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Haitian Americans

Introduction

On January 12th, 2010, a 7.0 earthquake devastated Port-au-Prince, Leogane and other parts of Haiti. This natural disaster claimed more than 230,000 lives and left more than 1 million Haitians homeless. As Americans watched horrifying images of devastation, death and destruction, Haitian Americans in Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, Florida, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, New York and Chicago, Illinois tried to contact their loved ones. Many people around the world wondered whether or not Haiti, a country with a long, turbulent history was cursed, as the Reverend Pat Robertson stated on his show called the 700 Club; doomed to permanent poverty, governmental inefficiency and misery. But other Haitian Americans returned to their homeland determined to contribute to earthquake relief and begin the long process of rebuilding and reshaping Haiti; a Haiti with a sustainable future. Many of those same Haitian Americans are glad that they are American citizens and can use their status in the United States as a way to help rebuild Haiti. This Haitian presence in the United States is not a recent migratory phenomenon, which occurred during a larger wave of immigration to the United States from Africa, Asia and Latin America in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, but is part of a larger trend which dates back to the inception of the United States as a country.

Although many Haitians left their home country during periods of intense political and economic turmoil, they have persevered and flourished in the United States despite encounters with prejudice and racism. Haitian Americans have overcome these obstacles by leaning on varied aspects of their culture which make them a distinct ethnic group in the United States. Haitian Americans have gained employment in all sectors of American society, created institutions which connect them to each other across the United States as well as to their kin in their homeland. Haitians also wield significant political power in cities like Boston and Miami due to their strong civic and electoral participation. As President Obama mentioned in a 2009 statement about the significance of Haitian Flag Day (May 18th), Haitian Americans contribute to the economic, social, cultural, scientific and academic fabric of the United States. Haitian Americans are also involved in shaping the future of Haiti through contributions to their kin and through social and political organizations that attempt to stem the crisis which predated the January 12th, 2010 earthquake.

As the 21st century continues, the relationship between Haiti and the United States will be largely determined by the ability of the current administration of Haiti (the Préval administration) to execute some important programs that will help rebuild Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake. Additionally, the assistance of the United States and the international community in supporting the Préval administration in rebuilding efforts, the cooperation and expertise of Haitian Americans in the execution and support of Haiti. Indeed, it is the hope of Haitians in the United States that the nation of Haiti will be rebuilt and Haitians, regardless of geographical location, will obtain respect, dignity and justice among the other nations of the world.

Chronology

1779 – Freedmen from the French colony of Saint Domingue (colonial Haiti) fight at the Siege of Savannah.
1779 – Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable migrates from Saint Domingue and founds the city of Chicago.
1804 – Haitian Independence occurs as the result of a series of victories by revolting slaves over the French.
1822 – Haiti invades the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo (today's Dominican Republic) and unifies the island under Haitian rule.
1838 – France recognizes Haiti's independence after ignoring its independence since 1804.
1862 – President Abraham Lincoln grants Haiti formal diplomatic recognition.
1889 – Frederick Douglass is appointed U.S. Minister and Consul General to Haiti.
1915 – Haiti is invaded and occupied by United States Marines.
1934 – The nineteen year U.S. occupation of Haiti ends.
1957 – Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier is elected President of Haiti.
1971 – Francois Duvalier dies and is succeeded by his son, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier.
1986 – Baby Doc flees Haiti on February 7th in an American chartered jet and takes up exile in France.
1990 – Jean-Bertrand Aristide is elected President of Haiti in mid-December.
1991 – Jean-Bertrand Aristide is deposed in a military coup d'etat in late September. Aristide goes into exile in the United States.
1994 – Aristide is restored to office of the Presidency following a multi-national military intervention in September sanctioned by the United Nations and led by the United States
1996 – Aristide completes his five-year term in office on February 7th and is succeeded by Rene Préval, who was elected in December 1995.
1999-2000 – Haitian-Americans are elected to state legislatures in Florida and Massachusetts and to key municipal posts in South Florida.
2001 – Aristide is elected President of Haiti for the second time and succeeds Préval.
2004 – Haitians around the world celebrate Haiti's 200 anniversary of independence.
2004 – In early February, Aristide is coerced into leaving Haiti after an armed insurgency erupted in the port city of Gonaïves.
2006 – René Préval is elected President of Haiti in May as part of new political party called *Lespwa* (Hope) (Trinity College Haiti Program 2003).
2010 – 7.0 earthquake destroyed parts of Haiti, claimed over 230,000 lives and left more than a million Haitians homeless.

I BACKGROUND

Geography

Haitians come from an island in the Caribbean which is 27,750 square kilometers; roughly the size of the state of Maryland. "Present-day Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola (Zéphir 2004, 1)." The other two-thirds of the island is the Dominican Republic. To the north, Haiti is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean; in the south by the Caribbean Sea; in the east the Dominican Republic; and to the west is the Windward Passage, which separates Haiti from the island nation of Cuba. There are also two small islands that are a part of Haiti. La Gonâve is the larger of these two islands and is located in the west. The island of La Tortue is in the north. "La Tortue is of historical significance because it is the location where the first French settlers established themselves around 1640 to prey on passing Spanish galleon traffic crossing the Caribbean channel on their way to Sevilla with their treasures. The island of Hispaniola is the second largest island in the Greater Antilles after Cuba which has an area of 110,860 square kilometers (Zéphir 2004, 2)."

The terrain of Haiti is covered with rugged mountains, small coastal plains and river valleys. Haiti also has a large east-central elevated plateau. Haiti's climate is warm and semiarid throughout the year but one also finds high humidity in many of Haiti's coastal areas. The Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) Factbook notes as of July 2009 that there are approximately 9 million (9,035, 536) inhabitants in the country of Haiti.

History

"Haiti" is derived from the word "Ayti" which means "mountainous" and comes from the language of the indigenous people of the island. On December 5th, 1492, Christopher Columbus encountered the Tainos, a branch of the Amerindian people called Arawaks (Zéphir 2004, 1)." Columbus called the island Hispaniola (Little Spain). Hispaniola's Taino population ranged between 300,000 to 1 million people. While Columbus consolidated the first permanent European settlement in the Americas, Tainos were enslaved and forced to cultivate crops and prospect and extract gold from rivers, streams and mines. As a way to ease Tainos into enslavement, they were forced to convert to Catholicism in addition to physical and psychological violence. In response to their enslavement, many Tainos committed suicide, rebelled and escaped to the mountains of the island they called Quisqueya. The Tainos also had no natural immunity against diseases carried by Europeans, such as smallpox, tuberculosis, typhus and influenza. Consequently, by the middle of the sixteenth century, only a few hundred indigenous people remained on the entire island.

After the indigenous population of Hispaniola was decimated, the Spanish brought in Africans, who were considered stronger workers than indigenous people, to replenish their labor supply. Africans were used as the next source of forced labor in Hispaniola and arrived on the island as early as 1501. Soon enslaved Africans and indentured servants were used throughout the colony to work on plantations. After time, the Spanish

shifted their attention to their gold and silver-rich colonies of Cuba, Mexico and Peru so much so that by the end of the sixteenth century large tracts of land in the western part of Hispaniola had been abandoned and taken over by European marauders. Many of them were of French origin and began to settle and cultivate vacant lands. In 1697, the Treaty of Ryswick ceded the western third of the island to France later known as the French colony of Saint Domingue.

In the 1780s, Saint Domingue was an object of international renown and in the words of one scholar, 'the most fruitful and pleasant of Europe's Caribbean colonies (Geggus 1982, 12)'. At that time, Saint Domingue was also referred to as "the pearl of the Antilles" because of the wealth it generated for European planters and the French merchant bourgeoisie. The plantations produced coffee, sugar, tobacco and indigo. At one point in its history Saint Domingue also produced about two-fifths of the world's sugar and over half of the world's coffee.

Africans who survived the rigors of the passage from Africa to Saint Domingue were sold as chattel destined for life as a slave. Once they reached a plantation, diverse West Africans, such as Aradas, Congos, Bambaras and Ibos, were assigned slave tutors who showed them how to perform different tasks necessary for the production of commodities that would eventually be consumed in Europe and throughout the world. Le Code Noir (The Black Code) prescribed baptism and instruction in the Catholic religion for all enslaved Africans and deemed assemblies of enslaved Africans for purposes other than Catholic worship as illegal (Simpson 1945).

The disciplining of Africans to turn them into plantation laborers came in the forms of psychological and physical violence. It was not uncommon for planters and overseers, for example, to:

> Hang a slave by the ears, mutilate a leg, pull teeth out, gash open one's side and pour melted lard into the incision, or mutilate genital organs. Still others used the torture of live burial, whereby the slave, in the presence of the rest of the slaves who were forced to bear witness, was made to dig his own grave...Women had their sexual parts burned by a smoldering log; others had hot wax splattered over hands, arms, and backs, or boiling cane syrup poured over their heads (Dupuy 1989, 39).

The physical brutality and mutilation of African peoples on plantations in Saint Domingue was an important part of the process which made them slaves. Without these violent mechanisms of labor control, it would have been extremely difficult for the interests of commodity production to coerce Africans into their roles as plantation laborers. Africans' positions as slaves within sugar plantations were concretized by poor housing, diets which underfed and undernourished them, and the rule of the planters to control and restrict slave behavior.

This whole complex, which intended to extract the greatest amount of labor from slaves, had deleterious effects on Saint Domingue's slave population. In her study of the Saint

Domingue revolution, Carolyn Fick used Hilliard d'Auberteuil's observations of Saint Domingue at that time to illustrate the deadly consequences of slave labor in this French colony. Hilliard d'Auberteuil noted during the years from 1680 to 1776 that over 800,000 Africans had been imported from Africa to Saint Domingue. By the end of that period there were only 290,000 Africans (Fick 1989, 26). These figures demonstrate that Africans were not reproducing themselves quickly enough in Saint Domingue as a result of the effects of the process of slave-making and the physical demands of plantation labor. Over one-third of the Africans brought over to Saint Domingue usually died off in the first few years as a result of arduous labor processes and the accompanying violence that maintained them (Fick 1989, 26).

Besides death and the production of commodities for world consumption, a religion was created on the plantations of Saint Domingue between 1750 and 1790 as the result of the combination of French authority, the culture of the indigenous people of Hispaniola and the enslavement of assorted Africans on plantations in Saint Domingue: Vodou. Vodou is the Fongbe (Benin) term for "spirit" or "god". Some scholars view Vodou as only "a genre of ritual music and dance performed in honor of a category of spirit" and tend not to view Vodou as a belief system (Richman 2005). Others view Vodou to stand for all African-derived religious practices in Haiti (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 2003, 102). Most scholars of Vodou would agree that it is the most maligned and misunderstood of all African-inspired religions in the Americas and one of the most complex religions in the region. Vodou liturgy and rituals revolve around a pantheon of spirits known as *lwa* (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 2003, 102). *Lwa* represent a fusion of African and Creole gods, the spirits of deified ancestors and syncretized manifestations of Catholic saints and can be thought of as supernatural beings that possess its adherents (Richman 2005).

Vodou served an important role in the eventual struggle for liberation that transformed Saint Domingue into Haiti. As one author writes, Haiti could not have become an independent nation as early as the nineteenth century without Vodou because its rituals provided the spirit of kinship that fueled the slaves' revolts against their colonial masters (Desmangles 1992, 6). An example of how Vodou provided a spirit of kinship among enslaved Africans in Saint Domingue was the *Bwa Kayiman* Vodou Congress led by Boukman, a maroon born in Jamaica who escaped from a plantation near Morne Rouge. C.L.R. James (1963) notes the importance of this historical moment in a stirring narrative that has also been noted by other scholars of Haiti:

> On the night of the 22nd (August 1791) a tropical storm raged, with lightning and gusts of wind and heavy showers of rain. Carrying torches to light their way, the leaders of the revolt met in an open space in the thick forests of the Morne Rouge, a mountain overlooking Le Cap. There Boukman gave the last instructions and, after Vodou incantations and the sucking of the blood of a stuck pig, he stimulated his followers by a prayer spoken in creole, which, like so much spoken on such occasions, has remained. "The god who created the sun which gives us light, who rouses the waves and rules the storm, though hidden in the clouds, he watches us. He sees all that the white man does. The god of the white man inspires us with crime, but our god calls upon us to do good works. Our god who

> is good to us orders us to revenge out wrongs. He will direct our arms and aid us. Throw away the symbol of the god of the whites who has caused us to weep, and listen to the voices of liberty, which speaks in the hearts of us all (James 1963, 87)."

Six days later, led by Boukman, slaves of the Turpin plantation indiscriminately massacred every white man, woman and child they could (Simpson 1945). This began a general insurrection which led to the Haitian Revolution, the first successful slave revolt in the Western Hemisphere that extended the "rights of Man" – liberty, equality and brotherhood – beyond French males to the emancipated Black and Mulatto peoples of Haiti.

As some scholars note, there were a number of reasons why the Haitian Revolution was a success. " The French Revolution weakened and divided the French in France and in Saint Domingue; the conflicts between free mulattoes and whites intensified; and Britain and Spain, the other colonial powers of the time, intervened to further their own interests. But above all else it was the role played by blacks that made the Haitian Revolution successful. During the war, the slaves defeated local whites, the forces of the French Crown, a Spanish and a British invasion and the massive expeditionary force sent by Napoleon Bonaparte (Arthur and Dash 1999, 19-20)." Toussaint Louverture rose to become the leader of the black armies and deserves credit for many of the military victories which led to the freeing of black slaves. Through the course of the Haitian Revolution, Toussaint united rebellious slaves into an efficient fighting force, invented guerilla warfare and skillfully exploited the rivalries between all the other main players in the conflict (Arthur and Dash 1999, 20).

In 1802, Toussaint was taken prisoner by the French forces sent by Napoleon Bonaparte to restore slavery and French rule in Saint Domingue. "When he was put aboard a ship that would take him to his death in a dungeon in France, Toussaint uttered these prophetic words, "In overthrowing me, you have cut down only the tree of liberty in Saint Domingue. It will spring up again from the roots for they are numerous and deep (Arthur and Dash 1999, 20)."" Less than a year later, Jean-Jacques Dessalines united the black and mulatto forces and started a campaign against the French. In a decisive battle during the Haitian Revolution, Dessalines and his forces defeated the French at the Battle of Vertières. As a result the last French regiments withdrew from the island. The Haitian Revolution ended with independence declared on January 1st, 1804 and the world's first Black republic used the Taino term "Ayti (Haiti meaning "mountainous")" as the name for a new nation of slaves who emancipated themselves.

After the Haitian Revolution, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, governor-general-for-life and later emperor of Haiti, ordered the slaughter of the remaining French on the island. After he consolidated his power, Dessalines was faced with the task of building a new nation in the aftermath of a violent revolution which decimated the country. "The colonial powers operating within the region were openly hostile to the world's first black republic, and for several decades there was a constant threat of invasion. The plantations, on which the economic prosperity of the French colony had been based, were in ruins, and many towns

had been razed to the ground (Arthur and Dash 1999, 45)." In addition to capital and labor shortages, many of the white planters fled the country and war and disease reduced the population on the island to about a third of its original size.

Among the Haitians who survived the revolution, two distinct and separate views of what the new society was going to look like divided the fledging nation along color lines and the ownership of land. The mulattoes, fair skinned Blacks of African, European and Indigenous descent, were a small but powerful minority that consisted of free men and property owners before the revolution. They planned on inheriting the power and wealth of the defeated French colonists. The black ex-slaves, who formed the majority of the country, resisted the plantation system and hoped to farm their own land. "During the early decades of independence, the interplay between blacks and mulattoes and ideologically divided groups determined the economic, social and political foundations of modern-day Haiti (Arthur and Dash 1999, 45)."

"Under Dessalines a large portion of cultivated land was brought under state control, and he planned to continue with Toussaint's attempts to revive large-scale agriculture as a way to sustain the nascent nation. But less than three years into his leadership, Dessalines was assassinated (October 17th, 1806) as the result of a power struggle which was linked to ownership of agricultural land and tensions between blacks and mulattoes (Arthur and Dash 1999, 45)."

After the assassination of Dessalines, Haiti split into two separate entities. Henri Christophe was Dessalines' successor and controlled Blacks in the North. Alexandre Pétion controlled the Mulattoes in the west and the south of Haiti. Christophe crowned himself king and created a black nobility. Using military force to resuscitate the plantation system and an export economy based on sugar and coffee, Christophe instituted a type of feudalism in the North where military and state officers ran plantations. "This militarized agriculture generated large surpluses and the revenue was used to fortify Christophe's army and build extensive fortifications in case of another French invasion. The most spectacular fortification built during Christophe's reign was La Citadelle of La Ferrière (The Citadel) (Arthur and Dash 1999, 46)." Many men and women died building the Citadel due to a deadly admixture of forced labor, insufficient diets, exhaustion and the work of forcing stones and other heavy materials up the sides of a steep mountain. In 1820 Christophe, physically weakened by a catastrophic stroke, committed suicide as the result of an uprising against his forced labor policy.

Alexandre Pétion controlled the Mulattoes in the middle and the south of Haiti. "Pétion distributed state-owned land to buy political acceptance and as a way to avoid any backlash if he attempted to force workers back to the plantation. The members of the mostly mulatto elite received the best lands but each member of the mainly black army was also allocated a six-hectare plot. During his presidency over 150,000 hectares of land were distributed or sold to more than 10,000 people (Arthur and Dash 1999, 46)." After the death of Christophe, Jean-Pierre Boyer, Pétion's successor, brought the two parts of Haiti together as one country. As a way to remove the threat of foreign invasion, Boyer annexed the eastern part of the island of Hispaniola in 1822. The occupation of

the eastern part of the island lasted until 1844 when an independent Dominican Republic was established. Boyer continued Pétion's practice of allocating small parcels of land to members of the Haitian military and peasantry. "During his rule, Boyer also bought French recognition of Haiti's independence with the payment of a massive indemnity to compensate French planters for property lost during the Haitian Revolution (90 million gold francs) (Arthur and Dash 1999, 46)."

Overall, the socioeconomic legacy of the Haitian Revolution left the country in complete ruins. The agrarian system was nonfunctional and the country was divided between the army and the peasants and between a Mulatto and a Black elite. "Since the mid-nineteenth century, Haitian politics has been dominated by the struggle between groups within the country's small elite for control of the state apparatus through control of the presidency (Arthur and Dash 1999, 47)." These dynamics were reflected throughout nineteenth century and twentieth century Haiti (Zéphir 2004, 43). This is illustrated by the fact that only two rulers managed to complete their terms in office between 1843 and 1915 (Arthur and Dash 1999, 47). During this period in Haitian history there were 22 heads of state; fourteen of which were overthrown.

"Up until 1915, the minority mulatto elite continued to exercise power while paying lip service to the political aspirations of the small number of black elite families and high-ranking black army officers. The "politique de doublure (government of the understudy)" system saw black presidents in power but controlled and manipulated by mulatto politicians masking a continuing and deep-seated social antipathy between mulatto and black elites (Arthur and Dash 1999, 47)."

"The acute political and economic instability of Haiti, particularly during 1911 and 1915 when six presidents succeeded one another in office, motivated the United States to invade Haiti, in the words of one author (Zéphir 2004, 45)." The Haitian elite borrowed heavily from foreign powers such as particularly the United States, Germany and France. "American investors were eagerly looking for ways to have the monopoly of investments in the country. Also, after the establishment of the Monroe Doctrine, and later the Roosevelt Corollary, gaining absolute control of the Caribbean region became a fundamental principle of U.S. foreign policy. So both financial interests and strategic factors weighed heavily in the U.S. decision to occupy Haiti and on July 29th, 1915, U.S. Marines landed in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, and a 19-year U.S. occupation began (Zéphir 2004, 45)."

The U.S occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934 reignited deep-seated resentment of foreign occupation and reunited both sides of the divided Haitian elite in a nationalist movement, albeit temporarily. Once the Marines departed, old tensions between the two groups reappeared. "Those who favored the mulatto hegemony were opposed by those who championed a redistribution of economic and political power. This latter tendency was bolstered by an emerging black middle class of schoolteachers, clerks, civil servants and small businessmen (Arthur and Dash 1999, 47-48)." Also as a result of the occupation, administrative, economic and political power was centralized in Port-au-Prince (the capital) and the influence of elite groups in coastal towns decreased. "As part

of this process, the Haitian military was reorganized and became increasingly linked and involved with political affairs in the capital (Arthur and Dash 1999, 48). An example of this involvement is the ousting of presidents Lescot (1946) and Estimé (1950) by the Haitian military.

In 1957, François Duvalier won a general election and became president of Haiti. Duvalier was a physician who was part of a group of black middle-class intellectuals known as noiristes. "Noiristes mingled literary and ethnological interests, promoting the idea of Haiti's essentially African identity and championing the black majority against the Europeanized elite (Ferguson 1987, 33)." Initially considered little more than a tool of the military, 'Papa Doc,' as he became known, soon proved that he had his own political goals and methods which helped him maintain political power in Haiti.

"François Duvalier, president for life of Haiti from 1957 to 1971, had his political opponents and their supporters arrested or driven into exile. Then, to guard against threats of military coups, Papa Doc transferred or replaced senior officers, and placed elite units under his direct command. The army leadership, François Duvalier's own cabinet and inner circle were regularly purged (Arthur and Dash 1999, 48)." As a counterbalance to the Haitian military, Papa Doc created an irregular force of armed men called Tonton Macoutes. "The Tonton Macoutes became synonymous with François Duvalier's type of state terrorism (Ferguson 1987, 40)."

The Tonton Macoutes were Duvalier loyalists that provided information and detected subversion in every sphere of Haitian society. The tactics they used to maintain Papa Doc's repressive regime includes bullying, extortion and murder (Ferguson 1987, 40). Under François Duvalier's regime, "trade unions were dismantled, progressive Catholic priests were expelled, newspapers were closed down and even the Boy Scouts were disbanded (Arthur and Dash 1999, 48)."

Papa Doc's fourteen-year long dictatorship relied on extreme violence in order to maintain rule and probably claimed the lives of more than tens of thousands of Haitians. To complete his ascension, Duvalier proclaimed himself president-for-life with the power to designate his successor. The public treasury was siphoned and foreign aid diverted to pay off supporters, Macoutes and high-ranking administrators.

As the result of his regime, Haiti slid deeper into social and economic ruin and created a 'brain-drain' that began during his regime and has continued unabated. "Between 30,000 and 60,000 people were killed by state terrorism during this period (Ferguson 1987, 57)."

"When François Duvalier died in 1971, the disabling of all serious opposition, and the tacit endorsement of important power-brokers such as the United States, the military high command and much of the business community, ensured that power was transferred smoothly to his 19-year-old son, Jean-Claude. Under the new leader, dubbed 'Baby Doc' by the foreign media, the ruthless repression of internal dissent, both real and imagined, continued (Arthur and Dash 1999, 49)."

Jean-Claude's regime (1971-1986) was described as a "kleptocracy" – a state in which those in power exploit national resources and steal. Indeed, the process of stealing state revenues by those in the Duvalier regime reached new heights. "Hundreds of millions of dollars were stolen by Jean-Claude and his small circle of associates (Arthur and Dash 1999, 49)."

In addition to maintaining a kleptocracy started by his father, Baby Doc encouraged offshore assembly industry under the guise of economic liberalization, which began towards the end of his father's reign and accelerated the downward slide of Haiti into the poorest country in the western hemisphere. At the end of Papa Doc's tenure as Haitian head of state, offshore assembly for U.S. corporations and markets began. "In the assembly industry, materials produced in a well-to-do country are exported to a poor country to be assembled by the comparatively cheap and "disciplined" labor there (Farmer 1994, 115)."

This form of business did little to arrest an economy in free fall and Haiti continued to sink deeper into debt. During Baby Doc's tenure, a widening gap between the urban and rural areas forced Haitians living in the countryside to migrate to Port-au-Prince in search of jobs at factories. While Jean-Claude and members of his circle grew fabulously rich, the majority of Haitians slipped deeper into poverty. The percentage of the population living in extreme poverty rose from 48 per cent in 1976 to 81 percent in 1985. Under the Duvaliers, Haiti became the poorest country in the Western hemisphere during the Duvalier regime and "one of the poorest and most economically polarized countries in the world (Arthur and Dash 1999, 49)."

During his continuation of his father's dictatorship, Jean-Claude alienated important supporters among the old-guard noiristes and the black-middle class by shifting his power base towards younger mulatto merchants and technocrats. "The alliance between the Mulatto and the new regime was sealed in May 1980 when Jean-Claude Duvalier married Michèle Bennett, daughter of a wealthy speculator (Zéphir 2004, 50)." As the regime faltered and an internal and external opposition movement grew, the U.S. and the Haitian military withdrew their support for Jean-Claude's rule and Jean-Claude left Haiti aboard an American-chartered jet February 1986.

After Baby Doc's departure, a four-year period in Haitian history known as 'Duvalierism without Duvalier' ensued. Consisting of a series of military juntas headed by senior officers, this period was characterized by attempts to secure the former order in the face of challenges from the poor majority and a section of the elite (Arthur and Dash 1999, 49). During this time period, opposition grew between the masses seeking retribution against former Duvalierists and Tonton Macoutes. From 1986 to 1988, the hope for democracy in Haiti was crushed through the massacre of peasant activists (July 1987), and of hundreds of voters waiting to cast their ballots at the voting polls (November 1988). After the fall of Jean-Claude, the elite were pushing for reforms to modernize the Haitian state. Part of these reforms, which were backed by the United States and international finance institutions, included a proposed transition to electoral democracy but the Duvalierists violently resisted changes to the political system. By 1990,

internationally monitored democratic elections were held in Haiti and the late entry of the charismatic liberation theology priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and the subsequent registration to vote of tens of thousands of previously unregistered peasants and urban poor, threw a wrench in the plans of the Haitian elite. Aristide, the presidential candidate for the *Lavalas* party, won an overwhelming majority of the vote (Arthur and Dash 1999, 50).

Jean-Bertrand Aristide's victory in the 1990 elections represented the first serious challenge to the status quo in Haitian history and the reforms proposed by the Aristide government were enough to upset most sections of the elite (Arthur and Dash 1999, 50). For example, large landowners were disturbed by presidential rhetoric about agrarian reform. Industrialists were vexed by discussion of a proposed increase in the national minimum wage. The Haitian military, the institution which at many times in Haitian history which was responsible for overthrowing numerous heads of state, was distressed by proposals that would separate the police from the army. Duvalierists were upset with talk of disbanding the section chief system and reform of corrupt state institutions. The Lavalas movement also threatened the conservative hierarchy of the Catholic Church and traditional politicians. These fears, manifested in elite and powerful sectors in Haitian society, manifested in a coup d'etat which toppled Aristide.

"Less than eight months after taking office, Aristide was overthrown by a military coup d'état which was rumored to have been financed by leading elite families (Arthur and Dash 1999, 51)." Aristide fled to the United States. The Haitian military and a resurgent Macoute sector carried out an intense and violent campaign of repression for the next three years against the popular organizations which had flourished since the fall of Baby Doc and formed the foundation of the Lavalas movement. The international community supported an embargo which did not weaken the military junta but exacerbated poverty among the poorest sectors of Haitian society. Subsequently, emigration from Haiti to other countries in the region, most notably the United States, intensified.

Through assistance from the United Nations and the presidency of Bill Clinton, elected president of the U.S. in 1992, an agreement was put together to solve the Haitian impasse which was known as the Governors Island Accord. The accord stipulated that Aristide was supposed to return to Haiti on October 30, 1993, accompanied by a United Nations peacekeeping force. Due to rising violence with the impending return of Aristide to Haiti, the Clinton administration issued a resolution in July 1994 authorizing a direct American military intervention in Haiti which passed. The U.S. occupation was scheduled to begin on September 19th, 1994. General Raoul Cédras, the head of the military junta, agreed to relinquish power in October 1994. Under the protection of the U.S. military, President Aristide returned to Haiti to finish his term, which expired on February 7, 1996. René Préval was elected the next president of Haiti and then Aristide was re-elected in 2001 for a second term as president until February 2006.

During his second term as president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide's administration was cut short by two years. Aristide was coerced into leaving Haiti after an armed insurgency erupted in the port city of Gonaïves in early February 2004 (Dupuy 2005, 187). Gerald

Latortue became the head of an interim government and members and supporters of Aristide's *Lavalas* party were summarily imprisoned and executed. René Préval was elected President of Haiti in May 2006 as part of new political party called *Lespwa* (Hope).

II CAUSES AND WAVES OF MIGRATION

Although Haitians are part of the wave of recent immigration to the United States in the 20th century, the Haitian presence in the United States is not a recent migratory phenomenon but part of a larger trend which dates back to the eighteenth century. We can view this history of Haitian immigration to the United States as an uninterrupted stream with high, low and dormant periods (Laguerre 1998, 2). The peak periods of Haitian immigration to the United States roughly correspond to the following: the Haitian revolutionary era and aftermath (1791- 1810), the period of American occupation of Haiti (1915-1934), the Duvalier and immediate post-Duvalier era (1957-1994) and during the times of stringent economic crisis and political unrest during the Aristide presidencies, military juntas and Préval presidencies (1994-2009).

Early immigration

The early migration of Haitians to the United States consisted of different sectors of colonial Haitian society (1791-1803) that fled the island colony of Saint Domingue during revolutionary unrest such as French colonists, the slaves of French colonists and free people of color. Some of these Haitian ancestors contributed to the revolutionary struggle of the United States during the eighteenth century. For example, 750 soldiers from Saint Domingue (Colonial Haiti) fought alongside American patriots against the British at the Siege of Savannah, in Georgia, on October 9, 1779. Currently, there is a monument in Savannah, Georgia which commemorates Haitian involvement in the American War of Independence.

Another example of early Haitian immigration to the United States in the eighteenth century which contributed to the social fabric of the United States is the life of Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable. In 1779 Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable migrated from the French colony of Saint Domingue and founded the city of Chicago. DuSable was born around 1745 and his birth was traced to the city of St. Marc, Haiti. He was born a free man, the son of a French sea captain and a Haitian slave. When he was young, DuSable's father sent him to France for his education. It is reported that DuSable traveled with his father on his merchant ships and was injured aboard a ship on a voyage to New Orleans. However, when DuSable arrived there, he discovered that the city had been taken over by the Spanish and that he was in danger of enslavement. A local chapter of the French Jesuits hid him until he was well enough to travel on his own. He left New Orleans and headed north via the Mississippi River. Along the way he came in contact with French fur trappers and land speculators. DuSable settled in what is now known as Peoria, Illinois and sold furs and bought large tracts of land. He became a wealthy businessman and headed north toward the Great Lakes and established his home, and a thriving trading post, on the bank of the Chicago River (Zéphir 2004, 12).

Later Waves of Immigration: Phases, to 1965 Immigration Act, Immigration Act of 1965 and succeeding legislation and Through IRCA to the present

After the 18th and 19th centuries, Haitian immigration to the United States was low until the second half of the twentieth century. During the U.S. occupation of Haiti (1915-1934), a group of Haitian immigrants from the urban areas of Haiti migrated to the United States. "The Immigration and Naturalization Service began separately recording Haitian immigration in 1932; for the period of 1932-1940, it recorded 191 Haitian immigrants, and it recorded 911 between 1941 and 1950. From 1951 to 1960, 4,442 more Haitians were recorded (Zéphir 2004, 17)." However, as a result of the 1965 Immigration Act which allowed the legal admission of hundreds of thousands of new immigrants per year beyond quotas, Haitian immigration to the United States increased dramatically. "From 1932 through 2000, a total of 414,401 Haitians immigrated legally to the United States (Zéphir 2004, 17)."

Papa Doc's regime caused massive numbers of people from all sectors of Haitian society to leave the country. Based on the Immigration and Naturalization Service's Statistical Yearbooks, over 40,000 Haitians legally migrated to the United States (40,011) from 1960 to 1971 and over 138,000 (138,157) were admitted to the United States on temporary visas during the same time period.

During Baby Doc's regime, the political and economic situation of Haiti worsened. Legal immigration of Haitians to the United States, therefore, increased steadily for most of Jean-Claude's dictatorship. According to the Statistical Yearbooks of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, nearly 108,000 Haitians (107,818) migrated to the United States legally between 1972 and 1986. During this same time period, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reports that close to 625,000 Haitians (624,803) were admitted to the United States on temporary visas. The INS also reports that there are gaps in their record of nonimmigrant data for Haitians between 1980 and 1982; the years when the highest estimates of boat people were suggested by reporters and scholars (INS Statistical Yearbook 2000).

It must be noted that a substantial number of Haitians migrated to the United States illegally during Baby Doc's dictatorship. Illegal Haitian migration to the United States coincided with the Duvalier dictatorship, especially during Jean-Claude Duvalier's reign (1971-1986). Many Haitians who visited the United States during this period overstayed their visas with the hope that they could legalize their status one day. One scholar of Haitian history notes that one of the most striking features of Jean-Claude's time in power was the process of escape and voluntary exile of Haitians, many of whom were determined to reach the United States for the prospects of work and food (Ferguson 1987, 63). This process began in 1972. Many of these Haitians, peasants who were desperate to leave a cycle of drought and famine, were persuaded to sell their family smallholdings and any other possessions in return for a place on a boat bound for Miami. In 1981 it was estimated that there were at least 50 or 60 such boats operating from Haiti's north Coast where we find cities such as Port-de-Paix and Cap Haitian. These migrants were dubbed Haitian "boat people" in the media.

The departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier from Haiti in 1986 led to more political and social chaos, as opposition grew between the masses seeking retribution against former Duvalierists and Tonton Macoutes. From 1986 to 1988, the hope for democracy was crushed through the massacre of peasant activists (July 1987), and of hundreds of voters waiting to cast their ballots at the voting polls (November 1988). The brutal domination and oppression of Haitians during this time period is reflected in the elevated number of Haitians who migrated to the United States. In 1988, for example, the Immigration and Naturalization Service reports 34,806 Haitians legally migrated to the United States and that 94,819 nonimmigrants were admitted on temporary visas.

Another difficult year in Haitian history was 1991, the year that the democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was overthrown by a military coup. Fearing for their lives, many of Aristide's supporters fled the country. The Immigration and Naturalization Service records for 1991 reflect this, 47,527 Haitians were admitted to the United States as immigrants while another 73,994 were admitted on temporary visas. As one scholar tells us, "let us remember a CNN report indicating that 67,000 boat people were intercepted during the same year (Zéphir 2004, 71)."

III DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Size and Composition of Community

Census figures provide the best estimates of the Haitian population in the United States. According to the American Community Survey, which is compiled from Census data, there were approximately 694,000 (694,123) Haitian-born Blacks in the United States as of 2005.

Age and family structure

Out of this population of 694,000 Haitians in the United States, the median age, as of 2005, was 28.4 years old. 10.4% were under 5 years old. 22.1% were 5 to 17 years old. 11.9% were 18 to 24 years old. 15.2% were 25 to 34 years old. 13.8% were 35 to 44 years old. 14% were 45 to 54 years old. 7.1% of this population was 55 to 64 years old. 3.7% was 65 to 74 years old with those 75 years or old comprising 1.8% of the population of Haitians in the United States.

The American Community Survey of 2005 organized Haitian households according to two categories: family households and nonfamily households. The average household size was 3.57 people and average family size was 4.00. 79.6% of Haitians in the United States, out of a population of approximately 201,000 people, lived in family households. The remaining 20.4% was placed in a nonfamily category.

Educational attainment

According to the American Community Survey from 2005, approximately 386,000 of the 694,000 Haitians in the United States are 25 years or older. From that population, 23.1% has less than a high school education and 30.3% are high school graduates (or the equivalency of a high school diploma). 28.5% of this population has some college or associate's degree and 13% has a Bachelor's degree. 5.1% of the population of Haitians in the United States 25 years or older has a graduate or professional degree.

Occupation and income patterns

According to the American Community Survey of 2005, out of the civilian population 16 years and older among Haitians in the United States (approximately 326,000), approximately 36.6% were employed in service positions, 22.6% were employed in sales and office occupations, 21% were employed in management, professional and related occupations and 14.7% worked production, transportation and material moving jobs. The remaining Haitians were employed in construction-related occupations and farming, fishing and forestry occupations (5.1%).

As of 2005, the median Haitian household income in the United States was approximately $40,000. The media Haitian family income in the United States was approximately $41,600 in 2005. 45% of Haitians owned their own home in 2005 as opposed to 55% of Haitians who rented domiciles.

Health issues

In Haiti, health is directly tied to one's economic status. Haitians are exposed to numerous infectious diseases which accompany poverty and malnutrition such as infantile tetanus, tuberculosis, the H.I.V. virus and malaria. In the late 1970s, tuberculosis was allegedly endemic among Haitians; in the early 1980s, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) identified Haitians as one of the primary groups at risk for AIDS, along with homosexuals, hemophiliacs and intravenous drug abusers. In spite of the removal of Haitians from that list, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the late 1980s officially refused to accept the donation of blood from individuals of Haitian descent (Stepick 1998, 2).

Regardless of the stigma attached to Haitians, when Haitians migrate to the United States they tend to become more affluent and their access to health care improves along with the quality of health care they receive. But even though the average life span of Haitians increases when they live in the United States, there are still diseases which affect their collective health. Bertin M. Louis, M.D., Former Chief of Nephrology at Maimonides Medical Center of Brooklyn, New York, who has worked closely with the Haitian community of New York City, notes that the some of the diseases which afflict Haitians in the United States are hypertension (high blood pressure), diabetes mellitus (Type 2 Diabetes) and hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol).

IV ADJUSTMENT AND ADAPTATION

Family, culture, and life-cycle rituals

"Families are the foundation for social networks that provide both material and emotional support, everything from temporary housing and food to how to find a job and get into school (Stepick 1998, 16)." When Haitian immigrants first arrive in the United States, they usually take temporary residence in the home of a relative (Stepick 1998, 17). These families, then, do not only consist of a mother, father and children, but at many times include grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, godchildren and sometimes non-relatives from one's hometown. These additional relatives temporarily reside with a relative and can move from household to household while working different jobs until they are able to rent or buy their own home.

Birth/baptism, coming of age, marriage, funerals--With some attention to regional variations (of origin)

In Haiti, the rites of passage that mark the lives of Haitians, such as baptism, marriage and funerals, vary according to religious affiliation and whether they live in urban areas or in the Haitian countryside. A look at the Catholic and Protestant traditions of Haiti offers us a glimpse into the diversity of rituals associated with important milestones in human life.

The majority of Haitians are Catholic. Haitian Catholics usually baptize their children a few months after birth in a ceremony at a Catholic church. At the age of 7 years, young Haitian boys and girls are *komune* (receive communion). At the age of 13, young girls and boys are *konfirme* (consummated in the Catholic Church).

With regard to engagements and marriages, Haitian men ask Haitian women for their hand in marriage. It is traditional for Haitian men to ask permission from the family of the woman they intend to marry. In many cases, many Haitians do not have enough money associated with a large wedding. In this case, many Haitian women and men enter into common-law marriage which is known as *plasaj*.

The wedding ceremony is similar to what occurs in the United States. The groom wears a tuxedo and the bride wears an ornate white dress. As in the United States, the father of the bride gives the daughter away. After the wedding, the best man and the maid (or matron) of honor are consulted by the husband and wife when moments of marital discord occur within the marriage.

Haitian funerals vary according to local traditions and religious affiliations. Wakes for people in the Haitian countryside are very animated. People entertain themselves by playing dominoes, singing and telling flattering and honorific stories (*bay blag*) about the deceased. At the actual funeral in the Haitian countryside, the body of the deceased is carried on the shoulders of four males who sing and engage in a choreographed walk that is almost dance-like. At some points during this animated funeral march, the corpse is

transferred to another group of four men who continue with the body in a similar animated manner. People at the funeral are also served *tafia* (strong Haitian rum) after the body is interred.

The behavior we find at funerals for Haitian Protestants varies according to one's religious affiliation and stands in stark contrast to funerals in the Haitian countryside. At funerals for traditional Haitian Baptists, for example, the ceremony tends to be very sedate and reserved. Crying and screaming are viewed as inappropriate outbursts. However, at some Pentecostal and Charismatic Haitian funerals, funeral attendees are expected to faint, cry and scream openly.

Families and changing gender relations

In a book about the relationship between Haitian Americans and Haiti, Dr. Georges Fouron, Professor of Education and Africana Studies at Stony Brook University in Long Island, New York, wrote about the relationship he had growing up in Haiti with his mother. When he was a child, his mother was physically and emotionally abusive towards him. But when he moved to the United States and earned his PhD in Education, his mother tried to reclaim him as her son. When Dr. Fouron brought his mother to the United States, her reaction to living in New York revealed something to him about gender relations in Haiti and how they can change when a Haitian woman moves to the United States. According to Dr. Fouron, his mother was totally transformed in New York. She lived with him, then his brother, found a job as a home health aide and earned her own income. One day, Dr. Fouron's mother told him "This (the United States) is my country now. I will never return to Haiti (Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001, 131)."

The revelation that Dr. Fouron made with regard to gender in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora is that his mother's violent behavior towards him was due to her social condition. In other words, Dr. Fouron's mother beat him because of her gender position (the fact that she was a woman in a repressive, patriarchal society) in a hierarchy which reinforces the exploitative class system of contemporary Haiti (Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001, 132). The restrictions placed on the mobility of Dr. Fouron's mother were lifted when she migrated from Haiti to the United States and gained economic independence.

Unlike Dr. Fouron's mother, other Haitian American women remain invested in Haiti although they are U.S. citizens. Glick Schiller and Fouron use the example of a Haitian American woman named Yvette to demonstrate that not all Haitian women in the United States reject Haiti. Yvette is obligated to take care of siblings, nieces and nephews in Haiti that she hardly knows (Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001, 143). Yet Yvette skin had become gray from working overtime to pay the debts she had incurred sending money to Haiti. She told Dr. Fouron "My body is like Haiti. It is tired and without hope (Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001, 144)."

Using the examples of these two Haitian women in the United States, we can see that there are contradictory results to the migration of Haitian women to the United States. Dr. Fouron's mother considered herself to be independent and associated her life in Haiti

with a lack of freedom and autonomy outside of marriage. The obligations which Yvette must meet for her siblings, nieces and nephews were physically taxing, taking a toll on her health.

Retaining a sense of national culture and identity

Haitian Americans retain a sense of national culture and identity through various practices, institutions and through the maintenance of certain cultural traditions. Remittances from Haitian Americans to kin in Haiti sustain familial obligations. Hometown associations (groups which contribute to the upkeep and development of their towns and cities of birth) allow Haitians to position themselves in the United States as an ethnic group distinct from African Americans while reifying their identities as Haitian nationals. Haitian American service organizations and community centers throughout the United States serve as important institutions which diffuse Haitian culture and values, aid in the integration of new immigrants while educating and defending members of its ethnic community. Religious practices help to maintain a Haitian identity which is distinct from other nationalities and ethnicities in the United States. The continued use of Haitian Creole by first and second generation Haitian Americans ensures the continued use of the language of the Haitian masses for future generations. The celebration of national holidays such as Haitian Independence Day, the preparation and consumption of Haitian cuisine and the performance and support of Haitian artists and musicians also ensures that Haitians in the United States can celebrate their culture.

Continued links to country of origin: Remittances and Hometown Associations

An important way that Haitian Americans are linked to Haiti is through the practice of sending remittances, which is the act of migrants sending money back to the place of their origin. In the 1990s, Haitians sent approximately $250 million to $350 million to Haiti per year in the form of remittances (Catanese 1999, 118).

Many Haitian families have become transnational in nature. In other words, the families extend from one nation-state (the United States) to another (Haiti). Haitian families living in South Florida, for example, are linked to their kin in Haiti and are morally obligated to send their relatives money, clothes and food. Many in Haiti are economically dependent on their overseas kin in the face of unemployment and poverty. Family members support and assist each other, both financially and emotionally. In addition to the economic dependence which Haitians have on Haitians in the United States, families also plan and finance the immigration of other family members. "Haitians in the United States are also expected to help with the future immigration of others, establishing a chain of immigrants (Stepick 1998, 15)."

Numerous Haitian Americans also belong to hometown associations. Examples of Haitian hometown association activities are digging water wells in a Haitian village or building a school for children in Haiti. According to Pierre-Louis, Haitian hometown associations emerged from the efforts of exile leaders in the 1980s to establish institutions in a foreign land and as an alternative form of organizing by immigrants who

did not want to engage in open political activities against the Duvalier regime (Pierre-Louis 2006, 27). Hometown associations allow Haitians to position themselves in the United States as an ethnic group distinct from African Americans, support the democratization process in Haiti and to address humanitarian crises there (Pierre-Louis 2004, 19). In the wake of the January 12th earthquake, The Haitian Hometown Association Resource Group (http://haitirg.org/), formed in March 2008 to strengthen community development and alleviate poverty in Haiti, partnered with the worldwide Vincentian Family, DePaul University and Fonkoze (http://www.fonkoze.org/) to create Zafèn (https://www.zafen.org/), a new initiative which provides interest-free microloans to Haitians. Specifically, Zafèn enables lenders and donors to finance small and medium-sized Haitian businesses.

In addition to the material contributions which hometown associations make to Haiti, Haitian immigrants who face discrimination in the United States can always fall back on their homeland to maintain their culture and to ascertain their identities (Pierre-Louis 2006, 12). This demonstrates that emigrants who leave their homelands do not simply assimilate into a new, dominant culture but rather renegotiate their identities in relation to familial obligations, discrimination and the culture which cultivated them. This helps Haitians maintain their ethnic identity.

Social organizations based on national/ethnic background

Using the example of Haitians in New York, we can see that Haitians have formed several service organizations and community centers that are critical to the diffusion of Haitian culture and values. In New York City, the best known of these institutions is the Haitian Centers Council, Inc., established in 1982 and based in Brooklyn, which maintains eight centers throughout the New York metropolitan area. "Four are located in Brooklyn (the Flatbush Haitian center known in Brooklyn); one in Queens (the Haitian American United for Progress Community Center, or HAUP); one in Manhattan (the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center); one in Spring Valley (Rockland County); and the other also within the Greater New York metropolitan area (Zéphir 2004, 94)." These centers focus on job training, immigration, refugee assistance and employment.

Based in Brooklyn, *Dwa Fanm* (Women's Rights) is an organization which is committed to the rights of Haitian women and girls. "Another important agency that serves New York's Haitian community is the National Coalition for Haitian Rights (NCHR), which deals with matters of immigration, welfare and legal rights of Haitian immigrants. NCHR is also involved in fighting for Haitian boat people in detention centers and raises awareness about human rights abuses for Haitians living in other parts of the diaspora (stopping abuses against Haitians living in the Dominican Republic, for example) (Zéphir 2004, 94)."

Religion

As one author correctly notes, Haitians are very religious people (Stepick 1995, 85). Most Haitians in the United States practice three major religions, all of which have roots

in Haiti: Vodou, Catholicism and Protestantism. Vodou, one of the most maligned and misunderstood of the African-derived religions in the Western Hemisphere, combines aspects of Roman Catholic, African and Indigenous religions representing the hybrid nature of Haitian culture. Rituals of the religion involve prayers recited in French and Creole, possession by *lwa* (spirits), singing and dancing.

Many Haitians enter the United States as a majority Roman Catholic population. Slaves in colonial Haiti (Saint Domingue) were baptized and instructed in the Catholic religion (Simpson 1945). After Haitian independence in 1804, Catholicism became the religion of the Haitian state. Many Haitians living in the United States are practicing and nominal Catholics.

The roots of Protestantism in Haiti can be traced as early as 1816 when Stephen Grellet and John Hancock, from the United States, visited Haiti for a meeting with Alexandre Pétion, the Haitian ruler at that time. Protestantism among Haitians in its diaspora scattered in the Caribbean (Brodwin 2003) and the United States (Richman 2005) is rising and now we are beginning to see Haitian Protestants outnumber Catholic Haitians in some locales. In a recent article about the spread of evangelism in Haitian-American communities in New York City, Haitian Protestant churches (which were estimated to be more than one hundred) have grown to outnumber Catholic churches. Although this may not indicate that Protestants are the new religious majority among Haitians in New York City, it does suggest that the number of Haitians who attend Haitian Protestant churches is rising and that there may be a new religious majority among Haitians in the New York City area.

Overall, the religious needs of Haitian Americans are met by several Catholic and Protestant churches throughout America as well as Vodou practitioners.

Language issues

Haiti can best be described as a nation predominantly composed of two linguistic communities: a minority French bilingual elite and a monolingual Creole speaking majority. In their study of language debates over Creole in Haiti, Schieffelin and Doucet remark that Haitian French was viewed as the high prestige form of language while Haitian Creole (Kreyòl) was considered the low prestige form (Schieffelin and Doucet 1994, 178).

While Haitians of earlier generation still view French as a high prestige form of language among themselves, Kreyòl (Haitian Creole) has become the language of choice among the majority of Haitian Americans and a strong symbol of Haitian heritage. Kreyòl was formed on the plantations of Saint Domingue and became a common language that linguistically united disparate Africans.

Kreyòl was an unwritten language until recently. There have been different ways of representing the spoken language of Haitian Creole over the years. In the 1980s, an orthographic system was established to represent Haitian Creole that is currently used

among Haitian educators in the United States and is taught in Haiti. Each letter in the current Haitian Creole orthographic system only has one sound. Consonants are sounded as they are in English, every vowel is pronounced separately and all the letters are pronounced in a word. For example, the word "activity" in English is pronounced "ak-tee-vee-tay" and written in Haitian Creole this way: *aktivite*. There are nasalized sounds in Haitian Creole, as well, like **an** in *mouvman* (movement), **en** in *genyen* (to win, to beat) and **on** like *milyon* (million). An additional sound in Haitian Creole, **en**, is not found in English. **En** is nasalized and is similar to the sound in the word "**en**vy". We find an example of that sound in the word *gouvenen* (to govern, to direct). **Ch** in Haitian Creole is pronounced like words beginning in "sh" in English like "shower". An example of a *ch* word is *chita* (sit).

National/regional-language press and other media

Along with restaurants, barber and beauty shops, music stores and money transfer stores that Haitians have established in major American cities such as Boston, New York City and Miami, "Haitians have also established their own community media – newspapers, radio and television – that keep them informed of daily events in the Haitian diaspora and in the homeland. Major Haitian newspapers produced in New York, for example, include the *Haitian Times, Haïti Observateur* and *Haïti Progrès,* all located in Brooklyn (Zéphir 2004, 93)." "In New York City's Haitian community, for example, there are five radio stations which function on a 24-hour basis: Radio Triomphe Internationale, Radio Soleil, Radio Lakay, Radio Tropicale, and Radyo Pa Nou. Also, *Haiti Dyaspo* and *La Lanterne Haïtienne* are widely watched news magazine programs (Zéphir 2004, 93)." Another source of Haitian news and information, in the greater Boston area, is the *Boston Haitian Reporter*, established in 2000 by William Dorcena.

Celebration of national holidays

Two of the most important holidays that Haitian Americans celebrate are Haitian Independence Day and Haitian Flag Day. January 1st of every year commemorates the independence day of Haiti. Haitian Americans take great pride in this day and visit each other to celebrate. It is also customary for many Haitian Americans to make a squash-based soup called *joumou* which they share with company. It is said that the newly freed slaves who fought in the Haitian Revolution ate soup *joumou* on Independence Day as an act of defiance because the French did not allow slaves to eat the soup.

In Haitian communities across America on May 18th, thousands of Haitian Americans celebrate Haitian Flag Day at concerts, festivals and parades. On May 18, 1803, in the city of Archaie, not far from Port-au-Prince, Dessalines, the leader of the Blacks, and Petion, the leader of the Mulattoes, agreed on an official flag, with blue and red bands placed vertically. Haiti's first flag was sewn by Catherine Flon. "On Independence Day however, the flag was modified again. The blue and the red bands were placed horizontally this time, with the blue band on top of the red band (Fobrum 2002)." Haiti used this flag until 1964 because François Duvalier used a vertical black and red flag and added a modified version of the arms of the Republic. On February 25, 1986, after Jean-

Claude Duvalier fled Haiti and the Duvalier regime fell apart, the Haitian people in its vast majority requested that the red and blue flag be brought back. The red and blue flag remains the official flag of Haiti.

Foodways

Haitian cuisine is a mixture of African, French and Caribbean influences. *Djiri kole* (literally "rice mixed with beans") is a staple of the Haitian diet as is rice and beans throughout the Caribbean. Haitians, however, have numerous unique versions of beans and rice such as adding pigeon peas, *djon djon* (tiny black mushrooms) and green peas. Haitians also make food like chicken, goat and beef in sauces that many times have a tomato paste base (*sòs Kreyòl*). Other Haitian specialties are *banan pèze* (fried plantains) *griyo* (fried pork), *pate* (Haitian pastries filled with fish, chicken or spiced beef) and *lambi* (conch). We find many Haitians throughout the United States dining on these Haitian delicacies. Many Haitians in the United States also enjoy *akasan*, a drink made of cinnamon, evaporated milk, flour, corn starch, star anise and vanilla extract, and imbibe in Rhum Barbancourt, rum produced in Haiti since 1862. In celebration of Haitian independence Haitians in the United States commonly eat soup *joumou* (pumpkin soup), which is made with squash and is offered to guests who drop by to offer their best wishes for the upcoming year. Variations of soup *joumou* contain vegetables, beef, turkey and thin pasta like macaroni and vermicelli.

Music, arts, entertainment

Haiti has a longstanding tradition of artistic expression which is internationally recognized. Some of the prominent Haitian artists of the 20th century are Vodouist painter Hector Hyppolite and Georges Liautaud. "The Galerie d'Art Nader, which opened in Port-au-Prince in 1966, has the finest collection of Haitian paintings in Haiti available for purchase, consequently contributing to the dissemination of Haitian art, as it receives hundreds of visitors and customers from around the world (Zéphir 2004, 62)." "The Milwaukee Art Museum, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is home to the largest collection of Haitian art in the world. This collection of Haitian art classics, named the Flagg collection, was originally purchased by the late multimillionaire Richard Flagg (and his wife, Erna) at the urging of his friend, Monsignor Alfred Voegeli, the Episcopalian Bishop of Haiti who was from Milwaukee (Zéphir 2004, 63)." The collection was donated to the Milwaukee Art Museum upon Richard Flagg's death.

Music is also another form of artistic expression which has brought increased visibility to Haitians. One popular form of Haitian music with deep roots in Haiti's peasant class and is used in Vodou ceremonies is *Rara*. "*Rara* bands perform in the streets of Haiti at various times when there are particular political events that incite grassroots movements. However, the established tradition of the *Rara* festival is during the Lent season, right after Carnival up until Easter Sunday (Zéphir 2004, 63)." In the mid 1950s, another form of Haitian music called *Konpa* developed. *Konpa* is influenced by merengue which is from the Dominican Republic. *Konpa* dominated the Haitian music scene with artists like Nemours Jean-Baptiste and Weber Sicot. Tabou Combo– which was formed in Haiti

and relocated to New York when the political situation worsened in the late 1970s–and Miami-based T-Vice are two bands illustrative of this type of music. *Mizik Rasin* (Roots music) developed in the late 70s among Haitians. This musical form came about as the result of the interest of returning to Haitian folk forms such as Vodou and *Rara* musical traditions. The group *Boukman Eksperyans* (named after *Boukman* who presided over the Vodou ceremony that ignited the Haitian Revolution) started in 1978 and used their music to speak out against the abuses of the Duvalier regime and allied themselves with the struggles of the Haitian masses (Zéphir 2004, 64).

V INTEGRATION AND IMPACT ON U.S. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Intergroup relations

Haitians in the United States have established ties to other Haitians through extended families and institutions. Many Haitians are concentrated along the Eastern seaboard of the United States in cities such as Boston, New York, Washington D.C. and Miami. Haitians frequently visit their relatives who live in each of these cities as well as kin who live within the greater Metropolitan areas of the major cities that Haitians live in. For example, there are an estimated 25,000 Haitians in the greater Washington D.C metropolitan area which includes Silver Spring, Langley Park and Hyattsville, Maryland. Many of them have relatives in the greater New York metropolitan area and they visit each other frequently by car.

The institutions created by Haitians in the United States also provide ample opportunities for Haitians to congregate based on a shared ethnic identity. In the Washington D.C area, for example, Dr. Joseph Baptiste, responded to the coup d'etat in Haiti in 1991 by founding the National Organization for the Advancement of Haitians (NOAH). NOAH is a non-profit organization for social policy and economic development and allows Haitians from the Washington D.C. area to interact and connect with Haitians living in other parts of the United States with the shared goal of the betterment of Haiti (http://www.noahhaiti.org).

Since its inception, NOAH has responded to emergencies in Haiti including natural disasters such as the January earthquake of 2010. NOAH members set up water pumps for over 5,000 Haitians living in tent cities and delivered thousands of meals to people affected. Additionally, NOAH has an earthquake action plan which includes a medical action plan including triage, consultation, emergency interventions and specialized medicine.

Political associations and organizations

Since their migration to the United States, Haitians have created numerous professional organizations which help them maintain their ethnic identity, promote their interests and continue links with their ancestral homeland. An example of a vibrant Haitian organization which helps Haitian Americans maintain their ethnic identity, assists members of the Haitian immigrant community and continue links with Haiti is the

AMHE, Association des Medecines Haïtiens à l'Étranger (the Associations of Haitian Physicians Abroad). According to the organization's website, the AMHE was founded in August 1972 by a group of Haitian physicians determined to mark their presence as a growing ethnic entity in the United States, to foster professional alliances, to promote the health and interests of the Haitian immigrant community at large and contribute to the health care needs of Haiti through medical student training and donations (www.amhe.org). Since the January 12th earthquake, countless members of the AMHE, as well as other Haitian Americans who work in health care, have returned to Haiti contributing their medical expertise in caring for Haitians who needed medical attention for compound fractures, amputations and mental illness.

Civic and electoral participation

In the major American cities we find Haitians (Boston, Chicago, Miami and New York, for example), Haitians have made an impact with regard to representing members of their community. Haitians also do this through increased electoral participation as a strategy in the shaping of their communities. The example of Haitian civic and electoral participation in Boston demonstrates this commitment.

Haitian organizations emerged in the Boston area in the 1980s to serve the population. Examples of these organizations are AFAB – Asosyasyon Fanm Ayisyenn Boston (Association of Haitian Women in Boston), the Haitian-American Public Health Initiative (HAPHI), the Haitian American Public Health Initiative, Haitian-Americans United, Inc. and the Haitian Multi-Service Center. These organizations mobilized their resources and experience to assist newcomers to Boston's Haitian community.

According to one author, Haitians in Boston have also had a strong voice in U.S. politics since 1999, when Democrat Marie St. Fleur was elected as state house representative from the Fifth Suffolk District, representing Dorchester and part of Roxbury (Zéphir 2004, 108). Marie St. Fleur campaigned as the "girl from the neighborhood" and gained numerous votes from Haitians who are overwhelmingly represented in her district.

Public policies and political representation

Although Haitians have positively contributed to the creation of the United States and the communities which they live in, Haitians are continually stigmatized by negative stereotypes, especially in the latter 20th century. Indeed, no other American immigrant group in the 1970s and 1980s endured more prejudice and suffered more discrimination than Haitians (Stepick 1998, 2). For example, Haitians have the highest disapproval for political asylum requests of any national group. They have been disproportionately incarcerated in comparison to other nationalities seeking political asylum requests and Haitians were identified as health risks for tuberculosis and A.I.D.S. during the 1970s and 1980s. As a result of this climate of discrimination, advocacy organizations that were disappointed that Haitians were not one of the nationalities benefiting from the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act, put tremendous political pressure on the U.S. Congress to pass some type of benefit to the estimated 50,000

Haitian refugees living in the United States in 1988. Applicants who were living continuously in the United States since December 31st, 1995 and were either orphaned, abandoned after entering the U.S., determined to have a credible fear of persecution if returned to Haiti, applied for asylum before December 31st, 1995 or previously been paroled into the U.S. by U.S. authorities for emergent reasons or reasons deemed to be in the national interest were eligible for permanent residence in the United States.

VI THE SECOND AND LATER GENERATIONS

Second generation Haitian Americans are more numerous and heterogeneous that the first generation of Haitians that migrated to the United States. According to one scholar, the greater number of children of Haitian immigrants tends to fall within two broad categories: "(1) those who were born in the United States, who have always lived in this country and may or may not have had a chance to visit Haiti; and (2) those born in Haiti who came to the United States at an early age (usually before adolescence) and are schooled in the United States, and who may not have spent any time or significant amount of time in Haiti since their relocation (Zéphir 2004, 129)." They are fluent in English and some may have an active or passive knowledge of Haitian Creole (French in rare instances).

Ethnic identity: Degrees of Haitianness

Second generation Haitian Americans can be divided into three broad categories with some overlap: "(1) those who display a strong form of Haitianness; (2) those who display a weaker form of Haitianness; and (3) those who have absolutely nothing to do with Haiti, the undercovers (Zéphir 2004, 130)."

"Haitianness is demonstrated mostly through an intense involvement in the Haitian diasporic community and an interest in Haitian matters in the United States and Haiti. Haitianness can also be expressed by a preference for the label "Haitian" as a self ethnic descriptor, an acknowledgement of one's birthplace of Haiti and parents' birthplace, length of residency in Haiti or repeated trips to Haiti, and a high level of fluency in Haitian Creole (Zéphir 2004, 130-131)." They speak Kreyòl without the use of a lot of English to express their thoughts and are active in Haitian clubs and organizations. Second generation Haitian Americans who exhibit a strong form of Haitianness also feel that it is their responsibility to educate Haitian American youth and the general public about Haiti. They defend Haiti from some of the negative accusations the country receives in the media. An example of a second generation Haitian American that fits this description is Wyclef Jean who is arguably the most prominent Haitian living in the United States. Wyclef Jean is a Grammy-award musician, producer and Haitian Goodwill Ambassador who created a foundation called Yélé Haiti which supports projects that improve the education of Haitian youth, the health of Haitians, the Haitian environment and community development in Haiti. Since the earthquake Wyclef Jean, his wife Claudinette and Yélé Haiti have distributed clothes, medical supplies and over 80,000 hot meals across Haiti. Yélé Haiti also distributed tents to Haitians rendered homeless by the earthquake and has enacted a plan to augment Haiti's agricultural

production through a farming community outside of Port-au-Prince in Croix-des-Bouquets. Finally, Yélé Haiti plans to build permanent housing for communities destroyed by the earthquake.

"Second generation Haitian Americans who are positioned at the weaker end of the Haitianness axis define themselves as Haitian Americans (Zéphir 2004, 133)." There are various factors that explain this choice of identification. For example, the fact that some Haitian Americans were born in the United States, or lived in the United States since a young age, has given them a thorough knowledge of American and African American culture that surpasses their knowledge of Haitian culture. Also, their lack of a foreign accent may prevent them from sounding like other Haitians who speak accented English. They like elements from Haitian culture such as cuisine and music but they are less involved with Haitian diasporic matters, as well as those of Haiti. Haitian Americans who display this weaker form of Haitianness stand in stark contrast to those Americans of Haitian descent that covers up their ethnic heritage to deal with the reality of ethnic prejudice which is pervasive in the United States. One author refers to people of Haitian descent such as this as an undercover (Zéphir 2004, 130).

Educational attainment

The assistance of state and city agencies that have attended to the specific cultural needs of Haitians has facilitated the education of second generation Haitian Americans. In New York City, for example, "the large number of Haitian students attending public schools compelled the board of education to hire Haitian teachers and guidance counselors who could address the needs of Haitian students. Many of these Haitian teachers are used in bilingual education programs (Haitian Creole and English) that are designed to help Haitian children with limited English proficiency (Zéphir 2004, 95)." Programs such as these have helped many second generation Haitian Americans to integrate into American educational systems and achieve at very high levels. Many second generation Haitian Americans, whether they were born in Haiti and moved to the United States or were born in the United States, have done well in American schools and have gone on to obtain advanced American university degrees which have secured them employment as doctors, engineers, nurses, lawyers, professors and business owners.

VII ISSUES IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Forecasts for the 21st century: Hope for Post-Earthquake Haiti

More than 200 years ago the ancestors of Haitian Americans fought a revolution where they defeated colonial powers that tried to reinstitute chattel slavery. The main lesson the Haitian Revolution taught the world is that black people (people of African descent) are human beings with the right to live dignified lives (Louis Jr., 2010). The Haitian Revolution was also supposed to allow Haitians to lead dignified lives but as the January 12th, 2010 earthquake in Haiti demonstrated, the majority of Haitians are still struggling to lead dignified lives.

Haitian Americans reacted immediately to this unimaginable cataclysm in numerous ways. For example, Haitian Americas rushed to Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, and Leogane, the epicenter of the earthquake, to lend their expertise for Haitians trapped under rubble and injured by debris. Anesthesiologist Billy Ford M.D., Pediatric Surgeon Henri Ford M.D., and Internist Jean Ford M.D., Haitian brothers who migrated to the United States, all went back to Haiti after the earthquake and helped with medical treatment in Port-au-Prince. Andia Augustin, a doctoral candidate in French at Washington University in St. Louis, interrupted her studies and served as a translator for a medical team from Tennessee that provided medical care to Haitians injured in the earthquake. Guerda Nicolas, PhD, used her expertise in psychology to inform well-meaning relief organizations, missionary groups and other groups with disaster counseling skills that American treatments for mental illness needed to integrate Haitian culture, Haitian folk medicine and Haitian coping mechanisms (such as singing, dancing, praying and receiving comfort from one's minister) as a way to treat depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Haiti.

The cataclysm of January 12th, 2010 overshadowed some of the good news that was coming out of Haiti with regard to its difficult past. Specifically, there was cause for hope for Haiti among Haitian Americans because the Obama administration took steps before the earthquake to ensure a brighter future for Haiti. For example, in 2009 President Obama appointed former President Bill Clinton as a Special U.S. envoy to Haiti. One of the responsibilities for the former President was to see that international donors converted their collective pledge of $353 million into viable aid for Haiti. Since that appointment, former President Clinton visited Haiti in July 2009 to raise awareness about reconstruction efforts in Gonaives, a battered seaside city that was nearly destroyed in 2008 by a series of tropical storms. During that visit, special envoy Clinton said the Haitian government and its international backers hoped to create 150,000 to 200,000 jobs in Haiti over the next two years. Many of those jobs were supposed to come from projects to rebuild roads and shore up erosion-prone hillsides (Katz 2009). Before the earthquake Haiti benefited from the presence of 9,000 United Nations peacekeeping troops which helped with security matters. In addition, the U.S. Congress granted Haiti access to the American textiles market, allowing for the duty free sale of Haitian textiles in the United States for a decade (as part of the Hope II Trade legislation). This policy added 12,000 jobs to Haiti.

There were other areas of improvement that gave Haiti hope. Recently three international organizations (the Inter-American Monetary Fund, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) canceled $1.2 billion of Haiti's debt on June 30th, 2009, freeing up approximately $50 million per year for spending to reduce poverty over the next 10 to 15 years. A significant portion of the debt dates back to loans which lined the pockets of Haiti's dictators, especially François and Jean-Claude Duvalier. Before January 12th, 2010, Haiti's government embarked on a focused action plan to safeguard the gains already achieved and ensure that the country continues on a path towards economic security. This included job creation and infrastructural improvement which was supposed to attract more foreign investment to Haiti.

Since the earthquake, the international community, the U.S. government and the Haitian diaspora (Haitian-Americans) have helped to rebuild Haiti in different ways. The main contribution made by the international community to the rebuilding of Haiti is external debt relief. After the earthquake, Venezuela announced that it would cancel nearly $300 million in Haitian debt. Haiti owes Taiwan $88 million. ON May 29th, 2010 Taiwan announced that the Taiwanese government would shoulder the Haitian interest payments for five years as Haiti recovers from the earthquake. France promised $230 million Euros (approximately $400 million U.S. dollars) towards Haitian earthquake relief. Numerous telethons in the United States (HOPE FOR HAITI NOW telethon, S.O.S. – Saving Ourselves: Help for Haiti) raised millions of dollars for Haitian earthquake relief. On March 22nd, 2010, the Inter-American Development Bank agreed to forgive $479 million of Haiti's debt. Additionally, the IADB will provide Haiti with $2 billion in loans over the next ten years. And on May 28th, 2010, the World Bank agreed to cancel approximately $36 million of Haitian debt. The World Bank also made $479 million in grants to support post-earthquake Haitian recovery and development through June 2011. Finally on March 31st, 2010 over 150 countries pledged over $5.3 billion over the next 18 months to help rebuild Haiti.

In addition to providing military and medical assistance in Haiti since January 12th, 2010, the Obama Administration granted temporary protected status to undocumented Haitians living in the United States. Temporary Protected Status protects undocumented Haitians from deportation for 18 months and allows them to continue to work in the United States. This special immigration status was extended to approximately 100,000 Haitians and 30,000 Haitians who were ordered to be deported. The protection status only applies to Haitians who were in the U.S. before January 12th, 2010 (Wu 2010). President Obama also donated part of his Nobel Peace Prize Award to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund. The Clinton Bush Haiti Fund gets essential medical equipment to critically injured Haitians, creates clinics and delivers relief supplies including water purification tablets, hygiene kits, mosquito nets and temporary latrines (http://www.clintonbushhaitifund.org/).

The Haitian diaspora in the United States (Haitian Americans) responded immediately to the earthquake as it has during past crises. In addition to Haitian American hometown associations and professional associations that went to Haiti to help with earthquake relief, Haitian individuals have contributed to rebuilding post-earthquake Haiti. Maurice Bonhomme and Jean Cayemitte, who work jobs as security guards and in the kitchen of an upscale French restaurant in Chicago, Illinois, returned to Petit Goave, Haiti which was devastated by the earthquake (Lazar 2010). Between the two of them Jean and Maurice raised enough money to get 500 tents to Petit Goave and are rebuilding a grammar school which they supported with their own money before the earthquake. Jean and Maurice's story is an example of the power of Haitian Americans in rebuilding Haiti. According to a 2008 World Bank study, émigrés remitted roughly 30 per cent of Haiti's GDP (Lazar 2010). As the result of the earthquake it would be safe to assume that Haitian Americans are sending even more money.

Haiti was the first country to articulate a general principle of common, unqualified equality for all of its citizens. The fundamental concept of a common humanity also ran

deeply through the early Haitian constitutions. This belief is what connects Haitians with other people around the world, as was highlighted by U.S. President Barack Obama in a speech he delivered in the aftermath of the earthquake, which has claimed at least 230,000 lives at present. In the coming months and years, Haitians will continue to struggle to live dignified lives in the midst of destroyed homes, deceased family and friends, infrastructural challenges, and possible waves of infectious diseases that could claim additional lives. But if most of the international aid that was pledged to Haiti is donated, if infrastructural improvements occur in Haiti and if Haitian Americans continue to help rebuild Haiti, there may be reason for hope in post-earthquake Haiti.

APPENDIX I: MIGRATION STATISTICS

APPENDIX II: CENSUS STATISTICS

Census figures provide the best estimates of the Haitian population in the United States. According to the American Community Survey, which is compiled from Census data, there were approximately 694,000 (694,123) Haitian-born Blacks in the United States as of 2005.

APPENDIX III: NOTABLE HAITIAN AMERICANS

Sidebar 1

A few notable Haitian Americans include the following individuals:

Marleine Bastien is a social worker and founder and executive director of *Fanm Ayisyen nan Miami, Inc.* (Haitian Women of Miami, Inc) which is also known as FANM (the Haitian Creole word for "woman"). She was born in Haiti in 1959 and immigrated to the United States in 1981. "She first attended Miami-Dade County Community College and, subsequently, Florida International University, where she earned a bachelor and a master of science degree in social work in 1986 and 1987, respectively (Zéphir 2004, 151)."

"From 1982 to 1987, Bastien worked full-time as an interpreter and paralegal at the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami, Florida. In 1991, she founded FANM, which was a purely volunteer organization at that time which advocated Haitian women's rights Zéphir 2004, 151)." Over time FANM grew and attracted attention and funding because of the important work the organization performed on behalf of the Haitian women of Miami (giving Haitian women a voice on issues which affected them such as education and community development). Bastien now serves as the Executive Director of FANM.

Edwidge Danticat was born in Haiti in 1969. She is arguably the most prominent Haitian American writer. Edwidge migrated to the United States in 1981 and graduated from Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn, New York in 1986. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in French translation and literature from Columbia University's Barnard College in 1990 and earned a master of fine arts degree in creative writing in 1993 (Zéphir 2004, 155).

Edwidge Danticat is a prolific writer who has published more than forty essays and short stories and several novels which have garnered acclaim such as *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1994), chosen by the Oprah Winfrey book club in 1998 and *Krik Krak* (1995) which was a finalist for the National Book Award. Ms. Danticat has also held "professorship positions in departments of English and creative writing programs at several universities, including New York University, Brown University and the University of Miami. She is also very involved in the Haitian community regularly organizing cultural programs and speaking to Haitian children and teenagers at public schools (Zéphir 2004, 155)."

Marie St. Fleur is a Massachusetts state house representative. She was born in Haiti in 1962 and migrated to the United States in 1969. While attending the University of Massachusetts at Amherst she earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science in 1984. In 1987 she earned her law degree after attending Boston College Law School.

"After positions as a law clerk for the Massachusetts Superior Court, assistant attorney general in the Trial Division of the Office of the Attorney General and chief of the Unemployment Fraud Division, Marie St. Fleur was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, becoming the first Haitian America ever to hold an elected seat in Massachusetts or a seat at any state legislature level (Zéphir 2004, 167)."

Henri R. Ford, M.D., is vice president and chief of surgery of Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, California as well as Vice-Dean of Medical Education, Professor and Vice chair for clinical affairs in the Department of Surgery and at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California. He received his bachelor's degree in public and international affairs, cum laude, from Princeton University in 1980 and his M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1984.

Dr. Ford did his internship (1984-85) and residency (1985-87; 1989-91) in general surgery at New York Hospital Cornell Medical College. He completed a research fellowship in immunology (1987-89) in the Department of Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh and a clinical fellowship (1991-93) in pediatric surgery at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

The story of Abner Louima is one of the more outrageous and infuriating cases of police brutality against black men, and Haitians, in New York City. On Saturday, August 9th, 1997, around four o'clock in the morning, Abner Louima came out of the Haitian Rendez-Vous club located on Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. Louima witnessed a fight between two women. Someone in the club called the police, who dispatched a squad car from Brooklyn's 70th Precinct. Louima reported that the cops began pushing people around, shouting racial slurs, calling them "niggers," and asking, "Why do you people come to this country if you cannot speak English?" He also said that he did not think he was involved in the incident since he was "just a bystander watching events (Zéphir 2004, 84)." Louima claims he was beaten and sodomized with a plunger handle by New York Police Department officers.

As the result of this incident a series of trials occurred from 1999 to 2002. In 1999, Justin Volpe pleaded guilty to sodomizing Louima and was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Officers Schwarz, Wiese and Bruder were tried on lesser charges which they were found guilty. All three officers appealed their sentences and on February 28th, 2002, they won their appeals, and their convictions were overturned. A new trial began for Schwarz on June 24th, 2002; on July 16th, 2002, the jury found him guilty of perjury but was deadlocked on the civil-rights violations charge (Zéphir 2004, 86). Schwarz pleaded guilty to perjury in a plea bargain and all of the other charges were dropped. Schwarz served five years in prison and settled in Staten Island. Officers Wiese and Bruder were fired from the New York Police Department and were not tried again. On July 12, 2001, Abner Louima accepted a settlement of $8.7 million from the City of New York and the police union after he had filed a civil suit. Abner Louima currently lives in Miami where he is an advocate for Haitian refugees.

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GLOSSARY

Brain-drain - an out-migration of a country's technical and intellectual expertise from the professional classes. Doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers and nurses, for example.
Kleptocracy – a state in which those in power exploit national resources and steal.
Lavalas – Haitian Creole for a flood which washes everything away.
Lwa – spirits; associated with the practice of Vodou.
Tonton Macoute – name of a traditional bogeyman in Haiti. Also a Duvalier loyalist who provided information and detected subversion in every sphere of Haitian society through bullying, extortion and murder.

FURTHER READING

Farmer, Paul. 1994. *The Uses of Haiti.* Monroe: Common Courage Press.

The Uses of Haiti uses the quest for human dignity of the majority of Haitian society (the Haitian poor) as a critical lens to analyze Haitian history. By reviewing the actions of nations, such as France and the United States, and particular actors in Haitian history, such as Toussaint Louverture, the Haitian upper class, the Haitian military, François and Jean-Claude Duvalier, Farmer's goal is to reveal the structural issues (structural adjustment programs, an indemnity the Boyer administration paid France in the 19th century so that France would not invade Haiti and the Duvalier kleptocracy) to answer why poverty and underdevelopment are persistent in Haiti.

Glick Schiller, Nina and Georges Fouron. 2001. *Georges Woke Up Laughing: Long-Distance Nationalism and the Search for Home.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Georges Woke Up Laughing is a superb ethnography which uses research in the United States and research in Haiti to demonstrate the continued ties between Haitians living in the United States and Haiti. Using the experiences and family history of Dr. Georges Fouron, a professor of education and Africana Studies at Stony Brook University who is of Haitian descent, the text takes readers from the United States to Haiti to analyze the current crisis in Haiti, gender, nationalism and the relationship between later generations of Haitian Americans and Haiti.

Haiti and the U.S.A.: Neighbors Linked by History and Community. The Trinity College Haiti Program. [Online information; retrieved 6/2/09.] http://www.haiti-usa.org/index.php

This website offers excellent information about Haiti, Haitian culture and Haitians in the United States. Of particular importance are the links that delve into the historical relationship between Haiti and the United States and the numerous links about Haitian communities across the United States including major ones like Boston and Washington D.C. and growing ones like Delray Beach, Florida and Detroit. In addition, this website also offers informative essays about Haitian heroes such as Toussaint Louverture, a chronology of important events in Haitian history and links to other Haiti websites.

Pamphile, Leon. 2001. *Haitians and African Americans: A Heritage of Tragedy and Hope.* Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Haitians and African Americans is an informative text which demonstrates the long historical relationship between Haitians and African Americans. This book deals with the shared heritage of slavery for both groups and how the paths of African Americans and Haitians have crossed repeatedly in their dual quest for freedom from human bondage and equality. For example, this book recognizes some of important contributions that Haitians made to American society by Haitians like the founding of Chicago by a Haitian named Jean Baptiste Point du Sable. In addition, the text notes the African American political support of Haiti and Haitians especially during the Haitian boat crisis of the late 20th century.

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The Haitian Americans is the premier resource about the Haitian presence in the United States. The author provides a detailed history of Haiti, a history of Haitians in the United States, statistics about Haitian migration to the United States, information about established and growing Haitian communities across the United States and short biographies about prominent Haitian Americans who contribute to the fabric of American society.

Sidebar 1: Youth Profile – Jozy Altidore

Jozy Altidore (Josmer Volmy Altidore) is a nineteen year-old forward for the U.S. Men's National Soccer Team and a soccer prodigy of Haitian descent. He was born on November 6th, 1989 in Livingston, New Jersey to Joseph and Giselle Altidore who were both born in Haiti. As a child Altidore moved to Florida and has three siblings: an older brother named Janak, and two sisters, named Sadia and Lindsay.

Jozy has already made a huge impact on the U.S. Men's National Soccer team although he has only been on the team for a relatively short time. Jozy became the youngest player to score for the United States (18 years, 92 days) when he headed in a goal past Guillermo Ochoa in a 2-2 draw with Mexico. He also became the youngest United States player to score a hat trick, putting in all three goals in a 3-0 win over Trinidad and Tobago in April 2009.[i]

Jozy began his professional soccer career at the age of sixteen when he was drafted by the MetroStars (now known as the New York Red Bulls) of Major League Soccer (MLS). Altidore spent the majority of his first season away from the MetroStars while he worked toward his high school diploma while living in Florida. He made his first MLS appearance on September 9th, 2006 as a substitute in the 81st minute. Jozy finished his rookie season with four goals (two game-winners) in nine games, which includes the playoffs. His first career goal was scored in brilliant fashion – a 30-yard, game-winning strike against Columbus on September 16th in the 83rd minute.

On June 4, 2008, Villarreal of La Liga, the premier Spanish soccer league, agreed in principle with MLS and the New York Red Bulls to sign Altidore for roughly $10 million or 7.4 million Euros. Altidore's fee is the largest fee paid for any MLS player. On September 14, 2008, Jozy made his La Liga debut, coming on as a second half substitute against Deportivo La Coruna and on November 1, 2008, Altidore became the first American to score in La Liga when he came on in the 90th minute and scored against Athletic Bilbao.

Although Jozy Altidore is an American and a prominent member of the U.S. Men's National Team, he is also aware and proud of his Haitian roots. He counts his parents, Joseph and Giselle, as his role models and in November 2006, Jozy went to Haiti along with his Red Bull teammates, Seth Stammler and Haitian-American soccer player Jerrod Laventure, as part of a six-day service trip for Yélé Haiti, the charitable organization of Wyclef Jean, a Grammy-award winning artist of Haitian descent.

Sidebar 2: Joanne Borgella

Joanne Borgella is a singer of Haitian descent who was a finalist on season 7 of American Idol in 2008. She is also a plus-size model represented by Wilhelmina Models, one of the largest and most successful model management companies in the world. Joanne was born in Oyster Bay, Long Island on May 29th, 1982, to Joel Borgella M.D. and Paule Danielle Ford who are both from Haiti. Her parents are the founders of Radio Tropicale, the first international Haitian radio station. Dr. Joel Borgella was also a presidential candidate in Haiti's 2006 presidential elections.

Joanne performed in her first recital at the age of thirteen. "[The recital] was definitely one of my most memorable experiences!" laughs Joanne, as she recalls dressing up in Christmas spirit singing the holiday classic, Silent Night. "After that day, I knew I was meant to be an entertainer being on that stage I felt at home -- I was meant to sing."

Joanne's big break in the entertainment industry occurred in 2005 when Joanne earned one of the coveted spots on the Oxygen Channel's groundbreaking special created by Mo'Nique of Queens of Comedy and The Parkers fame, entitled "Mo'Nique's Fat Chance." Joanne took the competition very seriously, and ended up victorious, winning the title of Miss F.A.T. (which stands for Fabulous And Thick). Shortly after her victory, Joanne was asked to perform alongside other famous singers such as Patti Labelle, Joan Osborne, Mary Mary and American Idol 2005 Runner-Up Bo Bice in Oxygen's Holiday Christmas Special in 2006. In 2008, Joanne continued her singing career by auditioning for the talent search reality television show American Idol. After successfully completing "Hollywood Week", the week when contestants are flown out to Hollywood for the chance to become a finalist, Joanne was chosen to be one of the top 12 women and overall top 24 final contestants on the seventh season.

Joanne is represented by Wilhelmina 10/20 division in New York, Miami, and L.A. Ms. Borgella is currently the face of Ashley Stewart, a nationwide plus-size retailer for urban women, Wal-Mart and Macy's. She is also currently one of the faces of Procter & Gamble's new campaign for African American women called "My Black is Beautiful", which celebrates the diverse collective beauty of African-American women and encourages black women to define and promote their own beauty standard. As the result of her modeling career, Joanne has been featured in African American magazines such as Essence and Jet. Joanne has also been the face of Torrid and Kohl's department store and was featured in ads in Seventeen and In Style magazine.

Joanne is also very proud of her Haitian roots. She has performed at numerous Haitian charity events as a special guest and has also donated food, gifts and clothing to Gonaives, Haiti, which was ravaged by numerous tropical storms and hurricanes in 2008.

Sidebar 3: Reverend Dr. Soliny Védrine

In the United States, Protestantism is growing exponentially as a form of religious affiliation for Haitian Americans. An example of this growth can be seen in the work of one of Boston's most dedicated community members, Reverend Dr. Soliny Védrine. Dr. Védrine is the head pastor of Boston Missionary Baptist Church, a Haitian Baptist Church founded in 1973. He is the Director of Haitian Ministries International at Emmanuel Gospel Center in Boston and a co-founder of a Haitian Evangelical International Crusade which occurs annually in New Providence, Bahamas. As part of Vision Globale de Protestantisme dans le Milieu Haïtien (Global Vision of Protestantism in the Haitian Context), Dr Védrine also coordinates efforts to spread Protestantism among Haitians in Haiti and its diaspora within North America and the Caribbean (the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and St. Martin).

Born in Lazile, Haiti, Dr. Védrine moved to Boston in 1972 with his wife Emmeline after they had lived in New York City. On March 15th, 1973 Dr. Védrine and his wife were able to use an American church building to start a Haitian church group. This church became the Boston Missionary Baptist Church. Their congregation met in that church for almost 8 years. Then they bought an old funeral home and the congregation called that home for 11 years. Then, the funeral home was demolished and then the first Haitian church to be erected in New England was built for a cost of $1.2 million. At the time of an interview in 2004, Dr. Védrine stated that Boston Missionary Baptist Church had a congregation of about 600 at-large Haitian members and about 200 young Haitians who attended church regularly (Dr.Védrine 2004).

As part of his ministry, Dr. Védrine assists Haitians who are need in the United States, the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and St. Martin. In each of these countries, Dr. Védrine brings Haitian pastors together for a program which includes preaching, medical work and counseling for young people of Haitian descent and community leaders. Dr. Védrine also brings groups of Haitians in the United States to Haiti two or three times a year to finish construction on church buildings and clinics. Dr. Védrine will return to Haiti in Summer 2010 to assist in relief and rebuilding.