sociality of blackness and Black life through the racialized violence of imperialism leave theoretical foundations of ontology and humanity inadequate for its construction, resulting in Black communities renaming and redefining their existence. With the integration of Twitter, this

research explores how technology can provide new interpretations and understandings of the African diaspora, and re-define what blackness can mean in context of a violent historical and symbolic structural misnaming . Second-generation East African women’s informal practices on Twitter forge new possibilities for Black female subjectivity, blackness, and the dexterity of the African diaspora.

The next section will bridge concepts of the African Diaspora, humanity and blackness, with cultural identity, diasporic resources, and what this means in terms of intergenerational memory, home, and non-essentialist perceptions of ethnicity, race, and culture.

2.2 Cultural Identity, Reconfigurations of Home, Diasporic Resources and Memory

As stated, modernity shaped the foundational workings around humanity, blackness and the African diaspora, influencing transnational productions of Black life. These key concepts trickle down to second-generation East African women’s identities presently, particularly how they are produced, re-appropriated, and what their identity constructions mean intergenerationally. Renowned cultural theorist Stuart Hall explains what constitutes cultural identity. For Hall, identity should be understood as a “production,” a process that is never complete, and always constituted within, not outside, representation (Hall, 2003). Second-generation communities, in particular, inhabit a space of immediate intersecting worlds. Their construction of identity resides in multiple spaces, places, and forms; it may reveal itself in different settings, and it may continue to grow pertaining to circumstantial events. Hall (2003) mentions that identity is not grounded in the archaeology, but in the re-telling of the past. Second-generation East African women’s construction of identity undergoes varying forms of

production that is not bound to finality, however, there is still an acknowledgment of a generational and/or ancestral past.

Although Hall urges to stray from rigid conceptions of identity, he explores the importance of an imaginative rediscovery stating, “Hidden histories’ have played a critical role in the emergence of many of the most important social movements of our time-feminist, anti-colonial and anti-racist” (Hall, 2003, p. 235). Similarity and self-examination through communal understanding provides camaraderie, relatability, and an intangible bond. Just as difference was mentioned in accordance to the importance of diasporic communities, similarity is essential to its binding force. This is pertinent to understand the contextual social implications that impact second-generation East African women, how they relate and differ within the diaspora, and in result, what this means for their utilization of digital space.

However, like scholars such as VèVè Clark (2009) and Brent Hayes Edwards (2003), Hall does not believe diaspora and identity are rooted in similarity. Cultural identity encompasses critical points of deep and significant difference that help to understand the diaspora historically, the impact of modernity, and how people have re-created and continue to re-create their identities. Hall (2003) states that cultural identity is a matter of becoming and being, it belongs to the future and the past, and is not intrinsically defined nor something that already exists. Second-generation identities come with history, familial influence, cultural practices, as well as external social factors that are separate from the identity constructions their parents experienced. But just as Hall (2003) stated, their identities are not an “exactness” or an identity that reaches a certain point of acceptability. In other words, second-generation identities have ruptures and discontinuities, giving insight to the hybridity and multiplicity of the diaspora as a whole, and the production of cultural identities.

Benedict Anderson (1991) introduces “imagined communities” as the product of numerous people within various regions, countries, and nations never meeting others who live in their communities, yet in each of their minds lives the image of their communion. Although Anderson’s work is primarily defining the symbolic constructions of nations, his research relays important work around community and imagination. Black diasporic communities forge identity and kinship through the negation of their existence and denial of their humanity. Communion, solidarity, and connectivity function as integral means of survival and resistance. Second-generation East African women share a unique sociality of merging transnational worlds within the confines of their family and household, where “imagined communities” extend the capacity for cultural identity and belonging to manifest beyond physical proximity such as borders, regions, and nationhood.

Similarly, Arjun Appadurai (1996) argues that the global cultural economy is a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, void of center-periphery models. Appadurai (1996) extends Benedict Anderson’s concept of imagined communities, stating that “multiple worlds are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe” (p. 33). Anderson’s work focuses on the construction of virtual countries and nationalism, how they are first projected before they are realized. However, Appadurai and Anderson’s emphasis of the imaginary lends hand to the application of Twitter, and how interactive technologies become hands-on approaches to imagined communities on the web. Social media has usurped traditional forms of media, fast-forwarding the dissemination of information that was once unavailable or inaccessible to people, but now a collaborative, productive, and cultural process for the everyday citizen.

Appadurai (1990) defines the imaginary as a social practice, a global cultural process that is critical to new cultural and diasporic productions. It is a negotiation between individuals and globally defined fields of possibility, and for Appadurai (1990) this process is central to all forms of agency and the new global order. Specifically when he discusses ethnoscapas and mediascapas, Appadurai (1990) articulates the numerous constructs of cultural production that amount to the imagined worlds and/or multiple worlds that he and Benedict Anderson speak on.

An *ethnoscape* by Appadurai's (1990) definition is a landscape of persons who shift throughout the world, this can constitute as a tourist, immigrant, refugee, exile, and guest worker. However, Appadurai notes that movement and migration is not limited to a physical shift, but can also mean imagining or envisioning moving, leaving, or migrating to another place. Thinking about a place, city, or space, of new horizons and futures, is not solely based in fantasy but a practical and realistic process based on changes in society, such as policies on immigration, involuntary migration, political strife, and more. Although imagined worlds and communities seem speculative, they are very much practical and necessary. The utilization of Twitter by second-generation East African women offer new insight on the diasporic production of the global order, but more so, whether these practices of the imaginary through discursive means on the web provide the agency that Appadurai speaks of. The effectiveness of Twitter as a site for cultural productions of identity and homeplace will unveil whether speculative and imagined worlds constitute as new realities for second-generation East African women.

Mediascapas refer to the distribution of the electronic capabilities that disseminate information, typical of traditional media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, television stations, and film (Appadurai, 1990). The images that amount from these mediums inflect various messages, ideologies, meanings, and narratives to viewers throughout the world. The

further away viewers are from the projected realities that are portrayed, the more blurry reality and imaginary worlds become. Appadurai (1990) writes that scripts formulated through media outlets and platforms complicate the way people live, basing their own realities on possible lives and fantasies. But even more significant, Appadurai (1990) notes mediascapes and their role of culturally constructing the Other. Through Western hegemonic constructions of humanity and identity, mediascapes recycle images, narratives, and messages through traditional outlets that reinforce exclusionary ideologies. Second-generation East African women can imagine themselves and their identities in opposition to the information shared through mediascapes, particularly the erasure and/or devaluation of Black life. *Mediascapes* and *ethnoscapes* demonstrate the complex and complicated nature of a global cultural economy, and share the necessities of imagination as both a progressive and practical tool. This lends hand to what Appadurai (1990) describes as *Technoscapes* which is the movement of technology that is able to maneuver freely around physical boundaries. Second-generation East African women's utilization of Twitter incorporates both *mediascapes* and *ethnoscapes*, through the application of *technoscapes*.

Appadurai, Anderson, and Stuart Hall's work bring two central ideas into focus: imagined worlds within the global economy and cultural identity. Bridging these concepts together elucidates their findings because it explores how this can apply to second-generation communities that inhabit a place in society of competing, conflicting, and sometimes even, complimentary worlds. Appadurai primarily analyzes the role of traditional media and its impact on the cultural economy, whereas this research applies his concepts and extends it to new forms of technologies that require interactive usage, reimagining how second generation communities acquire autonomy and agency to negotiate their imagined worlds and identities.

And with sophisticated technologies like Twitter, ethnoscapes (migration of people across culture and borders) simultaneously exist, where physical locality does not control the ability to create and manifest identity. The infiltration of modern, innovative digital mediums (mediascapes & technoscapes), such as Twitter, operationalize ethnicity and race as a malleable, “global force,” that slips “through the cracks between states and borders” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 41). Cultural identity undergoes a process of heightened continuous reproduction, due to Twitter’s accessibility and popularity across borders. Twitter transforms mediascapes and technoscapes from a landscape of non-autonomous cultural dissemination to a socially interactive medium of cultural capital. Second-generation East African women may utilize Twitter as a tool for cultural identity production while enacting the work of Appadurai, creating imagined worlds and sites of intangible ethnoscapas.

With imagined communities and the production of cultural identity, comes a reconfiguration of home, place, and space. David Morley (2000) conceptualized “postmodern geographies,” reflecting the intersections of digital media and mobility to re-define home. Morley explains that new communication tools contribute to redefining traditional boundaries and what are presupposed as inside and outside in regard to the domestic household (Morley, 2000). His work analyzes the relationship between new technological advancements and notions concerning identity and belonging, which correspond with the premise of the research around second-generation women’s utilization of Twitter as both a diasporic tool and site for homeplace conducive of identity and community. Morley navigates aspects of home, at micro and macro levels, and the many factors that intersect, such as technology, migration, geography, and media. Morley (2000) states that communities and boundaries become mediated at different geographical scales by new forms of media. With an integration of new media, home is

destabilized and rid of domesticated constrictions; virtual and imaginary spaces of communion are cohabitated and created.

Displacement and emplacement are crucial to the manifestation of imagined worlds, communities, and homes. Second generation East African women expand Morley's research by creating networks of home, community, and "postmodern geographies" through their utilization of Twitter. Contributions to the work around the African diaspora share sentiments of belonging through migration (voluntary or involuntary). Morley (2000), Anderson (1991) and Appadurai's (1996) work on transnationalism and technology offer possibilities of imagined home and space for African diasporic communities worldwide. Although they fail to incorporate anti-blackness as a critical component to the necessity of speculative and imaginative constructions of belonging, this research on how and why second-generation East African women use and manipulate Twitter for beneficiary reasons will expand the realm of technology's expansiveness as a useful tool of survival and resistance for Black communities throughout the world.

Morley (2000) accounts for digital media as a crucial component to the disassociation of locality and domesticity to the home, helping to expand and redefine hooks' (1991) conceptualization of homeplace. Although his work does not center Black women as critical figures in the construction of homeplace, the integration of Morley's research with hooks' prioritization of Black women allows for the research on second-generation East African women to flourish. This study challenges and expands Morley (2000) and hooks' (1991) works around the possibilities of home and homeplace beyond heteronormative constructs. In all of its various formations, homeplace is routinely and consistently created and necessary for Black women's livelihood.

Interrogating these sites of internal strivings of identity and homeplace, which vary, differ, intersect, and overlap, situates Black women to understand themselves, their family, their past, and their future. And at this juncture, it enables the production of diasporic resources, for inspiration, influence, exchange, and community.

As mentioned previously, Paul Gilroy emphasized a Black Atlantic, particularly the similarities that the African diaspora navigates as displaced individuals within a transnational space, discussing the intercultural relations of borrowing, exchange, and adaptation within “settled” Black communities (Brown, 1998). Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) pulls from his theorization of the diaspora, to help ground her conceptualization of a diasporic resource. In her article, “Black Liverpool, Black America, and the Gendering of Diasporic Space,” Brown (1998) writes on the relationship between Black America and Black British communities, particularly in Liverpool, and how the articulations of diaspora vary, differ, intersect, and interact. Brown (1998) writes that for Black Liverpoolians, they construct their identities based on the vast resources they are exposed to, however, it’s relative to the cultural and political economy they inhabit. As opposed to Gilroy, she posits that the diaspora is not necessarily accessible to everyone. Although Gilroy and his proponents may believe that the African diaspora constitutes “an identity of passions..these passions and the means of pursuing them, may not be identical within particular communities” (Campt, 2002, pg. 101). Brown argues that there is an “asymmetries of power” between different Black communities, either allowing or inhibiting the participation of a transnational Black diaspora (Campt, 2002). For instance, America as a hegemonic semblance of Black identity and diasporic influence, conflates other Black communities relationships with one another based on dynamics of power that dictate the diaspora. As previously mentioned, second-generation East African women’s experiences and

positionality may be deduced based on ways Black America structures modes of articulation for the diaspora. For this study in particular, it's important to take note of these occurrences and determine whether second generation East African women use Twitter in ways that reflect the influence of Black America or depart in ways that are unfamiliar from typical notions of the African diaspora and connectivity.

Brown's (1998) theorization of diaspora moves beyond a fixation on migration, displacement, and a reclamation of a central homeland towards a focus on raw materials that Black communities create and draw from to formulate their own cultures. Raw materials can consist of popular culture artifacts such as music, film, novels, dance, shared memories, or narratives. Brown cultivates the term "diasporic resources" by building on the idea of raw materials or cultural artifacts, and how they are exchanged and created. Diasporic resources are not bound to cultural productions but also people and places, iconography, ideas, and ideologies as they are exchanged between one another (Brown, 1998). Her construction of "diasporic resources" is to capture how Black Liverpoolians appropriate certain aspects of Black America for various needs and reasons under limitations, such as political and governmental influences (Brown, 1998). The discursive practices by second-generation East African women on Twitter have capabilities to redefine Twitter itself as a diasporic resource, a medium for the exchange of cultural artifacts through digital and virtual means of production.

Brown concludes that there is no actual space that one could call the "African diaspora," therefore she strays from rigid geographical constructions towards a belief that communities and social spaces are constructed through processes of cultural productions and racial formation (1998). Second-generation East African women encompass a small sample of the African diaspora, yet they still represent a large and complex region of cultural and ethnic differences.

Their engagement on Twitter replicates a microcosm of the complexity and dexterity of the diaspora. The desire to belong, however complex and different it is within the diaspora, is significant to the relations between Black communities and central to Brown's concept of diasporic resources (Brown, 1998). The measures second-generation East African women embark on to find semblances of home and belonging on the web, reiterate the communal experience of blackness while simultaneously negotiating subjectivity and difference.

To coherently defend Brown's understanding and conceptualization, she wrote on two historical moments between Black Liverpool and Black America: the postwar period and the Long Freedom Struggle, primarily the Civil Rights movement and Black Power movements. Brown (1998) recounts Black American servicemen stationed in Liverpool for as long as twenty-five years following World War II, and how a Black Atlantic port emerged, influencing cultural productions and interactions. She also notes the migration and travels of men and women (African, Afro-Caribbean, native Black Liverpoolians) who were employed by Liverpool shipping companies, and how it manifested critical points of social interactions and exchange (Brown, 1998). Brown negates Liverpool as only a point of global flows of Black American culture, rather she concludes that community and locality are demarcated physical spaces and clusters of interaction; place and space emerges through "intersections of specific involvements in a system of hierarchically organized spaces within the cultural constructions as a community or locality" (Brown, 1998, p. 292). Twitter, as a digital site, conflates borders and space in a way that deconstructs proximity to a "like" or "retweet," however, regions such as Liverpool and America still hold significance regarding people's perspective and ideologies. Cultural and historical events, therefore, are understood and reacted to in real time. In parallel to periods like World War II or the Long Freedom Struggle, the current events of the world become experienced

through one another's engagement on a social networking site. Through Twitter, influence and exchange are attainable and enacted from the palm of one's hand. Second-generation East African women have the capability to elicit interactions with one another regardless of distance, region, and nationhood, expanding Brown's theorizing of "clusters of interactions" to continuous intersections of exchange and communication on Twitter. In this case, place and space emerge through said engagements on Twitter to create cultural constructions of community within an intangible site, pushing the discursive capabilities of the site as a technological replicant of a diasporic resource.

Brown (1998) details how during the late 1960s and early 1970s, imaginations of young Black Liverpudlians were captured by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. The iconography and cultural productions by Black America were re-fashioned in Black Liverpool communities such as the wardrobe, style, ideologies, and ideas. During this era, Black Liverpudlian men adopted concepts of the Black Panthers to defy British fascist groups who restricted them from traveling to white areas of the city (Brown, 1998). Brown writes on a resident of Liverpool, Joseph, and his experience or influence by Black American racial ideologies:

Joseph described how he appropriated what I am calling diasporic resources to help him cope with growing up in an all-white part of Liverpool. He recalled that black American music during the civil rights era was always "reverberating around the house". Joseph said that he gained a perspective on racism by studying the lyrics of the Temptations—lyrics he described as "pure philosophy"—and by reading the backs of their album covers. He added that as a child, he idolized Muhammad Ali for the pride he showed in black people and for his rejection of what Joseph described as "mainstream, white-dominated, American values (Brown, 1998, p. 309)

Joseph, with cultural influences at hand, felt empowered and unfazed by verbal jabs by his white peers. Brown (1998) describes with Joseph's account, and several other anecdotes, how Black American iconography and ideologies travelled to Liverpool and helped Black youth

grapple with issues surrounding race in opposition to British nationalism and cultural identity in opposition to their parents' disregard of racial importance as opposed to their nationality. A family's nationality or cultural origin is significant to internal conflicts of race, socialization, and identity construction, that will be further elaborated in the following section. Second-generation East African women are positioned within the constricts of their society and the belief of their immigrant household, influencing how they perceive themselves and the diaspora. Brown's example shares how diasporic resources are constructed and exchanged, relative to one's social standing and region.

Although Gilroy is a foundational piece to Brown's work on diasporic resources, like Stefan Helmreich's (1992) critiques of Gilroy's work, Brown shares the same sentiments regarding Gilroy's male-centric ideology. Brown is aware of the theoretical accounts pertaining to diaspora instilled in gendered experiences, specifically male, however Brown (1998) urges diaspora studies to attend to the politics of gender and how Black women are significant agents and contributors to cultural productions and the cultivation of diasporic resources. In regard to seafaring, strictly practiced by Black American servicemen, African, Afro-Caribbean and native Black Liverpoolian men post World War II, Brown suggests understanding how this process also impacted women and the ways they navigated seafaring to more holistically examine the diaspora, space, and transnationalism. The inclusion of women as agents and influences to the production of diasporic resources applies to various regions of the world, not just the Black Atlantic, and even in intangible spaces, like Twitter. Second-generation East African women are contributors to cultural exchange, creation, and interaction; how they choose and decide to utilize an intangible, imagined space for diasporic exchange is not only contingent on their ethnicity and race, but conducive of their gender. Gender is a necessary aspect of their humanity that reflects

the specificity they hold as Black women. Their social standing should not be compartmentalized but reflective of their overlapping identities. Alice Walker's Womanist perspective as a theoretical framework positions gender as a critical factor for second-generation East African women's utilization of Twitter.

Brown (1998) shares sentiments of local Black women in Liverpool and their contrasting narratives surrounding racial identity. Karen, a woman Brown mentions, married a Black Servicemen, moved to the United States, and eventually moved back to Liverpool; Karen, however, draws her racial identity within a feminist framework that challenges certain oppressive African ideals and expectations within Liverpool (Brown, 1998). Karen denounces an ancestral Africa, instead accepts Black America as her culture; she critiques the gendering of Liverpoolian blackness, particularly around seafaring, and how it marginalizes women with feminist beliefs and ideals (Brown, 1998). The men in her community base blackness on a male-centric practice, seafaring, and thus condone a racialized sexual politics. The invented construction of seafaring as an access to blackness positioned Black America as a counterhegemonic diasporic resource where Karen and other Black women believed they could draw respect for themselves (Brown, 1998). Opposed to the Black men in Liverpool who idealized Black America as a space for class mobility, wealth, and fame, Black women of Liverpool imagined Black America as a place for self-respect, something they believed was unattainable in their own community. However true or false both of these idealizations are, pertaining to class mobility and the freedoms of Black womanhood in the United States, the exchange of culture and ideologies as a diasporic resource produced opportunities for imagining dreams, futures, and constructions of Black identity in transnational communities. The narratives presented by Brown (1998) share a diasporic subjectivity of what blackness within a Black

Atlantic framework entails (Liverpool, America, and Africa). However, recognizing the specificity of regional conceptualizations of blackness allows understanding of different definitions of what amounts to blackness for other communities. Brown's work is a critical reference point to infer and anticipate practices by other regions and how diasporic resources are presently becoming redefined within digital spaces.

Krista Thompson (2015) in her book *Shine*, draws from Stuart Hall (2003), Brent Hayes Edwards (2003), Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) and Paul Gilroy (1993) to enter the conversation around diaspora, and how it is created and practiced within the Caribbean.

Thompson (2015) uses Brown's (1998) conceptualization of diasporic resources to interrogate the interaction amongst African descendants and how they produce "diasporic imaginaries and selves" (Thompson, 2015, p. 7). Similar to Appadurai and his extension of Benedict Anderson's discussion on imagined communities, Thompson positions cultural and visual practices throughout Atlanta, Kingston, and Nassau as networks rethinking community by exchanging, influencing, and performing through the dissemination of Hip-Hop and street photography as diasporic resources. Thompson (2015) argues that through visual practices, a visual economy of culture and diaspora manifests. She highlights the importance of "light" in accordance to the exposure and brightness of the camera lens used to capture and share images of Black communities expressing their identities, cultivating new, and continuous cultural productions.

Thompson provides numerous examples regarding moments and practices around the importance of "light" and visibility. From dancers waving money in front of camera lights in dancehalls, over-the-top prom entrances in extravagant cars, and a man posing in front of a backdrop wearing a diamond Rolex, Thompson (2015) explains that the "shine" or "light" does not reside in the material objects or the images produced, but rather the act of being seen,

noticed, and visible amongst one's own community and the larger world. During the late 1990s, the "Bling" era in Hip-Hop became synonymous with black culture for most parts of the world, where critics deemed Black communities as hedonistic and shallow. However, Thompson (2015) redefines blackness and consumer culture, instead suggesting Black communities re-appropriate materialistic means to express their autonomy, visibility, and "negotiate their personhood and citizenship" (Thompson, 2015, p. 32).

The use of street photography in various Black urban communities throughout the United States and certain areas of Jamaica was another form of practicing diaspora and creating visibility. Thompson (2015) describes how individuals pose in front of painted backdrops to participate in the renegotiation of visibility, consumer culture, wealth, and allure. The act of posing elicits performative expressions; the person represents a photographed subject and the backdrop provides a surrealist illusion of fantasy, consumerism, and exposure (Thompson, 2015). The use of visuality, particularly recording real time events such as Jamaican dancehall performances, heightens the importance of physical appearance by party-goers. Thompson (2015) details how the "light" of the scope of the video provides people "the most viable means to transcend their geographic environments and social status" (p. 149). The extremes to which people go to make their appearance more visible and favorable for the camera proves the importance of visibility and shine.

Prom entrances in the Bahamas are as extravagant as red-carpet events for A-listers; Thompson (2015) describes it as dazzling attire, posing, and over the top performative moments of pseudo celebrity appeal. These moments reveal opportunities for Black youth to replicate or envision themselves as important, famous, and wealthy citizens of society, re-negotiating their own social standing (Thompson, 2015). Similar to Appadurai (1996), they are able to imagine

their worlds and even identities, as more than what they are told in their given circumstances. Twitter becomes another tool for creating and instilling Black communities access to visibility, shine, and redefinitions of their identities outside of prescribed societal constructions.

Thompson's work in *Shine* share's important examples of the relationship between visuality and the construction of diasporic identities and resources. Her analysis provides conducive research into some of the ideas, concepts, and frameworks presented by Appadurai, Stuart Hall, and Brent Hayes Edwards, to combine notions of cultural identities with technology. Thompson breaches these concepts by navigating how particular influences such as Hip-Hop and street photography infiltrate various Black regions to produce visual aesthetics and performances through virtual realities. Nassau, the Bahamas, and Atlanta represent three different regions with specific societal and/or historical influences, cultures, and characteristics, however, Black communities' production of cultural and diasporic processes through modes of visibility share the spectrum of the camera's eye and reflect back onto one another's diasporic neighborhood.

Twitter, like the camera, visual technologies, and performative measures, symbolizes exposure, light, visibility, and a communal and interactive platform for people to exchange, share, and imagine themselves in multiple ways. Second-generation East African women's utilization of Twitter can replicate a diasporic resource for the construction of Hall's (2003) cultural identity, Appadurai's (1996) ethnoscape and cultural economy, and Thompson's (2015) visual economy of light. Delving into how this is explicitly done, whether it consists of retweets, posts, comments, and so forth, is important to structure the research to examine how second-generation East African women use social media as a navigation of diasporic self-exploration, transnationalism, and "shine."

In relation to Thompson's examination of visuality within the Caribbean and America, Malick Sidibè's photography replicates similar notions of light and cultural productions, and takes it a step further by incorporating an element of re-appropriating and remembering generational socialities. Diawara (2003) writes on Sidibè's work, particularly how it incorporates a diasporic aesthetic. In a notable photograph, two women in Bamako, Mali are holding a James Brown record. The image, in Diawara's eyes, shows diaspora as a boundary-less concept, devoid of territory and physical proximity, not unlike Appadurai's (1996) idea of ethnicity and culture moving beyond territorial borders. But diaspora, as seemingly untraceable or void of strict geographical location, simultaneously resides in the constrictions and limitations of respective regions and nations. Although diaspora is fluid, it is also specific and subjective to its societal construct and historical remnants of modernity. Diawara's analysis of Sidibè's photography represents an instance of re-appropriation of diasporic aesthetics in accordance to a community's social climate, in this case the country of Mali's post-colonial independence.

It's intentional to examine a subset of second-generation communities in order to explore how they re-fashion cultural and familial practices in response to new, modernizing social processes. Manthia Diawara (2003) examines the youth of Bamako, Mali in the 1960s and how they culturally construct their identities. Similar to Hall (2003), Diawara (2003) writes that one should obey the past without representing it (p. 171). Diawara's work is critical to explore ways young adults re-fashion themselves through diasporic practice and influence. More so, it speaks to concepts of memory and remembrance, and how new generations re-cultivate and redefine the temporal socialities of their ancestors. The concepts of Stuart Hall, Arjun Appadurai, Jacqueline Nassy Brown, Krista Thompson, and ultimately Diawara's analysis on a young community in a post-independent Mali, converge in significant ways, influencing the work of this study. Factors

such as memory, culture, diasporic resources, imagined communities, and re-appropriation of prior influences, intersect theoretically with the participants' identities within the study.

Extending the work of Diawara (2003), particularly with how he examined the youth culture of Mali in the 1960s and how they renegotiated freedom and independence in a newly liberated Mali nation, challenged, countered, and added to the dimensions of their familial and cultural identities. They remembered who they came from, what their traditions and practices were associated with, and incorporated diasporic influences that imagined new worlds and identities. Second-generation East African women's utilization of Twitter represents more than just social media engagement, but a survival of past marginalized identities and socialities, a re-appropriation of cultural and familial practices, and a diasporic tool for the imaginative futurity of Black life through digital space.

Twitter presents an interactive technological and visual tool for the creation and exchange of diasporic resources to share "light" within a visual and cultural economy. Not to mention, it provides opportunity to encapsulate the archival work of memory, particularly of Twitter users' family and culture. Chinwe L. Ezueh Okpalaoka (2014) pulls from numerous scholars to define memory as a communicative interplay of present and past and a construct to preserve and recall information, for a continuous survival of marginalized groups (Erl, 2011; Halas, 2000; Rodriguez and Fortier, 2007). In regard to second-generation East African communities, their memories do not begin and end with themselves. Memory is a continuum, shared through communicative and productive practices of recreation. Second-generation East African women possibly complicate the rigidity of linearity by invoking a retrieval and recovering of temporal socialities, valorizing the lives of generations before by presently redefining their own identities in hopes of imagining their futures. Through multiple generations, cultures are maintained and

shifted in accordance to how people remember and memorialize. Okapalaoka (2014) describes herself as a bridge between her parents' generation and that of her children. However, temporality expands Okapalaoka's sentiments, and rearranges the bridge to a matrix, already connected, ebbing and flowing, back and forth, continuously in touch with past and present, to embark in a future that is always already valuing Black life.

And yet, memory can also limit the capacity and depth that the African diaspora encompasses. For some diasporic communities, memory is tied to an inheritance of a "sustained relation to real and imagined homelands as well as among and between communities separated spatially" (Campt, 2002, pg. 101). Therefore, memory acts as a construction that adheres only to a diasporic identity forged between originary and imaginary homes (Campt, 2002). If certain African descendant communities do not have these stories of generational remembrance, it restricts their capacity to participate in the Africa diaspora that has so customarily been sustained through an ancestral connection. For instance, Afro-Germans historically had little connection to one another and more recent generations did not grow up with both parents due to death during migration (Campt, 2002). Afro-Germans, for the most part, lack a shared narrative of home and community (Campt, 2002); memory-work negates their respective diasporic experience. In regard to second-generation East African women, memory may reveal itself in very different ways that obstruct commonly held beliefs about generational socialities and familial upbringing. It's important to carefully examine how they construct memory and whether there are any factors that hinder their diasporic identity. There could be a number of factors that limit traditional modes of memory, such as family unable or unwilling to pass down stories due to trauma, a language barrier, and so forth. These are all significant to address the limiting technology of

memory-work in regard to the African diaspora, and what that means for communities who either choose to forget, or were never given the option.

Memory and temporality bear significance to the continual struggle against pain and survival of Black communities throughout the diaspora. However, memory may not always constitute a temporal retrieval of respective African diasporic communities. Second-generation East African women could be surviving and recovering their sense of belonging in different ways that are not bound to relations of originary homeland. Their informal practices on Twitter may redefine what resistance and survival looks like for certain communities today, and accounts for the historical precedence of transformative measures produced by African-descendant communities on the continent and in the diaspora.

In order to situate the relevance of race and ethnicity within second-generation East African women, it's integral to understand the socialization of their immigrant families and communities, which will be discussed in the next section of the literature review.

2.3 First & Second Generation Ethnic & Racial Socializations

There are several findings on socialization, particularly the formation of racial and ethnic identity, amongst immigrant communities, and to a lesser degree, second generation populations. To understand generational perspectives of ethnicity and race, it is important to highlight the impact of parental and/or familial influence in the household of second-generation East African women, and how it may present itself on digital platforms such as Twitter.

Mary Waters (1999) examined West Indian immigrant communities in New York City. She stated that by 1990 foreign-born blacks made up 4.8% of the United States population, with a higher concentration in New York City. Waters (1999) notes that West Indian communities

encompass transnational actors rather than migrants who assimilate. According to Waters (1999), immigrants who maintain their ethnic identity and culture tend to be more economically successful. Although my study does not focus on economic mobility and stratification, it's significant to note the nature of second-generation East African women's household influence, and how it is reflected in their ethnic identity and confidence, or the degree to which they are successful in being themselves on digital platforms, which in some areas might be conducive of economic mobility in their familial upbringings.

In Waters' (1999) introduction, she discusses the difficulties of identification within Black immigrant communities in the United States, stating an example of a Jamaican family self-identifying as Jamaican yet being perceived by others as Black. The apparent disconnect of how one sees themselves versus how they are seen to the world is a relatable circumstance, for immigrant communities, and Black people across the globe. When dealing with race and ethnicity as a critical factor of the study, it's pertinent to understand how individuals identify themselves and how that relates to their utilization of Twitter. Immigrant communities range in association to blackness or identifying as Black, representative of the varying interpretations and societal constructs of race throughout the world. Within East African communities, to understand the socialization process is to unveil some of the nuanced interpretations of racial identity and the complicated identifying categories that society places on individuals versus how they see themselves.

Generationally, the remnants of influence on second-generation East African women highlight their unique positionality; familial, cultural, and hostland constructs convolute meanings of blackness. Waters (1999) writes that immigrants' identities aren't rigid but fluid, malleable, and layered, similar to Stuart Hall's (1996) construction of a cultural identity. It is

significant to explore the performances of cultural productions of identity and how they fluctuate, change, and vary amongst second-generation East African women's construction of digital personalities on Twitter, and what it means regarding their racial and ethnic identification.

When interviewing participants, Waters (1999) noticed a consistent theme amongst immigrant's opinions on race relations, particularly having positive sentiments of race due to their societal influences from their home country. Respondents' views of race relations differed across class lines, noting that middle class teachers provided more detail of race relations in their home country, in this case Jamaica, with positive remarks, however, they described the complexities of race in their home country to a much higher degree than working class and lower income participants in the study (Waters, 1999). Familial and cultural influence on second-generation East African women may reveal similar or different beliefs around race and ethnicity that will impact their perception of society and/or themselves. Waters' findings insinuate that a number of factors may influence the identity construction of children of immigrants, how they understand their family, their culture, the society they live in, and ultimately themselves.

Waters' analysis foregrounds research on a specific community, and with an examination of other communities within the diaspora by other scholars it illustrates some similarities and differences regarding racial identification. A study on Somali immigrants' racial formation in the United States, for example, reveals the multiplicity of a diasporic experience and socialization of race. The study challenged rhetoric that regarded blackness as a shared understanding and assumed as a universal phenomenon shared by the rest of the world (Kusow, 2006). Debunking generalizations amongst African diaspora communities, as well as the Black community at large dissolves monolithic perceptions of blackness. By realizing the diversity amongst ethnicities and

cultures under a range of social settings, it becomes easier to understand why certain communities express their identities differently.

Kusow (2006) states that Somali immigrants in Canada or the United States refrain from identifying as Black or utilizing blackness as a social understanding. For Somali immigrant populations, their identity is anything but racial. Somali immigrants find that blackness or identifying as Black inadequately expresses their identity, instead their national identity and ethnicity holds more importance to how they perceive and understand themselves. For second-generation communities, this can have a residual impact on their socialization. Reconfiguring the way people understand blackness as a race-first identification, will re-associate assumptions on how one should see themselves and others. Regionally, thinking of how the African Diaspora shape shifts depending on socially constructed ideas of race and ethnicity further proves the dexterity and multiplicity of the diaspora. Kusow's findings provide insight on certain sentiments of East African communities concerning race and identity, although it is certainly not a summation of how East Africans as a whole think, nor does it explain how second-generation communities develop their own identity, autonomous of their parents. Examining the role of second-generation East African women and their ideas of race and identity may vary depending on their social environments and familial upbringing, creating a hybridity of socialization. This research pushes to form complex characterizations of identity in viral spaces and urges away from dichotomous understandings of identity and race.

Kusow's work focuses on Somali immigrants, not second-generation Somali Americans, therefore it's limiting to understand how later generations identify themselves within the context of North America. However, this gives an insightful look on the upbringing of some second-generation Americans, and the perspectives of their parents.

Similar to the Somali immigrants mentioned earlier, East African immigrants more broadly are found to mobilize based on religious and national identities, which provide sources of status and pride, creating a distance between themselves and African Americans (Guenther et al., 2011). This is integral to understand how this practice may trickle down to second-generation communities and their conceptions of being Black in America. Particular areas of congregation and community may emerge for them through religious practices or even other accessible options, such as Twitter. Yet, their societal upbringing, within an American city, may blur lines of ethnically segregated socialization. The historical implications of race in the United States provide a different understanding of identity for second generation communities in comparison to their parents. Whereas their immigrant parents are more likely to associate their nationality and ethnicity to their identity, their children may find it more difficult to ignore their race within a country rooted in visible constructions of racial discrimination.

Ruben G. Rumbaut extends Kusow's literature by providing important scholarship on second-generation communities and their socializations in host-countries. Rumbaut (1994) examined ethnic identity, self-esteem and segmented assimilation amongst children of immigrants. Rumbaut found within his data that there are major differences in ethnic self-identification amongst teenage children of immigrants from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, in various corners of the United States (Rumbaut, 1994). Two-thirds of the participants identified with their parents' immigrant origins and the remaining assimilated to their American environment (Rumbaut, 1994). However, compartmentalizing identity development strips any semblance of contextual background and fluidity of identity construction and the possibilities of understanding how competing social and cultural worlds can complement, blend, or add to one another. It is possible to both hold American influences while

still attaining one's culture and traditions. When analyzing the social dynamics of second-generation East African women, it is crucial to consider and tend to the various factors that impact their identity, rather than assuming binary conceptions such as assimilation or integration.

Appadurai's (1996) work highlighted the disjuncture's and overlaps within a culturally globalizing world; there are many things happening at once that dissociate constructions of simple cultural identities. The United States and the respective countries the second-generation communities derive from, should not be bound to rigidity. Rumbaut, in this instance, fails to realize the malleability of identity, ethnically and racially. In newer research regarding second-generation young adults, the findings prove that identity formation does not have to be dichotomous and/or binary.

Rumbaut (1994) mentions that gender is significant to ethnic self-identity, stating girls were more likely to choose multi-identities or hyphenated identities and boys chose unhyphenated national identities. Rumbaut's findings help me to analyze particular practices and expressive ways women present themselves online and how it may vary differently from one another when I examine second-generation East African women on Twitter. This study implements the utilization of Twitter as a tool for identity construction. In alignment with Jacqueline Nassy Brown's (1999) work, identifying Black women as cultural agents and significant figures within the diaspora, Rumbaut gives insight on some of the particular ways socialization of race and ethnicity impact women differently. A poignant quote in Rumbaut's piece states, "gender was a main determinant of psychological well-being outcomes, with girls being much more likely than boys to report lower self-esteem, higher depression, and a greater level of parent-child conflict" (Rumbaut, 1994, p.789). Therefore, this may influence the usage of Twitter pertaining to self-expression, familial and cultural memory, and whether a digital

space can provide spaces for home, belonging, and community. And even more so, Alice Walker's *Womanism* provides critical engagement and a significant framework that centers gender as a crucial component on why Black women engage in online practices for belonging, homeplace, and identity.

Given Rumbaut's, Waters's, and Kusow's research, there were still significant strides needed to understand socialization and identity development of second-generation communities. Sherri-Ann P. Butterfield (2004), in the chapter "We're Just Black": The Racial and Ethnic Identities of Second-Generation West Indians In New York," expands on the work of Waters (1999) by concentrating on the personal experiences and stories of young men and women who were entirely raised in New York City by their immigrant parents. Instead of solely concentrating on the divisions and rigid distinctions between race and ethnicity, Butterfield argues that race and ethnicity are a salient part of their lives and identity. For Butterfield (2004), it is not an either-or proposition, "being Black and being West Indian are identities that coexist and greatly inform how the adult second-generation conceive of race and ethnicity for themselves and for other racial and ethnic groups in American society" (p. 289). As mentioned with Waters's (1999) book, familial upbringing and background have an impactful effect on the lives of their children, whether they are perspectives on race, their culture, or the new environment they live in. The impact of being raised in a host-land country creates an additional socialization process to occur, where they experience things that their parent's never have.

Butterfield (2004) initially mentions Waters's (1999) study and explains some of the holes within her research. Waters (1999) concluded that there are three paths of identity development for West Indians, either an African American identity, retaining their parents' ethnic identity, or adopting an American/assimilated identity. Butterfield (2004) states that

Waters' (1999) conclusions leave out important context, one being if these three categories necessarily apply to all West Indian immigrants and secondly, how do interactions with other African Americans play a role in their socialization processes. Butterfield (2004) challenges which community influences whom, focusing on how both immigrant communities and African Americans partake in a fluid, 'bidirectional' process of identity development within their social spaces (p. 291). Analyzing identity development amongst second-generation East African women requires an acknowledgement of the interactions of other Black communities, how it influences their understanding of themselves and vice versa, and additionally, displaying the complexity of blackness and the diaspora.

Butterfield (2004) concludes that racial and ethnic identity development is complex, ever-changing, and contextually based. Choosing between racial and ethnic identities is regressive and dissolves of any critical analysis of second-generation communities' socialization. Butterfield writes, "That formulation mistakenly implies that the choice is dichotomous-that choosing to emphasize one identity is automatically to negate the other" (Butterfield, 2004, p. 306). In Butterfield's study, she examines how New York City's culture is vastly influenced by the numerous West Indian cultures throughout its boroughs. Acknowledging the fluidity of influence, from immigrant cultures and African American cultures, helps to understand the construction of identities within the diaspora, in this case second-generation East African women, and the multidimensionality of blackness, culture, and ethnicity, furthering the work discussed in the previous section regarding cultural identity and diasporic resources. Instead of navigating the boroughs of New York City, the viral spaces of Twitter will be explored to understand its usefulness for expression, diversity, and remembrance of culture and family.

Waters (1999), later in her book, examines the roles of second-generation West Indians, as mentioned in Butterfield's (2004) continuation of her work. Waters (1999) writes that children of immigrants experience racism and discrimination in their hostland, causing them to develop differing perceptions of race relations and identity opposed to their parents. As mentioned earlier, immigrant parents generally had positive experiences of race relations back home, however, with their children growing up in a society built on the foundation of racial subjugation and enslavement, a rift begins to mount. Waters (1999) noted in her book that, "Parents will tell their children to strive for upward mobility and have high aspirations, but often the peer group and the children's own day-to-day experiences tell them the color of their skin" negatively influences their aspirations (p. 242). Their parents' expectations and the realities of their community conflict. Twitter becomes a digital tool for expression and learning, converging spaces of socialization with virtual realities. Waters (1999) and Butterfield (2004) detail the realities of second-generation populations' lives and their parents'; technology remains a minimal factor, however, with advancements in society, Twitter and other digital media outlets have the opportunity to either alleviate or accommodate second-generation communities' experiences.

In more recent work, Yndia S. Lorick-Wilmot (2014) examines the world that second-generation Black Caribbean immigrants encompass, where they stand between generations of their immigrant parents and the future of their children. Wilmot emphasizes that the stories of second-generation communities, regardless of ethnicity, provide significant insight on their immigrant parents, but also the dynamic of grappling with a new American identity (Lorick-Wilmot, 2014). What's telling is that second-generation populations deal with place, identity, and citizenship just as much as their parents did, re-articulating an unawareness that this

community grapples with (Lorick-Wilmot, 2014). Understanding the similarity between two generations helps to clarify the maturation of second-generation Americans, and refrains from generalizing that most or all accept or assimilate to an American identity. However, the second-generation is unique in its process of identity and community, because it is still being influenced by the systems that operate within the United States. Unraveling these stories is significant to elucidate how race and ethnic identities are defined in accordance to systemic operations of nationhood, class, religion, gender and sexuality, and whether the second-generation is intertwined in transnational networks similar to their parent's generation (Lorick-Wilmot, 2014). Lorick-Wilmot (2014) uses an important description for the experience of second-generation Americans, a feeling of "in-between-ness," of being Black in America but also a child of Black immigrants in America. The feeling of "in-between-ness" or a "living of two worlds," is what drives the intention behind this study and incorporating a new device, social media, is a look at how new ways of technology serve as an innovative medium of identity and home, memory, and diasporic resources; all possibly occurring simultaneously.

In addition to Lorick-Wilmot, Lotta Haikkola (2011) examined second-generation children and their transnational networks. Haikkola writes that children of immigrants transform their existing family ties into meaningful social relationships, mostly occurring during visits to places of origin where they meet family members and extended networks (Haikkola, 2011). This study is significant because it examines how children of immigrants develop networks of transnational communities through their parents' origin and their host-community. According to other research, family socialization is an important aspect to create a strong sense of ethnic identity and belonging (Sano, et. Al, 2015). In conjunction with Haikkola's (2011) analysis, transnational networks work to form familial bonds and connections, providing children of

immigrants a sense of belonging that is otherwise absent when living in a host country.

Technology can intersect the physical mobility, where transnational connections can occur through social media. Twitter can be used as a technology for virtual transnational connection, further helping familial, cultural, and ethnic understanding, as well as upholding intergenerational memory.

For most of the children, meaningful relationships with family and friends provided feelings of belonging and an attachment to family history. On the other hand, the embeddedness in a transnational network, and especially the mobility within it, affected identity construction and produced identities that were founded on the particular characteristics of networks: ideas of oneself as a traveler or living and settled in two places (Haikkola, 2011, pg. 1214).

The development of identity and ethnicity becomes complex and based in the networks of family, heritage and new customs, allowing for self-conceptualization of their subjective space. Therefore, when it comes to the use of digital media, their transnational networks can forge into easier connections in virtual spaces, mobilizing the traveler even if the individual is physically in one place. Understanding the usefulness of transnational networks highlights the importance of technology in order to maintain those bonds beyond the physical realm, as well as the cultural capital and significance second-generation East African women, as well as Black woman as a whole, hold within the diaspora and their respective communities.

In the last section of the Literature Review, the utilization of digital media by various communities is explored to culminate the work around blackness, the African diaspora, cultural identity, home, diasporic resources, and memory under the precedence of what it means to be human.

2.4 Digital Communities

To understand the concurrent dexterity and limitations of digital media, it's important to hark back on traditional formulations of media dissemination and how they reappear in the usage of social networks such as Twitter. The possibility for agency through new media is a continuous struggle; "access and patterns of the use of media, old and new, reveal power dynamics that have to do with the control of technologies, information, and cultural values" (Georgiou, p. 90, 2013). Reiterations of homogenizing aspects of traditional forms of media, such as the national press, have a tendency to recycle themselves on more seemingly autonomous sites of social media spaces, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram. It is argued that new media still lacks a challenge to socio-economic inequalities, rather reproducing them. Georgiou (2013) suggests that there is no ushering in of a new media system altogether, however, it is characterized as "complex formations" rather than a singular overarching structure. In relation to diasporic communities, the transformation of media, particularly new media, presents a different relationship with technology and identity. Examining digital media, specifically Twitter, as an intermediate construction of virtual spatiality, reconfigures transnationalism to more accessible means of connectivity and belonging; a re-making of home outside of constricting definitions around domesticity.

According to Georgiou (2013), a struggle for agency in media is not bound to oppositions between the state and individual, but also interpersonal exchanges within diasporic communities' everyday life. For instance, young people are often subject to their parents' and grandparents' media choices which dictate a collective communicative space for understanding identity construction and community; however, younger generations made intentional choices in their personal lives, such as friend groups to alter sites of inclusion (Georgiou, 2013). Georgiou

(2013) continues by stating, “Individualism is a strong element of the recorded attitudes of many participants towards media-use; individualism feeds into and builds upon media consumption practices that filter and organize participants’ worlds” (pg. 92). Although new media systems don’t eradicate hegemonic aspects of old mediums, it allows for constructions and discourse around subjectivity. Despite a recurrence of hegemonic norms on the web, second-generation East African women still have the capability to construct their online discourse pertaining to their own subjectivity and perspective.

Subjectivity allows the process of spatiality to occur; “through practices of electronic media use, place gets instantaneously pluralized, while raising questions about exclusion and difference as places are frequently constructed on acts of exclusion” (Kim, 2016, pg. 535). Through place-making practices by diasporic communities, that, as stated by Georgiou (2013), can stem from very individualistic sentiments, a new state of transnationalism and going “home” become created (Kim, 2016). Youna Kim’s (2016) research explores Japanese migrant women and their utilization of the Internet, specifically a Japanese social networking site titled Mixi, eliciting cultural familiarity and connection. The site itself is built around the migrant women’s native language, calming outside societal pressures. Mixi provides pleasurable cultural spaces of relief and release through familiar variety shows, music, drama, and comedy on its site; it is a semblance of home, or rather, a re-making of home.

In comparison, Zeek, a fifteen-year-old student in high school utilized digital media to re-imagine and re-define her identity (McLean, 2010). Oftentimes, the renegotiation of identity online simultaneously cultivates a process of placemaking; a re-creation of home. Similar to the Japanese migrant women, Zeek understands the digital world as her home; through social networking on Facebook consisting of sharing photos, comments, songs, hyperlinks, and an

exchange of colloquialisms, her connection to the Caribbean remains intact, and even establishes a nuanced re-modification of the growing hybridity of her identity. Cheryl McLean (2010) writes, “having migrated to a southern state in the United States four years ago, this 10th-grade student uses online digital technology as a way to maintain her connections with her native home” (pg. 13). Discursive practices such as interacting, feeling, emoting, valuing, gesturing, dressing, thinking, speaking, and so forth, characterize group membership and signifies membership and belonging to certain groups (McLean, 2010). Diasporic communities struggle with overwhelming influences of hegemonic constructions of the society they live in, negotiating between assimilating to the dominant group or choosing otherwise, which may have varying and overlapping degrees of integration, acculturation, and/or separation. The growing presence of digital media as a self-sufficient tool provide alternate avenues for transnationalism and connectivity, allowing in the confines of their phones and lap-tops the mobility of home within the spaceless-ness of their host-land.

Social networking sites, such as Twitter, offer users access to production and exposure to a range of multimedia constructions, such as photos, videos, symbols, and images. Specifically, personal webpages offer users the chance to create and cultivate redefinitions of identity and transnational linkages (McLean, 2010). Daniel Miller and Don Slater (2000) conducted ethnographic research investigating how the Internet can be widely used, understood and assimilated, particularly in Trinidad. Miller and Slater (2000) discovered that the Internet provided a platform for a creation of a Trinidadian identity that echoed sentiments of national pride. The authors realize that “being Trini” is integral to understanding the Internet, and the Internet is integral to “being Trini” (Miller et. al, 2000). The performance of “being Trini” online, is not only to create sociability but to maintain modes of cultural identity and

relationships offline. Miller and Slater (2000) conducted interviews and observed internet cafés and users' everyday interactions that revealed not only virtual elements that were repurposed but the tangible spaces that are fortified through the re-modification of spatiality and connectivity on the web. The medium of technology allows users to find themselves in their environment and at the same time try to mold it in their own image (Miller et. al, 2000). Trini youth, and users like Zeek, share a common literacy that stretches beyond physical dimensions; through their digital literacy, they create transnational sites of socialization (McLean, 2010).

For example, Zeek's personal webpage displays colorful collages of photos, music, videos, and colloquial comments that express her Caribbean identity while exchanging a maintenance of connection and space online with her friends. McLean (2010) makes a poignant analysis of Zeek's formulation of home and how it is constructed through language: "Zeek has actively made a space where, mediated by digital language, her primary and secondary social languages-Standard English and dialects of her native and host cultures-can coexist and inform each other" (pg. 17). Further, Zeek's hybrid use of language echoes memory and the re-appropriation of generational culture and identity; Zeek is pulling from familial influences and her own experiences to re-present her identity. And, most importantly, Zeek's language and online affinity display her sense of self as a young woman regarding how she interacts with her friends on MySpace and Facebook. McLean (2010) mentions that Zeek and her friends use gender-specific terms (girl, gyal, tanty) as a "linguistic performance." Through critical analysis, second-generation East African women's "linguistic performances" will be engaged with under the framework of Womanism, and how gender-specific terms on the web reflect the significance that gender plays in constructing homeplace for the survival and resistance of Black women.

As mentioned towards the beginning of this section, the Internet and digital media has not dismantled normative modes of behavior, and although Zeek's language re-establishes ideals of hegemonic identifications of gender, McLean (2010) analyzes Zeek and her friends' interactions online as a subversion of gender, using it to embrace commonality amongst her peers; it distinguishes Zeek's awareness of her identity as both Caribbean and woman, differentiating herself from other communities and signifying gender as a resource for transnationalism.

McLean (2010) elaborates this thought by stating:

Through Zeek's relationships within her social networks, she actively resists cultural assumptions and ideologies that have the power to silence. Thus, relationship building should not be taken as passive conformity to cultural models of gender stereotypes; rather, relationship building for Zeek suggests an active re-presentation of her identities across social spaces. Her actions show her purposive use of her digital literacies to construct and perform her multiple identities as a female learner, individual, and Caribbean immigrant (pg. 19)

Although these populations do not reflect second-generation communities, Zeek and the Trinidadian youth's utilization of the Internet illustrate the rationale behind their actions, and how it translates to a reconceptualization of home, identity, and memory; more convincingly, it proves how a diasporic resource can present itself through the technology of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and other social networking mediums.

However, there are scholars who have examined second-generation communities. Henry Mainsah (2014) analyzed young African Norwegian women of the diaspora and their use of digital social networks in regard to navigating and formulating identities and community. The two main women of his study, Madi and Naima, profess in their life stories their individual experiences of racism and alienation at the local and national level and the way it creates a desire to form alternate community and belonging (Mainsah, 2014). For Madi, she explained how Facebook allowed her to connect to a complex web of Pan-African networks, broadening her

network of the diaspora (Mainsah, 2014). Not only do Madi and Naima's sentiments reveal social networking sites as diasporic resources, but through these networking sites it deterritorializes home as a viable, intangible space for community and understanding. Mainsah (2014) introduces "safe black spaces" as a result of the exchange of stories and experience on online spaces, providing a place to develop a voice. Naima's Tumblr page displays photos of Cesaria Evora and Nina Simone, a link of a YouTube video of Sidney Poitier speaking on civil rights intertextualized with images of Black life; Madi posts a quote by Ghanaian author Ayi Kwei Armah on her Facebook page (Mainsah, 2014).

Madi and Naima demonstrate some of the practices that enable online connectivity through a repurposing of historical materials and use of images and content as a reflection of themselves. Mainsah contextualizes their utilization of digital media and others like them by stating, "they represent a few of the millions of peoples with affinity ties shaped by a shared history of slavery, colonialism and displacement, to diverse communities spread across the globe commonly known as the African Diaspora" (2014, pg. 106). Naima's use of quotes, videos, and other images on her Facebook and Tumblr profile form a "bricolage" of cultural signs that cultivate a "diasporic resource"; her construction virtually illustrates the overlap and complexity of blackness throughout the diaspora as she pulls from various influences transnationally to create her online space, identity, and home (Mainsah, 2014). Madi and Naima represent and reflect how second-generation Black women are currently using their digital homepages as a site of home, resistance, and proclamation.

The malleability of online spaces allows users like Madi and Naima to construct the boundaries of their community, either widening or narrowing them. Posting videos of Fela Kuti, or quotes of Toni Morrison, the range of cultural contexts is limitless, however, each user shares

their respective interests by what they choose to post, and through their posts share their own identity, beliefs, and interests. Naima expressed that it is easier to express herself online through the wide array of shareable content, “she describes ‘sometimes when I see a quote and I think “Oh this is exactly how I feel or what I would have said.” So instead of saying it in my own words I can just cut and paste” (Mainsah, 2014, pg. 115). Sometimes a voice can echo through the voices of others; virtual communities for Naima and Madi present sources of validation, knowledge, and community from other users, but also, from cultural and intellectual figures of the diaspora. Their engagement with their personal sites reflect the possibility and capability that Black women inhabit in a new, technologically advanced society, and how this expands and redefines the transformative practices that bell hooks (1991) describes with the likes of her grandmother. With society’s changing tides, Black women continue to formulate new, innovative practices that unconsciously invoke the work of the past, in hopes of a better future.

Similarly, Deborah Gabriel (2016) analyzes Black British women and the spaces they claim within blogging. Black women bloggers find their motivations centered on invoking cultural authenticity as a strategy for challenging negative representations of Black British female identity by sharing their everyday lived experiences as powerful counter-narratives (Gabriel, 2016). For the participants studied in this research, their imagined audience is crucial to the content they provide; knowing and visualizing that they are communicating and sharing content with people from their community elicits the importance of their work to provide commonality and familiarity of their experiences that resonate with their audience. Grace, a Black female blogger, enables a Black female consciousness through her blogs and content, she assumes and narrates from a specific geographical context on what it means to be a Black woman in Britain (Gabriel, 2016). Grace, and other bloggers mentioned in this piece, understand

their cultural capital, their influence, and the many other Black women who look to digital spaces for solace, home, and expression. Like the African Norwegian women, they too find that they create imagined audiences who they conceptualize as being largely Black. But most importantly, they construct the Internet to mold their own images of identity and the constructs that oppress or disrupt their freedom of expression.

However, an emphasis on cultural authenticity can create a collective consciousness, and even sometimes an essentialist perspective of what it means to be a Black British woman. Despite this, the specificity of Grace's blog, and others who have blogs, varies from person to person, and it allows users who traffic these sites the option to interact or respond with oppositional or different perspectives of their own realities. Gabriel (2016) notes cultural authenticity can err on the side of essentialism, especially when people challenge negative representations of Black communities by presenting "positive" or "real" images instead; this does nothing but reproduce what blackness should look like rather than what blackness could look like in many ways. In respect to Twitter and second-generation East African women, it is important to critically navigate the site to negotiate what is being reproduced as essentialist ideals and images of East African communities versus what is being posted to highlight its complexity.

Although Grace and other bloggers mentioned in Gabriel's piece prioritize cultural authenticity, their specificity and social standing cumulatively provide ethnically diverse perspectives of Black British womanhood. Similar to Patricia Hill Collins work on intersectionality, Black women bloggers present another example of Black women as "agents of knowledge," illustrating their positionality in respect to societal oppression (Gabriel, 2016). Jacqueline Nassy Brown's (1998) coinage of "diasporic resources" emphasizes the importance of

Black women as cultural agents within the diaspora, integral to the movement and shift of culture and intellectualism. Black British female bloggers highlight a specific enclave of intentional cultural influencers that pertain to an audience, and the African Norwegian young women share a more indirect interaction with digital media, both creating an audience but also engaging and pulling from users and sources. Both groups inform this research of formal and informal ways Black women globally are choosing to represent themselves online, redefine and rename Black identity and experience, and consciously and unconsciously form cyber constructions of home.

This research accounts for various theoretical foundations, stemming from historical concepts of “human” that influenced Black diasporic communities’ discourse around their own misnaming. This literature review explored early beginnings of self-conceptualization and identity from prominent African diasporic figures, how the violence of the Middle Passage symbolically and structurally obstructed the existence and ontology of Black life, and the formation of the “African diaspora.” Typically, counter-arguments and ideas manifested by various scholars, as well as new understandings surrounding subjective Black identity through Stuart Hall’s work on cultural identity. In conjunction with hooks’ formative work on homeplace, Morley (2000) helps extend and challenge her notions around physical spatiality and domesticity, lending a hand to the integration of Twitter as a new module for home-making. And through Jacqueline Nassy Brown’s (1998) work on diasporic resources, Twitter is given shape as a diasporic tool through second-generation East African women’s exchange, interaction, and engagement of their cultural identities, memorialization’s, and re-imaginings of space and place on the web. Under the scope of Walker’s (1983) Womanist perspective, the centering of Black women is integral to this work and the literature provided in this study. This study is in conversation with previous concepts of humanity, diaspora, home, cultural identity, spatiality,

and second-generation communities. It speaks to, with, and sometimes against the work shared in this literature in order to extract and analyze new ways of re-naming, re-appropriating, and re-interpreting blackness, ethnicity, and familial cultural influences through spaces and practices often deemed insignificant; yet, like hooks' (1991) work and Walker's (1983) *Womanism*, what does this say about the resistive capabilities of Black women that are typically unaccounted for? The ordinary, miniscule, subtle renegotiations occurring on the web sit at the precipice of this study, highlighting Black women's transformative measures at work.

The next chapter discusses the Methodology of the study, its design, population, sample, coding process and other significant measures needed to adequately address and explore the study at hand.

3 METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the utilization of Twitter as a diasporic resource for the construction of homeplace, identity and memory by second-generation East African women. Examining a demographic minimally studied and understood, this research centers Black women as significant figures within cultural economies, diasporic productions, and intergenerational remembrance, towards the progression of future manifestations of identity, communities and spatial processes of home and belonging. This study explores meanings of humanity and ways to re-define it, and it strives to eradicate binary conceptions of what is human and what is not. As a qualitative, phenomenological study, this research aims to reflect the African diaspora's diversity, similarity, and specificity by investigating second-generation American Black women's utilization of technology for various gains.

This chapter will contain the research methods of the study, specifically the design, its appropriateness, the demographic that will be studied, sampling, data collection procedures, and the methodology's internal and external validity.

3.1 Approach

As mentioned in the Introduction, this research conducted a qualitative study utilizing a phenomenological approach in accordance to Creswell's (2007) work on the five qualitative approaches to inquiry. A qualitative study is best suited for this research because the study will incorporate interviews and a textual analysis of Twitter usage that requires coding, interpersonal conversation, and in-depth analysis, in order to unveil themes of diasporic resources, home, memory, and identity. This research is not predicated on the quantifiable usage of Twitter but rather the way it's used. In regard to a phenomenological approach, Creswell states this is most

appropriate when a researcher is studying something that all participants have in common with or experience (Creswell, 2007). This research examines a specific population, second-generation East African women, and how they utilize Twitter, therefore their experience is unique to their positionality and social standing. This research specifically utilizes a transcendental phenomenology that “consists of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one’s experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon” (Creswell, p. 60).

3.2 Setting

According to the Pew Research Center in 2017, in 2015 African immigrants accounted for 4.8% of the U.S. immigrant population, a large surge from 0.8% in 1970. Pew Research Center notes that the Refugee Act of 1980 made it easier for immigrants fleeing conflict-ridden countries, creating a spike in numbers of African immigrants in the United States. Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Egypt are the top birthplaces for African immigrants in the United States, however, other East African countries made the list with Kenya coming in at fifth, and Somalia at seventh. According to the Pew Study, the largest number of African immigrants are located in Texas, New York, California, Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Virginia. The Migration Policy Institute notes that there are approximately 10,000 Ethiopians residing in metro Atlanta; although this only provides information of a portion of East African communities, it highlights the geographical demographics of the Atlanta metro area, and just a portion of the large East African population in the city. This research targeted students at Georgia State University as well as participants across the United States. Georgia State University has a population of 41.8% of

Black or African American students, providing a vast array of ethnicities, backgrounds, and cultures to decipher and measure from.

3.3 Sample

For the sample of the present study, ten second-generation East African women from the ages of 18-26 were selected to participate in interviews. Creswell (2007) recommends for a phenomenological study that the sample size range from 5-25 participants. A qualitative study must obtain data that sufficiently describes or explains a phenomenon of interest, and a sample size that addresses the research questions posed in the study. Therefore, recruiting ten participants for this study reaches the suggested sample size in order to obtain reliable information for the research. It's intrinsic to meet theoretical saturation, meaning no additional data is needed to explore the topic. Therefore, this research utilized criterion sampling, defined by Creswell (2007) as selecting and studying specific individuals based on an established criterion. In order to recruit said participants, Georgia State University's website was navigated, specifically its Student Affairs division pertaining to information on Student-Led Organizations on campus. Contact information of particular organizations that pertain to the sample of this study, such as Black Student Alliance, African Students Association, Office of Black Student Achievement, National Council of Negro Women and the Multicultural Center were identified, particularly their student president's and/or director's contact information. Once obtained, an email detailing the research proposed was sent out to respective student leaders asking permission to present during an organization's meeting. The email included a digital attachment of the study's flyer which described the study's intent and the researcher's contact information.

If given the opportunity to present and recruit at a meeting, I provided hard copies of the flyers, as well as a sign up sheet asking for students' names, ages, and emails.

Due to an inability to garner enough interest and traction, I amended my recruitment process and began posting my flyer on my Twitter and Facebook pages, and posted physical copies of my flyer across campus. The flyers contained the study's purpose, my name and email address. I allowed people to direct message me on the respective social media applications if they were interested in the study. Once I began garnering enough participants, I sent them each an email with an informed consent form requiring them to read over it and acknowledge that they agree with the study's parameters. After each participant emailed and/or direct messaged me back stating they agree with the requirements on the informed consent form, we set a day and time that was most suitable for them. Each participant was compensated with ten dollars. The interviews were either held in reserved study rooms at Georgia State University's campus library with the school's permission to audio record interviews, or over the phone. Before the interview began, they were allowed to ask any lingering questions they had about the study. If they felt uncomfortable during any point of the interview, they were allowed to leave and/or skip any questions deemed too intrusive. If they dropped out, they were still compensated.

3.4 Measures

This study measured the relationship of homeplace, memory, identity, and diasporic resources within the context of Twitter-use by second-generation East African women from the ages of 18-26. This study provides a textual analysis of Twitter to discover how this community is navigating Twitter to reappropriate memory, identity, homeplace, and diasporic resources. The interviews were each about 45 minutes long. The interview included 18 open-ended questions for

participants to speak freely on their ideas. Through a few cycles of coding, concepts of the major themes were extracted from transcribed interviews using the Nvivo software. As a result of the coding process, themes that come across from the participants' words and definitions were utilized to separately analyze Twitter through a textual analysis.

By exploring participants' Twitter-use, the relationship and relationality of homeplace, digital media, diasporic resources, identity and memory, provided insight on how Twitter can be manipulated in ways that are beneficial, helpful, and transformative for Black women.

3.5 Procedures

This study collected data through ten one-on-one interviews. As stated previously, student leaders of on campus organizations, such as African Students Association, Black Student Alliance, etc., were contacted via email for permission to speak at a meeting detailing the research and purpose. The initial email included a digital flyer that included my contact information and the description of the study. I also posted my flyer on Twitter, Facebook, and physically across campus. I emailed the interested participants the informed consent form and once they agreed to the parameters, I asked to schedule a time and date to conduct an interview. A mandatory IRB (institute review board approval) was submitted prior to the recruitment, interview, and textual analysis process.

Ten second-generation East African women were selected from the emails sent out to student leaders, flyers plastered across campus, but largely from the digital recruitment conducted on Twitter. Once I reached a commitment from ten participants, I stopped recruitment. However, I still kept the contacts of interested participants in case any dropped out during the process.

The interviews were done either in reserved study rooms at Georgia State University's campus library or over the phone, depending on how I recruited each participant. According to Georgia State University's Library Code of Conduct, GSU students are allotted access to utilize and reserve study rooms, however, I still had to request permission to audio record, which was done before the start of the interview process. The questions followed the thematic elements of identity and homeplace, diasporic resources, memory, and digital media. More specifically, questions on familial upbringings, cultural practices, identity construction, aspects of home, re-appropriations of cultural identity generationally, Twitter use, and other personal experiences were asked in the ten respective interviews. The interviews were detailed and semi-structured, approximating 18 questions and lasting around 45 minutes. The questions derived from the three research questions of the study that followed the thematic structure of the study pertaining the measures of this research.

Each interview was audio recorded on my cellular device using the application Voice Memo. The recordings were protected by a pin code only accessible by me. The recordings were later exported onto my laptop as an MP3 file, which was also protected by a password, only accessible to me. Each interview was transcribed. Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their identity.

The recordings will be kept on my cellular device and laptop for approximately two months, depending on how long the study takes. Once the study is entirely completed, the audio files on both the phone and laptop, will be destroyed.

3.5.1 Textual Analysis

After interviews were conducted, recurring phrases and hashtags were pulled from

transcriptions to garner tweets online. The phrases were inputted into the search engine on Twitter and I sifted through to find the most appropriate data. The data was collected over a three week period during the last two weeks of March and first week of April. Before pulling a tweet to use in the data collection, I surveyed the user's page to find any evidence of ethnicity, gender, and/or location by scrolling through previous tweets that would reveal their demographic. I did not provide the name of the user in order to protect their privacy. During this process, forty tweets were accumulated and inputted into a google sheets table categorized by "tweet," "action," "demographic," "category/code," and "engagement." Once organized in the table, I was able to extract themes across the tweets that lead to some surprising conclusions regarding the research questions of this study.

3.6 Validity & Reliability

3.6.1 Internal Validity

In order to establish internal validity of the data obtained, a process of triangulation was conducted, where the research obtained was cross-checked from multiple perspectives. In addition, the in-vivo coding used direct words and phrases provided by the participants, making the coding process collaborative and honest. The textual analysis utilized information provided by participants from the interview, establishing consistent and reliable informative analysis in relation to the evidence revealed in the interviews.

3.7.2 External Validity

Since this research is a qualitative study, external validity is not a necessary component. This study is concerned with in-depth and extensive analysis of a small population through

voluntary-sampling. Through intensive coding and analysis, the findings shared thematic and integral work on the nature of second-generation East African women's twitter use in relationship to homeplace, identity, and memory. It is a revelatory, descriptive, and explorative research rather than a quantifiable study. This work is intentionally specific to a certain population and community.

3.7.3 Reliability

To ensure reliability, any variations of the setting and/or context of the interview was noted and documented to share if any changes reflected and/or swayed the information in the interviews.

3.7 Analysis Process

This study utilized two forms of data collection, one-on-one interviews with ten participants and a textual analysis of Twitter. The interview process provided revelatory information that was not anticipated, gearing the research in a new direction. Second-generation East African women's application of Twitter reflected how cultural and familial socializations during their maturation impact their subjectivity. Their narratives illuminated complex intergenerational socialities and ways memory ruptures at the seams of a self-actualizing generation. Twitter, therefore, becomes a space for them to present themselves in ways that are often restricted in their households, regions they reside in, and the country their families immigrated to.

The transcriptions of the interviews were coded using the NVivo computer software for qualitative data analysis. I created approximately 35 nodes to code each text, ranging from descriptive, invivo, and simultaneous coding. According to Saldana's (2009) text *The Coding*

Manual for Qualitative Researchers, descriptive coding is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies. In order to answer such questions like “What is going on with this study?” descriptive coding helps with categorizing, compartmentalizing, and defining the number of topics that are mentioned in the ten transcriptions, as well as help to refer back to the three research questions for the study. Descriptive coding lays foundational work to establish basic vocabulary and insight into how the information was interpreted, and most importantly, lends hand to create thematic connections across the ten participants interviewed. Concepts revolving around upbringing, familial dynamics, sites of love, ideological differences, and generational rifts were noted through descriptive coding.

As mentioned, descriptive coding was not the only form of data analysis used on the Nvivo software. Throughout the data analysis process, I noticed that the participants were using significant words and descriptors in their interviews that were pertinent to the research, and would be useful to extract and formulate as codes from their own words. Saldana (2009) labels this type of coding *invivo* coding, which basically refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language used by the subject. Similar to descriptive coding, *invivo* coding is appropriate for all qualitative studies, and one’s that prioritize the participant’s voice. I wanted to be intentional with my analysis and make sure that I included the words and phrases from the participants as another way to make sure the data was reliable and accurate. For example, one of the participants, Janet, who is a 22-year-old Muslim, Ethiopian-American, detailed how her upbringing marked a “transitional” period between her and her siblings, and her parents. I found this term useful to create as a node/code in order to describe the sentiments of many of the subjects in this study who were describing similar narratives, and spoke to the concepts and theories I was hoping to illuminate through my theoretical groundwork in the Literature Review.

Lastly, simultaneous coding was used as the third coding process, particularly because the data content suggested multiple meanings at once. I found while I was coding that there were numerous times that texts from the interviews could be described in numerous ways that were significant to the initial research questions. For example, Farrah, a 26-year-old Eritrean-American, described how her parents expressed love. She states, “I would say it wasn’t necessarily a verbal thing. It wasn’t like, ‘Oh, I love you. Bye.’ You know what I mean? It was more so acts of service. ‘We do this for you, we do that for you.’” Through my coding, I read this in two ways, first as “Unorthodox Love” and second, “Acts of Service.” Interestingly enough, this coding could be read as all three coding analysis tools, descriptive, *invivo*, and simultaneous. The two codes express initially that Farrah is aware of her seemingly unaffectionate parents (“Unorthodox Love”), however she understands her parents as loving (“Acts of Service”), but not in the sense that is commonly acknowledged in Western societies.

Each process of coding (descriptive, *invivo*, and simultaneous) navigated how I interpreted and conceptualized the information I collected, and how the participants’ words either corresponded or strayed from the research questions. Overall, I was able to piece together points of commonality and some diversions in order to coherently share a complex narrative of second-generation East African women’s application of Twitter.

4 ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

4.1 Interpretations and Revelations

Each subject in this study presented a nuanced, subjective narrative of their life, their identity, and their families, and it is only right that I try to convey their stories as coherently and eloquently as they did. Thus, I hope to construct their words as a narrative for this study, weaving through the theoretical and foundational texts that ground this work, and inform the experiences the participants presented through their transparency. The three research questions of this study help to illustrate their thoughts and streamline a cohesive narrative of second-generation East African women's interwoven utilization of Twitter and the many factors that impact their engagement. Each participant was given a pseudonym in order to uphold confidentiality. The participants' pseudonym, ethnicity, age, and where they are from and/or currently located are listed below:

Pseudonym	Ethnicity	Age	Raised/ Current Location
Rami	Ethiopian	22	North Carolina/Atlanta
Farrah	Eritrean	26	Atlanta
Janet	Ethiopian	22	Nashville/Atlanta
Sarah	Ethiopian	18	Atlanta
Nicole	Somali	23	Minnesota
Hannah	Eritrean	23	Oakland/Washington D.C.
Kelela	Ethiopian	21	Southern California/Minnesota
Beth	Somali	26	Seattle
Heather	Ugandan	22	Maryland/Florida
Leah	Somali	22	DMV/Atlanta

4.1.1 *Establishing Inhabitanace*

The first research question of this study states, "How are second-generation East African women re-defining 'homeplace' through their engagement with Twitter?" In order to redefine bell hooks' "homeplace," I wanted to understand the dynamics of the participants' household

growing up, their parental influence, their familial relationships, and how it impacted their identity, perspective, and outlook. Some were evasive with their answers, while others shared the intimate details of their home life that impacted their growth. Most, if not all, subjects described being raised in a religious household, trickling down to how they were raised, their relationships with their parents, and significant ideological rifts between themselves and their parent's generation. Rami, a 22-year-old Ethiopian from North Carolina and current college student living in Atlanta, described her Muslim upbringing. She stated:

They were very religious. So I had weekly classes learning the Quran. I would have weekly prayer things scheduled. So that was a huge part of my upbringing, but at the same time culture was also very central to my upbringing, with only Ethiopian food in the household, and only speaking Amharic in the house too.

In total, there were five participants that detailed they were raised in a Muslim household, Rami included. Like Rami, some expressed how their family's religious affiliation influenced their upbringing and relationship with their parents.

I think that because my parents are like, we're all Muslim as well, that there are just a bunch of things. Like I didn't want to wear a scarf or a hijab. -Janet, Ethiopian, 22

I will say, when I was younger, I used to be very rebellious. And I used to be ashamed of my background. And I didn't understand why we were so traditional, conservative, and why my parents thought that way. -Beth, Somali, 26

Leah, a 22 year old living in Atlanta and raised in the Washington, D.C./Maryland/Virginia (DMV) area, had a particularly different experience from Beth and Janet. Her mother is African American and her father is Somali, however, she was primarily raised by her mother since her father went back to Somalia for a significant portion of her childhood. Despite this, Leah still remembers how her father put her in Sunday school at a local mosque as a young girl.

He put me in Sunday school for two years at the mosque, but that was by myself. And the holidays we rarely celebrated, because he wasn't there, I feel-- if he was there

probably, I probably would have been a totally different person, but I'd definitely know a lot more about my religion and culture and stuff like that. But I don't have that much first-hand experience, even though he's extremely devout; he prays five times a day.

Opposed to Beth and Janet, her lack of time spent with her father impacted her connection to the religious and cultural practices associated with Somali culture. Maybe feeling pressure to indoctrinate herself in the Somali community through common cultural practices, she thus felt like she missed out on a big portion of who she was and where she came from.

Several other participants recounted similar experiences, regardless of religious belief. Kelela, a 21 year old Ethiopian-American from Southern California explains she went to a “private Christian school up until middle school.” Both of her parents, although her mother, she explains, had a different religious history, raised her in a Christian Orthodox church, which constitutes for 62.8% of Christians in Ethiopia, and 45 to 50 million worldwide. As one of the pre-colonial Christian churches in Sub-Saharan Africa, there were a few other participants stating they were raised in this community, specifically participants who were either Ethiopian or Eritrean. Hannah, a 23 year old Eritrean-American, and Farrah, a 26 year old Eritrean-American from Atlanta, detail growing up in a Christian Orthodox household.

Spiritually, I was definitely raised in a church, so it was definitely school as a priority—well, school and church is all we did for the majority of my upbringing. So Monday to Friday I was in school, Friday to Sunday I was in church. -Farrah, Eritrean, 26

I'll say that going to church...very much so, a cultural practice that we practiced every week...we went to Orthodox Church for most of our early childhood. -Hannah, Eritrean, 23

It is no surprise that East African communities are engulfed in religious practices within their homes. As mentioned in the literature review, East African immigrants are more likely to mobilize based on religious and national identities (Guenther et al, 2011). These cultural and

ethnic identifiers become significant in their households and how their children are raised. East African immigrants' cultural and religious values are emplaced in a new regional location, and simultaneously, their children, second-generation East Africans, are internalizing and forming new articulations of East African identity that more than likely don't align with their parents' beliefs and values. Two generations are coming to a head in one household grounded in traditional, cultural, and religious values by a displaced community. However, a bi-directional process of growing apart and coming together ensues as immigrant parents and their children continuously recreate one another's socialities.

As significant as the religious component is to laying groundwork in the structure of this community's family and home, there was a need to understand the relational functions of the home itself, specifically how they treated one another, what were some issues, and what were some growing pains. All but a couple detailed the unorthodoxy of their parent's affection and love towards them, and how that trickled down to their inability to have a transparent relationship with their parents as they grew older.

I think that spaces of love in my household, I don't know if it—I don't know if it really-Not that it didn't exist, but I think that my family—we're not affectionate. -Janet, Ethiopian, 22

My parents didn't really grow up in an environment where people hugged or gave each other words of affirmation. It was mostly just like, "We feed you, we clothe you." -Nicole, Somali, 23

So I guess there's always a running joke slash stereotype that immigrant parents are very cold and just don't really express themselves with their kids, but I don't think that's true at all. It's just the way they express love is unconventional, and it's not customary to Western beliefs and stuff. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

So my dad is definitely monetary. And that's something I think about a lot and I'm kind of wondering where that came from. Because now that's kind of how my-- I'm like, 'Oh, gifts!' that's how I receive love. But, yeah, especially if he would have an explosive episode, it would always be followed up with some type of gift, or, 'Bubba, let me put

this money in your account.’ Or like, ‘Oh, just let me buy you, I don't know, different devices,’ you know, or whatever. So and I also think that he's really not one to apologize that much. -Leah, Somali, 22

Leah acknowledges that her father had explosive moments and used gifts and money to express his remorse and/or love. Her experience shares a lack of emotional intelligence and accountability from her father, and these aspects could easily impact how she's able to communicate with her father as she grows older. As Rami stated, most participants grew up in unconventional households regarding love and affection relative to Western beliefs in the United States. Although they did not receive words of affirmation, they each believed their parents cared for them in practical, useful and attentive ways.

Food is a big thing that comes to mind in terms of either cooking or just kind of providing food experiences.... like cutting up fruit, watermelon, and mangoes and bringing them to me in the middle of—out of nowhere and not really saying anything. Just leaving it by my desk. -Kelela, Ethiopian, 21

It was moreso acts of service. ‘We do this for you, we do that for you. -Farrah, Eritrean, 26

But they just do things for you and in their heads, it's kind of like, ‘As long as you have a roof over your head and food in your belly that you should be happy. -Beth, Somali, 26

They each realize in hindsight the significance of their parent's efforts, despite whether or not they had an expressive and emotionally available mother or father. Most times, survival is of utmost importance, and as long as immigrant parents' children are being fed, taken care of, and have a roof over their head, that is typically all that matters. A number of participants detailed their parents reasoning for displacement, varying from voluntary and involuntary matters such as warfare, political strife, safety, and/or an opportunity to raise their children in a better environment. Their parents not only bring with them generational trauma, but high hopes for the future, particularly of their children, and they want to see the sacrifices they made result in tangible progress. Thus, oftentimes concerns around emotional intelligence and open affection

fall to the wayside, compared to more serviceable expressions of love. For a few of the participants, they detailed how they felt an incredible emotional disconnect with their parents, resulting in further isolation.

I was a second generation immigrant growing up, mostly in spaces where I felt like I was misunderstood. And then I would go home and kind of have trouble grappling with that. But then also trying to explain to my parents was also difficult since they weren't going through it. So, like I said, those clashes that we had early on, I felt like definitely played into our relationship and how we express love for one another. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

Rami continued to explain her feelings of isolation, detailing how her disconnect with her parents further impacted their relationship negatively, "I wouldn't really express as much love for them and I also feel like they weren't doing that for me. Not understanding that the way that they were providing for me, and also the way that they were very protective, was their way of expressing love." As she grew older, she was able to understand her parents' ways of communicating love and care, things that seemed obsolete in her life growing up. Although she was able to reflect on her past and her parents, her sentiments are legitimate and reflect how some second-generation citizens feel misunderstood not only in the communities and regions they live in, but amongst their own family. Second-generation East African women live with a number of intersecting identities that merge, compliment, and even contradict one another. Therefore, their upbringing and background are significant to their self-actualization, especially when they experience things that their parents never have. The unconventional relationship second-generation East African women share with their parents is compounded with the religious and cultural traditions they establish in the home, creating an inability to form transparent relationships with their parents until much later on in life. And as expected, their parents were prone to being closed off about their past and upbringing.

Oh, I definitely feel like my parents were not open with me at all. I generally still feel

like I don't completely know my parents because if I'm going to be perfectly honest, I wasn't asking them about their past lives either. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

I think I had to push for some openness. I feel like I'm always pushing with my parents. Pushing the envelope. So I think they're definitely more open now and I think, now that I'm older, and I can—when you're a kid and your parents are strict immigrants they just don't understand you, you kind of see them in this black and white kind of view, but now that you're older you can appreciate all the complexities. -Nicole, Somali, 23

Neither of my parents were particularly transparent about their past. It's something I deeply regret not pushing further into. -Kelela, Ethiopian, 21

It took a lot of tooth pulling to get that out of them. I didn't know for a long time that my dad came from a farming background. He never brought that up until I actually went to visit Africa as an adult. I didn't know that my mom's family was disenfranchised and was quite poor. She comes from a minority tribe. -Beth, Somali, 26

I think when you're young, they just go on and protect you from everything and just like not really explain what's going on and not for context. -Heather, Ugandan, 22

There could be plenty of reasons why their parents were unable or unwilling to share their past and how they were raised. For example, Hannah, an Eritrean-American from Oakland, stated her mother did not share much about her childhood or upbringing due to the passing of her mother at a young age; “And my mom has—she's had some difficulties being able to express, you know, talk about her childhood because it does bring back a lot of really sad memories for her.” Farrah, a 26-year-old from Atlanta, is aware of the distinct differences between her and her parents, and why there is a limit to their relationship.

So the kind of things that we do in this day and age, it's like they can't even fathom in a sense. And the same for us, the kind of things that they dealt with at our age we cannot even fathom in the same way. So I think that's what kind of limits the relationship. But I don't think it's because-- it's just kind of reality versus the lack of the desire. So I think it definitely would-- I think on both ends they'd want that relationship but it's just kind of like it's such a disconnect in terms of what we both experience.

The stark difference in how each generation is raised negates replication, instead family traditions, customs, and relationships shift as do the children, and their children's children, in new social climates, communities, and nations. Farrah understands why a rift amounts between

herself and her parents, and how displacement and migration not only involves leaving behind a homeland, but the many experiences and traditions her parents took part in. As much as immigrant parents try to replicate their own childhood, their children are formulating new cultural configurations of identity, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, and so forth. Immigrant parent's ideologies travel, but they merge, blur, and transform in the lives of their children as they are situated within competing and co-existing societal contexts. Rami actively negotiates with this complicated relationship between her parent's values and those of the society she grew up in, "Going through that acculturation process while also having a very different dynamic at home, because my parents clinged onto their culture and religion and didn't care much for American values and cultures." Rami is aware of her complicated social standing within household and society.

Leah, a 22 year old Somali-American in Atlanta, explains that although her father felt his upbringing wasn't significant enough to share, she explains and tries to grapple with why that might have been the case, as did Farrah and Hannah.

...a lot of [his family] passed because of the war and stuff, and died early because of sickness or-- so he lost a lot of his siblings, so there aren't that many left, which I can only imagine how that feels. Yeah. So he doesn't talk about that that much, but it's also masculinity, and reflection, and-- I'm not sure how much of that goes on because he doesn't talk about it openly, but also, I mean, he might just be an internal processor and thinks about that stuff all the time. I don't know.

Like Hannah's mother, Leah's father may be harboring onto unresolved feelings that are difficult to share and bring up to Leah, as it may remind him of difficult memories.

Second-generation East African women's complex relationship with their parents creates a wedge between one another. This prevents them from understanding who and where they come from. For instance, Nicole, a Somali-American, stated she didn't know what tribes she was from

until college. This has implications on what memory-work looks like with this group of women and how remembering has revealed itself as a disjointed practice generationally. Redefining what memory means will be further explored in the latter half of this section.

Immigrant parents' inability to be emotionally present and open up about their past for their children creates a generational rift between them and their children concerning social, cultural, and political beliefs and values. Beth, a 26-year-old Somali-American from Seattle, explains that her parents become upset that she and others alike become so "Americanized," however, she laughingly states, "that's what happens when you grow up here." Second-generation East African women inhabit merging identities that require them to have complex viewpoints on a number of issues that more often than not, challenge their parent's, and the culture they were raised in. Nicole, a 23-year-old Somali-American from Minnesota, details her feelings of alienation because of her identity:

I don't feel like-- I think it's because of being an immigrant and being Black and being Muslim. It's just there's so much alienation and then you have the ways Somalis are represented in the media and everything, and it's not exactly positive. I still identify as Muslim, but I think of myself more, I would say, as a cultural Muslim than anything else really. I think I have a lot of disagreements with a lot of the religious-- I guess what's presented to us as morals, what's the definitive way to be a good person and all that. I don't agree with a lot of it. I think there's way too much bigotry, so I'm just personally not comfortable fully identifying with all of that.

In the literature review concerning the socialization of first and second-generation immigrant communities, Lorick-Wilmot (2014) details the importance of understanding the "in-flux" nature of second-generation's social standing. The feeling of "in-between-ness," of being a number of things, such as how Nicole discusses her ranging hybrid identity, takes a toll on the lack of inclusion she feels in her home and her environment. She notes that she does not identify entirely as a Muslim, instead she practices as a cultural Muslim due to her disagreements with some of the religion's customs. Her re-articulation of her culture and religion reflect Stuart

Hall's (2003) cultural identity, which describes identity as a continuous production. Her identity is not an "exactness" or an identity that reaches a certain point of acceptability. Simultaneously, she expresses both a feeling of isolation and a critical redefinition of what it means to be Somali and Muslim in a hostland country. Other participants reflected similar feelings:

Well, I am a Somali-American. I do see myself as that because I am a blend of both. Sexuality-wise I'm bisexual probably queer. Religion-wise I'm agnostic but my parents don't know that so to them I'm still a Muslim. -Beth, Somali, 26

There was a lot of cultural differences that caused rifts just because it's like although this is how our parents and grandparents did things, you also have to find these social standings of where they were versus where we are. -Heather, Ugandan, 22

He's literally said he feels like he's walking on eggshells with me. And part of that is because I think I have a strong personality and I, a lot of times, say when I have an issue with something, but also, it's kind of social justice aspect. Like, "Oh, you shouldn't say these things," you know? Like a gap there between what I know and what they know because I didn't learn that with them. -Leah, Somali, 22

I think so. There's a lot of-- I mean, I always used to get into arguments with my parents about things like social issues. I remember I had this really pivotal conversation with my mom about rape culture and how she's like, "Yeah. Some ladies who are [laughter] wearing short skirts, they have a part in this." And I'm like, "Obviously not. You're very wrong. -Kelela, Ethiopian, 21

Evidently, these four women not only share a re-articulation of identity, but express how their ideas and values shift drastically from their parents, and how it is a point of conflict and dissent within their households. Significant issues such as sexual assault, as reflected by Ethiopian-American, Kelela, from Southern California, reveal the sometimes contentious conversations second-generation East African women are confronted with. Discussions around sexuality are either neglected or kept in secret by second-generation East African women. For instance, 22 year old Somali-American, Leah, recently told her African American mother that she identifies as queer, however, she still has not told her Somali father. She explains how her mother and

father are on two very different ideological paths pertaining to sexual preferences and gender identifications:

My mother's in the mental health field so literally yesterday she was talking to me about this this day-long conference about literally trans people and terminology and being a mental health professional and knowing these things and working towards this competence. So she has that, that little didactic structured training. So I feel like she's kind of at more of an advantage than my dad. Who's also been in third-world countries for the past ten years and where being gay is still illegal. So I feel like he also generally is also a different-- it seems like a different timeline that he was running on too, in terms of social justice issues and human rights. So I feel like he's more-- or even not behind but - what's the word I'm looking for? - kind of deeper into the conservative parts of his generation compared to my mom because she has all this training.

Leah shares her parent's education with care, explaining how they are in two different points in their lives when it comes to understanding and engaging with human rights issues. Nonetheless, her comfortability to share how she identifies with her mother places significance in that relationship as opposed to the one she has with her father. She explains further how her father's ideologies are in clear opposition to her beliefs and her existence.

I was just like I can't believe-- he was talking about how gay people are going to go to hell and if you have—'Okay. That's fine.' I mean whatever. Believe what you want to believe. But he was saying all this stuff about people going to hell and stuff. And I was like, 'Well, watch me burn [laughter].' He would make the occasional kind of-- like, 'Is that a woman or a man, blah, blah, blah?' Stuff like that, that I'd be like, 'Well, you know' or even about people's weight. I don't know which he really can't talk. But he would just be saying all these things.

Leah's existence is in complete opposition of her father's beliefs and ideologies, all the more reason why digital spaces are significant to forming communities rooted in homeplace.

Issues concerning race and anti-blackness arise in particular households, which impacts how there are severe differences around what it means to be Black generationally and globally, and why second-generation communities differentiate themselves from the experiences and ideas their parents believe as they immigrate to the United States. Rami mentioned the

dissension she had with her father regarding his unwillingness to label himself as Black on a section of an application, and how that had an impact on her difficulty to self-identify as a Black woman. Second generation communities experience racism and discrimination in their hostland that causes them to develop different perceptions of race relations and identity opposed to their parents (Waters, 1999). Compared to their children, immigrant parents typically had positive experiences of race relations back home, however, second-generation communities grow up in a society, in this case the United States, where race is an overt factor in the subjugation of African-descendant communities. Rami explains the level of ethnic superiority she notices in her community:

And another thing I also kind of feel like it's kind of is prevalent within just-- not even just Ethiopian, but East African and also just many African countries is this sense of nationalism and pride to the point that it can kind be interpreted as a sense of superiority over the black American race.

As stated in the literature review, Waters (1999) writes that immigrant parents will adamantly tell their children to strive for upward mobility and educational attainment, however, they fail to realize that their children's day-to-day experiences are dictated by their race which negatively influences the level of attainment they can acquire in various spaces. Sherri-Ann P. Butterfield (2004) examines second-generation West Indians and also concludes that "being Black and being West Indian are identities that coexist and greatly inform how the adult second-generation conceive of race and ethnicity for themselves and for other racial and ethnic groups in American society" (p. 289). Hannah, a 23 year old Eritrean-American from Oakland, explains how her identity is a reflection of where her family comes from but also how she understands her positionality within the United States:

Be proud to be Eritrean, but when you are in this country, it's important to acknowledge and respect the fact that people came before us so that we could be here. So, in terms of

my identity, I first identify as a black woman who is from-- that is also Eritrean American. My parents are from Eritrea. I was born and raised in America, but definitely, I identify as a black woman.

Hannah had a particularly interesting upbringing when it came to her understanding of race in the United States. She noted that her dad was crucial to her informal education on race relations in America due to his appreciation and admiration of the Black Panther Party in Oakland.

My dad, literally he told me the reason why he moved to Oakland is because he was so inspired by the Black Panthers. He learned about the Black Panther movement back in the 1960s when he was in-- because my dad used to work at an American military base in Eritrea. That's what's unique about my dad is he knew so much about American culture and even black American culture before he even left the continent of Africa that it really influenced the way that he moved through the world. And when he eventually made it to America, he wanted to be in Oakland for that reason. And he was probably one of the early people moving to Oakland. He moved to Oakland in 1979, so there weren't even that many Eritreans at that time there. I don't know if maybe he influenced other people to move there [laughter].

Hannah's generational education on Black American culture is not necessarily unique or arbitrary to African descendant communities around the world, however, similar experiences come few and far between in this study. Her father represents a global diasporic cultural exchange and how it has shaped his daughters' perception of race and ethnicity. Regionally, Oakland provided a historically rich backdrop for Hannah's family, initially sparked by her father halfway across the world in Eritrea. Although the participants of this study did not have similar experiences, the participants learned first-hand how much their race shaped their lives in the United States. In this study Hannah's upbringing is an anomaly; the lack of acknowledgement of race as a factor amongst immigrant parents is another ideological rift that created division amongst second-generation East African women and their parents

Discrepancies on matters of race, culture, religion, and sexuality indicated how the women understood their positionality and especially how it impacted the level to which their parents were able to implement old customs to new societal spaces.

Since, I guess, growing up, there are certain values that my parents grew up knowing, that when they tried to implement it here, it was difficult since it completely clashed with Western values and even my own personal values, I realized. One thing for sure, I think this is a combination of both Western and Ethiopian values, but definitely-- it's so simple, but it was honestly the big reason why I had so many arguments with my mom. -Rami, Atlanta, 22

Rami shares her growing pains with her parents when it came to ideological, cultural and social disagreements. She's aware of the generational rift between herself and her parents, and acknowledges that her mother and father were raised in a particular way that is incomparable to her own circumstance. Manthia Diawara's analysis of Malick Sidibé's photography regarding how the photos incorporated a diasporic aesthetic and represented a re-appropriation of culture and resistance, are echoed in the thought processes by the women in this study. Diawara's analysis highlights a critical point in Mali's history where young adults were diverging from their older generation, and re-fashioned their identity, what it meant to rebel, and what it meant to resist in a newly independent nation. Similar to the young adults of Mali, second-generation East African women inhabit a space of transformation, change, and transition that results in conflict and rift. Rami understands there were particular values established before her existence, however, she is aware of her role in the continuation of a new generation of East African women within a converging space of culture and history. The women of this study are expressing points of resistance between themselves and their parents, meeting at odds and rupturing what it means to remember, to recover, and to renew generational socialities.

Janet, a 22-year-old currently living in Atlanta, experienced similar feelings to Kelela and Rami regarding isolation and dissent within her own family. She expressed that, "I feel like I'm the black sheep of the family as a whole. Like in a way that I discussed certain things even we can look at sexuality and not agreeing with things I say." There is a consistent theme of challenging ideological norms that have either been embedded in the generations and

communities before or simply ignored as time went on, because who's to say there weren't countless other women in previous generations living with complicated realities and hoping to find acceptance. Unknowingly, Janet, Rami, Kelela, and others alike could be retrieving the resistant practices of their forebears who were not given the space to speak for themselves or be heard. Most of the women in this study identify themselves as they see fit to set a precedent generationally, regardless of the disapprovals.

I'd definitely say a lot of it was revolving being a girl child. So it's just a lot of sexism, a lot of misogyny, and I was kind of always just arguing with my parents, 'So, why don't I get to do that?' Or just expectations, and it's what kind of led to me becoming a feminist is probably my upbringing because I just kind of felt tired of the expectations and kind of the ways that-- I'd say girls, particularly older girls, are kind of treated as pack mules. So they just kind of do everything. They handle everybody's emotional labor. -Nicole, Somali, 23

I don't see marriage as the thing that-- the all-important life event that I was kind of brought up to think it was...I don't think being in a relationship with a man is going to complete me or my worth is really determined on my proximity to men. I'd say just being selfish is a big thing that I'm learning to be okay with. I didn't really get to be selfish growing up, and I want to live life for myself and not for my parents and, that it's okay to be selfish. Women never get to be selfish and that needs to change. -Nicole, Somali, 23

I would buy clothes, and then my mom would be like, 'Why did you buy that? A woman is not supposed to wear that, blah blah blah.' And then obviously that kind of dialogue opens up to more like, when I've come home late or whatever, my mom goes like a woman's not supposed to be out late like this, or whatever. And I always had a problem with that because when-- it's just not a common Western belief and it's not a common thing-- it's not something that I believe in either. I feel like, 'Oh we shouldn't be limited like that,' and that whole domestic woman, homemaker, whatever, complex I was completely against it. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

Nicole and Rami both express frustration particularly with how they are expected to act as women and they realize they've grown accustomed to see mistreatment of older women in their families. Nicole explains how older girls are "treated as pack mules" and "they kind of just do everything." She's striving to be more independent and selfish with her time and energy in order to make sure that she's taking care of herself. Rami shares similar resentment towards the

expectations she garners from her mother on how to dress, what to strive for, and who to become. Young girls raised by immigrant parents are more likely to experience lower self-esteem, higher depression, and a greater level of parent-child conflict (Rumbaut, 1994), and through the young women's sentiments on expected gender roles in the household, their experiences reflect just how much second-generation women particularly struggle with their parental relationships growing up. As Nicole stated, she's trying to break free from "living for her parents." A sense of codependency results in this relationship from an obligation to fulfill their parents expectations, leaving second-generation women to grapple with how they see themselves outside of their parents' projection. Although this conflict emerges, Kelela acknowledges that her unwillingness to accept gendered expectations is not particularly unknown to the women in her life, instead in homage to what she has witnessed growing up.

But growing up, I saw so many examples of these strong women leading independent lives, regardless of their husbands, who could equally be as-- have a personality or be a little bit more gentle, like my dad. They always led their lives, and I think that really shaped who I am in terms of understanding the capacity of the sheer resilience that women carry. -Kelela, Ethiopian, 21

Kelela acknowledges the resilient nature of the women in her family. As bell hooks described the sacrifices and obstacles Black women in her life made in the home in order to create "homeplace," the women in Kelela's life were conducive to her maturation and independence.

There are several implications that impact a second-generation East African woman's home life, from religious and cultural practices, to ways parental figures express love, their parents' level of transparency, and how these each add to the disintegration of their relationship amongst one another. Ideological rifts, a break of tradition, challenge to familial status quo's, and differential experiences regarding sexuality, gender, race and religion, impact the redefinition of "homeplace" to a digital space like Twitter. The explorations of their upbringing

and homelife only reiterate why digital spaces are so integral to second-generation East African women. Their forms of resistance and survival differ from the Black women hooks describes in her conceptualization. Rather than keeping up a home, taking care of a family, and upholding domesticated and gendered tasks as important forms of resistance, second-generation East African women are re-articulating what it means to take care of themselves and one another. As Nicole stated, “women never get to be selfish and that needs to change.” Due to feelings of exclusion within their families, second-generation East African women utilize Twitter in ways that expand the construction of “homeplace” beyond the home.

4.1.2 “It makes me feel less alienated and less alone”

In order to create “homeplace,” networks are created amongst one another. The majority of participants detail their usage of Twitter as a jumping point to create niche groups, specific sub-groups, and private group chats. Nicole, a Somali-American, mentions that she’s able to find community and different perspectives that enable her to learn about others. Heather, a Ugandan-American, shared that Twitter was a place for second-generation Africans to follow one another using the hashtag #AfricanFollowTrain. She expressed that through this hashtag, a little community was able to form based on one another’s similar upbringings. Rami explained how Twitter allows her to keep connected with folks over long periods of time, resulting in forming long-lasting relationships with people over the Internet:

And I feel like just seeing people through various stages of life, too. I've been on Twitter for I think-- I think it's like eight years this summer. So it'll be like eight years that I've been on Twitter or something like that. But basically, more than five years that I've been on Twitter, so I've-- there's certain, I guess, accounts and stuff, certain people that I talk to, where I've just seen them through different stages, and they've seen me through different stages. Through high school, and to college, and now trying to see what post-grad will be like, and just having a sense of community, and I guess people that are going through the same thing as you. I feel like that is just so important. Because I think about how lost I felt prior to that not even just through Twitter, but just even meeting people and how it literally

felt like a huge burden was just kind of-- I didn't even know that burden was there, but just that weight just dissipated because there really are other people living the same truth that I've been living.

The relationships second-generation East African women form are not temporary, as expressed by Rami; Twitter is a space to share and witness moments of growth amongst one another. Second-generation East African women manage to create normalcy in their lives, where they can engage amongst their peers without having to be questioned. Rami grappled with the significance of community and kinship, but concluded that engaging in a space where validation exists, people to rely on, and opportunities to exchange and share ideas, are crucial for her. “Homeplace,” according to bell hooks, was conceptualized to honor and credit Black women’s subversion of the home from a space that often subjugated their existence, towards a space where they claimed their subjectivity as critical subjects of the home. In contrast, Rami and other second-generation East African women are sharing how Twitter provides solace, alternative communities, and intangible inhabitation. Although they don’t share the same social standing and roles as the Black women described by bell hooks, they expand notions around resistance, home, spatiality, and what it means to nurture without the expense of their emotional labor.

Several of the participants describe forming and interacting with specific groups and communities online, particularly those that have similar interests or identities as themselves.

It's a doozy but I'm also in group chats with other black women and black career people. So we just kind of talk. We check in on each other. How are we all doing? Talk about things we find interesting at the moment. -Nicole, Somali, 23

Twitter allows me to connect with other Somalis, but more so other Horners that are like me, so queer or agnostic. -Beth, Somali, 26

There's East African Twitter, then there's the Ethiopian Twitter, then there's-- I even follow a few accounts with East African and Muslim people, and it's just so interesting how what these people tweet are complete truths to my life. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

Would we have this space where women feel comfortable, and women of color feel comfortable breaking their silence? -Janet, Ethiopian, 22

Definitely black content, queer content, the content that makes fun of locals. Local Twitter feed content, content like that, that kind of is exactly my sense of humor, which is surprising how many people have that sense of humor. -Leah, Somali, 22

Each detail how important it is to establish and find small pockets online amongst people experiencing similar life events. Nicole acknowledges that these interactions on Twitter have had a profound impact in people's real lives.

But there's so many interesting, funny, kind people that you can meet. There's so much you can learn. I definitely wouldn't be the person I am if I didn't follow the people I did. I wouldn't know half of the shit I do. So I think Twitter can definitely be supportive. There's so many times where it's been my community on Twitter, who people have become homeless or have had personal emergencies come up. And we've managed to raise money for them. We pass around opportunities that we hear of to each other. So I think it's definitely a good network.

Rami describes how conversations on Twitter helped validate and confirm feelings she had during her adolescence, and even help her understand her own mental health issues.

This is also kind of going back to when I was going through the height of my depression it was people that I felt aligned the most with my beliefs and stuff that I could talk to because a lot of the sources of my depression went back to things that I experienced in high school that I couldn't pinpoint until I talked to people later. And I was like, 'You know what? I felt that same exact way.' So yeah. I think having that support system is very essential.

For Heather (Ugandan) and Nicole (Somali), they each express a need to form bonds only with Black women and how important it is to uphold those relationships. Their need for inclusive spaces revolving around Black women are in parallel with hooks' "homeplace" and Alice

Walker's "Womanism," where the mundane, everyday-ness of online engagement present transformative spaces of solidarity, community, and home.

And so a lot of it, I would say for me actually-- we only started in earnest-- this is really weird to say, but when *Lemonade* dropped I definitely became mutuals with so many black women because of that album. And just met a lot of different black women and forged those relationships. And I think for me now, anytime I make new relationships with black women on Twitter, it's mostly through-- just individually we get along with each other. - Nicole

I think the content that I most engage with is always really it has pro-black women because that's really my platform in the root, root, root of it all. It has to go back to being pro-black women. Because it's easy to be pro-black but pro-black women is kind of its own niche. - Heather

Once again, Black women are integral to the sustainment of one another, whether as mother-figures in the home or Twitter users online. There are parallels between these two socialities and each deserve acknowledgement, but also opportunity to challenge what it means to create "homeplace" outside of domestication. Removing the household as grounds for creating "homeplace" uproots customary beliefs around who is allowed in the home and what is expected, allowing the inclusion of marginalized communities who aren't always welcomed within their own households. Homeplace should be reworked subjective to the population and/or community; hooks' work now explores other possibilities of "homeplace" through the words and sentiments of the participants.

4.1.3 Diasporic Resources through Digital Engagement

Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) coins the term "diasporic resource" in her article, "Black Liverpool, Black America, and the Gendering of Diasporic Space." She derives this by analyzing the relationships and acculturation between Black Americans and Black British communities through their appropriations of diasporic aesthetics, particularly how they interact

and intersect with one another. The second question of this study states, “How does second-generation East African women’s engagement with Twitter replicate a diasporic resource?”

Ugandan-American, Heather, describes how the exchange of information on Twitter forms understanding and awareness: “It keeps us connected and I feel like I've learned so much about other African countries and other African people and ways of life through the internet.” Several others share their engagement on Twitter that reveal how the social media site is utilized as a diasporic resource.

I'd definitely say music and political stuff. So the political stuff, a lot of it is just-- a lot of, I'd say, my mutuals are people that are very aware of the world they live in. I don't watch the news, also. So Twitter is really where I get my news. And so learning about different things that are going on in different parts of the world. And because I follow so many different types of people, there's different news outlets they're getting their information from or different perspectives. -Nicole, Somali, 23

I think that Twitter has created a diaspora network for me by just watching other people openly discuss the issues that they may face or think that they're going through that I can relate to. -Janet, Ethiopian, 22

Twitter's the place where people are seeing the most up to date news when it comes to things going on in Eritrea or Ethiopia, things that the perspective that you don't see is mainstream media outlets. -Hannah, Eritrean, 23

I think it helps with-- I think social media helps the people with a lot of stuff that's going back home. It kind of makes us more aware of what's going on there because with Ethiopia ...with the whole politics thing and that being a mess. -Sarah, Ethiopian, 18

Janet, Kelela, and Rami find that Twitter is a space for the dissemination of information, varying from current events, political and social criticisms, and issues concerning respective East African communities. Online dialogues provide opportunities for second-generation women to share critical content and express their opinions with one another.

I don't want to exemplify, but even looking at how the black community looks at the R. Kelly Documentary series and how that was-- I feel like that was so important because a lot of black women, the night that the series came out, opened up about experiences that they had with close family and friends, and I think that that right there just goes to show would that conversation-- would that have happened if Twitter existed? -Janet, Ethiopian, 22

I find Tweets and I find other people who have such similar experiences, which not only forges a space for my identity itself but also introduces me to-- or it allows me a deeper understanding of those three worlds and affirms my identity, in some way. And so in terms of creating that was. I don't know if I'm actively creating a network, but it creates these bridges in between these worlds for me. -Kelela, Ethiopian, 21

Stuart Hall (2003), Arjun Appadurai (1990), and Benedict Anderson (1991) are each reflected in the actions and sentiments shared by Kelela and Janet. Their imagined communities have infiltrated seemingly impenetrable spaces of thought and analysis for second-generation East African women, particularly for Janet who suggests that critical conversations would be null and void had it not been for Twitter. When thinking of Anderson's (1990) "imagined communities," Kelela and Janet have found and created community and kinship amongst online users who identify as second-generation. Although their interactions are not predicated on the symbolic formation of nation-states, they are cognizant of the connections they are making digitally. Whether conscious or not, their engagement with Twitter replicates a transnational digital convergence of thought. Arjun Appadurai (1990) defines the imaginary as a social practice, and he deems this critical to diasporic productions. Transmitting traditional forms of "mediascapes," as Appadurai (1990) calls it, such as R. Kelly's documentary that aired on television, and re-contextualizing its content on Twitter, re-constitutes the documentary's purpose and reach. Janet found it was a moment for Black women to voice and share their own experiences of sexual assault by streamlining through the social and cultural event. Second-generation East African women are aware of their informal yet significant utilizations of Twitter, and how a digital

space redefines cultural engagement and diasporic production.

Leah explained how users' application of Twitter provides an informal education on others' experiences and perspectives:

It gives you an opportunity to hear voices that you wouldn't normally hear. And I really appreciate that because I feel like it's contributed to a lot of my informal education on people's experiences, and having the language to kind of express how I'm feeling, what's going on. I don't know, being able to see somebody perfectly sum up something that you were confused about before is really helpful. Also, it's literally news for me. It keeps me up to date with things that are going on in a very concise manner that's often entertaining. So there's a lot of positives to it.

Second-generation East African women create critical engagement of social and cultural issues that pertain to their communities and inform one another on their beliefs, cultural practices, and values.

Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) theorizes diaspora beyond migration and displacement, with a focus on the exchange of raw materials by Black communities. These raw materials can include music, film, novels, dance, shared memories, or narratives. Kelela notes that she “find[s] tweets and other people who have such similar experiences,” to help her forge a space for her own identity as well as become introduced to other communities. She's engaging in the exchange of narratives and shared memories, essentially reappropriating Twitter as a diasporic resource. Hannah, an Eritrean-American from Oakland explains how Twitter has introduced her to a thread on historical Eritrean music:

I think that it's cool when you see a thread or people are engaging on something that relates to, whether that's something related to your community or your upbringing. I remember somebody had started this thread of Eritrean music and it was amazing because there were so many songs that I grew up listening but I didn't even know how to find them on the internet.

Through threads, users are in some ways participating in archival work by retrieving old artistic works and re-introducing them to their community. Hannah not only explains a diasporic resource through the function of exchanging art and music, but her familiarity with the music functions as an exchange of memory. Second-generation East African communities are re-imagining space and inhabitation on Twitter by recovering and remembering artistic and/or cultural artifacts that engage with memory-work, diasporic cultural exchange, and homeplace, as it did for Hannah. Kelela realizes the significance of forming networks to enable and create moments like Hannah's:

Not to be spiritual or whatever, but there are deep roots, like ancestral roots that I think can be honed upon within developing networks. And I think digital landscapes really are such a good medium for those networks to be built. It's a matter of accessibility, right? Which can definitely be a problem because not everyone has access to the internet or these digital spaces. There's a sharing, that can happen and like an easier sharing of culture, of art, of food, of experiences that can happen. And I think that-- yeah, those are some of the benefits.

Her thoughts are reflective of the intentions behind this research, of trying to understand and harness how digital spaces are presently becoming discursive and diasporic sites of exchange, homeplace, and remembrance. This study acknowledges the significance of former generations of East African women, and Black women altogether, as critical figures within the home, within communities, and the sociality of many of the women of this study today. Kelela speaks to a significant temporal work that online users can partake in, by engaging and retrieving what they've understood through their upbringing, and how they're reappropriating and refashioning it to their own lives online, and in turn, the relationships they form intimately offline.

Concerning very critical issues such as race, gender, sexuality, religion, and so on, second-generation East African women are proving to be unapologetic about the traditions they break, so long that it is challenging rigid generational trends, and forming new cultural practices

inclusive of marginalized folk in their community.

4.1.4 Breaking and Mending Memory

Chinwe L. Ezueh Okpalaoka (2014) defines memory as a communicative interplay of present and past and a construct to preserve and recall information, for a continuous survival of marginalized groups. However, after conducting interviews, memory seems to work in disjointed, ruptured formulations, that are often hard to track, pin down, and equate as generational cultural re-articulations. Many of the participants describe that their parents were not transparent about their past and thus impacted how strong their relationship was with their mother and/or father. In addition, their parents were not emotionally present or affectionate and it had a residual impact on how they interacted with their parents, the level to which they asked questions about their parents' lives back home, and an overall interest to form a deep emotional bond. Although they were adamant to express that their family's love should not be ridiculed because it does not uphold Western values, they still felt it impacted their overall relationship as young children but have since grown to understand their parents and why they chose to raise them as they did.

When you're a kid and your parents are strict immigrants and they just don't understand you, you kind of see them in this black and white kind of view, but now that you're older you can appreciate all the complexities. You can actually see them as their own people. You can actually see all their humanity. -Nicole, Somali, 23

I will say, when I was younger, I used to be very rebellious. And I used to be ashamed of my background. And I didn't understand why we were so traditional, conservative, and why my parents thought that way....But now I'm starting to see their viewpoint, I'm a lot more empathetic. And I'm not as angry as I used to be. -Beth, Somali, 26

And now I have a much better relationship with my parents, I've realized, since I understand why they raised me the way they did. And I'm definitely trying to reimplement that into my lifestyle, since I tried to push it away growing up. So it's like I'm kind of reintroducing it back into my life, but kind of on my own terms. Obviously holding onto

the foundation that my parents gave me, but kind of adjusting it in a way that's compatible with me, if that makes sense. -Rami, Ethiopian, 22

Each participant shares a sense of growth and clarity in hindsight, particularly a realization that their parents are human, make mistakes, and made sacrifices that often came at an expense to their emotional and mental well-being. There are legitimate reasons why stories go untold and the participants understand and empathize with why that is the case. But they also acknowledged how their parents' past had residual effects on their upbringing. Their sentiments reveal transitional obstacles between generations impacted by the difference in upbringing.

The last research question of this study is, "How, if at all, do second-generation East African women perform discursive practices of memory and cultural identity on Twitter?" Campt (2002) defines diasporic memory as tied to an inheritance of a "sustained relation to real and imagined homelands as well as among and between communities spatially" (Campt, 2002, pg. 101). The participants shared that they were exposed to cultural and traditional practices that develop from real and imagined homelands.

We do have common ground which is like we still eat Somali cuisine every day at the house. We do celebrate the holidays. We observe the holidays. And we do try to speak Somali as much as we can - in the house - as a medium. But that's pretty much about it. -Beth, Somali, 26

Other cultural practices-- so like I said earlier, my dad's very much still involved with the Eritrean community in Oakland, and so I would say that most of my childhood is marked also by spending time at the Eritrean Community Center. Damn near my second home. I was there every weekend. -Hannah, Eritrean, 23

In both cases they illustrate how their families attempted to raise them on traditional and cultural practices. But as mentioned, without a close relationship with their parents, it formed a rift. The subjects in this study were raised in new environments that often opposed their parents' values and customs. Therefore, reappropriations of ethnic and cultural aesthetics were inevitable. The

participants are emplaced within a disjointed time and place because of their parent's migration to the United States. Migration is bound to result in a loss of symbolic and physical cultural attainment, such as ancestry, family ties, practices, beliefs, language, and history. Stuart Hall's (2003) "cultural identity" is ever-present in the lives of second-generation communities, as they continue to evolve, mend, and break familial and cultural expectations. Second-generation East African women traverse through complicated relationships that entangle how they remember, what they hold on to, and especially, what they choose to let go of.

Beth details how she grappled with her merging identities before finding a digital community. Despite her yearning for ethnic and cultural solidarity rooted in her parental influences, it did not always mean the inclusion of her sexuality and religious beliefs.

But when you're surrounded in a sea of other Somalis and East Africans, then you're like, 'I'm the only queer. And I'm the only agnostic.' You just tend to get so depressed and anxious. And you're like, 'I feel like I don't have any other representation.' But because of platforms like Twitter and like Tumblr and those things like that, you do get to connect to other people and, "Okay. I'm not alone. Actually, there are more folks like me that do have the same background so that means was just comforting."

Beth's utilization of Twitter is rooted in her heritage, yet she breaks traditional norms around what it means to be a young Somali woman through the communities and relationships she forms online. Beth explained further about the groups she created online that pertain to her personality and identity:

Well, I helped create a group for other East African seculars. And initially, it was maybe 10 of us at most. And now, we are just 30 plus people so I think it's cool. A lot of people are anonymous obviously for their own personal safety. But we do have a lot of cool conversation on there. I'm also part of a queer group, too. We talk a lot on there. And an anime group.

She has been able to create and form niche groups online within her Somali and East African communities, respectively, that are typically neglected in her reality. Her application of Twitter

stresses an importance of ethnic and cultural belonging, however, she is specifically rooted in forming community for East Africans that are not able to engage with their family about their beliefs and/or are unable to find like-minded people in close proximity. Beth prioritizes her Somali heritage while making strides to rearticulate beliefs around sexuality and religion. Nicole also spoke on the necessity to form small pockets of community within her ethnic community.

I'm also in group chats with other black women and black queer people. So we just kind of talk. We check in on each other. How are we all doing? Talk about things we find interesting at the moment. -Nicole, Somali, 23

Nicole utilizes the privacy of group chats, as does Beth, to create niche communities online for Black women and Black queer folk. Camp (2002) challenges who is allowed to partake in the African diaspora if one does not know or share a similar history. The informal practices of second-generation East African women on Twitter illustrate non-traditional functions of memory-work. Nicole and Beth utilize Twitter as a site to connect through their ancestry in order to shed free from commonly held beliefs around religion, race, sexuality, and gender within their community. Their diasporic identity is not bound to generational customs, traditions, or a shared past, allowing evolution, adaptation, retrieval, and reinvention; essentially a cultural identity.

Overall, the interviews highlighted the impact of having immigrant parents, how it influenced the participants' outlook on life, and the implications it had on their Twitter-use. In hindsight they each have grown to understand their parents' actions and grew a new-found appreciation for the resilience they exhibited in the face of immense burden and responsibility.

It's with age and that comes and you see them needing you more. Even not health-wise with me just not being in the state with them. It's just like, 'Oh, you have your needs too. I am not the only part of this relationship. I need to do my part. -Leah, Somali, 22

And it's like respecting that they can only fathom so much that we go through and we can only fathom so much that they kind of go through still and even back then and just more of a respect because regardless of how you kind of play it, I feel like they still kind of had it and have it worse. So I think it's more of an understanding and more of a respect. -Farrah, Eritrean, 26

Their use of Twitter reiterates the importance of their heritage while instilling new conceptualizations of their ethnicity through their re-appropriations of homeplace, diasporic resources, and memory-work.

4.2 Textual Analysis

After compiling data and information from the interviews, I parsed through Twitter using significant key words, signifiers, and hashtags by the participants that reflect their description of their Twitter-use. It initially started off by using the terminology listed below, derived from the words of the participants:

- “Black queer folk”
- “Horners”
- “LGBTQ Horners”
- “Immigrant daughter”
- “#FollowAfricanTrain”
- “East African Twitter”
- “Black muslim Twitter”
- “East African muslims”
- “Second-gen”

From this starting point, I was able to find online users, their network of followers, and derive more tweets, retweets, and likes from an array of second-generation East African women.

Essentially it became a matrix and/or snowball effect as I went deeper into their networks, their followers networks, and their followers follower’s networks; an endless nosedive. The great

thing about Twitter is that it suggests who to follow based on whose Twitter page you're on, so essentially I was able to find other second-generation East Africans just by being on one person's page. Twitter itself elicits connectivity through its technology, and made it easy to branch off into various users' pages.

The engagement by second-generation East African women displays a range of humor, activism, awareness, candidness, and solidarity. Often tinged with critique and social commentary, second-generation East African women utilize Twitter for entertainment and critical practices. I used simultaneous and descriptive coding to categorize the tweets. The codes ranged from, "exposure," "social-cultural criticism," "awareness," "advocacy," "community," "activism," and more. Second-generation East African women mostly used Twitter to rant on personal, cultural, social, and political topics.

During the textual analysis, the hashtag #HappyBirthdayCiham was circulating on behalf of a young Eritrean-American woman who has been missing for five years since she was put into detention by the Eritrean government. The hashtag was created to acknowledge her upcoming birthday and highlight the human rights issues occurring in Eritrea. Ciham is only one of many political prisoners in Eritrea who has not been seen or heard from in years, and by using the hashtag, second-generation East African women are pointing to the gross negligence by the Eritrean government in regard to Ciham and thousands of other Eritrean civilians. Several second-generation East African women shared and circulated a petition on Twitter to demand for her release, calling on U.S. political figures to step in as well.

Make a #happybirthdayciham video and help us share Ciham's case to the world and build enough pressure to make her governments act on hr behalf. Ciham deserves our attention, support & solidarity. Most of all, Ciham deserves justice and freedom. Let's come together and free her!

Meet Ciham. When she was 15 years old, she was imprisoned without a trial in Eritrea. Today, she spends her 22nd birthday in prison. Ciham is an Eritrean-American, but the U.S. government has neglected her case. She has been failed by both her governments. #BlackLivesMatter

Ciham Ali, an Eritrean-American was 15 when she was jailed in #Eritrea for trying to leave the country. Seven years later, there's still no word on her. #HappyBirthdayCiham @CNNAfrica

Meet Ciham Ali Ahmen, an American citizen who has been imprisoned in #Eritrea since she was 15 years old for trying to leave the country. 7 years later and there are still no charges or trial. 7 years later and her family still doesn't even know if she's alive or not

Whether through retweets, tweets, and likes, second-generation East African women disseminated information on the petition, Ciham's tragic circumstance, and helped reach wider audiences online. Users each participated in sharing, exchanging, and cultivating exposure on global and diasporic issues regarding African descendent communities. Their application re-appropriates Twitter as a diasporic resource for critical and cultural exposure, exchange, and social activism. Since the circulation of this hashtag, U.S. congressmember Karen Bass, CNN Africa, and Amnesty International have picked up on the hashtag and shared the petition on their respective platforms, all beginning from the dissemination and advocacy by second-generation East African women.

There were also tweets that dealt with issues concerning LGBTQ East African and larger African descendent communities:

I've made a lot of friends who are both horners & LBGT= and it honestly concerns me how many of us struggle with our mental health

Literally everyone has lgbt+ family. Everyone. Knowing *who is* a whole other story when ur whole family is scattered across the globe & homophobic/transphobic AF n being out isn't an option

Like the participants interviewed, there is a feeling of otherness amongst LGBTQ East Africans within their families and communities. The users also understand there are people who have repressed how they identify in fear of being ostracized, judged, or even murdered. Second-generation East African women are finding ways to engage in discussions around topics that are shunned in the home, in the church, the mosque, at cultural events, and so forth. This is their form of resistance, their implementation of homeplace, of survival, remembrance for those who went unheard, and for communities back home living under extreme duress. Alice Walker's *Womanism* reverberates in the users' concern and worry. Whether direct or indirect, the visibility and exposure of these tweets emphasize a need for community and action rooted in love and care; as Alice Walker (1983) stated, an emphasis on the "[commitment] to [the] survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" (p. xi). A simple tweet can reach second-generation East African women who feel isolated, alone, and insignificant in their homes and communities.

Walker's Womanist perspective could also be found in the wake of the tragic shooting at Christchurch mosque in New Zealand, as numerous second-generation East African women took to Twitter to voice their grief, sadness, and reconciliation with the inhumane terrorism enacted on their community.

Send your Muslim friends some extra love this week. We are depressed and exhausted.

one day we'll really talk about online platforms' refusal to deplatform white supremacists..from incells to Nazis. I'm a Muslim and I'm afraid very single day

ALSO: you cannot be pro-Black and islamophobic. Islam is the second largest religion on the planet. If you hate Muslims, you hate black people. Period

Through tragedy, second-generation East African women expressed their opinion, reminded others to be considerate, and found solace and comfort in their digital communities. Twitter has ironically become a highly emotive tool; its capabilities are only as imaginative as the people who utilize it. Second-generation East African women have manipulated Twitter's functions pertaining to their realities.

In addition to social activism through hashtags, community building for LGBTQ East Africans, and confiding in one another on Twitter during difficult times, second-generation East African women shared or voiced their thoughts on intra-East African diasporic differences and conflicts, often through comedic relief:

about to go get injera, I've been craving misor wot (*an Ethiopian dish*) all day. I still want the land back though.

did I just see an Ethiopian accuse a Somali of stealing a joke? a joke??? your people stole our land bro, the joke is ours now

Online second-generation East African women are aware of East African history and politics, and cleverly re-contextualized diasporic conflict to humorous cultural critique. These two examples share a lighter but still critical way second-generation East African women are engaging with matters around ethnic and diasporic conflict. Their tweets are unconventional ways to engage in memory-work, as they grapple with serious issues through relatable and humorous contexts.

The forty tweets compiled for this textual analysis reflected the sentiments shared by the ten participants of this study, and worked in tangent with the literature. The tweets shared efforts to create homeplace for LGBTQ East African communities, healing for mourning Muslim East Africans, a reappropriation of diasporic resources through social activism by way of hashtags like #HappyBirthdayCiham, and an unorthodox approach to memory through humor.

5 CONCLUSION

This study embarked on analyzing the informal practices of second-generation East African women on Twitter, and how it reflected particular redefinitions of bell hooks' "homeplace," Jacqueline Nassy Brown's "diasporic resource," and memory. As stated in the Introduction, bell hooks established "homeplace" based on Black women's subversion of the household from a historically oppressive site to a liberating space of love and care. A home became a site "where one could freely confront the issue of humanization, where one could strive to be subjects, not objects" (hooks, 1991, pg. 384). She shared how her grandmother created a home that instilled dignity, integrity, faith, and where life seemed possible of living. Homeplace invokes Black women as critical figures in the progression, sustainability, and survival of their community through practical functions of everyday life. Home becomes differentiated from homeplace as homeplace is actively working as a resilient social and communal space.

Hooks' work was critical to the foundation of this study and it provided inspiration to analyze and re-contextualize how it is redone, reworked, and/or reappropriated. As inspiring as hooks' conceptualization was, I found that it could be expanded beyond domestication and gendered expectations. I wanted to grapple with how one reconfigures the functionality of home especially when a home is void of healthy and resistive practices that a "homeplace" evokes. Therefore it was important to critically examine second-generation East African women's home life in order to inform the significance to apply "homeplace" to Twitter. The participant's Twitter use was analyzed to understand how they reappropriate and expand homeplace beyond family and physicality, to more speculative, imaginative, and inclusive practices that challenge heteronormative functions.

Alice Walker's (1983) Womanist perspective worked in tandem with "homeplace" as a theoretical framework. Like "homeplace," Womanism prioritizes the informal and quotidian practices of Black women in regards to their intimate relationships and communal efforts to care for their families. Walker's Womanism frames the practices of second-generation East African women as practical, fluid, and inclusive transformative measures. This allowed me to understand homeplace as a Womanist praxis on the web, and highlighted the interactions that second-generation East African women were engaging in with one another in various contexts on Twitter.

The Literature Review was compartmentalized by broad, philosophical questions around humanity and the African diaspora; then to concerns around cultural identity, diasporic resources, and memory; first and second generation socializations; and finally, current digital communities. This was structured to initially ask wider questions around race and humanity, towards a subjectivity of ethnicity, culture, and identity, how it impacts immigrant communities, and finally, how the three preceding sections influence the construction of digital communities.

Three research questions were posed in this study to investigate second-generation East African women's online practices:

1. How are second-generation East African women re-defining "homeplace" through their engagement with Twitter?
2. How does Twitter replicate a "diasporic resource" that centers second-generation East African women as significant agents of cultural production?
3. How, if at all, do second-generation East African women perform discursive practices of memory and cultural identity on Twitter?

5.1 Takeaway from Findings

Before I tried to gather information pertaining to the research questions, I knew I had to establish insightful connections between second-generation East African women's upbringing, and how it influenced their application of Twitter. As noted in the analysis portion of this study, an overwhelming number of participants detailed a complex relationship with their parents. They each described a lack of affection, little transparency, and a growing rift as they matured. Outside of one (Hannah, a 23-year-old Eritrean) they each described a complicated and evolving relationship with their parents due to ideological, cultural, and societal differences. The young women's inability to have open conversations with their parents concerning their identity and beliefs (many of whom identified as bisexual or queer) impacted heavily on their level of comfort and acceptability within their homes. Janet, a 22-year-old Ethiopian, was quoted saying she felt like "the black sheep" in her family particularly when it came to her beliefs around sexuality and social justice. She's just one of several who had to grapple with her familial relationships and find ways to navigate a space that is not open to critique. Disagreements on issues such as gender expectations, religion, sexuality, and race were prevalent points of conflict for second-generation East African women and their parents.

Participants expressed that Twitter allowed them to interact with small pocket community's that shared similar identities, interests, and beliefs that they typically don't find in their immediate families or communities. Heather (Ugandan) and Nicole (Somali) detailed that they yearned to form bonds specifically with Black women online and foster those relationships beyond mere likes and retweets. The participants understood the impact of creating networks through their informal practices, reflecting hooks' "homeplace" and Alice Walker's Womanist perspective.

Heather also noted that through an exchange of information, Twitter allowed her and others to keep connected, learn about other African countries, ethnicities, and ways of life. The participants found that they can disseminate useful information on current events, social criticisms, and issues concerning East African communities. Jacqueline Nassy Brown's (1998) "diasporic resources" was re-appropriated on Twitter through a symbolic exchange of information, culture, and beliefs. Janet (Ethiopian) and Kelela (Ethiopian) each explained how they found and created community amongst online users through a sharing of information and opinions on issues like the R. Kelly documentary. These were just a few of the participants that explained and valorized their interactions online as useful practices. Arjun Appadurai (1990) reflected the women's sentiments as they each acknowledged or hinted at the usefulness of imagination through digital means as formative social practices. And finally with Stuart Hall's (2003) cultural identity, Janet, Kelela and the rest of the participants understood their fluid and hybrid identities as continuously evolving through their influences and interactions on Twitter.

Memory functioned disjointedly as the participants shared how they each had difficult and conflicting relationships with their parents. Thus when it came to their application of Twitter, their use suggested an importance of heritage but a reworking of generational beliefs around sexuality, race, gender, and religion. Similar to the textual analysis, second-generation East African women recall on where they come from while simultaneously challenging and provoking old, normalized customs and traditions. And especially since most detailed a lack of transparency from their parents regarding how their parent's grew up and lived as young adults, it influenced the participants to improvise and redefine their culture and ethnicity. Tina Camp (2002) challenges who belongs and partakes in the African diaspora if it is only tied to memory based in a shared history; the participants worked through the missing pieces of their family

history by re-creating semblances of home and community with other women looking to fill that void as well. Beth eloquently stated, “But when you’re surrounded in a sea of other Somalis and East Africans, then you’re like, ‘I’m the only queer. And I’m the only agnostic.’ But because of platforms like Twitter, you get to connect to other people.” To remember where the participants came from, it often meant recovering neglected and widely shunned pasts in contrary to what is believed as shared history. They prove that ancestral histories are subjective, flawed, complex, and temporal.

5.2 Limitations

This study accumulated only forty tweets for the textual analysis portion, which is not enough to make overall generalizations about second-generation East African women’s online discursive practices. It also did not account for the numerous photos and memes that were used to re-contextualize cultural and social contexts to fit their points, and how they cleverly engaged in various communicative and sensory practices.

In addition, the textual analysis of Twitter is skewed particularly because the site follows a strategic algorithm that suggests users and content to follow based on one’s own interests. Therefore, the tweets I was able to accumulate through the data collection may not necessarily provide a wide array of objectivity but rather a reflection of my own social network. With more time and attention to detail, I believe Twitter can be a useful site to extract data, however, it still provides its issues and biases.

Another shortcoming was the overwhelming number of participants from the horn of Africa (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia) in comparison to other regions like Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, etc. That could be in result to my network and geographical location, but it would have been helpful to have a wider range of East African women included in this study.

5.3 Implications and Further Research

This study aimed to understand how second-generation East African women utilize Twitter, and specifically how they are redefining homeplace, diasporic resources, and memory to digital spaces. Their family histories, ethnic and cultural traditions, generational socialities, all informed their application of Twitter. This research hopefully explored second-generation socializations and how, presently, technology infiltrates this process and presents new, alternative methods of coping with conflicting realities. This study revealed the usefulness of online communities, and a need for resources for second-generation East African communities dealing with isolation and otherness pertaining to their sexual identification and religious affiliation. Although this study is predicated in the uses of technology, it presented an emotive and personal narrative concerning family, immigration, remembrance, and renewal. Second-generation East African women presented the capabilities of Twitter as a tool for cultural exchange, social activism, entertainment and humor, and spaces for love and care that expanded and redefined what it means to create and sustain a “homeplace.” For those excluded, shunned, and ostracized in the home due to sexual preference, differing beliefs, religious denouncement and more, this study emphasized that informal and discursive practices online can create niche groups of support.

Interestingly, most participants shared a complicated relationship with their parents as they grew up, but are becoming aware of why that was the case, realizing their own faults as children, and becoming more intentional with how they wish to grow their relationship with their parents as young adults. This study only hinted at the toll migration has on the sustainability of a family in a new country and how it disjoints remembrance and culture. This research shared only a reactionary result of migration and how it particularly impacts second-

generation communities. However, I hope this study influenced a re-examination on generational trauma, movement, space, and place amongst African descendant communities. In result, this study showed the temporality of memory and sociality based on how second-generation East African women worked to assuage their heritage and personal beliefs. They shattered what it meant to have a shared history, and re-affirmed the dexterity of the diaspora just as VèVè Clark (2009) described. Through their resistive practices, they actively worked to retrieve and re-member generations before who were routinely forgotten, unheard, and neglected. This study reminds us to remember our past, our family's and generations before, critically and intentionally, with care.

I believe this study is critical to Black Studies in its efforts to engage in digital humanities as a discipline and tool for research, analysis, and critique. Participants in this study noted a number of ways they privately made group chats online. Surveillance is a critical point of concern for Black communities as technology continues to become more sophisticated. How are we, as a discipline, engaging in generative digital humanities and Black Studies research that adheres to the safety of Black communities in the digital age, while understanding how technology can be manipulated in beneficial ways? This study engages with this slightly, but there is much work to be done. And I believe there is room to delve deeper into how second-generation East African women, and Black people at large, engage in archival work on social media.

This study shared insightful, generative, and expanding theories on “homeplace,” diasporic resources, memory, and generational socialities within immigrant communities. There are numerous ways African-descendant women are obstructing the world they have been accustomed to deal with, as it has dealt with them in such harsh, heinous, and unforgiving ways.

Through remembrance, redefinition, and retrieval, second-generation East African women are creating homeplace on Twitter as unapologetic, supportive, and inclusive online users, for the sustainment and survival of their community.

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APPENDIX

6.1 Textual Analysis Table

Original Tweet	Action	Demographic	Category/Code	Engagement
What benefit does Eritrea get by allowing Ethiopia to have a naval base there? Why should Eritrea allow this to happen in the first place?	Retweeted	Eritrean-Canadian,	Informational, Opinion-based	7 retweets, 52 likes
I've made it a lot of friends who are both horners & LBGT= and it honestly concerns me how many of us struggle with our mental health	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Informational/Awareness	27 retweets, 72 likes
one day we'll really talk about online platforms' refusal to deplatform white supremacists..from incels to Nazis. I'm a Muslim and I'm afraid very single day	Tweeted	Sudanese-Canadian, Muslim	Awareness/Opinion	210 retweets, 960 likes
nobody fears being replaced & invaded more than the descendants of genocidal settlers	Tweeted	British-Somali, Muslim	Awareness/Opinion, Social Relevancy	5,631 retweets, 15.3k likes
did I just see an Ethiopian accuse a Somali of stealing a joke? a joke??? your people stole our land bro, the joke is ours now	Tweeted	Somali-American, Muslim	Intra-Diasporic, Generational	49 retweets, 377 likes
Literally everyone has lgbt+ family. Everyone. Knowing *who is* a whole other story when ur whole family is scattered across the globe & homophobic/transphobic AF n being out isn't an option	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Awareness	11 retweets, 28 likes
ALSO: you cannot be pro-Black and islamophobic. Islam is the second largest religion on the planet. If you hate Muslims, you hate black people. Period	Retweeted	Sudanese-Canadian, Muslim woman	Awareness, Advocacy	710 retweets, 1,990 likes
Send your Muslim friends some extra love this week. We are depressed and exhausted.	Retweeted	British-Somali, Muslim woman	Solidarity, Community, Caretaking	2,176 retweets, 15.1k likes
true story: every eldest immigrant daughter i know is actually 400 years old.	Tweeted	British-Somali, Muslim woman	Connectivity, Relatability, Self-deprecation, Dry humor	28 retweets, 109 likes
destinys_child_so_good.mp3	Retweeted	Ethiopian-American	Music Archiving	13 retweets, 128 likes, 3 comments
love this appreciation of Emahoy Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou, the Ethiopian nun and pianist: thevinylfactory.com/features/vf-mix-160-emahoy-tsegue-maryam-gubrou-by-heijira/amp/?_twitter_impression=true	Tweeted with link to article/mix	Ethiopian-American	Content Sharing, Archiving, Remembering, Multimedia	4 retweets, 30 likes

20 Years Ago: #AmadouDiallo was killed by four plainclothes NYPD officers in a hail of 41 bullets. He was standing in the doorway of his own home on Wheeler Ave in the Bronx	Retweeted with link to article	Ethiopian-American	Remembering, Advocacy, Social Relevancy,	55 retweets, 60 likes
If you're first-gen, gotta put "skilled in crisis management" on your resume	Retweeted	Ugandan-American	Cultural Relatability	70 retweets, 274 likes
List of prisons in Eritrea, in Tigrinya, accompanied with four photos listed with prisons totaling 205.	Liked	British-Somali, Muslim woman	Exposure, Awareness, Advocacy, Diasporic Exchange	16 retweets, 23 likes
List of Universities in Eritrea, accompanied with a blank photo	Comment under Tweet	Eritrean-Canadian	Social-Political Criticism, advocacy, awareness	8 retweets, 21 likes
I love LA but the reality is it's trash for black women in SO MANY ways-going out, dating, everything constant policing. also LA is one of the most segregated cities ppl don't understand	Retweeted	Ethiopian-American	Exposure, Awareness, Cultural Criticism	10 retweets, 40 likes
I'm from LA and I do agree with this. Moving to Texas is a completely different as a bw. I do feel more appreciated and celebrated by men AND women. LA does have some colorism issues. ESP in the Hollywood/industry areas. I wouldn't generalize and say ALL of LA tho.	Retweeted	Ethiopian-American	Exposure, Awareness, Cultural Criticism	5 retweets, 44 likes
You can talk about your vagina & reproductive rights in women's spaces. You can associate YOUR womanhood w/ YOUR vagina. Your feminist art can display vaginas. What you CANNOT do is define/center all womanhood/feminism around vaginas/the ability to reproduce. THAT'S Transphobic.	Retweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Social-Political Criticism, advocacy, awareness	495 retweets, 1,762 likes
This #WorldPoetryDay let's celebrate and honour Yirgalem Fisseha Mebrahtu. An Eritrean poet, journalist, radio presenter, and writer who was jailed for 6 years in #Eritra without any charges or trial	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Advocacy, Exposure, Social Awareness, Political-Social Criticism	18 likes
about to go get injera, I've been craving misor wot all day. I still want the land back though.	Tweeted	Somali-American, Muslim woman	Cultural, Dry Humor, Recontextualizing History	1 retweet, 38 likes
Where all my girls that knw that the future is local and off the grid. I'm trying to milk my own oats and have a huge garden and mind my business. This technology, constant surveillance life? Archaic.	Tweeted	Somali-American, Muslim woman	Social, Critical Commentary	99 retweets, 470 likes
We keep talking about how divided the diaspora is over "politics" but at what point can I really engage with you if you literally can't acknowledge human rights abuses?	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Advocacy, Social-Political Criticism	53 retweets, 170 likes

Like you literally disagree with people having basic human rights???				
wallahi some of yall make me sick. you wanna be eritrean for the aesthetic of having the flag in your bio, but dont care about the actual liberation of our people	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Advocacy, Social-Political Criticism	16 retweets, 53 likes
Kelela is on her IG story making alicha, shiro, and kitfo with her mom and auntie with periodic amharic exchanges between them all :')	Tweeted	Ethiopian-American	Culture, Community, Celebrity	10 retweets, 145 likes
Meet Ciham Ali Ahmen, an American citizen who has been imprisoned in #Eritrea since she was 15 years old for trying to leave the country. 7 years later and there are still no charges or trial. 7 years later and her family still doesn't even know if she's alive or not	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Advocacy, Social Justice, Awareness, Online Activism	923 retweets, 909 likes
I'm literally at work rn writing an article about Eritreans stuck in Tijuana without access to legal education or legal services (let alone basic humanitarian needs) and it's just wild the state this regime has put our people in, I'm sick	Tweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Social-Political Criticism, Awareness, Venting	13 retweets, 42 likes
I really don't take the people I've met via social media for granted. There's a new meaning for community and I'm so happy I've come across so many amazing people that believe we can ALL win.	Tweeted	Ugandan-American	Community, Solidarity, home	45 retweets, 132 likes
academia will take whatever revolutionary fervor you had b4 n domesticate the shit out of it. b4 you kno it you'll be sippin cocktails witta bunch of bougie negros talkin' bout "the revolution happens everyday in my classroom"...nigga...don't you teach at Yale?	Retweeted	Somali-American	Social and Cultural criticism, humor	293 retweets, 1,368 likes
No, I am not Somali. No, I am not Sudanese. Yes, there are Muslims in Ethiopia.	Tweeted	Ethiopian-American	Cultural Awareness	6 retweets, 41 likes
being oldest immigrant daughter is a social detriment of health	Liked	Somali-American	Solidarity, venting	56 retweets, 164 likes
Ciham Ali, an Eritrean-American was 15 when she was jailed in #Eritrea for trying to leave the country. Seven years later, there's still no word on her. #HappyBirthdayCiham @CNNAfrica	Retweeted	Ethiopian-American	Activism, Awareness, Social-Political Criticism	144 retweets, 247 likes
Rest in power, Ashanti Carmon. You should still be here. Violence harms the lives of Black trans people every day. We have a duty to protect and support one another. We need to honor our Black trans siblings while they're still alive.	Retweeted	Ethiopian-American	Activism, Awareness, Exposure	359 retweets, 657 likes
I'm thinking of starting a talent agency for all my aspiring East African influencers	Tweeted	Ethiopian-American	Humorous	43 retweets, 446 likes

who are open to renting out their foreheads to different brands				
Can y'all stop excluding Kenyans, Tanzanians, Rwandans, Ugandans, and South Sudanese people from these "East African women" threads. It's colorist and not okay. If y'all want just Horners say Horn of Africa.	Tweeted	Somali-American	Intra-Diasporic Criticism, East African dissention	1 retweet, 9 likes
For Heaven's Sake, the #Eritrean issue is not a political situation, it is a basic human rights issue, WE CAN'T EXPRESS OURSELVES, WE DON'T HAVE AUTONOMY IN OUR LIVES, WE CAN'T MOVE WHEREVER WE WANT TO. It is not a matter of political opinion, IT IS RIGHTS, REPEAT RIGHTS!	Retweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Awareness, Advocacy, Social-Political Criticism	1 retweet, 2 likes
Meet Ciham. When she was 15 years old, she was imprisoned without a trial in Eritrea. Today, she spends her 22nd birthday in prison. Ciham is an Eritrean-American, but the U.S. government has neglected her case. She has been failed by both her governments. #BlackLivesMatter	Retweeted	Eritrean-Canadian	Awareness, Advocacy, Activism, Exposure	32 retweets, 38 likes
Make a #happybirthdayciham video and help us share Ciham's case to the world and build enough pressure to make her governments act on hr behalf. Ciham deserves our attention, support & solidarity. Most of all, Ciham deserves justice and freedom. Let's come together and free her!	Tweeted	British-Eritrean	Awareness, Advocacy, Activism, Dissemination of Information	2 retweets, 5 likes
#Eritrea: Unless we remember we can't understand. Let's remember our Arrested Journalists: Dawit Habte-Michael, Age 30, at time of arrest in 2001. Assistant chief editor & co-founder of Meqaleh newspaper. Physics graduate of Asmara Univ. Employee of Ministry of Education	Retweeted	Swedish-Eritrean	Awareness, Exposure	14 retweets, 37 likes
It's astonishing but unsurprising how so much European philosophy and writing on the subject of liberty and equality manages to completely overlook the subject of Black slavery	Liked	Ethiopian-Canadian	Exposure, Awareness, Social-Political Criticism	460 retweets, 2,401 likes
Many cisgender and heterosexual people push this idea that LGBT people don't live in the hood, which is very disingenuous and is completely devoid of talking about class character and the material struggles of transgender and gay street youth who do sex work and sell drugs.	Liked	Somali-American	Exposure, Awareness, Social-Cultural Criticism	477 likes, 2.1k likes

6.2 Interview Questions

1. What was your upbringing like? Home life?
2. How did your family members express acts of love in the home?
3. Were they open about their past/upbringing? What did they share with you?
4. What cultural practices did you engage in with your family regularly?
5. Did you find your relationship with your parents/generations before you as a transparent/open one?
6. How do you think your parents and family influenced your perception of yourself and your community?
7. How would you identify yourself today? (Ethnically, racially, sexuality, gender, etc.)
8. Were there any points of conflict between you and your parent's generation as you grew older? Describe them.
9. Do you find you've changed or disagree with particular ideals your family has taught you?
10. How would you define the African diaspora?
11. How do you create a diasporic network on Twitter?
12. How do you create community online?
13. How do you interact on Twitter, more of a bystander or active participant? Why do you think so?
14. What content do you engage with most (hashtags, trends, pages/influencers)?
15. How do you create a safe space online for yourself and others?
16. What ways do you think the teachings of your parents reappear in how you interact with Twitter? Do you think that there is a pattern?
17. What are some of Twitter's downfalls, when it comes to building community amongst ethnic/racial communities?
18. Is it any benefit to utilize digital spaces for African descendant communities?