
Kin Networks and Family Strategies: Working Class Portuguese Families in New England¹

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Introduction

The study of kin networks and family role relationships in urban environments has been a common anthropological topic of study since the 1950s, when Elizabeth Bott, Michael Young, and Peter Willmott published their studies on families in London (Bott 1957; Young and Willmott 1957). Since then there has been an expanding number of network studies in urban areas. These have documented a variety of network structures and their different uses for social control, for communication, and for instrumental activities such as getting jobs, distributing goods and services, and building political support (Bott 1971; Mitchell 1969).²

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² The literature focuses on social networks, usually ego-centered "sets" of kin, friends, and neighbors. Some studies, such as Adrian Mayer's analysis of "quasi-groups" in an Indian election (1966), take a more sociocentric view. For a review and analysis of the literature, see Mitchell's introduction to *Social Networks in Urban Situations* (1969) and the second edition of Bott's *Family and Social Network* (1971). In this chapter I will focus on ego-centered kin networks, that is, those relatives most important in a bilateral kinship system: parents, siblings, and their spouses, as well as the married children of a couple.

Much of the literature on networks is thus structural—describing the form of networks—or functional—focusing on what networks “do.” Less attention has been paid to the relationship between social networks and the economic factors that may shape them. Let me qualify this statement somewhat. There has been a clear theme in the literature that networks, particularly those that include kin or relatives, may vary by social class. Although Bott, in her original formulation, explicitly denied the relationship between network structure and social class, the Willmott and Young monograph points to a conclusion that the pattern of segregated conjugal role relationships and connected social networks are an English working class pattern.³ Some features of this relationship, particularly the stress on a segregated role relationship, have been emphasized by Gans (1962) in his study of ethnic groups in the west end of Boston. He argues that these are general working class family patterns in the United States and England rather than patterns that vary by ethnic group. Many social scientists would today criticize some of Gans’s interpretations as value laden, antiethnic and anti-working class. However, other studies of working-class nongeographically mobile families support Gans’s findings of considerable sexual segregation, both in network composition and in conjugal role relationship (Bott 1971:256). Bott’s review of the literature and the analysis by Rapp (1978) indicate that there are significant class differences in family patterns and the use of kin networks, which can be accounted for by the relationship between families and their position in the class structure, and hence economy.

Furthermore, the literature on social networks (including networks of kin-friends-coworkers) in African urban areas deals with recent urban migrants to East or South African industrial areas for work in copper mines, heavy industry, or service jobs. Although much of this research implicitly

³ There are several methodological difficulties with Bott’s study. First, she chooses the “couple” as the anchor for these ego-centered networks but is not clear as to how she deals with the potential overlap among close kin known to both husband and wife and presumably to each other. Second, she defines a network as “close-knit” to the extent that people in the network know and meet each other independently of the couple. However, she does not give enough detailed information on a family’s network to indicate whom among friends, kin, and neighbors are in a network and what precise linkages there are among them (Mitchell 1969:11). Thus, she skirts the difficult issue of multiple links between the couple and individuals in the network and the problem of evaluating content, that is, weighing an occasional visit against substantial exchange of money and aid. Third, she seems to confuse what later theorists have termed “reachability,” that is, how many steps it would take to reach a particular person in the network with “density” or “interconnectedness,” that is, how many of all the possible links between individual members are actual links (Mitchell 1969:17). Finally, it is not always clear why the shape of a network, rather than some of the “environmental variables” that she suggests influence role relationships only through impacting on networks, should influence a conjugal role relationship directly. Perhaps factors like social class, economic relationships between family members, and physical and social mobility affect conjugal roles and social networks simultaneously rather than affect the social network directly and conjugal role relationships only indirectly.

contrasts the kin-based relationships of the rural area to more heterogeneous ties in urban areas, it also carries with it the implication that the structure of networks and even their function are related to the economy of the urban areas in which migrants find themselves.

What is lacking in this literature is a more precise formulation of the relationship between family role relationships, kin networks, and economic variables. In other words, we need to go beyond the mere description of networks in urban situations and in different class segments of urban areas to an investigation of a local economy and its precise impact on the family and social network.

In this chapter I will reexamine two topics that were the focus of Bott's initial study: conjugal role relationships (including the division of labor within the family) and social networks, particularly ties among kin (parents, siblings, and children of a married couple). Bott hypothesized that the degree of segregation in the role relationship of husband and wife varies directly with the connectedness of the family's social network. In other words, the more connected the social network, the more segregated is the role relationship. She argued that "environmental factors" (such as the social class of the family, the type of neighborhood they lived in, and their physical and social mobility) effect the connectedness of the network and only indirectly effect conjugal role relationships.

Instead of positing a chain linkage among "environmental factors," social networks, and conjugal roles, I will argue that the nature of a local economy and the couple's work position within it directly shape and transform both conjugal roles and kin networks. My emphasis will not be so much on what Bott calls "environmental factors" but will be on a specific local economy, the structure of jobs, available wages, and fluctuations in employment. Specifically, I will examine the ways in which immigration and the wife's subsequent participation in the labor force have changed the degree of conjugal role segregation (particularly as indicated by the division of labor) and the ways in which members of a kin network have been used to solve instrumental problems such as arranging an immigration visa, finding housing, locating employment, and arranging child care.

I propose to examine the relationship among local economy, conjugal role, and kin network by focusing on the migration of Portuguese families to New England. Since special legislation encouraged the immigration of refugees from the 1957 volcanic eruption in Faial, (one of the Azores Islands) and since the Immigration Act of 1965 lifted the restrictive quota system, large numbers of Portuguese, primarily from the Azores, have migrated to the United States, particularly California, southern Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Many come from agricultural villages or working class neighborhoods in the small towns of the islands. On arrival in New England, the Portuguese enter factory work. Both husbands and wives, as well as teenage children, are employed in labor-intensive low-wage industries. This consti-

tutes a radical break with their past employment experience, since many husbands were previously employed in agriculture or in craft jobs (painters, stonemasons, carpenters). Most wives have had little work experience outside the home, garden, and fields, unless they have worked as maids or housekeepers. By examining the process of proletarianization (the transformation of rural agriculturalists and artisans to industrial wage workers), we can look closely at the impact of entering into a new economic position on family role relationships and kin networks.

Family Strategies

Throughout the chapter I will argue that it is important to see immigrant couples as forging new strategies in the immigrant context, whether they are dealing with the daily tasks of living (housework, cooking, shopping, transportation, and financial management) or with more occasional, yet critical, activities (arranging for immigration, finding a job, renting a new apartment, or making new child-care arrangements).

In other words, I take the view, similar to other theorists on women's roles (Collier 1974; Bledsoe 1980) that women and men are political actors who strategize to achieve goals and are active participants in their own situations. However, as others have pointed out in criticism of those who employ a strategy analysis (Asad 1972; Silverman 1976), strategies are not forged in a vacuum. We need to focus attention on the structural constraints that shape strategies and that may severely limit the options of actors within a system. Attention must be given to the political economy in which a few actors both control the means of production and dominate the social relations of production.

In the case of immigration it is important to analyze factors that "push" migrants out of their original economic situation and those that "pull" them into particular places within a new local economy, shaping and limiting their access to economic resources and family strategies for coping with daily life. It is my contention that family migration and female labor-force participation are intelligible as family strategies. These strategies are a product of the Azorean economy that pushes families to migrate and the New England economy that, through the historical development of labor-intensive low-wage industries, has utilized female labor for 150 years, permitting as well as necessitating female employment.

A wife's employment sets other forces in motion that begin to change the division of labor in the family, yet it is changed in a way congruent with other family values—male authority, family self-sufficiency, care of children by trusted persons. Some of these aspects are also beginning to change.

Entrance into an industrial economy sets up new tasks and problems that can be solved through the use of aid from members of a network of kin

and eventually friends, neighbors, compadres, or other ethnic group members. The process of immigration usually separates a nuclear family from its larger network of kin (i.e., from parents and siblings of the couple who migrate). However, in a situation where "chain migration" has been established and where there are substantial numbers of migrants from the same region, migrating couples often have access to some members of their respective kindreds, as well as contact with others from the same village or island. There is a dialectic here. On the one hand, kin are important in handling certain instrumental activities. On the other, given the low wages that Portuguese workers earn because they are recruited to jobs in the labor-intensive sector of the economy and given the instability of these jobs, there is incredible pressure put on these families to make sufficient income to meet expenses. Conflict may develop over issues of mutual aid in some families, while in others a rekindled unity grows through the sharing of goods and services in a new context. In addition, layoffs, new jobs in a distant town or city, and difficulties with housing often draw a family away from their closest kin, widening their social networks and encouraging the use of other ties and avenues of information, yet not shutting off the need for aid and contact with relatives altogether. Thus, the shape and interconnectedness of a social network is not just a function of the environment of the family and geographical mobility, as Bott suggests (1957, 1971), but is related to the kind of local economy in which a couple finds themselves and their place within it, in terms of wages, job stability, and fringe benefits.

Research Setting

Data for this chapter come from a larger project, "Women, Work, and Ethnicity in an Urban Setting," which focused on women and their families in an industrial New England city of about 20,000 persons. The aim of the project was to provide a detailed understanding of the strategies used by working class mothers to cope with their work and family roles. The study community is one in which the population mainly works in industry, a large proportion of married women are part of the paid labor force, and there are clearly defined ethnic populations. These features were present in the early decades of this century, when the town was dominated by cotton and silk textile mills. As the textile industry declined, first in the 1920s and 1930s, and later in the 1950s, jewelry, apparel, and other light industries have taken over the old mills, while some textile companies remain, mainly those in webbing and narrow fabrics.

The project focused on four of the important ethnic populations in the city: (1) Portuguese immigrants who arrived after 1965, particularly from the Azores; (2) Colombian immigrants recruited during the late 1960s and early 1970s to work in the remaining textile industry; (3) Polish Americans who

arrived between 1890 and 1915; and (4) French Canadians who came a generation before the Poles, between 1870 and 1890. Material on the Poles and French Canadians is mainly historical, focusing on women's work and family when these populations first arrived. For the two groups immigrating in the 1960s and 1970s, we conducted lengthy interviews with husbands and wives in families where the wife was working and where at least one child was 8 years old or less. We completed 15 Portuguese interviews, including 11 Azorean families and 4 Continental families. The interviews, conducted separately with husbands and with wives, included:

1. A description of the interviewee's current job and a complete work history
2. A discussion of the structure of family life, including daily schedule, household division of labor, and finances
3. A reconstruction of courtship, marriage, immigration, and residence patterns in the United States, as well as demographic material on parents, siblings, and in-laws
4. A discussion of the role of relatives, neighbors, and friends in family life, including the exchange of goods and services, mutual aid, and visiting patterns.

We deliberately chose this case study approach, which has netted us rich material on work and women's employment, as well as information on the immigration process, the division of labor within the household, and the organization of daily life. To provide a background for interpreting these case materials, data on the history of industry within the city were obtained, as well as information on current employers. A participant-observation study was conducted in an apparel plant where Portuguese women, as well as women from French Canadian, Polish, Italian, and other ethnic backgrounds, worked. Finally, through a newspaper clipping file, information has been collected on the Portuguese population in the state. The Portuguese, unlike the Colombian immigrants, have immigrated into an area where the Portuguese are already a well-established minority because of their immigration before 1924. In the area we studied there are two Portuguese parishes, several Portuguese clubs, a Portuguese-language school, and a number of Portuguese small businesses. The older immigrants in this particular area tend to be from continental Portugal, whereas the new immigrants include some Continentals but a large number from the Azores.

Because of the diversity of backgrounds, we interviewed several families who immigrated from the Continent but focused primarily on Azorean families, as they are more representative of the post-1965 immigrants to New England. This chapter will focus primarily on the 11 Azorean families, although occasional contrasts will be made with the Continental couples. Of the 11 Azorean families, 9 were from São Miguel, 1 from São Jorge, and 1 from Terceira. Almost half of the Azorean families come directly from rural

componēs peasant backgrounds. The others have lived in small towns or the capital city, but most have recently migrated to these more urban environments or have parents or siblings who still work "on the land." Husbands who have had wage experience outside agriculture have been skilled laborers (a carpenter, a painter, a stonemason, a metalworker, a solderer, and a tailor) or worked in one of the few factories (a sugar beet refinery and a knitwear factory). Six of the Azorean wives had no wage labor experience, although two had worked in the fields or had raised animals for sale. Two women had worked as domestics, another had a brief job making buttons, and 2 others, those with the most wage experience, were employed in an embroidery and a knitwear factory respectively.

This is in sharp contrast to the Continental families, where the men had been employed in factory, skilled mechanical, or even white-collar work and where the women had been employed in jobs ranging from cook and clerk in a lottery shop to employment in an electronics factory and 22 years as a worker in a net factory.

The Push for Immigration

The work experience of the Azorean families we interviewed reflects the largely rural and underdeveloped nature of the islands' economy. An overview of the occupational structure makes clear that there are few opportunities for wage jobs outside of the rural sector. This sector, in turn, is dominated by large landowners, reducing most agriculturalists to the status of small holders, renters, or day laborers. One-half of the paid labor force is employed in agriculture, and one-third, in services, with an underdeveloped industrial sector (only 17% of the labor force). Women work hard in their homes, caring for children, growing food in the family *quintal* (garden), washing clothes by hand, tending animals, or helping with the harvest and the processing of food. Only 10.6% of Azorean women are in the paid labor force, and of these 47.4% are in service jobs, including domestic service (29%) and other service work (19%). Of the female labor force only 26% are employed in the industrial sector, which means that women work in dressmaking or embroidery and knit shops or possibly in a brewery, a tobacco factory, or a milk-processing plant.

A closer look at the rural sector reveals the very difficult situation that most Azorean families face. A 1965 agricultural census of the Azores shows that almost 80% of the land is held by individual families, but 73% of these holdings are considered insufficient to provide adequate incomes for the families that work them.⁴ The proportion of insufficient holdings is higher for

⁴ Figures from Comissão de planeamento da região açores, *Relatório de Propostas Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Açores, Maço, 1972*, vol. 2, pp. 25-30.

the island of São Miguel, which is also the most densely populated island with the highest birth rate. Here land is more heavily concentrated in the hands of a few large landowners, and there are more agricultural families who rent rather than own their own land. The Azorean rural economy is thus composed of small holders who have a difficult time supporting their families, a situation that is exacerbated on the largest island of São Miguel, where the domination of large landowners has reduced many rural families to the status of renters.

Thus, it is not surprising that 75,000 Azoreans immigrated between 1960 and 1970, about 54% to the United States and 43% to Canada.⁵ Also, it is not surprising that in any given year during this period, immigrants from São Miguel made up one-half to three-quarters of the total Azorean emigration.

Portuguese families come to the United States as part of a family strategy to better their way of life (*A melhorar a vida*). A woman from Terceira (Mrs. D.) stated the matter well:

There we are raised as poor people. We immigrate for this reason: because we have the need to improve our standard of living. There the economy is very low right now. It's not that my land isn't beautiful, because it's absolutely marvelous. If we had the standard of living that we have in the U.S., no one would ever leave. I think most people feel the same way. We arrive here in order to improve our lives.

The Pull of the New England Economy and Female Labor Force Participation

Most Portuguese immigrant families entered the New England economy in the late 1960s at a time of economic expansion when unskilled and semi-skilled workers were badly needed. In the city that we studied even the declining textile industry was in need of workers, since there were still a substantial number of small firms specializing in narrow fabrics, braiding, and synthetics or silk woven fabrics. The Colombian immigration, for example, was a direct result of recruitment by textile employers who needed skilled labor (loomfixers and weavers) during the expansion of the 1960s. These firms, as well as a number of jewelry, apparel, toy, wire, and cable plants, welcomed Portuguese migrants to their semiskilled and unskilled jobs. In the 1970s the local economy saw a return to increased layoffs and unemployment, especially during the recession of 1974–1975; several textile firms, including two of the largest employers, closed their doors or moved to the South in 1975–1976.

⁵ Comissão de planeamento da região dos açores, *Emigração*. Subsídios para uma Monografia sobre os Açores (n.d.), pp. 6–7. (Pamphlet, available from the Commission of Regional Planning, Azores).

Employers, especially in textiles and apparel, are faced with heavy competition from imports and realize that low wages are important to the survival of their businesses. They often complained about the difficulty of finding workers to fill their jobs, but several explicitly recognized the advantages of hiring Portuguese workers. The president of a small webbing company said that if there had not been an influx of Portuguese in 1970–1971, the company probably would have closed down and gone to the South. He said that nobody wants to do weaving except the Portuguese, and if he could get more weavers he would expand production and start a third shift. At another webbing company, the general manager said that he would like to have more Portuguese employees. (Of their workers 70% were Portuguese in a work force that ranges from 170 to 250 employees.) “They are hard workers,” he commented. Finally, in the apparel company where I worked, the Portuguese women workers were described as “the backbone of the sewing operation.” In other words, the Portuguese reputation for hard work fits well with the needs of industrialists in declining, low-wage industries.

Most of the families we interviewed immigrated when they were between 30 and 50 years of age, after having several children or having completed a family of perhaps five to seven children. Two couples came to the United States as a young married pair and had all their children here. Most families had been in New England for 5–10 years, although four families had been in the United States less than 2 years at the time of our study. Some came on work contracts, but most already had relatives living in New England and arranged their resident visas through them. The wives expected to take jobs to help their husbands meet the cost of the trip and to pay off the initial investment in a car and furniture. In some families the oldest children had already completed school in Portugal (up through the fourth grade) and took jobs in the United States, whereas other children left school at 16 to work and contribute to the family income.

In 1977 the Azorean and Continental families interviewed were employed in a variety of textile, jewelry, wire and metal processing, and light manufacturing firms.⁶ About 40% work in small shops of 130 workers or less, all privately owned, often by several family members. The remainder work in shops of 150–500 workers, equally divided between privately owned local industries and subsidiaries of larger conglomerates. This reflects, first, the nature of the jewelry and textile industries, which are characterized by small family-owned shops, and, second, the trend for large conglomerates to buy out the more established and flourishing firms in jewelry, apparel, and insulated wire and metal processing.

⁶ Of the 30 husbands and wives interviewed, 6 held jobs in textiles (braiding, webbing, and elastic), 9 in jewelry and jewelry display or packaging firms, 6 in insulated wire or metals processing plants, 3 in cleaning or warehouse jobs, and 3 in aerosol or candy firms. One husband was a solderer for a trailer repair firm, one was an auto mechanic at a gas station, and a third husband was disabled in 1977 but had worked for 4 years in a tool and fastener firm.

The husbands and wives we interviewed (both Azorean and Continental) are indeed making low wages.⁷ Women in 1977 were making between \$2.07 and \$3.75 per hour, with an average of \$2.70 an hour, only 40 cents above the minimum wage of \$2.35 per hour. The men were earning between \$2.35 and \$6.50 an hour, but only 2 of the 11 Azorean men were making \$4.00 an hour or more. The average wage was \$3.70 per hour. Some of the women and particularly the men worked substantial amounts of overtime. Some men worked 11- and 12-hour shifts, and one man at the time of our interviews was holding down two full-time jobs in order to make ends meet.

Almost all of the families have experienced repeated layoffs, industrial accidents, health problems, unforeseen major expenditures, and even the loss of their belongings in an apartment fire. Given the local wage structure, it is not only necessary that there be two wage earners in a family, but it is important that at least one if not both workers put in overtime hours in order to meet expenses. The stereotype of Portuguese immigrants as hard workers is a matter not only of cultural attitude but also of economic necessity.

This brief discussion of the economy of the Azores and New England helps us to see how families' strategies are shaped at both ends of the immigration process.

1. Immigration itself is part of a family strategy to better the family's way of life.
2. The entrance of the wife into a factory job is also "strategic" and follows from the family's economic situation on arrival and from the nature of the local economy.
3. The low scale of male wages makes it almost certain that wives will work. In addition, it is important for the husband who earns relatively higher wages to put in as much overtime as possible.

Conjugal Roles

The economic background of immigrant families and the niche they fill in the New England economy leads to a high probability that Portuguese married women will work even if they have young children. Once the wife is working, new considerations appear in terms of the daily management of the household, particularly in terms of how child care is handled and how household tasks are organized. In examining changes in conjugal role relationships we see the complex interaction between traditional role relationships, the

⁷ Family incomes in 1977 ranged from \$10,900 to \$20,000 per year. It is important to note that those families with \$18,000–\$20,000 incomes are those with three or four full-time workers (either working children or a sister). In 1977 the medium income in the United States was \$16,009. A number of these dual-worker families fell in the range of the lowest 40% of family incomes (below \$13,273).

ideology of male–female roles within the family, and the new context of a dual-worker family.

Elizabeth Bott (1971) distinguished between complementary organization and joint organization of the activities in which husband and wife engage. In a complementary organization, activities of husband and wife are different and separate but are fitted together to form a whole. Or, activities may be independent and carried out separately without reference to each other. In a joint organization of roles, activities are carried out by the husband and wife together, or the same activity is carried out by either partner at different times. In her research, Bott used the term “segregated conjugal role relationship” to indicate a relationship where complementary and independent organization predominated: “Husband and wife have a clear differentiation of tasks and a considerable number of separate interests and activities. They have a clearly defined division of labour into male tasks and female tasks. They expect to have different leisure pursuits, and the husband has his friends outside the home and the wife has hers [Bott 1971:54].” In a joint conjugal role relationship, in contrast, joint organization is relatively predominant. “Husband and wife expect to carry out many activities together with a minimum of task differentiation and separation of interests. They not only plan the affairs of the family together, but also exchange many household tasks and spend much of their leisure time together [Bott 1971:54].”

The traditional Azorean relationship between husband and wife is complementary for household division of labor, yet, because of the husband’s role as head of the household and an ideology that women should be protected and within the shadow of the family, most leisure-time activities are done either as a family or in groups of the same sex individuals. In other words, families are male oriented, and conjugal roles are segregated with regard to the division of labor but joint with regard to leisure activities. Under the impact of immigration and female labor force participation, the segregated nature of role relationships has begun to change, but many aspects of traditional family ideology have remained, at least for the parents we interviewed.

Most of the Azorean couples we interviewed have gone through a traditional upbringing and courtship. As young women, girls are carefully watched and are not allowed to walk in public places unchaperoned. Mrs. N., age 29, recalled her upbringing, which she characterized as stricter than some other Azorean families:

I remember . . . when I was there [in the islands] that I had a friend whom I liked very much and she sometimes would go to the park and she would say, are you coming with me? And I would say, “I will not go without asking my Father.” I would get home and I would say to my father, “ai, Father, may I go with that friend?” and he would say, “No, sir, you will go out when I go out.” See, the way I was brought up, I could not go out. I would not go out with anyone. . . . Now I

go out more, but it would be very hard for me to be a popular girl, like the others, for example, like my sister-in-law. My sister-in-law, I like her personality. She goes out, the husband goes out. She goes to a dance or to a feast. I like her temperament, but it would be very hard for me to adapt to this because I was not brought up this way.

Mrs. F., now 43 and from a village on São Miguel, provides a good example of the way in which a traditional courtship progressed. She knew her husband since childhood. At 14 she knew she liked her husband, who was then 21 years old. Once they began courting (became *namorados*) the relationship was closely supervised. They would talk formally to each other on Sunday afternoons. The duration of the encounter was supposed to be for an hour, but it usually lasted most of the afternoon. She would come to a window in the front part of the house, and he would speak to her from the sidewalk. Occasionally, they would be together in public, especially during feasts, but that was frowned upon by the parents. At no time were they allowed to be alone. In the Azores, the young man must have the father's permission to court "at the window," and, after he has approached the father a second time and has been granted permission for the couple to marry, the young man may enter the home.

Among younger couples, courting may be interrupted by immigration or a couple may begin to court by mail, first exchanging pictures and then, after receiving permission from the father, exchanging letters for an extensive period. As Mrs. E., age 31, described her situation:

He was courting a girl in my town and when he went there he saw me and that was it. You know, he courted me for 9 months there and then he came here to America. He was here for 2 years and a half. My father consented to the wedding, and he returned there for the marriage. After we were married, I came back [to the United States] with him. . . . Before he came here, he talked to my father and everything was set so that I could receive his letters. But before he left he had set the time [for the wedding]—2 or 2 and a half years.

In contrast, Mrs. N., another young wife, immigrated first with her parents and siblings. As Mr. N. described what happened:

I had seen her but never spoke to her [in terms of courting] or anything. Later my sister's husband was friends with my wife's brother; they worked together. Her father came over with a work contract. Three years later, my brother-in-law [his sister's husband] used to get together with my father-in-law, and my sister sent a picture where my wife is together with other family members. I recognized her and I sent word asking if she had any boyfriend. That's how it started.

Mrs. N.'s interview took up the story from this point:

Then I courted him for 2 months through letters, and after that I went there to marry. When I went it wasn't to get married; my sister was the one who was

going to get married. I had the idea of going to get to know him and after, if I liked him, I would marry him; if not, I would stay single. My father said, "If you know the family . . . if the family is good, the guy is also good; but do what you want, I think you will get married. You will be married once and for all, instead of going back and forth!" So both of us got married. I got married on a Saturday and my sister on the Sunday.

In most of the Azorean families, the husband and father demands the respect of his wife and children, a respect that stems from their role as provider. Mr. M. commented on his role as head of the household:

As long as they live under my wings I am the boss [i.e., the one who gives the orders is me]. No authority will boss my kids around because I am working. I am sacrificing my body to feed them, to cloth them, to get them shoes and to provide a bed for them to sleep in. . . . I'm not going to be sacrificing myself and watch them at the age of 15 or 16 going out for two or three days without coming home. If they ever did that, they would never step back into this house.

The ideal of family self-sufficiency is strong among Azorean families and is often verbalized by the men. Part of this is a commitment to hard work of any kind by the husbands, as indicated by Mr. F.:

I can do any kind of work here in America. Any kind of work, that's doesn't matter . . . nothing. No, the Portuguese, the Azorean, he is used to heavy work; he knows what work means.

Mr. G., an older man, said that from the time he was married he never received any family help. "I struggled all along" (*Eu é que lutei sempre*).

Mr. H. said:

To tell you the truth, I like any kind of work, as long as I can do it, any kind of work. It's my thinking, my way, that what I want is to be busy working. It's true, that's our security, but to be honest, many people are not like that because I know. But me, I like to be working.

The older children usually follow Azorean custom and hand over their paychecks to their father. Often in the American context, the son or daughter may pay the bills because they have the English-language skills to do so, but the father often remains in charge of the allocation of funds. As Mr. F. described how financial arrangements work in his family with a working wife and a working 16-year-old son.

No, I am the one who is in charge of the money. We all do it together. I come home, I tell them what's what, you see, but they do the same to me. For example, if my son goes shopping with his brothers he must tell me what was spent.

Mr. M.'s family works on a similar system:

He [his 17-year-old son] comes home first, puts the check on the table or over there or here or there or any place. He puts it down first, then later he cashes it. Yes, he cashes it; I give him my check he cashes it. The bills — I give him the

money; then he leaves, pays everything, brings back the change, and there is never any problem.

An older son, now married, had done the same thing during his early working years. The father was particularly close to this child:

Good as that boy, that's what I ask God, that every father would have a son [such as] that one I had. He is really here [close to my heart].

In some families decision making is more jointly done. For example, Mr. D. handles the finances according to his wife, but they cash their checks together and then decide how to spend the money. In the N.'s case (a younger couple), the wife explained that Mr. N. took care of the money. Their paychecks are combined, and all the bills are paid; what is left over is theirs. Mr. and Mrs. N. talked over the decision that Mrs. N. would work and that they would try to make important decisions together. Mr. N. says,

Until this day, I never decided anything without talking it over with her together. And I enjoy it this way, because we can't blame the other. If it's good, it's for both of us, and if it's bad, the same.

The women in the household are responsible for cooking, cleaning, and child care. Usually the daughters in a family share some of these responsibilities. One father described his household routine, in which the sons as well as the daughters helped out:

Well, we have seven people in the house but as we say the parents are the ones in charge of all of this. But since I'm tired of working, and getting old, I'll tell Esmeralda [a 12-year-old daughter] to clean the stove; I'll tell Mario [her 12 year-old twin] clean this or clean that. Or I'll tell Adriano [the 10-year-old son], "Come on guys, make your own beds, Mario will help," and so they do it.

The mother supervises bed making and laundry and does the cooking, although the oldest daughter, age 17, cooks breakfast and dinner. In another household, the mother discouraged the adolescent girls from doing much of the housework, even though the father felt that they should help with these chores. Her point of view was: "No, inside the house I'm the boss," indicating her control over housework in the allocation of "female chores."

Most parents feel strongly that children should give respect to their parents. Mr. G. summarized the Azorean custom.

There we used to ask for our parents' blessing [kissing their hand] in the morning, very respectfully, everything . . . we used to talk in a lower voice than our parents.

The G.'s had spent 16 years in Brazil and felt that American culture supported entirely different relationships between children and parents in contrast to both Portugal and Brazil. Mr. G. noted the following differences:

There [in Brazil], is much more respect for many things. That is, in Brazil, it is not already as respectful as in São Miguel, but in America, it is much worse;

there is no comparison. Because in Brazil, my daughters at the age of my younger ones today, never spoke in a raised voice to me. Today, no, or because I don't want them to watch TV or because I don't want them to play ball in the street . . . they say that I am different from other fathers. . . . My uncle told me, "You should have never come from Brazil. The person who comes to America to educate their kids only ends up with uneducated children."

Mrs. E., a young mother, felt, on the other hand, that she would be able to raise her children in the same way she would in the Azores. She said that the best she could teach her children is for them to be well behaved, to be obedient to their parents, and not to misbehave. Mr. F. also emphasized the importance of respect in his philosophy of child rearing:

We don't need to hit them; the child more or less follows the father's words, as long as they are polite words, words of obedience, words of respect, the child will follow also that road.

Some couples interviewed noted that they did things together as a family. For example, Mr. N. said:

Americans have a different life from ours. We are more the type to stay home. For example, I go out, if I want to go out, I'll go with my wife. Americans, no. The wife goes one place and the husband goes someplace else. I don't buy that idea. Either we go out together or I stay home.

His wife had a similar analysis in contrasting American families with Portuguese families:

A husband goes out with the wife of another, for example, they exchange couples. These are things which are different from the Portuguese couple. The Portuguese, we are brought up husband and wife. We, where one goes, the other goes. Now, here the woman, if she feels like it, she will go to the barroom. The wife goes on Thursday and the husband goes on Friday. I find that very different.

Women's Paid Employment and Changing Roles

Given a strong ideology of family self-sufficiency, of male orientation, and of control over children and the importance of respect between parents and children, many of the rearrangements necessary because of the wife's paid employment have been handled within the nuclear family.

Rearrangement of husband-wife tasks has been possible because the local economy includes many firms that operate on two or three shifts. The textile industry and insulated wire plants all involve heavy machinery, which is more efficient to operate around the clock. In the jewelry industry, a second shift is often added, especially during busy seasons and for the small detail and finishing work. Most couples have opted for handling child care by working on shifts, unless their children are all of school age. Since husbands and wives are often laid off, may leave a job because of child-care or health

difficulties, or may seek a better job that is closer to home or on a better shift, there has been considerable adjustment of husband's and wife's jobs over an 8–10 year period, with concurrent changes in child-care arrangements.

Family N., a young couple whose 6-year-old child was born in this country, serves as an example. When the couple were first married, they lived with her parents in a city about 50 miles from the study area. They both worked first shift, he as a solderer and she in a knitting shop; her mother, who was not working, took care of the child. After a year they moved to the study town, and he worked for a brief 3 months at a second job; then he found a third job with better pay on first shift (7 A.M. until often 9 P.M.). He worked there until the workers went on strike and then found a fourth job through an advertisement in the paper. He worked first shift on this fourth job until he was laid off after 3 years. A fifth job was held for 2 years. This place closed and he found a sixth job. (All of these jobs were 10–15 miles commuting distance from his home). Finally, he was able to go back to his first job, a 50-mile commute, but at high pay (\$6.50 an hour).

Since coming to the study city, the wife has worked for 5 years at a textile company that makes elastic braid. She works on third shift, and since her job is close to home, she walks home in the morning, wakes her daughter and prepares her for school, walking her there as well. Her husband rises at 5.30 A.M. in order to get to his job 50 miles away by 7:30. This arrangement has worked well, except for a period when her husband was working from 5 A.M. to 3 P.M. He explains how they arranged baby-sitting with some Portuguese neighbors:

One of these tenants had two young girls, the husband used to work second shift and the wife the first. So she used to leave at 3:00 P.M. [i.e., the wife would leave work at 3, and the husband would start at 2:00 P.M.]. So from 2 or maybe 1:30 until 3:00 they needed someone to stay with those two children, and since we lived in the same building my wife would stay with them. She used to pay me after. And often, since we did that for them, for example, when I worked in X for a short while, [about a month] for that time we had to start at 5 in the morning until 3, so I would take my girl the night before and I would take her there, she would sleep in my friend's house, instead of waking her up in the morning. So we helped each other.

Table 9.1 shows the child-care arrangements used by the 11 Azorean families at the time of the interviews. It shows that most couples work on different shifts unless there are already a number of older children to look after the youngest from the end of school until the parents arrive home (between 3:30 and 4:30 P.M.). Fathers who work third shift often get their children up and off to school after they arrive home. Some fathers will often look after a young child during the day, catching naps in between watching the child.

The household division of labor has changed in other ways in the United States. Few Azorean women drive, so the couple shops jointly for food and

TABLE 9.1
Shift Work and Child-Care Arrangements

Family	Number of children	Age of youngest child	Shift of father	Shift of mother	Child care
A.	7	2	Third	Second	Mother in day; Father in evening
D.	1	16	First	Second	None needed
E.	3	2	Laid off	First	Husband's sister
F.	5 ^a	9	First	First	None needed (9-year-old is looked after by 12-year-old)
G.	5 ^b	7	First	First	None needed
H.	5 ^c	7	First and Third (10:30 P.M.-7:00 A.M.)	First	None needed
I.	4	5	Third	First	Father during day
L.	3	7	Disabled	First	Father during day
M.	7 ^d	7	Third (7 P.M.-7 A.M.)	First	Father during day
N.	1	7	First	Third	Mother after school
Q.	2	10	Third (1 A.M.-noon)	First	Father after school

^a In family F. both the 23-year-old son and the 18-year-old daughter are working.

^b In family G. the 27-year-old daughter works; the 23-year-old daughter is working but has moved out of the household. The mother quit her job between the first and second interview in order to have an eye operation.

^c In family H. the 16-year-old son quit school in order to look for a job; the father is holding down two jobs to make ends meet, one on first shift and the other at night.

^d In family M. two married sons are still in the Azores; one married son is in the United States and no longer lives with the family; a fourth son, who is 17, is working and helping to support the household.

clothes. The husband often takes the washing to the laundromat. Some husbands make beds and participate in some of the housecleaning. There seems to be a wide range of variation here. For example, Mrs. N. reports that on Saturday mornings (after working all night) she may go to bed and sleep until 10 A.M. When she gets up, Mr. N. will have the house cleaned. Another husband who had been taking care of his children while the wife worked the second shift said he was *saturado* (he's had it) and encouraged his wife to change to the first shift, using a neighbor as a baby-sitter.

In most families, despite these changes, the wife takes the burden of a "second shift" and the responsibility for most of the work inside it in addition to her paid job. For example, Mr. M. said,

The morning is the hardest part for Maria [his wife]. . . . She has to prepare the children, their clothes and she has this thing about ironing. She had to iron their clothes before they go to school. She has to do it every day and it has to be well ironed, for the girls as well as the boys. That's the only bad time for her. She always gets up around 5 o'clock in the morning to prepare everything.

Another husband said,

Here in America a woman's life is more unpleasant than that of a man, because I get home, even if I'm working only 8 hours, on Sunday, I can't help anything at all around the house. I'm not one of those men who help their wives washing the clothes. Housework for me . . . maybe because I got married over there and you know that the customs there are different from those here. . . . I find it difficult to change.

In sum, the conditions immigrant families face in the New England economy make the wife's labor force participation an important family strategy for economic survival. This, in turn, sets off changes in the division of labor in the family, with increasing male aid in child care, shopping, laundry, and even housecleaning. However, for these couples mainly in their 30s and 40s, these changes are taking place in the context of maintaining a strong ideology of family self-sufficiency, as well as a commitment to respect for the father's authority, control over the children's behavior, and a proper upbringing for the children, especially the daughters, whose leisure-time activities are still carefully chaperoned.

The Reconstruction of Kin Networks

Migration into the New England economy, on the one hand, separates a couple from their kin, neighbors, and godparents, but, on the other hand, migration is made possible through kinship. One of the goals of the Immigration Act of 1965 was to reunite families, and preference is given to parents, children, and siblings of those who have already immigrated. This has set up a process of "chain migration" whereby some members of a family migrate

and then are able to “call over” other family members, one at a time. The Portuguese expression for this is arranging a *carta da chamada* (letter of call), which involves filling out the necessary papers for a visa. Some families were able to immigrate in the late 1960s through a work contract, whereby an employer arranges immigration through guarantee of a job for a year or more.

Table 9.2 illustrates that among the 11 Azorean families interviewed most of the siblings and parents of one spouse are living in New England. Often members of the other spouse’s kindred have immigrated to Canada or California or remain in the Azores. Some families are in the process of arranging the papers for a mother, sister, or married child. Most husbands and wives have three to six siblings each, most of whom are married and have children. A number of parents are deceased, but there are some widowed mothers who have already immigrated and are living with a daughter or who plan to immigrate as soon as papers can be arranged.

In examining the role of close kin, that is, parents and siblings and spouse’s parents and siblings, I have selected five instrumental tasks that are critical to setting up a life in the United States. These are (1) arranging for immigration (*carta da chamada*); (2) obtaining housing on arrival; (3) finding the husband a job; (4) find the wife a job; and (5) arranging for child care. This last item, as discussed earlier in the chapter, can be handled within the nuclear family, but for many of these families, at the point of immigration the youngest child was under school age and some child-care arrangements had to be made if jobs on separate shifts were not obtained.

Table 9.3 shows the role of kin in each of these instrumental tasks at the point of immigration. Since most husbands and wives have had several different jobs and made different child-care arrangements, these patterns have varied over time. In particular, child-care arrangements are different than at present, since several families have children old enough to walk the young to school in the morning and to look after them after school before the parents arrive home from first-shift jobs. In dealing with these five tasks, a variety of ties are sometimes used, for example, close kin in connection with contacts from the same village or town, compadre relationships, or more distant kin (i.e., cousins, aunts, and uncles). Thus, the A.’s found their first jobs because the foreman was from their town; their housing was arranged through a woman who knew the husband’s mother. The house had very little heat, and the baby was suffering during the cold winter months, so his sister found them jobs in the study town (30 miles from where they originally located) and found an advertisement in the paper for the flat they eventually rented. The older daughter provided child care at first, and after the family moved the husband and wife worked on different shifts.

Of the 11 Azorean families, only the D.’s came without the aid of kin and have utilized a friendship network in acquiring housing and jobs. They were quite close to Family C., in which we were only able to interview the wife.

TABLE 9.2

Reconstruction of Kin Network in New England

Family	Husband's siblings		Wife's siblings		Husband's parents	Wife's parents	Network	Important friends
	Whereabouts	N	Whereabouts	N				
A.	4	3 brothers in N.E.; 1 sister in same town	4	2 sisters, 1 brother in S. Miguel; 1 sister in Toronto	Parents in study city	Father deceased; mother hoping to immigrate	Husband's siblings and parents	Foreman in first job from home town
D.	4	2 brothers in Canada; 1 brother, 1 sister in Terceira	5	1 brother deceased; 3 brothers, 1 sister in Terceira; 1 sister in Santa Maria	Father deceased; mother in Terceira	Parents deceased	Neither (sister hoping to immigrate)	Neighbors from same town; landlord; American woman upstairs
E.	3	2 brothers, 1 sister in nearby town	3	1 brother in Canada; 2 brothers in S. Miguel	Parents in nearby town	Parents in S. Miguel	Husband's siblings and parents (wife's parents would like to immigrate)	Husband's cousins; landlord is a cousin
F.	6	2 sisters in nearby town; 1 brother in same town; 1 brother 30 miles away; 1 brother 45 miles away; 1 sister in S. Miguel	2	2 sisters 30 miles away	Father deceased; mother just immigrated	Parents deceased	Estranged from his relatives, occasional visiting with her sisters	

G.	1	1 sister in S. Miguel	4	1 sister next door; 1 sister and 1 brother in same town; 1 brother 5 miles away	Father deceased; mother in S. Miguel (lives with sister)	Father deceased; mother in study city (lives with sister)	Wife's siblings and mother	French neighbor; wife's brother's compadre
H.	5	2 sisters, 1 brother in Montreal; 1 sister in Ottawa; 1 sister in S. Miguel	8	1 sister in S. Miguel; 2 brothers, 1 sister 5 miles away; 1 brother upstairs; 1 brother next door; 1 brother 10 miles away; 1 sister in same town	Father deceased; mother in Montreal	Father deceased; mother upstairs	Wife's siblings and mother	Wife works with her cousin's wife; has friends at work
I.	4	1 brother in California; 1 sister 15 miles away; 1 sister, 1 brother, 5 miles away	4	1 sister, 1 brother in S. Jorge; 1 brother in S. Miguel; 1 sister in Canada	Parents deceased	Parents deceased	Husband's siblings	
L.	4	2 brothers deceased; 1 brother in Toronto; 1 sister returned to S. Miguel	5	1 sister in next town; 1 sister 30 miles away; 1 sister 15 miles away; 1 sister 20 miles away; 1 brother 10 miles away	Parents deceased	Father 10 miles away; mother deceased	Wife's siblings	Wife's cousin; wife's compadre in Lisbon

(continued)

TABLE 9.2 (Continued)

Family	Husband's siblings		Wife's siblings		Husband's parents	Wife's parents	Network	Important friends
	N	Whereabouts	N	Whereabouts				
M.	7	1 sister, 2 brothers 30 miles away; 2 sisters in same town; 1 brother deceased; 1 sister in California	4	1 brother in S. Miguel; 2 sisters, 1 brother in Canada	Parents deceased	Parents deceased	Husband's siblings	Husband has close friend at work
N.	3	1 brother, 1 sister in S. Miguel; 1 sister in same town	3	2 brothers, 1 sister 50 miles away	Parents in S. Miguel	Parents 50 miles away	Wife's siblings	
Q.	2	1 brother in S. Miguel; 1 brother 20 miles away	3	1 brother, 1 sister in S. Miguel; 1 brother in same town (married to sis- ter of Mr. N.)	Parents 20 miles away	Parents in S. Miguel	Husband's parents and brother; wife's brother	N.'s and Q.'s socialize a great deal

TABLE 9.3
Role of Kin in Instrumental Activities

Family	Carta de chamada	Initial housing	Husband's first job	Wife's first job	Child care
A.	Parents of husband	Friend of husband's mother	Foreman from home town	Foreman from home town	Older children
D.	Husband arranged papers himself	Friends 50 miles from study city; then friends in study city	Friends	Friends	Azorean neighbors downstairs
E.	Husband's parents	Husband's parents	No information	No information	Husband's mother
F.	Husband's brother	Husband's brother and wife's sister	Husband's sister	Friend	None needed (husband immigrated first, wife and children followed 4 years later)
G.	Wife's mother	Wife's mother	Wife's sister	Sister-in-law (wife's brother's wife)	Wife's sister?
H.	Wife's brother	Wife's mother in house owned by wife's brother	Heard through a friend and went to shop	Wife's brother's wife working there	Wife's mother
I.	Husband's mother, older brother	Husband's brother, shortly after sister	Saw shop on Smith Street; sick and out of work 3 months	Shop on Smith Street	Husband's sister; husband, older daughter
L.	Wife's sister	Wife's second sister	Relative of wife's sister	Landlord (Portuguese)	Wife's cousin (also a compadre)
M.	Husband's brother	Husband's brother 25 miles away	Husband's brother	Portuguese friend	Husband and later day-care center
N.	Wife's father came on work contract; N.'s married, he into her resident status	Wife's parents	Labor contract	Labor contract and second job through husband's sister	Wife's mother
Q.	Husband's parents	Husband's parents		Husband's cousin	Husband's mother

Mrs. D. had a well developed analysis of how difficult it is to rely only on friends:

You can be quite sure that many people are friendless here. People still aren't well prepared to be friends with one another. They come here with little culture. They are used to always being with family. Look, at home I was like this [holding up two fingers together] with my family. We were three sisters, but it was as if we were one. It was the same with my brothers. We lived a very united family [vivíamos assim uma família muita unida]. When we came here, this was very tyrannica, tyrannical, tyranical. It's the most bitter thing about this land. Especially when you are in the hospital. I felt horrible because my illness was pretty serious. The other problems, we can face—with the family together or by talking we can solve them. But the problem of friendships is not solved here. In this country, it isn't easily dealt with.

A family immigrates through relatives, because of the way in which visas are obtained. However, a couple and children are often separated from their initial sponsors in the months and years following immigration. Much of this is due to the vagaries of finding and keeping jobs in the depressed New England economy. Most men and many of the women have experienced repeated layoffs, to say nothing of other job-related problems (sickness, difficulties with coworkers, conflict with a particular boss or supervisor). Siblings and their families tend to become scattered over several towns and cities in New England where there are substantial Portuguese populations. Thus, a couple may move to where another sibling is to get another job or better housing. Or, they may simply strike off on their own because of an opportunity or a connection with a more distant relative (a cousin) or a coworker. As time goes on, both men and women begin to find jobs through other coworkers, through advertisements in the newspapers (often seen by relatives or coworkers), or through unspecified word of mouth, and signs in shop windows. Sometimes husbands will encourage their wives to work in the same firm, especially in jewelry, where both men and women are employed in about equal numbers. Using more diverse sources for job information does not mean that for every family kin ties become irrelevant.

For example, Mrs. G. has held six jobs since the family has been in the United States. Her first job in 1968 was in a shop making billfolds; her brother's wife worked there and got her the job. She was laid off after one year and found a job at a shoe-string factory through a newspaper advertisement. She worked second shift and was laid off after 3 months. Then in 1969 she went to work for a braiding company, owned by a Portuguese man. She found this job through the mother-in-law of the man who put up the money for their transportation to the United States. She worked first shift and left during the fourth month of her pregnancy. She stayed out of work for 2 years while her baby was small. She returned to work in 1972 at a jewelry company, where she packed jewelry on the first shift. Her sister saw the ad in the paper, and this woman's sister-in-law also worked there. She left this job

after she had a hysterectomy and the boss was unsympathetic to her absences due to visits to the doctor.

In 1975 she went to work for another braid company, this time seeing a help-wanted sign on the door. She worked there for 2 years on first shift until an arm infection forced her to quit. Then in 1977, several months later, her husband found her a job at the jewelry shop where he worked. She left the job, which involved gluing jewelry-display casings, because the boss blamed her for work that had not been glued correctly. Throughout this work history we see how Mrs. G. first relied on kin ties in finding a job, but subsequent jobs were found through a variety of means: advertisements, kin of friends, a sister, her husband, and even a help-wanted sign. Kin and other connections within the Portuguese community do not seem to drop out as potential sources of job information, rather, other more impersonal sources are added.

Portuguese families are under a fair amount of financial stress, especially during the first few years in the United States. Husbands and wives are earning low wages, and there are substantial expenses. These begin with paying off the debts incurred for plane fares and continue with furniture and car payments, as well as the weekly expenses of rent, food, and the ever-rising heating bills during the winter months. Portuguese families do not like to be in debt and prefer to pay cash for items. It takes a number of years for a family to be able to buy a house, even in working class areas, where triple-decker frame housing is still relatively inexpensive.

Under these circumstances, considerable tension has developed in some families, and not only are families often physically separated by 30–50 miles but they also have experienced considerable conflict. For example, Mr. F. said of his family (most of whom are in New England):

You know this was a poor family and once this family came to America, money got to their heads. . . . There were several brothers and sisters and we never had any trouble . . . nothing. All married, on good terms with all. But ever since they came over to America it's been hell. . . . Nowadays I don't want to owe any favors to anyone, not because I am rich. It's because I already know what it is to live owing favors to others. I already lived here in America with my brothers as a favor; it was the worst time I ever lived.

Mrs. F., who remained in São Miguel for 4 years while her oldest son was serving in the armed forces and who had just arrived in the United States a few months prior to our interviews, commented on her husband's difficulties during his first 4 years here.

My sister is the one that paid more attention to my husband when he was alone; the others—they are each in their own homes, and we also do the same. . . . My husband was sick for 3 months and they never came to see if he needed a bit of tea.

The H.'s have had difficulties with the wife's relatives rather than with the husband's. Mr. H. commented:

None of my brothers-in-law helped me, not even to look for work. I was the one who looked for a job . . . through a friend who had told me that his shop was looking for people. I went and asked; I didn't get it then, so about a week later I asked again, saying I had been without a job for 6 weeks and I had five children, that I wanted to work, so they gave me a job the same week.

Mrs. H. described the way in which her large family of six siblings and her mother have grown apart since they have migrated to New England:

In principle, we were very much together; one wouldn't go out without the other. The other wouldn't go to one side if the other wouldn't. Now, it's not that way; things are all spoiled—each one goes out when he wants and each one goes where he wants to go. Perhaps because there is jealousy among them. [Among your children too?] No, my children are a family. My children are little ones and don't understand this. [Do you think that your family is more friendly or that of your brothers and sisters?] My brothers and sisters are ultimately very disunited—that is, they speak to each other, but they don't visit each others houses. [Do you think that your family of marriage is more united?] Sometimes yes, sometimes no. [And friends? Are there differences between friends and family?] Well, I am going to speak frankly, I have at times more confidence in friends than in my own family. I do because in my life I'm always trying to do the best for my family and my family now hasn't returned this kindness.

Mr. H. mentioned that he and his wife's brother's family immigrated at the same time and that he loaned his brother-in-law \$400 for the plane tickets. He has not received a dime back, in addition to money he loaned another brother-in-law 10 years before.

But he doesn't pay what he owes me. I've been very unfortunate . . . with my brothers-in-law—to all I lent money.

None of them mention that they still owe him money.

Other families seem to have had a different experience and have remained "united," visiting and exchanging goods and services often. For example, the E.'s, a young couple, visit her brother and family who live in Canada each summer.

We always send the season's greetings dry [without money]. . . . That picture on the wall was a gift from my brother, that big one, and a lot of things are gifts from him and I also give him gifts.

Mr. E.'s parents and two brothers and a sister live about 15 miles from the E.'s, and they visit regularly on weekends. Mrs. E. says,

My brother-in-law showed up here on Friday; we don't have regular days of getting together. Saturday, Sunday, yesterday down there, today all day. . . . You know his brother works the night shift and is at home during the day, and they are trying to finish the house . . . cleaning the yard, cutting grass, because his house has a fireplace and he has a cousin who has some trees and they cut wood for the winter.

They also borrow a car occasionally from one of Mr. E.'s brothers, and another helps with auto repair work.

Mr. M. has two brothers and a sister who live about 25 miles away whom he visits on Sundays with his family of seven children. When asked why he always drove to Green Falls (a pseudonym) on Sundays, Mr. M. replied:

That's where my family is. My brothers and sisters live there. . . . It's always Green Falls. Our place is always Green Falls, from there if we have another place to go, since my brother knows the roads already, we get together and we go places, sometimes three or four cars together, we go to a beach or a place with trees, and we spend the day this way.

Another family that frequently visits are the relatives of Mr. and Mrs. N. Mrs. N.'s parents and married siblings live about 50 miles away, but the N.'s see her parents almost every weekend and have a Sunday meal with them. Either the parents visit them or vice versa. The brother and sister come down for a visit, but not as often as the parents. Mr. N.'s sister is Mrs. Q. The N.'s and Q.'s see each other often, and the N.'s have become quite close to the Q. family.

Every week, starting about a year ago, we used to have dinner in his father's house [Mr. Q.'s]; we four families got together, four couples, his father and mother, he himself, another brother who lives nearby, and we. We are only acquaintances, but we were accepted just as if we were their children. About 3 weeks ago we went for a ride to New Bedford, to a feast, then we ate there and then we went for another ride, far away. Yes, we have a good atmosphere.

When asked if he felt his family of eight siblings was very close, he replied,

Oh yes, very much. Only one of them is a bit different, only one of my sisters. The rest of us are very close except that one. We talk, we get together and everything. . . . We feel closer to the other ones [except this one sister]. That one, ever since she was a kid she has always been different . . . always acting big, and we don't like that. Still she is my sister and we help each other; we always help each other.

In between these patterns are the I.'s. Mr. I.'s family (two married sisters and a married brother) live near the study town, but his wife's family has remained in São Jorge, one of the Azorean islands. When the I.'s first arrived, they stayed first with the brother and then one of the sisters. Mr. I. describes the changes that have taken place in visiting:

We used to visit one another, but lately no, you know, they also have their lives, taking care of things and we can't be always looking for them. Well, on special occasions, then we visit; we exchange visits. . . . They used to come over to the house, and we used to go over there, but for quite some time they stopped doing it. They stopped looking for us and we have been doing the same. . . . We don't know what is the reason. Sometimes it's outsiders, because of a word used in a conversation, they make a big thing out of it. People stop seeing each other and it's a shame seeing families not being as close as they should be.

Mr. I. expressed regret that his family is no longer united:

It's a very different life over there; we always used to visit even during the week and on special days, and even on Sundays we used to all together.

On the other hand, he felt that family members would turn to each other for assistance:

We, that is, we have sought each other; we always talk to each other and we keep in touch, but only a few times because we live far apart. . . . When we have some special need, some great need of anything, they always help us.

In many cases distance and the pattern of family members working different shifts put restrictions on visiting. For example, Mr. G. said,

On the contrary we visit them [his father's sister and family] more than the rest of the family. It's this: my brother-in-law at the time we can visit them, they are not home yet. My other brother-in-law also works from 7 to 7 [night shift all week long]; on Sunday, he lies down resting, so we don't like to disturb them with our presence; so my aunt, we go there from time to time because she also likes to have us there because he has a farm there, not very big. It's a small farm, so we go there.

Mrs. G. also mentioned that she did not visit her brothers and sisters often, because:

I don't visit my family very often because they are not living happily; they haven't married the right people. So everyone keeps to his own house and we do not have problems.

Many of the families are at the stage in their developmental cycle where the parents are beginning to orient themselves to their teenage children, where five to seven children have become the relevant group for leisure-time interaction and where visiting with other families takes more planning and preparation for an "occasion" than it would take for a young couple with only one or two children. Mrs. F. has five children and explains visiting her sisters who live 30 miles away:

We visit my sisters in the morning [on Sunday]. We are seven people and they are seven people [the sister, her husband, and three children, as well as a second sister and her daughter]. We can't show up without them expecting us. Here in America we never run out of food, but when we go there or she comes, I take food and she brings food.

Although she is on good terms with these sisters, she expresses a philosophy of "everyone in their own home," a phrase used by many couples, which is indicative of both a strong ideology of family self-sufficiency in combination with the continuing separation and distance between families, ultimately traceable to the economy, which has scattered families over a 50-mile range and has allowed family members to work different shifts and overtime hours

on Saturday shifts, squeezing visits into a few hours on Sunday. As Mrs. F. said,

Everyone in his own home. The visits are when we can, and if we can't we talk by phone and see if anyone needs anything, that is, here there is not time to visit a lot of people . . . sometimes around feasts. . . . You know I have only been here for a short while. They [the sisters] are also handy [geitosas] meaning that they take care of their lives and I also take care of mine. . . . Sunday is all too short; there isn't much time. . . . If we are going out, instead of going to someone's house, we go instead for a ride.

When asked about visiting other more distant relatives, she commented that it would be a miracle to make so many visits. That could only be done "when we get old and are out of work."

Conclusions

Among these Azorean immigrant families, as among many working class families, primary relatives (i.e., parents, siblings, and their spouses) are important sources of aid and support, especially in the first phases of life in the United States. On the one hand, the history of Portuguese immigration to the United States and the requirements of the 1965 Immigration Act have made it possible for Portuguese families to reconstitute part of their kin networks through a process of chain migration.

On the other hand, the structure of the local economy encourages shift work for couples and, because of layoffs and plant closings, pushes couples to relocate in nearby towns where jobs are available. These factors make it difficult to maintain a kin network of married siblings and parents. Distance and different schedules make visiting and exchange of goods and services more problematic and occasional. Their financial situation and their commitment to self-sufficiency (which includes owning a car, buying a house, and having all the bills paid) means that families are under pressure to maintain an orientation to their own nuclear families and remain "each in his own house." Among the 11 families we interviewed there is considerable variation in the amount of family unity that has been maintained, and it is important to recognize the variety of adaptations, rather than to try and find a generalization for "the Portuguese Family" in general.

In conclusion, it seems more profitable to view conjugal role relationships and kin networks as directly impacted by economic variables rather than as primarily related to each other and only indirectly affected by an economic environment. In this chapter I have shown how a wife's employment has changed the division of labor within the family, but many traditional Azorean patterns are being maintained or at least are not being altered dramatically in the first generation. Furthermore, kin networks are vital in

helping couples solve instrumental problems in the process of immigration, but they too begin to change in the United States context. It is the basic structure of the declining industrial Northeast, rather than the immigrants' assimilation to "American values" or changes in their own attitudes and feelings, that pushes families apart. These findings support the general picture of working class families that views their organization as a response to economic conditions and argues for a complex interrelationship between a local economy and strategic behavior in response to that economy. This more clear delineation of the relationship between family and economy should lead anthropologists away from focusing on how families adapt to an exploration of the kinds of public policies that might change the economic situation of families. Portuguese immigrant families deal daily with low-paying jobs, difficult work conditions, occupationally related health problems, and the pressures of the dual-worker situation. Their own lives might be easier and their goals more reachable if the nature of these industrial jobs were different (pay and conditions better) and if there were more support services available to them (better child care, transportation, and health care). Concrete research oriented to changing public policy around these issues seems to be the next area of fruitful investigation for anthropologists interested in family and kinship in its diverse forms in the United States.

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