Of Mimicry and Men Among We Men:
Adding V.S. Naipaul’s *Miguel Street* and Jamaica Kincaid’s *The Autobiography of My Mother* to Homi Bhabha’s Concept of Mimicry

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In the Caribbean, the Empire of colonization led to a hegemony by the culture and practices of the imperial power of England. The effects of this hegemony included mimicry, when the colonized people adopted the actions of the colonizer, whether these were religious practices, clothes, or even language. In his essay “Of Mimicry and Men,” Homi Bhabha influentially defined mimicry as “one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge” (Bhabha 85). However, upon analyzing two novels, V.S. Naipaul’s *Miguel Street* and Jamaica Kincaid’s *The Autobiography of My Mother*, Bhabha’s model of mimicry becomes incomplete. The concept of mimicry as a whole is more complex than Bhabha’s description of it. He describes two types of mimicry, however he treats them as equals and makes no differentiation between them. Furthermore his idea of mimicry is completely based around British standards and does not consider other standards, which could impose themselves on the identities of the colonized. He also describes mimicry as being subversive, but does not make any mention of the perspective that the mimicry is seen from.

In his article Bhabha describes the presence of two types of mimicry: colonized mimicking colonizer and colonizer mimicking colonized. While the notion itself is not widely contested, many scholars take issue with the way that Bhabha describes these two concepts. Dr. Dimple Godiwala argues in her essay on mimicry that Bhabha’s idea is unfitting because it equalizes the two types. She says that “Bhabha’s theory of mimicry rests on the false assumption that the act of an Englishman such as [Richard] Burton masquerading as an Indian is equivalent
to an Indian mimicking English values and attitudes” (Godiwala 61). By analyzing two characters from The Autobiography of My Mother – Alfred, who mimics the colonizer, and Phillip Bailey, who mimics the colonized – both perspectives can be considered.

Alfred shows signs of mimicry on nearly every front. Even his name is a form of mimicry, for he was named after Alfred the Great, a King of Wessex during the medieval period. While he did not claim this name for himself, it was given to him by his father in order to continue the paternal line of mimicry within the family. Alfred’s father was a Scots-man and he “inherited the ghostly paleness of his own father… and his eyes were gray, like his own father’s eyes, and his hair was red and brown like his father’s also” (Kincaid 49); while this physical resemblance is genetic, it emphasizes the mimicking way Alfred acts. Alfred rejects his mother’s heritage and acts like his father and the colonizing side of his father’s family. His clothes also portray this, as he views his soiled clothes as a burden (Kincaid 4) and his clean clothes signify his social status as a police officer. His title as police officer perpetuates his mimicry and he takes the role of oppressor and an administrator within the system. Jean-Francois Lyotard explains in his essay that “the transmission of knowledge is no longer designed to train an elite capable of guiding the nation towards its emancipation, but to supply the system with players capable of fulfilling their roles as the pragmatic post requires by its institutions” (Lyotard 48). Alfred’s position is meant to stabilize the institutions within the Caribbean, however the institutions are inherently English. He speaks only English and is never depicted speaking his daughter’s preferred patois. Furthermore Alfred is a Methodist and a deacon in his church, signifying that he has adopted the religious practices of the English power. His actions and personality are not just the way he was raised; Xuela clearly states “this walk of my father’s was not natural to my father and his gestures were not natural to him, either. My father had invented
himself, has made himself up as he went along…” (Kincaid 53). Alfred copies every action he makes, nearly erasing his identity.

Philip Bailey is also a character of mimicry; however he removes himself from his English home and situates himself amongst the colonized. He has an obsession with decay and ruin which “made sense, for he came from people who caused so much of it they might have eventually come to feel they could not live without it” (Kincaid 143-144). This proves that Philip’s fascination with ruin is specifically around the ruin that his people have created through colonization. Philip is unhappy in the Caribbean and constantly pines for his previous home in England, but he remains because he has become too obsessed and immersed into the culture. His clothes, much like Alfred’s clothes, signify his mimicry. He wears a shirt that is the color of the sea around Xuela’s island (Kincaid 149) and beige pants that look like the decay he is so fascinated by (Kincaid 152). Philip takes the place of colonizer while he is in Xuela’s room, as he often takes the subordinate role during sex and Xuela actively makes him do every sexual act that she wants (Kincaid 154).

While Alfred and Philip’s mimicry seem to be equalized in every way, from their actions to their clothes, the outcomes of their mimicry are very different. Despite his attempts to mimic, Alfred is still not able to complete the imitation. He is constantly attempting to move up within the social hierarchy and never feels content. He dies a slow and painful death and ultimately ends his life as a man with a copied identity. To him, his life looked wonderful; however to Xuela, and to the reader, his life is sad and filled with desperation to the end. While Philip is also unable to completely mimic the colonized people, his death is not described as painful at all. In fact, he appears to end his days happily with the woman he loves in their home on a mountain. Philip does feel some kind of satisfaction with his situation, as “[Xuela’s] father was less satisfied than
Philip, his position in the [church] group less secure” (Kincaid 139). Simply by being a white male, Philip has a social advantage over Alfred. Even though neither will completely fill the role they want, Philip still has the privilege of being “of the conquering class” (Kincaid 211) and being allowed to choose his position within the colonized society. There is even a physical distinction between the two men as they attempt to mimic, which Xuela describes:

“He [Philip] was about my father’s age, about fifty, but it was not a surprise that he did not look it; my father had had to commit his own crimes against humanity: he wore on his face the number of people to whose early death he had made a sizable contribution, the number of children he had fathered and then ignored, and so on; but by the time Philip was born, all the bad deeds had already been committed; he was an heir, generations of people had died and left him something” (Kincaid 145-164)

It is harder for Alfred, a poor, colonized black man, to reach the status he wants than it is for Philip to remove himself from British society. Furthermore Alfred must commit atrocities against his own people, while Philip simply needs to leave his family and the English countryside he loves. There are extreme differences between the two forms of mimicry that Bhabha equalizes and this differentiation needs to be taken into account before a fully realized definition of mimicry can be made.

Bhabha’s article attempts to be all-encompassing with its portrayal and argument, but the majority of his examples lead us back to mimicry of the British. This is mainly due to the fact that England was the major colonizing power, next to the French. However he does not consider another colonizing power that emerged after World War II: The United States. The influence of this country cannot be ignored and makes an important appearance within V.S. Naipaul’s *Miguel Street*. The male characters in *Miguel Street* attempt to subvert the English mimicry with an
imitation of American standards of masculinity; however the two standards conflict with each other and ultimately leads to the demise of each character.

The English standards that the colonized are expected to fulfill can be seen in the character Alfred, who has already been revealed as the essence of British mimicry. The standards are that one must be English speaking, well-groomed, wealthy, occupied (preferably in a position of power), and married. Next we look at the American standards, which are set out in *Miguel Street* through the American icon of Humphrey Bogart. The narrator states in the first few paragraphs of the book “I don’t know if you remember the year the film *Casablanca* was made. That was the year when Bogart’s fame spread like fire through the Port of Spain and hundreds of young men began adopting the Bogartian attitude” (Naipaul 9). This *Bogartian attitude* describes a tough, selfish, hard-drinking man who bends the law for his benefit. Unlike the English counterpart, a Bogartian man has flings with women, but no wife or even consistent girlfriend; however this man does have female troubles (just as Rick is still heart sick over the sudden departure of his girlfriend, Ilsa) which he keeps hidden beneath a stoic mask of virility.

*Casablanca* came out in the year of 1942, right when the United States entered World War II to help the crippled superpower of England. England’s domination is nearly destroyed in WWII and the United States emerged as the new superpower. The men of *Miguel Street* are attracted to it because it is new and covers up the previous dominant power they had come to reject. Furthermore the United States is a former colony of England, but gained its independence and rose to supremacy, something the colonies in the Caribbean were never able to do; therefore one can understand the appeal of such a power to the colonized men.

The character of Bogart in *Miguel Street* is meant to personify exactly what this Bogartian attitude is. Like his namesake, Bogart is known to look “bored and superior” (Naipaul
9), much like the character Rick. He was a tailor by trade, but the narrator insists he “cannot remember him making a suit” (Naipaul 10). Bogart has an occupation, thus filling the English standard, however his American side doesn’t want to live in such a mundane trade. He never took women up to his room, therefore remaining isolated like Rick and not taking a wife. He even has a picture of Lauren Bacall in his room (who starred with Humphrey Bogart in the film *The Big Sleep*). Overtime Bogart begins to act more and more American. The narrator says at one point “they [the men of *Miguel Street*] had never seen Bogart drink so much; they had never heard him talk so much…His mouth was a little twisted, and his accent was getting slightly American” (Naipaul 12). The men are alarmed by this sudden change, because, despite the fact that they all want to uphold these Americanized standards, Bogart is also completely ignoring the English standards that are still engrained in them all. At one point Bogart even makes friends with some Americans who hang out on Miguel Street at George’s brothel, while the other male characters were disgusted by them (though their disgust comes from a breach of privacy, as opposed to their actions). The other characters are still very attracted to the United States and Bogart, despite everything. They are only intimidated by Bogart’s disregard for English standards. In the end, Bogart runs away from a woman he had impregnated and Hat, the judge of correct behavior on the streets, says he did it “to be a man among we men” (Naipaul 14). Though the characters are still scared of what Bogart has become, they still endorse the *Bogartian attitude* and say that Bogart was justified in his actions. Bogart ran away from the position of father and husband, a position that is necessary according to English values.

The next character Popo exemplifies everything the Bogartian standards demands, but some the point of view of someone who cannot meet them – as opposed to Bogart, who demonstrates everything Bogartian. Popo has the title of carpenter, yet he relies on his wife to
support him. Hat states “Popo is a man-woman. Not a proper man” (Naipaul 17). Popo mimics the English standards by holding a title and wife, however this is deemed unacceptable by the bachelor men of Miguel Street. It is not until Popo’s wife leaves him that “Popo found himself then a popular man.” (Naipaul 18) and the men of Miguel Street accept him. Now that Popo is without a wife, he is filling the Bogartian standard of having women troubles. Popo heightens in status when he goes and beats up the man who took his wife away. For the men of Miguel Street, this action shows his sexual dominance. It is the mimicry that drives Popo crazy, because he must get back his wife to fill the English standard, but he must hurt the man who took her to fill the Bogartian standard. Popo then loses his status when he brings his wife back to Miguel Street, because he reverts back to being un-Bogartian. It is not until Popo is revealed to be a thief that he is accepted again. Popo “came back [from jail] a hero. He was one of the boys. He was a better man than either Hat of Bogart” (Naipaul 21), because bending the law was considered Bogartian.

George, like the character of Popo, is not a member of the Miguel Street gang. This is because “like Popo, George was happy to let his wife do all the work in the house and the yard” (Naipaul 22), therefore he does not fill the standard of being self-sustaining. Unlike Popo, however, the gang never accepts George, no matter what he does. George is meant to personify a failure of British mimicry. All of the characters, even Bogart, mimic the British in one way or another, whether it is through an occupational title or a wife. But George has no title, and though George has a wife, he beats her constantly and steps out of the acceptable standards of British mimicry. This beating is even one of the reasons that the men of Miguel Street do not accept George. After the death of George’s wife, the man all speculate that it was George’s beating that did it and “not one of the men said a word for George” (Naipaul 25). Why do the men of Miguel
Street ostracize George for mistreating his wife? They all treat their women cruelly, whether through ignoring them or leaving them. George’s actions are harsher, but the men of Miguel Street are no standards for feminine equality. George, as he deviates from societal norms, is meant to show what can happen when the mimicry cannot be met. The men of Miguel Street are more interested in mimicking and being socially acceptable. George is the personification of their possible failure, therefore they exclude him and ignore him.

The character of Hat is considered the judge of behavior amongst the men of Miguel Street. He is present in every chapter, whether as an active character or just as the voice of masculine standards. For example in the chapter on Popo his only lines are him stating whether or not Popo is a man. Looking at this, Hat appears to be the expert on the Bogartian attitude, or on what is manly and what isn’t. However, through the penultimate chapter of the book, we learn the true story behind Hat.

Hat is a complete hybridization of both the English and American standards. In the first paragraph of his chapter the narrator states:

Hat loved to make a mystery of the smallest things. His relationship to Boyee and Errol, for instance. He told strangers they were illegitimate children of his. Sometimes he said he wasn’t sure they were his at all, and would spin a fantastic story about some woman both he and Edward lived with at the same time. Sometimes again, we would make out that they were his sons by an early marriage, and you felt you could cry when you heard Hat tell how the boys’ mother had gathered them around her death-bed and made them promise to be good (Naipaul 154).
This ambiguity is Hat’s attempt to mimic both of those standards. He wants to mimic Bogart and have his unimportant flings, but he also wants to mimic the Englishman and have had a loving wife. Hat is also known for his love of cricket, a British sport, and the narrator recounts how Hat used to take all the boys to cricket matches. Hat has no problem with bending the law and often gets in trouble for very Bogartian actions, like “a little cockfighting here, some gambling there, a little drinking somewhere else and so on” (Naipaul 157-158). Like Bogart, Hat gets in scrapes with the law, but it’s never anything he can’t handle. Hat is even friends with the law and is said to enjoy a drink with Sergeant Charles every Christmas. Rick also is friendly with the law, as seen through his relationship with the Captain of the Police, Louis Renault. However Hat is slightly resistant to the American mimicry as well, which can be seen when he fears for the character Bogart when he starts acting too American. Hat is simultaneously trying to mimic and resist both standards.

Hat changes dramatically when his scrapes with the law get too big. He breaks the law to be wealthier, a standard of British values. However the only way he knows to do this is by breaking the law, thus mimicking Humphrey Bogart. Hat also brings a woman, Dolly, into his life. While this looks to be his attempt at mimicking the British by filing the role of husband, Hat still mimics Humphrey Bogart as well. He ignores Dolly constantly and doesn’t seem to care for her much, similar to the way Rick treats the character Yvonne in Casablanca. This hybridization can further be seen in the origin of Hat’s name. He was named such because of his resemblance to another cultural icon: Rex Harrison (specifically he is named Hat because he wore a hat much like Rex Harrison’s). According to the narrator, Hat was “in appearance… like Rex Harrison. He was dark-brown in complexion, of medium height medium build. He had a slightly bow-legged walk and he had flat feet” (Naipaul 160). Rex Harrison was a famous Hollywood actor, like
Humphrey Bogart, but was different in one specific way: he was British. He was famous in the United States as being the essence of British manners and culture and performed in various Hollywood films. Hat is basing his whole demeanor off of a British actor; however, like Rex Harrington, he thrives in the American setting. In this way, Hat cannot choose between the two ideals. He wants to mimic the British gentleman but also the American ruffian.

Through Hat the narrator exposes the effects that American and English standards have on the men of *Miguel Street*. Neither standard can be met while the other is trying to be achieved. In this way even the voice of correct behavior on the street, Hat, is a failure. The standards that have held up the entire book are based on a shaky platform. When Hat’s failures surface, the rest of the characters who held his ideals are revealed to be immature recreations of an ideology that is flawed. As Aaron Eastley writes in his essay, “they are, in fact, a lot like children who want to be something important when they grow up” (Eastley). The narrator ends the section stating “when Hat went to jail, part of me had died” (Naipaul 165). This death he refers to is the death of the entire concept of masculinity that the narrator has been raised on. It is after this chapter that we learn the narrator’s story and begin to see his resistance to mimicry as a whole.

Bhabha states that mimicry, though definitely used as a tool to subjugate an oppressed people, is subversive in nature. Because the colonized people can’t ever fully achieve the imitation, Bhabha declares that mimicry “poses an imminent threat to both ‘normalized’ knowledges and disciplinary powers” (Bhabha 86). This concept of subversive mimicry is contested by many scholars, including Dr. Godiwal, who asks “how can this act of mimicry pose as a threat to normalized knowledges when it, in effect, seeks to replicate them as faithfully as possible?” (Godiwala 65). In the novel *The Autobiography of My Mother* it is not the acts of
mimicry that pose a threat to normalized behavior; it is the characters who do not mimic and the perspective that the mimicry is viewed from that subvert.

The first character in who fails to mimic is Xuela’s half-brother, Alfred II. His first failure at mimicry is his appearance. While his father looks like his own white father, Alfred II looks more like his own black mother. And while Alfred and the mother attempt to make Alfred II like his father in every way, including walk, dress, and personality, Alfred II fails. He is described as “eleven years old or so, wearing a white linen suit, a direct copy of his father’s; so thin, so pale; his black hair, which was the same as his mother’s, forced down straight against his scalp; his gait awkward, unsteady, as if he had only just mastered the ability to use his feet” (Kincaid 54). Though he tries to mimic, he cannot. Alfred II’s final act of failure is his death, when he can no longer mimic his living father and succumbs to a terrible disease. The disease that he dies from is most likely AIDS (the disease Kincaid’s actual brother dies of) which was notorious for afflicting black men. While AIDS did not differentiate between races, the disease’s bad reputation labels Alfred II as a poor, black man – not the rich, almost-white man he was trying to be. Even though Alfred II attempts to mimic, his body ultimately rejects it and this leads to the metaphorical death of his identity and the literal death of his body. Kincaid makes Alfred II a heartbreaking character – Xuela herself often says she pities him – and to show the effects that normalized standards can have on those who cannot fill them. It is because of Alfred II’s failure to mimic and Xuela’s perspective of him as tragic that the reader sees how ridiculous the standards are.

The second character that fails to mimic the British standards is Xuela herself. Unlike Alfred II, Xuela does not fail because she cannot mimic, but because she refuses to mimic. Xuela resists the love of Ma Eunice, who is a surrogate mother, like the surrogate motherland of
England; Xuela says her milk “tasted sour and I would not drink it” (Kincaid 5). Xuela also refuses to say she is sorry when she breaks Ma Eunice’s plate of the English countryside. Much like the sourness of Ma Eunice’s milk, Xuela’s body has another adverse reaction to mimicry when the uniform that she wears to school – “a green skirt and beige blouse, a uniform, its colors and style mimicking the colors and style of a school somewhere else, somewhere far away” (Kincaid 12) – gives her blisters.

Xuela continues to resist into her adult years when she decides to never have children. Her decision is not only to resist the English standardized role of housewife, but also to end the line of mimicry in her family. As stated above, Alfred attempts to continue the mimicry through his son Alfred II. Xuela is also a part of a mimicry coming from her mother’s side; for example she has her mother’s name. As Louise Bernard points out in her essay, “Xuela’s dead mother… is also abandoned, given up to an orphanage, thus adding another link to the matrilineal chain of separation and longing” (Bernard 121). Xuela is doomed to mimic her mother, just as Alfred II is doomed to mimic his father. Xuela’s decision directly contradicts the decision of her father. Alfred was born of a Scots-man and an African woman, but is stated as having chosen “the ease of the victor” (Kincaid 186), or his father’s side. Xuela choses the side of her mother, a native of the Caribbean people. Alfred decides to continue the family line of a fertile, prosperous people, while Xuela decides to end the line of a nearly extinct people.

Xuela also shows a resistance to her name throughout the story, as she never uses it. It is only mentioned once throughout the story and comes within quotation marks, as if someone else is saying it. The name is never mentioned again, showing her dislike of it and her desire to be separate from it. Kincaid also emphasizes on mimicry with name through the character of Alfred and Alfred II. It should be noted that “Kincaid writes in one of her essays ‘To Name is to
Possess’ about the early conquistadors and their desire to lay claim to the natural beauty and resources of the lands they invaded” (Bernard 114). Kincaid’s own view of names as possessive titles transfers into *The Autobiography of My Mother* through Xuela’s preference to not use her name. Even Kincaid herself is known for this resistance to nomenclature, as she “changed her name from Elaine Potter Richardson to Jamaica Kincaid in order to forge a literary persona removed from her past and her relationship with her family…” (Bernard 119). This could also explain Xuela’s willingness to marry a white man that she did not love. While this could be construed as a type of mimicry, it is really a way for Xuela to escape her mimicking family and to take a new name. Xuela’s life as an adult resists British influence in every way. She does get married, but never becomes a mother; she refuses to go to church and she insists that she saw a fantastical scene that cannot be explained through “normative” British logic; she takes on lovers and is unfaithful to her husband, and even participates in the taboo act of self-love.

Because the story is from Xuela’s point of view, the reader sees Alfred II as tragic for being forced to fill roles and sees Xuela as heroic for refusing to fill them. Furthermore Xuela states at one point that to her father “his life [of mimicry], of course, looked splendid to him” (Kincaid 210). From Alfred’s perspective, the life he led and the mimicry he performed are not subversive. However to Xuela, his life was simply one that caused pain in others. It is because of Xuela’s perspective of her father that we see the absurdity of the normalized standards.

In Naipaul’s *Miguel Street* there is one character that continuously resists the mimicry that is being forced on him: Uncle Bhakcu. He does not have a title that is given to him by the people of the street or a sign that the narrator makes; he is a self-proclaimed mechanic. He constantly disagrees with Hat – the essence of both English and American mimicry – therefore showing his resistance to both forms of mimicry. It is directly stated that Bhakcu is not a member
of the Miguel Street gang and that “the men of the street didn’t like Bhakcu because they considered him a nuisance” (Naipaul 122). The only thing that Bhakcu seems to have in common with other characters is in the fact that he beats his wife, like George. However George beats his wife because he has failed as a mimicker, while Bhakcu beats his wife because she pushes him into mimicking. This does not excuse Bhakcu’s actions, but we must consider the reasons that he beats his wife. The first is because his wife sticks up for him against Mrs. Morgan, who mocks him. Mrs. Bhakcu says to him “you is my husband, and I have to stand up for you” (Naipaul 118), however she is really defending him from Mrs. Morgan’s insults because she knows them to be true. Uncle Bhakcu beats her because she considers him inadequate.

The second scene where Bhakcu beats him wife is right after she makes him buy the lorry so he can take up a profession in cargo transportation, thus mimicking the British standard. However Bhakcu does not want to have a legitimized profession; he only wants to fix cars, which he even does to the perfectly good lorry. He smiles when his clothes get dirty after fixing cars, saying “mechanical people like me ain’t got time for clean clothes” (Naipaul 116). This directly contrasts the character of Alfred in The Autobiography of My Mother, who wears his clean clothes as a mimicking mask. But when Mrs. Bhakcu forces him to fill an acceptable role, such a cargo driver or taxi driver, Bhakcu retaliated and beats her. More importantly he beats her with a cricket bat. At first this can be construed as Bhakcu taking the place of colonizer and beating down his wife (who takes the place of the colonized) with British culture. However, considering the fact that Mrs. Bhakcu is forcing the mimicry, is could be construed another way. Mrs. Bhakcu is the colonizer and Bhakcu is the colonized who is beating back against the oppression of mimicry. The fact that he uses a cricket bat is simply ironic.
Bhakcu also continually sings songs from *Ramayana*, a Hindu text. This is his declaration of his heritage and his identity. While the other male characters focus on English and American actors and cinema, Bhakcu clings to his Indian roots. The haunting scene of Mr. Bhakcu beating his wife while singing the *Ramayana* completes this image of resistance. He beats back the mimicry while singing the song of his people. In the end, Bhakcu is the only character that ends happily. He becomes a pundit, or an expert in Hindu teachings and “he still tinkered with his car. He had to stop beating Mrs. Bhakcu with the cricket bat, but he was happy” (Naipaul 127). His new position as pundit has to do with his own heritage and he never feels like he is mimicking again. The character of Bhakcu gives us our first glimpse at a truly subversive character within a story of mimicking characters.

As with *The Autobiography of My Mother*, the subversive nature of mimicry is based off of the perspective that the story is told from. The boy narrator feels closest to the character Uncle Bhakcu, thus making him a heroic character in the reader’s eyes. Furthermore the boy feels disconnected from Popo after he starts mimicking and always feels disconnected from Bogart, who mimics. He feels a great connection to Hat, however the connection goes away when Hat starts to go Bogart and break the law. Like the characters of Alfred II and Xuela, Uncle Bhakcu and the narrator of Miguel Street are resistant to the mimicry around them. It is important to note that all of the characters that do not mimic are children, excluding Uncle Bhakcu, who still holds distinct child-like characteristics – such as tinkering with the cars and never holding an occupational sign. Popo is another character who tries to resist the mimicry as best he can and his name is actually a term of endearment for a child. Strongman writes in his essay “the child protagonist’s critical stance towards the developmentalist aims and mimetic efforts of its education is allegorical of their island’s desire for cultural independence from colonial ideologies
and political rule” (Strongman 86). The character who attempt to be men are actually child-like underneath, while the child characters are the ones who hold their identity within the mimicking setting. It is from this child’s perspective that the mimicry looks unattainable and ridiculous; only then is it subversive.

Through examining the mimicry in Kincaid’s *The Autobiography of My Mother* and Naipaul’s *Miguel Street*, we find that Homi Bhabha’s model of mimicry is not fully realized and that the actual concept of mimicry is far more complex. Bhabha states that there are two forms of mimicry, however he treats them as equal concepts instead of two separate ideas. Alfred’s mimicry, though very similar to Philip’s mimicry, requires different actions and has different outcomes. Furthermore Bhabha’s concept of mimicry only focuses on one colonial power (England) and does not consider the presence of two colonial powers and the effects that mimicking both ideologies could have on the mimickers. Bhabha also argues that mimicry is subversive, but does not specify that perspective has an impact on whether or not the mimicry is subversive. It is through the perspective of child (-like) characters that resist the mimicry that the subversive nature of mimicry comes out. While Bhabha began the discussion, his ideas should continue to be added to and contested with evidence from post-colonial writers so that we can create a more realistic concept of mimicry.
Work Cited


