Survivors: an analysis of relocated Somali women in Georgia

Dorian L. Brown
Clark Atlanta University

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ABSTRACT

POLITICAL SCIENCE

BROWN, DORIAN L. B.A. SPELMAN COLLEGE, 1991
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SURVIVORS: AN ANALYSIS OF
RELOCATED SOMALI WOMEN IN GEORGIA

Advisor: Dr. Abiodun A. Awomolo

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The purpose of this study was twofold. The first priority was to determine how relocated Somali women in Georgia addressed their political, economic, social, and psychological needs. The second priority was to determine whether gender roles changed, and how those changes impacted the lives of relocated Somali women in Georgia. This research is necessary due to the lack of literature on relocated women, especially African women, and the obstacles they face once they settle in a country of asylum, especially in their own words. This study is significant because it documents relocated women’s experiences in their own words.

Fifty surveys and ten interviews were administered to obtain oral histories of the women’s experiences from Somalia to the United States. The research conducted under a Third World feminist framework yielded the following results. Relocated Somali women in Georgia address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs by utilizing government and nongovernment agencies, their community, and network preservation.

Findings from the work suggest that relocated Somali women should be traced to further examine their progress. The findings also provide an opportunity to assess and
compare the progress of relocated Somali women in Georgia with relocated Somali women in Canada, Australia, or other states, such as Minnesota.
SURVIVORS: AN ANALYSIS OF
RELOCATED SOMALI WOMEN IN GEORGIA

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
DORIAN L. BROWN

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This exploratory research investigates how resettled Somali women in Georgia have survived anarchy. The term Somali refers to people who claim their ethnic lineage from Samaale or Saab. Although Somalia comprises other ethnic groups, they are not considered Somali, since their lineages are not traced through these mythical brothers. The purposes of this research are: 1) to examine how relocated Somali women address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs amidst unfamiliar obstacles and territory; and 2) to determine if gender roles of relocated Somali women in Georgia changed, and how those changes affected their lives.

Somalia’s state government collapsed in 1991 when dictator Siad Barre fled the country. From the time he overthrew the civilian government in 1969, his clan-family based regime exacerbated inter/intra clan conflicts. The North, comprised primarily of the Isaaq clan-family and smaller clans, was disgruntled with the domination of government by Barre’s southern Mareehan, who are a subclan of the Darood clan-family.

Until the spring of 1988, Barre managed to control clan conflict through tactical political maneuvers and repression. In addition to political exclusion, northerners also felt economic discrimination due to the unequal sharing of benefits from regional resources, such as livestock, and inequitable regional economic development.
Socially, northerners wished to maintain contact with populations in Ethiopia and Djibouti, but Barre used clan identity/loyalty to exacerbate tensions with its neighbors. The longstanding political, economic, and social grievances resulted in a May 1988 uprising led by the Somali National Movement (SNM), an opposition group based in the North. Barre's governmental forces attempted to repress the uprising by air bombing the northern region. His forces destroyed cities, such as Hargeisa and Burao, as well as most of the infrastructure. Approximately 5,000 Isaaqs were killed.

In May of 1990, armed opposition to Barre's government spread throughout the country. Barre intensified his repression of opposition groups, which were underlined by clan identity/loyalty. However, Somalis persistently rebelled against Barre's oppressive and divisive tactics of leadership. As a result, the country's economic, political, and social stability declined. Consequently, Somalia exploded into a plethora of clan-based war zones, which eventually forced Barre and his supporters to flee Mogadishu, and eventually Somalia in January of 1991. He died in 1995.

In the aftermath of the 1991 Somali civil war, many Somali women were left without husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles, and male cousins to protect their families. Most of the men were killed while fighting to protect the territory of their clan-family or subclan. The majority of fighting occurred in the capitol city of Mogadishu. Southern subclans and lineages fought amongst and against each other to gain control of Mogadishu and other southern territories. Young Somali men died while operating "technicals." Houses were looted, women and girls were kidnapped, raped, and some were even gang raped. Searching for food, clothes, shelter, water, and medicine were familiar tasks, yet
they became virtually impossible without order. As a result, many became refugees in Kenya, Ethiopia, and other neighboring African countries, while some fled to countries on other continents.

As refugees, surviving without a male is difficult. Female refugees in general are subject to rape (often repeatedly), ridicule, and neglect in refugee camps. For example, women are raped when they have to walk long distances away from the camp to fetch food or water. In Somali culture, if a young girl, or woman is raped, she is shunned by her community and family. As a result, she may not even disclose that she has been violated. Consequently, Somali and all refugee women who are victims of rape suffer deep psychological trauma, a trauma exacerbated by the isolation of the victim.

According to Judy A. Mayote, in 1951 the United Nations (U.N.) defined a refugee as any person who fled their country or was in exile for fear of being persecuted based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or holding a political opinion, and was unwilling or unable to return to their home country due to these fears. This definition was written to cover displaced Europeans from World War II. Unfortunately, this definition did not encompass other refugees displaced after 1951. As a result, the definition was modified in the U.N.’s 1967 Protocol to include refugees outside Europe who fled after 1951. Furthermore, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) expanded the definition at a 1967 convention to include African refugees displaced by civil and liberation wars, as well as the inter-African conflicts of the 1950s and 1960s. Though the U.N.’s 1951 and expanded 1967 Protocol definition remains the legal description of a
refugee, most nations that signed these documents accept the broader OAU interpretation.⁶

Being a refugee means living without the familiar comforts of childhood friends, neighbors, neighborhoods/villages, and security. The uncertainty of everyday life is overwhelming and presents a tremendous challenge to anyone surviving under such circumstances. For women, the challenge of surviving also includes struggling with the absence of education for them and their children. As much shelter and assistance refugee camps offer, they still cannot replace the security and comfort of one's home.

Although Somali women obtain assistance from nongovernmental organizations in Somalia and refugee camps, without a male to intervene on their behalf, they face adversity maneuvering in the public sphere. This problem is magnified when anarchy exists.⁷ Therefore, this dissertation is an exploratory investigation of how relocated Somali women survived anarchy in post-Barre Somalia.

In applying for refugee status to relocate to countries of sanctuary, refugees are faced again with the dilemma of leaving some relatives behind, obtaining the necessary resources to seek asylum, as well as assistance in leaving refugee camps and entering the relocated countries. Different countries maintain various rules and regulations regarding the qualifications and admittance of refugees. Since most Somalis tend to resettle in Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States, appropriate paperwork and procedures must be followed for each territory.

Every year the United States accepts a limited number of refugees from countries designated by the Department of State. Then, each country is allotted a certain number of
refugees from the total number determined by the President in consultation with Congress. Somali women who were sponsored by a mother, father, brother, or sister already in the United States, were allowed to enter. The waiting period for entrance ranges from one year to more than ten years.

Refugee women face two hurdles in obtaining refugee status: 1) the basis for which one is granted refugee status; and 2) the process of establishing justification for refugee status. At either point a petition might be denied. Thus, obtaining refugee status to resettle in asylum countries is not always smooth or successful.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some internally and externally displaced women are able to relocate to countries of sanctuary, where they are removed from the immediate dangers of refugee camps and their war ravaged home countries. Displaced women represent all levels of social and economic statuses. Yet, they all must learn and abide by the rules, laws, and regulations of their new state while adjusting to the political, economic, social, and psychological challenges of a new environment. In order to understand the plight of relocated women, the psychological, political, economic, and social issues they face must be examined.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

Some Somali women reluctantly relocate while leaving children, mothers, and other relatives either in the refugee camps, or in Somalia. Some women come to countries of asylum alone, and some come with relatives and friends who are also seeking asylum. This is often a lonely and desperate situation that relocated women must manage in order
to provide for themselves and relatives that were also able to relocate. In the end, they all must adjust to American culture, and provide food, clothes, shelter, water, and medical care for themselves and their families.

The women are psychologically affected by the traumas that occurred during the war and throughout their displacement. They must grapple with the experience of being raped, witnessing a relative or friend being raped or killed, the kidnaping of relatives and friends, and losing all their possessions, lack of clean water, hunger, living in the bush, constantly moving to sustain themselves, and living with the daily threat of being killed due to ethnic affiliations.

Although a considerable amount of research exists on women in refugee camps, more documentation is needed on the experience from the female refugee’s perspective since women experience rape(s), unequal distribution of food, and endure sexual propositions from men in charge of food distribution to obtain at least an adequate portion. Another issue deserving examination includes, the vulnerability of women refugees surrounding their possession of proper documentation to travel within countries operating refugee camps. They are subjected to unwarranted sexual propositions from male security provided by the country maintaining the refugee camp. Once relocated, refugee women must bear the emotional scars from experiencing horrible atrocities, while maintaining enough self-esteem and courage to maintain themselves and those dependent upon them.
SOCIAL ISSUES

Research on relocated communities should include information on these communities, their location, population, and extent of existence, as well as the isolation resettled women experience from the host, and other resettled communities. Often relocated women have relatives who emigrated or were resettled in other countries. This separation from family causes a break in the comfort of having family surround the women to provide advice and stability. Family separation is intensified by the anguish over relatives who may be detained by the Immigration Naturalization Service (INS) while attempting to enter the United States. Close family connections, and a familiar culture are often the primary reasons why relocated women do not frequently venture into the broader communities of their countries of asylum.

The comfort of being surrounded by the familiar people, food, custom, clothing, religion, and recreation provides a buffer to all the psychological, social, economic, cultural, and religious differences of the broader community. For anyone who is homesick, no matter how far or short the distance, these familiar reminders of home provide the strength and stability necessary for relocated women and their communities to survive. For without such a strong foundation of support, the challenges of obtaining a job, providing food, clothes, shelter, and medical care for themselves and their families would be too overwhelming.

Most relocated persons tend to reside in apartment complexes within the same vicinity. Upon arrival into the country of sanctuary, newly relocated persons are welcomed and settled into the relocated neighborhoods by other members from their home state. As
this process continues, the community grows and begins to socialize within its own
cultural circles. Thus, the relocated community becomes isolated from the other relocated
and host communities within the host country.

Relocated women feel safer and more in control in an environment where
everything is familiar, and no one perceives them as different. Hence, they do not socialize
with the broader community unless the encounter is dictated by the necessity of fulfilling a
need. Social and economic interactions between relocated women and women of the host
country occur in settings such as women’s conferences, nonprofit jobs. For instance, in a
conference or workshop setting, the relocated women have to speak and comprehend a
certain level of English, as well as the host country’s culture.

More than likely, the relocated women are coming to the broader community for
assistance, not providing it. Therefore, their encounters with women from the host culture
are not very social. Furthermore, social interactions only occur when women from both
communities are willing to engage in conversation and activities in each others homes,
places of worship, or communities.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

The economic issues impacting relocated women are based on the incompatibility
of their job skills with those needed for the American job market, the ability to acquire job
skills necessary to obtain a job, and the adequacy of their pay to support themselves and
their dependents. In addition, knowing the type of job and transportation the women
possess is critical to examining their economic plight.
POLITICAL ISSUES

Politically relocated women maneuver throughout their host country but their activities are limited due to their non-citizenship. For example, only citizens of the United States are able to vote, and freely travel outside the United States (with the necessary documents), but relocated persons are only able to travel outside the United States, unless they obtain special permission from the government. Also, relocated persons must abide by the public policy generated by a government in which they are unable to participate due to their non-citizenship status.

The government of the sanctuary country provides new guidelines and boundaries for relocated women. Different entities control the distribution of and access to the state's resources. Relocated women must thus align themselves with individuals or organizations that will provide access to survival resources. Also, the women are detached from politics back home. They are unable to witness the reconciliation process between and among the rival clans, as well as the procedures for outlining establishing a new government. Moreover, research on relocated women and their political activities and opinions will provide insight into their awareness of political issues and activities in their home country, as well as whether the women attempt to affect Somali politics through organizations or individuals in their host country.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

It is an engaging task to study women who have survived anarchy due to the fact that there is a dearth of literature focusing on such a phenomenon. The majority of
literature on women after war focuses on their experiences as internally displaced persons, or refugees. As necessary as this data is, it is also pertinent to describe and analyze the circumstances of refugee women once they relocate to a country of asylum. Although there is some literature that describes and examines the experiences of relocated women, not enough documentation exists to provide full comprehension of their struggles and triumphs in an adopted or temporary state.

In literature centering on women and the state, the focus is primarily on women's resistance to the state, seeking cooperation with the state, or the marginalization of women by the state. These components are often examined from a political, economic, social, or developmental perspective. Further, though there are research and actions taken by nongovernmental organizations to address women surviving anarchy, there is a paucity of theoretical explanations.

The majority of literature in African politics and women in politics focus on analyses of women or political phenomenon based on the existence of a state. As Chazan et al. comment, "[T]he relationship between state and class, especially when the state is in disrepair is still obscure." Though Chazan mentions the necessity of research on the relationship between class and the state in disrepair, it is just as important to analyze the role of women when the state is in disrepair. They go on to say that "... the connection between public institutions and specific social groups has yet to be fully explored." Again, the call is for analysis in the presence of a state. But what happens to these social groups when the state is absent? In other words, why not analyze the effects of anarchy on these groups? More specifically, why not examine women's roles in anarchy?
The significance of providing accurate data on displaced women is crucial in the midst of the current number of war torn societies in the world. The global implications for tracking and documenting the experiences of these women in their own words should not be solely the domain or responsibility of nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations. The academic world should embrace more scholarly work such as this, to bridge the gap between the practical and academic spheres. In other words, to provide the most and best assistance in returning displaced women to normal existence, the academy must work with practitioners to render substantive, efficient, observations and solutions to the problem. Hence, this dissertation will hopefully serve as a catalyst to greater interaction between the two domains to produce effective solutions.

This research is necessary for various reasons. First, it becomes significant to the literature due to its focus on women in the absence of a state, since most theories are centered on relationships with the state. Also, there are implications as to how a new state will emerge following a period of anarchy based on how these women respond to new and previous roles. Second, more women than men return to a society following war. Even as refugees, women tend to outnumber men. Thus, how women survive anarchy has the potential to provide a glimpse of the restructuring of society that will perhaps emerge when order is restored.

Third, this type of research is able to shed light on how women survive in order to provide examples for other women experiencing the same situations. Fourth, women who survive will be the mothers of the next generation. Consequently, they will be responsible for nurturing children who are physically, psychologically, and emotionally distressed.
Therefore, displaced women must receive adequate health, mental, and maternal care in order to raise the upcoming generation. Consequently, a study such as this will highlight areas of their need so that society is capable of adequately meeting those needs. Indeed, displaced women, their children, as well as orphans and the elderly must be supported in the aftermath of war due to the obstacles they will meet in striving to rebuild their lives and their society.

Finally, women who lived through the war and its aftermath, possess vital information on the reconciliation process of the country. Based on their experiences, displaced women residing or returning to Somalia are able to provide information on how the culture has or has not changed, how their roles within the family changed, how they have been able to sustain themselves, their children, and others politically, economically, socially, and psychologically.

The need to respond to the absence of a male figure, due to war, places Somali women in a position they have traditionally been denied. As a result, women who become heads of households in order to provide for themselves and their children, are able to use aggressive survival tactics to forge a place for women in the new society and government. Therefore, their own contributions to the reconciliation process are critical.

Relocated Somali women in Georgia were chosen for this study based on the need for more academic literature on African women in all their life experiences. The plight of relocated women deserves as much attention as women remaining in refugee camps or ravaged countries. The stories of these women in their own words will generate research findings that will provide governmental, nongovernmental, and nonprofit organizations
with concrete data to facilitate assistance for displaced women. In addition, academic institutions, especially Historically Black Colleges and Universities will benefit greatly from compiling pertinent knowledge on African women.

After examining relocated Somali women in Georgia, this research expects to find that clan identity/loyalty remains a part of relocated Somali communities. Since clan identity/loyalty is the foundation of Somali existence, it defines how a Somali is received or perceived in a relocated community. Although all relocated Somalis must adjust to American culture, they may not readily dissociate themselves from Somali standards.

This examination also expects to discover that Somali women rely upon their traditional gender connections within the Somali community to support them. The community in general supports all relocated Somalis, but there is a special interaction between and among Somali women. Somali culture promotes a kindred spirit of sisterhood among Somali women. Since gender separation is cultural, and women were relegated to the private sphere in Somalia, it is expected that sisterly relationships endure the refugee and resettled experience.

Relocated Somali women support each other by caring for each other’s children while they work or search for work, as well as contribute funds to pay one another’s bills or rent. Therefore, this author defines women supporting other women financially, emotionally, socially, or any action that aids in another woman’s survival as “network preservation.” Network preservation might take the form of rent payment, childcare, job placement, emotional confidence, and other nurturing activities.
The results of this research will provide a window of observation and understanding about African women. The data will contribute to knowledge about women around the world who must survive and raise their children without assistance from an established state or its institutions. This data will then be available to governments, nongovernmental organizations, nonprofits, and individuals to access. Data gathered on resettled Somali women will also be beneficial to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) since these institutions not only house knowledge on African women, thereby providing students with accessible data, but accept some of the women as students.

Since HBCUs were founded primarily to meet the educational needs of African descendants, it is only fitting that these institutions be the initiators and custodians of knowledge on African descendants throughout the diaspora. Research conducted by African-Americans or native Africans provides an opportunity to learn about African cultures, meet and mingle with native Africans, and therefore, establish a measure of trust and communication that will lead to positive outcomes for both communities. In addition, research by HBCU students will provide Africans with an avenue to convey accurate, pertinent knowledge about their communities and experiences. More importantly, this information will help provide networks that create cultural awareness and exchanges between African-Americans and native Africans. In essence, knowledge gathered on relocated Somali women in Georgia will generate awareness of the plight of displaced persons.
If data on resettled refugees is made readily available, people will have access to knowledge that will hopefully eliminate biases against refugees. The more one knows about certain people, the less one is inclined to treat them with hostility often shown toward strangers. Thus, the general public will be more inclined to assist them. This assistance could begin with local governments providing aid through a program either the government initiates, or working in conjunction with existing programs.

Most data on the survival of women in war torn states is produced by nongovernmental organizations. Although these examinations are vital to the accumulation of updated data on women, there is a need for more academic investigations, thereby confirming the need for this particular type of work. Furthermore, existing academic works on women and relationships in the absence of an established state tend to focus on Middle Eastern, Asian, or Latin American women.


As important as these works are, they do not devote lengthy discussions to refugee women. The problems female refugees face are different from those of male refugees, therefore, analysis of their situations must be geared toward their specific circumstances.
Indeed, the dilemma of refugees worldwide deserves attention, but the obstacles faced by women have a direct effect upon the children they are raising.

The results of this research will serve to assist relocated women by making their needs and interests clear to local, national, and international organizations. By putting these women to work, a local government not only boosts the local economy, but it begins to support healthy, well rounded citizens who contribute positively to society. It is incumbent upon the larger communities to begin to recognize the wealth of talent, skills, willingness, and knowledge relocated women offer. Immigrant and refugee communities are increasing and the women from these communities deserve to be included in the American way of life.

This dissertation has the potential to add more to Ridd and Callaway's initial focus in *Women and Political Conflict* in terms of examining African women and their struggles, roles, and adjustments in attempting to survive conflict. In addition, this study would provide vital information on women's issues during conflict. Finally, this treatise will serve as a bridge between the academy and nonprofit spheres.

**METHODOLOGY**

This dissertation was an exploratory work, and as such, does not set out to test a hypothesis. Exploratory research is more an attempt to understand a particular phenomenon than an effort to question an established explanation for a phenomenon. Therefore, this study focused on the experiences of displaced Somali women to determine how they survived anarchy.
This study attempted to document the historical experiences of relocated Somali women in Georgia from 1991 to 1999. This time span covers nine years of Somali existence without a state, which began in 1991 with the flight of Siad Barre. From 1991 until the present, ethnic clans have continued to fight over control of land in Mogadishu and other areas of southern Somalia. Furthermore, the country is without institutional, political, economic, or social services.

The collapse of the state in Somalia forced thousands of Somali women to seek shelter, food, clothes, water, and medical care in refugee camps in neighboring African countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia. Other Somali women fled to countries outside Africa. Upon entering these countries, they became relocated persons. Consequently, they were met with new challenges as they strove to maintain themselves and their families. Somali women were chosen as a case study to more specifically investigate how women survive conditions of anarchy. Resettled Somali women in Georgia were selected due to the large numbers of Somali refugees residing in Georgia. Further, ethnographic data was added to the analysis through the author’s participatory observation of community activities through employment at the Newcomers’ Network refugee center in Clarkston.

Clarkston, Georgia was selected as the site for this research due to the large Somali community located around Memorial Drive in DeKalb county. Clarkston, Georgia is home to resettled communities from a myriad of cultures. Ethiopians, Sudanese, Bosnians, Vietnamese, Somalis, and other communities are concentrated in Clarkston because Georgia’s nongovernmental resettlement agencies, such as World Relief are located here. Relocated persons have access to resources that allow them to adjust
economically, socially, politically, and psychologically. These services include schools, public transportation, and affordable housing all of which are revealed by resettlement agencies and refugee organizations. In addition, restaurants and grocery stores cater to certain ethnic cuisines due to the constant influx of refugees into Clarkston. Hence, Clarkston continues to grow as a multicultural city and the location for this research.

The relocated Somali women selected for this study resided in Clarkston, Georgia. Although Somalis reside in other areas of Georgia, Clarkston appears to be the area with the largest concentration of relocated Somalis based on information conveyed through participant observation conversations. The concentration of Somali emigrants and refugees to Clarkston began with the first group of refugees in the 1980s when Siad Barre began attacking and harassing northern clan-families and subclans from 1987 to 1988, many fled to Ethiopia as refugees, while others left for other countries.

The Somali women selected for this work vary in age (eighteen to over fifty), skills, and experiences. Some have been refugees, while others voluntarily emigrated to the United States. These women work, maintain families, interact with each other, and participate in community activities. Although their stories are different, they share the common challenge of surviving away from Somalia.

Relocated Somali women's responses or perspectives will differ from refugee Somali women, as well as those who remain in Somalia. Although they represent a subset of Somali women, their unique perspectives as relocated refugees will nevertheless enhance comprehension of Somali women's methods of survival. These women were first displaced by the 1991 civil war where they were separated from family and friends. They
were dependent upon international aid for their survival, just as they were in refugee camps. In addition, the physical danger, emotional and physical stresses were constant factors in both situations. Furthermore, relocated women draw on their experiences of being displaced in Somalia and living in refugee camps to assist them in surviving in a temporary country of sanctuary.

Although these historically displaced Somali women have been relocated in a host country, their refugee experiences remain intense components of their memories and lives. The fact that resettled Somali women reside in a host country with access to food, clothes, shelter, and medical treatment does not mean all their needs are met. Their lives remain disrupted due to the obstacles they must overcome in order to survive in the host country.

Some resettled Somali women in the United States have difficulty obtaining jobs, purchasing groceries, and socializing due to their low level of English fluency. Most of them face cultural differences, which may also lead to misunderstandings, which lead to difficulties in everyday life situations. Therefore, it’s important to track relocated women and document how they live.

Relocated Somali women’s experiences provide valuable data on what happens to refugee and emigrated women across the board after they are relocated. Data collected will reveal how well they are doing now based on the knowledge about their past experiences. In other words, their stories will provide knowledge on their lives as displaced, refugees, and relocated persons.

Participant observation requires the researcher to observe the participants in their natural settings. This type of examination involves the interviewer spending time with the
Somali women during their community events, and their daily routines, if invited. An account of the researcher’s observations was added to survey findings.

DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENT

A minimum of ten interviews and fifty surveys were utilized to gather data on displaced Somali women relocated in Georgia. Interviews provide a structured means of obtaining knowledge. Elite interviews are interviews with a stakeholder within the community of the sample population. Ten elite interviews with Somali women were conducted in the Clarkston community. Usually community stakeholders offer more insight into the women’s daily lives and challenges. They also served as liaisons between the Somali community and act ivies, issues, and individuals in metro Atlanta, and Georgia.

In other words, these women will provide clarification, and link facts from the surveys.

Interviews began in May and proceeded through June. They were scheduled in the afternoons, evenings, and Saturdays or Sundays to accommodate the daily work schedules, and Friday prayers of the women. One or two interviews per week will be scheduled with the aid of female Somali contacts in the community. The interviews were conducted in individuals’ homes in order to allow the Somali women to respond in a more personalized, relaxed setting. Such a setting is often more conducive to eliciting personal, detailed, and honest responses.

Several open-ended questions focused on documenting Somali women’s feelings on their lives, themselves, and their circumstances in Somalia, refugee camps, and the United States. Women interviewing women is an approach that presents a comfortable
atmosphere for the Somali women. Coming from a culture that cultivates interaction between and among women, they tend to be more relaxed relaying their positive and (especially) negative experiences to another woman. Moreover, their comfort level is boosted when speaking with a female African-American interviewer who is able to identify and sympathize with their experiences of racial and gender discrimination in the United States. The following questions were asked: 1) What was life like for you in Somalia before war broke out in 1991? 2) Did the 1991 war impact women differently from men? 3) Who helped you get food, clothes, and shelter in Somalia? 4) What was it like for you to leave Somalia? 5) Was clan identity a factor in who fled and who remained in Somalia? 6) How did you feed yourself and your family in the refugee camp? 7) What was life like for you in the refugee camp? 8) How has your life changed since you have been in the United States? 9) Have relationships changed within your immediate? 10) How are women's roles different in your community in the United States from what they were in Somalia? 11) Is clan identity important in your community? 12) Do Somali women from the cities have technical skills that assist them in acquiring high paying jobs in the Untied States? 13) Are Somali women in the U.S. Community more politically active than they were in Somalia? 14) What do you think the future holds for Somalia? 15) Do you intend to return to Somalia? 16) What role do you see women playing in rebuilding Somalia? 17) Will women be accepted in leadership roles in government?

In order to complement the interviews, a minimum of fifty surveys were issued to a general group of Somali women. The surveys were designed to obtain demographic data, such as age, refugee experiences, birthplaces, marital status, etc. In addition to the
demographic questions, the survey consisted of closed ended questions. This form of questioning allows the interviewer to draw a general uniform broad picture of relocated Somali women in Georgia.

Another ethnographical tool utilized in this study is oral history. Oral history is a method of interviewing people to document their life stories in their own words. Although this treatise does not cover the Somali women's entire lives, it is documenting significant portions of their lives that need to be expressed in the words of the women. Therefore, an oral history approach enables the researcher to document the experiences, opinions, and attitudes of relocated Somali women in Georgia.

Oral history complements exploratory research based on the fact that the interviewer's initial contact with the Somali women is not prejudged by existing theories as to why or how they survived anarchy. The candidness of their experiences was expressed without placing their experiences (the data) into a prefabricated explanation.

With this approach, neither the interviewer nor the Somali women are confined to certain boundaries, i.e., the interviewer does not act with the purpose of accomplishing anything except opening doors of knowledge and awareness. Likewise, the Somali women are provided a comfortable atmosphere to speak freely, which allows the expression of complex information that would perhaps be eliminated or overlooked in content analysis. In sum, exploratory research and oral history allowed for an unfiltered form of discovery.

Oral histories provided a foundation for examining and observing women through women's eyes. The perspective of refugee Somali women relocated in Georgia was conveyed without a great deal of external interpretation. In other words, their experiences
were conveyed through their words and opinions, i.e., what they experienced fleeing Somalia, while in refugee camps, and coming to the United States.

PROCEDURES

The ten elite interviews were arranged around the schedule of the Somali women and will be conducted in their homes in Clarkston, Georgia. Interviews were conducted by the researcher with the assistance of a translator who was familiar with the project. Interviews were conducted on Mondays through Thursdays because Fridays are reserved for Muslim prayers in the Mosque. Following the interview, observations and analysis of the respondents’ behavior during the interview was recorded. Also, the author’s overall opinion of each particular interview process was recorded.

The surveys were administered at the refugee center called Newcomers’ Network, and participant’s homes. Due to the fact that most of the targeted women did not speak fluent English, a Somali woman served as interpreter during the administering of the surveys and interviews. For the interviews, handwritten notes were the primary method of documenting the Somali women’s responses. However, tape recorders were used along with written notations, when acceptable to the respondent.

Surveys allowed for qualitative and quantitative analyses of relocated Somali women in Georgia. Once the interviews and surveys were completed, the data was analyzed to reveal how Somali how these women survived Somalia’s anarchy. SPSS analysis software was used to input the responses from the surveys and interviews. SPSS software allows the researcher to input, group, and analyze qualitative data to produce
quantitative output. By crossing data such as the Somali women's age, level of education, marital status, and job status, it was possible to gain a clearer description of these women.

In addition to data gathered from the interviews and surveys, the observations of each encounter with the Somali women were recorded and analyzed. The encounters included phone conversations before, during, and following the administering of the instruments. These encounters also included gatherings to which the writer was invited.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Although this research will be conducted in as thorough a manner as possible, there are limitations to collecting and analyzing the data. One of those limitations is the inability to travel directly to Somalia. It would be difficult to arrange interviews in Somalia due to the danger posed by a nonfunctioning airport, lack of security, and aggression against United States citizens. Also, due to famine, droughts, and floods, women in Somalia are mobile due to their search for food, shelter, and water. Therefore, their preoccupation with survival may prevent their openness to interviews, especially from an American.

Actual data on the number of Somalis in Clarkston was extremely difficult to obtain. The most accurate count of the community did not occur until the 2000 census conducted in 1999, and those calculations will not be available until 2002 according to Federal Census representatives. In addition, the local immigration office in downtown Atlanta in the Martin Luther King building was contacted in an attempt to either acquire the data or discover new resources that might possess the statistics, and again the
information was unavailable. In sum, every effort was made to obtain an accurate count of Somalis residing in Clarkston, but to no avail. This difficulty in documenting the Clarkston population, especially the women, further emphasizes the necessity of research such as this.

The sample size for examining the relocated Somali women in Georgia is small due to the language barriers between the researcher and the Somali women, as well as the researcher being viewed as an outsider to the community. It was inefficient to distribute surveys to the women and expect completed surveys without assistance from the Somali interpreters. Thus, the number of women surveyed was limited to those who understood minimal English and could reasonably complete the surveys themselves, or to women who were clients of the Somali caseworkers/interpreters. Although, this limitation will yield results from a sample size not completely representative of all Somali women in Georgia, the results will apply to the relocated Somali women with whom this study is concerned.

The snowball method was utilized to randomly select Somali women for interviews. Names of women who were clients of Somali caseworkers at Newcomers’ Network were used as the basis of contacting women. From these names, women who were friends or relatives of these women were contacting to complete interviews. In some instances, friends and relatives of the Somali interpreters were interviewed based on the conversations within the community as to what was occurring at the refugee center.
Questions utilized to guide this research are: 1) How did relocated Somali women in Georgia address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs? 2) If gender roles changed, how have the changes impacted the lives of relocated Somali women in Georgia?

ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

Chapter one explains the research topic and chapter two provides a historical background on Somalia. Chapter three introduces the theoretical framework for examining Somali women relocated to Georgia as well as the Literature Review. Chapter four discusses the methods utilized to examine relocated Somali women in Georgia, and chapter five includes the case study of the interviewed and surveyed Somali women. The conclusions drawn after analyzing the data will be discussed in chapter six. The results of the interviews and surveys are intended to provide answers to the research questions. Chapter six will also cover recommendations for the future will include the projected economic, political, and social place of Somali women in a new Somalia. Finally, chapter six will further discuss ways Somali women in Georgia, as well as those remaining in Somalia are contributing to the rebuilding of a new society.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Certain terms are used throughout this dissertation. To aid in understanding the context in which they are used, the following definitions are provided.

Anarchy: This research defines the term anarchy as the absence of formal governmental authority. For this study, the term applies to the condition in which an
established, functioning government does not exist. Communication, transportation, and banking systems also do not exist. The people also lack electricity, water, and educational services. The term represents the opposite of a state since there is a lack of organized aggregate or relatively permanent institutions of governance. In addition, no order or means of creating and maintaining boundaries in society for its citizens is present. This term, therefore, applies to Somalia in this study since heavily armed militiamen representing the warring clan factions are controlling Mogadishu and other areas in southern Somalia.

**Patron Client System:** According to Chazan et al., a patron-client system operates within a state structure. This is a political term that describes the liaison between a person from the ruling government and the people.

**Displaced:** Refers to people uprooted by war from their ancestral home in order to survive. A) internally B) externally

**Refugee:** Any person who fled their country of origin for fear of persecution or violence against them based on their religious, social, ethnic, and political beliefs, and is afraid to return due to that fear.

**Refugee Camp:** A temporary settlement used to receive and house refugees.

**Relocated or Resettled:** Refers to any persons who left their home countries and resettled in other countries.

**State:** "The organized aggregate of relatively permanent institutions of governance." This term represents the opposite of what Somalia is currently
experiencing. However, it does apply to the countries of sanctuary where the relocated Somali women now reside.

**Survival:** Somali women's ability, opportunity, and success of obtaining food, clothes, shelter, water, medicine, and medical attention in the midst of anarchy. This term applies to displaced Somali women whether they are refugees, emigrants, or relocated.

**Network Preservation:** Somali women supporting each other financially, emotionally, socially, psychologically. This term applies to childcare, job placement, and other ways Somali women assist each other.
NOTES

1. "Technicals" are Russian and American tanks used by armed Somali men to protect areas controlled by their subclan or lineage. They were hired by the United Nations and other relief agencies to safely transport personnel and equipment to and from Somali ports and airports. The young men operating the "technicals" were led by the clan war leaders, such as Mohammed Farah Aideed, and Ali Mahdi. Mohamed Sahnoun, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities* (United States: the Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace, 1994), 34.


12. Ibid., 22.


17. Somali is an ethnic term which defines any person whose lineage is traced directly to the mythical brothers of Samaale and Saab. Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, 29.


19. Scheduling interviews with community stakeholders is more difficult due to their numerous responsibilities. Moreover, their elite status provides them with access to more resources and involvement with more people in the group being interviewed. As a result, they offer more detailed observations about occurrences in the larger community. Janet Buttolph Johnson and Richard A. Joslyn, *Political Science Research Methods* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1986), 179.


21. Ibid., 23.

22. Ibid., 134.

23. It is understood by this author that Somali women fled to other countries besides the United States of America.


27. Ibid., 39.
CHAPTER TWO

SOMALIA: AN HISTORICAL REVIEW

Somalia is an East African country. The Gulf of Aden borders it to the north, Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti on the northwest, Kenya to the southwest, and the Indian Ocean to the east and south. The political, economic, and social dynamics of Somalia are affected by two factors: its origins as a people and the significance of clans and sub-clans must first be explained.

In ancient times Somalia was known as the Land of Punt, which means Land of the Blacks. Early Arabs and Greeks called the people dwelling there “Black Berbers.”¹ The Somali people are descendants of East African Cushitic peoples. Their lifestyle, traditions, economic methods, social institutions, language, and physical characteristics resemble those of primordial Cushites that dwelled around Lake Ethiopia. This is also where the Somali ancestors, the Omo-Tana, split from the original Cushitic peoples.²

According to the stories of origins of the Somali peoples, they are direct relatives of the prophet Muhammad through his uncle Abu Taalib and Muhammad’s daughter Fatimah who married the brother of Abu Taalib, Ali. Though Somalis are adamant about their Arabic heritage, authors such as Ali Ahmed disagree with this notion and trace their descent from the ancient Cushitic East African peoples.³
Nevertheless, Somalis trace their descent from one mythical father Hiil and his two sons, Samaale and Saab. From these two brothers, the six dominant clan-family groups emerged. The Darood, Hawiye, Isaaq, and Dir who are descendants of Samaale are primarily nomads and reside in northern Somalia. Their principal herds include cattle, sheep, camels, and goats. Saab's descendants, however, are the farming Digil and Rahanwein who reside in southern Somalia. As a result, Somalia has been both a pastoral and agricultural society since the early Somalis inhabited the eastern horn of Africa, and remains so today. Clan-families, according to Irving Kaplan, are groups of clans that trace their lineage through a common male ancestor. These clans divide into smaller clans, that further divide into smaller sub-clans, which are then divided into family units.

Clan identification and loyalty are extremely intrinsic essential elements of Somali society and culture. As a result, every aspect of a Somali’s life is guided or influenced by the clan from which she or he hails. Clan identification and the loyalty expected from that identity were in place in Somalia long before a western state was formed, and before that state collapsed. It can, therefore, be argued that clan loyalty is an embedded element of Somali culture dating back to the earliest accounts of East African peoples.

For women, identification is made with the clan from which she is descended and the one into which she marries. These dual clan linkages have been addressed by Hadani Ditmars as useful in political negotiations toward the reconciliation and restoration of Somalia. Ditmars suggests that this dual clan linkage allows women to play a formidable role in the restoration of order and established government in Somalia.
As mentioned earlier, clan loyalty has always been a central and significant element of Somali culture. But it eventually became an integral element of the state. Clan identification was taken to new heights under the administration of Siad Barre from 1969-1991. Even though Barre proclaimed that he would not foster ethnic loyalty in his administration, clan loyalty, nevertheless became a central element in his rule of the state. Access to and the distribution of resources increasingly became centered on clan identity. In fact the majority of positions within government institutions were occupied by members of his immediate and broader clan, the Marehan and Darood, respectively. Consequently, this manipulation of clan loyalty was highly responsible for tearing apart the very fragile fabric that held the government together.

Politically, Somalia is without a formal structure of a state due to the civil war that erupted in 1991, as well as natural disasters. In addition, Somalia is a country which consists of several local factions, as well as Somaliland. The self declared Somaliland Republic is the northern area of Somalia. During the colonial era, it was a British territory formerly known as British Somaliland. After independence, northern clan families (Isaacs, Hawiye, Darood, and Dir) felt excluded from the military and new government positions established by the new constitution under the southern clan families (Rahanwein and Digil). As a result, the region proclaimed independence from the nation of Somalia in May 1991. The Somaliland Republic is not recognized by the international community as a government.

Presently, Somalia is a country torn apart by war, famine, drought, and floods. Recovery from these disasters left the government in financial debt to the World Bank as
well as the International Monetary Fund. It is a country of religious homogeneity, united under Islam. The majority of people practice the Sunni sect of Islam. The aforementioned existing turmoil of Somali has many contributing factors. Much of the earlier history of Somalia has impacted its present state of affairs.

Between the seventh and tenth century A.D., Arab and Persians from the Gulf of Aden settled on the Red Sea coast of present day Somalia to promote trade in ivory, gold, and spices. For example, the city of Mogadishu, started by Arabs, became a significant port in the East African Southeast Asian trade route. As a result, competition for control of such a lucrative area increased.

The first colonial occupation of Somalia occurred in 1875 by Egypt. Egypt itself was ruled by the Ottoman Turk Empire. In 1865, the Ottoman sultan issued a decree which placed the port towns on the western shore of the Red Sea in the khedive's possession. By 1874, Egypt occupied towns on the northern coast of Somalia. They remained in northern Somalia until 1884 when they were replaced by the British.

The British halted Egypt at the Benadir Coast by hindering the khedive’s establishment of his authority in the town of Baraawe. The British began to directly interact with the coastal Somali clans, and gradually established themselves on the Somali coast by 1884. In fact, the British eventually gained control of the area in Kenya known as the Northern Frontier District (NFD). Britain's northern occupied territories became known as British Somaliland. By the late 1800s, both France and Italy were pursuing colonial interests in Somalia.
France arrived in 1859. It had previously obtained a treaty with the Afar people for control of the port of Obock. Britain and France competed for control of the Indian trading route. As a result, Britain closed the port of Aden to French shipping, which resulted in the French to developing a coaling station at Obock. Eventually the station was moved to Djibouti to counterbalance Aden. Thus, France gained control of the small area of Djibouti, and it became known as French Somaliland.

Nevertheless, Italy was a late comer to the colonial competition due to its own unification process, which was not completed until 1870. Italy was active in both northern and southern Somalia. In the north they served as the buffer between the French and the British. In 1870, the Italian foreign ministry authorized a former missionary to find a place for Italian expansion. He purchased the Port of Assab in Eritrea from the Egyptians in 1870 and established a coaling station. The Italian government gained control of the shipping firm in 1882. In 1885, the British agreed to allow the Italians to take over Massawa from the departing Egyptians. As a result, Italy lay claim to the entire Eritrean coast.

Italy emerged in 1889 as the primary European power in southern Somalia when the Somali sultans of Obbya, on the Indian Ocean coast, and Alula, on the Gulf of Aden, accepted Italian protection in exchange for annual payments. The area leased, stretched from Uarsciech southward through Mogadishu to the mouth of the Juba River. Italy's territory was expanded along the coast through the commercial firm appointed as the Italian government's representative. This territory was protected by the Italian navy.
However, the Italians wanted to claim the Ethiopian kingdom as part of its sphere of influence. So, Italian forces moved inland, defeated the Ethiopians, and signed the Treaty of Ucciali with the new Emperor, Menelik II. To the Italians, Ethiopia became an Italian protectorate, but to Emperor Menelik II, it was not. Menelik only signed the Amharic version, which allowed him the option of utilizing Italian offices while conducting Ethiopia’s foreign affairs.

Italy and Great Britain signed treaties in 1891 and 1894 demarcating the boundaries of their respective territories. The treaty separated Italian Somaliland from British Somaliland and the Northern Frontier District. However, the boundaries were not discussed with Somalia or Ethiopia. The inland boundaries divided a region claimed by the Somali and Ethiopians. The Ogaden region was placed under the Italian sphere, thereby creating a conflict over boundaries, a situation which hampered Somalia’s independence.

In 1895, Somalia’s first call for nationalism was proclaimed by a Muslim holy man, Sayyid Mahammad Abdille Hasan, a member of the Salihihay Muslim brotherhood. Hasan brought together various clans and clan families to fight against Ethiopian raiders, and eventually against European colonial powers.

The Ogaden land area was part of Ethiopia. However, Somali clans occupied a large portion of this area. To exacerbate the problem, Ethiopia was a devout Christian society, whereas Somalia was pledged to Islam. Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan was a Somali whose lineage was rooted in the Ogaden region. Therefore, as a holy man with dual allegiances to Islam and Somalis, his leadership was legitimized by his many Ogaden
followers. Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan and his followers known as the *Dervish*, fought against the Ethiopians for control of the Ogaden region.

By 1899, Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan and the *Dervish* waged war against the British. The Sayyid’s maternal homeland and clan (Dulbahante) were part of British Somaliland. Upon his return to the northern area from his pilgrimage to Mecca, he began to assemble men and arms with the intent of assisting his relatives in the Ogaden against the Ethiopian raids. News of his movement reached Britain via their representative on the coast, and the Sayyid became known by the British as the *Mad Mullah*.

Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan and the *Dervish* battled against Ethiopian and British troops (which consisted of British, Indian, and British African colonial soldiers) for control of the Ogaden until 1920. The terrain of the country was more familiar to the Dervish than to their adversaries. As a result, the Dervish were able to hold them at bay until the introduction of airplanes into warfare in 1920. Consequently, the Dervish were unable to withstand air bombings on their northern regional forts in Somalia. Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan succumbed to influenza and died in 1920.

From 1920 to 1940, Britain and Italy controlled their territories using different styles. Of all the colonizers, Italy was the only one that set forth an economic development plan for its colony. This plan included plantation farming of banana, cotton, sugar, and citrus fruit crops. Italy, like France with its African territories, sought to mold Somali culture into Italian culture.

Britain on the other hand, never intended such cultural transformations. For them, the Somalian colony was simply a means of providing their British military in Aden with
livestock. The effects of these different colonial styles would eventually be primary elements and obstacles in Somalia's independence.

During World War II, Italy invaded British Somaliland and ousted the British from northern Somalia in 1940. Italy's intentions were to expand Italian territory in Somalia to increase its colonial power in Africa. However, in August 1940, British forces regained the colony, and conquered Italian Somaliland as well as the Ogaden region.

The British proposed the unification of all three Somalilands under British control. France, the Soviet Union and the United States rejected the proposition. Eventually, the Ogaden was returned to Ethiopia, and the United Nations granted Italy trusteeship of southern Somalia for ten years. The return of the Ogaden to Ethiopia, and the continued colonial rule of the British and Italians intensified Somali nationalism.

Urban Somalis who obtained civil servant positions under colonial rule began to question the authority of the British and Italians. Throughout the country, in public and private facilities, discussions and debates were held regarding political unity, and the end of colonial rule. The first Somali political party to formally address these issues was formed on May 13, 1943. It was called the Somali Youth Club, but in 1947 the name was changed to the Somali Youth League (SYL). This political party consisted of Somali nationalists from various clans and regions, and its goal was to unite all Somali territories regardless of clan identity.

The Somali Youth Club held demonstrations, and participated in the first general elections, which the Italians sponsored in 1954. On July 1, 1960, British Somaliland and the Italian trusteeship of Italian Somaliland were combined to form The Somali Republic.
Under multiparty elections, Aden Abdulla Osman (a member of the Hawiye clan-family) was elected President and Abdurashid Ali Shermarke (a member of the Majeerteen sub-clan of the Darood clan-family) was voted in as Prime Minister. 37

The new Somali Republic was immediately faced with problems that threatened the unification of the people. Differences between the colonial rules of northern Somalia under the British and southern Somalia under the Italians caused major unification problems. Primarily, the north was left out of the major government offices, such as prime minister, president, commander of the army, etc. 38 Understandably, the Isaaq and other northern clans became skeptical about their ability to receive equal access to resources as well as the distribution of those resources. As a result, this rift between the north and south, (and the clans and sub-clans represented in each region), remained an obstacle in overcoming clan identity/loyalty and focusing on nationalism from 1960 until today. Independence brought other problems to the forefront.

The newly formed government also needed to proclaim an official language. Although most Somalis spoke Somali, they did not have a written script. Therefore, the new government was forced to choose between Arabic, Italian, and English as the official state language. However, neither a declaration of a state language nor official script of Somali occurred until 1972. 39 There were also economic hindrances with which government had to contend. Four of Somalia's economic sectors, (pastoralists, Somalis employed at former colonial plantations, merchants, and salaried professionals), had to be considered, advancing Somalia's position in the international economy, appeasing private
businessmen while promoting socialism, and convincing the Somali people that changes were for their benefit.\textsuperscript{40}

Somali nationalism began with Sayyid Mahammad Abdille Hasan and his \textit{Dervish} resistance group in the nineteenth century. Modern Somali nationalism was built on the legacy of Sayyid Hasan and recaptured by the Somali Youth Club (SYC) in 1943.\textsuperscript{41} The intense longing to reunite all Somalis under one territory was a powerful idea that emerged from the fervent clan identity/loyalty of Somali culture. Eventually, Somali nationalism would lead Somalia into war with Ethiopia. Furthermore, the newly formed government of the Somali Republic was faced with enormous obstacles in its attempt to become a nation.

In 1961, disgruntled northern military officers attempted to secede from the new republic but failed.\textsuperscript{42} The attempted coup was a direct result of the critical and skeptical demeanor northerners had against southern leadership. Primarily the northern officers were angered that the former prime minister of the north, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, was merely assigned the position of minister of education in the new government. Also, negative sentiments towards the south were expressed in an unfavorable northern vote during the 1961 constitutional referendum.\textsuperscript{43} Also, during the initial years of the new Somali republic, clan loyalty and conflicts emerged onto the political scene. Loyalty between and among clan families and clans from the south (Rahanwein and Digil) and north (Hawiye, Darood, Isaaq, Dir) became the basis for multiparty political organization.

Each clan-family and its many lineages had their own interests in obtaining seats in the new government, which caused tensions among lineages within the same clan.\textsuperscript{4} Clan
fission and fissure, so apparent in traditional Somali politics, were transferred to a modern arena. Since government was the center of access to the distribution of resources, it was imperative that the clan have as many representatives as possible in government to ensure their reception of resources. Distribution of resources through the clan system is a historical part of Somali culture. Therefore, the insistence of having a representative from the clan in a new system of distributing resources was imperative given the significance of clan identity/loyalty in Somali culture.

However, in the new system, where the government is the center of resource distribution, having a position in that government becomes the means by which a clan receives its resources for survival, and its prestige. As a result, the clan families and their lineages began to compete through political parties to secure access to resources. Consequently, the differences between the north and south was compounded by continued tensions between and among the northern and southern clans. Gradually, the north became more suspicious of the south and questioning of its place in the new government.

The general elections of 1964 occurred in the midst of the aforementioned obstacles to unify faced by the government. The elections returned Aden Abdulla Osman to the presidency and he appointed a new prime minister, southerner Abdurazaq Haji Hussein. In the 1967 elections, southerner Abdurashid Ali Shermarke was elected President with northerner Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal as the Prime Minister. Following the 1967 elections, the north and south appeared to be reconciled. However, Shermarke and Egal differed on how to address the reunification of all Somalis
into one territory. Egal wanted to receive substantial United States economic aid, but the United States required Somalia to abandon its reunification goals in order to receive the financial assistance. Shermarke, in contrast, wished to unite all Somalis at any cost. Consequently, the government remained stagnant in order to avoid anarchy.

During the eight years of civilian rule, the government was unable to secure legitimacy of rule from the Somali people. Corruption, maladministration, clan nepotism, economic decay, and the lack of an official language and script, were some factors that led to the people’s discontent. Thus, the general elections held in Somali in March of 1969 were shrouded in anxiety. Shermarke and Egal were again elected President and Prime Minister, respectively. However, amidst the political, social, and economic instability, the atmosphere was ripe for insurrection. President Shermarke was assassinated by a disgruntled soldier from one of his rival Majeerteen sub-clans in October of 1969. Following his assassination, there was a scramble to find a successor, which allowed for the subsequent bloodless coup d’etat.

The military and police forces, under the command of military General Mohamed Siad Barre, combined to seize power on October 21, 1969. He immediately banned all political parties, suspended the constitution, and demolished Parliament. Instead, he replaced the government with the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC). As head of the new government, Barre immediately announced his plans to rid Somalia of its economic, political, and social ills. This plan would be based on “scientific socialism.”

From 1974 until 1975, Barre used Scientific Socialism to justify his control of the government. His message of equality was cleverly conveyed through concepts and
principles already familiar to the Somali people. For instance, Barre defined socialism as *hantiwadaag*, which is interpreted in Somali as "livestock sharing." Therefore, the term socialism would invoke the sharing of one's abundance with others.  

His socialist foundation stemmed from his association with the former Soviet Union.  

In this period, Somalia frequently sought armament assistance from the United States and the former Soviet Union. The weapons were to be used in its reunification attempts, which often led to border skirmishes with Ethiopia. The United States refused to assist Somalia in its early years of independence. The United States sided with Ethiopia in order to protect its strategic military interests. However, the former Soviet Union aided Barre’s regime in an attempt to antagonize the United States through its African arm of Cold War defense.  

Barre promised to eliminate clan identity/loyalty so embedded in Somali culture and society. He promised that the government positions would reflect the myriad of clan families and lineages under his administration. He also assured the Somali people that he would rid the government of the blatant corruption exhibited by the previous regime. But these promises were never fulfilled.  

Barre began to fill his cabinet with members of his clan-family (Mareehan), his mothers clan (Ogaden), and his primary son-in-law’s clan (Dulbahante). This triad of favoritism was covertly known as M.O.D.  

Barre also began to annihilate and imprison his opponents. Hence, in 1975, Barre’s regime began to crumble.  

The crucial blow to Siad Barre’s autocratic government was the 1977 to 1978 Ogaden War. Barre viewed an attack on Ethiopia as a means of reviving his popularity.
Thus, he capitalized on the regime collapse of the Ethiopian monarch, Haile Selassie. Although the former Soviet Union had been providing Somalia with arms, its interests were now focused on a more significant ally in Ethiopia. However, for Barre, this was an opportunity to regain the Ogaden region in Ethiopia (where Somalis resided) and unite it with Somalia.58

Somalia supported the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) and the Abo Liberation Front in Oromo. Meanwhile, the former Soviet Union was consistently supplying the new Ethiopian government with weapons. Somali guerrilla fighters attacked and captured the Ogaden in 1977. After this incident, the former Soviet Union abandoned Somalia and immediately dispensed advisors and weapons to Ethiopia. Further, the U.S.S.R. enlisted the aid of 12,000 Cuban soldiers who pushed Somali troops back into Somalia.59 Needless to say, Barre severed all ties with the U.S.S.R. and turned to the United States instead.

This clash provoked a counterattack from Ethiopia. Occasional Ethiopian advances continued until 1978. The defeat of the Somalis unleashed internal criticism and strife amongst the Somali people and officers. Majeerteen officers were quick to criticize Barre's leadership and he had most of them executed. After the humiliated Somali troops regrouped, civil war erupted in their camps in April of 1978. These troops attempted a coup but it was crushed by the government.60 In response to the discontentment of the people, another major opposition group formed in London.

In April of 1981, Isaaq emigrants residing in London formed a group called the Somali National Movement (SNM). This group was significant for several reasons. First,
it was the only other clan-based opposition group to Barre’s regime. The Somali Youth League was comprised of southern opposition clans. Second, it represented the largest northern clan. Third, it was the clan most excluded from Barre’s administration.

The Somali National Movement (SNM) and the Somali Democratic Salvation Front (SDSF), (a dissident group based in Ethiopia) formed a coalition in 1982. In 1983, they stormed the Mandeera prison and released many of Barre’s political prisoners. In 1984, they dispatched commando units to besiege numerous northern military posts. By 1988 it was clear that Siad Barre’s regime was crumbling. The SNM seized several northern towns in 1988. Barre retaliated by hiring white mercenary pilots to bomb civilians when Somali pilots refused to bomb civilians. In the wake of the destruction, 15,000 people were killed, and 300,000 became refugees. However, Barre was unable to contain the SNM and the insurrection it triggered.

Complete unrest spread throughout the country by 1989. One hundred prominent businessmen and politicians approached Barre in 1990 to urge him to resign. In place of his administration they wanted a transitional government that would allow for multiparty elections. Barre arrested, then released forty-five of the leaders, and promised to hold a referendum on a new constitution in October of 1990. He also assured them that multiparty elections would occur in February of 1991.

Siad Barre dismissed his cabinet in September of 1989 and replaced it with a transitional government. He legalized opposition parties in December of 1990. Towards the end of 1990, the newly formed opposition party called the United Somali Congress (USC) captured Mogadishu, thereby forcing Barre to flee to his family base in the south.
Following two failed attempts to recapture Mogadishu during 1991, Barre finally went into exile in Kenya. With the flight of Siad Barre in 1991, the state of Somalia collapsed. Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar declare that "with the state collapsed, the Somali people suffered the horrible brutality of living in a Hobbesian world without law or institutions to regulate relations among groups or to protect the most vulnerable from the most vicious." Various areas of Mogadishu and southern Somalia are controlled by clan and sub-clan leaders who remain armed from weapons previously acquired primarily from the United States and the former Soviet Union. Also, in 1991, northern Somalia proclaimed itself an independent nation.

The major clans have been fighting, raping, pillaging, interfering with international aid drops, and terrorizing international relief workers in these areas for more than eight years, thereby making it difficult for people to receive survival necessities. According to Lyons and Samatar, "Lawlessness, anarchy, and the consequent famine were most profound in southern Somalia ... and in the capital of Mogadishu ...." Since clan loyalty has been and remains a salient element in Somali culture, and in the relationship between women and the state, it becomes significant in the survival of women in Somalia. For example, if one clan obtains access to provisions supplied by international aid, the women of this clan will probably eat, as opposed to women of the other clans that did not obtain access to the foodstuffs.

Although Somalia is without a formal state, the Islamic Shari’a law does provide order in certain communities. This form of jurisdiction is carried out by Muslim holy
men. Primarily they preside based on the laws dictated in the Qur'an. Nevertheless, Somalia lacks an established state that would allow its emigrated people to return to their home country and experience a secure life.

From 1992 to 1994, the United States led a United Nations mission to get food into Mogadishu. The military forces were met with renegade Somali men in tanks who looted, raped, and plundered northern and southern Mogadishu. Occasionally, they responded to orders dictated by local clan leaders. In addition, the airport in Mogadishu was (and remains) closed, which means the incoming aid and aid workers arrived to a hostile situation. Nine years later, inter/intra clan warfare continues in southern Somalia, especially Mogadishu.

The absence of a government has yielded several clan conflicts which have resulted in the killings of Somalis and international aid workers. Mogadishu remains in a state of anarchy. In sharp contrast, stable governments and economies have emerged in northern Somalia where the seceded Somaliland and Puntland boast a stability which southern Somalia has not experienced. Nevertheless, the government of Somalia no longer exists and the country continues to be internationally described as being in a condition of anarchy.

Somali people have always been resourceful due to their nomadic heritage. However, Somalia was, and remains, one of the poorest countries in the world. Elements familiar to western societies, such as television, electricity, plumbing amenities, and refrigerators, are extremely rare, and considered luxuries in Somalia. Yet, the most
prominent concern for the government and the Somali people was their fellow countrymen in surrounding areas.

SOMALI WOMEN: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

By examining how Somali women survived in a decentralized precolonial society, a colonial state (1875-1959), a western state (1960-1969), an autocratic state (1970-1989), and the collapse of the state, (1991-date) the prescribed social gender roles in Somali culture will be illuminated. By defining what they did to survive with a state, the evidence gathered from the data on women surviving without a state will provide a comparison on which to determine whether they survive differently with or without a state.

In most of Africa, the dependency of women on men is often a cultural component dating back to the precolonial era, and then legally enforced by the state following independence. Women's dependency becomes more profound as they are marginalized by two forces of authority, the state and their communities. Consequently, the dependence of women becomes institutionalized through their marginalization.76

PRECOLONIAL

Precolonial African governments were either centralized or decentralized. Some people were governed by a chief and others were governed by a group of elders. The former societies centralized the decision-making authority solely in the position of chief, whereas “stateless” societies were democratic.77 Stateless societies were complex and should not be misconceived as lacking organization. A council of male elders, who were
representatives of each clan comprising a community, were responsible for dispensing justice and the overall governing of village activities. Although men held most of the chiefdoms and seats as elders in the councils, African women were respected.

It has been documented that Somalia functioned as a stateless society prior to the arrival of Europeans. The pastoral clans of the north operated under a government that involved a council of elders within the clan who heard and resolved issues. On the other hand, the agricultural clans of the south relied on a chieftainship to govern their communities. Hence, Somali society experienced order prior to the introduction of western democracy. In contrast, colonialism and its political structures and ideologies left Somalia with an entrenched western state and much disorder.

In precolonial Somalia, there was a decentralization of power. These codes were based on the overall ties of kinship, which provided one with her/his identity and purpose. In essence, kinship was the basis or center of communal existence. Likewise, blood ties and heer provided the overall parameters which governed public and private life.

According to Lidwein Kapteijns, the culture of northern Somalia is based on nomadic laws that date back to primordial Somali life. The codes of conduct and law that governed the early pastoralists were blood ties and the heer. In the pre-colonial era the heer was the intangible, yet binding foundation for rural society. Although its standards varied from one region to another, and periodically changed with time, nomads respected the rules and regulations of the heer concerning murder, stealing, and social behavior. This informal customary law provided the basis for inter and intra clan
encounters. In other words, the heer stipulated laws which governed the constantly mobile kinship groups of nomads.

Within these groups there were specific tasks assigned to each age and gender group. Senior males were regarded as elders, and therefore controlled the decision-making within the nomadic camps. Their positions were earned based on their age, the respect gained from the community, and their wealth. These men were usually married and their primary duty was to supervise the herding of camels, sheep, and goats by the younger men, women, and children for the camp.

The young unmarried men and boys tended to the camels, while the girls and women tended the sheep and goats. Women’s responsibilities included, birthing and nurturing children, obtaining and preparing food, erecting and dismantling tents, tending to the needs of their husband, as well as maintaining the interior of the aqal.

Marriage was crucial to the survival of nomadic women. Since men made decisions concerning the governing of the nomadic settlement, and women were completely excluded from any forms of power (within or outside the home), it was crucial for young girls to marry. Marriage was an assured means of being provided food, clothes, shelter, jewelry, and status.

If Somali women become widowed or divorced, they had an even more difficult time meeting their needs without the security a man of a man in the household. Without the physical and material security of a man, whether he be an uncle, cousin, son, brother, father, or husband, a woman was considered helpless. Since marriage was such a salient
element of a young girl’s future, the act of infibulation was a means of physically ensuring her eligibility for marriage.  

In Somali culture, like other African (and non-African) cultures, the virginity of a young girl maintains the honor of her immediate family, sub-clan, and clan. It is deemed honorable that a young girl has never had sexual relations until she consummates her marriage with her husband. Thus, her infibulation stitches are frequently inspected by elderly women in her family or village. The severing of her stitches would indicate her sexual encounter(s). Consequently, she dishonors herself, her family, anyone related to her through her clan lineage. Moreover, she brings shame to the clan’s reputation for producing honorable women, worthy of marriage.

Once married, a young girl’s allegiance is torn between the clan of her father and that of her husband. After marriage, she becomes an asset to the wealth and production of her husband’s family unit. However, since lineage was traced from the male, she remains linked with her father’s clan. In fact, married women maintained their father’s clan name instead of acquiring their husband’s clan name.

The women of Somali agricultural societies performed many of their responsibilities outside the home. In addition to their traditional household concerns, they were involved in the local trading of milk, mats, wooden spoons, ropes, bread, charcoal, and bark. Furthermore, land preparation, harvesting, planting, weeding, packing and storing sacks of grain are tasks women performed during the farming season. Farm products were then sold at the market.
By selling products at the market, rural Somali women contribute heavily to the overall economy of the agricultural community. However, due to the patriarchal laws surrounding society, Somali women were not allowed to own property. The opportunity to own land and livestock belonged solely to Somali men. Women were allotted capital through inheritance, but wound up with a lesser portion than men. Therefore, Somali women sold small items to acquire money for themselves.89

Nomadic women in the 1880s organized a religious group to recite and learn the Quran. The organization of this group was in response to the exclusion of women from Islamic meetings. The institution is called Abay siti, which means “lady sister” in Somali and combines religious order with Somali tradition. This organization eventually led to the formation of the hagbad. The hagbad consisted of a group of Somali women who came together to financially assist each other. This practice involves each woman in a group contributing a certain amount of money to a money pool at the beginning of every week or month. Then, every month, one woman receives all the money based on a rotation cycle. Most often this money is used to start a small business, thereby providing the Somali woman with some financial independence.90

In the fishing communities, which are primarily along the Shabeelle and Jubba Rivers in southern Somalia, Somali women constructed fishing nets, boat utensils, and baskets. Just as Somali women of pastoral and agricultural societies, sold produce, the Somali women of the fishing communities sold their surplus fish to contribute to the family income.91 Therefore, trading to support the family has been a part of Somali women’s
lives since the pre-colonial era. Furthermore, trading to provide for their families was not new when colonialism entered in the nineteenth century.

In primordial Somali society, resources necessary for survival, such as water wells, cattle, camels, sheep, goats, and grain were controlled by the subclan or clan-family, which was under the authority of men. Although women were not allowed to own as much property as men, they maintained a level of independence through the *hagbad* and local trading of the goods. Clan identity and loyalty presupposed the preservation of its members. However, when colonialism arrived, the control of resources changed from local to European hands.

**COLONIAL**

Between the late 1880s and 1960, the British, Italians, and French occupied different segments of Somalia. The British occupied the north, the French controlled the area of Djibouti, and the Italians maintained the south. With their arrival, trading of livestock and grains became commercialized, and the Somali people were no longer in control of their products. Ultimately, this meant they were not in control of their resources either.

The Italians utilized their southern territory to build banana plantations in order to provide Somalia with an economic base. The British, on the other hand, were not interested in providing the Somali people with an economy. Their primary goal was to keep the men at their outposts fed with the livestock they purchased. Somali women
remained dependent upon their husbands, but now trading of their products was controlled by Europeans.

The control pastoralists previously enjoyed in cultivating their land, and trading their commodities for personal profit was now in the hands of the British, Italians, French, and Ethiopians. The economic disruption began with the British overtaking Aden in 1839 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1856. As a result, Somali pastoralists in British Somaliland began exporting heavily to Arabia.92

Ultimately, the raising and trading of livestock became a part of market exchange, and livestock were no longer traded as a hefty part of the families income. Instead of trading sheep and goats in local markets, the livestock became part of the commercial capital used to uphold the colonial state.93 More importantly, Somali women’s dependence for survival now fell into the hands of colonial powers.

European powers seized land from the African men and used the men and women as the labor force. The produce from these once communal lands was now used by colonial powers as exports in the international capitalist economy.94 However, in the process of establishing cash crops, colonial powers urged men to cultivate land. Consequently, women’s autonomy was tremendously diminished since cultivation was primarily their contribution to the family income. In addition, colonial powers further marginalized rural and agricultural Somali women by not utilizing their unpaid work as a means of generating income to support the protectorate. Poor urban women were allowed to continue their petty trade, or wage labor, but were also excluded from the economy.95
The colonial structure of the state was such that it took over the economic flow of the pastoralists. The colonial state created townships for the pastoralists and designated grazing areas for the nomads.96 This economic restriction severely undermined the social and political structure of society, which was traditionally based on clan identity/loyalty, Islamic law of sharia, and the heer.97

The western dichotomy of superior/inferior, male/female was introduced through European and American colonizers as part of their value system. Previously, males and females had been viewed as equal, yet with different tasks. With the intrusion of western values, men were favored over women. Consequently, men’s duties were deemed higher than women’s responsibilities. Yet, Somali women were politically active in Somalia’s fight for independence.

Grassroots Somali women’s organizations were significant in supporting the early liberation movements of the 1950s.98 During the 1940’ and 1950s, many Somali women in the north and south joined the independence movement.99 Somali women supported political parties, such as the Somali Youth League and the Somali National League. Approximately forty-five percent (45%) of the members of these political parties were women. Therefore, Somali women have long been organized and utilized their community associations to mobilize for political participation.

Somali women traditionally express their thoughts through poetry called “Buranbur.”100 Poetry is a salient element in Somali culture. Both men and women use it to express thoughts. Yet, even in poetry there are sharp divisions and rules for Somali women’s and men’s poetry. Somali men usually address political issues in their recitations,
but some Somali women have utilized this coveted aspect of Somali culture to address the marginalization of women. The social and political status afforded poetry in Somali society must not be underestimated. Poetry is a powerful expression of one’s intellect, skills, and abilities, which transforms into one’s qualifications for obtaining and maintaining power. Therefore, there is clear evidence that women are gradually entering the public domain, which has traditionally been reserved for Somali men.

Women used poetry to campaign for their interests and a better future for Somalia during the struggle for liberation. Due to the significance and respect for poetry, Somali women utilized the forbidden public arena to voice their opinions on colonialism and its elimination. Poetry was also used by active Somali women to persuade other Somali women to become involved in the struggle. For example, the following poem was written in the structure and context of Somali women’s poetry called Buranbur. It is Halimo Godane’s response to her friend’s caution about dying in the struggle without having children. Halimo Godane was one of the first women to join the Somali Youth League, and suffered abuse from men and women for her political activities.

*Aniga geeri iyo nololi way ii gudboonyihiin.*
[For me death and life are the same].

*Gotaan bean geadhnay isticmaarka inaan gubnaa,*
[We have decided to bum the colonialists].

*Shardou naga guuro geashaanka waa la hayn.*
[Until they leave (us) we will keep the shield].

*Guhaad iyo ciil nin qaba yee wax gaysan jiray,*
[The angry one who is being scolded for not avenging takes action],

*Shardou naga guuro geashaanka wee lay hayn.*
[Until they leave (us) we will keep the shield].
Somali women, such as Halimo gained recognition as nationalists. Although Somali women were not granted decision-making authority, they were extremely active, and significant to the movement for independence. In fact, their strong participation in the independence movement was a catalyst for potential changes in women’s roles in Somali society. Unfortunately, major changes for Somali women did not occur until Siad Barre came to power twenty years later. Until then, Somali women remained marginalized under the newly formed government.

With the combining of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland, two separate colonial entities gained their independence and became The Republic of Somalia in 1960. The new government faced various socio-economic problems, such as uniting all Somalis from surrounding territories in Somalia, a declining economy, and merging the culturally diverse northern and southern areas of Somalia. Needless to say, most public policies developed by the newly formed government did not reflect the interests, input, or needs of Somali women.

POSTCOLONIAL

At independence, the state became the controller of resources. As this new form of governance came into existence, it further marginalized Somali women from political and economic power, and it created a clash between traditional Somali communal life with the competition for resources of the western state. Consequently, the state became the vessel for acquiring and distributing resources utilizing the principles of western capitalism.
With independence came the western form of government. The state was the means by which the government created, implemented, and reinforced societal rules and regulations.\textsuperscript{105} When colonial powers withdrew from the countries, they left a western state in place for the indigenous leaders to govern. Since Somali culture restricted most women from political decision-making positions, women’s interests and needs were also neglected under indigenous authority. Thus, the cultural marginalization of women by men was about to become institutionalized by the state.\textsuperscript{106}

The state controlled resources, and access to these resources was usually available through state jobs.\textsuperscript{107} Since the culture of the state was patriarchal, men filled these state positions and perpetuated male privilege.\textsuperscript{108} Indigenous men were now able to create, implement, and uphold laws that confined women to the private sphere. Despite the fact that women provided the fuel, water, and food on which the family survived, they continued to be excluded from political power. Consequently, most women stayed at home though some urban Somali women were employed by the government as civil servants, traded in the local market, or performed other community tasks.

Cultural and government restrictions on women’s lives meant they were illiterate, untrained, and therefore, incapable of obtaining jobs the modern western state offered. As a result, women became more dependent upon men for their survival.\textsuperscript{109} Thus, there existed the cultural submission of women along with the post colonial state’s institutionalization of women’s marginalization. Hence, Somali women were oppressed by internal and external powers.
Modernization was a powerful component of the western state. The technologies and capitalistic economic tendencies were in stark contrast to the pastoral traditions of Somalia. Therefore, when cities emerged, many Somalis who had been educated in the United States or Europe took advantage of these opportunities and moved from the rural areas into the cities. As a result, Somali women lost their access to the productive (sheep, goats, land) resources that provided some economic independence. In addition, Somali women were further marginalized from economic power when the newly formed government insisted on dealing with men instead of women in economic transactions. Therefore, although women in urban areas sold goods in the market, they remained on the periphery of economic power. According to Lidwein Kapteijns “... gender has continued to be a major determinant of inequality in Somali society, and it interacts with class and clannism in shaping the lives of Somali women.”

In explaining the relationship of Somali women to the state, it is additionally important to note the salience of clan loyalty to the relationship between Somali women and the state. The state introduced competition for resources through the formation of political parties. Political parties are organized based on similar beliefs, needs, interests, and demands. Ethnic affiliations primarily defined the basis for organized groups in precolonial Africa.

When western government introduced organized competition for resources, most of the political parties became representatives of various ethnic groups. As a result, state positions tended to be filled by members of the same ethnic group. Due to the economic, political, and social resources affiliated with state jobs, certain members of society gained
more wealth and status than others, resulting in the creation of a middle class. Hence, class distinction became strongly associated with ethnic affiliation.

For example, Somali men who held positions within the state bureaucracy had access to better housing, and to European shops and restaurants that were inaccessible to those who were not employed by the state. Moreover, these positions were obtained and secured through clan identity/loyalty-nepotism in its most extreme form. Therefore, a Somali woman who married or was born into the clan of power, through the man employed by the state, was more likely to live a more comfortable life than perhaps even her mother, if the mother was not also a member of the clan in power.

By 1969 and the coup d'etat by General Mohammed Siad Barre, Somali women's political, economic, and social marginalization had been institutionalized. Religiously, Somali men utilized Islamic guidelines to justify Somali women's exclusion from Mosques and prayers. Consequently, Somali women began pressuring the government to address their interests and needs. As a result, Barre seized the opportunity to use Somali women's pressure for inclusion towards his political advantage.

Barre understood the significant roles of Somali women in the birthing and nurturing of future generations. In 1972 the Somali language gained a script, and Barre utilized this new element of education to spread his Marxist philosophy. Barre's intention was to indoctrinate the next generation of Somalis through their mothers, which meant radical changes in the education of women. Therefore, new laws had to be written that allowed more Somali women to receive an education. Subsequently, Barre promoted the education of girls.
In 1969, girls comprised 20 percent (20%) of primary students, and 40 percent (40%) by 1979. The percentage of women enrolled on the intermediate, secondary and university level were not very impressive either. From 1974 to 1984 the percentage of girls in secondary schools increased from 17 percent (17%) to 34 percent (34%). Rural girls were the least educated based on their families’ belief in girls gaining knowledge pertaining to household and child nurturing abilities. Boys were often preferred to receive an education since this would improve their social status. On the other hand, the social status of girls was improved through an early marriage. Therefore, the social assignment of Somali women to the private sphere, and Somali men to the public sphere was reinforced in spite of education opportunities.

Employment for Somali women rose during Barre’s regime. Somali women saw the greatest advances under the Ministry of Education due to the many positions filled by Somali women as teachers at the primary level. From 1969 to 1979, the percentage of female teachers rose from 10 percent (10%) to 30 percent (30%). Particularly, urban Somali women received the greatest benefits from the educational advances due to their exposure to skills necessary to obtain professional jobs, such as high level positions in government ministries. Despite their advances, Somali women did not hold positions in Barre’s Supreme Revolutionary Council.

Siad Barre’s government created the Somali Women’s Democratic Organization in 1971. The purpose of this organization was to promote women’s economic, political, and social interests and equality. The Somali Women’s Democratic Organization established branches at the national, regional, district, town, and village levels. Despite the political
and educational opportunities established under Barre, the majority of Somali women continued to be denied decision-making power. Some avenues in which they expressed their dissatisfaction was through poetry.

Siad Barre also opened doors for Somali women in terms of traditional practices related to divorce and murder. Divorce in Islamic societies is the sole right of the man. He may divorce his wife without any justification at any time he chooses.\textsuperscript{119} Traditionally, the price was higher for the murder of Somali men than it was for Somali women. The murder of Somali men called for ten camels to be paid the immediate family of the murdered man. Five camels, however, were payment for the murder of a Somali woman. During Barre's regime, the camel price was equaled for the murder of Somali men and women. Barre also challenged inequalities in bride-wealth, maternity leave, and equal wages for women.\textsuperscript{120}

Barre's celebration of the International Woman's Year angered the religious leaders in Somalia. For the sheikhs, his law, which gave women equal inheritance rights, was an act of secularism. In response to their vocal opposition, Barre had ten of the sheikhs executed in public.\textsuperscript{121}

In the end, Somali women's rights were advanced more during Siad Barre's regime than anytime during colonial and post independence years. Although he advanced women's issues for ulterior motives, he nonetheless opened the door for Somali women to make real changes in society. One set back to his progressive measures was the fact that only a small number of Somali women benefitted from his tactics. These women were mostly women who obtained an education and therefore a professional job, or women
who married Somali men with professional or state positions. Moreover, Barre’s scientific socialism strengthened clan identity/loyalty.

The post independence years further entrenched the cultural and institutional marginalization of women. Most Somali women were marginalized in the private and public sphere. Somali men controlled the social atmosphere, the state, its resources, the distribution of those resources, and the laws that withheld power from women. Yet, Somali women did resist their marginalization through grass roots organizations, mobilization, and poetry.

Siad Barre’s primary advances for Somali women occurred during the early years of his regime. By 1976, his control was beginning to decline. Barre had not addressed Somalia’s failing economy, rather, he agitated clan identity/loyalties in politics. He alienated the international community through his brutal attacks on northern Isaaqs, alienated countries in the Arab union, and set the precedent for violent retaliation against opponents. On rare occasions, some Somali women participated in combat or enticed their men to fight against Barre’s regime. Eventually, efforts to overthrow Baree succeeded. Consequently, he fled to Kenya, then Lagos, Nigeria, where he died in 1995. By 1991 Somalia’s social, political, and economic structures collapsed, leaving women and children to bear the brunt of the impact.
NOTES


4. Ibid., 117.

5. Ibid., 17. Although the north and south developed different cultures and Somali dialects, everyone of Somali descent in Somalia and the surrounding areas of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti is acknowledged as a relative. This identification and loyalty to family also applies to Somalis residing outside Somalia.

6. Ibid., 373.


11. Ibid., 22.


13. Ibid., 74.


18. Ibid., 51.


22. Ibid., 21.


24. Ibid.


26. The Ethiopians raided Somali villages in the Ogaden region for political and religious reasons.

27. Ibid., 56.

28. Ibid., 57.

29. Ibid.


32. Ibid., 59.


37. Ibid., 70.


40. Ibid., 105.

41. Ibid., 62.


43. Ibid.


45. Ibid., 30.


47. Ibid.


50. Ibid.


54. Ibid., 82.

55. "Scientific socialism" was the ideology of Siad Barre’s regime. Using Soviet and Chinese Marxist principles as a reference, Barre formed his own ideology and formula for governing Somalia. Barre used Marxist alignment to obtain financial and military aid from the Soviet Union. In return, Somalia allowed the Soviet Union to use the naval facilities at Berbera.


57. Ibid., 72.

59. Ibid.


61. Ibid., 93.

62. Ibid.


64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.


70. Ibid.

71. Hereafter the term state will be defined and used in this study to identify a somewhat secure means of governance with permanent institutions to implement its rules and regulations. This definition is based on one provided by Chazan et al., *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, 178-180. Examples of a state include military, welfare, communist, etc.


79. There is a myriad of definitions for democracy. Yet, Western democracy possesses the characteristics of electing officials, and the accountability of those officials to the people. Also, Western democracy provides for the people to exercise, and the government maintain certain freedoms, such as freedom of speech, the right to assemble, and the right to oppose the government without consequences. Dov Ronen, Democracy and Pluralism in Africa (Colorado; Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. 1986), 192.

80. Ibid., 10.


82. Blood ties were essentially the genealogical connections patrilineally traced to one common male ancestor. They formed the basis of clan solidarity. Clan solidarity was maintained through the diya. The diya was the judicial foundation which guided clans on matters of debt and restitution for offenses against its members. Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar, Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution 1995), 8.


85. Infibulation is also called female circumcision. This is an ancient practice believed to have originated in ancient Egypt. It is not sanctioned by Islam or any other religion, which supporters often use as justification for the act. The operation is performed on adolescent girls and involves the cutting of a young girls clitoris, inner and outer lubia (lips) usually without anesthesia or sanitized tools. The area is then sewn up leaving only a
small pin sized opening for urination and menstruation. The debate over the elimination of this act is based on traditional opinions who say it should continue due to its cultural and historical significance to Somali women and Somali society. On the other hand, those who wish to eliminate the act stress that there is not any cultural or religious significance to the operation. B. A. Robinson, “Female Genital Mutilation (Female Circumcision) in Africa, the Middle East & Far East,” [database on-line] available from http://www.religioustolerance.org/fem_cirm.htm; Internet; accessed 03 March 2000.


89. Wallace and March, Changing Perceptions: Writings on Gender and Development, 133.

90. Ibid.


93. Ibid., 254.

94. Ibid., 6.


96. Ibid.

97. The sharia is the Islamic code of law introduced to Somali society with the massive conversions of Somalis in the eleventh, through thirteenth century. The sharia's
laws stem from the Quran, the hadith, and interpretations from early Islamic eras. The *sharia* contains numerous schools of legal thought, and includes various categories of behavior. According to the Area Handbook edited by Helen Chapin Metz, these behavioral divisions are: obligatory actions, desirable or recommended actions, indifferent actions, objectionable but not forbidden actions, and prohibited actions. Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Somalia: A Country Study*, 4ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 1993), 97.

98. Alice B. Hashim, “Towards the Effective Participation of Women in the Development of Somalia” (A Situation Report and Project Concept Paper for Strengthening the Role and Impact of the Women in Development Unit, Mogadishu, August 1990), Human Resources Department with assistance from UNFPA/ ILO Project-SOM/86/PO2, Ministry of National Planning and Juba Valley Development.


101. Jama, “Fighting to be Heard: Somali Women’s Poetry.”

102. Ibid.

103. Somali nationalism is a fundamental political aspect of Somalia. It’s ideology consists of bringing all Somalis from the Ogaden region in Ethiopia, the Northern Frontier District in Kenya, and Djibouti and uniting them in Somalia. This ideology and the actions spun from it throughout Somalia’s history from the colonial to present era are based on Somalia’s cultural clan identity/loyalty. As a result, all Somalis are considered “away from home” until they reside in Somalia. Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, 68.


108. Ibid., 154.


111. Ibid., 244.

112. Ibid., 55.

113. These state positions and the social status associated with them provided for wider gaps between the rural (traditionally nomadic north and agricultural south) and urban lifestyles of Somalis. Consequently, women of rural areas were not as exposed to western culture or resource derived from association with the western state.


120. Ibid., 95.


CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW

Men and women feel the psychological and physical strains of living outside their home country. All refugees leave relatives, friends, neighbors, pets, places of worship, schools, and other important entities behind or lose them in war. Women refugees, however, have different challenges than men.\(^1\)

Approximately 80 percent (80\%) of refugees are women. A number of women and girls experience rape (often repeatedly), as a result of war. In the process of retrieving wood and water for cooking, women are prime targets for rape by refugee camp guards from the host country, or any man or group of men wielding power through weapons and/or threats.\(^2\) The psychological, social, and physical strain of rape cause women in countries like the Sudan to become withdrawn. Armies even use rape as a method of warfare to not only demoralize their enemies, but in genocidal wars, men will intentionally impregnate their victims to ensure the perpetuation of the rapists' ethnic group and a dilution of the opposition.

The effects of war on women are devastating. Women either become internally displaced, or flee to refugee camps. From the refugee camps, they hope to relocate to a country of asylum, or return to their home countries after war. Since the majority of men are either missing, kidnapped, or killed during a war, most women are left without men to
provide security and perform traditional roles within the family. As a result, widowed women find themselves as heads of households, and therefore, responsible for providing food, clothes, shelter, water, medical care, and security for their families. Even though most women in war torn societies are used to these roles and the responsibilities that accompany them, their efforts to continue these responsibilities become more difficult in the absence of a male in the family. For some women, operating in the public sphere on behalf of themselves is a new experience, since their cultures fostered patriarchal domination prior to war.

Researching women in the aftermath of war is a recent endeavor. It is an area of study that emerged from feminist writings and theories of the late 1970s and 1980s. Before then, analysis on war and its impact centered upon men, with women merely mentioned marginally since most scholars view war as a male phenomenon and women are perceived as peaceful victims, the impact of war on women was not the center of research. Although men, women, and children suffer psychological, physical, political, social, and economic effects of war, each group is impacted differently.

The eruption of war destroys the social, economic, and political fabric of any society. Whether it is a civil, liberating, or revolutionary war, peoples' lives are forever changed. The effects of war are even more profound when anarchy is the outcome of war.

Most societies are patriarchal, and men control virtually every aspect of women's lives prior to war. Whether in underdeveloped, developing, or developed countries, the cultural hierarchy of men over women prevails. Whether they reside in urban or rural areas, men control the opportunities available to women. For instance, in urban areas, men
are the dominant law makers and women are barred from political participation. In rural areas, most women cannot own property. The land that rural women cultivate belongs to her husband, father, or male relative responsible for her. Therefore, men uphold and create legislation that maintains the marginalization of women from political participation. Furthermore, state governments, and government institutions are controlled by men, which sustains their social influence amongst each other and within their respective communities.

One of the reasons women and men experience the political aftermath of war differently is because of their political inequality prior to the war. Since men control the government and hold most of the government positions, they are responsible for the distribution of the state’s resources. They make laws that maintained their control over women’s lives, therefore, the political impact of war on women and men differs primarily in rights and issues.

During revolutions, women were courted for their support by the group seeking power. After an assertion to power, pre-revolutionary promises to women were denied or forgotten by the new regime. Furthermore, revolutions are generally not beneficial to women and their interests due to the replacement of one patriarchal regime with another. However, following a revolution or any type of war, both men and women are targets of the enemy based on their association with the previous government, or their affiliation with someone associated with the ousted government.

The national economy is either destroyed or severely disabled by war. Farms that previously provided commodities are often intentionally destroyed in wars to prevent the
enemy from surviving. Damages to crops severely affect the economy of war torn societies. Not only are the people devastated by their loss of livelihood and food for consumption, but nations that rely on agricultural exports are crippled as well. Without a government, government structures, or tools to sustain a living, many displaced persons are forced to rely on international assistance. 11

When war erupts, and the state and its institutions collapse, some urban men lose their jobs, their legal control, and their social status. The loss of the state job places these men’s lives in jeopardy since they represent the enemy (the government). This threat to their lives is exacerbated when ethnic identity/loyalty is an underlying cause of the war. As a result of losing the government job, men are no longer able to provide for their families, and their masculinity is threatened within their families and communities.

As for rural men, they too are heads of their families, but they control women’s lives through cultural rules and traditions. Just as urban men lose their livelihoods due to the loss of their state positions, rural men lose their livelihoods due to the damages to crops and herds. Therefore, rural men are no longer able to contribute to the family income, and rural women must rely on their market skills to support the family. In the midst of these struggles, both rural and urban men face being kidnapped, tortured, exiled, killed, or entering combat. In sum, the aftermath of war causes most urban and rural men to lose their livelihoods as well as control over women’s lives.

Both women and men experience social changes in the aftermath of war. Family and friends are separated temporarily or forever. Ethnic identity/loyalty becomes either a liability or asset depending on which ethnic group is the aggressor and which is the target.
Since women are associated with the private sphere in most societies, they form their social groupings amongst each other. Therefore, when war erupts, these social groups remain significant, though interrupted and altered. In other words, women continue to assist each other and rely upon previous connections to survive. Furthermore, men’s social groups become severed or strained due to their previous political associations, and the political outcome of the war.

Women have more to gain socially following war than men. In anarchy, the collapse of the state eliminates political control over women’s lives. Although cultural restrictions remain in social interactions, women become free to either begin or continue organizing to promote their needs and interests. Women remain within gender roles of managing the private sphere, as well as remaining separated from men at weddings, and other religious services. Yet the absence of state restrictions on women’s participation in the public sphere allows women to establish businesses and grassroots organizations that address peace, healthcare, and education.

The difficulty of providing survival necessities for themselves and their families ignites some of them to organize women’s groups to address women’s needs and issues. For example, in Sudan the Sudan Women’s Voice for Peace promotes, peace, democracy, and women’s rights, while the New Sudan Women’s Federation conducts community awareness on human rights in southern Sudan. Likewise, revolutions allow women to seek political rights through mobilization, as well as elected positions in the new government.
Men have more to lose socially in anarchy, due to the elimination of their economic and political control over women's lives. In wars of ethnic cleansing, men lose just as much as women during and following war due to their lack of political, economic, and social control over their lives and the lives of their families. In revolutions, men only lose social, political, and economic control over women's lives if they are members of the ousted government. For men of the new regime, the aftermath of war reconnects them to political control, and also, economic control over women's lives.

One of the physical challenges to the general public following war are land mines. People are exposed to mines left in fields, which create a large disabled population. Disabilities present difficulties for people to farm or manage any other tasks to support themselves and their families. Along with physical challenges are the psychological impacts of war.

The most common impact of war on men, women, and children is post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This psychological condition is caused by any distress or severe trauma experienced during or following war. Women are particularly prone to suffer PTSD as a result of rape due to feelings of the violation of their safety. Since rape has become a weapon of war, thousands of women experience psychological reactions to these horrible acts. They are unable to sleep, trust people (especially men), become depressed, and some have difficulty maintaining their mental faculties.

Raped women serve as symbols of the opposing forces conquering of their enemies' honor, dignity, and spirit. The further deliberate impregnation of the enemies' women and girls provides a lasting reminder of the conquered groups defeat, and
perpetuation of their genes. In essence, rape and intentional impregnation are used in wars of ethnic cleansing.\textsuperscript{15}

Psychologically, men in combat, suffer combat stress reactions (CSR). Symptoms of CSR include anxiety, rear, sleep disturbance, irritability, decreased appetite, social detachment, suicidal thoughts, headache, aggressive behavior, and bad dreams or memories. The causes of this condition are a result of surprise attacks, heavy casualties, lack of sleep, exposure to unknown gas weapons, lack of food, isolation, inadequate communication, and lack of trust in leadership. Overall, CSR results from feelings of being in uncontrollable situations.\textsuperscript{16} Women combatants experience physical and psychological effects of war differently than men. Women and men experience torture, but the torture is administered based on the permeating attitude in most societies that women are inferior to men, and exist at men’s disposal.\textsuperscript{17}

Some women, who take up arms, are viewed as maverick women who disregard, disrespect, and dishonor their families and cultural traditions. Since some patriarchal societies dictate women’s behavior as calm, and their domain as the home, it is dangerous and unacceptable for them to participate in the chaotic, public sphere of men. However, in some countries, such as Eritrea and Cuba, female soldiers were abundant despite the military and civilian backlash they received.\textsuperscript{18}

Socially, when women combatants re-enter society following war, they are treated differently from men. Women soldiers must face the social stress of re-entering patriarchal societies without the heroes welcome male soldiers receive. Male soldiers are given first priority over female soldiers to jobs and receiving assistance upon returning to society. For
example, in Afghanistan, food and medical attention are deferred from women to male soldiers. Although men must make adjustments to life after combat, women soldiers often do not disclose that they have been involved in direct combat for fear of societal and family exclusion. Therefore, many of their experiences and emotional pain remain embedded in their memories for them to address in private.

The loss of family, friends, villages, neighborhoods, property, and a sense of stability is shared by all who experience war. People must begin to search for food, clothes, shelter, water, and medical attention often without the aid of previous government institutions. For most displaced persons, aid comes from outside their war torn country.

In addition to nongovernmental and international assistance, internally displaced women also benefit from their traditional skills as market traders by starting their own businesses. They sell produce, and arts and crafts in the local markets. However, some displaced women turn to prostitution as a means of survival in order to avoid becoming poverty stricken. For women, life after war brings forth new challenges, responsibilities, and dangers.

In most war torn societies, women’s social and economic roles change when they become the sole providers for their families. Prior to war, some are co-contributors with men to the family’s economy. Socially, they are forced to serve as protectors of their families and themselves, which is usually the role of men in the family.

Women are responsible for the house, the children, gathering and cooking the food. In other words, women’s influence and power was confined to the private sphere, whereas men controlled the public sphere. This patriarchal structure was based on the
cultural demarcations of men and women’s area of influence. In addition, women of color
in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America also faced racial discrimination by their
European oppressors.23

Traditionally, most African, Asian, and Latin American women were socialized to
maintain the house, birth and care for the children, and cater to their husbands. In Latin
American culture, *machismo* is a term often cited as the definitive indicator of gender
relations.24 Most women were not allowed to attend school. Therefore, they were
illiterate. Men were educated (sometimes as far as university level) and were therefore
responsible for all family public matters, i.e., the purchase of land and paperwork
concerning any matter. As a result, women were traditionally dependent upon men.25

In Asia, Vietnamese women worked outside and within the home. They were vital
contributors to the family income and its survival. While they did not have access or rights
to the estate they helped create, Vietnamese women were economically viable prior to the
1975 war.26

Women from Africa, Asia, and Latin America have also organized groups to
address health, education, and community welfare. These effective grassroots women’s
groups provide the foundation for political activity. Some women become politically
active through protests, rallies, strikes, seeking elected offices, and support or rejection of
certain male candidates in their relocated country or reconstructed home country.
In fact, many women’s organizations emerged from women’s political mobilizations.27
For example, in Zimbabwe, groups such as, the Woman and AIDS Support Network and
the Musasa Project focus on protecting women from domestic violence, sexually
transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. These former grassroots organizations also educated women on these issues.

Rape in refugee camps also occurs around the distribution of food. The rationing of food in refugee camps is primarily a male task. Men are in charge of distributing food provided by the nongovernmental organizations (NGO’s). Consequently, women are often forced or coerced into providing the men with sexual favors in exchange for their food portion.28

When women refugees attempt to relocate to countries of sanctuary they are often discriminated against since their claims for refugee status is not easily documented. Consequently, they are denied access to asylum countries due to their inability to prove they have been raped, or are threatened with the possibility of being raped if they return to their home country or remain in the refugee camp.29

Solutions offered to address these issues include training the staff of nongovernmental organizations to respond promptly to refugee women’s needs, employ more women at every stage of refugee assistance, include them in food distribution and decision making in the camps. In addition, women should be included in development projects. Action should be taken to ensure the protection of women returning to their home country, and gender sensitive counseling should be established to address the needs of abused refugee women. A complete reform of the international system, regional initiatives, international law, humanitarian issues in the United Nations, and national policies to better address refugee needs and interests are also proposed by advocates for the rights and protection of refugee women.30
Once refugee women relocate to a sanctuary country, their struggles do not cease. For some western countries, such as the United States, national agencies provide financial assistance for the first ninety days refugees reside in the Untied States. However, once the ninety days expire, they are responsible for their own survival. 31

Women must adapt to new concerns along with their traditional responsibilities. Resettled women must also adjust to the new ways families relate to each other, as well as differences in child care customs. 32 To support themselves and their families, relocated women must find jobs. Often, their English proficiency is low, which creates difficulty in reading and completing job applications. Consequently, language and cultural barriers prevent or hinder resettled women from providing for their families. However, women manage by helping each other, seeking assistance from their community of refugees or immigrants, and refugee centers. 33

Language barriers and cultural discrimination also create difficulties for relocated women when obtaining government assistance. Often some citizens of the host country are offended by the federal, state, and local financial assistance provided relocated refugees. 34 Sometimes their disapproval is so intense that it leads to violence against the refugee community. As a result, relocated women become more vulnerable and susceptible to physical mistreatment. In addition, routine tasks for the citizens of the host country, such as banking, purchasing groceries, and seeking other services becomes frustrating when resettled women face cultural, gender, and racial discrimination. 35

Relocation for men is also difficult due to their inability to obtain jobs, especially if the men were high ranking professional or civil servants in their home countries. Yet,
women remain subject to the marginalizations of a patriarchal society in their host country as they did in their home country. Meanwhile, the men are faced with less gender discrimination since they are men reentering a male dominated society. However, relocated men and women of color face racial discrimination that few relocated European males and females endure.

Knowledge on women in war torn societies exist, but not enough. There is also a lack of specific data on women in African countries. However, the largest gap in women's literature lies in what happens to displaced women once they are relocated to another country. It is imperative to research women in war torn societies due to the immediate needs and dangers they face. Yet, it is also important to understand their plight once they relocate. Arrival in a country of sanctuary does not mean the end of their struggles. Understanding what obstacles relocated women face, and how they overcome them provides salient information on how to assist other relocated women. This treatise will therefore, serve as an incremental fulfillment of that gap.

The account of women's experiences in the midst of war is crucial to not only the documentation of women's issues, but to this research as well. Women in the aftermath of war have been viewed from their part in combat to their survival after war. The literature provides significant insights, questions, and conclusions to the experiences and issues of women coping with war. However, there is scant information on what happens to refugee women once they relocate to a country of sanctuary. In addition, this dissertation will augment the sparse data on women from war torn countries in Africa.
This research will also dispel stereotypes of third world women as docile, economically dependent, fragile, and powerless. Previous images and descriptions of African, African descended, and Asian women put forth by earlier nineteenth century western scholars emerged from research conducted from a biased perspective that became known as "Orientalism."

It is imperative that women of color are represented for whom they are: a rich, diverse group in many aspects. In Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America, there were and are strong women who defy the image of docile, fragile beings who exist only to please and honor their male kinfolk. Not all women of color remain in the "woman's box" in which society places them. Therefore, the stories of women’s strengths and triumphs are necessary. Furthermore, this study attempts to avoid the same mistakes and assumptions of earlier (and some current) scholars.

It is intended that by the end of this research, generalizations will emerge that will guide further theoretical work and applied research on women surviving anarchy. It is critical to know and understand this information since it will be vital in helping to restore order on a local scale that will perhaps lead to larger scale cooperation. Also, this dissertation will illuminate some women's issues, women's organizations, women's mobilization, and personal perspectives relating to women surviving anarchy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the context in which relocated women are observed in this research, a theoretical review of anarchy is necessary. Anarchy is defined in most literature as the absence of government. In international relations theory, anarchy describes the
lack of order in the international system, although anarchy theorists, such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Gerrard Winstanley, subscribe to the notion that government is not necessary in order for people to live happy, fulfilling lives. In fact, anarchists view government as corrupt and coercive.

This concept of living without a government, however, does not denote life in chaos. For anarchists, government itself is the restricting factor on people’s freedoms. Therefore, anarchists would perceive the situation in Somalia as a ripe environment to manifest the theory’s three basic principles: 1) criticisms of the power base structure of society; 2) a libertarian society based on cooperation, not coercion; and 3) process of moving from one social order to the other. Therefore, the theory of anarchy clashes with any form of a state (socialists, democratic, or communists) that believes laws, created and defined by a state/government, are necessary to provide order and guidance to society.

The anarchists’ theory is disproved in Somalia because in Somalia the absence of government has not allowed for progress or freedom of development, nor has the power structure been replaced. Southern Somalia is an example of the failure of anarchist theory since the absence of government has not produced a better way of life for everyone. People continue to live in the midst of gunfire, raping, starvation, lack of adequate health care, and education, and fear. Those that were powerless prior to the collapse of the state, remain powerless in the absence of a state. In other words, neither political, economic, nor social power has been transmitted to women, or members of clan-families, or subclans previously without power.
To further disprove the anarchist’s theory, northern Somalia has divided itself into two separate governments; Somaliland and Puntland. These two states are not internationally recognized, but they do not identify themselves with southern Somalia. Both states have functioning governments, economies, and social structure. The state of Somaliland has existed since 1991, and has continued to provide its people with life necessities. Furthermore, an examination of northern and southern Somalia would disprove the anarchist’s theory because northern Somalia has provided for its citizens, but an established state exists to provide stability, security, and order. However, in southern Somalia, the absence of government has exacerbated political, economic, and social tensions and divisions.

The Somali state fell and the country went into a condition of anarchy in 1991. In researching relocated Somali women in Georgia, it must be understood that these women left a condition of anarchy, and entered a condition of order and government in the United States. Of course, the condition of anarchy is positive or negative depending on the perspective from which the situation is assessed.

For instance, if one approaches the condition of anarchy from a democratic point of view, anarchy does not provide the environment for a fulfilling life. Operating without order, rules, and regulations only leads to confusion and stagnation. On the other hand, anarchists see the lack of rules and regulations as the prerequisite for a fulfilling life.

Since most Women in Politics and African Political theories concentrate on analyzing the relationship of units and the state, it becomes important to understand how women actually live from day to day without assistance or protection from the state. In
examining African women, consideration must be given to the difference in their relationship with the state, and that of western women to the state. Shirin M. Rai and Geraldine Lievesley points out that women of the Third World have not always had a direct relationship with the state as have western women.39

Finding a theory that specifically focuses on a stateless country and the circumstances of people within anarchy from African Politics and Women in Politics was difficult. The closest was Third World feminist Theory (Women in Politics) and the Statist Approach (African Politics). But because women are the focus of this research, and the period under examination is without a state, Third World feminist theory was chosen as the theoretical framework from which this research will be conducted.

According to Chandra Talpade Mohanty, the purpose of Third World feminism is to promote new feminist historiographies and epistemologies, to explore links among the struggles of third world women with sexism, racism, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism, and to address questions of feminism in literature on women of color. She defines third world women as the geographical and sociohistorical categorization of people of color in the United States and the world. Mohanty also conceptualizes Third World women as a political group.40 In fact, in her contribution to *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, she explains that women of color are politically bonded due to their shared struggle against racism, sexism, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism.41

Mohanty is also clear on the salience of women of color producing their own literature about their own experiences. For Third World feminists, this is critical to the accurate historical documentation of these women's experiences. Since, written texts serve
as the basis of the exercise of power and domination, literature by and about women of color serves as means of strengthening women's political resistance.42

It is well known that African males perceive women as belonging only in the domestic sphere.43 Their responsibilities include raising the children, tending the needs of their household, as well as acquiring and preparing food. So, this work sets out to understand how women residing in societies without a state actually fulfill their responsibilities. What do they have to do in order to eat? How do they protect themselves? How do they feed their children? What do they do when their husbands, sons, fathers, uncles, male cousins, are murdered or kidnapped? By addressing how women survive anarchy, this study will enhance the literature on women and the state at the point where this relationship breaks down into anarchy.

Third World feminism is an appropriate framework for this study based on the fact that the data gathered, will reflect the personal experiences of emigrated Somali women. In addition, the participants offering the data, and the person conducting the analyses and investigation are women of color. Also, this research will render experiences that will provide salient solutions to the woman of color’s plight in a war torn society.

This treatise falls in line with at least one of what Mohanty says Third World women’s feminist writings have focused on. “... the idea of the simultaneity of oppressions as fundamental to the experience of social and political marginality and the grounding of feminist politics in the histories of racism and imperialism...”44

Third World feminism looks at women of color and their relationship with the oppressive state in which they reside. This study examines women of color in a colonial,
imperial, and capitalist state, as well as in the absence of a state. Thus, this work utilizes
Third World feminism’s basic premise of focusing on women of color and their struggles with sexism, racism, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism.

Third World feminism is also the correct theoretical framework for this research because it makes the experiences of women of color and their struggles against gender and racial oppression the center of discussion. In addition, Third World feminism considers the unique local circumstances of women in less developed countries as a result of global racism, which stems from the capitalist nature of the global economy. Mohanty states, “Third World feminists have argued for the rewriting of history based on the specific locations and histories of struggle of people of color and post colonial peoples, and on the day-to-day strategies of survival utilized by such peoples.”

Third World feminism provides a guide for gathering, analyzing, and discussing the experiences of women of color. The extraordinary experiences of Somali women and their struggles to survive anarchy is important to the broader understanding of women’s global struggles. Unlike Marxist, Socialist, or Liberal feminism, Third World feminism focuses on women of color who are so often forgotten in mainstream feminist research.

Black/Afrocentric feminism, however, concentrates on female African descendants in the United States. On a structural note, Multiracial feminism addresses the institutions that perpetuate racism. In sum, all these theories approach the analysis of women with the assumption of an established state. Therefore, none of them allow for an examination of women existing without a government. Although the oral history and ethnographic
methodologies of these streams of feminist thought are appropriate for analyzing displaced Somali women, the theoretical context of these frameworks is not.

Liberal feminism was not chosen since it is a stream of feminist thought that tends to lean toward white, middle class, western women. The theories and approaches to research of women under this framework do not take into account the everyday encounters of women of color against racism, sexism, and imperialism. Based on the fact that Liberal feminism was founded in the eighteenth century by white middle class women, the needs and interests of African-American women were neglected.47

A large portion of women’s issues was excluded from the early surge of women’s rights although, such women as Sojourner Truth managed to be heard.48 Yet, there was a small representation of the numerous other voices of African-American women (enslaved and free) who deserved to have their issues on womanhood addressed. Therefore, Liberal feminism does not adequately frame the context in which this dissertation needs to be conducted.

Liberal feminism would not allow for the documentation of Somali women’s lives because it would automatically assume that these women view their roles as women to be submissive to men’s roles. Liberal feminist theory would also assume that emigrated Somali women, and those who oppose the previous roles of women, and support the possibilities of new roles after a new country is established, have a better understanding of their existence as women. Therefore, they will be willing to fight to change or better that existence through political participation.
In addition, Liberal feminism may not take into account the fact that perhaps these women's lives were satisfactory until the colonial powers intruded with their western philosophies and dichotomies black/white, thereby exacerbating some African philosophies of male/female. Furthermore, the salience of individualism in western and shrouded in Liberal feminism is the same philosophy that undergirds capitalism and capitalism has contributed somewhat to the oppression of people of color.

The early anthropologists and socialists who produced the first information on Africa and its people researched Africa from the western or colonial perspective that viewed Africans as animals, and therefore lacking intelligence. As a result, their conclusions confirmed and validated the western world's image of Africans as inferior beings who could not exist without the benevolent assistance of western civilization. Consequently, it is imperative that this type of research and its underlying assumptions do not continue, especially in research conducted on women of color. On the other hand, Marxist feminism is an inadequate framework to examine Somali women due to its primary focus on the class of individuals and the philosophy that what humans produce is the ultimate indicator of whom humans are. In other words, what a person produces determines her or his status in society.

Since Somali women were denied the ability to produce and be a significant part of their household's and the nations' economy when colonial powers took over, their mode of production and ultimately their worth was denied. But according to Marxist feminism, they were not paid the right amount for their services even before colonialism. Further,
Marxist feminism concludes that ultimately, class and not gender is responsible for women's oppression.  

Multiracial feminism believes that racial biases shape gender construction in society. Therefore, the eradication of race will yield progress for women. This concept is racially unsuitable for analyzing displaced Somali women for two reasons: First, the population of Somalia is ninety five percent (95%) ethnically Somalia. Therefore, the concept of racism defining the power structure of white over black does not apply. Second, the institutions in Somalia no longer exist. However, once the women relocate to a racially stratified state, they are automatically discriminated against because they are identified as persons of color. Consequently, multiracial feminism does not provide an appropriate context to examine displaced Somali women.

Socialist feminism is slightly more accurate in focusing on gender and class when analyzing women's oppression. Its methodology allows for the elimination of sexism and racism simultaneously, as opposed to initially eradicating racism as Marxist feminism asserts. Yet, due to the fact that socialist feminism does not center on women of color, nor was it conceived to analyze women in the absence of a state, it is also not the appropriate research framework.

Black/Afrocentric feminism focuses primarily on Black women writing and researching for/on Black women. The term Black is used since Collins defines it as anyone descended from African ancestors who may reside within or outside the United States. The major theme is an epistemology created from the Black woman’s life experiences. Therefore, research on Black women will be conducted from a different perspective than
other feminist theories and will yield results, theories, and conclusions that more accurately reflect Black women.

Black/Afrocentric feminism also fails to completely embrace displaced Somali women. Yes, they are descendants of Africa residing in the United States, but culturally they are Somali. Therefore, their perspectives differ from those female African descendants born/socialized into the culture of the United States. As a result, the perspective for, and the questions generated to interview displaced Somali women will be inaccurate. In other words, an examination of relocated Somali women in Georgia must reflect their cultural beginnings in Somalia.

ASSUMPTIONS

This dissertation assumes that Somali women and men respond differently in a stateless situation. Men are traditionally responsible for herding camels, while older men control decision-making for the nomadic groups through the council of elders. Men, more importantly, provide the security and protection for their households, whether urban or nomadic. Men also hold government positions due to the social, cultural idea that men control the public sphere. Since most Somali women are traditionally the primary providers of food, clothes, shelter, and other domestic needs, this role does not change in the absence of a state.

Without men, women's responsibilities in a stateless society become more difficult because they are not protected by men. But once the women migrate, or become refugees, they respond dramatically differently from men because the men are no longer present to dominate the hierarchical structure of the family. As a result, women become the heads of
households and begin to wield power in public and private matters. Examples of this are seen when Somali women emigrate to western countries and partake of new opportunities to obtain skills that will allow them to acquire jobs, from which they are able to support their families. Thus, Somali women create a method of survival not based on the traditional role of men.

This study also assumes Somali women utilize a patron-client system to survive. Patron-client systems usually exist within a political context, but tend to have social and economic implications. Typically, patron-client systems in Africa involve a linkage between the government and its citizens. This linkage is facilitated by a member of or someone closely associated with the government called a patron. The patron serves as a liaison between the state and citizens by brokering votes for himself in return for citizens' access to the state's resources. The citizens, however, are usually grouped based on ethnic identity. Therefore, their demands and interests reflect those of their particular ethnic group.

Although Chazan et al. describe various types of patron-client systems in Africa, none accurately describes how women interact to survive anarchy. It is assumed Somali women utilize the fifth type of patron-client system while in Somalia, as well as in relocated communities. This type, according to Chazan et al., exists in the absence of institutions. People align themselves with powerful leaders who provide them with security. This type of patron-client system fits Somalia due to its deeply embedded clan identity/loyalty. Therefore, it is also assumed that clan identity/loyalty carries over into relocated communities. Furthermore, relocated Somali women in Georgia are also
assumed to be abiding by this type of patron-client system, or at least a modified version.

This treatise also assumes that displaced women lack access to a patron-client system once they depart their native country. As mentioned previously, African women do not directly relate to the state. Their interaction with the state is primarily through their menfolk who work for the state.

This research also assumes that society suffers a breakdown of some of its rules, regulations, behaviors, and expectations in a period of anarchy. Even though a state no longer exists to promote and enforce hierarchical demarcations, it is assumed that the hierarchal structure of society is not eliminated. For instance, men continue to dominate the political, social, economic, religious decision making process. Therefore, it is assumed at the beginning of this investigation that the patriarchal structure of society remains due to the continued adherence to societal roles of male and female.

Granted the hierarchical demarcations embedded in society from the pre war years still exist, they are not reinforced by the state. Perhaps hierarchy is maintained through weaponry or terror tactics, but not through intentional state maldistribution of resources as occurs when a state and its institutions exist. In addition, the social status that accompanied the positions and titles held by state employees are also eliminated, since a state position does not exist to provide such status.
NOTES


5. The call for more research on and by women of color included women in underdeveloped countries.


7. Laketch Dirasse, “From Crisis to Transformation? A Gender Perspective on Conflict and Development,” *BRIDGE* 3 (1996). This author understands the significance of examining the impact of war on children, and that children are affected by the experiences and conditions of the women or girls responsible for them. However, since this dissertation focuses on women, the impact of war on children will not be examined.


24. Beverly Lindsay, ed. Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women: the Impact of Race, Sex, and Class (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980), 17. It is not the intention of this dissertation to generalize about the roles of all women in all African, Asian, Caribbean, or Latin American countries, but to merely point out the similarities of their lifestyles.


36. Colonial anthropology and orientalism were western perspectives adopted by early anthropology scholars studying nonwestern cultures. Colonial anthropology defines the western opinions of moral and intellectual superiority underlying their research of so-called inferior nonwestern cultures. Orientalism is a term that originally pertained to western studies of Asia, but a Palestinian born American scholar named Edward W. Said extended it his 1978 work *Orientalism* to include all nonwestern cultures. According to Said, studies published under “Orientalism” provided the foundational misconceptions western countries utilized to justify imperialism. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). It is an all encompassing term for cultures early scholars deemed exotic. These theoretical frameworks were used to categorize cultures of Asia in the nineteenth century. However, Somalia and Ethiopia were lumped into this category without regards to their historical, cultural, geographical, or religious diversity. Ahmed, *The Invention of Somalia*, 158-9.


41. Ibid., 4.

42. Ibid., 35.


49. Ibid., 40.

50 Ibid., 173.

51. Kapteijns, Gender Relations and the Transformation of the Northern Somali Pastoral Tradition, 246.


54. Ibid., 21.

55. Ibid., 180.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this exploratory research was to examine how Somali women survived anarchy, with emphasis on their lives once relocated to Georgia. Since there is a paucity of data on relocated women, this examination was necessary to document the continued obstacles refugee women face when relocated to a country of asylum. The misconception is that once refugee women are relocated, their worries of danger, and survival are over. It is true that they are removed from immediate danger, but their efforts to survive continue.

Resettled Somali women in Georgia were chosen as the research group of focus to provide more data on the impact of war on African women. An ethnographic study was conducted to gather the oral histories of Somali women residing in Clarkston, Georgia. Clarkston is located approximately two miles outside of I-285 south. This city was selected as the location to gather data, since a large concentration of Somalis in Georgia reside here.

The Clarkston community is home to other refugee communities, but most Somalis in Georgia reside in Clarkston due settlement of the area by refugees who fled Siad Barre’ attacks on northern Somalia (the Isaaq and Hawiye clan-families) in 1987-1988. Fifty surveys were administered and ten interviews were conducted through snowball sampling
to gather data on the relocated Somali women in Georgia. The surveys were analyzed through the Social Science statistical software of SPSS, and the interviews were analyzed by this author.

Research on refugees is extremely scarce and is confined to anthropological programs within universities, such as Georgia State. Thus, it was difficult to obtain an accurate count of the number of Somali women in Clarkston. The majority of government departments in Clarkston, Decatur, and DeKalb county do not possess specific documentation on Somalis residing in these respective areas because refugees are such a mobile group. In fact, most refugee agencies lack data on Somalis. The most reliable statistics were obtained from the Georgia Refugee Health Program.

This organization documents the number of resettled refugees in Georgia every year. The refugees report to the organizations to be screened for any health abnormalities. Then they are documented according to their nationality, place of birth, and county of residence. Unfortunately, the totals are not divided into gender for each nationality, only for the general number of refugees in DeKalb County. Refugees who fail to be screened for health problems are omitted from the final tabulation. Therefore, calculations are incomplete, but provide the only documented data on Somalis in DeKalb county, which encompasses Clarkston, Georgia.

The Georgia Refugee Health Program reported four hundred eighty four (484) Somalis residing in DeKalb County as of October 25, 1999, but the number of Somali women residing in Georgia remained undetermined. Therefore, administering fifty surveys
and ten interviews were decided upon as a representation of their estimated guess that 60 percent (60%) of Clarkston Somalis are women.¹

Data was gathered from May through July 2000 with the assistance of Somali co-workers who resided in the community. These two Somali co-workers also served as interpreters for the interviews. The co-workers contacted the randomly selected women to inform them of the research that would be occurring in the community. Then, at least three days prior to the interview, the interpreters would remind the women of the scheduled interview. This casual approach to setting up and conducting the interview was based on the fluid, relaxed Somali way of doing things. All appointments are maintained by memory, or reminders from others.

The interviews were conducted in the homes of the women without the use of tape recorders. The Somali women who assisted with the interviews informed this author that tape recorders would make the women uncomfortable due to the women’s concern for anonymity. In addition, some women in the community had conducted interviews with another researcher who promised anonymity, but reneged. Consequently, the women feared for the safety of their friends and family in the United States, other countries of sanctuary, and Somalia.

On days interviews were conducted, this author either met one of her Somali co-workers at the co-worker’s apartment, left from work. The Somalis’ residences are concentrated in apartment complexes that cover Memorial Drive, North Decatur Avenue, and Market Street. Thus, accessing the women was not difficult.
Upon entering the homes, this author had to remove her shoes, based on the Islamic custom that the home is sacred because prayers are offered from anywhere in the home. Usually, interviews were conducted in the morning, afternoon, or evenings to accommodate the women’s work schedule. All of the women, with one exception, were cooperative after the Somali interpreter reexplained the reason for our visit, introduced this author, and assured them of the protection of their words and identity. This warm reception was due primarily with the respect the women held for the two Somali co-workers who served as contacts and interpreters.

These two women are employed by Newcomers’ Network and have therefore assisted numerous Somali women and their families. Due to their dedication to providing aid to their community, these women have gained the adoration of other Somali women for maintaining the Somali tradition of communalism.

The one rejection of the interview came from a woman who was extremely concerned about personal information from the interview being used to deport her and her three children. The interpreter assured the woman emphatically in Somali that her identity as well as any information obtained would remain strictly confidential. The interpreter even called the other co-worker to assure the woman over the phone that it was all right to conduct the interview, but to no avail. After approximately ten minutes of fierce persuasion, this author and the interpreter decided to leave.

While discussing the situation after returning to the car, the two decided that this author’s attaché case caused suspicion and fear for the potential interviewee. As previously mentioned, these women have faced hardships directly related to who they are,
where they were born, and to which clan they belong. As a result, the woman was leery of someone who appeared to represent a government official despite the repeated assurances that this was not the case.

Interestingly, the Somali interpreters were extremely aggravated that this woman refused to be interviewed. This frustration is based on the fact that the two Somali co-workers understood the significance of documenting knowledge and statistics on the women in their community. On most occasions, whether to conduct an interview or for friendly visits, this author and her co-worker were offered something to drink, and on two occasions something to eat as well. Partaking of the offered beverages and food was a way for this author to show respect for the women’s hospitality, while at the same time making them more comfortable with the interview process.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WOMEN

Prior to the discussion of the findings to the research questions, it is necessary to briefly describe the women that were transcribed. Twenty-four percent (24%) of the relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia are from southern Somalia. Places such as Mogadishu and Barawe represent large cities from which the women fled, while such places as Taleh and Bashanir represent small villages. Other southern Somali cities represented included, Kismayo, Gaalkayo, and Merka. These southern cities were the areas former dictator Siad Barre punished with ethnic cleansing in 1991.

Northern Somali cities or areas represented included Nugaal, Bosaaso, Hargeisa, and Laasanood, which accounted for 8 percent (8%) of the total responses.
Representation of the northern cities can be traced back to Barre’s fleeing to his clan members in northern Somalia in 1991. These women fleeing from northern Somali cities were targeted because of their clan identity with the ousted leader.

Clan-families primarily found in the south are the Rahanwien, and Digil, and those in the north include the Isaaq, Dir, Hawiye, Darood. Although these clan-families are found throughout Somalia, they tend to be concentrated in these particular areas. More importantly, no matter where they reside in Somalia, they live together as a clan-family, or subclan.

In order to determine the clan-families and subclans the women represented, survey question number two asked the women about their place of birth. Since clan-families occupy various territories throughout Somalia, knowledge of where the women were born would help determine their clan-family or subclan. Thus, Figure 1 illustrates which clan-families and subclans are represented in the Clarkston community.

Figure 1 Bar Graph of Relocated Somali Womens’ Origins

Responses of Saudi Arabia and Somalia are a result of respondents' misunderstanding of the survey question.
Sixty percent (60%) of the women from the sample have been in the United States for three or more years, 52 percent (52%) are heads of their households, 56 percent (56%) are married, 34 percent (34%) have at least a primary education, 52 percent (52%) have jobs, and 86 percent (86%) wish to return to Somalia. The age ranges of the sample relocated Somali women in Clarkston are from eighteen to over fifty-four, with the majority of the young women (20 percent) falling between the ages of twenty-nine and thirty-three. Eighteen percent (18%) of the women are fifty or older, which means there is a large number of elderly women in the community. As a result, there is a large population of elderly women relying upon the young women for their survival.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & RESPONSES

1. What was life like for you in Somalia before war broke out in 1991?

Life for Somali women prior to the 1991 war was relatively relaxed and allowed time to share tea and conversation with their female neighbors, while the children were at school and the husbands at work. One woman responded by saying, “I had good life. My life was better. I was a housewife. He (her husband) had a business and I was taking care of the children.” Another woman stated, “I had good life. I was young and used to go to school. My family fed me. Life was good. I was fifteen.”

When asked about her life before the war, one woman stated, “It was good. I used to have a business ... wholesale business.” Another responded by saying, “I used to have a really good life. I used to have farms and worked for the government for twenty-six years. I started as a cleaner and became a telephone operator. I left the government job in
1985 and had my own farms." A young woman explained, "Even though I was young at that time, we had really good life. We had a small business and we had cars. I was a student. We had a good life." 

Some Somali women worked to earn money in addition to the money their husbands gave them and used it for their own luxuries, to assist extended family members (especially other women), or to add to the family income. Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents' husbands traded in the local market while 24 percent (24%) worked for multinational corporations. Six percent (6%) of their husbands were civil servants, while 16 percent (16%) held other occupations. This extra money was used to either help friends or relatives, or to start small businesses, or to simply keep for personal security. Urban professional women tended to be civil servants or work for multinational corporations, while rural women sold family produce or arts and crafts in the local market.

Urban professional women sometimes performed other jobs such as, teachers, nurses, and administrative assistants (8%). Four percent (4%) worked for multinational corporations and less than 4 percent (4%) were civil servants. Forty-four percent (44%) of the relocated Somali women in Clarkston worked in local Somali markets, while 30 percent (30%) worked in the home. Since 34 percent (34%) of the respondents gained a primary education, they do not possess the necessary professional skills, such as English fluency and typing proficiency, to obtain professional jobs in the United States. Caring for home and family is not subject to class. No matter what socio-economic level a family occupies, or whether a woman is employed, she is still responsible for maintaining the
domestic sphere. Figure 2 provides details on the various vocations of women while in Somalia.

Figure 2 Bar Graph of Women’s Economic Endeavors

2. Did the 1991 war impact women differently from men?

Undoubtedly men are impacted by war. Many Somali men were killed when they joined the oppositions SNM forces who were combating former president Siad Barre’s government troops in 1988. When asked if the 1991 war impacted differently than men, the women’s responses overwhelmingly concurred that women were impacted women differently than men. One woman said, “Yes. The women got raped, beaten, isolated from their children. Starvation. When starvation breaks out, it’s the women and children that are hurt the worse.”

“Women were impacted worse than men. Women pregnant without husbands because they had been killed. You can’t pick the children up or provide transportation for
them." One woman even mentioned how the girls and women were kidnapped and used as sex slaves. She said, “They [Somali bandits from rival clans] made girls and women travel with them and work for them. They kept them as sex slaves.”

According to three of the ten women interviewed, rape was the primary element in their response that women were impacted differently or more severely than men in the 1991 war. “For women it was dangerous. When they [Somali bandits from rival clans] would see us they would rape us. That’s why we stayed in doors mostly.” One of the community stakeholders in the community began to cry as she told the story of what happened to so many Somali women and girls. She said, “It was the same for men and women. They used to throw bombs at both. The different thing is women were raped.”

Her response indicated her activism in Somalia, and her status within the relocated Somali community. She went on to say, “That’s why I’m so sensitive to what happened to them. They [Somali bandits from rival clans] used to rape eighteen and nineteen year olds and women who just had babies.” One woman aptly summarized the women’s response by saying, “Yes. Women were hurt worse. Men were killed, but women were raped.” However, there was one response that was sympathetic toward Somali men after war.

One respondent explained that, “Men were affected the worse because he used to go to work and support the family. Eighty percent (80%) of the women used to stay home. The man was used to going to work, but after that the men didn’t have a job and had to provide food, clothes, shelter. It was more stressful for men.”

3. Who helped you get food, clothes, and shelter in Somalia?
Relocated Somali women were asked on question number thirteen from the survey what other organizations in Somalia helped them obtain food, water, shelter, medical care, and clothes following the 1991 outbreak of war? As Figure 3 indicates, their responses included the United Nations, the United States, the International Rescue Committee, other Muslims, World Relief, and the Red Cross (10%). Eight percent (8%) replied that they did not receive any assistance, or did not recall what organization provided them aid, and 24 percent (24%) did not respond to the question. However, 32 percent (32%) of the respondents answered that the Red Cross, United Nations, and CARE were the organizations that provided refugees with food, clothes, shelter, and medical care. The women obtained water from nearby rivers.

Figure 3 Pie Chart of International Aid
Thus, one is correct in concluding that international nongovernmental organizations were extremely instrumental in the survival rate of displaced Somali women immediately following the aftermath of war. Often, they are the first international relief assistance to be dispatched to an area of crisis. In 1991, and the years following, internally displaced Somali women were dependent upon these organizations for basic survival necessities.

Somali women displaced in Somalia also received food, clothes, shelter, and medicine from neighbors and relatives in surrounding areas.\textsuperscript{16} Twenty percent (20\%) of the women stated in the interviews that people in the cities helped their relatives or friends from rural areas. Even though the urban relatives may not have had much themselves, they offered assistance in the communal tradition of Somali culture.\textsuperscript{17} One woman said, “It depends on the people. If you have clan people, they bring you things. People helped each other. Sometimes we would go without eating, just drinking dirty water. If people had anything, they would share it.”\textsuperscript{18} One respondent stated, “My mother used to work in Red Cross. Vaccination for the kids. My mother was a nurse in Somalia.”\textsuperscript{19}

Another responded explained, “Those who had money used to buy for those of us who didn’t have money. Sometimes Red Cross would help. Sometimes we used to get food through the hospital. Some people say it was Pakistan. We used to get medicine.”\textsuperscript{20} One response denoted wealth since the respondent replied, “We took our own food and stuff out of the country in our Range Rover.”\textsuperscript{21}

For nine of the ten interviewed women, the absence of food was a constant concern. “Sometimes you don’t have anything to eat at all. You are lucky if you get some
food from Red Cross, Save the Children, or U.N. sometimes you could go days without food. Sometimes, if you get food, at night gunmen come and take it.  

4. What was it like for you to leave Somalia?

Forty-two percent (42%) of the respondents were living in Mogadishu when the 1991 war erupted. Fourteen percent (14%) were living in the southern town of Merka and 6 percent (6%) were living in the southern city of Kismayo. Therefore, the majority of relocated women in Clarkston were residing in southern Somalia, specifically Mogadishu when the Somali state collapsed. Leaving Somalia was imperative for these women since they were in the area where clan clashes were most intense.

According to the data, the difficulties women faced in leaving Somalia were hunger, extended walking to refugee camps, loss of relatives, loss of possessions, and attacks by rival ethnic groups. Yet the overall response was war (18 percent). “It was hard. All the family members were okay... just leaving your country. Some women made dangerous voyages to flee, as this respondent explains. “Walking, hunger, always feeling scared that I might lose my life.” One woman’s stated, “I was faced with a lot of problems. I risked traveling by ship without documentation to Yemen.

“We could have died and I was so scared. I was only with my brother and other relatives. My mother, other brother and sisters are in Somali. Father died.” “I lost my aunt in the war and the guy we raised. My aunt was watching to see if something was coming and they shot her. She was standing in the window. They shot the boy we raised.
Yes. They robbed us too, said one woman.26 Some women fled to relatives, like this woman said, “[We] went to family members in Kenya when I left Somalia.”27

“I left Somalia because there’s nothing you can do. Everyone was fighting for their tribes. Everyone became gunmen and sometime innocent people got shot crossing the street. We were trying to get to a safe place for our children.”28 This particular respondent was able to leave Somalia with all four of her children, but most left relatives in Somalia.

Thirty-four percent (34%) of the women left parents, brothers, and sisters in Somalia. Twenty-two percent (22%) said they left sisters and brothers, meaning the parents are either deceased, in African refugee camps, or relocated to other countries of asylum. Eighteen percent (18%) said they have brothers and parents in Somalia. Many of the women fled in the midst of chaos and were separated from their families. The terror of being killed or raped is exacerbated by the sorrow of missing family members.

“When I left my house, they shot my driver and I had to run without shoes.”29 One woman shared that she was, “Very lucky to get out. People getting killed in front of you. Food’s very expensive. It’s very easy for gunmen to take your life. We walked to the jungle a couple of days. You are lucky if you survive. You aren’t even scared because you are so tired. Sometime you want to die just to get peace. You just keep going to get to a safe place.”30

From another perspective, one woman stated, “I was with a very rich family who worked for the government at the time, so I didn’t have any problems. The farmers were unreceptive of people from the city. It was difficult to adapt to life on the farm.”[This last statement refers to people from southern Somalia fleeing and seeking refuge with relatives
in the rural areas. However, she did say the “Kenyans guards were evil. I didn’t encounter any Somali militiamen.”

“Before the war we used to vacation in Washington and D.C. Just imagine that I had come from that to being a refugee. I used to come for vacation here to New York. I lost my kids [in Somalia] I used to walk without shoes, drink dirty water. I had ten children but only one with me at the time. My oldest son had been shot in his leg and I didn’t see him while he was sick,” explained another woman.

For women, the danger of being raped by men of rival ethnic groups was a constant threat. “...am I going to get raped, am I going to see my family again? Everyone gets lost. You aren’t sure if they are alive. Some of them die in the war. Some of them are still missing. “All the family been stressed because one of my sisters has been raped. We lost all our wealth.”

5. Was clan identity a factor in who fled and who remained in Somalia?

Clan identity/loyalty is an intrinsic element of Somali society. The 1991 civil war was a result of clan-families and subclans fighting over state resources. Then, the collapse of the state resulted in clan-families and subclans clashing over control of territory in southern Somalia. Therefore, clan identity impacted which clan and subclan members were targets and which ones aggressors.

When asked this question, one woman stated, “Yes. It’s major factor with the clan. My mother’s clan was enemies with my father’s clan.” “Yes, especially in the section [southern Somalia]. If you were stopped and you weren’t in the same clan [Darood or
Hawiye] you got killed. The south was predominantly Hawiye. The sub-clans have problems. It’s very difficult to get the sub-clans to agree. I saw people in my village die and you see some of your old friends dead on the floor. I had some friends who I saw alive for some time and then they were dead the next week.”36 “Yes clan matters. I’m from Benadir. Everyone used to fight to get the power.”37 “The reason we were fighting was because every clan wanted to have power.”38

Since Somali politics is so intertwined with clan identity, members of Siad Barre’s government were mostly members of his clan family (Darood being his mother’s clan and Hawiye) or sub-clan. Therefore, leaving Somalia presented tremendous dangers for them. “My tribe was from Siad Barre. So all my tribe was getting killed. If they find me [in Somalia], they will kill me and rape me and take everything I have.”39 One woman said clan identity was a factor “... because my husband was a minister. My husband lost power. It was also the fact that he was in government. Clan was a factor.”40 Another explained that, “Other clans were killing anyone from Siad Barre’s tribe.”41 Aideed started killing anyone from Barre’s clan and sub-clan. Only respondent number nine said that clan was not a factor in who fled and who remained in Somalia.

6. How did you feed yourself and your family in the refugee camp?

Seventy percent (70%) of the women lived in the Kenyan refugee camp of Utanga. Since most of them were fleeing southern Somalia, the closest refugee camp to them was across the border in Kenya. In responding to this question, one woman stated, the “Red Cross and U.N. was giving food. Later on it [the food supply] was short and they started
sending Somalis back to Somalia. "42 We used to get it [food] through the U.N. Every
two weeks the U.N. gave food. We got it from neighbors. We used to get water from the
river."43

Another woman explained, "I was in the Kenyan border for about two months.
You get your own food and clothes. The Kenyan government is the sore government.
They ransacked houses. They would come to the house, get the women out and rape
them. You're vulnerable in a refugee camp because you have no food, no money, and you
don't know what to do."44

The Somali communal tradition was also present in the refugee camp. "You ask
your neighbors if they have money or food. You always share for everyone to save their
life. Men and women could ask each other for help. Money is shared amongst the village
or others in refugee camp."45 One woman responded by saying that she was aided by,
"Neighbors and whoever we know. They used to give us food."46

One woman explained, "Some of us have family outside Africa in Europe or Arab
countries or Canada or U.S."47 In conjunction with this statement, one woman said, "Since
I had family outside Africa, they used to send us money and we used to use that money.
The refugee camp was very close to the grocery store. We had access to buy food and
things [in Kenya]."48 Another woman replied, "My aunt was in the U.S. and sent my
family money."49

"The U.N. was supporting us, but my brother already in the U.S. was helping us,"
explained one woman.50 Her brother was sending money to her through a Kenyan citizen.
The process began with the brother phoning his Kenyan friend. He provided the friend
with her full name. Then, the friend went to a phone center in Kenya and delivered the money to an account number provided by the brother. The sister then goes to the phone center to retrieve the funds. This woman’s situation is similar to numerous refugee and relocated Somali persons. Another means of obtaining food and water was from vendors in areas surrounding the refugee camp. “People sell food, clothes close by the refugee camp.”

7. What was life like for you in the refugee camp?

Life in the refugee camp was unpleasant, but acceptable according to the respondents. The women said it was difficult to maintain positive thoughts about life due to their dim surroundings. In addition, they constantly recalled the loss of their relatives and possessions, which increased the difficulty of remaining positive. For one woman, recalling the experience was too traumatic. As a result, her reply was, “I don’t want to talk about it. It was really awful. It wasn’t life.” In conjunction with this statement, one woman stated, “It was hard. It was an uncomfortable place and a lot of people living under one place was hard. Women used to help each other.”

Another woman described her experience by saying, “For me I was okay because I compared myself with others who were worse off than me.” [At this point the interpreter and the respondent began corresponding in Somali. Since this portion of the conversation was not translated, this author assumes it was either irrelevant to the interview or too personal to divulge].
For one respondent, "Peace was number one because I saw people dying and being raped [in Somalia.] I had that peace in the refugee camp. When I say peace, I mean not hearing the screaming and gun shots. I didn’t complain while I was there."54 "It was okay because we were in a peaceful place but compared to living in Somalia, it wasn’t good."55 One woman explains her situation by saying, "You always have hope. You live in a hope that our country will have a fair government and you can live with no enemies. Or you hope you will go to the U.S. or Canada."56

One woman described her experience of reaching Kenya after fleeing Somalia. "We got to the border of Liboya, Kenya. Kenya government was not kind to us. They were worse than the Somali gunmen. Wherever you go they tell you to give them money or they take you to jail. We stayed there a few months and then went to Nairobi, Kenya. Nairobi is worse than Somali during the war because you don’t get respected by the Kenya soldiers. If you say you don’t have any money, they claim you are selling drugs or that you are a prostitute and you stay in jail. You are lucky if family get you out or they find money on you. They ask you for your I.D. to see if you are Kenyan. They don’t care if you are old, sick, young, handicapped. There’s no sanitation or food in jail. They put you in the dessert with no food or water."57

In a similar experience, one woman said, "Beginning in 1992-1994 everything was okay. We were getting food. After 1994 the Kenyan soldiers began stealing from us and telling us they would arrest us if we didn’t give them our food and money."58

A different perspective was offered by one of the respondents when she replied, "I really didn’t have a problem because I was with my auntie and she had help from her
relatives in the U.S. I was with a wealthy family and had no problems in finding food, clothes, shelter . . . just trying to keep safe.”

Although the women did not mention rape in the refugee camp in their responses, the danger of being raped was a constant concern for refugee women. In the process of retrieving firewood and water from wooded areas, guardsmen from the host country, who are responsible for protecting refugees, take advantage of the women and girls. Since this is such a sensitive issue both culturally with Somalis, and in general, it is not surprising that the women did not feel comfortable recalling such horrendous incidences.

In refugee camps, the respondents said other people in the refugee camps supported them by supplying food, clothes, shelter, water, and medicine when the supplies of the United Nations, Red Cross, and other non-governmental organizations dwindled between shipments. In addition, the respondents stated that the refugee camps in Kenya and other neighboring countries, were usually close to cities, which allowed them to purchase food from nearby markets. The women said this was very helpful in meeting their survival needs. Also, some of the women received aid from relatives in the United States or other countries outside Somalia.

8. How has your life changed since you have been in the United States?

Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents have been in the United States three or more years. Twenty-six percent (26%) have been here one to two years, while 12 percent (12%) have been here less than a year. International and nonprofit organizations are extremely instrumental in relocating refugee women. Relief agencies most responsible for
the women entering the United States were World Relief (34 percent), Lutheran Ministries (22 percent), and International Rescue Committee (14 percent).

Although relocating to an asylum country is valued, 40 percent (40%) of the respondents do not have acquaintances in the United States prior to their arrival. Thus, they are alone in a new state and overwhelmed by a different culture. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents, however had relatives in the United States prior to their arrival. If these relatives are United States citizens, and are immediate kin to the refugees, they may sponsor the refugees’ entrance into the United States.

Seven of the ten women interviewed had positive responses to this question. For them, life in the United States provided educational, financial, and personal opportunities for themselves and their children that would have been impossible to achieve in war torn Somalia or in a refugee camp. Therefore, their lives had been changed for the better. Furthermore, the reduction of concerns over stealing, killing, fighting, hunger, rape, in Somalia and refugee camps provides the women with a certain amount of calming of their fears. Following are their opinions on life in the United States.

“It’s been a positive change. My children all have a chance to go to school. My husband was sick and got better with Medicare. I have twin daughters, which I didn’t have [in Somalia]. So life is good.”61 “I educated myself. I’m safe. No more civil war.”62

“Being in a peaceful place is a good thing. I don’t worry.”63

Fifty-two percent (52%) of the respondents are employed and forty-six (46%) are unemployed. Since the majority of the women only received a primary education, their level of English fluency, as well as suitable American job skills are limited. Thus,
employment does not necessarily denote above minimum wage positions. Nevertheless, the women need jobs to support their families. Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents have six to ten members in their family and 38 percent (38%) have zero to five family members.

“It’s been a big change. I cool off because I don’t worry about stealing, killing. My kids get education for life. I’m able to work and make money. I get education too. I’m one hundred percent happy. My life here doesn’t even compare.”64 [This respondent worked at the Marshall’s clothing warehouse in DeKalb County.]

Similarly, another woman who worked in a factory had this to say. “At the beginning I was so confused because I didn’t have family to help me. I was depending on stranger. But now I’m working and I rent an apartment with someone else. I work in a factory where they make diapers. A friend picks me and other women up to take us to work. We pay him twenty dollars ($20.00).”65

“Much better. Doesn’t even compare. I’m able to work, make money, support my family here and the ones I left behind on [my] mother and father’s side [as well as] widows and orphans. I have it in my will that my kids are to support the less fortunate and family members if they get enough money and my kids promise they will do it when I die.”66

“It is okay. I never complain. I never had a problem. I never worked since I’ve been here because my son takes care of me. I got sick and had problems with [my] feet but I got better. I baby sit kids in the complex and I make good money. I support myself.”67 [This last statement was determined to mean that she generates her own money, while the son provides her basic necessities.] “They [Somali women] learn they can support their
families without men. They learn they can make money. You can live without husband. It’s never too late to go to school.  

Although life was better in the United States for these seven women, the other three did not have such positive responses. For example, one woman replied, “I’m still struggling with my life. It seems okay since I’m in school and I might have a chance to get a job. I didn’t have a chance to do this in Somalia. Life will be okay for me.” Another woman said, “Life has been hard for me because I came with small kids and I was pregnant. I couldn’t find an apartment. Right now I’m better. I had my child. I got an apartment.”

Another spoke about her life by saying, “It hasn’t changed. I don’t like the lifestyle here where you have to work when you’re fifteen (15). Back home you don’t have to work until you’re twenty-six (26) and on your own. It was easier when you have the land from your ancestors. We had our own maids back home. If life gets better back home, I’m going. I’m not used to having to do things for myself.” This particular observation is based on the fact that Somali young adults often must work to contribute to the family income in Clarkston. For instance, one respondent said, “When we were back home, we had servants that used to take care of the house and the children were more relaxed. But here they have to work and take care of the younger kids and contribute to the income.”

9. Have relationships changed within your immediate family?

Four of the women said their family relationships were unchanged. One gave an explanation for the maintenance of the family structure in her response when she stated,
“We are like we used to be. We are sticking with our religion so the family order remains the same.”

For the women who said their family relationships changed, one response was, “The relationship between my husband and me has improved. Both of us were able to work when we came here. Before I was dependent on my husband’s income alone and I spend it the way I want. I get stronger. I was kind of weak person. I got empowered when I lost some of my family, friends, and neighbors. When I came to America, I just keep working to help those I left behind. I remember when I first came to America, my nephew called me and told me that fourteen of my family members had died. But I asked myself what were my duties and they were to go to work so I can support my family back home. I cried, but I went to work because I knew I had to support them.”

Another woman explained that, “It changed. At that time [in Somalia] I was rich woman and had a lot of family around, but now I am by myself [in Clarkston].” Another respondent said she too was alone in Clarkston, while another woman did not have immediate family in Clarkston.

An example of the influences of western culture on young Somalis, and the conflict that results, is evident in one of the responses. “I have mutual respect for my mother even though we disagree on things. Nothing’s really changed. We haven’t had too many problems because I follow what they say.” One woman spoke on young Somalis abandoning traditional clan identity. She was concerned that, “They have to connect with non-Somalis, like Americans. The older generation wants the younger ones to cling to their Somali culture.” The impact of young Somalis having to work to supplement the
family income is another change occurring within the Somali family structure. Another element that has the potential to alter the structure of the Somali family is the level of English fluency among the young, and not the old.

The fact that young relocated Somalis have matured within the American school system, means they have mastered the English language. Therefore, they must often translate for their parents during parent teacher conferences, or serve as liaisons between the school’s administration and the student’s parents. As a result, the students begin to realize a certain amount of power they posses over their parents due to their ability to fluently communicate in English. Consequently, children begin to assert more authority in decisions concerning their lives, thereby creating conflict with the family structure of parental control over the children.

10. How are women’s roles different in your community in the United States from what they were in Somalia?

Relocated Somali women’s roles back home and in the United States are defined by their marital status and the presence of children. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents are married, 20 percent (20%) are single, 16 percent (16%) are divorced, and 8 percent (8%) are widows. Thirty-eight percent (38%) have five or more children while 28 percent (28%) are childless. Eighteen percent (18%) have one to two children and 16 percent (16%) have three to four children.

Being wife and mother are significant aspects of Somali culture. Women cherish their roles as mothers, perhaps more so than being a wife since bearing children has
traditionally been an indication of power for women. As previously mentioned, Somali women were culturally, then institutionally marginalized by colonial powers through the establishment of western states. Therefore, women were socialized to remain in the domestic sphere, and not the public sphere. However, literature on women in the aftermath of war documents women having to control the private sphere, while functioning in the public sphere.

One of the primary elements impacting women’s roles in the United States is education, and education directly affects job opportunities for relocated Somali women. Some view women working as an unwanted disruption to their previous lifestyle, while others view it as an opportunity for personal advancement. “Women used to be housewife and take care of herself. The servants used to take care of the children. But here [our] income is not enough. You have to work to help your husband support the family,” replies one woman.79

“Most women back home used to be housewives. They used to be at home and calm. Now, here, I see them running trying to get their bills paid. They are more active here than they were at home.”80 Another woman states, “We used to stay home and now we have to work and suffer. The men used to take care of us.”81 “We have been here nine months. Because of life situation here, most women have to work. Because of bills you have to work. Back home we used to own our houses, here we have to pay rent,” explains one respondent.82

Working for Somali women who chose to back home was for pleasure, as explained by this respondent. “Back home even the women who worked like it. Working
was for fun. Whatever money we got from men we spent our extra money on ourselves. We knew that the husband would support us. But here, you need the extra income to support the family.83

Another respondent explains the difference that working creates in relationships. She states, “. . . the women don’t work in Somalia. Men are the care suppliers for the families. Men are more used to [being] an authoritarian. It’s easier for women to find jobs [in the United States] than men. The men have to get used to lower jobs because they can’t speak English. The women become the care suppliers of the home and this causes problems in marriages. You see some men who were doctors back home, or worked in colleges and universities get Medicare jobs here. Both sexes [professionals] are having to get used to lesser jobs here in the states.”84

Those who view working as a positive opportunity said, “Here anyone can be somebody. You have a lot of opportunities but there [in Somalia] it was tough. [In] Most of the families they educated the sons and not the daughters, but here you’re able to get educated and get a job. For sons back home, they see that he will grow up and support his family, but they don’t see that with the daughters,” explains one woman.85

Another woman agrees by saying, “Here we get more freedom, which is good. We can do for ourselves. We can work.”86 “We work and we have an income. We have independence.”87 Still another woman agrees when she says that roles have, “Definitely changed here. We were in third world country and you weren’t necessarily able to make money if you weren’t educated. But here you are able to make money whether you’re educated or not. Women have more opportunity here than in Somalia. Here it’s difficult to
support the family on just the husband’s income. So the women have to work also."

11. *Is clan identity important in your community?*

Clan identity plays a major role in the formation of political, economic, and social structures in Somalia. Yet, the Clarkston community is a mixture of clans. Although the majority of refugees represent the southern clan families and sub-clans, they are nevertheless surviving alongside members of northern clans and sub-clans. In fact, six of the women interviewed stated that clan identity was not significant in the community. One replied, “No. Everybody the same now.” Another responded, “No. We are all Somalians.” Another woman echoed their sentiments by stating, “No. I’m friendly with everybody. We all get along.” This author did note that all the ten women provided short responses to this question, which leads to the conclusion that clan identity remains a sensitive topic. For example, one response hinted that, “It might exist.” Or, “It depends. Some of them still think it’s important.”

Regarding the younger generation and their perspective on clan identity in the community, one woman said she did not “... think that’s important now. They get tired of it. The younger generation doesn’t care about the clans but the older generation doesn’t think it’s good because it forces Somalis to go to strangers.”

For the two women who did admit that clan identity existed, only one provided a detailed response. She said, “Yes. It decides social interactions and marriages. You can’t marry because you like the guy. The larger clans don’t marry someone from the lower clans. This is a problem. It affects social parties. Every tribe thinks one tribe is better than
the other. It’s really sad because we’re all the same creed. I also think you should be able
to marry whoever you want.”

An example of the significance of clan identity in the community is found at the
wedding ceremony. When a Somali couple marries, the men gather in the morning and the
women gather at night, between nine o’clock and midnight. There is plenty of food, music,
and catching up on the lives of people some women haven’t seen in years.

During the night, the women form a circle leaving space in the middle for dancing.
Sometimes there is something this author refers to as the “calling of clans or tribes.” This
is a song led by an older woman in her forties or older, and every clan in Somalia is
named. Upon hearing the name of their clan, every woman who is a member of that clan
steps into the middle of the circle and dances. This continues until every clan in Somalia’s
history has been named.

12. Do Somali women from the cities have technical skills that assist them in acquiring
high paying jobs in the United States?

Thirty-four percent (34%) said they reached the primary level, and 28 percent
(28%) said they had no education or achieved a secondary level of education. Only 6
percent (6%) said they obtained a university degree. However, education was not greatly
offered or encouraged to young Somali girls.

In Somalia, education on all levels, but particularly higher levels, was reserved for
males in the family. In rural areas, the family sacrificed to send boys to the university
instead of girls due to the cultural perpetuation of specific gender spheres. A broad
education belonged to males because they operated and functioned in the public sphere, and they were to provide for their families. Thus, they required a better education to accomplish this. This was especially true for nomads in rural Somalia.

According to the data, urban Somali women do not possess clerical skills that will enable them to secure administrative positions in the United States. One interview respondent, stated, “A city woman won’t have clerical skills unless she went to a private school and learned English.” She went on to say that, “Very few of them come to the U.S. with skills that will help them in the U.S. Some of them lost skills in Somalia due to their fear and trauma of the war and its results.”

Another woman said, “I don’t think it works because I saw a lot of women who had degrees that are working in factories with me.” Another respondent disagreed and said that those with skills “... are getting better jobs than those without skills.”

For two of the women, education and language were two skills necessary to obtain jobs. “Yes. Because they were educated back home.” “Here the most important thing is language. Those who speak the language... they get the job. But for those of us who have the skills but not the language, it is more difficult. We have to take ESL (English as a Second Language) classes to improve our English and therefore, we get the unskilled jobs. We don’t have time to take the ESL classes.” Still another replied, “Yes. They used their skills to get jobs. Those with the language and skills can get jobs. Those without the language still have to take English classes.”

However, educated women who held professional jobs in Somalia find it difficult to obtain an equivalent position in the United States.
Often the education and professional degrees attained in Somalia are unacceptable for the same position in the United States. In addition, women have lost their degrees in the transition of fleeing, becoming a refugee, or relocating. Therefore, they are unable to document their qualifications, thereby compelling them to re-qualify through courses in the United States educational system.

As one respondent explained, “Yes. Of course. They just have to improve a little. They have to take courses here because their certifications don’t count here and their accreditation papers are lost.” Another woman mentioned that, “Back home people who have skills have to start from scratch. Improve their skills. The system here is different than the one back home.”

One respondent stated that rural and urban women were facing the same obstacles. She stated that, “Whether they came from the rural areas or the cities, they all are doing the same job. Sometimes the education the women had in Somalia doesn’t count here. Women from back home have more stress because they can’t use their skills.”

13. Are Somali women in the U.S. community more politically active than they were in Somalia?

The political activity of women in Somalia is best defined by the guidelines for “political engagement” provided by Nelson and Chowdhury in *Women and Politics Worldwide*, as well as the “direct action” discussed by Berenice A. Carroll in her article entitled “Women Take Action!” *Women’s Direct Action and Social Change.* In both these works, traditional formal political participation of belonging to a political party,
running for an elected office, or joining a political organization is not necessarily the form
of political participation for all women.

For these authors, protesting is a form of political participation and Somali women
express their disagreement of clan warfare through poetry and protesting. For example,
women in the southern city of Kismayo shockingly protested inter/intra clan fighting by
marching through the streets bearing their breasts. This was both a cultural and political
protest against two elements affecting their lives—clan warfare and gender marginalization.
In addition, membership in a women's organization qualifies as grassroots political activity
according to the aforementioned works. However, 84 percent (84%) of the respondents
said they were not members of a women's organization in Somalia. Furthermore, this
statistic proves that Somali women may not be formally organized, but they are politically
active in Somalia.

Six of the ten women interviewed said Somali women are not more politically
active in Clarkston than they were in Somalia. One of the reasons was the language
barrier. "In Somalia it's easy to be political, but here the language barrier makes it difficult
to start or know where to begin."\(^{106}\) Another reason was women do not have time to be
politically involved due to their daily struggles of surviving. "No. They are refugees and
they struggling to survive. Whey you are politically active you have to be settled. They are
too busy with their new lives."\(^{107}\) "No. I've never seen or heard about them being active.
Most of us are refugees and we didn't reach that point. They are in the stage of adjusting
themselves. The only active thing I did . . . I used to go with Asha [one of the
interpreters] to trainings or things. I am the first one in Atlanta who took the child care
Another reason is based on the detachment relocated Somali women feel toward the United States. One woman explains, “No. They don’t see America as their home country and they don’t want to get involved.”

There is optimism from two of the women regarding future political activity among the women. One replied, “Maybe in future for those born here, but I don’t think refugees have been involved in anything.” The only positive response was, “Yes. [The women are] more open minded. They see the difference in how [American] women challenge the system. They see what women can do.”

14. What do you think the future holds for Somalia?

Responses to this query were limited as well. Even through prompting, the women did not elaborate much more on their responses. Therefore, it is safe to assume this topic is highly emotional and sensitive. In addition, some may have been concerned about their safety since speaking out against the government invokes ideas of retaliation.

Nevertheless, two of the women provided some details on the future of Somalia. The first woman stated, “If we get one government there will be a fair government because it affects all the clans. It’s going to be very peaceful. It’s going to take time.” The other woman expressed her concerns by saying, “My expectation was that after 1991 it will take another ten or twelve years to get back to normal, but now I think it will take longer because it keeps getting worse. I don’t see any hope.”
This woman’s pessimism was countered by six other women who placed the fate of their home country in the hands of Allah. “It is in God’s hand. I don’t know what will happen but I’m praying all the time things will change for Somalia.”114 “I don’t know. I want it to get better, so we can all go back home.”115

15. Do you intend to return to Somalia?

It is not surprising that the answers to this query directly correspond to the replies of the previous question. The overwhelming response was in favor of returning, but only under stable political conditions. Eighty six percent (86%) of the women said they would return to Somalia and only 10 percent (10%) said they would not. One woman said, “Of course. It’s my country. Everybody loves their country. If it’s peace, I’ll be back.”116 Another woman replied, “Of course, if everything is okay. My family is there, I just want to be back with them and live in peace.”117

In further details one woman expresses her opinion by saying, “Yes. I want to go back and when I go back I will write a book about how the U.S. treats us. The only place that accepts us is the U.S., so I’m going to write good things about the U.S.”118 Another explained her situation by stating, “I’m almost sixty-two years old. I don’t know. If it gets better, of course, but it will take a long time.”119

The number of Somali women who have returned to Somalia is undetermined. Neither government nor nongovernmental agencies document the return of refugees due to the lack of data on the number of Somalis in Clarkston, as well as the constant mobility
of resettled persons. However, participant observation revealed that under 10 percent (10%) of the Somali women have returned.

The only negative response came from one woman who said, “No. My kids get used to the life here. Since they've been here so long and some of them were born here. Yes. We may visit but I don’t think they will be able to catch up to life in Africa.”

16. What role you see women playing in rebuilding Somalia?

Two of the women said they were not sure if women would play a role in Somalia’s rebuilding since they had not heard or seen women participating in such activities or organizations. However, six of the ten women believe Somali women will have some role in Somalia’s future. Some responses reflected future involvement that stems from current grassroots efforts in Somalia. “Somali women will definitely have a role. We have a group of women that send money to Somali family for education, medical supplies. They send it to the Red Cross.” “They have a lot of women’s organizations in Somalia that help people by giving them food. They help everybody.”

One woman supplies current examples of women providing financial aid to Somali efforts when she explains that, “If there is a problem in Somalia, women contribute their money. If there is a school to be built, they were the ones to contribute the money. They are doing something. They want to participate.” Another woman explains the economic, political, and social role women might play in Somalia. “I think they will be in the government. They never used to be in the government.”
One respondent was a community activist in Somalia and continued her work in Clarkston. Her response was clearly one of optimism. She said, "We are at grass roots level. I am the one who organizes. So, I bring all the women together. Wherever Somalis are we want to send them [other Somali women] a message. The name of the organization I started is "Nesaho." It's a kind of positive organization that promotes solutions. The organization encourages the women that this is a positive and right thing to do. We use one of the women's houses for meetings. There are fifteen of us. If there is an emergency [we meet] more than once a month. If not, once a month. Right now, we don't have anything written down, but in the future I will write a mission statement about what we want to do. First, we want to make a connection with all the Somali women in North America. We want to tell them that we are leaders and since the men haven't done anything, we will make the changes. We also collect money for women who need help. We collected five hundred dollars ($500.00) for one woman. We want to help our fellow Somalis who are starving."  

The contempt some women feel toward Somali men for continuing to engage in warfare, and ignoring peace treaties, is evident in this woman's reply. She explains says women should, "Take the government power. The woman is the one in the war. I see the war effect us. We lost our fathers, sons, brothers. Men always think about money and power and tribe but the woman can sit together and build a relationship together. It will take time because the women were affected differently from men. They see the urgency of peace."
17. Will women be accepted in leadership roles in government?

Four women did not see women as accepted leaders in a new Somali government. Two of the reasons for their skepticism were religion and culture. "No. It's against the Muslim religion," replied a strict Muslim woman [Somali men have interpreted the Qur'an as forbidding women from occupying political or religious leadership positions]. In concordance, another woman states, "No, because of the religion and the men don't want the women to be leaders. Most Muslim countries are run by men. Djibouti [a country to the northwest of Somalia] is holding peace conferences that was [for] men and women and organized by women, but I don't think they will hold power positions. Yes. The women will demand these power positions." This response also alludes to the role Somali women play in the reconciliation process. On a more personal note, one woman said that, "The place where I came from [Mogadishu] . . . women are nothing and I don't think women will be accepted as leaders."

Another woman explained that, "Lot of women will try it and are willing to do it but religion and cultural beliefs will prevent this. Some open minded men will support his but older, holy guys will not support [it]. Some women will disagree with this because they believe that women are incapable of claiming power. This could start another war because of the stiff resistance to the role changes that will allow women to take power."

On the contrary, two women responded positively to the query. The first woman said, "Of course because they've been in leadership positions before. Things change and men and women are equal, and women think more than men in leadership positions. The other woman said, "I think they will be okay if they get leadership roles. Still, women and
men [have to] work together.” The other four women were more unsure about women’s future government leadership positions.

One woman’s response reflected the colonial influences on Somali politics when she stated that the acceptance of women’s leadership positions, “Depends on what part of the country you’re from. If you’re from the north, I don’t think women will have [to endure] the same sexism. The southerners [of Somalia] are more flexible because of the Italian influence. The north is more uptight due to British [influences].” Yet, in the midst of the uncertainty and vision for the future political accomplishments of women, one woman’s response captures the optimism of Clarkston women when she simply said, “Maybe. You never know.”

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that guided this study were: 1) How did relocated Somali women in Georgia address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs? 2) If gender roles changed, how have the changes impacted the lives of relocated Somali women in Georgia?

FIRST EXPLANATION

In answering the first research question, the data indicated that relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs by utilizing federal assistance, relief and resettlement agencies, their community resources, and network preservation.
After arriving in the United States, relocated Somali women are financially assisted by federal funds distributed to resettlement agencies, which is then dispersed to refugees for ninety days. This direct federal assistance consists of food stamps, Medicaid/Medicare, and monetary assistance for housing and utilities. The United States State Department determines the amount of funds allotted each state for such tasks. After the ninety days have elapsed, the women are left to fend for themselves. Relief agencies provide resettlement placement locally, with the aid of state funds and resources.

In order to survive, most relocated Somali women turn to the Clarkston community. If they are fluent in English, they are assisted by Somali women who have resided in the United States five years or more. These women are able to provide the newly arrived women with friends, food, clothes, shelter, and the Somali culture. This acceptance is vital to the relocated women’s psychological adjustments because they have to become familiar with their new surroundings, and a new culture. Therefore, connection to the Clarkston community provides social and psychological stability necessary for the women to address their political and economic needs.

Newly relocated Somali women also receive social and psychological assistance from local resettlement agencies and refugee centers. Nonprofit organizations such as, Newcomers’ Network collaborate with resettlement agencies such as, World Relief, Lutheran Ministries of Georgia, and Catholic Social Services to provide the women with a safe haven outside of their communities and homes. At the refugee centers, the women meet refugee women from Somalia, Bosnia, Ethiopia, Iraq, and Vietnam because
Clarkston Georgia is home to numerous refugee communities, as is the Chamblee Tucker area.

Refugee centers also allow the relocated Somali women an opportunity to address sensitive issues such as, rape, torture, and domestic violence. Due to the pride in family strength and unity of Somali culture, such issues are considered private, and should not be discussed with strangers. The women are extremely hesitant about admitting such occurrences. However, these issues are detrimental to their social, psychological, and economic stability. For instance, if a woman suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), she will not admit it to her family, community, and oftentimes herself. Moreover, the women are unaware of PTSD, as well as its symptoms.

Refugee centers are able to arrange medical and psychological assistance for women who suffer from extreme PTSD, or any other medical condition. Often the women are unaware of the available health care in the United States. In addition, female community leaders or established resettled women, provide each other with crucial information on doctors, hospitals, emergency and payment procedures. This assistance is an example of network preservation. From observing the women, sisterly bonds are present and utilized. In fact, women privy to certain social, political, and economic resources provide a service similar to that of a patron-client system. For instance, professional relocated Somali women will alert other Somali women to position openings at their office, hospital, or other soliciting places of business.

Refugee centers also assist the relocated Somali women in Clarkston with service providers. They interpret rent and resettlement documents, as well as bills for water, gas,
light, and phone service. These services are vital to the everyday survival of the women, especially if they do not speak English. By aiding the women, refugee center employees also provide positive, successful examples of relocated women. Encountering such women in the community, refugee centers, and relief organizations is by far the most encouraging means of addressing relocated Somali women's social and psychological needs.

Refugee centers and the Clarkston community also provide an avenue for the women to address their economic and political needs. By providing English classes, refugee centers aid the women in becoming more self-sufficient. Lack of English fluency hinders the women from obtaining jobs, which diminishes their ability to support themselves and their family. For the most part, they are only qualified to work in factories, warehouses, and food markets. In addition to providing English classes, the refugee centers also provide job skill training.

Many Somali women are accustomed to caring for children and creating arts and crafts. These skills are shaped to fit the American job market. For example, women who are accustomed to caring for children, undergo child care classes so they may receive wages for their skills. The classes previously offered at Newcomers' Network, for instance, provided these women with certificates and the necessary credentials to apply for day care positions. In addition, the women could open their own day care centers in the Somali community with this certificate, thereby addressing their economic need for a sufficient income.

Once the relocated Somali women obtained proper job searching and performance skills, they are able to obtain jobs to support themselves and their families. According to
the results, however, these jobs are usually not high paying jobs because the women do not speak English fluently. So, though the women have sacrificed and struggled to obtain a job, there is still no guarantee that the job will pay enough to keep the family above the poverty line. Still, this work experience is different from what Somali women experienced back home.

Unfortunately, neither refugee centers nor relief agencies provide an avenue for women to address their political needs. Since they are not citizens of the United States, they are unable to vote, but do not seem interested in American politics enough to become involved. For them, the daily struggles of survival prevent them from engaging in the politics of a temporary state. Even amongst women who have gained their citizenship, political activity in the traditional sense, is absent. However, women remain abreast of politics in Somalia.

The Clarkston community is the primary resource for obtaining Somali news and politics. The men, however, gather to discuss politics in each other’s homes, or at the Mosque following a service. Needless to say, political discussions occur in separate gender arenas. In other words, men and women do not discuss politics together. Yet women who own or have access to a computer, retrieve information on Somali occurrences via the Internet. More importantly, since the majority of the women want to return to a politically stable state, they are anxious for peace and reconciliation in Somalia. Therefore, they remain cognizant of the peace, and restructuring process.
SECOND EXPLANATION

Working outside the home has been defined as part of the male gender role within most European descended, western families regardless of their socio-economic level. Prior to women’s suffrage, the man was primarily responsible for providing food, clothes, shelter, medical care, and other basic amenities for his family, while the woman maintained the household. Therefore, the man had to obtain a job that paid wages so he could purchase the family’s necessities. Consequently, this family structure and the gender roles within it were portrayed as the ideal family within the United States. That is why this research identified “working” as a manifestation of specific roles assigned to males and females in western culture for comparisons of gender roles within Somali culture.

In Somalia, working outside the home was also considered a man’s right, since he had to provide for his family. Therefore, work outside the home was considered part of the male gender role in society, while working within the home was considered part of the female gender role. These gender assignments were part Somalia’s early nomadic culture. Later, Islamic laws in the Qur’an were interpreted by male religious leaders to entrench the existing cultural exclusion of Somali women from the public sphere, thereby justifying her place in the home. Then, the introduction of western ideals of male superiority following Somalia’s colonization in the 1880s further entrenched these gender roles. Furthermore, this definition of gender roles provides the basis for determining whether gender roles changed within the Clarkston community.

Responses to survey questions number four, six, nineteen, and twenty reveal that twenty-two of the fifty surveyed Somali women worked in local markets in Somalia, but
the incomes generated from these jobs were in addition to their husbands income. Also, the women did not have to work in Somalia. For them, working or owning their own business was simply a means to generate extra money for themselves, or funds that would be spent on their children, husband, or used to assist extended family members in need.

Prior to the 1991 war in Somalia, women traded goods in the local market and held low level government positions. Among those surveyed, twenty-two of the fifty women traded goods, such as shoes and food in the local market in addition to maintaining their households, while fifteen of the women solely maintained their households. Therefore, the majority of the surveyed relocated Somali women worked in both the private and public spheres. Moreover, these women were a vital part of Somalia’s economy.

It is important to note that trading in the local market was considered both women and men’s work. Therefore, a woman was not viewed as stepping outside her gender role by selling goods in the local market. On the other hand, it was unusual for a Somali woman to work for the government, due to Somali patriarchal tradition. In fact, only six of the women indicated they worked for a multinational corporation or were professionals. Nevertheless, the results show that Somali women were accustomed to working both inside and outside the home. Furthermore, having to work to survive in the Untied States is not unusual for resettled Somali women.

Married Somali women are faced with the fact that dual incomes are often necessary in order for the family to survive in the United States. Dual incomes are not an unusual characteristic of some American households. In fact, some women in the United
States perform in both the private and public sphere. Somali women, however, must adapt to working in the private sphere for the purpose of survival, as opposed to out of choice back in Somalia. Furthermore, relocated Somali couples maintain the domestic hierarchy of male dominance, although some women latch onto western liberal thinking and demand more control and consideration in the home.\textsuperscript{135}

This study's marital statistics seem to contradict the literature that records women as head of households in the aftermath of war. Since this research shows that most of the relocated Somali women have resided in the United States for three or more years, it is possible that the women who arrived alone have remarried. In addition, women in war torn society literature documents the circumstances of internally displaced women. Perhaps, being the head of a household does not remain the case for relocated women.

The influence of western culture on some resettled Somali women (re)defines who they are, what they want to know/learn, and what goals they want to attain. Thus, conflict emerges between relocated Somali men and women in marriages and dating relationships due to some women embracing and utilizing western ideals of equality and liberty to improve themselves, and therefore demand more equality in the relationship. Some women enroll in collegiate classes to either obtain a degree or enhance the one obtained while in Somalia.

Opportunities such as this allow resettled Somali women to advance their skills, talents, and minds in ways unavailable or offered in Somalia. For instance, the technological training some women receive is far more advanced than any training they
could have received in Somalia. In addition, opportunities to utilize technical skills in a job are more abundant in the United States than Somalia.

Gender roles are stretched due to the possibility of a professional woman having an opportunity to advance beyond her husband as far as obtaining a job, and providing for the family, which is traditionally his responsibility. Thus, western ideas of equal opportunity for women provide relocated Somali women with knowledge and resources that equip them to push the boundaries of gender roles within the Somali families and the community. Western ideologies might also influence resettled Somali women in Clarkston to become politically active in the United States on behalf of Somalia and its people, as participants in American politics, or participants in politics back in Somalia.

According to the women, their existence, however, is of basic survival, not so much to be involved in political activity that only benefits or focuses on women who are culturally a part of the United States. For example, displaced Somali women in the United States are usually more concerned with obtaining jobs, so that they may purchase food, shelter, medicine, school supplies, and other necessities for their families and themselves, as opposed to primarily being concerned with political participation. That is not say that there are some Somali women in the United States who have been and remain politically active, but the women focus on in this study were mostly Somali women who had been refugees and are now relocated in the United States.

Although resettled Somali women do not possess the desire nor the time to be politically active, they do have the potential of asserting power if they remain in the United States. Forty-three of the fifty women surveyed stated they would return to Somalia
politically stable conditions. Therefore, the repatriated Somali women would crusade amongst their new government, and other Somali women for the democratic ideals of freedom of speech, equality, and the right to vote. Consequently, gender roles would change in Somalia, since politics is perceived by Somali culture as a male domain.

Data results for the second research question denotes that gender roles of relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia did not change. If a relocated woman marries in Clarkston, she is still expected to follow the proper social behaviors as if she were in Somalia. Her loyalties remain with her husband, and she is expected to conform to his wishes and opinions. For the most part, the Somali community in Clarkson, Georgia clings to its cultural socialization regarding gender roles. However, the conflict between men and women in a relationship stems from the western influences of family structure.

In Somali culture, the man is the sole breadwinner. He provides money to purchase amenities for every person in his family. Observations of Somali families reveal a patriarchal hierarchy. The man is away from home working, while the wife is home caring for the children. The eldest girl, assists the mother with household duties, and caring for her younger siblings. The male children, however, are free to exit the home at anytime without notifying the mother as to their whereabouts. Thus, the patriarchal authority persists in the younger generation, even between a son and his mother. Nevertheless, disrespect from the son toward the mother was never detected. However, when a relocated couple attempt to live their lives in Clarkston, they are met with the Somali and western cultural clashes on gender roles.
For the most part, a relocated Somali man expects his wife to remain home while he drives a taxi, runs his restaurant, or performs any other job(s) to support his family. His wife, on the other hand, may work at a refugee center, food market, or warehouse to supplement the funds from his job. Needless to say, the fact that the wife has command of her own skills, and utilized those skills to create her own financial contributions, causes most Somali men to resent their wives working. It is not that the Somali women abandon all Somali family traditions, it is just that some see the western freedoms offered to women as a means to enhance their skills and make more contributions to the family. However, some men view their wives working as an assault on their authority within the family.

Western ideals of freedom and choice have influenced the male-female relationships amongst all age groups in Clarkston. However, the teenagers and young adults have been influenced the most due to their exposure to western schooling. Younger Somalis in Clarkston do not disown their traditional family structure, but they do question some of the boundaries placed upon women and girls.

Having American friends, and observing the freedom of choice, some American youth have in their dating patterns influences Somali youth to want to behave the same way. Therefore, the traditional Somali gender roles are pushed with every generation that is reared within western culture. Furthermore, older Somalis fiercely defend their traditional family structure, as well as the gender assignments within that structure.
NOTES

1. Two prominent Somali women in the Clarkston community provided this estimation. They have resided within, and worked extensively with the people in the community for a combined twenty years. Therefore, their knowledge of the changes, issues, new refugees and immigrants qualifies them to provide an educated guess as to how many relocated Somali women reside in Clarkston. Due to the paucity of data on the Somali community in general, information from established women within the community is valuable and reliable.

2. Survey question number two. The survey and interview instruments are located in Appendix A.

3. Survey question number ten.

4. Survey questions number seventeen, three, four, twenty-one, thirty-six, and one.

5. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


7. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


15. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

16. Interview question number three.

17. Interview question number four.


22. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

23. Survey question number fifteen.


27. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

28. The words spoken by the women are written in English based on the Somali interpreter's translation. However, most of the women interviewed either spoke very little or no English. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

30. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

31. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

32. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

33. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

34. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

35. Ibid.

36. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

37. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

38. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


40. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

41. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

42. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

43. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

44. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

45. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.
46. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

47. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


49. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

50. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

51. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

52. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

53. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

54. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

55. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

56. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

57. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

58. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

59. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

60. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.
61. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


63. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

64. Respondent number ten, interview by author, 23 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

65. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


67. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

68. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

69. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

70. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

71. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

72. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

73. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

74. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

75. Respondent number six and ten, interview by author, 7 June 2000 and 23 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.
76. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

77. Respondent number ten, interview by author, 23 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

78. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

79. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


81. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

82. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

83. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

84. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

85. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

86. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

87. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

88. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

89. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

90. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.
91. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

92. Respondent number seven, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

93. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

94. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


96. Respondent number eight, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

97. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

98. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


100. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


102. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


104. Ibid.

105. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.
106. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


110. Ibid.

111. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

112. Respondent number four, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

113. Respondent number two, interview by author, 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


115. Respondent number six, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


117. Respondent number five, interview by author, 5 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

118. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


120. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

121. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

123. Respondent number two, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


125. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

126. Respondent number nine, interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.


129. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

130. Respondent number eight interview by author, 13 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

131. Respondent number two, interview by author, 7 June 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

132. Respondent number three, interview by author, 22 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

133. In western and Somali culture, a woman working outside the home is still viewed as a privilege, not a right despite the legal advances made in the west.

134. Survey question number six.

135. Interview question number ten.

136. Survey question number thirty-six.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussions in this final chapter of the research include: 1) a synopsis of the findings; 2) conclusions; and 3) recommendations for future research.

A Somali woman named Hadiya M. described displaced Somalis by stating, “They are somewhere trying to survive,” and according to this research, relocated Somali women in Georgia address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs through 1) nongovernmental and governmental organizations; 2) the Somali Clarkston community; and 3) network preservation. Results of the research also concluded that gender roles of relocated Somali women in Georgia did not change, but were challenged.

This research was conducted within the Third World feminists context. Thus, the findings of the research must be explained and discussed from that perspective. The primary thread of this theory is that women of color around the globe have different backgrounds and experiences, but share the common bond of struggles against racism, sexism, colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. It calls for more literature written by, for, and on women of color based on their unique life experiences. The contributions of women of color to the evolution of societies are significant and must be appropriately documented. In other words, Third World feminist theory acknowledges, embraces, and documents the life histories of women of color.
Some citizens of asylum countries are often skeptical and uneducated about the cultures of relocated people. As a result, hostilities arise and increase the women’s difficulties in surviving. The stigma of being a refugee creates obstacles to women finding jobs, apartments, and having grievances acknowledged by authorities. In addition, the fact that most information on refugees comes into sanctuary communities through western influenced media further distorts and negates who they are, as well as their intentions. The other communities in asylum countries must become more aware of their resettled communities’ needs and interests. Once this occurs, the women of these communities will have better chances of obtaining food, clothes, shelter, and jobs.

In addition to cultural discrimination, relocated women of color must also overcome racial discrimination. Due to global prejudices against people of color, relocated women from developing, and underdeveloped countries are faced with attitudes of prejudice in a host country. As resettled women of color, they are automatically lumped into the racial categories that prevail in western descriptions and influence social status. For instance, resettled African women are not distinguished from African-American women. Based on skin color, they suffer discrimination as if they have the same background, culture, goal, interests, and needs as African-American women. Therefore, their survival is hindered by cultural and racial discrimination.

Cultural and racial prejudice is manifested frequently in the workforce. The majority of Somalis belong to the Sunni sect of Islam. The Qur'an is the Islamic holy book of divine proverbs and practices as interpreted by the prophet Muhammad. Based on these principles, Muslims follow certain dietary, hygienic, meditation, and cress rules. These
rules often are in conflict with the American work environment. For example, the long, flowing dress (*derr*) of Somali women creates a health hazard when they work in warehouses around forklifts or other machinery. Although Somali men are ostracized due to their religion and some of its practices, they are not penalized because they tend to wear western clothing while working. Also, the Islamic requirement of praying five times a day creates conflict with the American standard of working eight hours with a minimum of two breaks (sometimes this includes lunch).

Islamic prayers require a clean, quiet area so Muslims may remove their shoes, face Mecca, and bow and kneel with their faces touching the ground. Some Muslims use prayer rugs or sacred cloths which are placed on the floor to provide a clean area. The prayers last about three minutes, but take approximately five minutes when cleansing and preparation time is included. The fact that one of the required prayers coincides with sunset creates the most problems with Somali employers. For instance, in November 1999 thirty-three Clarkston Somali men and women quit their assembly line positions at Solectron (a communications business) in Suwanee because they were told to pray in the bathroom as oppose to a conference room they were using.¹

The Somalis were faced with remaining on jobs that ignore their religious practices in order to support large families, or quit and face searching for another job while supporting themselves and their families. This dilemma loomed larger for relocated Somali women, especially if they were in Clarkston/the United States alone. For these women, paying rent, bills, and meeting other financial obligations was paramount. In addition to
cultural and racial injustices, relocated Somali women in Georgia must also endure gender
discrimination.

Due to the patriarchal structure of the United States, and the patriarchal structure
of Somalia, relocated Somali men may find adjusting to America easier than the women,
but relocated Somali women are subjected to the same gender stratification American
women face. Moreover, the racial categories in the United States, and the socio-economic
status attached to them, force relocated Somali women to bear the same gender injustices
as African-American women. Relocated Somali women and African-American women
also share the experiences of living through colonialism and imperialism. Although the
histories, and experiences are different, the struggle against colonialism and imperialism is
universal.

Relocated Somali women encounter the remnants of colonialism in the United
States as they did in Somalia. Somalia’s northern territory was colonized by the British
and the southern area by the Italians. Both colonial powers ruled under their own system.
The British excluded Somalis from government and maintained the racial, gender
hierarchy by catering to Somali men in their attempts to maintain economic, thus political
control. Somali women were excluded from both areas of power. This marginalization by
the British was not duplicated by the Italians.

Italy’s purpose for acquiring a colony was to make a claim for itself in Europe, and
operating a colony emphasized a country’s economic, political, military power. In other
words, Italy wanted to be viewed as an international power in Europe. Therefore, in
southern Somalia, banana crops were the primary focus of the Italians to generate financial avenues for the mainland's economy.

Somalis under the British and Italians worked to produce profits for the colonial powers, not themselves. In addition, they were subjected to the socio-economic hierarchy generated and justified by the racial and gender prejudices of their colonizers, particularly the Britain. Thus, Somali women were relegated to the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder. Furthermore, this status is duplicated in the western society of the United States.

Upon relocating to the United States, Somali women encounter living in a country that began as a British colony and emerged more powerful than its mother country. Although portions of Somalia and America were British colonies, their experiences were different. The primary difference being the racial power structure.

America was a colony of British religious, and social outcast, and adventurers. They were nevertheless of the same European descent of British mainlanders. Therefore, the racial element was not significant. Power was based more on economic and social status. However, in Somalia, racism was the defining element that determined a person's political power and socio-economic status.

The British feeling of cultural superiority created a justification for conquering other peoples, and this notion provided justification for early Americans to base their economic system of slavery on the superiority of European culture/civilization to African culture/civilization. Thus, the United States began by utilizing slave labor from North American indigenous peoples, then Africans to ignite its economy. As a result, relocated Somali women experience the political, economic, social remnants of United States slavery,
which was based on and justified by the racial and gender power categories advocated by the British.

Economically, relocated Somali women encounter the capitalist economy of United States. The class stratification of a capitalist society impacts relocated Somali women directly. Due to the racial and gender discrimination in the United States, relocated Somali women are economically marginalized. This economic marginalization leads to a lower social status.

There are a few who have married American men or emigrated Somali women that have access to economic resources, such as stocks, bonds, savings accounts, and investment clubs. But the majority of women earn minimum wages and do not have access to such resources. Nevertheless, all working relocated Somali women contribute to the Clarkston economy.

Some of the women start their own businesses or work for other Somalis in the community and branch off to create their own. In this regard, they are participating in the capitalist economy because they are owners that have people working for them or they work for themselves and keep all the profits. This scenario, however, only applies to a select few and they tend to be the more educated women, which means they are members of the clans that comprised Siad Barre's regime in Somalia. However, those working for Americans, other refugees, or other Somalis also contribute to the capitalist economy by way of selling their labor. Thus, relocated Somali women continue to be impacted by the United States.
PSYCHOLOGICAL FINDINGS

Psychologically, resettled women are tested due to the discouragement of lacking finances, difficulty in obtaining a job and the cultural, racial, gender, religious discrimination they face. Some even declare that life would be easier in their home countries despite the destruction and chaos. At least, to them, the surroundings, culture, and people would be familiar, which would make it easier to cope with the hostilities and difficulties of surviving. In extreme cases, some women contemplate suicide. Once the women obtain a job, adjusting to the American work ethic is also stressful.

Working in Clarkston, Georgia is a physical, mental, and emotional challenge to most relocated Somali women. Since the majority of married Somali women cared for the home exclusively prior to the 1991 war in Somalia, and having a job was not a necessity, working to provide food, clothes, shelter, water, and medical care for themselves and their family in the United States is different and difficult. Further compounding the problem of working outside the home are socio-cultural variables, such as lack of English proficiency, and job skills compliant with the American job market. Moreover, these obstacles loom larger for the uneducated or little educated relocated Somali women.

For instance, an uneducated or little educated woman in Somalia does not speak fluent English. Therefore, the job opportunities available to her in the United States are limited. Many women are forced to work hard labor jobs in warehouses, large markets, and other positions that do not require a great deal of communication. The strain of the type of work they have to perform, as well as adjusting to the American work schedule, demands, and culture creates stress for them. In addition, work related stress is
compounded by the sexism, racism, cultural discrimination, language and cultural barriers, and adjustment of paying bills, rent, and insurance experienced by relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia. In sum, uneducated, little educated, and professional Somali women alike face crucial adjustments to the American labor force.

Some professional Somali women have difficulties obtaining jobs in the United States because they cannot produce their high school, college, or university diplomas from Somali institutions. Therefore, they are forced to return to school to learn American procedures and knowledge that will qualify them to practice their profession. Having to regain or attain credentials is extremely stressful to women who established their careers in Somalia.

ECONOMIC FINDINGS

Although urban Somali women possess certain skills rural women lack, those skills do not assist them in obtaining a job any sooner than a rural Somali woman. In fact, based on the discrepancies with professional women’s credentials, some rural women may acquire a job sooner than urban professional women simply based on the availability of lower paying jobs. However, once professional urban women attain the necessary qualifications, they tend to hold higher paying positions than rural women. Furthermore, education is a crucial factor in the economic differences between relocated rural and urban Somali women.

Educated Somali women who manage to obtain certificates of qualification in the United States, tend to have professional jobs in careers, such as nursing and social work.
Whereas the uneducated, or those with limited education tend to be unemployed, or work in warehouses performing intensively laborious jobs. These economic distinctions cut across clan lines because each clan-family, or subclan consists of educated, noneducated, rural, and urban women.

The Somali community includes rich and poor with a burgeoning middle class. This middle class contains taxi drivers, small business owners, and others who provide services to Somalis and the larger Clarkston community. For example, one Somali woman has opened her own women’s center where refugee women’s issues are expressed, and addressed.

Economically, resettled Somali women may contribute to the local economy by starting their own small businesses, or performing jobs most Americans would consider menial, such as positions in hotels, fast food restaurants, or warehouses. Most of the women of all economic statuses in Somalia remained home to care for the children and domestic issues. Therefore, when they come to the United States, they are frustrated because they have to obtain jobs, and many are not used to working the types of jobs they receive, nor at the pace of the American job force. In fact, many of the Somali women do not view the fast pace of American life as enjoyable living.

To Somali women, Americans are in too big a hurry and rush through life, thereby missing out on the treasured simple things, such as rain, laughter, and enjoying the company of friends, and family. This part of the adjustment to American culture is particularly difficult and tends to take a physical and emotional toll on the women. For them, life back in Somalia was easy, fulfilling, and joyful prior to the war.
Somali women were accustomed to working in Somalia, yet when they arrive in the United States, they are faced with the challenges of survival that they did not face back home. For instance, having to pay car insurance, apartment rent, light, gas, phone, and electric bills are all new responsibilities for them. These items would have been addressed by the husband back home in Somalia. However, as head of a household, relocated Somali women must quickly learn how to survive. Thus, working in the United States becomes a vital part of survival as opposed to being an option back in Somalia.

Resettled Somali women in Clarkston primarily are not the breadwinners in their households since 56 percent (56%) of them are married and most have children. The research shows that the young and middle-aged women outnumber the elderly. Thus, the younger women are faced with immense responsibilities since they have two generations relying upon them to survive. Their children and the elderly mothers, aunts, and uncles are dependent upon them not only for food, clothes, shelter, water, and medical care, but also emotional support. Needless to say, these are heavy responsibilities for one or two persons in a household.

Often, an entire family’s survival is dependent upon one young woman who may only have a high school education, barely speaks, reads, and writes English, and therefore is only able to secure a minimum wage job. In a few instances, young women were resettled without any other relatives to assist them in Clarkston, Georgia and the United States. Therefore, they are forced to work despite the language and cultural barriers. For these young Somali women, they must support themselves, while attending school. For them, refugee centers, such as Newcomers’ Network becomes even more necessary for
their survival. Furthermore, this low paying job barely keeps food, clothes, shelter, water, and medical care, and transportation available for the young woman.

In the midst of caring for the family, the young resettled Somali woman does not have time to adequately care for herself, thereby leaving her body susceptible to illness. However, if she does become ill and cannot care for her family, the other Somali women in the community come to her aid. They provide the necessities of life, as well as emotional comfort and support until the young woman regains her strength. The other women also care for the children and ensure they continue to attend school. Thus, Somali women rely upon each other, as well as the assistance they may receive from the Somali community as a whole for food, money, shelter, and other amenities.8

POLITICAL FINDINGS

"In many ways displaced women are the ultimate objects of policies and forces far removed from their everyday lives. Their responses to profound upheaval constitute the politics of their everyday lives. When they speak . . . their plight and their reactions bear witness to the struggles of all displaced women."9

As a political group, relocated persons are placed in a precarious position. They live, work, and sometimes die in a country of asylum but often never become citizens of that country. Citizenship often is a tedious and arduous process. Some resettled persons are elderly when they enter the country of sanctuary and never become full citizens. Other relocated persons become discouraged and isolated in their first asylum country and want to move closer to relatives in other countries. Still others simply wish to return to their
home country to utilize skills and resources acquired in and from their host country. Whatever the reason, relocated persons are not a solidified political group, although they have the potential to become an effective force in social change.

Resettled women either embrace the American political system, or they choose not to become involved. As a result, their needs and interests are not effectively conveyed or addressed in a democratic political system. Therefore, they continue to depend upon agencies and individuals to assist them in paying for housing, food, and medical care. However, relocated women have the numbers and resources (in those women residing in host countries for a number of years) to organize and develop into a mighty force that could impact local, state, and national policies concerning relocated women and communities at large. More importantly, women's political mobilizing in the United States may impact United States' policies toward Somalia, and possible influence the fledgling government.³

As one of the women leaders noted, she is active with other women concerning community and women's issues. If she and other community leaders capitalize on the respect, confidence, and popularity they possess in the community, a grassroots organization will emerge. This grassroots organization would serve as a catalyst for political activity within the community, but women would first have to be educated on the American political system. In addition, motivating them to participate in a temporary state's political process might prove a formidable task. The best prospects for membership are probably relocated and immigrated Somali women who have gained their United States citizenship.
An argument amongst most racially oppressed groups is whether liberation begins with gender or race. For African Americans, this has been and continues to be a powerful issue. For Somali women, this will undoubtedly become an issue when and if they formally organize to affect Somali public policy back in Somalia or in the United States. The formation and expression of opinions by any political group will depend on the continuance of democracy in Somalia. Furthermore, the newly formed government will surely have to confront clan identity/loyalty to establish political stability.

SOCIAL FINDINGS

When Somali women relocate to the United States, they are impacted by the capitalist state, which is grounded in generating economic gains. The state is also organized to maintain power dichotomies of men/women, European descendants/people of color, wealthy/poor. Certainly relocated Somali women experience not only these “isms,” but also cultural discrimination in Georgia.

In fact, upon their arrival in the United States, African women are automatically identified with the racial group of “black.” For resettled Somali women, this means they are immediately faced with the same political, economic, and social marginalization of African-American and other women of color. Also, one dichotomy not addressed by Mohanty in Third World Feminism, is age discrimination.

Elderly relocated Somali women are faced with health conditions sometimes too far advanced to reverse, or they lack the funds to afford an operation. Often, they are too
old to work, and may not have someone in the United States to care for them. As a result, they must rely upon Medicare and network preservation to survive.

Traditional definitions and descriptions of patron-client systems did not adequately address or describe how relocated Somali women helped each other survive. Thus, this author termed this type of assistance network preservation. An example of network preservation is the child care offered by older Somali women in the community while young mothers worked during the day. The children are fed, clothed, disciplined, and allowed to play until the mother returns.

Another example is how women in the Clarkston community gather clothes, money, food, and other necessities together for families and other women who are recently relocated, or victims of unforeseen events, such as apartment fires and loss of jobs. Therefore, “network preservation” defines the type of system that exists in addition to the assistance provided by the general Somali community. Furthermore, the term applies to the system established by resettled Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia to provide basic resources and access to state resources for other relocated Somali women and their families.

In the midst of “network preservation,” however, a type of system exists that resembles a patron-client system. This system involves the immigrant and well connected/educated Somali women who have been in the United States long enough to master English, understand American culture, and obtain middle to high paying jobs, and recently relocated refugee Somali women. These women provide their community and other Somali women with assistance in accessing state resources. For instance, Somali
caseworkers at resettlement or refugee agencies are in key positions to assist recently resettled Somali women because they are able to provide their clients with knowledge and understanding about job applications, job openings, housing opportunities, and school information that aid relocated women in their survival in a temporary state of sanctuary. Also, the Somali caseworkers help obtain the federal assistance offered by the United States to recently resettled refugees, which also helps them survive.

Since a sponsor of a refugee must be an immediate family member, clan identity is automatically present in the Clarkston community. Thus, when a refugee arrives in the community, she or he is more likely to gravitate toward her or his relatives, whether they are of the mother’s or father’s clan. Furthermore, it is expected that clan identity/loyalty influences relationships between and among men and women in the relocated Somali community in Clarkston, Georgia.

Clan identity/loyalty also plays a major role in the resettling of Somali refugee women. Since their sponsors must be a spouse, sibling, or child, and clan identity is the basis of Somali culture, it is understood that members of the same clan-family or subclan bring their relatives to live with them in Clarkston. Therefore, the initial relocation connection for Somali refugee women is through the clan of their husband if they are widows with children, or their mother if they are single without children.

Clan identity/loyalty remains a sensitive issue in the community. Some Somali women say it is not significant, while others say it remains a prominent issue in the social, economic, and political dynamics of the community. An example of clan/identity/loyalty on socio-economic status is the class distinction observed among the women.
Women who are or were married to ex-government officials in Siad Barre's regime seem to maintain the social status within the Clarkston community they enjoyed in Somalia. Sometimes, the women maintain their economic status as well if they or their husbands obtain high level jobs. Based on home visits to conduct interviews, this author observed the difference in the interior of more prominent homes and those of less economic affluence.

As far as gender roles changing and the impact of those changes, the research found that gender roles did not change much for relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia. Somali women and girls abide by the same cultural expectations and guidelines in Clarkston as they would in Somalia. However, the western ideals of freedom and equality influence their behaviors within the family structure and test those traditional social boundaries.

Young Somalis are also influenced by western ideals through their scholastic and personal relationships. Since the majority of schools in Clarkston reflect the multiracial population, young Somalis are exposed to the interests, music, language/slang, clothing, hairstyles of young Americans. However, Somali youth tend to associate with young African-Americans.

The apartment complexes where the community is concentrated are also occupied by African-Americans and most of the African-American youth that attend their schools. Somali youth tend to spend time in school and after school with young African-Americans who reside in their apartment complexes. Based on participant observation, this association is due to similarities in family structure, and the struggles associated with
living in the United States as a member of an oppressed group. As a result, Somali youth are exposed to young American life, as well as a particular culture within American culture. Thus, young Somalis are influenced by the expressions of American culture through the behaviors, language, clothes, interests, and lifestyles of African-American youth.

For example, dating in the traditional Somali family does not occur. A young girl around the age of fourteen is betrothed to a Somali man, usually from the same subclan or clan-family of one of the parents, and is married based on her family’s assessment of his financial ability to provide for her. In sum, the young girl is not involved in the decision making process regarding her husband. For most Clarksston Somali women ages forty and above, this is an accepted process since most of them were married in the same manner. However, young Somali women ages fifteen to thirty-five are opting for the western method of choosing their own mates, without their parent’s influence. In fact, the notion of dating is addressed differently in Somali culture.

When a young man wants to spend time with a young lady (regardless of their age), he must initiate the contact by first securing the approval of her parent(s), especially the father. If a father is absent, then the next male relative must give his approval. Then, the two are not allowed to be alone. They must be in the company of other young men and women. Physical contact is absolutely prohibited. Likewise, dating in some American families is just as discerning. However, sometimes, less restriction is placed on the time spent alone with each other.
For most American teens, dating is often defined by the parents of either or both teens. Approximately from the ages of thirteen to eighteen, young men and women are given boundaries as to physical contact, location of the date, and duration of the date. For young adults ages nineteen and older, parental supervision of dating is lessened and the young people determine the limits of the date or courtship. Therefore, American young adults are allowed to choose whom they date at a certain age before they marry. Whereas young Somali girls are under parental, community supervision until they marry. In fact, young Somali women are marrying later in life than their older female relatives.

Somali women ages eighteen and above who have been in the United States more than five years have learned to speak English well enough to obtain above minimum wage jobs. Those who have been in the United States since they were school age have not only learned to read, write, and speak English, but they have been exposed to the options of furthering their education through four year colleges, community colleges, or technical schools. As a result, these young women are exposed to the western idea of beginning a career upon the completion of their secondary education. Thus, some digress from Somali tradition of marrying young to start a family, and opt to forego marriage and beginning a family to begin a career, or further their education. Furthermore, the longer young women are influenced by western culture, the more they will be viewed by older Somali women as rejecting the traditional Somali woman’s role.

Clan identity is also a factor among younger and older Somalis. This is evident in the dating process. In Somalia, clan-families, such as the Isaaq, Dir, and Darood occupy the northern territories, while southern Somalia is populated by the Rahanwein, Hawiye,
and Digil. Marriage within clan-families or subclans occurs between and amongst those from the same region. Therefore, a young woman is expected to marry within the same tradition in the Clarkston community. However, young adults in Clarkston are beginning to reject the rigidity of clan identity/loyalty since they blame the fierce loyalty to these kinships for the plight of their country, and their current resettled situation.

In addition, young Somali women seem to accept clan identity, but not the extremes of clan loyalty. Consequently, some young adults clash with their parents when they want to date members of rival clans in Somalia. This clash of cultures also manifests in marriages between husbands and wives.

Once relocated, Somali women adjusted to life in Clarkston and began to exercise some of the rights and privileges offered to American citizens. For instance, some women experienced clashes with their husbands who did not want them to work outside the home. The women, on the other hand, wanted to work so they could attain the material success they saw their female American co-workers experience. Hence, some relocated Somali women choose to identify with the liberties and freedom of opportunity available to them in the United States and to use those opportunities to improve themselves. They seek to advance their knowledge through classes, or obtaining new skills, which are viewed as a threat to the power structure within the resettled Somali household.

Most married Somali women enjoy being home, caring for their homes and families. They also enjoy taking time in the afternoon to relax and have tea with their neighbors. So, while American women are bombarded by the western, liberal feminist notion that women are being denied the opportunities to reach their full potential and
enjoy the most fulfilling life by remaining at home, some married Somali women are satisfied with maintaining their homes.

It is dangerous for western scholars to assume that women who remain in the home are there because their husbands won’t allow them to pursue activities and relationships outside the homefront. It was Somali women’s prerogative to work if they wished in Somalia, and the money they earned was their own in addition to what their husbands provided through their income. In fact, most of the relocated Somali women find the lives of American women extremely stressful and less fulfilling due to the lack of time allowed for sharing with family and friends.

Some Somali women’s acceptance and enjoyment of housework contradicts the work ethic and independence taught to some American girls and women. American females are socialized early in life to care for themselves by obtaining an education and beginning a career. Therefore, western women cannot condemn Somali women, or other women socialized to remain home simply because they are socialized differently. Furthermore, projecting western values and life perspectives onto other women is parochial.

Most Somali women do not even seem to define caring for their households as work. The western term of “housework” may not suit a Somali woman’s definition or perspective of what she does at home. For her, the home and family duties may be termed “housejoy.” In other words, even the way western culture defines what women do is indicative of the way western culture perceives or places an imbalance on tasks performed in the public and private sphere. For Somali women, caring for their families
and homes was deemed respectable and just as important as the husband’s job in the public sphere. The Somali men may not perceive their efforts as equal to theirs, but the women had their own value system, and questioned any woman’s integrity who did not maintain herself, her family, and her home.

When western scholars examine women from other cultures, they tend to research them with western perspectives and vocabularies. However, as this research has proven, Somali women were very comfortable and satisfied with their lives in prewar Somalia. In fact, coming to the United States caused frustration, as well as physical, and mental anguish.

Within the family structure and the Clarkston community as a whole, the male remains in control of the home (if one is present), and children remain controlled by the mother or eldest sister in the household. Gender roles are intact also when it comes to weddings, and other cultural events. In the Mosques, men and women remain separated during services. Somali men continue to frequent the Mosques on Fridays and spend hours there without regard for the wife at home. However, the same is not true for the women.

If Somali women remain away from home due to their job, they are still expected to return home at a certain hour at the end of the day to prepare the husband’s dinner, and care for the children. Therefore, a married Somali woman continues to care for her family while attempting to hold down a job that is necessary for the family to survive. Although resettled Somali women in Clarkston were accustomed to working inside and outside the home in Somalia, the type of work they performed in the United States, compounded by cultural and language barriers, exacerbates their adjustment obstacles. In sum, resettled
Somali women begin to resemble career American women who care for their homes, themselves, their families, friends, while maintaining a career.

Resettled Somali women in Clarkston suffer from physical, mental, and emotional distress when attempting to survive in a temporary country of sanctuary. They have to learn a new language, jobs skills, work place etiquette, and find educational facilities for their children, all while dealing with cultural, racial, gender, and religious barriers. Thus, though gender roles did not change, resettled Somali women are impacted by the different type and duration of work they face in a western country of sanctuary. Furthermore, the western liberal ideal of freedom influences relocated Somali households and has the potential for altering gender roles.

CONCLUSIONS

The 1991 civil war in Somalia created a state of anarchy that especially impacted women and children. The women were left to protect and provide for their families, which was not traditionally their responsibility. In the pre 1991 war years, Somali women did work to increase the family’s income, but the men were traditionally the head of household. With the destruction of Somalia’s infrastructure and institutions, women are forced to address political, social, economic, and psychological needs on their own. Furthermore, these needs must be addressed in every stage of surviving anarchy in Somalia.
INTERNALLY DISPLACED

Internally displaced women utilize clan-family and subclan identity/loyalty to meet their political, social, economic, and psychological needs in the midst of anarchy. Due to the salience of clan identity/loyalty in Somali culture, widows in the aftermath of war depend upon their husband’s clan for protection and provisions if they have children. If widows are childless, they depend upon their mother’s clan or subclan for survival.

The clan-family or subclan provides psychological aid because women regardless of their clan identity/loyalty have experienced most of the same psychological, and emotional traumas. The women provide comfort for each other, which draws on their traditional sisterly relations within clan-families or subclans. Despite inter/intra conflicts, most of the women assist each other in times of peace and war due to their shared gender experiences. Clan identity/loyalty also provides social assistance to women in the aftermath of war by maintaining a connection with their culture, language, religion despite the absence of order.

Clan identity becomes problematic, however, when clan-families/subclans are fighting for control of Mogadishu, other southern areas, and the foodstuffs arriving from the donor community. Being identified with as a member of an enemy clan or subclan leaves women vulnerable to physical harm, as well as destruction/confiscation of her possessions.

Since this research was conducted in the United States, the question of changing gender roles would not be adequately addressed in this discussion. However, this author assumes that by becoming heads of their households, internally displaced Somali women
would find themselves utilizing their talents and skills to survive. For example, in northern Somalia, women have created organizations to assist other women with their needs. They started their own businesses, and provided social, economic, and psychological assistance to other displaced women.

REFUGEES

As refugees, Somali women addressed their economic needs by shopping for groceries in markets close to refugee camps, through clan members’ assistance in nearby towns, and by international aid. Since the women were not in a position to work, they relied upon these avenues for survival. What little money they had after feeling, they used to purchase food in markets near the refugee camp, but for the most part, their economic needs were met by the international community. However, nongovernmental organizations, such as the Red Cross supplied the majority of food for the women. They obtained their own water from wells near the refugee camp.

Psychological and social needs were met by other women in the refugee camp regardless of clan identity. Gender roles are less visible since the majority of people in refugee camps are women and children, but family hierarchy exists. For example, if a mother fled with her children, the eldest daughter would assist her in caring for the younger siblings, and they would respect the authority of the eldest child. Women provide comfort and offer any type of assistance to each other based on the feeling of cultural sisterhood, as well as shared experiences. Thus, refugee women provide social and psychological aid to each other.
In a refugee camp, political needs are less direct since the women’s focus is on survival. It is difficult to participate in Somali politics, yet they remain abreast of occurrences through relatives in towns near the refugee camp, employees of non-governmental organizations, and some residents of the host country. Political needs become more significant, however when the women attempt to relocate to a country of asylum.

RELOCATED

In order to enter the United States as a refugee, a person must meet the definition of a refugee, as detailed by the United Nations. A refugee is defined as a person facing fear of persecution based on race, religion, membership in a social group, political opinion, or national origin upon return to their home country, and must fit into five “priority” categories (these categories refer to the reunion of parents, children, and spouses residing in the Untied States with their immediate refugee relatives.

Every year the United States accepts a limited number of refugees from countries designated by the Department of State. Then, each country is allotted a certain number of refugees from the total number determined by the President in consultation with Congress.11 Somali women who were sponsored by a mother, father, brother, or sister already in the United States, were allowed to enter. The waiting period for entrance ranges from one year to more than ten years.

The resettled Somali women in Clarkston address their political, economic, social, and psychological needs through “network preservation” within or outside an established
state, and with or without the assistance of governmental or nongovernmental organizations.

The fact that all resettled Somalis are facing the same challenge of surviving in a country of sanctuary blurs the previously distinct lines of clan identity/loyalty. This could be a catalyst to rebuilding Somalia since they all recognize the fact that they are displaced as a result of clan rivalry, and that they are all in the same predicament in a country of asylum. Therefore, they put their differences aside and work together to survive. In sum, clan identity (acknowledging and associating with members of the same clan-family or subclan without excluding association with members of other clan-families or subclans) is prevalent in the Clarkston community, but not the extremes of clan loyalty (disassociating from other clan-families or subclans based on conflicts originating in Somalia).

Relocated Somali women play a major role in the maintenance of the community. Socially and culturally they are the safeguards of Somali tradition. They raise the new generations caught between western ideals of individualism and Somali communalism. The older Somali women, especially, ensure the youth take advantage of available opportunities without abandoning their heritage. They are insistent upon maintaining links with family and traditions from back home.

Finally, relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia are part of a fascinating culture and community. The small sample size of relocated Somali women in Clarkston, Georgia allowed generalizations to emerge concerning the larger population of resettled Somali women in Georgia. Although they are faced with tremendous obstacles, they confront them with wisdom, courage, and faith. Their lives reinforce the ability of humans
to conquer emotional and physical tragedies. Moreover, their life stories should inspire a deeper look into the lives of African women (and women in general) in the aftermath of war.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research fulfills Third World feminism's urge for research by, on, and for women of color, as well as the call for specific documentation of day to day survival of people of color. Although this author does not claim to be a feminist, she does recognize the crucial need to research women of color, document their existence through their own words and experiences, and acknowledge their significant contributions to the creation, maintenance, and evolution of societies.

It is this author's hope that further research will be conducted to determine: 1) Are relocated Somali women in Georgia politically organized, and if so, are they mobilized to affect United States foreign policies toward Somalia? 2) When and how did the Clarkston Somali community form, and what role did women play in its establishment? 3) What are the economic contributions of Somalis in Clarkston, or Georgia, or other states with a large concentration of Somalis, such as Minneapolis, Minnesota, and to the United States economy? 4) What is the prognosis of changing Somali attitudes toward women in government? 5) How can resettled Somali women affect peace efforts and the economic, political, and social rebuilding of Somalia? 6) Theoretically determine why network preservation exists in the Clarkston community? In addition, a study could be carried out over a ten year period, which chronicles the lives of five Somali women in Clarkston,
Georgia, or Minneapolis, Minnesota to compare how they address political, economic, social, and psychological issues.

In the search for a safe, consistent existence, Somali women endure tremendous experiences. Their physical and emotional endurance is frequently tested, but for the majority of relocated Somali women, the hope of returning to their homeland continues to kindle their perseverance. An excerpt from a poem by Mahamuud Tukaale seems to beckon its people, especially its women to return home. It is this author’s hope that this day is soon manifested.

I bade you farewell. Wished you a journey full of blessing;
Every hour you exist, when you go to sleep and when you awake
Keep in mind the troth between us
I am waiting for you, come safely back, come safely back^{13}
NOTES


2. Respondent number one and two, interview by author, 14 April 2000 and 10 May 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondents, Clarkston.

3. Survey question number twenty-one.

4. Interview question number twelve.

5. Ibid.

6. Respondent number one, interview by author, 14 April 2000, Clarkston, elite interview, residence of respondent, Clarkston.

7. Ibid.

8. The term “network preservation” was coined by this author to describe the type of assistance relocated Somali women in Georgia receive from other relocated or immigrant Somali women in the Clarkston community.

9. As of this writing, Somalia was governed by President Abdelkassim Salat Hassan. He was installed by a reconciliation council held in Djibouti in 2000. The council included previous members of Siad Barre’s administration, as well as dominant clan-family representatives of the previous power structure. Women were not excluded from this conference, but did not occupy decision-making positions.


12. Ibid., 10-11.

APPENDIX A

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS
Interview Questions for Somali Women in Clarkston, Georgia

Date________________________

1. What was life like for you in Somalia before war broke out in 1991?

2. Did the 1991 war impact women differently from men?

3. Who helped you get food, clothes, and shelter in Somalia?

4. What was it like for you to leave Somalia?

5. Was clan identity a factor in who fled and who remained in Somalia?

6. How did you feed yourself and your family in the refugee camp?

7. What was life like for you in the refugee camp?

8. How has your life changed since you have been in the United States?

9. Have relationships changed within your immediate family?

10. How are women’s roles different in your community in the United States from what they were in Somalia?

11. Is clan identity a important in your community?

12. Do Somali women from the cities have technical skills that assist them in acquiring high paying jobs in the United States?

13. Are Somali women in the United States community more politically active than they were in Somalia?

14. What do you think the future holds for Somalia?

15. Do you intend to return to Somalia?
SURVEY


2. What city or region were you born in? ____________________________

3. What level of education have you completed? None □ Primary □ Secondary □ University □

4. What is your marital status? Married □ Single □ Divorced □

5. How many children do you have? 0 □ 1-2 □ 3-4 □ 5 or more □

6. Did you have a job in Somalia? Housework □ Civil Servant □ Trade in Local Market □ Multinational Corp. □ Other □

7. What did your husband do in Somalia? Civil Servant □ Trade in Local Market □ Multinational Corp. □ Other □

8. How many of your relatives worked for the Somali government? 0 □ 1-3 □ 4-6 □ 6 or more □

9. Where were you living when the war broke out in 1991?

__________________________
10. Which women's organizations were you involved with in Somalia?


11. Did the organization help you get food, water, shelter, medicine, and clothes in Somalia?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

12. How many women were members? 5-9 □ 10-14 □ 15-19 □ 20-24 □
25-29 □ 30-34 □ 35-39 □ 40-44 □ 45 or more □

13. What other organizations helped you get food, water, shelter, medicine, and clothes, etc. after war broke out in 1991?


14. What city/area were you in when you left Somalia?


15. What difficulties did you encounter leaving Somalia? List examples.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

16. Did you ever live in a refugee camp? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, name the country ________________________________

17. How long have you lived in the United States? Less than a year ☐ 1-2 years ☐

3-4 years ☐ 4 or more years ☐

18. Name the organizations that assisted you in getting to the United States?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

19. How many members are in your family? 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐

20. Is your husband in the United States with you? Yes ☐ No ☐

21. Do you have a job now? Yes ☐ No ☐

22. Are you involved with any women's organizations in the United States?

Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, name them.

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

23. Did you know anyone in the United States prior to your arrival? Yes[ ] No[ ]

If yes, are they Relatives[ ] Friends[ ] Other[ ]

24. Which of your relatives are still in Somalia? Sisters[ ] Brothers[ ]

Parents[ ]

25. Which Somali city or region did they live in before the 1991 war broke out?

_________________________________________________________________

26. Do you communicate with these relatives? Often[ ] Sometimes[ ]

Seldom[ ] Never[ ]

27. How do you communicate with them? Check each one that applies. Telephone[ ]

Letter[ ] Friends[ ] Relatives[ ] Other[ ]


Yearly[ ]

29. Do you send money back to them? Yes[ ] No[ ]
30. How do you send money back to them? Friends □  Relatives □  Other □

31. How do they get food, clothes, water, shelter, and medical care? United Nations Red Cross □  Red Crescent □  Other Relatives □  Friends □
Other □

32. Are any of your relatives refugees in Africa? Yes □  No □
If yes, name the countries ________________________________________

33. Do you communicate with these relatives? Yes □  No □

34. How do you communicate with them? Check each one that applies. Telephone □
Letters □  Friends □  Relatives □  Other □

35. Do you send money back to them? Yes □  No □

36. Do you intend to return to Somalia? Yes □  No □

Mahasaanid!!
(Thank you for your time!! )
Dorian Brown
APPENDIX B

MAP OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA
Clarkston, Georgia is located approximately two miles outside of I-285, U.S. 78 with a population of 7,231. Clarkston is home to a large number of relocated persons due to the concentration of resettlement agencies and established relocated communities of various cultures. www.mapquest.com.
REFERENCES


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