Exercising Exit, Voice and Loyalty:
A Gender Perspective on Transnationalism in Haiti

Prepared for delivery at the 2003 meeting of the
Latin American Studies Association
Dallas, Texas
March 27-29, 2003-04-01

Sarah Gammage
Centro de Estudios Ambientales y Sociales para el Desarrollo Sostenible

sgammage@bellatlantic.net

Exercising Exit, Voice and Loyalty: A Gender Perspective on Transnationalism in Haiti
Sarah Gammage[1]

Abstract

This article explores gendered patterns of migration and transnationalism in Haiti. A combination of factors has prompted extensive rural-urban migration and emigration over the last three decades. Violence, repression, economic collapse and the implementation of neo-liberal reforms have left many Haitians with few options other than to seek a new life elsewhere. More than twelve percent of Haitians currently live outside of Haiti. Although many Haitians abroad naturalize and take citizenship in host countries, emigration does not mean that ties to their homeland are severed. Indeed, a substantial number of Haitian's remain intimately connected to Haiti: visiting, sending remittances and gifts, investing in land and exercising political voice in Haiti and in their country of residence. This article explores the gender dimension of Haitian migration and transnationalism drawing on Hirschman's typology of exit, voice and loyalty. For many women as well as men, exit has been the only option. But exit is not incompatible with both voice and loyalty. Yet these options are uniquely gendered. Although most analyses of transnational citizenship focus on men, women and women's movements in Haiti have also benefited from transnational organizing and the transnational links forged over the past three decades. Through migration, women have participated in changing the financial architecture and political landscape of Haiti. Expressions of voice and loyalty by women are challenging traditional gender roles in Haiti and contributing to an emerging transnationalism that has profound affects on Haitians and their communities at home and abroad.

Word Count: 9,767

Introduction

For many people, migration is a response to a set of economic, social and political forces that compels them and their families to seek opportunity and freedom elsewhere. Migration can be a desperate act or one of liberation and renewal. Migration to cities and across national borders can also be seen as a feature of globalisation that is intimately linked to the greater integration of markets and economies. Migration patterns follow distinct trends and build on a web of social capital that enables individuals and households to relocate. Although migration can be a costly and wrenching process, it is not one that necessarily severs all contact with the home country. Many migrants continue to maintain close ties with family members left behind, sending back remittances and goods and engaging in the reciprocal exchange of cultures, ideas and financial resources that impact upon the host culture and the sending communities. Work by Hamilton and Chinchilla (1991), Basch *et al* 1994, Laguerre (1998), Grasmuck, and Grosfoguel (1997) and Glick Schiller *et al* (1995) suggest that although migration is not costless, it is increasingly a force that wrests agency from processes of globalisation, changing economic and social institutions and redefining the political landscape in sending and receiving communities and nations.

This article draws on Albert Hirschman's typology of 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty' to explore the gender contours of Haitian migration and transnationalism. Hirschman developed this typology to explore 'repairable lapses' on the part of economic actors and explain how inefficiency and poor performance may be tolerated by a market system that is not purely competitive and immediately self-correcting. Hirschman defines exit and voice as options that can be used to police or correct defective or inefficient behaviour. This analysis is directed at firms, managers, employees and consumers—but can be easily translated to other realms. Hirschman considers the case of a firm or an organisation where its performance deteriorates and the quality of the product or service offered declines. Some customers may simply stop purchasing or consuming the product or service: this is the exit option. As a result, revenues drop, membership declines and managers are compelled to seek ways of correcting for the deterioration in service provision and quality. Another response could be voice: where the firm's customers, or the organisations membership, express their

dissatisfaction to management or to an authority to which management is subordinate. Once again, management is likely to begin to search for and implement remedial action. Finally, loyalty is another response that consumers may choose to exercise. In Hirschman's world view the presence of loyalty makes exit a less likely option. Loyalist behaviour is motivated by a fear of exit and responds to the cost or penalty felt by those who might seek exit as an option. In Hirschman's typology: 'The individual feels that leaving a certain group carries a high price with it, even though no specific sanction is imposed by the group' (Hirschman 1970:98). In defining loyalty, Hirschman notes:

> 'Loyalist behavior, may however, be motivated in a less conventional way. In deciding whether the time has come to leave an organization, members, *especially the more influential ones*, will sometimes be held back not so much by the moral and material sufferings that they would themselves have t go through as a result of exit, but by anticipation that the *organization to which they belong would go from bad to worse if they left*.'(Hirschman 1970:98)

This typology can easily be adapted to view the tensions and conflicts that produce migration and the loyalties that sustain familial and community bonds over great distances. Shifting the focus from firms to nations, consumers to individuals, and membership of organizations to membership of households, communities and political movements—we can define migration as exit; loyalty as remaining in the country or continuing to nourish ties to the country; and voice as seeking political solutions to the factors compel exit. However, these decisions or choices are not mutually exclusive. The migrant may choose to exercise all options sequentially or simultaneously. For some migrants abroad, exit, voice and loyalty are concurrent options and strategies. While remaining abroad, migrants can express voice by organizing to protect their interests as migrants in the host-country and to begin to influence international political discourse or leverage political outcomes in their home country. Similarly, migrants continue to demonstrate loyalty to their family members and relatives or to the hope of their eventual return, sending remittances, investing in land and engaging in transnational enterprises. Finally, the exercise of exit and loyalty has also created the conditions for voice in home and host countries.

The exercise of transnational citizenship and political voice is increasingly a topic of interest in the literature on migration and transnationalism (Fitzgerald, 2001; Goldring, 1999; Portes, 1999; Smith, 1994). The governments of sending nations have begun to recognize the

importance of their expatriate communities as entrepreneurs, consumers of home-produced exports and as political representation abroad or potential advocates of foreign policy positions by host-country governments towards the home country. But as Pessar and Mahler (2001) and Goldring (2001) also note, the exercise of voice is often seen to be a male prerogative. Certainly, Jones-Correa (1998) emphasizes that among Latin American immigrants men have a more outward political perspective than women and are more likely than women to become engaged in transnational political activism. Similarly, Guarnizo and Portes (2001) find that gender exercises a dominant effect in determining the nature and extent of the political activities of migrants in the home and host countries. It would seem, therefore, that without a gendered and transnational optic, women's concerns, activism and political voice as migrants and transmigrants may be ignored or subordinated to definitions of transnational citizenship and scholarship that emphasize the role of male migrants in transnational organizations and political agency by men.

Engendering Migration

The growing body of research in the social sciences on gender and globalisation explores a variety of different characteristics of 'globalism' examining the causes and consequences of the greater integration of markets, peoples and ideas in the latter part of the 20th century (Moghadam, 1994; WLDI, 1993; Rowbotham and Mitter, 1994; Peters and Wolper, 1995; Mohanty, 1997; Sahgal and Davis, 1992). Sassen (1996) partitions the recent literature on the feminisation of globalisation into three distinct chronological phases that describe the history of gendering in the global economy (Sassen, 1996). The first phase she identifies draws attention to the subsidies that women provide to male waged labour through their household production and subsistence farming and can be summarized in the work of Boserup (1970) and Deere (1976). The second phase is described by the extensive literature on the internationalization of manufacturing production and the feminisation of the proletariat. The third phase of scholarship that Sassen delineates is associated with the process of transformation of women's subjectivities and identities as they are expressed in women's notions of membership and inclusion or exclusion from enclaves, groups or associations that are in flux or are being redefined by a process of internationalization. Sassen highlights the example of the role that migration plays in these transformations:

'Among the richest and most promising is the new feminist scholarship on women
immigrants, which focuses, for example, on how international migration alters gender
patterns and how the formation of transnational households can empower women' (Sassen
1996:3).

Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994, 1999) also emphasizes an analysis of migration that recognizes
how key institutions that affect or shape the migration decision are distinctively gendered.
Similarly, work by Mahler (1999) and Pessar (1999) echoes the importance of an analysis of
migration and transnationalism that considers how roles and responsibilities differ for men
and women as migrants and how the experience of migration is challenging the
configuration of these roles in the home and host country. Although scholars such as
Guarnizo and Portes (2001) contend that transnational political action is socially bounded
across national borders and appears to reproduce pre-existing power asymmetries, Pessar
(1999) stresses a more nuanced interpretation of transnationalism where migration can
simultaneously reinforce and challenge the patriarchy in its multiple forms.

Theories of migration, identity politics and transnationalism are as much in flux as the
people whose movements are being considered. However, there are certain characteristics to
the literature that emphasize particular experiences of displacement and relocation.
Grasmuck and Grosfoguel (1997) point out that despite the complexity of the subject matter
there is a dominant emphasis on the male experience that relegates women to a secondary
position:

'While there have been important exceptions, many theoretical accounts of different
immigrant trajectories in America remain essentially stories of men (Waldinger and
Gilbertson 1994). This bias is problematic because gender dynamics can be highly influential
in affecting the social outcomes of immigrant communities by interaction with the structure
of opportunities that local environments provide. The fate of female migrants is not always
the mirror image of their male counterparts especially when high rates of family disruption
accompany the process.' (Grasmuck and Grosfoguel 1997: 342)

The failure to incorporate a gendered focus in the analysis of migration and transnationalism,
in combination with a disproportionate emphasis on the migrant as the protagonist, ignores
the experience of those who remain in the home country. Those who stay may have also
shared in the migration decision. Furthermore, those who stay often bear the burden of

increased work-loads, and shoulder the responsibility to repay debts assumed in order to send the migrant abroad.

Drawing on work by Pessar (1999) and Mahler (1999) this article contends that migration, whether national or international, prompts qualitative shifts in the realm of the personal and the political, changing the role that women play as providers and caregivers and constructing new identities for women in sending and receiving communities. In some cases these transformations are positive and these new identities are empowered. In other cases, migration and displacement has reinforced traditional roles and responsibilities and contributed to the further impoverishment of women. In the following sections I provide a brief history of the Duvalier dysnasty, violence, political repression and economic collapse as the preconditions for exit from Haiti. Subsequently, I examine each of the three categories of exit, loyalty and voice highlighting the role that women have played in the exercise of each. While migration is not costless, and the transformations engendered by exit are not painless, gender roles and responsibilities are in flux in Haiti and some are being challenged as a result of the simultaneous exercise of exit, voice and loyalty. What follows is an exposition of exit voice and loyalty in the Haitian context linking these choices and outcomes to the history of repression, violence, economic collapse and the ongoing struggle to define a democratic state.

Haiti: A Brief History of Repression, Economic Collapse and Flight

The history of internal and international migration in Haiti is one characterized by a repressive state, the indiscriminate exercise of violence, precipitous economic decline and rising poverty (Portes and Stepick 1986; Preeg 1996). By the late 1980s, the combination of an oppressive state, the collapse of domestic agriculture and rising levels of poverty spurred a massive exodus. Although many of the migrant flows in Haiti have been internal, a substantial number of those in flight from rural areas or from state oppression have set their sights on the US, Canada and the Bahamas.[2] The first wave of Haitian immigrants to the United States in the 1960s were distinct from those to arrive in the latter part of the 20th century. More than a third of those fleeing the Duvalier regimes were professional or white collar (Eide, 1999; Laguerre, 1997). Subsequently, the majority of those arriving have been impoverished rural migrants with little education, a substantial number of whom arrive in boats in South Florida seeking political asylum (Grasmuck and Grosfoguel, 1997).

The second Duvalier regime began to crumble in the early 1980s in response to a mobilized citizenry that took to the streets. New coalitions of power began to form and the military that had been largely subject to the dictates of the Duvalier family rose to take power. The *Conseil National de Gouvernement* that took over in February 1986 was a military junta that contained both civilians and high-ranking military personnel unaccustomed to executive office. The rise to power was shaky and tentative, but it was only a matter of time before the *Conseil* reinvented itself in the image of the authoritarianism that it had experienced at the hands of Papa and Baby Doc.

By 1988, the numbers of documented Haitian immigrants admitted to the United States more than doubled (see Figure 1). The numbers of undocumented Haitian immigrants also rose, estimates are that almost 100,000 undocumented Haitian immigrants entered the United States during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Indeed, boats intercepted 25,551

---

[2] Cross-border migration is not a new phenomenon. The historic relationship between Haiti and the Dominican Republic laid down a network of cross-border alliances rooted in the emerging post-colonial sugar trade. Seasonal migration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic has been etched into the patterns of agricultural labor for over 400 years (Justice Economique 1999; Gavigan 1997). However, the principal

Haitians attempting to land on US shores between 1981 and 1991, returning these potential migrants to Port-au-Prince (Gavigan 1997; INS data).

The popular movement grew during the 1980s fuelled by economic and logistical support from the diaspora community and propelled by the solidarity generated through the shared experience of widespread the repression. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, an ex-Salesian father and a representative of the *tilegliz*, a grassroots Catholic movement, emerged at the forefront of the political uprising. Aristide captured the popular vote and won a landslide victory with two-thirds of all votes cast, becoming the first democratically elected president in February 1991. It is interesting to note that the numbers of migrants leaving Haitian shores dropped dramatically under the first Aristide government. Gavigan (1997) reports that fewer than 1,200 Haitians attempted to migrate in 1990.

The Cédras regime installed itself in September of 1991 assuming power in a series of swift retaliations against the Aristide government and the *lavalas* movement that supported him. The ruthless imposition of power and the continued human rights violations under the Cédras regime prompted the Organization of American States to declare an embargo calling for the imposition of stringent economic sanctions that restricted trade and financial flows and froze the assets of key members of the coup leadership (Chomsky, 1999). Both Mexico and Venezuela cut off supplies of oil to Haiti bring Port-au-Prince to a virtual standstill and prompting long electricity blackouts as electricity generation came to a virtual halt.

Haiti experienced a dramatic deterioration in economic and social conditions during the embargo period (Lundahl and Silié, 1998; IMF, 1995). Multilateral and bilateral donors suspended disbursements in 1991, exports declined and balance of payments deficits grew substantially. Real GDP declined by twenty-eight percent over the period 1991-1994. The trade and payments embargo imposed upon Haiti in May 1994 shut-down industry and paralysed the economy. Per capita GDP fell almost six percent per year between 1991 and 1994. Foreign direct investment dried up and capital flight sky-rocketed. Investment contracted from eleven percent of GDP in 1991 to approximately two percent in 1994.

---

international destinations for the majority of Haitians fleeing state repression and poverty in the latter part of the twentieth century have been the United States and Canada.

Savings turned sharply negative, falling from -1.6 percent of GDP in 1991 to -5.2 percent in 1994 (IMF, 1995).

Throughout the coup and embargo period, migration continued unabated, becoming the central preoccupation of US policy toward Haiti under the Clinton administration. Between 1991 and 1997 approximately 220,000 Haitians, or almost 3.5 per cent of the total population of Haiti migrated to the United States (INS, 1999). Sanctions were applied in an attempt to force the Cédras regime to its knees and facilitate the return of Aristide. When this failed, Clinton ordered the invasion of Haiti. The motivation for this invasion was also couched in terms of the need to staunch the flow of Haitian migrants to US shores. In his 1994 speech, Clinton described the cost of the regime in terms of US tax dollars spent on refugee aid, stating that over $200 million had been spent to support Haitian refugees in Guantanamo and the United States. The goals of the invasion were to restore democracy and to end the refugee crisis:

> 'Three hundred thousand more Haitians, 5 percent of their entire population, are in hiding in their own country. If we don't act, they could be the next wave of refugees at our door. We will continue to face the threat of mass exodus of refugees and its constant threat to stability in our region and control of our borders.' (New York Times, September 16, 1994 cited in Chomsky, 1999)

As a result of the US invasion. Aristide was returned to power on October 15, 1994 after 1,111 days in exile in Venezuela and Washington DC. During his exile, Aristide signed an agreement with the Paris Club of international creditors, which many feel committed Haiti to a neo-liberal future. This agreement set the seal on the subsequent reform package that was embraced in the following years (Weisbrot, 1997; McGowan, 1997; Stotzky, 1997). Despite these measures, and some might even say because of them, emigration from Haiti has continued. Poverty has not been addressed, and the fragile democracy continues to be beleaguered by violence.

Exit: Internal and Cross-Border Migration

> 'Some people get to America and some people die. Me, I'll take either one. I'm just not taking
> Haiti anymore'. (A young male Haitian migrant quoted in Finkel, 2000:50).

Boserup (1970) identifies a series of gender-specific push- and pull-factors such as the availability of economic opportunities that impel men and women to migrate and socio-cultural factors that sanction or limit their mobility. These socio-cultural factors play an important role in shaping men's and women's migration patterns and trends and the scholarship that interprets these trends. Indeed the literature on gender and migration is replete with examples of male migrants determining when and how to migrate, and women and children being swept along in the process, or brought to the host country once the male migrants have settled (Lee, 1966; Mincer, 1978). Mincer (1978) developed a theory of the 'tied mover' or 'tied stayer' where the migration decision rests on a determination of the net family costs and benefits of migration; where those who stay or move do so based on the joint calculus of family as opposed to private or individual benefit. It was assumed that women were disproportionately 'tied movers' accompanying spouses and facing reduced labour market options as a result of their joint migration decision (Jacobsen and Levin, 1997; Baker and Benjamin, 1997). Such analyses subordinate women's roles in the migration decision and contribute to their invisibility as migrants who exercise both agency and choice.

The literature on migration in Haiti tends to emphasize similar dichotomies of power and agency for male and female migrants. There are a variety of explanations for the general belief that women do not initiate migration in Haiti and are not leaders in the migration process. Firstly, that scholarship which does not consider women to be protagonists in the migration decision is unlikely to find that they are. Secondly, that the analysis of migration is beset by problems of inadequate data and imperfect record keeping by nation states. And finally, that the processes and filtering mechanisms through which women seek exit and obtain entry into host countries are uniquely gendered de-emphasizing women's agency and magnifying their dependency. It appears that the system through which women pass as they seek and obtain entry to host nations is not impartial in the way that women migrants are registered and subsequently admitted as immigrants.

Broadly speaking there are two trends that characterize population movements in Haiti: rising rural-urban migration and massive out-migration to the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. These population flows are differently composed of men and women and have affected men and women in distinct forms. Internal migration in Haiti is dominated by women (twice as many women as men migrate from rural to urban areas), whereas cross-border migration is disproportionately a male phenomenon (Laguerre, 1998; Akman, 1992). Men disproportionately migrate seasonally or semi-permanently to the Dominican Republic seeking employment on plantations and farms harvesting sugar cane and bananas (CARE, 1997a,b). Women tend to migrate to urban areas seeking employment as domestic employees or in export processing zones.[3]

The portrayal of internal migration as distinct from that of out-migration fails to emphasize commonalities in the impact on sending households: the net effect on household formation is to contribute to rising rates of female-headed and female-maintained households throughout Haiti. Currently the DHS estimate that forty-eight per cent of urban and thirty-three per cent of rural households are headed by women (DHS, 1994). Earlier census data reveals that the percentage of female-headed households has increased dramatically in rural areas between 1981 and 1994. In 1981, approximately forty-four percent of all urban households were female headed and 26 percent of all rural households were female-headed (IHSI, 1982). Internal and international labour migration in Haiti has led women to play an increasingly prominent role in agriculture—a sector where returns are declining and yields are falling. In 1981, women made up 30 percent of the agricultural labour force. By 1999, this figure had risen to a little over 37 percent (IHSI, 1982; Charmes 2000). The few available data indicate that poverty is being feminised in rural areas (Gammage and Jumelle, 2000; Correia, 1998; Anglade 1986). Although the feminisation of poverty and agricultural production places increased burdens upon women as workers and care-provides, it has also given rise to a new political consciousness as women emerge at the forefront of political

---

[3] Khoo et al (1985) observe a similar dynamic in their study of rural-urban migration. They note that the causes and consequences of female migration appear to be different from those of male migration because of the different economic and social roles that women fulfill. They also find distinct patterns of age- and sex-selective migration with women disproportionately migrating to the cities in Latin America, Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

movements in the countryside and the city (Bell, 2001; Charles, 1990, 1995, 2000; Racine, 1999).

A scholarship that fails to emphasize the commonalities of the impact of internal and international migration in Haiti upon shifting gender roles and responsibilities and household formation, contributes de-emphasizing the role of women in the migration process. Some studies of international migration, however, do consider gendered patterns and processes. Laguerre (1998) contends that international migration is gender differentiated at different points in time. Laguerre outlines a cycle of migration using an analysis of the links between Haitian households and subsidiary households in New York city. The initial phase in Laguerre's migration cycle is characterized by the out-migration of a working-age male. The successful migrant establishes a subsidiary household in the host country finding employment and beginning to send remittances back to the core household in Haiti. The flow of remittances can then be used to secure the migration of other household members. As the migrants establish themselves in the host country, those who are able to obtain documents do so and are likely to bring other household members over under family reunification programs. According to Laguerre, the initial phases of outmigration are disproportionately male, and the later phases of documented migration are dominated by women (Laguerre, 1998, 1978).[4]

Certainly, Finkel's grueling account of a boat full of aspiring migrants to the United States emphasizes that the majority of those willing to take the risk and set sail for US shores were men (Finkel, 2000). Of the forty-six people aboard the boat, only five were women. The boat was intercepted at sea after only two days of sailing. All on board were suffering from dehydration and exhaustion, several were in critical condition and had to be hospitalised. All the migrants were placed in a detention centre on Great Inagua Island in the Bahamas. None of the potential migrants qualified for refugee status and all were returned to Port-au-Prince (*ibid*).

---

[4] This finding parallels the Mexican experience which reveals distinct gendered trends in migration patterns and flows with male migrants dominating undocumented flows and women being disproportionately among new legal immigrants (Bustamante *et al* 1998).

The processes and filtering mechanisms by which women seek exit and through which they obtain documented and undocumented entry to the host country are also uniquely gendered. The fact that more Haitian men than women attempt undocumented passage to the United States may be indicative of the risks involved in the emigration decision, the comparatively high cost of migration, and those socio-cultural expectations about women's role as care-givers and nurturers that restrict their mobility and relocation. Similarly, the data that we have on documented entry and asylum petitions in the United States contribute to the subordination of women as agents and actors who exercise volition in the migration decision, or whose political activity has exposed them to risk and persecution in their home country. The fact that the majority of women migrants enter the United States on reunification visas or accompanying a male partner has contributed to their invisibility and the archetype of the adjunctive wife daughter, or dependent swept along in a process largely without agency. The United States 2000 census reports that women comprise approximately fifty percent of the foreign born population resident in the United States and little more than fifty-five percent of all immigrants admitted in 1999. In 1999, women made up fifty-six percent of all Haitian immigrants admitted into the United States. Table 1 reveals that slightly more male than female migrants from all countries are single when they immigrate to the United States.[5] Women who immigrate are far more likely to be married (fifty-nine percent of women versus forty-one percent of men), widowed (eighty-seven percent of women versus thirteen percent of men), divorced (sixty-six percent of women versus thirty-four percent of men) and separated (sixty-nine percent of women versus thirty-one percent of men).[6]

At the beginning of the fiscal year 1999, there were 14,823 Haitians with asylum cases pending with the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS 1999), a little under 40 percent of these were women. Data on asylum granted indicate that men appear to outnumber women among the applicants for and recipients of asylum in the United States (Human Rights Watch 1997; Table 2).

---

[5] Unfortunately, a gender breakdown of visa categories and civil status are not available for each country. These figures are aggregates for all migrants entering the United States.

[6] These categories of civil status are difficult to apply to immigrants from countries such as Haiti where unions are complex and accompaniment can take many forms (Lowenthal 1984).

Marleine Bastien, director of Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami a Haitian rights advocacy group in Miami firmly states: 'The system itself is biased against women applicants for asylum—largely because of the stereotype that women are not political activists. This is compounded by the fact that many of women's political activities in Haiti were a natural extension of their caring and household responsibilities: preparing food for the Lavalas movement, organizing in the market place, bringing together other women in the fields. Where women were excluded from the decision-making process by the movement, they were not deemed to be political activists by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the United States. Nonetheless they were targeted as political activists in Haiti and repressed, murdered and tortured for their political involvement.' (Interview April 3, 2002).

Evidence presented by Human Rights Watch would also support Marlein Bastien's claim that women are less likely to apply for and receive asylum in the United States (Human Rights Watch 1997). In February 1994, the US Embassy's refugee coordinator in Port-au-Prince, estimated that only twenty-five percent of the principal applicants for asylum were women. Human Rights Watch documented the case of a Haitian women who was granted asylum in the United States by the US Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) in May 1993. The BIA ruled that, after being gang-raped by three soldiers who broke into her home and identified her as an Aristide supporter, she had demonstrated a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of her political opinion because she had 'suffered grievous harm in direct retaliation for her support of and activities on behalf of Aristide' (Human Rights Watch 1997). This case set an unheard of precedent, furthering the cause of women's human rights and their rights as migrants seeking asylum in the United States. Human Rights Watch notes: '[t]his is the first BIA decision that explicitly recognizes rape as a form of grievous harm that could be imposed in retaliation for political activities. In May 1995, BIA formally designated the case as a binding precedent for future asylum adjudication and thus officially acknowledged that women may suffer persecution in the form of rape' (Human Rights Watch 1997:2).

Because of the inadequacy of the data on Haitian immigration to major host nations such as the United States and Canada, and given the absence of a comprehensive household survey in Haiti it is difficult to say categorically who is migrating and when they leave. Furthermore,

the gendered nature of the process by which individuals seek and obtain entry to host nations, and through which their entry is official recorded, obscure the role that women play as protagonists in the migration decision. It is clear from the fragments of information that are available, however, that women are exercising the option of exit and leaving rural communities to go to the cities or emigrating from Haiti in the hope of gaining residence abroad.

Loyalty: Sending Remittances Home and Changing the Financial Landscape

While there are many motivations for migration, among these, the goal of obtaining employment and being able to send remittances back to the home country features prominently in the life stories of Haitian migrants (Finkel, 2000; Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 1999; Lundahl, 1992). For the sending family, remittances are often the hoped-for product of an extremely costly investment. Lundahl (1992) notes that 'there should be no doubt that emigration has become one of the most important, perhaps even *the* most important social insurance mechanism in contemporary Haiti' (Lundahl, 1992:396). Estimates of the amount of remittances that enter the Haitian economy vary substantially from between US$400 and US $810 million in remittances each year (Laguerre, 1998; World Bank News, 1997; IADB, 2001; Orozco, 2002). The remittances are sent through a variety of channels and mechanisms using transfer companies that have been established by Haitian Americans in the US such as ZIN in Boston and HATREXCO and CAM in New York and Boby Express in Miami; Western Union[7], the Banque Haitienne de Development, FONKOZE, other banks, or through courier.

These financial flows, can be seen as an expression of loyalty to family members and friends and to the preservation of a hope that the migrant may one day return home. Glick-Schiller and Fouron (1999) report the case of Yvette, a fifty-five year-old Haitian immigrant to the United States who had spent 13 years living outside of Haiti. Yvette sent remittances back home regularly to family and friends supporting a broad network of people in Haiti. Although Yvette had taken US citizenship she planned to retire to Haiti. For Yvette, taking

---

[7] Currently Western Union has over 70 agents operating in more than 45 separate locations in Haiti (http://www.westernunion.com/caribbean/index, accessed December 2001).

citizenship was not an attempt to sever relations with Haiti, but to guarantee that she might return with a steady and secure income from her Social Security contributions that would support her in her retirement in Haiti. Similarly, Kerner (1991) quotes another Haitian woman resident in the United States:

> 'My husband is dead, it's been 8 years since he died, and I'm taking care of bills here and in Haiti... I'll give you an example: If I quit my job now, what would I do for the bills here and in Haiti? Because once the month starts, in 15 days, they start watching the mail to see when I am sending the money. Well, I can tell you, if I leave my job, my whole family would die, because I'm the one keeping them afloat.' (Kerner 1991:4 cited in Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1999:164).

Remittances clearly provide insurance for poor households to withstand income shocks. As such an insurance mechanism they also appear to be disproportionately important for female-headed and female-maintained households in sending and receiving communities. A recent household survey in the West and Central Plateau region reports that slightly more female-headed households than male-headed households receive remittances: six percent as compared with four percent (See Table 3). These remittances make up approximately forty-three per cent of total household income for female-headed households and twenty-nine per cent of total household income for male-headed households receiving remittances.[8] Although the receipt of remittances is low in this rural sample (approximately five percent of all households reported receiving cash remittances) thirty-six percent of all households reported receiving gifts as regular contributions from family members and extended kin no longer in the household or the community. Gifts disproportionately accrued to female-headed households in this sample: a little over sixty-one percent of all female-headed households reported receiving gifts. These gifts were estimated as being equivalent to nineteen percent of the total household income for female-headed households. For male-headed households, gifts were valued at less than five percent of total household income. Although not all gifts are transnational, the majority of these gifts originated from members of extended family networks and fictive kin[9] with ties to migrants in the city and abroad.

---

[8] The average annual receipt of remittances was 13,459 *gourdes* for female-headed households and 6,726 *gourdes* for male-headed households.

[9] Fictive kin are extrahousehold 'family' members bound by virtue of constructed ritual or social ties such as co-parents, god-parents, or patrons. Typically the association is expressed in terms of a familial relationship marèn (godmother), komè (co-mother).

Although the evidence suggests that the majority of households in receipt of remittances in Haiti are urban, international migrants are increasingly from rural areas. Data from the 1990 and 2000 US census indicate that overtime fewer Haitian immigrants to the United States have a high school degree and that the proportion of those with more than a high school degree are declining (Catanese, 1999; US Census, 2000). This is consistent with a greater proportion of rural migrants among those seeking and gaining entry into the United States. A rural survey financed by CARE in the Norwest of Haiti[10] found that almost twenty-five percent of the survey respondents reported receiving remittances from family members who had emigrated (CARE, 1997a).[11] These relatives sent average annual remittances of a little over 1,900 *gourdes* or US$119 (*ibid*). This figure corresponds to a little over half of the average annual income reported for households surveyed in the northwest. Female-headed households and households headed by married women with absent husbands received substantially more remittances in cash and kind than male-headed households (*ibid*). For many households, the ability to capture remittances is key to diversifying income and lifting these households out of poverty (Gammage and Jumelle 2000; CARE 1997b).

Remittances to Haiti are changing the landscape of capital flows, securing household incomes, funding home-town associations and grass roots organizations and changing financial and social institutions. Figure 2 reveals that between 1989 and 1991 estimated remittances were on a par with official development assistance. Subsequent estimates of remittance inflows indicate that remittances may be more than threefold the foreign currency receipts from overseas aid and from exports (fob) (Orozco, 2002; World Bank, 2002). NGOs such as FONKOZE and national financial organizations such as the Banque Haïtienne de Development have created innovative and low cost mechanisms of capturing and channelling migrant remittances to their family members. FONKOZE is an economic alliance of peasant organizations, women's collectives, cooperatives, religious groups and credit unions. FONKOZE has an explicit social and political mission to promote democratic and transparent governance, upholding the rights of its citizenry and according full participation of civil society organizations. As part of its banking and financial services,

---

[10] The survey was conducted in Anse Rouge, Baie de Henne, Basin Bleu, Port de Paix, Mole Sant Nicolas, Jean Rabel and Bombardopolis.
[11] This figure declined between 1994 and 1996 from 25 percent to 19 percent (CARE 1997b).

FONKOZE transfers remittances from the US to Haiti through the City National Bank of New Jersey. FONKOZE has eighteen branch offices in every department in Haiti that provide savings accounts, currency exchanges, literacy training and business development funds and services. FONKOZE maintains a 1-800 number to allow Haitians to deposit money and permitting the recipients to collect their remittances in their home department. FONKOZE charges a flat fee of $10 for this service irrespective of the quantity of funds transferred but requires the beneficiaries of remitting migrants to open an account with a minimum deposit of $4. By 2000, FONKOZE provided 12,899 savings accounts for the previously unbanked, many of whom live in rural areas. Funds are usually available the same day or within twenty-four hours of receipt of the remittances in the City National Bank of New Jersey. Both women and men remit through FONKOZE in roughly equal proportions, sending an average of between $150 and $200 a month. Similarly, sister parishes and small business use the FONKOZE remittance service. Parishes in New York, New Jersey and Florida typically send between $500 and $1,000 a month and transnational businesses, mostly owned by Haitians, send between $1,000 and $1,500 a month.[12]

In contrast, the Banque Haïtienne de Development (BHD) is a commercial for profit bank and a mortgage agency with fifty-one percent of its capital owned by cooperatives and credit unions in Haiti.[13] The BHD provides a similar transfer service to remitters charging ten percent of the total transfer in fees, of which five percent remain with the collecting branch and five percent go to the distributing branch. Randolph Voyard of the BHD estimates that of the total amount remitted to Haiti, twenty percent is channelled through national banks, 50 percent goes through commercial transfer houses such as Western Union and the rest goes through NGOs, informal channels and personal couriers.[14]

As remittances flows increase, new opportunities are opening for the unbanked and impoverished sectors as well as for the private sector creating a burgeoning formal and informal financial apparatus that transfers, exchanges and deposits dollar remittances. Currently, there are ten locally incorporated banks (Promobank, Unibank, Banque de

---

[12] Interview with the customer service of FONKOZE in the United States March 5, 2002.

[13] No individual can own more than 10 percent of the bank's capital.

[14] Randolph Voyard, presentation at an Inter American Development Bank conference on the productive use of remittances in March 2001.

l'Union Haitienne, Sogebank, Socabank, Inter-Continental, Capital Bank and the very small Banque Industrielle et Commerciale d'Haiti) and two foreign banks (Bank of Nova Scotia, Citibank) in operation in Haiti. There are also two state banks (Banque Populaire Haitienne and Banque Nationale de Credit), a private development finance institution (SOFIDES), and two mortgage banks (BCI and Sogebel). Seven of these Haitian banks list a further 13 separate US banks as their correspondent organizations for the transfer of funds to Haiti, creating a lattice of financial institutions in Haiti that channel remittances to family and friends of migrants.

Remittances do more than subsidize consumption (World Bank, 1998; Woodson and Schrag-James, 1997).[15] Those households in receipt of remittances in the West and Central Plateau region of Haiti were more likely to operate a microenterprise or undertake petty trade. FONKOZE reports that remittances are often used for small business transactions and to purchase assets for micro-enterprises. Women are approximately eighty-five percent of the total portfolio of beneficiaries of the small loan program operated by FONKOZE. Many of these women are *ti marchand* or small merchants whose businesses have grown through the receipt of remittance capital. These women refer friends and family to the FONKOZE remittance service in the United States to transfer some of their earnings and make transnational investments. Increasingly, the *ti marchand* supported through small credit loans from FONKOZE are transnational both in their receipt of remittances and through their purchase of goods and inventory in the Dominican Republic, Miami, Panamá and the Bahamas.[16]

Although few data are available on men and women who remit to Haiti, it is obvious that both do so frequently and that the amounts sent are not inconsequential. DeWind (1987) finds that a little over 90 percent of a sample of 497 Haitians in New York sends remittances to Haiti (DeWind 1987).[17] Furthermore, DeWind (1987) reports in his study that Haitian women send larger amounts of money than Haitian men, with women heading female-

---

[15] This finding is similar to that by Woodruff and Zenteno (2001) who conclude from their analysis of over 6000 small firms in urban Mexico that remittances made up more than 20 percent of the capital invested in microenterprises.

[16] Interview with Anne Hastings, FONKOZE Haiti, March 6, 2002.

headed households sending the largest amounts of remittances (see Table 4). That these remittance flows may be more important for female headed and female-maintained households emphasizes the importance of a gender analysis that describes the distinct roles and characteristics of men and women engaged in transnational activities and the households receiving remittances. The fact that female heads of household send substantially more remittances to Haiti may reflect traditional gender preferences and gender roles in household maintenance documented widely in the development literature. A growing body of literature confirms that resources in the hands of women are more likely to be channelled towards household expenditures that secure the welfare and well-being of other family members (Thomas 1990,1997). That these preferences and responsibilities for household maintenance persist over distance and time may pay testament to the enduring nature of gender relations where women are primarily responsible for household maintenance and provisioning in Haiti.

Voice: Migration and Political Activism

Migration and transnationalism are redefining the polity in Haiti simultaneously as the impact of the diaspora has consequences for those elites at the privileged core attempting to govern, manage or profit from the diaspora. The Haitian diaspora is redefining the political role and representation of migrants in both the United States and Canada conferring leverage upon them and providing opportunities for organization in support of democratising forces in Haiti. New alliances are being built between North America and Haiti, providing an emerging political platform for cross-border organizing, challenging a narrow locational definition of the nation state, providing funds and generating new power bases for political movements in the host and home country (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1999). Women are emerging as key protagonists in the diaspora movement and among grass roots as well as elite organizations struggling for democracy in Haiti (Charles 1990, 1994).

A factor that has contributed greatly to the prominent role played by Haitian organizations abroad in the political struggle for democracy is the formal extension of the borders of the

---

[17] It is interesting to note that this report was commissioned by Citibank, clearly as a precursor to entering the remittance arena in Haiti and capturing some of the profits from remittance transfer.

nation-state to include transmigrant populations (Itzigsohn, 2000; Glick Schiller *et al,* 1995). In 1991 President Aristide designated the Haitian diaspora the Tenth Department of Haiti adding to the nine departments within the national boundaries. Haitian migrants were thus able to retain a formal right to vote, lobby, demonstrate, run for political office and fund political campaigns. Glick Schiller *et al* write:

> 'By including Haitians in whatever country that they have settled as part of the Haitian nation-state Aristide contributed to a new construction of the postcolonial nation-state. In this construction of Haiti as a borderless state, Haitian territory becomes a social space that may exist within legal boundaries of many nation states'. (Glick Schiller *et al* , 1995:58)

In this act, migrants were constituted as part of the polity, formalizing the role that they would play in defining the emerging democracy and leveraging political outcomes in Haiti and in the host country.

Without a doubt, migration and transnational processes have had significant impacts upon women's political consciousness and organizing in Haiti. Although internal migration may be different in character from out-migration, it has played a significant role in forming and reforming political identities of women in Haiti. The net effect of a rural-urban exodus of women has led to the feminisation of an urban proletariat that has been at the forefront of the democracy movement in Haiti (Charles, 2000, 1995; Racine, 1999). Similarly, the feminisation of agriculture and the displacement of male income earners from the countryside has changed economic roles and may also have contributed to the emergence of rural women as a political force in Haiti. Rural peasant women played a crucial role in the *Mouvman Peyizan Papay* (N'Zengou-Tayo, 1999; Mouvman Peyizan Papay, 1986). Where in 1980, there was one autonomous MPP women's group, in 1991 there were 400 (Charles, 1995). This grassroots organizing effort has mobilized rural workers to advocate for agricultural and economic interests, equitable distribution of resources, equal rights, family planning, and political power.

Internal labour migration has given rise to the feminisation of an urban proletariat in the assembly industry. Assembly manufacture became a focal point for political activism to improve the terms and conditions of employment inspiring creative north-south alliances formed by coalitions of activists, labour unions and concerned consumers (Anner 1998;

NLC 1996). These alliances become a conduit for information about working conditions in the north and south and provide an opportunity for politicisation in both realms. Transnational activism around the terms and conditions of employment in the assembly sector in Haiti has been vocal and strident. The National Labor Committee (NLC) in the United States has provided a focal point for this organization concentrating efforts on the Walt Disney Company in Haiti:

> 'Haitian workers sewing Pocahontas and Mickey Mouse pajamas and other garments for export to the U.S. are forced to endure starvation wages, are robbed of benefits and routinely face inhuman production speed-ups, forced overtime, filthy working conditions and gross sexual abuse'. (NLC 1996:1).

Grass roots organization such as *Batay Ouvriye* were able to organize in a number of assembly plants and successfully negotiated improvements in working conditions in a number of plants, most noticeably at Megatex a major contractor with the Disney corporation (Campaign for Labor Rights 1998). Unfortunately, the Disney corporation eventually closed down production in Haiti stating that: 'sales of the [...] products manufactured in these facilities ha[d] declined sharply' (Chicago Tribune, cited in Anner, 1998:18). Although this result was not what had been hoped for, the campaign and the grass-roots support among Haitian workers in the assembly sector has had a lasting effect on the institutions that oversee employment conditions in the sector. Pressure from the coalition of workers and overseas activists prompted a response by the private sector to address poor working conditions in their factories.[18] The Assembly Industry of Haiti (IDAH) in conjunction with Haitian Manufacturers' Association (ADIH) developed a code of ethics and business conduct that attempted to address the allegations levelled against the industry and required their membership to maintain compliance with labour laws governing hiring practices, minimum wage statutes, benefits rights, the right to organize and the maintenance of adequate health and safety standards (Rourk *et al*, 1998). Significant concerns remain about incentives to full-fill these mandates, there is little evidence that the terms and conditions of employment in this sector have improved (Justice Economique, 1998). The privatisation of state cement factories has called attention to violations of worker rights (*ibid*). Yet the cross-border alliances continue to thrive and the role of national and international NGOs in

---

[18] Groups such as the *Central Autonome des Travailleurs Haitiens* (CATH), *Batay Ouvriye* and *Plateforme Haïtienne de Plaidoyer pour un Développement Alternatif* (PAPDA) were active in this alliance (Justice Economique, 1998).

defining a campaign of solidarity and channelling funds to grass-roots organizations remains an important feature of globalisation that shapes the political terrain in which capitalist labour relations are defined in Haiti.

The diaspora of Haitians throughout the Caribbean and North America, and the distinct choices made by men and women migrants, has moulded the contours of the political map in Haiti. The growth of non-governmental organizations within the diaspora, such as the umbrella group the National Coalition for Haitian Rights, the Haitian Dialogue, the Haitian American Network and the Union of Patriotic Haitian Women in New York, the *Asosiyasyon Fanm Ayisyen* in Boston and Miami and the Rally of Haitian Women in Canada, are important examples. These organizations provide services to Haitian immigrants in their host countries and channel funds and support to partner organizations in Haiti. Groups such as the *Lambi* Fund of Haiti, which supports women entrepreneurs and women's grass roots organizations and *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyen* (SOFA), have representation in Haiti and the United States. Both the *Lambi* Fund and SOFA have worked hard to address women's needs and concerns and raise their profile on the national agenda.

The role of women and women's NGOs in particular has been salient in the formation of contemporary Haitian civil society and the moves toward democratisation. Middle class women first organized for women's civil rights with *La Ligue Feminine d'Action Sociale* (Women's League for Social Action) in 1934 to campaign for higher education access and voting rights. In 1950, they obtained the right to vote. This organization and other elements within the Haitian women's movement was forced underground during the Duvalier period being targeted by repressive forces of the *tonton macoute*. Many of the leaders of the women's movement went into exile, while the remaining activists channelled their efforts through charitable groups in an attempt to avoid persecution. In exile these women did not cease to be politically active. The North American and European Haitian diaspora provided an unprecedented and prominent space for political organizing and, in the 1960's and 1970's, the diaspora proved to be extremely important for women's consciousness-raising. The influence of the North American second wave feminist movement as well as the experience of racism in European and American life helped to shape the dimensions of a feminist consciousness among Haitian immigrants that was disseminated directly and indirectly back

to Haiti (Charles, 1995; LaGuerre, 1998) There are strong links, for example, between Haitian women's organizing in North America and the fall of Duvalier and the move toward democracy (Charles, 1995).

Diaspora immigrants returning to Haiti were prominent participants in the social movements for democratic change in the 1980's. On April 3, 1986, 30,000 women marched in Port-au-Prince championing the cause of democracy and showing solidarity with the popular democratic movement. These organizations received substantial support from diaspora groups as well as from newly formed national NGOs such as ENFORFANM, KAYFANM and the *Centre de Promotion de Femmes Ouvrieres*. Significantly, the ruthless effort on the part of the Duvalier and later the Cédras regimes to, in effect, depoliticize the Haiti majority by repressing and assaulting representatives of all organizations for democratic change had, in fact, the reverse effect. By being targeted as threatening subjects, Haitian women and Haitian citizens generally were instead politicised in an unprecedented fashion. Ironically, after generations of silence and invisibility as non-political subjects, it was the Duvalier and Cédras governments who saw women as threatening, targeted them for suppression and therefore raised feminist consciousness.

Human rights abuses against women increased sharply under the Cédras Regime (1991-1994) and rape, which had been infrequently reported, became much more common (Rey 1999; Fuller 1999; UNICEF 1996). Several indigenous human rights groups began to offer refuge and direct assistance to victims of abuse and one national group (KayFANM) started a safe-house for women. In March of 1993, despite intimidation by the state, women's human rights groups bravely organized a three-day-long conference on violence against women *Premier Rencontre Nationale sur la Violence Faite aux Femmes* (Bell 2001; Fuller 1999). After the return of Aristide, increased pressures from this movement of women's organizations advocated for the creation of a Women's Government Ministry, and a special Commission on Violence Against Women mandated to, among other things, hold Cédras regime personnel accountable for its many abuses against women.

The role of the diaspora community was significant in supporting the movement to address violence against women in Haiti. In September 1994, testimony given by victims and

witnesses at a 'popular tribunal' in Montreal provided bleak but important witness for a targeted campaign of mass rape and terror implicating the highest levels of the military junta in Haiti (Rey 1999). Affidavits presented at the tribunal and later filed with the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington were particularly important in providing testimony that would elevate concerns about violence against women in Haiti to a prominent position on the national and international agenda (Ministère Nationale de la Justice de la République d'Haiti 1997; Human Rights Watch 1995). Partly in reaction to the government's continued failure to implement recommendations from this Commission, women's organizations later formed another milestone in their struggle and held an International Tribunal Against Violence Against Women in Haiti in November of 1997 wherein international human rights groups, local women's organizations, and representatives of the Haitian Ministry converged to investigate, hear testimony and make legislative recommendations regarding women's human rights abuses.

The panel of judges at the International Tribunal was drawn from international experts and representatives of Haitian human rights groups and made unprecedented recommendations. The panel called for the government to work with a coalition of women's organizations to prepare a law for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. It also recommended: legalizing abortion in cases of rape, incest and danger to the woman's health; decriminalizing adultery and introducing it to the civil code as a foundation for divorce proceedings; amending the Civil Code to recognize common-law marriage; establishing a police unit composed of women to receive complaints and conduct investigations on anti-woman violence, and measures to protect plaintiffs and witnesses in trials; establishing shelters for women who are victims of violence or other problems; and adoption by schools of education programs that incorporate principles of non-sexist education, and education on human rights where the rights of women are recognized as human rights (Fuller 1999).

While transnational organizing has proven to be critical to the advancement of the cause of Haitian feminism and human rights in Haiti, the spaces created and exploded by immigration also produce a variety of oppositional consciousness for women makes the process and the place of diaspora very important to understand. Tensions between transnational coalitions and indigenous organizing may be articulated in positions on current policy in the host

country, or in ongoing dialogues between donor groups, diaspora organizations and civil society in Haiti. The Haitian American Community Action Network was inaugurated in February 1997 at St. Jeromes's Church, Flatbush in New York and brought together over 300 Haitians, Haitian-Americans and non-governmental organizations from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Chicago, California, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Florida. The conference was described as an effort to develop common ground, strengthen Haitian's ability to improve their communities and gain more powerful voice in the decisions that affect their lives in the United States. For a number of the attending organizations, this implied a substantial shift in orientation away from a diaspora organization focused primarily on the welfare of Haitians in Haiti, to an organization that also actively embraced a focus on the welfare of Haitians in the United States as citizens and residents. As diaspora organizations refine their political strategies within the host countries and concentrate upon incorporating their members into the polity of the host countries, such tensions naturally emerge.

> 'For a long time, we have been on the outside, playing Haitian politics.....We're behind, but it is not too late'. Tatiana Wah, Chairwoman, Haitian American Alliance (New York Times, 1998)
>
> 'We have a community that in the past has lived on the margins. Now we are starting to focus on our lives here and how everything affects us'. Netlyn Bernard-Samedy (New York Times, 1998)

Despite the success in managing dual nationalities and engaging in bi-local political activism some migrants and transmigrants may never feel entirely welcome in the host country. The focus of their political activism maintains ties to the home country and brings with it many contradictions. For some the disapora movement and its focus may be insufficiently honed to achieve real gains in Haiti. Miriam Merlet a feminist activist and academician in Haiti reports:

> 'I chose to be a Haitian women. I couldn't see myself being forever a nigger in the United States, an immigrant in Canada, or a stranger in Europe. I felt the need to be part of something. This couldn't be the black cause in the United States or the immigration cause in Canada. It could only be the cause of the Haitian people. Thus, I decided to return to Haiti'. (Myriam Merlet, interviewed in Bell 2001:217)

Migration and the contradictions thrown up by the migrant experience provide a fertile ground for reflection on aspects of those ethnic and national traditions that collide or

reinforce gender stereotypes and archetypes of agency and submission. The exercise of voice through exit, and as an expression of loyalty, is clearly a powerful and contradictory force. Voice has been taken by Haitian women exercising their diasporic citizenship and significant change has flourished in Haiti as a result. Immigration law has been challenged in host nations, and the rule of law in Haiti has been expanded and refined to embrace gender concerns. A Women's Ministry has been inaugurated and police and judicial procedures have been modified to identify and prosecute gender-based violence. Yet, tensions remain. The Tenth department is still not recognized constitutionally, and those Haitians who take the citizenship of foreign nations cannot vote simultaneously in their home and host country. The relationship between the diaspora and the domestic polity is at times uneasy and conflicted. Democracy has yet to triumph in Haiti and the Aristide government remains embattled and beset by violence.

Conclusion

Migration as exit responds to economic collapse and is a force that has shaped the dictates of policy in Haiti over the last two decades. The Haitian diaspora has also changed the political landscape within the host countries. The particular impact of exit upon women in Haiti and recourse to exit by women is manifest in gendered patterns of migration, impoverishment and changing household structure. Exit has affected women in many ways: changing the composition of households and contributing to the rise of female-headed and female-maintained households in rural and urban areas. Exit has also contributed to the feminisation of agriculture at a time when the returns to agriculture are decreasing. Consequently, women are emerging at the forefront of a national movement to secure land rights and redistribute wealth to the countryside. Loyalty expressed through the sending of remittances is changing the financial architecture in Haiti, spurring initiatives to provide financial services to the un-banked and prompting the engagement of international banks in the profitable business of transferring remittances from the diaspora community to recipients in Haiti. Remittances offer a minimal safety net to poor households that have no other opportunities to earn foreign exchange. The remission and receipt of remittances is uniquely gendered: remittances appear to be more important for female-headed households. Although both men and women send remittances, there is evidence that women may face

greater incentives to remit. Revealing, perhaps the constellation of pressures and the weight of socialization that enforces traditionally gendered roles of care provision and household maintenance. Yet while traditional roles are reinforced in some arena, they are challenged in others. Migration and transnationalism have redefined the locus of political activism among women in Haiti offering new channels for voice and giving rise to a new discourse on human rights and violence. While the exodus of men and women from the countryside and urban areas is not costless, there have been benefits reaped by individuals and coalitions of activists galvanized by this experience into an activism that has contributed greatly to an emerging if fragile democracy and appears to be furthering the advancement of human rights in Haiti and Haitian rights in the diaspora.

Tables and Figures

Figure 1.

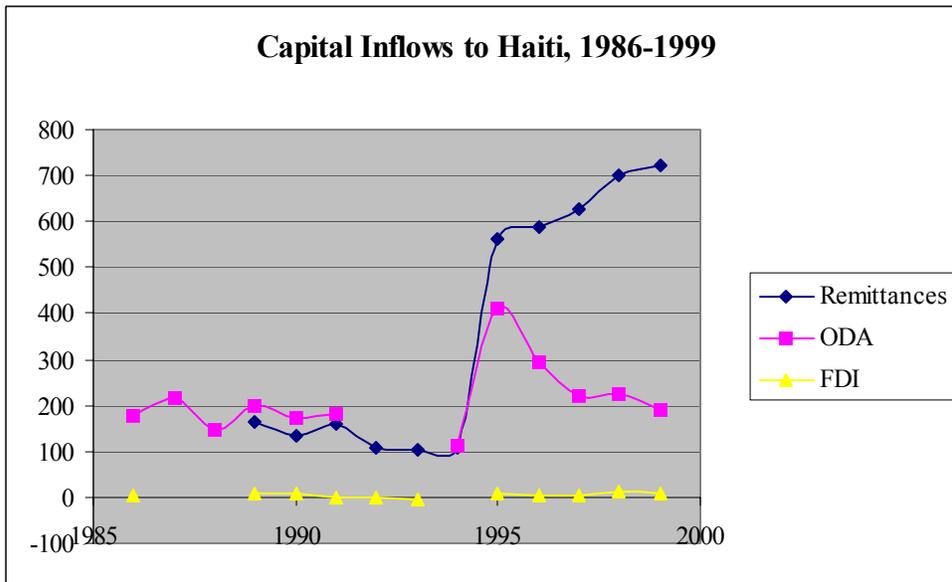### Haitian Immigrants Admitted to the United States
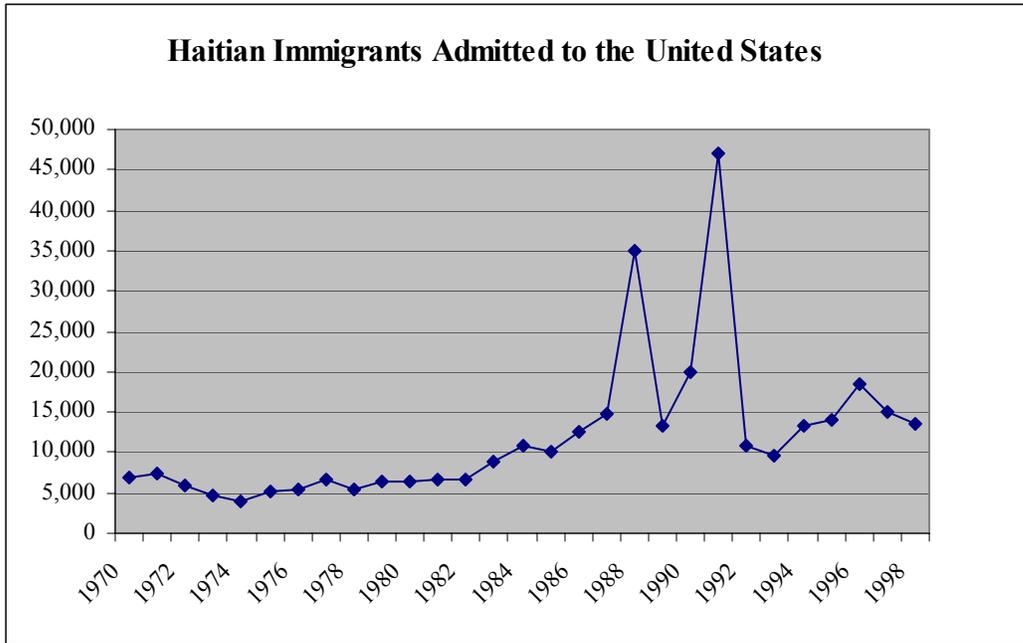
In 1996, the number of undocumented Haitian immigrants resident in the United States was estimated at 105,000 (INS 1998).
Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1970-1999

Figure 2.

Capital Inflows to Haiti, 1986-1999

Source: International Financial Statistics Yearbook 1985-1999; IHSI 1998; IMF 1999

Table 1. Immigrants to the United States in 1999, by Marital Status and Sex

	Total	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Unknown
Male	44.9	51.3	41.1	13.3	33.6	30.6	43.7
Female	55.1	48.6	58.8	86.6	66.3	69.4	53.6

Source: INS 1999, Table 13.

Table 2. Asylum Granted by Gender, 1991-2000

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Men	100.00	81.71	78.01	77.60	70.71	69.19	61.43	60.06	60.63	68.35
Women	0.00	18.29	21.99	22.40	29.29	30.81	38.57	39.94	39.38	31.65

Table 3. Characteristics of Households Receiving Remittances and Gifts in the West and Central Plateau, Percent

CHARACTERISTICS	MALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS	FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS	DIFFERENCE OF MEANS $H_0 : \overline{x_m} - \overline{x_f} = 0$ $H_1 : \overline{x_m} - \overline{x_f} < 0$
Receiving remittances	4.10	6.25	t=-1.57, H_1:0.05
Remittances as a percent of total household income	29.18	43.21	t=-1.83, H_1:0.03
Receiving gifts	26.42	60.71	t=-11.64, H_1:0.00
Gifts as a percent of total household income	4.61	19.19	t=-11.46, H_1:0.00
Current or past migrants	26.50	26.41	t=-0.03, H_1:0.51
Poor[a]	74.58	80.42	t=-2.13, H_1:0.02
Extremely poor	58.80	67.66	t=-2.82, H_1:0.002

[a] Poverty and extreme poverty are defined using 3,321 *gourdes* and 2,384 *gourdes* per person per year using the World Bank definitions applied in Wiens and Sobrado (1998).
Source: Author's analysis of ADRA household survey 1995

Table 4. Annual Remittances Sent by Haitians in New York, 1987, US Dollars

	MEN	WOMEN
Head of Household	1,479.18	1,698.91
Non-Household Head	1,185.86	1,056.95
Total	1,308.65	1,522.77

Source: Reproduced from DeWind (1987)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Akman, G. (1992). *Both Sides Now: Gender Relations in Credit and Agriculture Cooperatives in Rural Haiti,* UMI Dissertation Series. Ann Arbor, MI.

Anglade, M.A. (1986) *L'Autre Moitié du Développement: A Propos du Travail des Femmes en Haïti*, Editions des Alizés, Port au Prince, Haïti

Anner, M. (1998). ʹTransnational Campaigns to Defend Labor Rights in Export Processing Plants in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Haitiʹ Presented at the Latin American Studies Association, September 24-26, Chicago, Illinois.

Baker, M. and D. Benjamin (1997) ʹThe Role of the Family in Immigrants Labor Market Activity: An Evaluation of Alternative Explanationsʹ, American Economic Review, Vol. 84,(4):705-727

Basch, L. N. Glick Schiller, C. Szanton Blanc (1994*) Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States*, USA: Gordon and Breach

Bell, B. (2001) *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women's Stories of Survival and Resistance*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press

Bustamante, J. A. G. Jasso, J.E. Taylor, P Trigueros Legaretta (1998) ʹCharacteristics of Migrants: Mexicans in the United Statesʹ in *Migration Between Mexico and the United States Binational Study, Vol. 1. Thematic Chapters.* U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, Washington D.C.

Boserup, E. (1970) *Women's Role in Economic Development*, New York: St. Martin's Press

Campaign for Labor Rights (1997-1999) Labor Alerts
http://www.summersault.com/~agj/clr/doc_lib.html#disney

Catanese, A. V. (1999) *Haitians, Migration and Diaspora*, Bolder Colorado: Westview Press

CARE (1997a) ʹWomen's Commercial Activities in the Northwest and Northern Artibonite Haiti: A Baseline Survey for the Rural Recapitalization Projectʹ, CARE Haiti, Small Enterprise Activities Development (SEAD) PN-55, July 1997

_____ (1997b) ʹAn Update of Household Livelihood Security in Northwest Haitiʹ, CARE Haiti, Monitoring Targeting Impact Evaluation Unit, December 1997

Charles, C. (1990) ʹFeminism and Power: Haitian Women's Political Struggles in Haiti and the Diaspora, 1930-1990ʹ, City University of New York, unpublished 1990

_____ (1994) ʹTowards a Redefinition of Citizenship, Democracy, and Civil Society: Haitian Women's Struggles During 1980-1990ʹ, unpublished 1994

_____ (1995) 'Gender and Politics in Contemporary Haiti: The Duvalierist State, Transnationalism, and the Emergence of a New Feminism (1980-1990).' *Feminist Studies* 21, (1) Spring: 135-164.

_____ (2000) 'Gender and Development in Haiti: A Report Prepared for the UNDP, New York, February 25.

Charmes, J. (2000) 'Indicateurs Sociaux et Suivi des Conditions de Vie des Ménages en Haïti: Rapport D'Etape', Rapport de la Mission Effectuée pour le PNUD en Haïti, du 7 au 15 Janvier et du 13 au 18 Jnvier 2000

Chomsky, N. (1999) *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order*, New York: Seven Stories Press

Correia, M. (1998) 'Gender and Poverty in Haiti' in *Haiti: The Challenges of Poverty Reduction*, Volume 2, Report No. 17242-HA, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Caribbean Country Management Unit, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, World Bank, Washington DC, August 1998

Deere, C.D. (1976) 'Rural Women's Subsistence Production in the Capitalist Periphery', *Review of Radical Political Economy*, Vol. 9: 9-17

DeWind, J. (1987) 'The Remittances from Haitian Immigrants in New York City', prepared for Citibank, Immigration Research Program, Center for the Social Sciences, Columbia University, November 23, 1987

DHS (1994) Demographic and Health Surveys, Macro International, http://www.measuredhs.com/

Eide, G. M. (1999) 'Haitian Identity: the Effects of Race Through Haitian History and Transnational Migration', unpublished paper

Finkel, M. (2000) 'Desperate Passage', New York Times Magazine, June 18, 2000

Fitzgerald, D. (2001) 'Negotiating Extra-Territorial Citizenship: Mexican Migrants and the Transborder Politics of Community', paper presented at the 2001 Latin American Studies Association, Washington DC, September 6-8, 20001

Fuller, A. (1999) 'Challenging Violence: Haitian Women Unite, Women's Rights and Human Rights', *Association of Concerned Africa Scholars*: Special Bulletin on Women and War.

Gammage, S. and Y. Clement Jumelle (2000). 'The Gender Dimensions of Poverty and Inequality in Haiti: The Case of the Artibonite.' Washington, D.C.: UNDP, CEASDES.

Gavigan, P. (1997) 'Migration Emergencies and Human Rights in Haiti', Inter-American System of Legal Information, Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Paper prepared for the

Conference on Regional Responses to Forced Migration in Central America and the Caribbean, September 30-October 1, 1997

Glick Schiller, N, L. Basch, C.Szanton Blanc (1995) 'From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 68 No. 1: 48-63, Jan. 1995

Glick Schiller, N. and G. E. Fouron (1999) 'Terrains of Blood and Nation: Haitian Transnational Social Fields', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* Vol. 22, (2): 340-366

Goldring, L. (1999) 'Power and Status in Transnational Social Spaces' in L. Pries (1999) (ed) Migration and Transnational Social Spaces, Aldershot: Ashgate

Goldring, L. (2001) 'The Gender and Geography of Citizenship in Mexico-U.S. Transnational Spaces' *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, Vol. 7: 501-537

Grasmuck, S., and R. Grosfoguel (1997) Geopolitics, Economic Niches, and Gendered Social Capital among Recent Caribbean Immigrants in New York City. *Sociological Perspectives* 40: 39-363.

Guarnizo, L.E. and A. Portes (2001) 'From Assimilation to Transnationalism: Determinants of Transnational Political Action among Contemporary Migrants', Unpublished Working Paper, University of California, Davis, April 2001

Hamilton, N. y N. Chinchilla (1991) 'Central American Migration: A Framework for Analysis' *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 26, (1):75-110.

Hirschman, A.O. (1970) *Exit, Voice and Loyalty, Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1994) *Gendered Transitions: Mexican Experiences of Immigration,* Berkeley: University of California Press

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1999) 'Introduction: Gender and Contemporary U.S. Immigration', *American Behavioural Scientist*, Vol. 42, (4):565-576

Human Rights Watch Women's Rights Project (1995). 'Rape in Haiti.' The Human Rights Watch Global Report on Women's Human Rights. Ed. Regan Ralph. New York: Human Rights Watch, pp. 31-56.

Human Rights Watch (1997) 'The Asylum Process', Human Rights Watch http://www.hrw.org/about/projects/womrep/General-40.htm, accessed February 2002

IADB (2001) 'Remittances as a Development Tool', Background Report for the regional Conference, May 17-18, Washington DC, 2001

IHSI (1982) Resultats Anticipes Du Recensement General, Ministere du plan, Institut Haitien de Statistique et D'Informatique, Population et Logement, Port-Au-Prince, 1982

____ (1998) 'Les Comptes Economiques En 1998', Ministere de L'Economie et des Finances, Institut Haitien de Statistique et d'Informatique, Port-au-Prince

IMF (1995) 'Recent Economic Developments' Report prepared by a staff mission approved by the Western Hemisphere Department, February 27, 1995

____ (1999a) 'Haiti: Statistical Annex', IMF Staff Country Report No. 99/118, International Monetary Fund, October 1999, Washington DC

____ (1999b) 'Haiti: Staff report for the 1999 Article IV Consultation', IMF Staff Country Report No. 99/105, International Monetary Fund, September 1999, Washington DC

INS (1970-1999) 'Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service', Department of Justice,
http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/ accessed February 2002

Itzigsohn, J. (2000) 'Immigration and the Boundaries of Citizenship: The Institutions of Immigrants' Political Transnationalism', *International Migration Review* Vol. 34, (4):1126-1154

Jacobsen, J. P, and L. M. Levin (1997) 'Marriage and Migration: Comparing Gains and Losses from Migration for Couples and Singles', *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 78: 688-709

Jones-Correa, M. (1998) 'Different Paths: Gender, Immigration and Political Participation', International Migration Review, Vol. 32, (4):326-349

Justice Economique (1999) 'Migration en République Dominicaine', *Justice Economique*, Octobre, PAPDA, Port-au-Prince.

_____ (1998) 'La Surexplotation des Travailleurs Haïtiens dans les Industries D'Assemblage', Le Bulletin Conjoncture de la PAPDA, Septième Numéro, Juillet, Septembre 1998

Khoo, S., P.C. Smith, J.T. Fawcett (1985) 'Female Rural to Urban Migration in the Third World: Comparative Perspectives and Research Notes', *International Migration Review*, Volume xviii, (4):1245-1263

Laguerre, M.S. (1978) 'Ticouloute and his Kinfolk: The Study of a Haitian Extended Family' in D. Shimkin, E, Shimkin and D. Frate (eds) *The Extended Family in Black Societies*, Mouton, Paris

Laguerre, M.S. (1998) *Diasporic Citizenship: Haitian Americans in Transnational America*, New York: St. Martin's Press

Lee, E. (1966) 'A Theory of Migration', *Demography*, Vol. 3, (1): 47-57

Lowenthal, Ira P (1984). 'Labor, Sexuality and the Conjugal Contract in Rural Haiti.' in C. Foster and A. Valdman, eds, *Haiti Today and Tomorrow: An Interdisciplinary Study*. Lenham: University Press of America. 15-33.

Lundahl, M. (1992) Social Security in Haiti: Informal Initiative in a Welfare-Less State, in Lundahl, M. *Politics of Markets? Essays on Haitian Underdevelopment*, London: Routledge

_____ (1998) 'Towards the Abyss? The Political Economy of Emergency in Haiti', UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research.

Lundahl, M. and R. Silié (1998) 'Economic Reform in Haiti: Past Failures and Future Successes?' Comparative Economic Studies, No 1, Spring: 43:71

McGowan, L. (1997) 'Democracy Undermined, Economic Justice Denied: Structural Adjustment and the Aid Juggernaut in Haiti', Development Gap, Washington DC, January 1997

Mahler, S. (1999) 'Engendering Transnational Migration: A Case Study of Salvadorans', *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 42(4):690-719

Mahler, S. (2001) "Transnational Relationships: The Struggle to Communicate Across Borders', *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, Vol. 7: 583-619

Mincer J. (1978) 'Family Migration Decisions', *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 86, (5): 749-773.

Ministère Nationale de la Justice de la République d'Haiti (1997) Commission Nationale de Verité et Justice', Ministère Nationale de la Justice de la République d'Haiti ,Port-au-Prince 1997

Moghadam, Valentine M. (1994) Identity Politics and Women, Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective, Boulder: Westview Press.

Mohanty, C. T. (1997) Women Workers and Capitalist Scripts: Ideologies of Domination, Common Interests, and the Politics of Solidarity, in J. Alexander and Mohanty, eds. *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, New York: Routledge.

Mouvman Peyizan Papay/Education Development Fund (1986) 'MPP Women: Committed to Permanent Resistance', Peasant, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp

Myoshi, M. (1993) A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State. *Critical Inquiry* 19 (4): 726-751.

National Labor Committee (1996) 'The Richest and the Poorest: Walt Disney and J.C. Penney Caught Illegally Profiting from 12c an Hour Wages in Haiti', News release, January 30, 1996

NCHR (1998) 'Can Haiti's Police Reforms Be Sustained?', National Coalition for Haitian Rights, Washington Office on Latin America, New York, January 1998

New York Times (1998) 'Haitians Striving to Muster Political Clout', Garry Pierre-Pierre, March 16, 1998

N'Zengou-Tayo, Marie-Jose (1998). 'Fanm Se Poto Mitan: Haitian Woman, the Pillar of Society.' *Feminist Review* 59, Summer: 118-142.

Orozco, M. (2002) 'Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean: Money, Markets and their Environment', Inter-American Dialogue

Pessar, P.R. (1999) 'Engendering Migration Studies: The Case of New Immigrants in the United States', *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 42, (4):577-600

Pessar, P.R. and S. Mahler (2001) 'Gender and Transnational Migration', Paper presented at the conference on Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives, Princeton, June 30-July 1, 2001

Peters, J. and A. Wolper, eds. (1995) *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*, New York: Routledge.

Portes, A. and A. Stepick. (1986) 'Flight into Despair: A Profile of Recent Haitian Refugees in South Florida', *International Migration Review* Vol. 20(Summer):329- 350.

Portes, A. (1999) 'Conclusion: Towards a New World - The Origins and Effects of Transnational Activities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* Vol. 22, No. 2, pp 463-477

Preeg, E.H. (1996) *The Haitian Dilemma: A Case Study in Demographics, Development and U.S. Foreign Policy*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC

Racine, M.B., with K.Ogle (1999) *Like the Dew that Waters the Grass*, Washington DC: EPICA publications

Rey, T. (1999) 'Junta, Rape, and Religion in Haiti, 1993-1994', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol. 15, (2):73-100

Rowbotham, S. and S. Mitter, eds. (1994) *Dignity and Daily Bread: New Forms of Economic Organizing among Poor Women in the Third World and the First*, New York: Routledge.

Rourk, P, M. Webber, K. Murphy, M. Knight, C. Beauboeuf, C. Labossiere 'Haiti: Private Sector Assessment', Final Report to the United States Agency for International Development, Coopers and Lybrand, March 1998

Sahgal, G. and N. Y. Davis, eds. (1992) Refusing Holy Orders, Women and Fundamentalism in Britain, London: Virago Press.

Sandoval, C. (1991) U.S. Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World. *Genders* 10: 1-24.

Sassen, S. (1995) 'Immigration and Local Labor Markets', in A. Portes (ed) *The Economic Sociology of Immigration: Essays in Networks, Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship*, Russell Sage Foundation

_____ (1996) 'Toward a Feminist Analytics of the Global Economy', *Indiana Journal of Global Studies*, Volume 4 (1): 7-41.

Smith, L.M. (1994) 'Transnational Migration and the Globalization of Grassroots Politics', *Social Text*, Vol. 38:15-33

Stotzky, I.P. (1997) *Silencing the Guns in Haiti: The Promise of Deliberative Democracy*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press

Thomas, D. (1990) 'Intrahousehold Resource Allocation: An Inferential Approach', *Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 25:635-664

Thomas, D. (1997) 'Incomes, Expenditures, and Health Outcomes: Evidence on Intrahousehold Resource Allocation', in L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H, Alderman (eds) *Intrahousehold Resource Allocation in Developing Countries: Models, Methods, and Policy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

UNICEF (1996) 'Violence Exercées sur les Femmes et les Filles en Haïti', CIFD/UNICEF, port-au-Prince, 1996

US Census (2000) 'Educational Attainment of the Latin American Foreign-Born Population by Sex and Region of Birth: March 2000', US Current Population Survey, US Census Bureau.

Weisbrot, M. (1997) 'Structural Adjustment in Haiti', *Monthly Review*, Vol. 48, (8):25-39

Woodson, D.G., and J. Schrag-James (1997) 'Livelihood Systems' in Woodson, D.G., M.A. Barro, T. J. Finan, D.A. Giuliano, C. Bart, K. Coelho, J. Schrag-James, A. Bocar N'Diade, J. Manthei and H. Ilahiance (1997) 'A Baseline Study of Livelihood Security in the Departments of the Artibonite, Center, North, Northeast and West, Republic of Haiti', prepared for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency and the Interim Food Security Information System by the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arisona, May 1997

Woodruff, C. amd R. Zenteno (2001) 'Remittances and Microenterprises in Mexico', Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies Working Paper, University of California at San Diego, August 14, 2001

WOLA (1995) 'Demilitarizing Public Order: The International Community, Policy Reform and Human Rights in Central America and Haiti', The Washington Office on Latin America, Washington DC, November 1995

Women, Law and Development International (1993*) '*Claiming Our Place, Working the Human Rights System to Women's Advantage'*,* Washington, D.C.

World Bank News (1997) 'Poverty Study on Caribbean Calls for New Policies to Ease Poverty', World Bank News, Washington DC, July 24, 1997

World Bank (1998a) <u>Haiti: The Challenges of Poverty Reduction</u> Volume 1, Report No. 17242-HA, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Caribbean Country Management Unit, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, World Bank, Washington DC, August 1998

_____ (1998b) Haiti: The Challenges of Poverty Reduction Volume 2, Report No. 17242-HA, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Caribbean Country Management Unit, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, World Bank, Washington DC, August 1998

_____ (1999) Haiti: external Financing, HFY 1998/1999 Indicative Commitments, Disbursements and Projections, World Bank, Washington DC

_____ (2002) Haiti at a Glance, http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/countrydata.html#DataProfiles World Bank, Washington DC accessed February 2002