HAITIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION
PROCEEDINGS

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE, JUNE 17, 1989

Tufts University, Medford, MA
General Editor: Alix Cantave
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to express our gratitude to those colleagues who revised their presentations for the publication of the Proceedings of our first annual conference. Several of the talks included here were transcribed from audio tapes by Frances Di Leo of Typing Unlimited and Kate Gallagher. Special thanks to Ed Dente of Tufts University Language Lab for recording the entire conference on audio tape. We also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Tufts University students who volunteered their time to this effort, Namely: Nadia Georges, Allison Jacobson, Natasha Labaze, Paul Labossiere and Emma Villedrouin.
WELCOME

Eugene C. Brune, Mayor
City of Somerville

I'm very pleased that I can be here today and welcome you. I certainly know that this day is going to be very successful, being the first and, I hope, one of many. Sometimes we have to be careful when we're on the Tufts University campus regarding whether we're in Somerville or Medford. It also depends on who writes the program. If someone from Medford had written the program, the program would probably say Tufts University, Medford/Somerville, Mass. But I'm assuming that Alix Cantave must have had something to do with this program, because it says Tufts University, Somerville/Medford, Mass. We kid a lot about that because we're proud to have Tufts University as part of our community. I know I am. It's nice to be a part of a university community and I'm pleased and proud. I have said that many times to President Mayer. Certainly problems with town and gown arise in any community, but we also know that with the problems comes the high respect that people throughout the world have for Tufts University.

And so I welcome you here to Somerville. Somerville is rather a unique community. For those of you who don't know too much about the city, I'll just give you a brief synopsis. Somerville is one of the smallest cities in the state in land area -- 4.2 square miles. We have about 3.8 miles in land area and a bit of water-- not enough to have tall ships come in, but enough to say we have a little bit of waterfront. Within the 3.8 square miles, we have about 77,000 people. We are the most densely populated city per square mile in the state, perhaps one of the top ten in the country.

I've been the mayor of Somerville for ten years now. This is my tenth and last year. I was born and raised in Somerville and intend to stay here, I hope, for the rest of my life. I'm so proud to live in Somerville and to be the mayor because although we are small in land area, we have so many people from diverse ethnic backgrounds that can get along with each other. We are not a model city and racial incidents do occur, however with 77,000 people living in such a small area, we still don't have the uprisings that sometimes plague other communities. We work hard at developing harmony in the community. We have a Multi-Cultural Un-
derstanding Committee; we try to have neighborhood meetings. I think that projects such as this certainly help. We had an international festival just about two weeks ago involving a couple thousand people: Haitian and Vietnamese performers, Irish dancers and Italian singers. That's what it's all about—living together side by side because we know that there's room for all of us.

So I'm pleased, once again, to welcome you all here to Somerville. I congratulate Alix for being a part of this endeavor. Alix, as you know, works for the city of Somerville, works for one of my departments, and is very well respected by all of our staff and his peers. We welcome you here. We hope that today will be very successful for all of you.
INTRODUCTION

Robert I. Rotberg
Vice President for Arts Sciences
and Technology, Tufts University

Thank you very much, Alix, for that over-generous introduction. Somerville and Haiti are meant for each other. Just think about it. Somerville is a very densely populated, diverse city. Haiti is the most densely populated place in the rural areas in this hemisphere and one of the most densely populated places in the world. Haiti is underestimated. Sometimes Somerville is underestimated -- not always, but sometimes. Not in the last ten years, but before that. Somerville and Haiti are both on the upswing and that's very important. Somerville in the last ten years, certainly Haiti, we hope, in the near future. Those are among the similarities of places separated from each other by distance, but brought together by people like Alix Cantave. Alix is the inspiration for the Haitian Studies Association and for this meeting and for the success that we will all have.

Every heart aches for Haiti. Whatever our political persuasions and our past affiliations in regard to Haiti, all of us here at the first Haitian Studies Association conference care deeply about Haiti. That is why we’re here. That is why our membership will grow and our influence will grow and why it’s important to begin in Somerville where so many important things happen. That’s also why Tufts is particularly pleased -- and I’m pleased, of course -- that the Association will formally be created by you today on this campus in Somerville.

Why an Association? Our steering committee talked about other ways of accomplishing the objectives of helping Haiti and bringing knowledge about Haiti to Americans and to Haitians scattered in the diaspora across North America. Why an Association? By focusing the attention of the academic and near-academic world on Haiti, we can raise consciousness about Haiti’s past and future and create an understanding regarding what we all (in the United States and Canada and other places) can do to help Haiti.

I look forward very much to the discussions today about the varieties of Haiti and I am delighted on behalf of Tufts University, on behalf of our steering committee and on behalf of Alix, to declare the meeting open. Welcome to Tufts.
PANEL I: TELLING THE HAITIAN STORY
HAITI NOW: THE TRAGIC QUID PRO QUO

Frantz Leconte
Kingsborough Community College

A suspicious convoy stopped in front of the Saint-Jean Bosco Church; people wearing red armbands, armed with guns, machetes, picks and wooden sticks, positioned themselves strategically around the building. A few minutes before the 9 a.m. Mass, nearly a thousand worshipers, drawn to and fascinated by the most charismatic militant priest, the champion of the poor, Reverend Father Jean Bertrand Aristide, crowded into the church. Churchgoers of this shanty part of town had no idea that within minutes their lives would be imperiled and their sacred church would become a pandemonium. Outside the commandos took position and surrounded the church. An order was given and the attack was launched. At first, stones fell on all sides, struck the roof, walls, doors and windows of the church. Then, the macoutes opened fire. They blew up the main gate. Nothing remained in the way of the assailants and the massacre began. Children, women and men were easy targets. They were hacked, shot, and clubbed without pity. The aggressors in their rampage struck many times a seven and a half month pregnant woman and wounded the fetus' head. The two of them were miraculously saved by a team of seven devoted Haitian doctors. Some victims died from their wounds subsequently as did others in the frightened crowd. Some died suffocated when the commandos, blocking the exit, set the church on fire and the burning roof collapsed. The horror unfolded while military personnel looked on. Police sources estimated that 20 people died and 70 among the injured were taken to hospitals. However, some of the bodies were not taken to the morgue. Many were incinerated under the rubble, others were dumped at Ti Tanyen, a deserted area North of Port-au-Prince. Therefore the official death toll could not have been accurate. Many victims went to private hospitals and clinics. Numerous cases were not reported on purpose to play down the tragedy.

This violent offensive launched on Sunday, September 11, 1988 illustrated in Haiti's history the merciless campaign of the neo-Duvalierist army against the nationalistic sector of the Catholic Church, whose participation in the overthrow of Jean-Claude
Duvalier's dictatorship need not be mentioned. It was not an isolated event; it took place after numerous attempts against the militant priests and before another terrorist act perpetrated the next day. After the arson and massacre at Saint-Jean Bosco, another ghetto chapel, the Immaculate Conception, was to undergo the same fate.

The massacre of the September 1988 dealt a serious blow against the Catholic Church where prayers to God support the aspiration of the most impoverished people in Haiti and their commitment to social change. Above all, it was a fierce offensive against the unity of two groups whose unyielding determination had altered the status quo in February 1986. In 1988, with incredible indecency and cynicism, the assailants on that infamous bloody Sunday prevented the Red Cross from assisting the victims. Instead, they went to the State University Hospital to finish them off. They even claimed responsibility for the Sunday mini-genocide and made serious threats on National Television. This event led to their capture and swift execution through "purifying fire." It was during this feverish and confusing period that the most conservative member of the National Council of Government of February 1986 took over the Presidency from General Namphy.

Avril Rise to Power

Prosper Avril, the new General-President had a long and fascinating past. He viewed himself as a ruler chosen by destiny to fulfill a sacred mission, a leader open to dialogue, reforms and human rights, who never had thought to become the president. He presented himself as a product of the Haitian middle class who had to give up his university career for economic reasons to enroll in the military academy in 1959. An emaciated young man of less than 120 pounds who did not meet the academy's requirement, he had to struggle to be admitted. Once he had been accepted into the Army's unit, he excelled in his studies and graduated with honors. During his early years as a commissioned officer, he received a law degree, pursued a course of studies in ethnology and economics, wrote a few military manuals and spent six months in military studies in the U.S. Avril witnessed first hand the most violent decades in Haiti's political history—the Duvalieristic pogroms of the 1960's, "this excellence in evil"—and
the most unusual transition of power in 1971 to the dictator's son, Jean Claude Duvalier.(1)

His promotion within the ranks of the Duvalier concentration camp system has previously been shrouded in mysteries because we do not know all the facts. Originally he was chief of J.C. Duvalier's bodyguards; he became the Army's supplier - a position that usually gives access to great and illegal wealth. He was also at a certain point in his military career the Army Training Commander. However, his promotion did not take place smoothly. One must recall a set-back to his ascendancy initiated by J.C. Duvalier in 1982 and a humiliating resignation imposed by the powerful Minister of Defense Dr Roger Lafontant in 1984. The circumstances which allowed Avril's reinstatement into the Army are not well known. On the other hand, one knows for sure that he masterminded the escape of Duvalier and his companions in 1986. Avril displayed belief in the unity of the Army and unfaltering loyalty to General Namphy - the very same General, who, in response to an ambassador inquiring about Haiti's 2,800,000 potential voters, said laughingly: "Mister Ambassador, in Haiti, the Army is the only voter that counts."(2) Avril's reward came about in June 1988, after Professor Manigat's removal from a puppet Presidency imposed in January by the Army's most ludicrous elections.(3) According to Francois Duvalier's transcendental teaching, it is certain that "gratitude is weakness". Avril, his protege, "one of his best pupils," was to illustrate this formula in September 1988 and Namphy paid the price. During a display of cruelty which paralyzed the whole country, Avril ordered Namphy's arrest; the latter only understood his fate when he was sent into exile in Santo Domingo.

Subsequently, the fabulous and moving story of the revolutionary "little" soldiers emerged characterize by their unparalleled nationalistic zeal, endless need for fraternity and genuine love for the people. Every one believed that these rank and file soldiers were going to save the country. They were kissed and offered flowers, as a sign of the people's gratitude. The nation celebrated them and repressed their participation in the November 1987 tragedy. Could one ever forget this unprecedented, traumatic experience when peaceful citizens on their way to vote were mowed down, mutilated and bludgeoned to death?(4) A recent article states that Even days after this tragedy, "at one polling place in the Capital, chopped-off hands were still clutching ballots,"(5) as if to remind us that we were living in a time of
extraordinary atrocity. Once the soldiers, the backbone of the Army, converted into champions of democracy, chose the altruistic Army General, Avril to lead the national crusade for rehabilitation, the people had accepted their agenda as a fait accompli. Avril’s so-called "regenerative power" received a standing ovation.

Nevertheless, it became necessary to dismiss high ranking officers. Jean-Claude Paul, the cumbersome colonel, commander of the most powerful battalion of the Army, posed a threat to the newly emerged government. "According to the US Drug Enforcement Administration, Colonel Paul was Mr. Essential, the Haitian linchpin connecting the Colombian cocaine wholesalers with the jobbers who turned the big brown shipments into the little white packages the retailers in New York and Miami would sell for billions" (6). A Miami court of law accused him along with his wife of drug trafficking. The US demanded his extradition to face numerous charges which have kept him in jail for 35 years. This drug-smuggling scandal illustrated the emergence of a new narco-military class in Central America against which the U.S. government was actively organizing. Surprisingly, however, the offensive seemed to evaporate; the colonel was allowed to retire before he met with a mysterious death.

Some overzealous soldiers in the pursuit of justice were also unexpectedly accused of plotting against the State and General Avril. They were jailed, released (under popular pressure) and dismissed from the Army without trial. But according to Sergeant Beauchard and the other alleged conspirators, they represented a "nationalistic" faction within the Army that was disgusted with the General’s failure to bring past offenders and tonton-macoutes to justice.

After the initial euphoria ended, people became aware of Avril’s real politics. The systematic elimination of potential adversaries seemed to dismiss future challenges to his authority. In fact, the policy initiated by the government was aimed at eliminating all remaining dissent in the country. Nevertheless, one could not risk challenging former members of the Duvalier regime, old friends of the past, who were clinging to their privileges. For example, despite the government’s promises for new openness and democracy, it allowed Franck Romain, a former Duvalier henchman and mayor of Port-au-Prince, guilty of genocide (who took asylum in the Dominican Embassy) to escape (7).
coherent and unconvincing explanations were provided subsequently to rationalize his swift departure.

In the wake of protests, sustained efforts were made to pacify national and international criticism by the media and to solve the collective crisis of confidence. Foreign aid, cut since the November 1987 slaughter, had to be restored. This fiscal need explains the endless speeches on human rights and the formation of committees to fight all breaches of the law. It is true that politics as an enterprise did not begin during Avril’s presidency. For the last 30 years, fortunes were made through the sale of drugs, blood, corpses, human organs, through bribery, embezzlement, continuous contraband and illegal dumping of toxic waste. Even François Duvalier "the incorruptible leader of the Revolution," "Apostle of National Unity," had very profitable ties with the mafia (8). Persistent scandals within the government have revealed a history secret political alliances made for profit between private interests and the bankrupt national treasury. The ex-Haitian dictator and his wife shook the world in their 1986 interview with Barbara Walters when they naively acknowledged having disbursed, from the national funds of the poorest country of the Western Hemisphere, more than $4 million to their close friend and private decorator Jean Sambour (9).

Pluralism was the watchword, given the impression that democracy had become a permanent fixture in Haiti. November 29, as suggested by the Opposition, became a national day of remembrance. The nationalistic and fraternal mood seemed to have conquered all social, political cleavages and the customary dissension within Haitian politics. Closing down Fort-Dimanche, where thousands of enemies of the totalitarian regime had been murdered, caused incomparable joy and happiness. Holding a democratic forum provided new hope even though questions about the General’s unorthodox past continued. The partial implementation of the 1987 Constitution, with the famous article 291 prohibiting hard core duvalierists’ participation in elective offices was proof of good faith, (10) but the potential for violence remained. (11) The last of the government’s pacifying gestures was the establishment of the Ministry for overseas Haitian citizens.

The General was satisfied with the status quo which allowed the murderers of Louis Eugene Attis, Yves Volel and hundreds of unknown victims in the urban and rural areas to remain free despite their repulsive crimes. But more than moral imperatives,
economic needs compelled actions against drug proliferation which caused a political and military earthquake of sorts.

The Avril Government does not seem capable of fulfilling the people's very basic needs and curing the general malaise plaguing the nation. Let us examine some of the statistics regarding problems that had to be alleviated before elections occurred: of a population of 6,200,000, a quarter or 1,600,000 are on the brink of starvation (12); half or 3,100,000 are unemployed (13). A country where 40,000,000 trees are cut every year (14) can neither employ nor feed its citizens. Destruction of the environment leads also to destruction of agriculture and the economy. Professor Robert Rotberg has noticed that the countryside has lost its those features which used to help impoverished peasants. It is neither possible to grow corn, sorghum, rice, and yams, nor to nurture pigs and livestock that used to be sold for profit. Haiti has been denuded of trees, cut down for firewood and charcoal. The mountain tops have been devastated and eroded. For a country with an area of 10,714 square miles, only two percent of the total land remained forested. Torrents of rain carry nutrients and precious soil into the sea. If agricultural productivity has been declining for a long time, it has reached catastrophic proportions since 1960 (15). Four-fifths or 4,900,000 are illiterate (16), despite solemn governmental promises throughout three decades of "revolutionary Duvalierism." One third or 2,700,000 are exposed to malaria, tuberculosis and other serious diseases (17). How could it be different when all recent surveys established that Haiti had the worst nutritional status in the Western Hemisphere? If in 1988, 4,712 Haitian boat people were returned to Haiti, for the first quarter of 1989, 3,338 were brought back (18). Even though we do not have present statistics on Haitians going to the batey in the Dominican Republic, we can surmise that they will amount to 18,000 to 20,000 as in the past years. From January 16 to May 23, 1989, 22 kilos of cocaine, 900 packs of crack and 10 pounds of marijuana were confiscated from the smugglers (19). It was the tip of the iceberg, for in Jeremie—a southern city of Haiti—504 kilos of cocaine, valued at more than $10 million were uncovered during the last week of July 1989.

The current situation is dangerous, chaotic, disintegrating so rapidly that there is little evidence of a functioning government apparatus. Whatever is left of the president's authority can not solve the growing problems of a terrorized population. The problems that we have just underlined are so enormous that any
solution would require a national strategy, long term planning and massive foreign aid. When General Avril pretends to perform miracles before elections occur, we are forced to believe that perhaps we are witnessing the last show of a "con-artist" who is attempting to transform his provisional government into a permanent dictatorship. Such foolish attempts, we believe, are necessarily counter-productive, tragic, and perhaps even suicidal. They illustrate a pathetic case of the proverbial self-fulfilling prophecy long associated with non-democratic governance in Haiti.

Notes:
1- Télé-Haiti, Interview with General Avril, October 1988.


3- Haitians were humiliated by the outcome the second set of elections, January 1988 elections and considered them to be unconstitutional. Children twelve years of age voted. Some voters were seen erasing the indelible red ink on their fingers, so that they could vote again. Mentally ill patients were lined up to vote and interviewed by the media thereafter. A foreign journalist was permitted to vote along with his family. All these frauds were shown on television.

4- Massacres occurred in Port-au-Prince, as well as in the provinces on November 29, 1987 in order to prevent the democratic forces from winning.


7- Franck Romain, former mayor of Port-au-Prince and well known tonton-macoute, was accused of having organized the November 29 slaughter on election day.


10- The article 291 of the March 1987 Constitution forbids Duvalierists, guilty of crimes, to participate in any elections for a ten year period.

11- This ban on elective offices for Duvalierists can not be effective unless the death squads are neutralized. In the event of free elections which would annihilate their dream of conquest, the Duvalierists would not hesitate to use violence to abort them.


13- Haiti, Dream of Democracy, 1987 [a T.V. documentary]


HAITI: 1986-1989

Paul Latortue
University of Puerto Rico

I have been asked to speak about the story of the last three years. I would have preferred that someone had spoken about the story of the last two centuries because it is important to put things into perspective. We are dealing with a country that is trying to survive. Whatever Haiti does or does not do -- let's say over the next ten years -- is dramatically important and will have deep repercussions, not just on Haiti, but for the region as a whole. Speculation about Haiti's future includes repercussions for the United States as a major power in this hemisphere, because we are dealing with the viability of the black nation that was born after a struggle with European powers almost two hundred years ago, and as a consequence partly of the French Revolution whose Bicentennial we are about to celebrate next month. I shall not speak here of history, however, if you have any questions, I will be glad to answer them during the question and answer period. Let me focus primarily on the last three years (1986-1989), that, as a subject, is more manageable within the fifteen to twenty minutes to which my remarks are confined.

My basic thesis here is that during the last three years -- marked by the fall of Duvalier in February 1986 -- we have been dealing with an uphill fight between the people of Haiti and the State of Haiti over how the country is going to be redefined and how policies are going to become different so that life can take place in a better way. In that uphill struggle, it is not clear so far who is winning. I know the people sooner or later will win, but at this point the outcome is not clear because, after two years of conflict both sides, in my opinion, are fighting with decreasing levels of efficiency. Who will win this time around -- because the fight will continue forever -- will depend on which group establishes its efficiency rapidly. Secondly, from the bottom of my heart I hope and pray that it is the people's side that will become more effective, but I cannot come here and tell you that I have the evidence to prove that it will.

Since we have been speaking about rumor this morning (and because as you know where there is not sufficient information, rumor takes over) rumors do exist regarding the circumstances that brought Duvalier down. Or better still, these rumors repre-
sent popular explanation of the overthrow. Some "explanations" have been overstated and others understated. I would like to share some of these with you.

For example, the role of the Church as a causal factor for the fall of Duvalier, in my opinion, has been overstated. Too many people feel that Duvalier fell because the Church led a revolt against him. That hypothesis does not stand up to the scrutiny of reality. The Church did play a role, especially when events leading to the overthrow started to gain momentum. The bishop who denounced the killings in Gonaïves in November 1985 was the younger brother of the army general that made the transition from Duvalier father-to-son possible in part. As a result, one understands that it was not only the Catholic Church that was speaking out against repression, but a bishop who could be identified as being very close to the army. That fact is important. The role of the people, themselves, has been overstated because, as we've seen many times in Haiti -- and as we just saw in China two weeks ago -- people power without gun power can be totally ineffective. People power can succeed if legal, moral and institutional forces are strong enough so that gun power cannot act to counter their efforts. In the case of Haiti -- as the Army has consistently demonstrated -- the Army is perfectly willing to use gun power against the masses, unarmed people. So if the Army did not attack in December 1985, in January or February 1986, then we must ask ourselves whether the Army failed to do so because it did not wish the cry of the people to be heard and reach a successful conclusion. Also, some of us believed that Duvalier fell because the United States government's apparent policy of backing one step away from dictators that they have supported since World War II was working in the case of Haiti. We have seen a similar strategy in Central America where, one after one, dictators have been stripped of their power. This apparent policy was also a factor in the Haitian case, but I do not believe it was the main factor.

I have been following the situation closely enough to say that Duvalier fell partly because of all these factors, but the most critical cause in my estimation is the split that took place within the Duvalier sector. When the Army became part of the split, then the stage was set for the fall due to the fact that the Church also supported overthrow as did the United States government. When the people took to the streets, then the perfect scenario was orchestrated after careful planning. The United States
government supported the scenario by watching over the situation to make sure that one eventuality did not occur -- that the tonton macoute forces would not clash with the Army forces. To achieve that goal, some tonton macoute chiefs -- namely Roger Lafontant had to be expelled from the country before the fall. If Duvalier was going to be deposed then the power should go to the Army. Meanwhile, you had to make sure that the civilian tonton macoute forces could be neutralized and that no one remained on the scene to galvanize them as a unit. That, in effect, was the policy.

February 1986: The people enjoyed the moment. In other words, the people of Haiti were happy, first of all that Duvalier had fallen; second, that power was bestowed on the Army. The people knew that control could have gone to the tonton macoute. The fact that the citizenry was happy did not mean that they love the Army; it was rather a statement that they hate the tonton macoute. The Army, seeing this situation, started to speak a democratic language, but we know that no Army speaks a democratic language forever. No matter the country, the Army is built on strength, on brute force. It was a question of time before the Haitian people discovered that the Army that had proclaimed victory on February 7, 1986 was really an institution working against the interests of the people. We have no time here to describe all the details; let us say, simply, that it took the people about five months to find out. I think that by June 1986 the people understood.

But then, what to do? The administration was new. The dictatorship had lasted nearly thirty years. Numbers of people, including myself, came back from a long time abroad with new ideas concerning Haiti’s future. Upon our return, we realized that we knew nobody. We certainly didn’t understand the real Haiti. There was a Haiti that we read about in books; there was the Haiti we recalled from earlier years. We arrived with all the big and bright ideas we had learned abroad. But how does one plug that knowledge back into the old society? And you cannot expect change to occur successfully in a very short period of time. I believe that many of us did what he could. One thing we did do was to contribute to the rise of certain democratic processes and forces. That’s the story of 1987, starting with the Referendum on the Constitution, also with the actions during the summer of 1987 to make sure that the appropriate institutional infrastructure was put in place to allow for fair elections for the first time in our
history. The people of Haiti identified with the struggle for fair elections because they felt that if they could truly select their leaders, things would be different. I'm not sure that this thesis is correct, but the Haitian people believed it. That's what we had to work with.

Nothing could stop that process towards fair elections until, on Election Day, the guns spoke more eloquently. Since that day (November 1987) events have assumed a downward spiral. The so-called democratic forces put all their eggs, so speak, in the electoral basket thinking that the United States government would back up such a move knowing paradoxically, to our dismay, that the United States would probably play a role in the planning of what took place on November 29th. That day the guns spoke. Army officials did not like the faces and the agendas of those that might have emerged victorious through a representative, electoral process.

Because of this situation, you can understand how the level of efficiency among the so-called democratic forces has been losing ground since the summer of 1987. Their strategy did not work, so people who believed in the strategy no longer believed in its effectiveness. This is part of the history of the electoral process. The Army tried their best, then, to satisfy the United States by holding some kind of election, because that's what the U.S. Administration wanted. They brought in Leslie Manigat, who didn't have any popular backing, but who had international credentials. They brought him in, not really to hand over the government to him, but to buy time. In less than six months, he was also on his way out. By that time, the Duvalierist forces, it seems to me, had won the first skirmish of the battle with the help of the Army. Then came the unexpected, in a way, but the perfectly expected when you know Haitians: once you have neutralized the opposition forces, then the question becomes who is going to take charge and control of the Duvalierist heritage. That conflict seems to be the one at hand, because the Duvalierist heritage represents political power.

Then the surprise. There are various factions within Duvalierist power, and they started to fight among themselves after the dechoukaj. When you look back at recent history you realize why in 1971 it was his son -- a nineteen-year old -- who assumed the father's power: Duvalier divided to rule. It was impossible in 1971 for one sector of Duvalierists to take power because the others would have opposed their rule. The son was the guarantee
that the different contributors, the different factions, would not fight precisely because he was still a kid. That means each captain, each chieftain, would retain control of the sectors over which they dominated so that disequilibrium would not upset the prevailing power structure. Then you understand also that Namphy -- in the two years that he held power -- was able to maintain his control because he did not attempt to alter the established equilibrium. He kept everybody in his/her place. The day that someone would try to displace another member of the Duvalier power structure, the domino theory would have prevailed.

The situation today is one in which the victorious, Duvalierist side in power comes from the faction that was able to have the Army at its command. But within the Army, the struggle continued and the army became divided leading inevitably to a major conflict. Prosper Avril emerged victorious as a result of the conflict which took place two months ago, but he’s commanding a weaker army and sometimes I have a lot of doubts as to whether he really is in command.

I have enumerated some of the significant details, however my basic thesis is the following: we are witnessing a struggle between the people of Haiti and the State of Haiti -- the people want political change; the Army and the State resist any apparent political transition or any from of political change. Both sides are fighting, it seems to me, with decreasing levels of efficiency. I do not know what’s going to happen, but I certainly hope that the Army and the State lose in that battle so that in post-dechoukaj Haiti, we can bring about a new State and a new regime. At no point in time has the Haitian Army been so weak as at this point, but they're still strong because they have guns. The people don’t have guns and, apparently, there’s no decision on the side of the people to take up guns. They believe -- and they still believe -- that a process without guns would provide a better solution. I don’t know for how long they will keep believing in unarmed struggle. But that's the point in history where we are today, three years after the overthrow of Jean-Claude Duvalier.
PANEL II: DIALOGUES/RESOURCES ON HAITI COLLECTED WORLDWIDE
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS BIBLIOGRAPHY PROJECT: RARE DOCUMENTATION ON 18TH & 19TH CENTURY CREOLE AND HAITIAN EMIGRATION

Arnold Highfield
University of the Virgin Islands

Good Morning. Thank you, Alix. I am on the periphery of working on Haiti. I went to Haiti in 1964, and actually lived in Jacmel for a while, learned Creole and tried to learn something from Haiti and Haitians. Finally, though, I ended up by going back to the Virgin Islands to live and teach at the University, however, my interest in Haiti has remained strong over the years. Although I am looking in at Haiti now from the periphery, in a strange and unexpected way my research has taken me back around to where I started in 1964 during that first visit. Let me explain.

I started to write on language and history in the Virgin Islands where we have a very interesting, mixed heritage. I found that just about every text devoted to the island’s history was derivative and could be traced back nearly four generations to original sources in German, French, and Spanish. By comparing the old and new, I learned that the more recent writers and scholars had been generating the same old texts, the same old prejudices and even some errors embedded in the earlier sources. As a result, in the early 1970's, I began looking at and for these same original sources, and before I knew it, I was in the process of establishing a bibliographic study on the history of the Virgin Islands which now has 48,000 citations in the computer and nearly 10,000 more to input. Consequently, we have established a huge bibliographic project at the University called VIBIB, Virgin Islands Bibliography. In the remainder of this presentation, I would like to emphasize two points about my research on the bibliography---one relating to sources in Creole and the other to Haitian emigration during the 18th and 19th centuries.

My work on the bibliography required travel to archives, first in Denmark, then to East Germany, Madrid and Seville, to Paris and Guadeloupe. In these different places, I literally scoured archives, and what I located was tremendous. Eurocentric though these colonial sources may be, they exist, await a scholar to sweep them up and, more importantly, yield amazing data. Trained as I am in linguistics, I did not expect, but was delighted...
to find, for example, transcripts of court cases from the 1790's-1830's recorded by Danes in which the suits involved slaves. In these transcriptions, slaves spoke in the English Creole of the islands. In addition to the work on original sources since 1971, I have been working on a dictionary of the English Creole of the Virgin Islands, and these historical sources have been very useful in that regard. To conclude this first segment, I am suggesting that it is important for us as scholars to return to early sources, wade through them and make them available to wider audiences. I hope that by this time next year, my project will have come to an end, and that I will have compiled on computer between 55,000 and 60,000 citations devoted to the comparatively small Virgin Islands in nearly seven or eight different languages. We expect to place this data on-line so that it may be made available to everyone. Even though two important bibliographies on Haitian subjects have been published, I would like to see this sort of data-base established for Haiti as well. I am a realist, however, and know that such an endeavor is going to take time and considerable resources. Nonetheless, I feel strongly that a project of this nature devoted to uncovering original documents in several languages should be placed on the research agenda for serious scholars lest we continue to crank out the same derivative histories, derivative linguistic studies and the like that have characterized the scholarly parameters in the recent past.

The second point that I would like to make concerns Haitian history. In going through sources, I came upon some very interesting information that had to do with Haiti in the independence era. I found that St. Thomas had become the refuge for Haitians leaving St. Domingue and Haiti from the 1790's through the 1850's. Interestingly enough, St. Thomas had a community of Haitians (French and Creole speakers) that may have been as extended as 7,000 to 8,000 residents! In the Vatican Archives of all places, I found that there had been a schism in the St. Thomas Catholic Church during the period. Part of the reason concerned these newly emigrated Haitians. They had their way of doing things and wanted rituals observed in French, for instance. This desire conflicted with some of the existing St. Thomian practices. A schism arose which lasted about a decade within the St. Thomas Church involving Haitians of all people. The dispute became such a problem that the Papacy sent out a legate who refereed the debate. The Haitian presence was very strong then. Some Haitian intellectuals who no longer felt
at home in Haiti during the nineteenth century---who had to leave home for one reason or another---made St. Thomas their home. The name Anténor Firmin probably evokes memories for many of you in the audience. He spent a long period of exile in St. Thomas and wrote a book entitled *Mémoire de St. Thomas* (18_), a very interesting text that is rather hard to find these days. Firmin's text inspired me to look around. As a result, I found that there were many more Haitian family documents---their studies collections, and correspondences---existing in the Virgin Islands or elsewhere. And the tradition continues into the present day given that we have someone living in St. Thomas writing about Haiti and the Virgin Islands, namely M. Paquin. There are many, many Haitians residing in St. Croix and St. Thomas to this day, but as I mentioned earlier, during the nineteenth century, St. Thomas was the home-away-from-home for numerous exiles. I would suggest, therefore, that the Virgin Islands is a very interesting site in which to investigate the Haitian diaspora very early on.

I would like to mention one other historical convergence that I located as a result of this project. When the slaves of St. Domingue and the West Indies started to become restive as early as 1819 in full force, we contemporary historians looking back were not quite sure why this upheaval was happening. As I started to investigate Moravian sources from East Germany, I found that there was an uprising there planned for 1819 in Tortola. When the authorities questioned some of the captives that they had detained, the latter gave a long report on how there had been some contact with Haiti. They knew about Haiti and its Revolution and, as a result, had some encouragement to travel to the island. In fact, the captives in question had planned to rise up in Tortola, to kill the authorities, capture women and sail off to Haiti.

There are other examples of that same sort of rebellion. In 1848, West Indians rose up on July 2nd in the town of Frederickstead, Virgin Islands. They demanded their freedom and got it on July 3rd. By the way, this insurrection was the second occurrence of its time in the Caribbean where that kind of successful revolt had not occurred save in Haiti. These kinds of uprisings have not been well researched in the Virgin Islands. We know, for instance, that a man by the name of Boudeau---known locally by the name which represents our local Creole form of Bordeaux---was the leader of the revolt mentioned above. He
had contacts with other islands, and that connection is indeed interesting and worthy of future study.

The Haitian influence in St. Thomas was long and, in evidence, well into the end of the last century. When I hear you talk here today about the diaspora, I realize that contemporary scholars and the wider community tend to think of the Haitian diaspora in terms of Brooklyn and maybe Indiana and Kansas. However, everywhere that I have traveled outside of the Americas, I have run into Haitians—in Madrid, Switzerland, France, and so forth. It does not surprise me, now that I have had the chance to consider the phenomenon of emigration from the Caribbean perspective, that there was, undoubtedly, a diaspora in the nineteenth century. It was a very profound one, and I am convinced that historians, linguists, and scholars in general have not yet observed the phenomenon in historical depth.
TEACHING AND RESEARCH ON HAITIAN CREOLE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

Bryant C. Freeman
University of Kansas

Why is a Haitian Studies Program located in the middle of our country, in Kansas? The two more active programs in the country are at Indiana University and the University of Kansas, both unlikely places. Why not Kansas? We offer a Ph. D. in Chinese, in Japanese, and we teach altogether some twenty-seven foreign languages, so why not Haitian Creole?

The personal and political reasons for the existence of our program in Kansas are rather simple to relate. I first became interested in Haiti and things Haitian when I was at Yale. When I was still a graduate student teaching at Yale, I read James Leyburn’s *The Haitian People*, a study with which you are all probably familiar. At any rate, I was brought to Kansas to serve as Chairman of the French Department. As university politics go, there is very little chance of establishing a Haitian Studies Program unless the chairperson chooses to do so. Rather than seek the permission of the dean, I simply started the program, and it has been active for the past ten to fifteen years now. Once the Haitian Studies Program got going, we were able to attract federal grants and so forth.

What are we doing at Kansas? First of all we are teaching Haitian Creole to Americans. What American wants to learn Haitian Creole? What does the typical profile of my students look like? I still do not know after all these years. I enroll between twelve and twenty-one students in first-year Creole. We offer four years of the language; obviously, as the level of proficiency increases, the enrollment numbers decrease over four years’ time. A large percentage are French majors who want to learn a related language; others are students who already speak several languages and simply want to learn Haitian Creole, or have been to Haiti. The profile is almost as varied as is every student, and among them there is a great deal of enthusiasm. In fact, we have been accused of producing fanatics concerning Haiti. I teach mainly at the graduate level in French, and find that the level of excitement among my students in Haitian Creole is far greater than that in French. Haitian Creole is still perceived
as something new and different, and students continue to be very excited about learning the language.

A number of my former students have gone to Haiti and worked in various capacities, namely teaching English or working in the écoles professionnelles. Many seem to end up on the island of La Gonâve. One of my students was a director of the school there for a good amount of time. Another is in charge of the nursing program at La Vallée just north of Jacmel.

In addition, I offer a course which is part of our non-Western culture requirement, "Portrait of a Third World Nation: Haiti, or The Haitian Experience." We discuss the Tainos and Arawaks, the history of Haiti from Christopher Columbus through Prosper Avril, in terms of Haitian culture and social sciences, including history, music, literature, sociology—all that contributes to the Haitian experience. I, myself, have been in and out of Haiti for thirty-one years, and the country has become near and dear to my heart. I try to speak about Haiti with feeling and objectivity. I want Americans to know what Haiti is about—the good and the bad, because we hear the bad reported so frequently. There is, however, much more good that can be said about Haiti. As some of you know, I just returned from Haiti yesterday to attend this conference. I was there for about four or five weeks this time. Let me summarize the research aspects of my work which are to me much more important and exciting. For the last eight years, I have worked with Jowel Laguerre who is from a little town on the southern peninsula called Saint-Georges, near Aquin. He is a young man of rural origin who miraculously moved up through the Haitian school systems and obtained a scholarship at the Ecole Normale in Port-au-Prince. I was able to bring him and his family to the University of Kansas, and he has assisted me for the past eight years. We have been compiling a bilingual dictionary (Haitian Creole to English/English to Haitian Creole). We have covered word by word some 150 to 175 texts in creole—medical and religious texts, political tracts, etc. We used everything that we could locate provided that the texts were written in good Creole, and in the process we learned that establishing what is good Creole is a difficult problem to resolve. The Valdman dictionary compiled by my colleague, Albert Valdman at Indiana University contains some 9,800 entries; we have about 22,000 entries so far and are about to cease our search because there is no end, given that new words emerge constantly. The main thrust
of our work has been the creation of this dictionary from which a more manageable, more affordable version will be derived.

In addition to teaching and researching, we have published a number of textbooks. The one that sells best is entitled *Chita Pa Bay: Elementary Readings in Haitian Creole* (1984). When foreigners begin to study Haitian Creole, they must confront the problem that once you begin reading, there are no easy texts in Creole. *Chita Pa Bay* is aimed both at those who have native fluency in the language and others who are just learning to read. When you begin reading in French, German, or Spanish, for example, you start with elementary French, German, or Spanish reading texts. The problem for Haitian Creole is that a graded approach to reading the language does not exist. Consequently, we have published five textbooks of various kinds, including literary texts and general subjects in easy-to-middle level Haitian Creole. Moreover, we are trying to add dignity to the ways in which the language is perceived by foreigners and Haitians alike. French has been used since 1804 as an effective weapon to keep the rich rich and the poor poor in Haiti. And I say this without any animosity to the French language. I was partially educated in France. French and English are my two languages, but I avoid speaking French in Haiti whenever possible out of respect for the Haitian people. A number of Haitian intellectuals and officials have recently provided the grounds for treating Creole in a more respected manner. In the latest constitution (1987), Article Five states that Haiti has two official languages, Haitian Creole and French, on equal par. The reforms of Joseph Bernard in 1979, still being implemented slowly, assert that the aim of education is that Haitian Creole be taught in the first four grades and French thereafter.

Obviously, if you want to study brain surgery or astronomy, you will need French, English, or German. But how many Haitians are going to study brain surgery? What the average person needs to learn is arithmetic, the history of Haiti, hygiene and the like in a language which he or she can understand well. Since 1804, the ruling elite has been trying to mold Haitians into Frenchmen, and the policy has not worked. It’s as simple as that. One has to be practical and realistic, and realize that Haitian Creole is the language of Haiti’s future. In the wider world, the ability to speak and read Haitian Creole is limited to a certain extent, but so is Icelandic. Iceland has a population of 200,000, while Haiti, I believe, has 6,000,000 to 8,000,000!
There is no reason why more cannot be achieved through publications in Haitian Creole. The language can be useful for the writing of technical texts and the like; there is really no limit, in my opinion. People discuss philosophy in Haitian Creole; they learn anatomy in the language. And do not think that Haitian Creole is a popular idiom whose vocabulary is limited to 3 to 4 thousand words. This is not so. The range of usage is amazing, and once you study the literature and work intimately with the language you begin to realize its amazing diversity. In that regard, through the University of Kansas, we are publishing a series of works directed strictly toward Haitian audiences where the works are entirely in Creole, and we are trying to assist Haitian authors who wish to publish special editions of their works. Our endeavors are doubly focused on foreigners who desire to learn Haitian Creole at more advanced levels and on Haitians concerned with the ideology of promoting a dignified definition of their language.

I mentioned earlier that I have just returned from Haiti. The project on which I was working might be of interest to you. Amazingly, for a teacher and researcher devoted to the promotion of a disparaged language, I was asked to work for the United States Department of Justice. The primary foreign language which presents problems of communication in the U.S. Federal Courts is Spanish, as one might well expect. What you would not suspect is that the number two language barrier in the U.S. Federal Courts today is Haitian Creole. More and more, Haitians are called forth as defendants. The United States Government is bound to provide a trained interpreter in such cases. In order to provide adequate services for Haitian Creole speakers, the Justice Department enlisted the aid of six Haitian scholars along with two American specialists of Creole—Albert Valdman and myself. We were instructed to set up a series of examinations that would be administered to prospective Creole interpreters. The task of providing a standardized examination was difficult, to say the least. If one passes these exams, one will be certified as a federal interpreter for English and Haitian Creole. The job pays well—$25,000 to $35,000 per year—and is a responsible, professional position. One has to know American English and Haitian Creole very, very well. In addition, one has to be able to handle the legal jargon used by the judge and lawyers, as well as idioms native to North Americans from several socio-economic classes in which witnesses express themselves. Some North American criminal
types may testify using American slang because that is the way they normally speak. An interpreter has to translate that particular speech, as nearly as possible, into the equivalent of Haitian Creole and vice versa. Essentially, we were establishing the prerequisites for hiring Haitian Creole interpreters at the federal level. We worked for twelve days without respite in Pétionville, Haiti.

As we sought to produce a multiple-choice examination for interpreters, we set up, for example, a series of antonyms: we would provide a sentence with a particular word underlined followed by alternatives in Haitian Creole from which the examinee has to choose the word in greatest contrast. The exam also included responses to a series of synonyms and passages in Creole of a page and half in length. We asked a number of detailed questions about the content of the passages in order to examine total comprehension. All of this process was to be conducted totally in Creole. During our deliberations, we also created a section devoted to usage. We presented a series of four long sentences in Creole in which we required the examinee to choose the best example of Creole usage. These multiple choice questions are similar to the College Board's and S.A.T. exams in the United States, but administered in Haitian Creole. To our knowledge, no one has ever applied this degree of rigor to the comprehension of oral Haitian Creole.

The more we worked, the more we realized the difficulties of examining correct speech in Creole. The problem that we faced was essentially how to delimit the boundaries of Creole speech. Where does Creole end and where does French begin? There are areas where Creole definitely diverges from French. There are expressions, such as au fur et à mesure, used by some speakers of Creole that are totally of French origin. But then, there exists a gray area between. Is à l'abri/alabri French or Haitian, or, somewhere in between?

On a Haitian creole examination for interpreters, are the examiners entitled to use an expression, such as alabri. We argued for hours on these kinds of problems. We realized that there is no clear-cut solution. Of course, we come back to the age-old problem of bilingualism or diglossia in Haiti. Another dilemma surfaced among the eight assembled scholars: of the six native Haitians in the room, if only one or two were familiar with a given term, we discarded it from the exam. The other American and I were unhappy about that principle of exclusion because we
recognized the disparities that exist between reading and interpreting in English and in Haitian Creole. There are many words which we do not know in our own American language. Yet, we admit that as native speakers of the language, bonafide usage does exist beyond our personal knowledge. The difference is that as speakers of English, we can rely on a resource such as Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, and at the same time, had to acknowledge that a similar Haitian/Haitian dictionary does not yet exist. In other words, we need a Petit Larousse Créole, a Webster's in Creole. This kind of dictionary must be produced by a group of Haitians very knowledgeable in their own language.

With a group of scholars in Haiti, we did complete the Diksyonè dòtograf kreyòl ayisyen for teachers who are supposed to be teaching in Haitian Creole now. These instructors have been taught primarily in French, so they say: "We're supposed to go to the blackboard and write words in Creole, and we do not know how to spell Creole." At the University of Kansas, we assembled 18,000 Creole head-words, and then Pierre Vernet, director of the Centre de Linguistique Appliquée, at the Université d'Etat d'Haiti and his équipe, eliminated about 5,000 words which they found were too rare. As a result, we published a small dictionary of some 13,000 words in Creole which provided standardized spelling, but not definitions. This text is aimed at the teachers in Haiti who want to learn how to write according to the standard spelling system. In Haitian studies, we now consider that the question of spelling Haitian Creole is no longer a problem, that it has become a non-question. Too much time and energy has been lost in the Creole movement talking about spelling. Spelling is arbitrary. If you and I decide that dog is going to be written dòg, then fine. As long as we all agree on a standardized spelling, we can forget about orthography and talk about more important matters. If you wanted to sabotage a language movement, there is no more effective way to do so than to get people divided over spelling, so that ultimately they spend their time fighting among themselves. That is where the Haitian Creole movement was mired at one point. This has changed, and we are no longer arguing among ourselves as to how to spell the language.

Another project in the works is a medical language dictionary which will appear this summer. It contains 6,000 words---Creole to English/English to Creole. For instance, how do you say naso-gastric tube in Haitian Creole? How do you say a wax
build-up? There are many non-Haitian missionary doctors who are working in the rural areas, and this text is aimed at them. Also to appear is a book of some 1300 phrases, everything from: "How are you feeling today?" to "We need to do a spinal tap." How do you say spinal tap in a language which a Haitian mother who only speaks Haitian Creole and does not know French can understand? We refused, in these circumstances, to use what we call "French-fried Creole."

**DIALOGUE WITH THE AUDIENCE**

Q: I am glad that at last you made the point about "French-fried Creole." In the process of your research, are you working with educated Haitians? As we know, most of them speak French and have a tendency, when they are writing Creole, to write French. Have you worked at all with people in the countryside who never hear French?

FREEMAN: I'm glad you asked that question. I didn't want to bore you with statistics about the Diksyonè, however let me describe our research methods. We hired anaîphabetes—fifty rural Haitians who do not read or write and who speak exclusively Haitian Creole. We paid them about fifty cents an hour. With a team of Haitians from the Centre de Linguistique Appliquée, we asked questions concerning the 18,000 words in our corpus, and asked our informants to classify them in one of four categories: 1) used everyday; 2) used occasionally; 3) vaguely familiar; 4) unknown. We discarded the fourth category and kept the first three, eliminating in the process some 5,000 words, so that the dictionary ended up with exactly 13,006 words.

To return to another part of your question that pertains to my own research, I stress the fact that the person who has been working with me originally is of rural origin. He was born and raised in a very small community. Until he was twelve or so, he has told me that he didn't really understand French. People talked French at him, one day he began to comprehend. But in his home, there was no French spoken whatever. In addition, we have a number of scholars who are also purists working on our projects, for example, Yves Dejean, a former Catholic priest with a Ph.D. in linguistics from Indiana University. Another is Roger Desir, the person who headed the team that translated Biblia into Haitian Creole. Again, he is another purist. And there's also
Yves Joseph. Purists all! If an expression approximates a Gallicism, it is eliminated. 

As you know, the level of Creole usage in the media (radio and the newspapers) has improved a great deal in recent time, but you still find occasional Gallicisms like préconiser or Anglicisms such as basement. What do you do with basement? There are no basements in Haiti. So how are you going to communicate this idea? There's the French word cave, but what Haitian knows the word cave in the sense of basement? Someone living in Brooklyn, New York might well understand. I'm thinking of Franketienne's Pèlin Tet, the play about two Haitians living in a basement in Brooklyn. Whatever we do, we are going to be criticized. It is very difficult to know what is good Creole, what is not.

Q: I heard that Saint-Louis de Gonzague which is supposedly the pinnacle of French-language schools in Haiti, is now going to offer Creole. Is that true?

FREEMAN: Absolutely. Isn't that amazing? For those of you who are not familiar with Saint-Louis de Gonzague, it caters to the upper crust of Port-au-Prince society. The head priest announced in the newspaper about two weeks ago that beginning this fall (1989), the school will teach students to read and write in Haitian Creole. Frankly, I never thought I would live to see that day!
PANEL III: RESEARCH AGENDA FOR HAITI
INTRODUCTION

Gerdes Fleurant
Salem State College

I am delighted to be with you. Usually the role of the moderator is simply to moderate, but I think I will take some time to say a few words about several concepts that the steering committee of the Haitian Studies Association has developed over the past seven months concerning a research agenda for Haiti.

First, as you know, most persons acknowledge the fact that a great deal has been published on Haiti and its people. Many of these publications are to be found in the Humanities and the Social Sciences. We need now to locate, catalogue, and evaluate this body of research. Earlier, Professor Highfield elaborated upon material which might possibly exist in the Virgin Islands, and material exist all over the world on Haiti that we must search out and evaluate. Second, and most importantly, we need to develop a "grounded model," a model to evaluate, categorize, and systematize the existing body of literature in order to make it useful to future generations of scholars and policy makers.

A word about the model. Most of this research has been produced according to various theoretical and ideological frameworks. But as you know, 90% of what has been written on Haiti in the past hundred years has been less than desirable, to say the least. I'm not stating here anything that you do not already know. There is a model that we have developed here at Tufts University derived from the work of Vò Vò Clark, who teaches in the Romance Languages Department, and myself, who completed the Doctorate here at Tufts under her guidance and with other faculty members. It is a model that we call bosal, kanzo, and pris des yeux. This model is based directly on the nomenclature of the Vodoun. As you all know very well, a person who has not been initiated into the Vodoun is considered bosal. As one moves further within this particular faith, one becomes kanzo or privy to some of the mysteries. And, as one moves further still, one may acquire "eyes," that means, the gift of prophecy, the gift of foresight or what is known as the pris des yeux.

Were we to categorize the research on Haiti according to these three sequences of development, we would find that 90% of the research on Haiti falls within the bosal category written by people who do not know very much about Haiti and the remainder would
fall within the enlightened kanzo and pris des yeux areas. What does this schematization mean for us in terms of developing a research agenda for Haiti? It is very clear that we do not need any more bosal studies; we cannot use them. Haiti needs people who will take the time to do valuable research that can be effective and helpful to the country and its people. A third and fourth point: contemporary Haiti requires research in several overlooked fields, with special emphasis on the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, business and economics, public opinion, and communication sciences. In addition, Haitian Studies demands a qualitative evaluation of the Haitian diaspora in major cities: Haitians residing in New York, Miami, Boston, Montreal, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Houston, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and so on. We need to examine the resources of these communities, what is specific about them and how some of the resources can be used, not only in these resettled areas, but also for helping in the development of Haiti itself. Moreover, Haitian Studies has become international due to massive exile since the 1960s. As such, we must encourage comparative approaches, for instance, a comparative study of Haitians abroad, such as Haitian communities in Europe, Africa, Latin America, the wider Caribbean and of course, the United States.

We cannot overlook research in the Humanities as significant arenas for the development of social policy, political action, and the quest for democracy. We know that the Humanities are extremely important, and the discipline must and can be used as guides for future research and the formation of policies in Haiti.

Finally, we need to develop the dissemination of research materials to ensure that vital information goes beyond the circle of the elite and reaches working-class communities. I was very pleased this morning to hear Jocelyn McCalla speaking about his discomfort with Academia, a dis-ease many of us in Academia and the community share with him. Those of us who are committed to Haiti will perhaps follow in the tradition established by W.E.B. DuBois, the Afro-American scholar and activist, and engage forthrightly in the exchange of information we have gathered. The problems I have outlined here prompted the steering committee to organize this panel devoted to a research agenda for Haiti.
AGENDA FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Paul Latortue
University of Puerto Rico

To speak about an agenda for economic research -- in any country in the world -- the guidelines are the same. In our specific case, the environment may be different, and some of the problems are unique, so I'll try to give you a mixture of the general and specific case of Haiti. I am not addressing solely research to be done in Academia, because Academia is only one place where research occurs. Academia is a very important site, because it is the arena where free thinking takes place, and we do need that space even if some say that professors at the university do not belong in the real world. The central question is: how long does it take for the real world to catch up with you, the scholar, and scholarship to respond to the pressing needs of a diverse populace.

There are three points I want to make. Firstly, in any viable nation, a good portion of economic research must derive from the government bureaucracy. I would like to outline the parameters of what one could expect a working bureaucratic apparatus in Haiti to accomplish, not different from what other countries ought to be doing; secondly, we must be concerned with the external economy, Haiti's external trade; and thirdly, the activity of the internal market.

To manage a modern nation there is great deal of information that you do need. You must have access to information about the population, thus a census -- the distribution of the population by age, sex, and economic activity. You may wonder what such a compilation has to do with economics; it has everything to do with economics, because you do not begin without a knowledge of what's going on in the population -- who they are, and so forth. This kind of survey is basic. A population census was taken in 1950 for the first time in Haiti, followed by several weak attempts hampered by the absence of stable bureaucratic apparatus, sufficient financial support as well as a lack of civil training, and perhaps the will to really do a good job. Any country in the world requires a general census, because without it you do know where people reside, what they are doing, and so forth.

In addition to popular census, industry census is requisite, namely specific data describing labor among various sectors of the
populace -- the kinds of technology in which they are engaged. This kind of basic information derives from research, surveys, and the like. In Haiti, we need statisticians.

The land, how it is being used, how should it be used? What kind of crops will prosper, or should be planted in particular terrain? Some scholars have published research on these issues in the past. An American did some work on that problem, and these references are referred to as exemplary to this day, even after many, many years. We need to have more and new information on land use and planting habits. We need to gather information on prices, the development of prices, not only in general, but also in specific places. As you can see, this kind of information supports the bureaucratic apparatus if it is kept solely in the hands of the government.

Fortunately, I must say, the kind of resources required to undertake such censuses and surveys do exist, because Haiti belongs to a family of individual nations and receives support from international agencies, within the United Nations -- U.N. agencies, the likes of ILO, FAO, and others. They offer the possibility of obtaining training and funding to upgrade our current status. International, institutional support is in place, but it does not work. Organizations such as OAS, IDB, the World Bank, are users of Haitian statistics. They have a role and an interest in helping us build an infrastructure. I wanted to draw your attention to the fact that bureaucratic apparatus is important. That same international, bureaucratic apparatus also commissions studies to reveal the needs for infrastructure development. You go nowhere without a plan for infrastructure development in these times.

The second point with respect to external trade: more work needs to be done on what should be the role of foreign trade in the economy of Haiti. Foreign trade has always been important since the slave era in St. Domingue. During that period, the slaves were producing sugar and rum for export to France -- and the United States at that time also. But you see, there's a problem. We were brought from Africa to do just that, and the enterprise turned out to be very sour for us, because, in essence, we were working for free and for a dominant minority. This economic fact is important. I think that the memory of this history has perhaps predisposed us against foreign trade activities. If one studies the history of nationalist forces in Haiti, there is a tendency to avoid the international marketplace, precisely because over the cen-
tures international markets have not remunerated our efforts to the extent that they should have. Consequently, we have distanced ourselves from that market, turned inward to ourselves believing thereby that we were going to produce a prosperous economy. If that is what we want, we should know that no small country has ever been able to accomplish such a feat, because, simply, the smaller you are, the higher the probability that you will never find within your territory all the resources you will need to develop a full-scale economy. The smaller you are, the higher the need to be a participant in foreign trade so that you derive from foreign trade the commodities that you need. No company or country is going to supply what you need unless you export. The only way you can pay for an import is to export. Conversely, we do not want foreign trade agreements to extract all the juice from us, all the juice we are capable of delivering. And, the present structure of the international market does just that. So, what is the appropriate mix? What should be the importance of the foreign trade sector in Haiti's economy? What kind of products should we export and import? What kind of markets should we be looking for, and so forth? These are legitimate topics to be researched. Moreover, research on the international transmission of business cycles is another important issue, that is, collaboration with our neighbors. Our neighbors in the region have been trying to get together and create processes of economic integration. They have not been all that successful. No matter the degree of success, they are forging alliances and speaking to each other. Haiti, too, should be part of that process.

Whatever economic integration has occurred so far in Haiti has taken place in an unplanned and sometimes in a very undesirable manner. I shall mention briefly what is happening now between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The Dominican peso was officially devalued a few years back; unofficially, devaluation commenced at the beginning of the decade. Haiti, however, has not devalued its currency thereby creating an imbalance between the two exchange rates. As a result, you find a process of arbitrage taking place leading to unplanned, economic integration -- unplanned and unwanted. If the Dominican Republic devalues its peso and Haiti does not devalue the gourde, automatically all Dominican goods -- we are on the same island -- will be cheaper to Haitians. We might reach a point where Dominicans accept the Haitian gourde as a means of payment, but they don't have much to get back from Haiti by paying in gourdes to buy Haitian
products. If a more equitable arrangement could have been reached, some problems might have been avoided, but Haiti is a high-cost economy today. That's right, low income but high cost. I think this situation remains a major problem.

Migration is an economic phenomenon about which we need to know more. I mentioned earlier the need to know more about land use and crop production. Moreover, we need to do more work on finding out the optimum size of farms. Certainly farms in Haiti are too small. When we look at the statistics, we see that the productivity of the land in Haiti is only one-third of what is produced elsewhere in the Caribbean. Take a product such as rice, and consider production in a very fertile Haitian valley; you learn that we produce only one third the amount yielded in Cuba. Haitian rice fields produce only one-third of what the Dominicans get, and I don't think the Cubans nor the Dominicans are the world's most efficient producers of rice. By comparing our output to that of our neighbors, we see that the situation is very bad, indeed. If only one-third of the land is producing rice in Haiti, that means that the land is feeding one Haitian, and at the same time is providing food for three Cubans and three Dominicans. Automatically, therefore, your country becomes a poorer nation. Something must be done to increase the levels of productivity. A good-looking guy serving as President of the Republic is not going to do this alone; rather hard work at all levels is mandated. It's not simply a question of what type of rice to plant and market; the problem also has to do with the size of farms, with credit. Economics is not limited to the academic discipline of economics perse; every aspect of economics touches a given society.

I should like to mention two additional points -- one minute on each, because I think they are important. Taxation. Taxation is important to study in Haiti. Taxation has been a way to transfer wealth from the poor to the rich. Taxation is not a means in Haiti to collect revenues for the public good; it's a device to tax the poor and, as a result, the people who control the government become rich. You now know why some people want to become President-For-Life! We need to know more about taxation -- the case of production and export of coffee has been well documented; unfortunately, there is no time to provide further details here. I have arrived at the last point I want to make, last but not least. Following the Haitian Revolution of the nineteenth century, we turned inward implying that we no longer wanted to produce
sugar cane for European markets, rather we sought to produce food for our own consumption. Essentially, former slaves wanted a piece of land to develop. Some influential owners of property were not willing to concede. They lost. Those who suggested to suggest the initiation of land reform did not do so. Those revolutionary leaders who did promise land reform knew that they did not really believe in such a process as their actions demonstrated. They distributed to emancipated slaves marginal lands on marginal hills. And then what? Yes, in the beginnings of our post-revolutionary history, we created our own little paradise: we grew our own bananas or whatever believing that such an enterprise was surely better than producing sugar cane. At the same time, our revolutionary leaders of the nineteenth century set in motion a situation that over time would create misery. Why? Erosion. You cannot plant and produce on high-sloped hills unless important measures are taken to stop erosion. So today, after five to seven generations, we have eroded soils up in the mountains where people are still living. How are you going to change life without changing the production methodology -- without changing what people ought to be planting on hills whose ecology responds positively to the growth of forests and trees -- only? In search of economic survival, peasants want to plant corn in the hills. Development agendas notwithstanding, people will tell you corn or another product is not the issue. These are subsistence farmers who, no matter the crop, would likely be dead long before harvest. They are quite right; they would have been dead already. No matter what research indicates that farmers ought to be doing differently, the bureaucracy must provide them with an alternative in order to generate income.

One of the alternatives could well be artisanat: woodwork, wood-carving, painting and the like. Haiti still has that resource. I think the possibilities of other, non-agrarian, income-making possibilities on the hills represent an alternative to agricultural production. If we do not want to increase the import of food, we must explore means by which productivity might be increased on flat lands and in rural areas.
AGENDA FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

Alex Dupuy
Wesleyan University

I’m very pleased to be here, and I’m glad that Alix Cantave invited me to participate in the first annual meeting of the Haitian Studies Association. When he told me that he wanted me to talk about a research agenda for Haiti, I had to pause and think about what that could be.

The first point I wish to make is that there is no such thing as disassociated or disinterested social research. All social research is by definition partisan. The social researcher always starts from a particular standpoint, be it theoretical, political, or moral. The questions one asks about a social order and the answers one seeks are very much determined by the perspective that one adopts. So I believe it’s crucial that intellectuals and social scientists doing research on Haiti decide what they are going to research, the kinds of questions for which they are seeking answers, and what they are going to do with the information they gather. And it is also important to decide for whom and for what purpose they are conducting their research.

In terms of my own research, let me say up front that it is on the side of those who are seeking to transform Haitian society, because I have come to believe after years of studying Haitian society that the social, economic, and the political system that exists there is totally bankrupt and needs to be transformed. This conclusion is not solely the result of my own individual research, but is also the product of the collective findings of other Haitian and non-Haitian intellectuals and social scientists. And, equally as important, if not more so, it is the collective finding of the majority of the Haitian people themselves who are struggling to bring about change in Haiti.

What has been encouraging to me for the past years is the resurgence and growth of a popular movement to transform Haitian society. This movement has had a direct influence in the type of research that I have undertaken since I wrote my book *Haiti in the World Economy: Class, Race, and Underdevelopment Since 1700*, which was published in 1989. Specifically, I am interested in identifying the forces struggling to create an alternative, more egalitarian, and more just social system in Haiti, and other forces opposed to such changes and committed to preserve
the status quo. Another related question concerns the obstacles, both internal and external, to the possible success of such a movement for social change.

For purposes of illustration, I will outline what I see as the various social forces that are confronting each other in Haiti, and what research needs to be done to contribute to the movement for social change. Intellectuals, I believe, can play an important role in the collective struggle to create a better Haiti. They possess special knowledge, skills, tools, and talents that popular movements often need but lack because of their poor education and training, or because their energies are spent making ends meet and struggling to overcome incredible odds, thereby making it difficult to assess and reflect on the larger picture. For me, it is quite obvious that the sectors of Haitian society which benefits from the exploitation of the majority of Haitians are not going to be the agents of their own demise. These social forces, however, do not represent a unified bloc. There is no unified ruling class in Haiti. If anything the ruling class is highly divided, between those who control the government, the State apparatuses, and the military, and those who control the private sector of the economy. Normally there is a close relationship between these two components of a class system whereby the government and the State primarily defend the interests of the privileged, propertied classes. This is so because in the context of a capitalist economy where the means of production are privately owned, the government depends on the well-being of the private sector for its own well-being. Thus, there is a tendency in such a context for the government to respond to the needs and interests of the propertied class to maintain a healthy business climate conducive to investments and economic growth.

In the context of an underdeveloped, dependent, and poor society like Haiti, however, the State has always enjoyed a high degree of autonomy from the private sector. Given the relative smallness of the private sector and its monopolization by the traditional bourgeoisie, the State in Haiti has historically served as a means of social promotion for members of the middle classes. Thus, the State has always been a contested area for control by one or another faction of the privileged classes. The State, in other words, constitutes an economic actor in its own right, which competes with the private sector to control and appropriate a greater share of the social wealth.
Now, since the Duvalier regime came to power in 1957, there has been a monopolization of political power by the Duvalierist forces. The objective of the Duvalierists was to transfer power from the traditional elite which had succeeded in controlling the State since the United States military occupation of Haiti (1915-1934) to the emerging and predominantly black petite bourgeoisie, and particularly the black nationalist factions within it who have their origins in the movement against the American occupation. They go further than that, but for purposes of discussion we can locate them at that period.

Now François Duvalier had been an active participant in the black nationalist movement since its inception during the American occupation. He also participated in the first "black nationalist revolution" that brought Dumarsel Estime to power in 1947. Duvalier, therefore, saw himself as the continuator of the Estimist or black nationalist revolution, whose objective was to reach a balance between the black middle class and the mulatto elite through the control of political power. After François, Papa Doc Duvalier died in 1971, the regime of Jean-Claude Duvalier began to distance itself from the strident black nationalism of the father to form an alliance with the traditional bourgeoisie and foreign capital. This alliance was thought to be necessary to invigorate the economy which had stagnated under the father's regime. That alliance succeeded in keeping the Duvaliers in power until 1986. During the 1980s, and especially after 1984, there emerged a mass movement that began to contest the legitimacy of the Duvalier regime and demand democratic reforms. The conclusion was reached by large sectors of the population because the current regime was not capable of generating the type of economic development that would bring about a significant improvement in living standards. This same populace believed that a new and democratic social order was needed to achieve this goal. I need not tell you what you already know, namely that Haiti has been and continues to be the poorest country in the Western hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world.

By 1985, the movement for social change that began in some provincial towns like Gonaïve, Cap Haitien, and Jérémie, had become national in scope. Though this movement was spontaneously organized and remained fragmented and diversified ideologically, it was united in its determination to overthrow the discredited and bankrupt Duvalier dictatorship. I will not main-
tain that this mass movement directly caused the downfall of the regime. The Duvalier regime was brutal enough and had at its disposal the means to suppress the mass movement. Though the regime tried to suppress the movement initially, it was eventually unable to contain the movement's growth and became more isolated nationally and internationally.

Thus, rather than directly causing the regime's downfall, the mass protest movement helped undermine the alliance I mentioned earlier that had been formed among the Duvalierists, the traditional elite, and foreign capital. And the Catholic Church played a crucial role in this process through its criticisms of the regime's brutality and its support for the opposition movement.

Since the overthrow of the Duvalier regime in 1986, Haiti has been experiencing one crisis after another, a crisis which expresses, on one hand, the attempt by the Duvalierist forces to preserve their base of power and privilege through their control of the state and the military, and on the other hand, the process of disintegration of Duvalierism through the constant struggles of the masses of the population for an end to dictatorship and a democratic alternative.

Thus, my research agenda for the past two years has been to delineate the various forces at work to bring about democratic change in Haiti. Thus far this movement for a democratic alternative remains very fragmented and without a consensus on what is meant by democracy or what type of economic system might replace the bankrupt, dependent and underdeveloped capitalist dictatorship that benefitted a few at the expense of the vast majority. The research that needs to be done, then, is to investigate the various tendencies, ideologies, programs, and agendas for social change that are emanating from the mass movement. Such research can shed light on where the movement has been, where it's going, and what its future possibilities might be.

In carrying out this research, however, one must keep in mind the context in which Haiti exists. This is the context of its subordination to the United States and that country's determination to prevent any sort of social change in Haiti that might undermine the U.S.'s hegemony in the region. In this light, the study of the experiences of other Caribbean societies that have also attempted to create alternative and more egalitarian systems, like Jamaica under the Manley administration from 1972 to 1980, the Grenadian Revolution from 1979 to 1983, and the Sandinista
Revolution in Nicaragua could prove very useful to assess what is possible or what may or may not work in Haiti.

I believe that it is in doing that kind of committed and focused research that social scientists interested in the process of social change in Haiti might contribute immeasurably to that very process.
HAITIAN CREOLE AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Cindy Ballenger
Wheelock College

The two previous speakers, Paul Latortue and Alex Dupuy, talked about Haiti and the ways in which their research can help the country. I am going to be talking about linguistics, which I think has a lot of practical value, but it is certainly not as direct. What I'm interested in is how people learn languages. You all have many intuitions about that, I am sure, because you have done it successfully. But when one looks very closely at these intuitions it turns out that they do not fully answer the question. All sort of commonsensical ideas, prevail that maybe children imitate what their parents say, or they form some patterns or analogies out of what they hear. There is some truth in this, I'm sure, but it does not hold up. We still can not explain, really at all, how a baby, who is born and hears this sort of noise from the day it comes into the world, by the time it's two, begins putting words together, and by the time it's seven, can say extraordinarily complex things. We do not know what it is that the child does in order to get there.

The way we are trying to look at this question is in terms of what it is about the human mind that makes this possible. What does the child come with that allows him to take this noise and create an organized and extraordinarily subtle system out of it? The question reformulates as the investigation of what is acquired, what is learned about language versus what is innate, or part of the programming, if you want to use a computer analogy. This question is tremendously profound, if you think about it. In some sense the question is what makes people human? What makes us different from animals? This is an age-old question. other differences. Maybe we're moral in some way.

Why should we worry about this issue in terms of Haitian Creole? I am going to argue the theoretical reasons and then talk about actual and practical applications. There are two approaches to why we should assume such a posture. The first one is simple. When we look at the way young French children learn French; when we look at the way young English-speaking children learn English; the way young Russian speaking children learn Russian -- we approach their language development in the context of this major philosophical question. We ask what is it about their minds that allows them to learn this language in the par-
ticular way that they do. Why should we consider these same principles with Haitians? Because Haitian people are beleaguered in some sense, are oppressed and have major difficulties, should we then look at their children learning another language in isolation and not place the process within put it in the context of this classical question.

I do not think that we should forget theory and concentrate on practice alone. We should look at Haitian Creole language acquisition in terms of major philosophic questions, because that is the way we look at languages acquisition in the case of other languages.

There is another way of justifying looking at language theoretically, this has been associated with someone named Derek Bickerton. He would say that Haitian Creole is not just another language, but that Creoles have a particular place, a most privileged position, in terms of our understanding of how language acquisition operates. According to his theory, Creoles were developed in a situation where people had no common language with which to communicate. People had been torn from their homeland, in the case of Haiti, from various parts of Africa presumably, they did not have a way to speak to each other nor a common language. They had some French and perhaps some people had certain African languages in common, but there was not a common language.

Children were born to these people, and these children had no language with which to communicate with their peers. They were not hearing enough French to really learn French, and they were hearing a whole mélange of African languages; this is the way in which Bickerton imagines the situation. Haitian and other Creoles, as Bickerton sees it, are created by children without the benefit of a model.

Whatever we imagine language acquisition to be, we have to say that usually there is a model. One hears one’s parents; one hears the larger community speaking. In the case of Creoles children without models created language. What they created must be, then, the closest to whatever innate linguistic capacity exists in the human mind. It must reflect the "hard-wiring" quite directly. This is a testable hypothesis because what this predicts is that children learning Creole will not make very many errors. Children learning English make errors; children learning French make errors. They actually do not make an awful lot of errors, but everyone here who is a parent, or who has spent time with
small children, knows that kids make funny little errors. The assumption that we are making is that those errors are what they want the language to be.

If Creole is really closest to some sort of innate language capacity, then, it should be right in line with what the kids want, with their natural tendencies. You should be able to look at small children learning Haitian Creole and see something about what this innate language capacity is like. If Bickerton's theory is correct, then an investigation of Haitian Creole and of young children learning to speak has a particularly strong contribution to make to theoretical studies in linguistics.

Now, let us turn to the practical reasons for studying language acquisition. Let me first say what I mean by "studying it". What we have, for other languages, is a corpus of data from kids which contains transcriptions of words from two-year-olds. When you see things like, "want cookie," "me no go," and you realize that all two-year-olds do that in English. This is standard. This is what the two year olds grammar looks like. We also have data from two and a half year-olds and three year-old. You can see the progress they make, until they pretty much get the adult grammar by maybe five or six or seven years old.

Parents and researchers have written down what kids say. The data have been collected for many languages, but they do not exist for any Creole language.

With English speaking kids we were extremely accurate. We discover when certain problems exist and we help them. I studied a number of four-year-old Haitian kids. They were assigned to me because they had significant problems. I went and checked how they were doing in the third grade and I tested them; 80% of the kids were doing fine. I do not usually cure kids, so the fact that they were doing well in the third grade means that 80% of these kids were misdiagnosed. It did not hurt them to be in my classroom. It was all right, but it is still a very high rate of misdiagnosis. One of the reasons this took place was that we really did not know what they ought to be doing at 2, 3, and 4 years old. We are unaware of what was normal in Haitian Creole. Nevertheless, the more information we have, the more we can refine our intuitions and really know if we are right to say that this child needs help.

I'm not in favor of a lot of testing and labels. I do not like the idea of someone talking to a child for thirty minutes listening to his grammar or his pronunciation and then formulating a diag-
nosis. The way to make that labelling less blunt is to have lots of information. The more information you have about what normal kids do, the more you see the variety; the less likely you are to do this kind of labelling, which is often really unfortunate for school age kids.

The final thing I think would be very helpful to educators and parents to know more about is -- what is the effect of bilingual education for Creole-speaking children? There are many arguments about bilingual education. Some groups seem to be promoting it practically through high school as the best way to teach non-English speaking kids. Others believe in immersing their children in English and reject bilingual programs. There are positions at all points between these two extremes. We are starting a study at the Haitian Multi-Service Center in Dorchester; it has a bilingual preschool for Creole and English speaking children. We are going to study how those kids perform in school. Most of the students go into monolingual classrooms in kindergarten, after some years of bilingual education at the preschool level. We want to compare their progress to Creole-speaking children who have been to monolingual preschool - kids who have gone to Headstart or other preschool programs, where they were taken from a Creole-speaking family and immersed all at once in an English-speaking environment.

The question of bilingual education seems to be a particularly charged one for many of the Haitians I spoke to -- there are issues of social class status and pride involved, so a calm appraisal is difficult in many cases. The better our information on the patterns of linguistic and academic achievement for Haitian children, the more successfully we can defuse the issue and discuss facts, so that people can make the best choices for their children.

**Notes**

PANEL IV: RESEARCH TO DISSEMINATION/PERFORMANCE
INTRODUCTION

VeVe A. Clark
Tufts University

We have altered slightly participation on this panel. Maximilien Laroche could not be here with us today. I asked him to participate because, as some of you know, he has his own editorial staff and a small press at the University of Laval in Canada called GRELCA which publishes criticism of Haitian literature. The objective of this panel was to discuss research and how we might go about disseminating our work through more innovative channels in order to reach audiences within and outside of the Academy.

Undoubtedly, participants in this conference noticed in the lobby a book display which demonstrates the principal means by which those of us in the Academy produce information for each other’s consumption. There are other avenues as well: Haitians are well known for what here in America we call “vanity press,” that is, self-published writing; you also have small presses such as Laroche's GRELCA. In addition there are numerous university presses, especially in the United States; slowly several Haitian writers are entering mainstream publishing—Depestre and Metellus, for instance—and their works published by Gallimard.

My question for all of us at this point in time, after the dechoukaj is to consider whether the old networks, the old channels of dissemination are "S, E, & A"—Sufficient, Effective, and Appropriate. When you view the display of all those wonderful writings on Haitian subjects gathered in our lobby, you may say to yourself, "Ah, this is marvelous; I’ve got to purchase this or that publication." Many of us realize, however, that the broader audiences in whose literary interests we are interested will never pick up those books, never be exposed to them or any book, for that matter. Consequently, what we decided to do with this panel was explore other means of distributing the results of our research to larger audiences, communities outside of the Academy. Let me illustrate what I mean using the Afro-American example. In my community, a vast majority may not purchase Toni Morrison’s Beloved, may not read Alice Walker. Yet, they might go to a play produced by their church or stagings elsewhere in the community simply because the subject interests them or a member of the family is performing, and so forth. Or the amorphous community
about which I am speaking might well be attracted to a dance performance, more likely to a film, to the film version of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. I am always surprised that we, as scholars, often forget those media in which the community almost volunteers to be involved. Performance is the issue here. Those of us trained in literary criticism write about the novel, about poetry and tend to ignore performance when, throughout the Caribbean, most folks—despite economic constraints—will participate enthusiastically in Carnival each year. We scholars must explore the potential for communication embedded in working-class and peasant willingness to learn in non-traditional arenas.

During this panel, we shall feature "Rites and Reason", an experiment at Brown University (Rhode Island) in existence since 1973, where scholars work together to transform their research into performance. They do not confine the results of their scholarly work to college campuses or debate among their colleagues. Versions of their research go out into Providence, into the community. George Bass and Rhett Jones call their method *research-to-performance* and, in my opinion, provide an example of a more creative way of sharing scholarly research with the public, with that same amorphous community which supported our entry into the Academy. In addition, we have asked film-maker Robin Lloyd to join the panel so that she may show her film *Black Dawn* because, as I mentioned earlier, films often inspire the public to become more informed about issues, particularly non-reading audiences.

Let me provide some contemporary examples of the phenomena regarding experiments in performance and film production in the Caribbean. One of the best illustrations of research-to-performance is the Sistren Collective from Jamaica. Some of you may have heard of the group. These are young, working-class women who reveal and deal with personal and societal problems through theatre techniques known as *collective creation*. The group works to discover a common problem in all of its complexities and reworks these issues into a coherent performance that is then returned to the larger community within local theater spaces. Other examples appear in contemporary film-making. Some of you have perhaps seen two of the most important Haitian independent films recently released, namely Raoul Peck's *Haitian Corner* and Elsie Haas's *La Ronde de Vodou*. Audiences have an immediate reaction to these kinds of ideological documentary films.
In sum, this particular panel is about breaking away, breaking free from some of the old, staid, and boring methods that we have inherited as accepted means of presenting the results of our research or artistic productions. I would like to suggest, in the future, if it becomes of interest to our members that the Haitian Studies Association attempt each year to have one panel on Research to Dissemination or Research-to-Performance so that we keep alive the notion of looking for innovative modes of communicating from the field to the Academy and back to the field.

We will begin the panel discussions with Professor Rhett Jones from Brown University who will speak to you about the experiment at Brown University, "Rites and Reason."
RESEARCH-TO-PERFORMANCE METHOD

Rhett Jones
Brown University

I think I'll follow my good friend Gerdes Fleurant's suggestion, follow his good example, and save some wear and tear on my feet at the same time. I'll sit right here, if you don't mind.

Let me start off with what our basic assumption is in what we call "Research-to-Performance Method." Instead of trying to get into the argument that scholars know more than the people know about themselves, or the people know more than scholars, we start with the assumption—and we've been working in this method since 1973—that both of those kinds of knowledge are of value: the kind that we get out of our libraries and off our computer tapes, and out of other kinds of data bases, and the kind of knowledge that people have in the street. Historically, one of the problems has been that people have not brought those two kinds of knowledge together. We work at getting scholars to talk to people, and people to talk to scholars in some regular, systematic fashion.

I should say, in case you couldn't tell from looking at George and me, that what we are primarily concerned about is the Black experience. We have done other projects, however, in fact we recently completed a project with Armenian-Americans. And we have another on the drawing board with Native Americans. What we've basically done for the last twenty odd years, is to work in and with the Black community. What I want to do first is give you some idea how this process works. There's nothing very complicated about it. Then, George is going to follow up by grounding my observations, by framing them so that you get some idea of the kinds of assumptions that underlay the work.

The first thing we do is we start with the scholar. Let me give you a concrete example. A few years ago we did a project concerned with Black women. We asked a psychologist, Dr. Alice Brown Collins, who was then at Brown and is now at Wellesley, to write a position paper. This is what we do in all projects. We asked Alice to write a position paper on the state of knowledge in her discipline of about twenty pages or so. What, we asked, do scholars know about relations among Black women? She wrote the paper just as she would write any kind of summary for a scholarly journal. Then, we pass that paper around; we pass it
to a director, to a playwright, to our staff. We all read it. We then asked Alice to make a presentation of her paper in ordinary speech, not academic jargon.

When we first started out, we had such presentations mostly on campus. Now we have them everywhere. We have them in churches, senior citizen centers, community colleges. In Alice’s case, she discussed the state of psychological research on how Black women relate to each other. Once she made her presentation, we took questions and comments from the people there. We received varied responses such as: "Okay, that makes sense. Yes, I understand that. Yes, my grandmother did that. No, that stuff is crazy; I don’t know where you got that idea from. You better go back and research that again, lady, because that makes no sense at all." You get that kind of dialogue going. We tape record the encounter. We all take notes, then we go back and talk about what we’ve learned. We also do something else: we know that a lot of people won’t get up in a forum like this and speak before other people, so we arrange one-on-one meetings.

We have a group of people in the Providence community who love to talk to scholars. We send the scholar to their homes. They have coffee, they have tea; they may have a little something stronger, too. In that way, we get people together one-on-one with our scholars: "I heard your paper. I read your paper. Right here in my living room I’m going to tell you what is good about it, and what I think is bad."

You may ask how we get these people. People come to our performances. They like to be entertained; they like to be involved. Also, in the years we’ve been working, we have convinced people that we are serious about listening to their ideas. You can’t run a scam on people from 1973 to 1989. They ain’t that dumb. They will figure out if it’s a scam and say, "Yeah, you tape record our ideas, but we never see them again." George and I no longer talk about "the community," as I’ve been in Providence since 1969, and he’s been there since 1970. Our children have been born and raised in Providence, so that we are as much of "the community" as anybody else. People work with us because of our track record. We have demonstrated that we listen to ideas; we write them down, we talk about them and later folk will see them on our stage.

To return to the process, I left off at the point where people are at the house having their tea and sharing their ideas. Once
we have had that intimate feedback and a public response from people in Providence, then the scholar, in this case Alice, would re-write her paper. Remember she started with a body of scholarly knowledge. During the re-write she took into consideration what she learned, so that paper became a blend of the state of scholarship in Black psychology --- what the discipline has had to say about Black women --- and what the people in the community told Alice.

We then had another meeting in which we discussed her revision. At such meetings we bring in a playwright and a director. We sit down and talk about the revised paper. After that discussion, the playwright goes away and writes the first draft of the play based on the initial research, the input of people in Providence, and our discussion. We all read that first draft. Then we come back again -- playwright, director, Rites and Reason staff, scholar -- and we discuss the first draft.

The scholar might say: "Wait a minute. This may play well; it reads well. This is a great scene, but I don't see anything in my research that backs this up." It's at that point that we get into our best fights. We've had people say "Turn off the tape recorder, and I'll really tell you something." We've had people walk out. We haven't yet had any physical clashes, though we've come close to it. Lots of yelling, lots of hand waving, because everybody is serious about the work. The playwright is serious about what he or she has written, and the scholar is serious about his or her work. We are all serious about making certain that the data the scholar has collected and the community input are represented in the play.

Once we have had that discussion, the playwright does a second script, and it's that script that then goes into production. Since I'm running out of time, I won't go through the various stages of production. You can raise questions about the different kinds of presentations we offer, if you like. But I will say this --- in each one of those productions, the Providence people are present. They get a chance to respond to what they saw on stage, not just in terms of the fact that it's a good play or a bad one, but whether it reflects their understanding of what the issues are. We never bring a performance to our major stage unless the people have had the chance to speak back. We call these sessions "Folk Thought," and in them we encourage people to speak out and criticize what we're doing.
In the final analysis what we try to do is bring our community, playwrights, and scholars together. People often ask us: "How do you make the process work? Can other people do it?" I think it's adaptable to any community of scholars that's willing to work and to take seriously people who are not scholars; who are willing to acknowledge that just because you don't have a Ph.D. or an M.A. doesn't mean you haven't learned something about life, and you don't have a perspective to offer. You have to take the people seriously. I can't think of any short-cut to involving people in the work. It took us a long time, because people, particularly Black people, have had so many scams run on them, that the only way we got over their suspicion was that we persisted. We just kept doing it over and over again. You cannot rely on one of these advertising companies who give you a good slogan, and get people to come to a university and seriously dialogue with scholars and playwrights. We've tried a lot of slogans too, but the slogans have had less impact than the hard persistent work. People have seen that we do take them and their ideas seriously.
RITEs AND REASONS

George Bass
Brown University

Robert's role in our work at Brown is that of Research Director. He is generally responsible for organizing and overseeing the quality of scholarship and our faithfulness to the interpretation of that scholarship. My role is that of Artistic Director, and as Artistic Director I'm principally responsible for overseeing the transformative process from the scholarship into performance works.

I'd like to think of it as a collaborative and collective process that allows us, in a sense, to simulate what perhaps would happen in the folk tradition of making stories, or making songs. That is, the movement of a story or song from person to person refines the work by cutting away those elements that are seemingly not true to the spirit of the culture, and finally gives form and shape to compelling images and metaphors that speak from and to the hearts and minds of the people.

In bringing scholars, artists, community people and university students together, we, in a sense, simulate the reforging process of tradition through forms of dialogue. In those forms of dialogue, then, we are concerned with the power of shared memory, but not shared memory that is necessarily predicated on agreement. We want to enunciate shared memory in the sense that we are articulating our common experience from different perspectives of age, of region, of social backgrounds in order to recognize a broader view of who we know we are.

The objective, of course, is to enunciate a shared understanding of a peoples' experience as it relates to a specific topic, whether that topic is the nature of Black women's perceptions of themselves, or on something as specific as the Rhode Island Black Regiment, or a more broader topic such as our 1981-83 project, "Finding the Peoples' Ideology." In "Finding the People's Ideology," we asked to what extent do Black people act from some shared ideological approach to living, as they cope with and meet the challenges of life. What happens in the process is that the bringing together of different members of the community for discussion enlarges and hopefully strengthens the playwright's imagination by allowing the playwright to add to her or his own
poetic vision the insights, personal accounts and understanding of other persons of that particular community.

It is important to understand that this process is community-based grounded in an on-going dialogue between the institution, Rites & Reason, and the community it serves. The process allows us to move our concern for an issue and topic from the gathering of scholarly information and the interpretation of research findings to discussions with theater artists and community persons followed by the creation of a script. The script is reviewed by scholars and their responses assist in the rewriting of the script which leads to the usual process of playmaking—producing the play.

At every phase we seek to inspire an on-going dialogue by asking: what is the issue here? What are the meanings? What is the significance that we are trying to put into sharp relief for our shared understanding about how we see, know and appreciate the experiences of our own history.

Another important aspect of the process is that it produces more than one level of interaction. We have created a season of productions that is organized to engage our community in different levels of dialogue with us about the works that we are seeking to develop. We have four events in each season that are part of the research-to-performance method. Two of them we think of as forums and the other two are productions. The first event is an open forum that is organized around a specific topic. The topic this past year (1989) was "Do middle class Blacks have a culture, too?" In another forum we asked: "What is the role and responsibility of artists in addressing social problems?" At any rate, by coming to respond to a specific topic, we generate focused discussions, and from those discussions we come to recognize and know specific issues and ideas that should be pursued and examined more fully in our research-to-performance process.

In a second event of each year, we have a one-act play, sometimes maybe two one-act plays, that have been developed from specific research material. The one-act play gives focus to the community dialogue. One year, for instance, we used research dealing with the Jamaican Maroon experience. We have also used an historical incident to examine the conflict between Dubois and Garvey in a one-act play. More recently, we dealt with the question of Black women's survival and images of Black women in the cultural continuum from the Yoruba culture of Oshun to strong women of the New World experience. Each of
the two events include audience discussion that can help us to understand more clearly the people’s response, their appreciation for and displeasure with our interpretation of shared experiences. The work presented as a one-act play may, in time, move forward into a full-length drama, our next stage of play development, the third and fourth events of a season—productions of full-length plays developed from the method. This past year (1989) we produced a play, *Dance Mama, Dance* by Barbara Bejoian which was a part of the original project Rhett referred to earlier, "Women in Transition," where we looked at self-concepts of Armenian-American women and Black American women. The Armenian-American play, *Dance Mama, Dance*, was first produced in 1984 and given a second production in May 1989. The script was significantly improved and refined as a result of the first production experience. During the second production of the play, persons from the Armenian-American community were invited to read the revised script for us, the week before we went into rehearsal. They sat around and informally read the script, assuming various roles; discussed that script and made recommendations that in their view would more accurately reflect their culture. We used their insights in rewriting the script during the rehearsal process. In this manner, we arrived at a performance work that speaks to and from the experiences of a people, enunciates shared memories, and illuminates shared understanding, thereby strengthening the memory, poetically codifying the history, and empowering the people with a sense of their own experience from their own cultural perspective.
BLACK DAWN

Robin Lloyd
Green Valley Film and Art Center
Burlington, VT.

I am honored that you chose to show my film Black Dawn here today. I can’t think of a more appropriate audience, and I’d like to ask that this screening be dedicated to the memory of C.L.R. James. This is the first time it has been shown since his death. His book The Black Jacobins (1938), was a formative influence in the making of the film.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about how I, as a white North American woman, came to Haiti and made this film, because I think that some of the influences that affected me and my partner, Doreen Kraft are similar to other people’s way of experiencing Haiti. I think it’s important to change the images Americans have of Haiti from the sensational and negative ones that have proliferated in recent years in the mass media, to a more positive and productive perspective.

We went to Haiti to make Black Dawn in the middle of the seventies. Our original inspiration was Maya Deren’s encounter with Haitian Vodun described in her book Divine Horsemen (1953). The subtitle of the book is The Living Gods of Haiti: we hoped we might find the ‘Living Gods of Haiti’ during our journey. We lived in a Vodun temple for a short time during our first visit, and obviously some spell was cast upon us, because we returned to the U.S. determined to raise the money to create this film.

Above and beyond the inspiration of books by Deren and James was our growing admiration and respect for the Haitian people and their tremendous talent and creative energy.

Black Dawn is an animated film. We worked with artists affiliated with the Centre d’Art of Port-au-Prince, and we found a remarkable enthusiasm among artists for the project. For example, Rigaud Benoit was an artist who painted, among other subjects, Vodun rituals. To capture the sense of spirit animating nature, he painted stones with little feet on them and tree branches turning into snakes. When he understood that we were asking him to make a painting of moving parts, it corresponded with his sensibility. This experience made us aware that the word for animation--bringing objects alive on the screen--is connected
to the word animism, wherein the world of objects is permeated with spirit. Vodun is sometimes referred to as an animistic faith system. I believe that the success of our film arose out of the interconnectedness of theses creative impulses.

I'd like to say a few words about my current project. This summer, I'm going to be accompanying a Haitian family to Saut d'Eau in central Haiti, which is a pilgrimage site for both Vodun and Catholic worshippers. One of my reasons for wanting to make this video is my dismay at the way in which Vodun has been denigrated by the American mainstream media in recent years. I have a sense, for example, that the ecological situation in Haiti is sometimes blamed on the Haitian peasant and Vodun. I hope this video will shed some light on these questions.

I'd like to read a few sentences from the book by Alfred Metraux, *Voodoo in Haiti* (1959/1972), about the destruction of the trees that happened during the Anti-Superstition Campaign in Haiti in 1941. The American occupation was over, but the Catholic Church was still very strong, and encouraged a rejection of 'satanism' by the people, that grew into a crusade of religious hysteria. Called the Anti-Superstition Campaign, wholesale destruction of Vodun artifacts and temples took place. The sacred trees were not exempt from this hysteria. Métraux writes:

> Then the sacred trees, plentiful around the houmfort - temples- were cut down amid hymn singing and prayer. All who witnessed these scenes were struck by the behavior of those who had become the agents or tools of the persecution. They attacked the sacred objects of voodoo as though these were their personal dangerous enemies. While the curae was engaged in exorcising the sacred trees, fanatics threw stones at them, cursed them and blamed them for all the money that had been made and then thrown away on sacrifices and offerings, and of course this rage betrayed their conviction that these trees were, in fact duly inhabited by spirits. As to the voodooists who had to be present during these scenes, which in their eyes were sacrilege, and had to give up with their own hands their talismans, the guarantee of their safety and well-being, they were so dejected, so completely downcast that they burst into tears and showed signs of overwhelming grief. (p.346)

These trees were often the largest trees in the Haitian countryside. They were frequently near streams, and helped to
stabilize the ecology of the area. In its zeal, the Anti-Superstition Campaign sought to stamp out a reverence for life. When this happens, when the sacred is desecrated, the environment is put at risk. This happened and is happening not only in Haiti, but wherever native beliefs have been submerged by Christianity.

Thus as we watch environmental degradation pollute our earth, we might find it instructive to look back at indigenous faith systems and study how they managed to live gently, with reverence, on the land.

[Screening of Black Dawn]

Question and Answer Period

QUESTION: Shall we take this medium as representative of things to come?

ROBIN LLOYD: Creating an animated film is an incredibly arduous task. When my partner and I completed the film in 1978, and premiered it at the Brooklyn Museum during the exhibit of Haitian Art, we collapsed shortly thereafter saying - "never again will we make an animated film." Ten years have passed, and believe it or not, we are considering the idea of an animated film based on Jamaican folk culture. The Jamaican situation is a bit different, but there's a lot of cultural wealth there that could be used in a film which, ultimately, provides interesting similarities and differences when compared to the Haitian story. I have screened Black Dawn in Jamaica and people are quite interested in it, and quite interested in the parallels to their circumstances and culture.

QUESTION: I have a question for the two presenters representing the research-to-performance project. How is this project supported? Is it supported through the university?

RHETT JONES: Brown University does give us support. The University does provide staff people and an operating budget. We also take donations from the community. In our first ever fundraiser from the community we got donations as low as $2.00, but it all added up to almost $12,000.

We do not charge admission. This has been a big bone of contention with funding agencies. But we have persuaded the University that it doesn't charge admission to have people come and give lectures, to share scholarly knowledge, and we shouldn't charge admission either. Our forums are open and free. Mainte-
nance of Rites and Reason also means that we do a great deal of
grants writing; we do get support from the University Develop-
ment Office, too.

QUESTION: How long does the process from research-to-per-
formance last? When you described it for us, a project seems to
take approximately two years before it is completed. How does
the process impact on your own creativity? One of the critiques
of the process in which you engage is that the product is preachy
and dull.

GEORGE BASS: Our work tends not to be preachy and dull.
We are committed to the best dramaturgical knowledge and skills
that we have for theater, so that though the process imposes
certain kinds of constraints, it is also liberating. It is liberating in
the sense that the writer is given a greater store of information
and images for refining her/his own imagination in the process of
shaping character, plot, and language. The process is time-con-
suming if it is done well, but then isn’t that the nature of producing
any play? If you develop a play that springs from the research and
imagination of an individual artist, it is also time-consuming. It
takes years for a play to develop. Charles Godone’s No Place To
Be Somebody was over ten years in the making from the time that
he first started writing it until it was finally produced in New York
City and won a Pulitzer Prize. It was the tenacity of and commit-
ment to his own poetic vision that made that success possible.

In like manner, we try not to take that much time, but we are
mindful of the fact that the creative process in theater, being
collaborative in nature, demands time.

RHETT JONES: The product cannot be dull. Although some
of our works have been produced in other places, we operate
primarily in Providence. If our performances are dull, people
won’t come. It’s that simple. So it cannot be dull. It’s got to be
both entertaining and informative to be successful.

GEORGE BASS: Rites & Reason did not exist before 1970. It
has come into existence, it has developed its own methodology
and its own support system simply by the doing of it. I think that
you and your friends can begin such a project by identifying a topic
that concerns you, and moving ahead a step at a time. Certainly
if you wanted some feedback from us, we could share with you
our experiences.

VEVE CLARK: I want to thank the members of the panel for
their presentations which have offered us an alternative view of
what may be sufficient, effective and appropriate ways of getting
our research out into the larger community. Perhaps next year we will succeed in focusing our attention on dissemination through established venues as we begin to document the publishing records of university and mainstream presses that are currently interested in Haitian issues. This afternoon, we wanted to suggest that we need to have one session perhaps every year devoted to the issue of research and dissemination during the annual Haitian Studies Association Conference.