

(81-102) should not be interpreted as a form of minimal sociality or greater individual networking, but also as a way of fostering a potential for deeper relationships, should the occasion arise.

The central finding regarding the relationship between the cell phone and poverty is that contrary to other Third World countries, the cell phone in low-income communities in Jamaica is not a source of income generation. Rather, the cell phone makes it possible for people living in poverty to survive, mainly through asking others for financial help to solve financial crises (165-66). The cell phone participates in a process where money is not saved for capital accumulation, but is filtered back through donations to alleviate crises of poverty. Such a finding highlights the importance of taking into account local situations, practices and values for policy developments, and Horst and Miller show how ethnographic work can address the shortcomings of top-down approaches commonly used by national and international policy-making institutions, and can answer the need to analyze how general conditions of poverty, welfare and technological development are enmeshed with local situations and aspirations. Furthermore, ethnography offers a way to bring more scrutiny to the often unintentional and fortuitous effects of policies (176).

Horst and Miller offer a compelling and detailed account of the complex setting within which the cell phone is embedded in low-income Jamaican communities, highlighting how economic and political factors, social aspirations and cultural values are inseparable from technological development and have profound and specific social and personal impacts. In so doing, the strength of their approach lies in the invitation to think beyond strict categorization and direct causality models.

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Midlife and Older Women: Family Life, Work and Health in Jamaica. Joan Rawlins. Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006; tables; illustrations; I + 173 pages; ISBN 976-640-183-7; \$20.00US (paper).

Joan Rawlins provides an excellent historical account of family life, health and employment experiences of middle-aged and older working-class and middle-class Jamaican women in the early 1990s in two Jamaican communities: the traditional working-class community of August Town and the established middle-class community of Hope Pastures. She examines how gender, age, socio-economic status, education and region are implicated in these women's experiences accessing health services and paid employment and negotiating relationships with family.

Rawlins argues that the matrifocal character of most Jamaican families is simultaneously oppressive and empowering to Jamaican women. She contends that while many of these women exert a certain amount of power in their homes by taking up many of the financial, emotional and physical care and decision-making responsibilities there, they face a double burden in that depressed economic conditions often require that they also work outside of the home, often until they become seniors.

Given that Jamaica has seen significant changes in its economy, health care and social conditions since the early 1990s when the data was originally collected, the author's decision to use historical data in a book that was published in 2006 is a curious one, particularly since she fails to clearly explain why she made this decision. Moreover, her historical analysis loses much of its impact without a clear articulation of how the economy, health system and social conditions have evolved (and in many instances worsened) in Jamaica over the past fifteen years. For example, since the data was collected over fifteen years ago, AIDS has become one of the most significant (if not the most

significant) health problems in the Caribbean, a factor that could only be alluded to in her discussions on the health care system.

In addition, the author's failure to examine how the women used spirituality, religion and the church to help them cope with the many hardships they encountered in their lives was a particularly glaring omission, given the numerous studies that have been conducted over the years demonstrating the significant role that these issues play in relieving the emotional and physical burdens experienced by Black women worldwide.

However, Rawlins' use of multiple data sources, such as survey interviews, case studies, discussions with community members and library resources, significantly enhances her analysis by offering a wide-ranging and credible account of the experiences of Jamaican women. In addition, although she provides an intellectual and critical account of the issues, her discussion is never mired in pretentious or overly philosophical and intellectual language that would turn off the general readership. Consequently, the book is accessible to a diverse audience, including students, teachers, researchers, scholars and the general reader.

Rawlins' book provides an important feminist analysis of gender relations, the family, health and employment in the Caribbean, particularly because she shows how these issues are intimately connected in the experiences of Jamaican and Caribbean women.

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