

# WHY MAINE? SECONDARY MIGRATION DECISIONS OF SOMALI REFUGEES

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## ABSTRACT

Since 2001 a steady stream of Somali secondary migrants have been leaving their initial places of resettlement and moving to Lewiston, Maine. Drawing from in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observations, this article addresses several questions: Why do Somalis move in and out of Maine? What are the agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions among Somalis? What role does social capital play in facilitating migration to and from Maine? The findings illustrate the ways in which secondary migration decisions are motivated by changing agentic orientations and actualized by social capital. In my analysis, I explain the nuances and complexities of secondary migration decisions and illustrate the ways in which agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions interpenetrate with social structure.

**KEYWORDS:** *secondary migration, Somalia, refugees, Maine.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Maine is now home to more than 6,000 Somalis, at least 3,500 of whom live in Lewiston and neighboring Auburn.<sup>1</sup> Although their migratory paths are as varied and interconnected as the people that have traversed them, most Somalis share a common past of having lived in other places in the United States before relocating to Maine.<sup>2</sup> A small percentage of Somali refugees

were resettled in Maine through refugee resettlement programs—mostly in Portland—however, the majority of Somalis in Maine chose it as their home. In fact, municipal officials in Lewiston, Maine, estimate that secondary migrants account for 95 percent of the city’s Somali refugee population.<sup>3</sup>

Many ask, “But why Maine?” And “Why Lewiston?” At first glance, it is perplexing. After all, Maine is cold, it is overwhelmingly white, there are few Muslims, wages tend to fall below national averages, and the economy is struggling. But closer observation reveals many reasons for this secondary migration to Maine. This article addresses several questions: Why do Somalis move in and out of Maine? What are the agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions among Somalis? How do the agentic dimensions of migration decision interpenetrate with social structure? What role does social capital play in facilitating migration to and from Maine? To answer these questions, I examine the secondary migration patterns of Somali refugees moving in and out of Lewiston/Auburn, Maine, and analyze the ways in which agency and social capital mediate and facilitate the secondary migration decisions of those Somalis. This article aims to go beyond the view that individuals are simply pushed and pulled by macro level factors. Thus, I argue that to understand why Somalis move, it is essential to also understand not only the macrostructural factors but also the agentic processes that undergird secondary migration decisions. I contend that while social capital mediates and facilitates the secondary migration decisions, individual actors need to use agency in order to utilize social capital. Considering the agentic dimensions of secondary migration patterns of Somalis helps shed light on the complex and dialectical relationships between structure, culture, and agency.

This article proceeds in five sections. I begin with an overview of Somali refugee resettlement in the US. This followed by a review of the literature and the theoretical

framework. I then describe the research context of Lewiston, Maine, and discuss the particular research methods used. In the findings section, I first discuss the macro-structural push and pull factors that contribute to why Somalis move in and out of Maine, and outline the ways in which the agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions are associated with social capital.

## **SOMALI RESETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES**

Since the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act in 1965 and the Refugee Act in 1980, African immigration to the United States has steadily increased. Between 2004 and 2007, refugees from Africa constituted the largest number of arrivals in the U.S., and the majority of those were Somalis. In fact, between 2001 and 2007, the US admitted close to 400,000 refugees, of which 47,302 were Somalis.<sup>4</sup>

The rise of Somali immigration has its roots in the Somali civil war, which began in 1991. Given the continued violence and turmoil in Somalia and the tens of thousands of Somalis still residing in refugee camps in Kenya, Somali immigration to the United States is expected to continue growing. While many will arrive as refugees, increasing numbers of Somalis will arrive via family reunification programs, sponsored by relatives who have become permanent residents or US citizens. Somali refugees have been resettled in every state except seven.<sup>5</sup> Somali settlement in the United States is characterized by both concentration and dispersion. The majority of Somalis are concentrated in large metropolitan areas such as Minneapolis, Minnesota; Atlanta, Georgia; and Columbus, Ohio, but they are also dispersed around the country.

However, Somalis seldom remain where they are resettled. Lidwien Kapteijns and Abukar Arman point out, “even after resettlement Somalis do not sit still.”<sup>6</sup> Since 2000, “a great

deal of secondary and tertiary migration has occurred as Somalis relocate in search of various types of opportunities (e.g., affordable housing, employment, education and health care).”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, many Somalis relocate to find jobs and refugee services.<sup>8</sup> Increasing numbers of Somalis have been drawn to meatpacking jobs in small cities and rural towns in the Midwest.<sup>9</sup> The estimated Somali population in Minnesota ranges from 15,000 to 30,000.<sup>10</sup> And according to one study, 60 percent of Somalis living in Minneapolis-St. Paul moved there from elsewhere in the United States.<sup>11</sup>

Somalis have a tendency to settle in communities with other Somalis.<sup>12</sup> Some relocate to large metropolitan areas with established Somali communities, but others move to small metropolitan or rural areas whose populations are racially homogeneous and where the Somali refugees are often highly visible. For example, Somalis account for 10 percent of the population in Lewiston, Maine, and thirteen percent of the population in Barron, Wisconsin.<sup>13</sup>

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Previous research indicates that the most important determinants of secondary migration include the existence of an established ethnic community,<sup>14</sup> socioeconomic factors,<sup>15</sup> educational opportunities,<sup>16</sup> the possession of human capital,<sup>17</sup> and access to social capital.<sup>18</sup>

There is ample evidence that new immigrants and refugees gravitate to geographic areas where there is an existing concentration of compatriots<sup>19</sup> and that the majority of secondary migrants move to large metropolitan areas with concentrations of foreign born residents.<sup>20</sup> Research also indicates that the key socioeconomic factors affecting secondary migration include social class status, employment opportunities, local economic conditions, and availability of resources. In his work with Laotian refugees, Zakir Hossain determined that refugees with the

most financial resources were likely to relocate.<sup>21</sup> According to Zimmerman and Fix, employment opportunity is one of the most important reasons for relocation.<sup>22</sup> Buckley points to a relationship between secondary migration and welfare availability particularly among refugees.<sup>23</sup> Zimmerman and Fix also reported that welfare generosity influences refugees' migration decisions, although to a lesser extent than jobs and family ties.<sup>24</sup> Yet, as Dianna Shandy points out, while some Sudanese refugees do move to obtain access to resources that will help them improve the situation for their families, reducing secondary migration to welfare generosity ignores its complex social dimensions.<sup>25</sup> Madeline Zavodny ascertained that state economic conditions influence relocation choices and that new refugees are unlikely to move to states with high unemployment levels.<sup>26</sup>

Research indicates that human capital characteristics such as age, language proficiency, education level, employment, and skill set influence immigrants' propensity to relocate. Several scholars found that those with a higher level of education are more likely to migrate<sup>27</sup>, whereas others found that some immigrants cross state lines to advance their human capital through educational opportunities.<sup>28</sup> Gurak and Kritz found that Africans and Indians show the highest interstate migration propensity.<sup>29</sup>

Most of the US secondary migration literature has focused on Southeast Asians and has overlooked the secondary migration patterns of other groups, particularly Africans.<sup>30</sup> This is not surprising, given that Southeast Asian refugees account for more than half of the approximate two million refugees resettled in the United States since the 1970s whereas the majority of African refugees arrived in the past two decades.

Moreover, the existing literature on factors affecting secondary migration focuses primarily on macro-structural economic ones. While this focus has yielded important findings

about determinants of secondary migration, questions remain about micro-level processes and the interplay between macro and micro level factors. This article addresses this gap by focusing the agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions and on the ways in which secondary migration decisions are made within specific temporal and structural-historical contexts.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The literature on social capital spans multiple disciplines and is conceptualized in a variety of ways. Social capital generally refers to both economic and non-economic resources and benefits which individuals' access and exchange through their membership in social networks. The concept has a long history, which some date back to John Dewey and Karl Marx. Alejandro Portes points out that despite recent wide usage of the term social capital; it is not a new idea as the meaning behind it has deep roots in sociology. "That involvement and participation in groups can have positive consequences for the individual and community is a staple notion, dating back to Durkheim's emphasis on group life as an antidote to anomie and self-destruction and to Marx's distinction between an atomized class-in-itself and a mobilized and effective class-for-itself."<sup>31</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant define social capital as "the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."<sup>32</sup> While the majority of immigration scholars do at least consider the ways social capital supports migration, a few have argued that migration disrupts social networks and leads to a decline in social capital.<sup>33</sup>

The mainstream literature on social capital has been criticized predominantly on four fronts including: 1) inconsistency in defining social capital which has led to much ambiguity

about its meaning and application;<sup>34</sup> Portes writes, “the point is approaching at which social capital comes to be applied to so many events and in so many different contexts as to lose any distinct meaning.”<sup>35</sup> 2) overemphasizing the positive aspects of social capital while overlooking the negative ones;<sup>36</sup> 3) favoring quantitative research methodologies which ignore the intersubjective and micro-level contextual processes and social dynamics involved in understanding social capital;<sup>37</sup> and 4), for being tautological, treating social capital as both a cause and effect.<sup>38</sup> This article aims to address the third criticism by examining the ways in which social capital intersects with temporal dimensions of agency that operate on the micro level.

Despite these challenges and ambiguity over its definition, most scholars agree on at least three key features of social capital: *social networks*, *trust*, and *bounded solidarity or relations of reciprocity*. In my working concept of social capital, I begin with the basic definition put forth by Alejandro Portes, who defines social capital as “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures.”<sup>39</sup> Drawing from the work of Bourdieu and Coleman, Portes points out that social capital has an “intangible character...Whereas economic capital is in people’s bank accounts and human capital inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of relationships.”<sup>40</sup> I also incorporate the theories of those who have challenged and expanded on Portes’ definition. Hellermann argues that Portes does not clearly distinguish between social capital and social networks and Fuglerund and Engebrigsten broaden Portes’s definition of social capital by problematizing his and other scholars’ lack of attention to the wider context and historical depth of social capital among immigrant populations.<sup>41</sup> They argue that such an approach tends to view “processes taking place in country of origin and country of settlement as empirically and analytically separate”

rather than interconnected.<sup>42</sup> “In order to understand the life and situation of immigrant groups there is a need to take into account broader issues and more deep-seated traditions than the encounter with a particular new society. In particular, when discussing migrants, we need to understand how the people concerned conceptualize space and their own communities within it.”<sup>43</sup>

In migration research, scholars have examined the relationship between social capital and a variety of variables including social mobility, entrepreneurship, assimilation, educational achievement, ethnic identity, and human capital. With few exceptions, most immigration scholars have focused on how social capital facilitates international movement while overlooking the ways in which social capital facilitates internal migration within a particular nation.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, most immigration scholars analyze the links between social capital and specific outcomes (e.g., employment, social mobility, assimilation, educational advancement) rather than examining the patterns and processes involved.

A number of studies have examined social capital and migration patterns, but with few exceptions, this literature has failed to consider secondary migration within a specific country. Although some scholars have noted the importance of social capital in secondary migration, most have focused on the economic dimensions of social capital as well as the adaptive functions and outcomes of social capital while overlooking the micro-level dimensions and dynamics of social capital. In this article, I aim to demonstrate the ways in which social capital is a relational process that involves cultural specificities, structure and agency. It is also important to recognize that human capital and social capital are inextricably linked. Social capital influences the accumulation of human capital and vice versa. For instance, people learn about opportunities to improve their skills through their social networks and in turn, their investment in human capital



leads to an expansion of social capital. I argue that secondary migration decisions are strongly influenced by both access to social capital and temporal dimensions of agency. In doing so, I aim to enhance the existing literature by shedding light on the micro-level processes and locating secondary migration decisions within the larger historical context of Somali history and culture. It is well established that refugees rely on social capital for help and support during migration.<sup>45</sup> In fact, Laura Simich refers to secondary migration as a “support-seeking behavior.”<sup>46</sup> However, what remains unexamined is how social capital is related to the agentic dimensions of secondary migration decisions. This article seeks to fill this gap by paying close attention to the agentic dimensions of secondary migration. My analysis draws upon Emirbayer and Mische’s conception of agency and Alejandro Portes’s and Robert Putnam’s conceptions of social capital.<sup>47</sup> I argue that secondary migration decisions are made within specifically temporal and structural-historical contexts and that these decisions are both associated with access to social capital and are located within specific temporal and structural-historical contexts. Specifically, Emirbayer and Mische conceptualize agency as a “temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its ‘iterational’ or habitual aspect) but also oriented toward the future (as a ‘projective’ capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a ‘practical-evaluative’ capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment.”<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, I assess the ways in which Somalis’ decision to move to and from Maine are embedded within multiple temporalities at once and are simultaneously informed by the past and oriented toward the present and future.

## SOMALI REFUGEES IN LEWISTON, MAINE

The research site of this study is Lewiston, Maine. As the largest state in New England with a population of 1.3 million, Maine is known for its long, cold winters and heavy snowfall. Maine's second largest city, Lewiston, is located forty miles from the largest city, Portland. Lewiston is predominantly white, Roman Catholic, and Franco American, and has been dubbed "the most Franco city in the US" At the time of the 2000 census, 96 percent of Lewiston's 35,690 residents were white.<sup>49</sup> An estimated 28 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home, and of those, the majority speak French.<sup>50</sup> The residents of Lewiston tend to lag behind the rest of the state in education and socioeconomic status. Lewiston contains two of the poorest census tracts in Maine; according to the Maine Department of Labor, the city's 15 percent poverty rate exceeds the statewide average; and the median household income falls below the statewide average.<sup>51</sup>

Somalis began relocating to Lewiston at an historical moment when population decline was at its most severe and the availability of housing was correspondingly high. In 2001, there was a newly established Somali population in Portland, but given that city's housing vacancy rate of less than 3 percent, Somali families were resettled instead to Lewiston, where the vacancy rate was then 20 percent (declining to 7 percent by 2008). Between 2001 and 2005 the majority of secondary migrants to Lewiston were ethnic Somalis, and in 2006 and 2007 Somali Bantus made up the majority of secondary migration relocations.<sup>52</sup>

Today, many of the vacant apartments and stores are occupied by Somali families and Somali-run businesses and organizations. On Lisbon Street, the primary thoroughfare in downtown Lewiston, a store-front mosque is in the midst of retail shops selling Somali food, clothes, books, and videos. Somalis stroll along the street wearing traditional colorful *hijabs*

ranging from the more conservative two-piece *jelaalbib* to the looser *maser*. Many of the men wear long, loose tunics (*ma'awis*) or embroidered caps called *kooiyad*. However unlikely, and perhaps to its surprise, Lewiston has become a Somali community.

## METHODS

The findings presented in this article are based on five years of data collection and observations compiled by the Somali Narrative Project (SNP), an interdisciplinary collaborative documenting and examining the experiences of Somali refugees in Maine. Data includes twenty-seven interviews with individuals (fifteen women and twelve men), eight focus groups comprising a total of thirty individuals (twenty-one women and nine men) and many hours of participant observation in Somali homes and neighborhoods, stores, cultural celebrations and festivals, school events, a wedding, and other public spaces.<sup>53</sup>

Following the example of community-based research,<sup>54</sup> we enlisted the help of Somali students and community members to conduct a community forum as a vehicle through which Somalis could tell us their interests and needs. Within the parameters of our collective areas of expertise – sociology, women's studies, history, communication, and Maine studies – we subsequently worked with community members to develop a community-based research project to document the immigration stories and experiences in Maine. We utilized the snowball method of sampling to find research participants for the interviews and focus groups through our established contacts. With research funding we hired two Somali community members – a man and a woman – to consult on the project and to help coordinate and schedule the interviews and focus groups. We trained and paid three Somali students to conduct interviews, and with their help, we did half of the interviews in Somali language.

Focus groups took place in community centers and office conference rooms, whereas the majority of the interviews took place in the homes of participants in Lewiston and Auburn, Maine. Two of the interviews took place over the phone with Somalis who had moved out of Maine. The interviews and focus groups lasted between one and two hours. Participants were offered the option of speaking in Somali, English, or a combination, and trained bilingual interviewers were present.

The interviews and focus groups were semi-structured, based on a list of predetermined questions. In the interest of fostering subjects' active participation in the dialogue, the sequencing of the questions varied, depending on the situation. Somalis are known for their storytelling and as such, it was not uncommon for participants to tell stories throughout the interviews and focus groups. In addition, during the interviews and focus groups, people often showed up after an interview or focus group was underway, sometimes flowing in and out of the room and the conversation. This occurred more often in people's homes which were fluid environments characterized by children, extended family members, or neighbors coming and going. Only those who participated in the dialogue were included as subjects.

At the beginning of the interviews and focus groups, participants drew their migration histories on maps of the Horn of Africa and the United States. Participants were then asked to relate their decision to move to Lewiston, their experiences living in Maine, and if applicable, to explain why they now want to leave.<sup>55</sup> Participants in this study ranged in age from eighteen to seventy-one, had arrived in Maine between 2000 and 2008, and were interviewed between 2006 and 2009. Prior to moving to Lewiston, all of the participants lived elsewhere in the United States, and most had moved several times.<sup>56</sup>

## **SOMALIS ON THE MOVE: COMING TO MAINE**

Migration is not a new phenomenon for Somalis. Participants in this study reported complex migration histories even before war prompted a mass exodus. For many, mobility with the changing seasons was a way of life. Most participants or their parents had moved within Somalia, typically from the North to the South in search of better economic opportunities after independence in 1960; across borders to neighboring Kenya, Ethiopia, or Djibouti to join extended family; to other countries, such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia, or Italy to work or go to school; or had moved in with relatives in another area of Somalia to attend school or find work.

Movement within Somalia was common and elastic, taking place within dense kin and clan networks, with the orality of Somali culture and gender norms sustaining the connections and linking people together. Like Fuglerund and Engebrigsten, who found among Somalis “a tendency towards dispersal and of managing tasks through long-distance networks,”<sup>57</sup> I discovered that relations among Somalis exist within a wide web of social connections spanning the US and global diaspora. Almost every participant reported regular contact with immediate and extended family throughout the United States and the world, in places like Canada, Kenya, Ethiopia, England, Australia, Sweden, and the Netherlands. Somalis in this study migrated internally for a variety of reasons, but most actualized their move through their membership in social networks.

Initially, the bulk of Somali secondary migrants moved to Lewiston from Clarkston, Georgia, a city ten miles northeast of Atlanta,<sup>58</sup> but since that time, Somalis have been relocating to Lewiston from many different locations including Columbus, Ohio; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Boston, Massachusetts. According to the City of Lewiston, Somalis who applied for public assistance between 2001 and 2007 came from thirty-five US states, three countries, and one

hundred cities and many had lived in several different states. The paths of the following three men are typical. Mohammed moved to Maine almost two years ago from Vermont where he had lived for twenty months. Prior to that he had spent six months in Atlanta, where he was initially settled after eight years in two refugee camps in Kenya. Guleed had been in Lewiston for eighteen months. Prior to that he lived in Chicago for eight months, where he was initially settled after eight years in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. Khalid lived in Dallas, Texas for three years before moving to Maine.

### **WHY LEWISTON?**

According to city officials, more Somalis are moving into Maine than are leaving. During an interview, one city official commented, “since the end of 2001 I don’t think we’ve ever seen a month where we haven’t had an average of twenty-five to thirty relocations.”

For Somalis in Lewiston, economic incentives cannot be the primary factor for secondary migration, given the extremely limited job opportunities there. Phil Nadeau writes, “What confounded most refugee resettlement experts about Lewiston’s secondary migration relocation activity was the absence of any resettlement activity or industry that might have influenced their relocation decisions to the city.”<sup>59</sup> This economic reality has contributed to the widespread public perception that Somalis are moving to Maine to use welfare benefits. Rumors circulate that tax dollars are used to give Somalis large cash sums and free cars.<sup>60</sup> Several participants pointed out that when people see Somalis congregating on Lisbon Street in Lewiston, they assume that they are on welfare. Omar challenged this. “If you see a Somali standing at Lisbon Street it doesn’t mean that the Somali is idle. That Somali will be at Lisbon Street because that is the center of information for the community . . . Maybe he came from night shift, passed

through the *halal* [store] to pick his meat, he will pick up a calling card, and then go home and sleep for the rest of the day.”

Closer examination indicates that while some Somalis may be attracted to the social services provided in Maine, such services are not the singular motivating factor driving secondary migration. The most common reason given for moving to Maine was to improve quality of life. Although welfare is one aspect of such an improvement, more frequently cited macro-level aspects included safety and increased social control, good schools, and affordable housing. As Muna put it, “Atlanta was hard, you know, a big family, it is really hard to raise kids in Atlanta.” In these ways, Somalis resemble other secondary migrants who seek a better life for their families.

Several of the participants in this study did specifically mention welfare benefits as a reason for moving to Maine.<sup>61</sup> Sufia, who arrived in Lewiston with her family in 2001, said:

I moved to Lewiston because in Atlanta, where I lived for about nine years, I had two jobs. I used to work at a factory and I owned a little store. One day my son was somewhere and I was looking for him when I fell and broke my leg. In Atlanta they don’t give adults Medicare or any type of medical plan. So I moved to Maine because I was told that the adults get Medicare and medical expenses would be paid for.

Similarly, Cawo, a woman in her early twenties, reported that her large family moved from Decatur, Georgia, because her father heard that “there would be better assistance here.”

The majority of Lewiston’s early wave of secondary migrants left Georgia, which has one of the lowest levels of welfare benefits in the United States (ranked

fortieth) to move to Maine, which is among the highest (ranked thirteenth).<sup>62</sup>

Georgia also has one of the harshest lifetime limit policies on welfare benefits in the United States at forty-eight months (a year less than the sixty-month limit established by the federal government in 1996).<sup>63</sup> In contrast, Maine has no lifetime limit and, unlike Georgia, allows benefits to continue to children when their parents are no longer receiving assistance.<sup>64</sup>

The data suggest that welfare benefits may be a macrostructural factor affecting some Somalis' decision to relocate to Maine; however, it is important to point out that this widespread perception appears to be exaggerated in the media and other factors tend to be overlooked. Although many secondary migrants do come from states with middle or low level benefits, such as Georgia and Texas, many others come from states that actually offer equal or higher benefits than Maine, including New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Minnesota.<sup>65</sup> The data indicate that a significant number of Somalis leaving Lewiston are headed to states with either lower monthly benefits (Utah and Arizona) or harsher lifetime limits (Minnesota, Washington, and Utah) than Maine.<sup>66</sup> This illustrates the ways in which agentic dimensions intersect with social structure (i.e., welfare benefits) as well as the fluid nature of agentic orientation. Those who are drawn to Maine because of the relatively better welfare benefits are often responding to the inadequate resources available in their initial places of settlement. In trying to attend to their basic needs they are temporally oriented toward the present. Whereas, as I will discuss below, those who leave Maine for states that offer fewer benefits are more likely to be oriented toward their future (e.g., in search of economic opportunities).



### *SAFETY AND INCREASED SOCIAL CONTROL*

Many of the study participants were initially resettled in large, inner city neighborhoods characterized by high crime, drugs, gang activity, substandard housing, and grossly underfunded schools. Some participants expressed dissatisfaction with the macro-level structures in these neighborhoods such as housing and schools, while others referred to the tensions and conflicts that occurred on the micro-level in these communities. Omar, a Somali man in his thirties, points out:

Many...refugees are [re]settled in are very deprived communities. So by the time you come and realize where you are, it is like, “Oh, my God. Where am I living in the US? Is this the country I was coming to?” . . . It’s these very tough neighborhoods where even the front doors have gates and the whole night what you hear are police sirens and gun shots and murders.

Cawo’s family moved to Maine from Atlanta because her kids were being bullied. “There was a lot of violence in the community I lived in.” Similarly, Halima cited the conflicts that ensued between African Americans and Somali immigrants: “African Americans usually inhabit the dilapidated neighborhoods; like most people, they react to the new immigrants and therefore tensions begin.” Halima’s observations were echoed by several interviewees who described being harassed and beat up by African Americans at school.

Safety, especially for raising children, was the most persistent reason given for moving to Maine. To understand why safety is paramount, it is important to remember that unlike many immigrants who move to the United States for economic opportunities, Somalis were fleeing war and poverty in Somalia or harsh and unsafe conditions in refugee camps. One young woman

stated, “my mom moved us [to Lewiston] since she was the only one with us...My father did not come with us—he is still in Kenya—so that’s why we decided to come here because it’s quiet and smaller and less crime.”

Some Somalis moved to Maine to have more social control over their children’s religious and cultural behaviors and dress, as well as to keep closer tabs on their whereabouts. Some parents expressed heightened concern for teenage sons, whom they viewed as being at higher risk than daughters for being drawn into oppositional cultures in inner cities. Many participants noted that it was easier to exert parental control over their children in Lewiston compared with other places they had lived. This was often attributed to the small size of the city as well as to more religious conservatism among Somalis in Lewiston than the Somali population in nearby Portland. One young woman, Aman reported that:

“We joke all the time when we see someone and say, ‘how much do you want to bet that my mom’s gonna call me knowing where I am right now?’ . . . It’s kind of a joke . . . They can keep a closer eye on us because it’s a small town and everybody knows each other.”

For some parents, the desire to have more control over their children was especially acute when their children were young and in school. Relative to other places they had lived, Somalis viewed Lewiston schools as safe places where their children could get a good education.

*GOOD SCHOOLS*

It is well documented that educational opportunities are a determinant of secondary migration for immigrants, and for the participants in this study, education was essential. This is not surprising since Somali culture tends to have “strong positive attitudes toward, and expectations of, modern education.”<sup>67</sup> As one young woman stated, “school was definitely one of the biggest reasons why we moved here.”

Most Somali families moved to Maine when their children were young, but two participants moved to Maine as adults because they had heard good things about Maine colleges. When describing the importance of education among Somalis, Halima explained, “one thing you need to understand is that, religious or not, .... teaching [their children] and encouraging getting a higher education is one thing that is common for all parents.” Most participants had positive things to say about the schools in Lewiston, especially compared to their experiences elsewhere. Eighteen-year-old Aman reported, “in contrast [to Boston] we definitely have gotten our education. I just graduated and we have been a lot safer here and the schools have been more structured, more serious, and more willing to help us . . . [Here] there are more caring people who want to see you succeed.”

For many parents with young children, access to educational opportunities temporarily outweighed the availability of jobs. These parents regarded education as an investment in the future. From Khalid’s perspective, “it is very hard to find a job in Lewiston but I think it is good place to get an education, for our children to go to school. When we get enough English we have to move out to find a good place to work.” Similarly, Guleed, a father of five, stated, “that’s why we moved to Lewiston. We wanted to improve our education. I think if we get a good education maybe we will move to another place where we can have a good job.”

## *HOUSING*

Many participants cited cheap, affordable housing as a factor in their decision to move to Lewiston. Because the vacancy rate hovered around 20 percent when Somalis first started arriving, rents were extremely low. A Lewiston city official reports, “the rents have increased... [but] in Lewiston you can still have 350 dollar-a-month apartments . . . The market will demand that that kind of price be in place because there are still landlords that are looking to fill the units.” Caaliya puts this in perspective: “in California even though we had jobs they weren’t able to sustain us . . . Rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$1200 . . . here in Maine [it] was \$462.” Along these lines, Faadumo stated:

We were in Atlanta for three years. . . My mom was working at two jobs and my father was trying to get his degrees back and all of his papers and he was also working. I was working, my sister was working, and still it wasn’t enough because our rent was really really high . . . We moved a lot . . . And then finally my parents were like, “We have to go somewhere else because the housing here is really expensive.”

Housing is further complicated by the size of Somali families. Most apartments in the United States are not designed to accommodate large families. In California, Caaliya’s family of sixteen could not afford housing sufficient for all of them, so she and some of her siblings lived with other families. Such arrangements were common.

Some participants reported that federal Section 8 housing vouchers are more available in Maine.<sup>68</sup> One Somali case worker observed, “there is no waiting line in getting subsidized housing or Section 8 in Lewiston...The grapevine is that once most get their Section 8 vouchers

they move out to other states. I know of five families that have moved to Arizona.” While some of our participants did allow that they moved to Maine to obtain better public assistance benefits such as welfare and Section 8 housing, this reason by itself cannot explain the quality of life issues—safety, schools, housing—that drew Somalis to Maine. As noted earlier, many of those who are leaving Maine are moving to places that offer fewer welfare benefits.

In sum, the secondary migration decisions of Somalis who moved to Maine were embedded in multiple temporalities at once. Decisions were simultaneously shaped by orientations toward the past (war, unsafe neighborhoods in the US), the present (the desire to preserve culture and religion, and their immediate needs for safety, affordable housing and good schools), and the future (their interest in obtaining a quality education to improve future opportunities, pursuit of the American Dream). Emirbayer and Mische point out that in any given moment, one orientation may dominate but they are all simultaneously present. Moreover, they stress the fluidity of agency: “the key to grasping the dynamic possibilities of human agency is to view it as composed of variable and changing orientations within the flow of time.”

<sup>69</sup> The participants in this study illustrate that when one’s situation changes so does one’s agentic orientation. For example, participants reported that safety was the paramount concern that prompted relocation to Maine and as such, the initial decision to move was oriented toward the past and present. Many did not give much thought to what they would do after they settled in Maine; many assumed that they would find a job. After settling in Maine and learning that it was difficult to find a full time job, those who decided to leave tended to shift their primary orientation from the past and present toward the present and future. The agentic dimensions of the migration decisions interpenetrate with social structure. While the decisions took place and were carried out within social networks on the micro level, macro level factors, such as social

services, crime, schools, and housing, formed the backdrop that precipitated the decision to relocate.

### **WHY DO SOMALIS LEAVE MAINE?**

Participants cited a variety of reasons for leaving or wanting to leave Lewiston including “the winter,” “all the trees,” “sometimes there’s nothing to do,” “we can’t find housing to accommodate our growing family,” and “[I’m] disappointed with the school system.” Although many left or desired to leave because they were dissatisfied with life in Lewiston, many others spoke highly of living in Maine, and several of those who left reported that they missed Maine and hoped to move back one day. Farham, a fifty-five-year-old man who moved to the Southwest with his wife and seven children, expressed a strong desire to return. He said “one leg of mine is still in Maine. I like Maine. It was the first place that gave me an opportunity to be where I am today. I have to pay that back and will return to Maine.” When describing life in Maine, he said, “the water is very sweet in Maine. Once you taste it you’ll never [want to] leave.” Overall, three persistent and recurring themes about leaving Maine emerged from the data.

#### ***LACK OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES***

The most commonly reported reason for leaving was joblessness. Many Somalis struggled to find full-time work, and those who graduated from college left for other states with stronger job markets. Halima’s observations are echoed throughout the interviews: “I see the

young college-educated leaving the state because of unemployment. I was talking to some of the students, and they are all planning to leave right after graduation.”

Many adult participants who did find work reported working seasonal jobs or having to travel long distances to work. Guleed said, “it is very hard to work in Lewiston for the refugee migrants . . . One day I applied for twenty jobs for different companies. No one called me.” Another man stated, “[Somalis] go to work in Freeport, they go to work in Augusta, they go to work in another city, but not in Lewiston.” Aman, whose family is in the process of relocating to the west coast, said, “my family is leaving because there are not enough jobs here. There’s not enough . . . I don’t see that there are a lot of options for people like us [here].”

Many of the younger participants reported plans to leave Maine after college, in part because they have seen how hard it is to make a living in Maine. Omar reported, “I finished college. I stayed here but I could not get a job.” Another reported, “two of my siblings have graduated from college and they stayed here for a year just looking for a job and they can’t find anything so they have to look outside the state.” The following responses were typical among Somali college students: “I’m going to leave Maine as soon as I am done with college,” “I’m planning on staying here until I graduate and get my master’s degree,” and “there is not much in Maine for me. As soon as I graduate I’m leaving. *Inshallah* (God willing).”

Libaan, who is pursuing his master’s degree and hopes to stay in Maine, observed that the out-migration of Somalis is similar to the out-migration of other college-educated Mainers: “I mean it’s well known that even Mainers, when they graduate from college, they leave.” While this may be true, a key difference between native-Mainers and Somalis is that among Somalis, the entire family tends to move, either in stages or all at once, whereas native-Mainers are more likely to move on their own. This reflects a key difference between US culture, which

emphasizes individualism and Somali culture which places more value on the group over the individual.

The educational opportunities in Maine seemed to outweigh the lack of jobs, at least until family priorities shift. Libaan noted that “when people with young kids move here they don’t worry about their kids getting jobs until they get to the point that they have to pursue jobs.” Yet, even those who were quite satisfied with the educational opportunities in Maine also reported experiences of racism or expressed some dismay over the lack of racial and cultural diversity within the schools, the second most important reason given for leaving Maine among my participants.

### *RACISM AND LACK OF RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL DIVERSITY IN MAINE*

Some participants reported coming to Maine either to escape racialized experiences in other urban areas or because they believed that the North would be more accepting of racial and religious diversity than the South. Several young Somalis reported being beat up or harassed by other racial minorities prior to moving to Maine. Thirty-four-year-old Omar reported: “I came [to Lewiston] from the South which was totally a different world. When I arrived in Atlanta ... I saw all the big trucks with the confederate flag on top of it, and I was going like ‘My God!’” He continued that Somalis “want to go places where they are no longer in the limelight, but once they arrive here they come to realize that you cannot take one step without being identified as a Somali...Oh my God, this place is not even diverse!”

Some participants had only positive things to say about their experiences in Maine. Halima, reflecting about the “Many and One Rally” that drew an estimated 4,000 people,<sup>70</sup> stated:



I love Maine . . . I don't know if you remember January 11, 2003, but people from Lewiston clearly stated that they would not welcome racism in their communities. I remember going to the rally against my mother's will. There were so many people from all over Maine. I remember thinking, "Well, there you go; after all, we are welcomed here. I remember this one incident at a gas station where an old Caucasian woman walked up to me and said, "We love to have you here." It was early in the morning, like 4 AM, and I was going to work in Freeport. Lewiston is a great city and most of the Somalis there don't face racism. This does not mean that racism is not an issue. There is always that one person or group in every community in the United States.

Ladan, a woman in her late twenties stated, "Here most of the people are white so I thought they would discriminate because I'm wearing a head scarf or because I'm black but actually it was different . . . One day I went to Sam's Club and this lady was asking me about my *hijab* and she said, 'Oh, I like your scarf. I would like to have one like that, too, you know.'" And Farham stated, "I have not experienced discrimination on the basis of race or religion in Maine. Lewiston people are very polite and very respectful, but slow to open up to new immigrants. This is due to most of them having lived here since their birth. They already have all the friends they need."

More commonly, however, participants reported more nuanced and often negative experiences about being racially and culturally different. Living in Maine has taken a toll on Caaliya, a recent college graduate who is leaving Maine to attend graduate school in a large city:

It's exhausting . . . being Somali and living in Lewiston because it's not just limelight, it's kind of like a shining, beaming spotlight that goes with you wherever you go . . . because if I go to Boston, I go to New York people at most will go, "Oh there goes an African-American Muslim." . . . It's almost like a craving for invisibility.

For Hibo, a young woman in her early twenties, "the lack of diversity in Maine is mostly what I dislike about being here . . . It sucks to be a minority in a state where almost 99 percent of the population is white."

After praising the education she received in Maine, Aman qualified her experience. "The racial and cultural tensions are a major reason why I want to leave. I mean education-wise—books, studying, academics—it's been good but I think socially it hasn't been. People don't understand about our religion and our culture...they kind of back away because they just don't understand." For thirty-four-year-old, Ahmed, who moved to Lewiston in 2001:

I was working in this company in Brunswick with this guy and we were sitting down just talking back and forth and he was like, "When Somalis come over here, they are paid by the taxes...and Somali people just keep coming over here because they find free housing and food stamps...They want to take over the whole Lewiston city." He hates Somalis so bad.

And for Rashid, a forty-year-old Somali man, "many times what I find difficult is that even though Mainers are fairly nice people and down to earth, they also came from a small town [and] they have a small town mentality."

Experiences of racism and issues of diversity are complex and contextual. Some Somalis chose to relocate to Maine from larger, urban areas like Atlanta, in part, to escape the tensions and conflicts between themselves and other racial minorities.<sup>71</sup> Many participants reported that they had not experienced racism or identified as “black” prior to immigrating to the United States. Once here, they quickly learned that they were defined as “black” by others and what this meant, including the fact that African Americans are subject to racism and largely viewed as being at the bottom of the racial hierarchy in the United States. Moving to Maine was one way of simultaneously distancing themselves from the stigma of being labeled as African American and preserving *soomaalinimo* or being Somali—something that is viewed as essential to live a “secure and dignified life.”<sup>72</sup> However, some Somalis do leave Maine because of racism, and even more often, because of the state’s lack of religious diversity.

### *CONSTRICTING EFFECTS OF RELIGIOUS CONSERVATISM AND SOCIAL CONTROL*

Omar, who has a fairly liberal view of Islam, reported that the Somali community in Lewiston is “very conservative,” explaining, “one woman told me that in Lewiston you have to toe the line or else you will be reprimanded and called names until you’re driven out of town [by other Somalis].” He went on to say, “in some circles Somalis have been referred to by other Muslims as ‘the Muslim police’” and have “behaved in ways like the Moral Police of Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan.” Other interviewees stated that if a Somali woman walks down the street in Lewiston without a *hijab*, she will be repudiated by other Somali women.

Some participants were more subtle in their criticism of social control and pointed to generational tensions between parents and children. For example, Aman wanted more freedom and anonymity in her life:

When I think about living here, I think of living under my mom's eyes I guess, and I just want to be able to go out and be able to go somewhere without somebody judging me or without somebody giving me an eye. When somebody sees you somewhere they call your mom and they say, 'Oh, I saw your daughter here.' Or whatever...I feel like in Seattle you could walk around all you want and nobody says anything."

In sum, those who decided to leave Maine were responding to present conditions (lack of jobs, racism, lack of freedom) but were more oriented toward the future and their desire to find work, experience upward mobility, live in a place that was more racially and religiously diverse, and experience more freedom by escaping the constricting effects of religious conservatism and social control. Thus, given the many and nuanced reasons why Somalis move in and out of Lewiston, it is clearly problematic to reduce secondary migration to economic factors alone. The voices of Somalis in Maine highlight how agentic orientations change over time and interpenetrate with the surrounding social structures.

### **ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Perhaps most people living in poor urban areas are dissatisfied with their quality of life and the lack of economic opportunities available for them and their children. Hence, it is not enough to just point to the factors outlined above to explain secondary migration. Rather, to understand why Somalis are able to pick up and move out of such places while the native born tend to stay, it is necessary to probe more deeply into the ways in which social capital facilitates secondary migration.

A closer examination of the forces facilitating secondary migration among Somalis reveals that the secondary migration decisions also intersect with social capital. Importantly, the Somali networks extend far beyond the impoverished areas of their primary settlement. This networking distinguishes Somalis from poor minorities living in inner-cities, who tend to live in a more isolated context with highly localized social ties.<sup>73</sup> The movement of Somalis is thus actualized by their involvement in dispersed social networks. Decisions to move in and out of Maine are located within the macrostructural and microinteractional worlds of multiple sites—Somalia, Maine, and the diaspora. Whether Somalis move to or from Maine in search of jobs, education, or safety, the way they learn about new places and opportunities is through their expansive social networks. Furthermore, in most cases, the social networks facilitate and buffer the transition from one place to another. There are always people on the other end to provide food, shelter, and assistance once they arrive in a new place. As Caaliya elaborates, “you are given rides to where you need so you have all that social support so there is no real cost in your moving . . . The only thing you are asked to do is *pay it forward* for the next family who comes” (italics added). For many Americans moving from one place to another is a costly endeavor, financially and psychologically, but Somalis’ social connections enable those with few resources to pick up and move, needing only the means to get there.

Somalis go to great lengths to help one another. There is a strong tradition of hospitality in Somali culture in which Somalis are obligated to host and help each other. Ladan, a twenty-nine-year-old woman, stated, “in Somalia, our relatives most of them are nomadic so when they come to you, to your house, you give them food . . . Hospitality over there is different, so we like to receive guests, and that way you just feel happy about it and that you have helped so many people.” Grounded in deep historical traditions, social capital is primarily exchanged through

familial and clan ties. Somali families are large and complex. Most Somalis know and can even verbally recite their family genealogy back fifteen to twenty generations, in many cases tracing their family tree back to Samaale, who is considered the founding father of Somali people.<sup>74</sup>

Galad, a sixty-three-year-old man stated, “I can count all my ancestors up to thirty generations . . . Every day I tell my children . . . First of all they have to know their relatives, and second they have to know that they are from a great country with great culture.”

Although kin and clan continue to take precedence in the United States, Somali networks are expanding and transforming within the US context where social exchange may be extended on the basis of national (Somali) or religious (Muslim) identity. When describing this process, Omar said often people initially help each other on the basis of their Somali identity (oriented toward present), and once the newcomers have been properly received in the new setting (e.g., picked up at the airport, fed), phone calls are made to find a closer clan or kin match (oriented toward past). He stated:

The Somali coming into town, no worries. We'll go there to receive you, then once we've received you we take you home. Then you rest. Then after that we'll discuss where you are going . . . then I hand you over . . . The Somali mindset is when somebody sees you, he sees you as a Somali. Then, of course, one or two days later he will have to pass you on to a more closer immediate family member. It's a natural, right thing to do. We are all Somalis, but when it comes to a certain level of comfort or details you must have a name of a person . . . That's why genealogy works positively in terms of [how] you identify yourself, then people figure out who is your closest relative.

Caaliya stated, “my mom has always told me you’re a Somali first, always. It doesn’t matter... When you’re in airports and you see another Somali person you won’t pass them because their clan at that point is irrelevant . . . We could be killing each other in Somalia, [but here] it really doesn’t matter.”

Robert Putnam’s concepts of “bonding” and “bridging” social capital are useful in understanding the shifting identities and changing social relations among Somalis in the diaspora. Social capital in general refers to social networks that are based on mutual trust and reciprocity. One dimension of social capital, bonding social capital, connects people to their own social group in which social networks are built around homogeneity (e.g., within religion, race, class, ethnic group), and trust is limited to others within the group. Another dimension, bridging social capital, occurs when social networks extend outside one’s primary group (e.g., outside of family, clan, religion, race) and trust is more general. This form of social capital can transcend group divisions and links people to the broader social structures in a particular society.<sup>75</sup> In the US context, what characterizes bonding or bridging capital for Somalis is fluid and evolving. For instance, in one context relations among Somalis from different clans might be oriented toward the past and be considered bridging capital; whereas in another, where identities are shifting and clan affiliations are fading with new generations, this very exchange could be oriented toward the present and future and viewed as a form of bonding capital, helping their “brothers” and “sisters.” My findings indicate that in the Lewiston/United States context new identities and allegiances are being forged, particularly for the 1.5 and second generations of Somalis,<sup>76</sup> to create more levels of bonding and bridging capital that fall along lines of clan, family, religion, and ancestry (Somali or African).

The remaking of social networks is also related to shifting identities among Somalis. Somalis express who they are in numerous ways. Some participants view themselves as Somali first, Muslim second. Others are very clan-identified and will only shop in stores owned by members of their clan. Still others prioritize their Islamic identity and align themselves with Muslims of other nationalities. Some see themselves aligned with other Africans, even those who are not Muslim. Regardless of how individuals self-identify, Somali identities are being transformed in the US context, and with these changes temporal dimensions are shifting, particularly for younger Somalis, and social networks are expanding in ways that include both bonding and bridging capital.

As Somali identities become more fluid, their radius of networks extends, and their agentic orientations change. For some participants, these networks are oriented primarily toward the past and present and thus, confined to members of their own racial, ethnic, or religious group. Yet others—particularly Somalis who obtain a college degree and regularly interact with non-Somalis—are more likely to be future oriented and rely on social capital resources both within and outside of their primary group. With time and new generations identities will continue to shift and change.

## **CONCLUSION**

This article addressed two central questions: 1) why do Somalis move in and out of Lewiston, Maine? And 2) in what ways are the secondary migration decisions of Somalis embedded in agentic processes and social capital? I relied on Emirbayer and Mische's conception of agency to interpret the secondary migration decisions of Somalis in this study who



moved in and out of Maine.<sup>77</sup> My analysis of social capital was based primarily on the work of Alejandro Portes and Robert Putnam.<sup>78</sup>

The most important factor pulling Somalis to Lewiston was the opportunity to improve their quality of life (i.e., safety, good schools, housing, and public assistance) and live among family and kin in accordance with their religious and cultural beliefs. The small size of Lewiston was particularly attractive in that Somalis were able to live in close proximity with one another and keep a close watch on their children. In the aftermath of a brutal civil war and years living in the harsh conditions of refugee camps, Somalis' main priorities are safety and security. In this way, Somali refugees are unlike immigrants who come to the United States in search of economic opportunities: Somalis who initially move to Maine are influenced by past experiences and are primarily oriented toward their present concerns about safety. Having fled the violence of war and the instability of refugee camps, many Somalis were not willing to accept their placement in crime and drug-ridden neighborhoods in the US. After the basic needs of safety and security are met, there is more space for their agentic orientation to shift toward the future. This is what propels Somalis to leave Maine, in search of greener pastures. The major reason Somalis leave Maine is the lack of jobs. Finding a job was not a reason given for many Somalis who moved to Lewiston, but as Somalis acquire education and skills (i.e., human capital) and as children grow up, jobs and economic opportunities take on more importance, and Somalis become more future-oriented. In other words, as Somalis become more acculturated their agentic orientations change and their field of options expands.

The findings presented in this article highlight the nuances and complexities of secondary migration decisions and call attention to broader structures as well as micro-level processes. Specifically, the broader social structures (e.g., US refugee policy, social services, schools, labor

market) clearly influence Somalis decisions to move from one place to another. The findings illustrate the ways in which secondary migration decisions are motivated by changing agentic orientations that interpenetrate with social structure. Calling attention to the deficits within larger structures reminds us that micro-level processes are best understood in relation to macro-level structures. For instance, if refugees are settled in safe areas with good schools and jobs, they may not want to move. When Somalis pick up and move away from their initial places of resettlement, they rely on social capital when deciding when and where to move.

Lewiston may be a stepping stone for Somalis, a safe place in which to raise children and accrue human capital through educational opportunities before pursuing better economic opportunities elsewhere. Lewiston offers an escape from the harsher places of initial resettlement and satisfies a yearning to belong to a tight-knit community where bonding capital and “thick trust” prevails. However, Lewiston does not offer much for those who long for the American dream. Beyond obtaining an education, there are few opportunities for upward mobility. Once Somalis obtain an education, extend their social networks and human capital they can become more future-oriented and rely less on bonding capital and more on bridging capital and the expanding radius of networks and “thin trust” that comes with it.<sup>79</sup>

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## APPENDIX: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Using maps of the horn of Africa and the United States, trace the migration route of the interviewee. Establish a timeline:
  - a. Where were you born?
  - b. Where have you lived in Somalia? How long did you live in each place? Why did you move?
  - c. When did you leave Somalia? (year, age)
  - d. Where did you go? How long did you live in each place?
  - e. Where have you lived in the US? How long did you live in each place? Why did you relocate?
2. Please tell me about the decision to move to Maine
  - a. How did you family hear about Lewiston?
  - b. Who made the decision to move here?
  - c. How long did your family consider moving to Maine before doing so?

- d. What factors did you find attractive about Maine?
  - e. Was everyone in your family in agreement about moving to Maine?
3. Please describe the proves of moving. How did you to Maine (by car, plane)? How did you transport your belongings?
  4. How does the housing in Lewiston compare with other places you have lived in the US (affordability, availability, quality)?
  5. Have you had any experiences with public assistance or section 8 housing in Maine? How has this compared with other places you have lived?
  6. Have you experienced discrimination on the basis of race or religion in Maine? In other places you have lived?
  7. Please describe your experiences with practicing your religion in Maine and how this compares with other places you have lived in the US?
  8. Did you know anyone in Maine before you moved here?
  9. Are you happy about your decision to move to Maine? Why?
  10. What do you find most appealing about living in Maine?
  11. What do you find least appealing about living in Maine?
  12. How long do you plan on staying in Maine? Why?
  13. If you plan on leaving, where do you want to go? Why?
  14. Do you see yourself living permanently in one place at some point? Where would you like that place to be?
  15. Has it been difficult or relatively easy to pick up and move?
  16. Demographics: # in household, Age, Marital Status, Number and age of children, Education, Occupation, Gender

## **BIOGRAPHY**

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 2008 it was estimated that 3,300 of the estimated refugee population of 3,500 Somalis were secondary migrants. The small remainder were direct refugee resettlements (see Phil Nadeau, "The Flawed US Refugee Workforce Development Strategy for Somali Economic Self-Sufficiency in Lewiston," *Race, Ethnicity and Place Conference IV*, Miami, Florida, November 6, 2008). The hub of Somali activity is in Lewiston, although many Somalis also reside in neighboring Auburn. Current estimates suggest that there are more than 4,000 Somalis in Lewiston today.

<sup>2</sup> The legal term "secondary migrant" refers to individuals who are initially resettled in one geographic location in the United States but decide to relocate to another location within the first eight months of settlement. When refugees relocate to a new location within the first eight months of settlement, they are still eligible for refugee resettlement benefits. After eight months they are no longer eligible for refugee benefits but can apply for public assistance. See Sharon E. Timberlake, "Municipal Collaboration in Response to Secondary Migration: A Case Study of Portland and Lewiston," PhD diss., University of Southern Maine, 2007). In this chapter, the term secondary migration is used to apply to refugees who move to a new location regardless of the amount of time that has passed.

<sup>3</sup> Nadeau, Phil. "The Flawed US Refugee Workforce Development Strategy for Somali Economic Self-Sufficiency in Lewiston."

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Health & Human Services. "Fiscal Year 2001 Refugee Arrivals." Ed. The Office of Refugee Resettlement: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Administration of Children and Families, 2001 – 2007/ <http://www.hhs-stat.net/scripts/topic.cfm?id=237>.

<sup>5</sup> Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Montana, West Virginia and Wyoming. See US Department of Health & Human Services. 2001-2007; "Fiscal Year 2001 Refugee Arrivals," The Office of Refugee Resettlement: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Administration of Children & Families.

<sup>6</sup> Lidwein Kapteijns and Abukar Arman, "Educating Immigrant Youth in the United States: An Exploration of the Somali Case," *Bildhaan*, Vol. 4. (2004). 18.

<sup>7</sup> Franklin Goza, "The Somali Presence in the United States: A Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile," in *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, ed. Abdi M. Kusow and Stephanie R. Bjork (Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 2007). 262.

<sup>8</sup> Goza, "The Somali Presence in the United States: A Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile", 255-275. Jessica Schaid and Zoltan Grossman, "The Somali Diaspora in Small Midwestern Communities: The Case of Barron, Wisconsin," in *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, 296-319.

<sup>9</sup> Shandy, Dianna J. and Katherine Fennelly, "A Comparison of the Integration Experiences of Two African Immigrant Populations in a Rural Community," *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2006). 23-45. Schaid, Jessica and Zoltan Grossman, "The Somali Diaspora in Small Midwestern Communities: The Case of Barron, Wisconsin," 295-319; Kirk Semple, "A Somali Influx Unsettles Latino Meatpackers," *The New York Times*, October 15, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Horst, Cindy. "The Somali Diaspora in Minneapolis: Expectations and Realities," in *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, 275-294.

<sup>11</sup> Mattessich, Paul W. and Ginger Hope, *Speaking for Themselves: A Survey of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian and Somali Immigrants in Minneapolis-Saint Paul*, (Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 2000), <http://www.wilder.org/download.0.html?report=1151>

<sup>12</sup> Kapteijns, Lidwien and Arman. "Educating Immigrant Youth in the United States," 18-43.

<sup>13</sup> Goza, Franklin. "The Somali Presence in the United States: A Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile," 263

<sup>14</sup> Bartel, Ann P. "Where Do the New U.S. Immigrants Live?" *Journal of Labor Economics* 7 (1989): 371-391; Buckley, Francis H. "The Political Economy of Immigration Policies." *International Review of Law and Economics*, 16. (1996). 81-99; Zavodny, Madeline. "Determinants of Recent Immigrants' Locational Choices." *International Migration Review* 33(1999): 1014-1030. Gurak, Douglas T. and Mary M.



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<sup>15</sup> Hossain, Zakir. "Factors Affecting Secondary Migration: A Case Study of Laotian-Americans in a Midwestern City." in *American Sociological Association: American Sociological Association*, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> Shandy, Dianna J. *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007).

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<sup>18</sup> Gurak and Kritz. "The Interstate Migration of U.S. Immigrants: Individual and Contextual Determinants", 1017-1039; Simich, Laura. "Negotiating Boundaries of Refugee Resettlement: A Study of Settlement Patterns and Social Support." *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology/ La Revue Canadienne de Sociologie et d'Anthropologie*, Vol. 40 (2003). 575-591.

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<sup>20</sup> Zavodny, "Determinants of Recent Immigrants' Locational Choices", 1014-1030.

<sup>21</sup> Hossain, "Factors Affecting Secondary Migration: A Case Study of Laotian-Americans in a Midwestern City"

<sup>22</sup> Zimmerman and Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome", 287-316.

<sup>23</sup> Buckley, "The Political Economy of Immigration Policies", 81-99.

<sup>24</sup> Zimmerman and Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome", 287-316.

<sup>25</sup> Shandy, *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*.

<sup>26</sup> Zavodny, "Determinants of Recent Immigrants' Locational Choices", 1014-1030.

<sup>27</sup> Bartel, Ann P. and Marianne J. Koch. "Internal Migration of U.S. Immigrants." In *Immigration, Trade, and the Labor Market*, edited by J. M. Abowd and R. B. Freeman. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). 121-134; Nogle, June Marie. "Internal Migration for Recent Immigrants to Canada." *International Migration Review* 28(1994): 31-48.

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<sup>39</sup> Portes, “Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology, 6.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 7

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<sup>51</sup> Nadeau, Phil. “The Flawed US Refugee Workforce Development Strategy for Somali Economic Self-Sufficiency in Lewiston.” Gordana Rabrenovic, “When Hate Comes to Town: Community Response to Violence Against Immigrants,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 5, no. 2 (2007, pp. 349-360).

<sup>52</sup> Nadeau, Phil. “The Flawed US Refugee Workforce Development Strategy for Somali Economic Self-Sufficiency in Lewiston.”

<sup>53</sup> Focus groups took place in community centers and office conference rooms, whereas the majority of the interviews took place in the homes of participants in Lewiston and Auburn, Maine. Two of the interviews took place over the phone with Somalis who had moved out of Maine. The interviews and focus groups lasted between one and two hours. Participants were offered the option of speaking in Somali, English, or a combination, and trained bilingual interviewers were present. Six additional interviews were conducted after data for this article was analyzed.

<sup>54</sup> Strand, Kerry, Nicholas Cutforth, Randy Stoecker, Sam Marullo, and Patrick Donohue.

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<sup>55</sup> The English interviews and focus groups were transcribed in full by trained research assistants. Those interviews and focus groups conducted in Somali or both Somali and English were first translated verbatim by trained bilingual student research assistants and then transcribed in English. Quotations used in this chapter were minimally edited for clarity and readability. Excessive redundancies such as “you know” and “um” were eliminated; passages and phrases—marked by ellipses—were abridged in the interest of condensing and clarifying; and grammatical changes were made to improve the flow and clarity of the subjects’ stories. In addition, pseudonyms were used to protect the anonymity of the interviewees.

<sup>56</sup> The findings of this study are not generalizable; they are specific to the local context in which the data were gathered. Moreover, those findings are limited by our particular contacts in the Somali community. The diverse Somali community is cleaved along a number of social, political, and cultural lines, and given our limited contacts; we were unable to access entire segments of the community. For example, this chapter does not necessarily represent the secondary migration experiences of Somali Bantu, a minority group that has migrated to Lewiston in recent years.

<sup>57</sup> Fuglerund, Oivind and Ada Engebrigtsen. “Culture, Networks and Social Capital: Tamil and Somali Immigrants in Norway,” p. 1126.

<sup>58</sup> See Timberlake. “Municipal Collaboration in Response to Secondary Migration: A Case Study of Portland and Lewiston, Maine.”

<sup>59</sup> See Phil Nadeau, "The Somalis of Lewiston: Effects of Rapid Migration to a Homogeneous Maine City," *Southern Maine Review*, (1995, pp. 105-146).

<sup>60</sup> Rabrenovic, Gordana. "When Hate Comes to Town: Community Response to Violence Against Immigrants," pp. 349-360.

<sup>61</sup> See Francis H. Buckley, "The Political Economy of Immigration Policies," *International Review of Law and Economics* 16 (1996, pp. 81-99), who points to a relationship between secondary migration and welfare availability particularly among refugees. See also Wendy Zimmerman and Michael Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome, in *Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals*, ed. Barry Edmonston and Jeffrey S. Passel, pp. 287-316 (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1994) who reported that welfare generosity influences refugees' migration decisions, although to a lesser extent than jobs and family ties.

<sup>62</sup> Dianna J. Shandy, *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Nailah Macarthy, "Significance of Race: Comparative Analysis of State Time Limit Policies Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996" (PhD diss., Howard University, 2006).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> See Shandy, *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*, 170, Table A.6. Resettlement States by Level of Welfare Benefits for more details. See Macarthy "Significance of Race: Comparative Analysis of State Time Limit Policies Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996" for an analysis of time limits and racial composition of states. See also Ihuto Ali, "Staying off the Bottom of the Melting Pot: Somali Refugees Respond to a Changing US Immigration Climate," *Bildhaan* 9 (2009, pp. 82-114); and David Peterson, "African Immigrants Set Pace to Get Off Welfare" *StarTribune.com* (December 27, 2006), who both provide evidence that counter the perception that large numbers of Somalis are on welfare.

<sup>66</sup> Macarthy Nailah. "Significance of Race: Comparative Analysis of State Time Limit Policies Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996"; Shandy, *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*.

<sup>67</sup> See Kapteijns and Arman, "Educating Immigrant Youth in the United States: An Exploration of the Somali Case," p. 28.

<sup>68</sup> Section 8 housing vouchers are a form of financial assistance that is provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled so they can rent homes or apartments in the private market. Voucher-holders are permitted to move and use their vouchers anywhere in the United States.

<sup>69</sup> Emirbaryer, Mustafa and Ann Mische. "What is Agency?," 964.

<sup>70</sup> The "Many and One Rally" was organized by a community-based coalition in response to a poorly attended rally organized by the neo-Nazi group National Alliance, who came to Lewiston after the mayor of Lewiston published an inflammatory letter in the local newspaper asking Somalis to stop moving there, see Rabrenovic, "When Hate Comes to Town: Community Response to Violence Against Immigrants."

<sup>71</sup> Somali immigrants are sometimes perceived as a threat to native-born racial minorities, which is not unfounded. In her research with immigrants and employers in New York City, Nancy Foner, in *From Ellis Island to JFK: New York's Two Great Waves of Immigration* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000). found that employers were more inclined to hire minority immigrants over native born Blacks and Hispanics, largely because of racist attitudes toward Black and Hispanics and the perception that immigrant workers would be more docile and harder working than native born Blacks and Hispanics.

<sup>72</sup> See Mulki Al-Sharmani, "Diasporic Somalis in Cairo: The Poetics and Practices of Soomaalinimo," in *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, pp. 71-94.

<sup>73</sup> See Alejandro Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology", 1-24.

<sup>74</sup> Somali clan structure is extremely complex. There are six main clan-families with numerous subclans. The majority of Somalis trace their lineage to the four main pastoral nomadic clans (the Dir, Darod, Isaq, and Hawiye), whereas the minority trace their lineage to the two major agricultural clans (the Digil and Rahanweyn). See I.M. Lewis, I.M. 2002. *A Modern History of The Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. Fourth ed. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press. for more detail.

<sup>75</sup> Robert Putman, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.

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<sup>76</sup> 1.5 generation refers to immigrants who grew up in two cultures—born outside of the United States and immigrating to the United States at a young age. Second generation refers to children who were born in the United States to immigrant parents.

<sup>77</sup> Emirbaryer and Mische. “What is Agency?”, 962 – 1023.

<sup>78</sup> Portes, “Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology,” 1-24; . Putman, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.

<sup>79</sup> See Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 136.