THE 2010 EARTHQUAKE
AND MEDIA IN HAITI:
JOURNALISTIC TRANSFORMATIONS, DEMOCRACY
AND THE POLITICS OF DISASTER.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explains the role that Haiti’s leading mainstream and alternative news outlets have played in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake that devastated the island nation of Haiti. The role of the media as a civic institution that acts on behalf of and in alliance with civil society in times of crisis is the central theme of this dissertation. Prior research has demonstrated that Haiti’s media has been at the heart of such a role in civic society throughout the country’s two hundred plus years of independent existence. This dissertation argues that this media tradition has been revitalized, strengthened and put to the test by the current crisis the country faces in physical reconstruction from natural disaster, political reconstruction from fragile early attempts at democracy, and social reconstruction from decades of economic stagnation that have exacerbated poverty and living conditions of the average Haitian.

This project uses a mixed methodological approach of qualitative methods and basic quantitative methods to analyze how Haitian journalists have covered the aftermath of the disaster. This research addressed three key elements: (1) the impact of the disaster on the fractions that existed within the leading news media outlets during the nation’s ongoing experiment with democracy (2) the impact of the disaster on how journalists view and practice their profession (3) the impact of the disaster on the quality of news being produced in Haiti.
Findings indicate that there was an initial solidarity reborn among key Haitian news outlets that has sustained itself four years into the crisis. The solidarity born out of this most recent crisis has resulted in changes in how journalists approach their civic duty, despite commercial strains, and how they cooperate through sharing of news content and resources. These changes are seen across all media platforms. Additionally, Haitian media outlets have taken joint stances on developments in the country since the 2010 disaster that has resulted in news content that is more critical of those who hold power, and more concerned with advocacy on behalf of the Haitian people in general. At a time when the Haitian people are searching for a path forward, Haiti’s media is providing a powerful platform to debate the course of the country’s future.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Finally, to my children, Zachary Ramjattan and Zoë Ramjattan (to be born in June 2014), this project is for you two and every minute I have spent away from you working on this project my heart longed to spend with you.
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DEDICATION

To my mother Bernadette Roberts and to my children Zachary and Zoë Ramjattan.

And, in memory of Mrs. Joandra Archer-Charles.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores how Haitian media have covered Haiti’s reconstruction since the 2010 earthquake. I argue that the work of Haiti’s media, both mainstream and alternative, carries the tropes and voices of the Haitian people as they stake their claim among the debates of international policy brokers, their own elected officials and among local elites. Haiti’s media acts as a powerful institution, what media scholars call the “Fourth Estate.” It serves as the collective forum of the people to check the power of branches of government and even to international forces at play in a society. The power and influence of a country’s media have watershed moments over time, in which the media’s accountability role coupled with civic action leads to political or social change. At other times, the media’s full power has been curbed by its corporate, partisan or elite influences. However, media research has shown key examples when the press has acted as a galvanizing force, educative tool for the masses, and collective space for negotiating power, freedoms and accountability in times of political and social crisis. In the United States, the role the African American press has played historically in advancing the civil rights of black people has best demonstrated media power.\(^1\) Throughout Latin America, both mainstream and alternative media have worked to champion political and social change in recent history.\(^2\)

In this dissertation, I argue that Haiti is unique in this field of analysis, because Haiti’s media system has had to continually address a society in moral crisis from the
very moment the nation was born out of bloodshed and revolution. Whereas other nations in the Western Hemisphere put off addressing societal matters of race, class, power, colonialism and capitalism for decades after its independence, Haiti’s revolutionary founding plunged the nation into a societal dialogue that to this day is still being sorted out. Because of this reality, I argue that Haiti’s media, within such a context, has constantly been forced to function in a society that has been actively reconciling itself.

Theories of the press and how the media functions in a society are the theoretical frameworks within which this dissertation seeks to address the contributions of Haiti’s press to the debates about Haiti’s current conditions. The four theories of the press advanced in 1956, which have become the benchmark for media studies, include: the authoritarian model, the libertarian model, the communist model and the social responsibility model. Since these four models have been proposed, scholars have added offshoots such as the liberal model, the democratic corporatist model and the polarized pluralist model. These new models have mostly originated from studies of the U.S. and European societies. While Haiti’s media exhibits characteristics of such models of the press, it does not fully fit into any one category altogether.

Given a lack of research on media evolution in the developing world, some international relations scholars have proposed two other press theories: development media theory and alternative media theory which are both used to describe media outlets that are run by civic or grassroots organizations or developmental organizations. But these latter theories do not adequately address the characteristics of the commercial “mainstream” press of Global South nations. Unfortunately, the general trend has been to assume a developing country’s media would operate like a developed country’s own,
simply because of history or proximity. Thus scholars are tempted to assume that Haiti’s media would function like that of France, even though Haiti has been independent from its colonizer for more than two centuries, and is the only independent Francophone country in the Western Hemisphere. Or they would assume that Haiti’s media would behave like that of the United States, simply because it lies 700 miles South of the United States, and has been under the geo-political influence of the U.S. arguably more so than any other Latin American or Caribbean nation since the beginning of the twentieth century.

This dissertation therefore seeks to build on research put forward in the field of Haitian studies from anthropologists, historians, novelists, poets, and cultural and critical studies scholars that have attempted to describe who or what is Haiti and its people. In answering that question first, this dissertation explores how Haiti’s media reflects, shapes and contributes to Haiti’s civic society.

The primary goal of this dissertation is to focus on the natural disaster of 12 January 2010 and its effect on Haiti’s media. This dissertation uses the events of the decade prior to the earthquake as the most recent contemporary reference point for framing current developments in Haiti and in explaining Haiti’s media climate leading up to the earthquake. This places the impact of the earthquake on Haiti’s media in its full context and clarifies the changes found in Haiti’s media as a result of this crisis. This dissertation looked for changes in Haiti’s media as a result of the earthquake by examining Haiti’s media ownership, Haiti’s journalistic practices, and Haiti’s news content since the disaster.
This dissertation uses three research components to explain how Haiti’s media has functioned since the 2010 earthquake. Each of these research components corresponds to specific research questions that address the current state of Haiti’s media. The first component concerns the current structure of Haitian media. This component looks at Haitian media ownership patterns, current government laws and regulations of the press. It also explains the support of media by commercial or non-profit means and its relation to media consumption by the public. The second component looks at Haitian news workers and their news values and routines. In this component I let Haitian journalists speak for themselves on how they gather and produce the news, how they define journalism, how they practice journalism, and the demands of doing so under the current conditions. The third component looks at news content. Through a content analysis of published articles and broadcast transcripts (audio and video) this component will explore how the Haitian media frames news and information, its sourcing of the news, and its use of editorial or newswriting techniques to present a news story, package or live on-air interview. The quantitative examination of news content produced in Haiti and the qualitative analysis of interviews with Haitian newswriters informs questions about the role of Haiti’s media in the aftermath of the earthquake. These two standard research methods employed by media scholars provided the necessary data for describing media ownership in Haiti, journalistic practices, and the framing of the news in Haiti in 2013.

The findings of this dissertation, through looking at these three research components, are that Haiti’s media is performing a critical advocacy role in the post earthquake reconstruction environment. Across mainstream and alternative outlets, this critical advocacy journalism is taking place in varying degrees shaped by media structure
and format limitations. However, this dissertation also argues that based on the research conducted with Haitian journalists, this critical advocacy role is not new to the current conditions, but characteristic of Haitian journalism in general. It is a style of journalism that has roots in Haiti’s revolutionary press, and one that was reignited by the era of journalists who emerged during the Duvalier dictatorship. Current Haitian journalists point to key aspects of Haitian journalism that emerged out of the well-known radio stations of the Duvalier era, such as Radio Haiti Inter, as the bedrock of how they practice journalism in 2013. Once again, Haiti remains different from Western press traditions and their experience with social responsibility roles. Critical advocacy journalism is not a once in a generation or event-driven occurrence as was the case during the Watergate scandal or civil rights movement for U.S. mainstream press for instance. Rather, in Haiti, critical advocacy journalism is a built-in aspect of practicing journalism in Haiti. This dissertation argues that who constitutes a journalist in Haiti and what constitutes journalism in Haiti continues to defy limited understandings of the craft.

The study of how Haitian media outlets are currently framing the news of the country’s reconstruction is important for four reasons. Firstly, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere but it has the highest number of non-governmental agencies per capita of any country in the world.⁶ A key to understanding Haiti’s circumstances come from engaging ordinary Haitians, and this dissertation argues that Haiti’s media is crucial in representing these voices who in many cases do not speak the language of the foreigners wishing to help them. Secondly, Haiti is set to become the largest full member of the Caribbean Community of nations (CARICOM). This move is significant as Latin America seeks to challenge U.S. hegemony in the region by aligning itself with the
largest Caribbean political bloc, through platforms outside of the Organization of American States (OAS) which includes the U.S.\(^7\) Accessing the vision of Haitians for their country’s future is important in building a counter-narrative of U.S. developmental formulas for Haiti.

Thirdly, this study is important as the Haitian press perspective on reconstruction potentially offers U.S. aid donors a Haitian perspective on how aid dollars are being spent. The United States still remains the major source of international aid to Haiti, primarily through the USAID office in Port-au-Prince.\(^8\) Journalism from a Haitian point of view, and not the foreign press corps in Haiti, presents an assessment of Haitian foreign humanitarian and corporate intervention that allows American taxpayers to learn exactly how and where their dollars are needed and when these dollars have worsened the plights of impoverished peoples. This in turn, provides a second layer of press accountability, holding U.S. citizens to the task of seeking answers of their own government’s role in Haiti’s conditions. Haiti’s press may not be the go-to source for external consumers and foreign nationals interested in Haitian affairs. However, this dissertation argues that Haiti’s media captures the local sentiments, attitudes, frustrations, and desires of not just ordinary Haitians but Haitian elites, politicians, intellects and statesmen, and provides a valuable resource for outsiders looking to “do right by Haiti.”

Fourthly, Haiti’s media is also a platform for internal dialogue among classes, and between the people and their leaders to address the failures to which those in power can control.

Therefore, the study of Haiti’s media is also an important one because it can begin to set a precedent for how to venture into other impoverished nations in Latin America
and outside this Hemisphere, to answer how best to study the press in such nations. The research conducted in Haiti with Haitian news organizations is beneficial for mass communication research and theory building because it offers the traits of media systems of a Global South nation, and one of the first to gain independence. As researchers, primarily those from developing nations, begin to write about media systems and traditions in Latin America, the Middle East, Central Africa, Southeast Asia and elsewhere, this dissertation contributes to new literature on countries often considered on the periphery of international hegemony. Insights from this research in Haiti can also prove useful in studying media in emerging nations in the Global South like China, Brazil and India, whose press traditions help provide a window into civil society of the new power-brokers on the world’s stage. This dissertation seeks to challenge cultural hegemony in mass communications research. Here researchers have focused on the evolution of media systems in advanced Western nations and have theorized that such developments should be normative for countries in the developing world. Media scholars have also failed to adequately study media transitions in nations of the Global South, and have assumed that patterns of media development in industrialized nations should be used as a model to explain the rest of the world. In focusing on a developing nation, Haiti, this dissertation seeks to study Haiti’s media system in its own right as an institution that has been shaped by the course of events in that nation. Therefore, the context with which this dissertation evaluates Haiti’s media is shaped by an understanding of Haiti, and not of external understandings of what the media is and what it should do.

The conclusions of this dissertation are potentially useful for research in several fields. In the field of Haitian Studies, this dissertation seeks to elevate the presence of
Haiti’s media and newworkers in treatments of historical and contemporary events in Haiti. In the field of area studies, particularly Latin American studies, this dissertation seeks to find potential commonalities between press traditions and conditions within the region as Latin American nations seek to integrate, export best practices, and find alternative paths to development. Finally, in the field of international relations and development, this dissertation fills a void in the literature on the image of Haiti, as portrayed by the press. Researchers have published scholarly articles, chapters, books and agency reports on how foreign news agencies cover Haiti, even as early as the Haitian Revolution. The result is that there is a far greater body of known information about what outsiders think about Haiti rather than how Haitians define themselves. With regards to the study of the media, there has been only one known scholarly work of Haiti’s media published in the last two decades, compared to roughly two dozen well-cited texts that look at the external gaze on Haiti.\(^\text{9}\) Noting this gap in the English language scholarship on Haiti does not discount the articles and limited texts written by Haitian journalists, journalism instructors, and intellectuals, whose texts, now out of print, written in French and published in Port-au-Prince, have been overlooked in publications in English outside the country. In chapter 4 of this dissertation, the works of Haitian authors on Haiti’s press tradition will be explored in depth to help contextualize Haiti’s media system.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation describes the external perception of Haiti as the country rebuilds from the 2010 earthquake. Chapter 2 presents the conditions that have shaped Haiti’s media system by revisiting key events in Haiti’s history. Chapter 3 explores how Haiti’s media system, as a result of these historical events, defies theory on the nature and function of mainstream media.
Chapter 4 of this dissertation is the beginning of the original research portion of the dissertation that uses texts, government documents and other archival resources to map out a structured look at Haiti’s media system. Chapter 5 analyses the perspectives of Haitian newsworkers using interviews conducted in Haiti in the spring and summer of 2013. Chapter 6 looks at a sample of 2013 news content produced by Haitian media across different types: mainstream and alternative; as well as different formats: print, online, radio and television. The conclusion of the dissertation outlines how the findings of the second half of the dissertation, support the dissertation’s theoretical arguments summarized in this introduction and explored in chapters 2 and 3 on Haiti’s history and on mass media theory. While this dissertation does not attempt to be an exhaustive exploration of Haiti’s history, early press, contemporary events or socio-economic profile, all these factors figure into an analysis of what is taking place in Haitian journalism in the present.

The external image of Haiti’s “reconstruction?”

This dissertation focuses specifically on the role Haiti’s media has played in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake, which has been labeled by the foreign media as an ongoing “reconstruction” period in Haiti. Therefore, a summary of Haiti’s current conditions is necessary before a more detailed look at additional historical events as they apply to the research questions of this dissertation. The word “reconstruction” is used in quotation marks to demonstrate that foreign governments and international aid workers mostly prefer this term. Haitians understand that physical rebuilding of the infrastructure in and around the capital is needed after the disaster. However, the concept of a larger reconstruction is one that Haitian officials and newsworkers have stated as originating
externally, instead of being driven internally. The following section aims to clarify why Haiti is under “reconstruction,” explain the dominance of this frame in currently viewing Haiti, and to explain the importance of looking at media coverage of this time period.

Scientists have ranked the 7.0 magnitude 2010 earthquake that hit Haiti on January 12 as second only in size, in the 2000s, to the underwater 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake that triggered a tsunami that directly devastated six nations. To put the scope of Haiti’s disaster into context, it is important to note roughly 200,000 Haitians died, and 300,000 were severely injured. This Haitian death toll compares to 280,000 people from multiple nationalities who died in the Indian Ocean tsunami. Haiti’s capital Port-au-Prince was completely destroyed, compared to coastal towns in Indian Ocean nations.

The international humanitarian organization Oxfam estimated that some 1.69 million people were displaced by the 2004 tsunami, compared to one million Haitians who became homeless. These homeless people moved into some 460 makeshift camps in 2010, which were reduced to 50 camps in 2013. Six months later after the 2010 earthquake, Haiti suffered a cholera outbreak that continued until 2013. Haiti has now officially surpassed Bangladesh as the most persistent of cholera epidemics annually, where Bangladesh’ monsoon season can create anywhere from 100,000 to 300,000 cases a year. Roughly 450,000 Haitians have contracted cholera within one year from 2010 to 2011, and 6,100 who have died of the water-borne disease within a year of the epidemic, according to the United Nations. The cost of rebuilding Haiti after the earthquake has been estimated by international organizations to be as high as $14 billion, while the cost of reconstruction for the Indian Ocean tsunami for all nations was placed at $7.5 billion.
This demonstrates the single burden Haiti faces in rebuilding from a major natural disaster event compared to a shared cost facing tsunami affected nations when looking at the response to recent international crises.

As if in a symbolic development, the 2010 earthquake reduced Haiti’s historic Presidential Palace to rubble, a sign of the chaos that would ensue as general elections for the Chamber of Deputies (Chambre des Députés)\(^{14}\) and 10 remaining Senate seats, were put off from the scheduled date of February, 28, 2010. When the general elections finally took place, lumped together with the presidential elections in November 28, 2010, only 22.8 percent of registered voters participated.\(^{15}\) In the second round of presidential elections, only 22-percent turned up to cast their ballot, according to government statements. Journalists interviewed for this dissertation estimated that it was far less, as low as 10 to 15-percent.\(^{16}\) The reason for this were two-fold. Firstly, political maneuvering, pre-dating the 2010 earthquake, under the government of President René Préval, excluded several parties from participating, most notably \textit{Fanmi Lavalas}, the party of the first democratically elected president in 1991, Jean Bertrand-Aristide. Secondly, the displacement from the earthquake, the damage to government buildings in the capital, and the lack of electoral coordination meant both the state and the population were not ready for a presidential or general elections.

The Provisional Electoral Council or (CEP) which sets election rules, and whose members President Préval had picked, excluded \textit{Fanmi Lavalas} from participating in the 2009 Senatorial elections. The CEP created a technicality before the 2009 elections requiring President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, then in exile in South Africa, to provide an original, non-faxed signature to confirm the party’s list of candidates.\(^{17}\) This precedent
held over to the February 28 elections that was postponed to November 28, 2010 when the earthquake struck. Fanmi Lavalas is symbolic to Haiti’s democracy because it was this party, under Aristide, that ushered in a new political era. Préval served as Aristide’s first prime minister in 1991 until Aristide was removed from office by a coup. Préval later went on to serve as president twice: in 1996 after a brief return to power by Aristide, and then again after he won a controversial re-election in 2006. As such the first and second democratically elected presidents of Haiti have dominated politics in the country for the last two decades. In his second term, Aristide was again forcefully removed from office.\(^\text{18}\)

With the two presidential heavyweights seeking to gain power through successors in their party, Préval through the CEP, was able to bar Aristide’s Lavalas party from electoral participation. Neither Préval, nor Aristide are eligible to run for President again because of constitutional term limits. The isolation of Aristide’s party created a vacuum for popular leadership in the post earthquake environment. Préval’s coalition lacked Aristide’s populist credentials and personal appeal. This disconnect from popular movement in politics saw Haiti’s leading konpa singer Michel Martelly (or as he is known on stage, “Sweet Mickey) enter the presidential race with his Repons Peyizan party. President Préval’s party, the INITE coalition put forward its candidate Jude Célestin. The other top contender in the race was the wife of Haitian former president Leslie Manigat, Mirlande Manigat with her Rassemblement des Democrates Nationaux Progressistes.\(^\text{19}\)

The results of the November 2010 presidential elections set the tone for weakening the capacity of the post-2010 Haitian state in its ability to gain legitimacy with
firstly the citizenry, and secondly with the international community. The initial results of the November 2010 elections put Mirlande Manigat in first place, Jude Célestin in second place, and Michel Martelly, in third place. After the results, an Organization of American States mission comprising of the United States, Canada and France, as the six members of a seven-body team, reviewed a sample of ballots. The delegation declared that Martelly had inched out Celestin by 0.7 percent of the vote. Préval’s CEP, described as acting under international pressure, accepted the OAS special team’s report and sent Michel Martelly to the run-off elections with Mirlande Manigat in March 20, 2011. In an election that only turned out 22 percent of all registered voters, Manigat, who was considered an elite candidate, by some political observers, because of her years abroad as an expatriate, lost the run-off to Martelly, who positioned himself as the anti-establishment candidate. Martelly carried two-thirds of the already small voter turnout in the runoff election in 2011.

President Michel Martelly’s political background is also important in explaining perceptions of Haiti’s current government by its own people. Martelly, ran as a populist candidate who sought to capture disenchanted Lavalas voters, however, he actively encouraged Aristide’s forced removal from power in 2004. Before the Aristide presidency, Martelly had moved comfortably with Duvalierists, entertaining them at his night club in the 1980s. In his younger days he claimed to have been a member of the Tonton Macoutes, the dictatorship’s personal militia. When the Duvaliers fell, Martelly supported the 1990s military junta that controlled the country, and befriended the officers behind the anti-Aristide coup in 1991. He even released an album titled “I Don’t Care” in 1994, to dismiss criticisms of his political affiliations. As part of Martelly’s 2010-2011
presidential campaign, he promised to reinstate Haiti’s military, abolished under Aristide, in a move that political critics felt harkened back to an authoritarian era in Haiti’s politics that the people had fought to overthrow.²³ Such lack of political purity has left Martelly without a true base. Riding to power as the anti-establishment candidate may have gotten Martelly into the runoff and to the presidency, however it did not give Martelly control of Parliament, which is still controlled by members of Préval’s INITE coalition.²⁴ Martelly’s attempt to govern a Congress in which he has little political support has further reduced the legitimacy of his administration.

Secondly, the earthquake exposed not only a weakened state apparatus but also a weakened socio-economic structure that had been hanging by a thread for at least a decade. How Haiti, which was one of the richest colonies on the world went on to become the poorest nation of the New World has been a topic debated by economists, historians, anthropologists and development experts.²⁵ In sum, the practice of large-scale monoculture during colonialism set in motion an unsustainable means of supporting a nation based on an export-based agricultural economy. Several centuries of large-scale monoculture from the colonial to the independence era resulted in environmental degradation that scholars have dated as far back as the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century, the arrival of U.S. foreign investors that preceded the U.S. Occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934, created new economic challenges for ordinary Haitians. The loss of small family plots for subsistence farming to larger farms worsened the ability of peasants outside of urban centers to compete and grow their own food. This practice worsened after the occupation period as Haiti’s post-Occupation political regimes encouraged U.S. foreign investment and its acquisition of land. This led
to large-scale urban migration in pursuit of small-scale light industry jobs, mostly
producing goods for export to the United States.

The Duvalier dictatorships from 1957 to 1986 saw a lack of economic investment
and a heightening of corruption that stagnated development for three decades.
Additionally, conditions set by aid organizations for the country to thrive from the
Duvaliers up to Préval meant that international aid would only be delivered in exchange
for liberalization of the economy, and a lowering of import taxes on foreign goods,
mainly U.S. agricultural products. This practice meant that cheaply imported
agricultural goods displaced the Haitian farmer from competing in the local market often
with their higher quality product, against a lower quality U.S imported good. Two often
cited examples of this effect on Haiti was the forced eradication of Haiti’s black “Creole”
pig population in 1978, prompted by fears of the African Swine Flu by the United States
Department of Agriculture, and the removal of import taxes on U.S. subsidized rice into
Haiti in the 1990s.

The outbreak of African Swine Fever in the Dominican Republic in the mid-
1970s prompted the USAID office in Port-au-Prince to pressure for the eradication of
Haiti’s indigenous black pig in 1978. Backed with data from the US Department of
Agriculture, the USAID program called The Program for the Eradication of Porcine
Swine Fever and for the Development of Pig Raising (PEPPADEP) was implemented.
The USAID program set aside some $14.5 million to slaughter 1.2 million Haitian black
pigs. The program had a detrimental effect on the country’s peasants and triggered severe
starvation in the countryside. This was because the Creole black pig was a scavenger and
could survive on a scarce protein diet among the country’s rural poor, and families sold
their black pigs annually for savings, investments, to send their children to school or to survive. To compensate, the US sent its pink pig as a replacement for slaughtering the peasant’s pigs. However, the pink pig could not survive on a subsistence diet, and Haitian peasants were forced to buy imported cereal feed, a specially constructed sty and medication from US manufacturers. Peasant families were forced to use all their savings to care for the new pink pig and others received no compensation for their loss. The PEPPADEP program was a clear example of a program that produced more harm than good during this decade and led to many peasant families starving or losing all their investments in the late 70s.

In another oft-cited example, Haitian rice, grown in Haiti’s Artibonite River plain has been said to have West African origins. The quality of the grain meant that Haitians received more nutrition from it and required smaller quantities to meet nourishment for the harsh rural climate. In the 1980s, Haiti was self-sufficient in producing its own rice. By the 1990s, rice imports outgrew local production. Once Haiti liberalized trade with the U.S. and lowered tariffs on imported rice to 3-percent (the lowest for any Caribbean Community country) Haitian farmers were unable to compete with cheap U.S. imports, often called “Miami rice.” Trade liberalization were the terms set for Haiti in the 1980s under the military junta that seized power as the country struggled to transition to democracy after Jean Claude Duvalier fled. The junta leveraged Haiti’s economy as it sought to gain support from the international community for its non-democratic control of power. Additionally, a series of natural disasters triggering food shortages in the 2000s resulted in “rice dumping” in Haiti. Donor rice also served to undercut the ability of Haitian farmers to sell their rice at a fair market price if the competition was literally
giving rice away for free. Agriculture in Haiti has fallen from more than half of gross domestic product in the 1970s to less than a third by the 1990s.\[^{30}\]

Despite the economic hardships, democracy was not a bleak experience for Haiti, but merely a short-lived experiment met with internal and external pressures. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide still achieved some significant reforms between 1994 and 1996, according to observers. In terms of law enforcement, in 1995, he opened a school for magistrates, which graduated 100 new judges and prosecutors by the end of the decade.\[^{31}\] He refurbished courthouses and police stations, set up special courts for children, and a child protection unit of the Haitian National Police. He dismantled the U.S. trained Haitian military and created a National Commission for Truth and Justice to investigate crimes during the 1986 coup. The findings of the commission were brought to Parliament in 1996, and former soldiers and paramilitaries were tried and found guilty in a series of trials.

In terms of social welfare, he created a cabinet appointment for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in 1995 to tackle rape, pre-natal care, equal wages, and literacy among women.\[^{32}\] He encouraged social organizing, media access, and radio stations in the capital more than doubled from 44 to 100 over the decade, while TV stations increased from 16 to 35 across the country. Aristide also saw that the 1987 Constitution was printed in Creole so all Haitians could learn their rights.\[^{33}\] Despite pressure from the USAID office which was investing in attracting US firms to the country’s low wage labor force, Aristide increased the minimum wage in 1995 from 10 cents per hour to 25 cents per hour.\[^{34}\] In terms of rural development, he redistributed 2.47 acres of land per family in the Artibonite River Valley to 1500 peasant families, and through government credit,
provided tools, fertilizers, heavy equipment and technical support to farmers. The
government also repaired the rural irrigation system to some 7,000 farmers allowing rice
yields to increase from 2.7 tons per hectare to 3.5 tons by 1996. Of interest to the peasant
farmers, Aristide reintroduced the Creole pigs which were taken away under a 1980s
USAID program that slaughtered the native pigs suspected of carrying African Swine
Fever.35

Aristide also looked outward and set up a program to encourage Haitian refugees
to return in 1994. For the lower skill refugees, he offered skills programs in carpentry and
sewing, and credit from agricultural cooperatives. Some 100,000 refugees returned to
their homes under this initiative. His government also set up an Office of Civil Protection
to work with the Red Cross to issue natural disaster warnings.36

Yet, Aristide’s time in office during the 1990s remained extremely short, and his
funding tied to macro-economic benchmarks being set by international lending agencies
like the World Bank.37 The country was still unable to demonstrate strong macro-
economic trends and public revenue stood at 7-percent of GDP throughout the decade,
while assistance from foreign aid was close to 12 percent of GDP. GNI per capita at the
end of the decade was US $480 and two-thirds of the population continued to live in
poverty. Almost 50 percent of adults were still illiterate by 1999, and only 25 percent of
rural children attended school.38

Despite attempts by President Préval to continue Aristide’s efforts in his first
term, by the end of the nineties, Haiti was far worse than it stood at the beginning. In
2001, the country saw the return of its popularly elected democratic leader President Jean
Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted in a coup in 1991, overwhelmingly re-elected for his
second term. However Aristide’s return to power was not met with strong support from local political elites, or from the U.S. who placed an aid embargo on the country for the four years Aristide served from 2000 to 2004, before he was forcibly removed by U.S. political and military intervention. Aristide was critical of neo-liberal and U.N. multilateral policies on his administration’s agenda. The prevalence of foreign aid groups in the country undermined the state’s ability to coherently provide broad reforms. Aristide’s rhetoric and policies did not sit well with President George W. Bush’ administration making relations tense between Aristide and Haiti’s leading donor for international aid.

Aristide attempted to look elsewhere to develop Haiti. He also sought to build South-South relations, signing agreements with Venezuela to obtain oil, with Cuba to train Haitian doctors, and with Brazil to develop trade. Aristide also tried to pressure other Western donors like France to invest in the country through a campaign to repay the indemnity Haiti paid France for recognition of its independence. Experts estimated that in its first century as an independent nation, Haiti repaid France in gold bars the equivalent today of $90 million to $150 million francs for economic losses France incurred by losing Haiti as its prime colony after the Haitian Revolution.

Aristide’s efforts were commendable given the bilateral and multilateral freeze on funding. In an attempt to show good faith, Aristide even began to pay interest for International Monetary Loans promised the Haitians, although they never received the funding. However, battling fierce political opposition from Haitian elites, and external pressures from the U.S., Aristide’s second term in office was cut short when he was forced into exile in 2004. President Préval, who succeeded Aristide again, then struggled
to pursue any major reforms in his second term of office from 2006 to 2011, in which he attempted to tow a far safer line with domestic and international political forces after a questionable 2006 presidential election that weakened his public support. Préval focused mainly on macro-economic indicators by encouraging foreign direct investment. However such programs, while increasing economic activity on the island, failed to address the living conditions of ordinary Haitians.\(^{42}\)

Préval’s last term was also hampered by what humanitarian groups describe as Haiti’s “decade from hell,” with a series of natural disasters affecting on an already vulnerable population and environment. Severe hurricane devastation rocked the the first half of the 2000s: Hurricane Lily in 2002, Hurricane Jeanne in 2004, Hurricane Ernesto in 2006, Tropical Storm Olga in 2007, and Hurricane Gustav and Tropical Storm Fay in 2008. In addition to hurricanes, in 2004, severe May flooding killed thousands, and as a result violence erupted in the country the same year when President Aristide was forced out of office again. The popular president’s second removal prompted the United Nations to set up a peacekeeping mission on the island called MINUSTAH, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. After the Global Economic Recession hit, the country experienced food riots in 2008, and then at the end of the decade, the 2010 earthquake devastated the country even further.\(^{43}\) Where the Haitian government may have been the primary focus for international aid in the 1980s and somewhat less so in the 1990s, the disasters of the 2000s, saw the leading global non-profits, the U.N. and the USAID Haiti office gradually divert attention away from working with the Haitian government to independently delivering disaster relief aid themselves.\(^{44}\) Over the decade, the country
saw a rise in non-governmental organizations from a permanent group of 3,000 to a high of 10,000 separate groups trying to tackle the country’s disaster woes.45

With foreign aid cut off from the government until 2006 with the election of President Rene Préval, the country’s development had been transferred into the hands of disaster care groups, with some dubbing the country a “Republic of NGOs.”46 Power had effectively been taken out of the hands of the Haitian government, with major donor sources, such as the USAID Haiti office changing their policies only to give aid through private and non-profit entities of it’s choosing. For instance, foreign NGOs received $300 million in aid from the USAID office during 2007-2008, while the Haitian Ministry of Planning, in the same period, operated on a budget that was one tenth the size of that figure. Some 300 non-profit microfinance groups operating in Haiti extended $100 million in loans to some 240,000 borrowers in 2008.47 Yet the country itself did not have a credit bureau to regulate the legal status of the microfinance firms. Nor was there a government ministry in place to pass consumer protection laws. Thus a potentially positive attempt at economic development through microfinance remained poorly coordinated, highly funded, and disconnected from the Haitian government. The imbalanced proportion of aid to NGOs, compared to the Haitian government, meant that the state wielded little to no power to deliver services or coordinate foreign entities.48

As foreign aid resumed after 2006, the World Bank continued to fund the Haitian government’s development projects at only a 50 percent level of the cost to do so, even up to 2009.49 During this time, the Bank took extreme care to set milestones and monitor program achievements and even provided funding for government administration through technical assistance grants to improve state capacity. One such program aimed to develop
Haiti’s Emergency Recovery and Disaster Management Ministry to provide services, tackle flood protection and to implement housing construction codes.\textsuperscript{50} The World Bank also set up funding for a Haiti Catastrophe Insurance Project that allowed the country to begin to develop reserves for use in future earthquakes and hurricanes through the 2007 Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility.\textsuperscript{51} These particular World Bank programs were certainly innovative. However programs designed for short-term or crisis situations received priority and quicker funding than programs that tackled more long-term problems that had plagued the country from decades before.

It was not until after the 2010 earthquake did both the Haitian government and the international community begin to seriously tackle the problem of the disjointed development in the country. NGOs had been focusing on disaster relief and pet projects independent from the Haitian government which had remained powerless and underfunded with regards to regulation and coordination of funds and programs taking place in their own country. Prior to the 2010 earthquake, a 2009 donors conference failed to channel aid to the government, despite some $350 million in pledges.\textsuperscript{52} It was not until after the 2010 earthquake with the creation of the Haiti Recovery Commission, that the World Bank took an active role in managing a multi-donor trust fund designed to empower a new Haitian Development Authority to direct and coordinate projects to reduce waste.\textsuperscript{53} While the commission for the first time sought to include the Haitian government and empower it to regulate the abundance of NGOs, the current Martelly administration continues to experience similar problems as previous governments with the international community.

Donors pledged some $5.33 billion to the multi-donor Fund by 2012, and U.N.
Special Envoy for Haiti Bill Clinton has noticed that donors have been reluctant to release funds. This hesitation is perhaps rooted in UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon’s 2012 meeting with Haitian President Michel Martelly. The United Nations Development Group Haiti Reconstruction Fund is the representative arm of the UN in the Haiti Reconstruction Fund. It operates through the UNDG’s Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.\(^5^4\)

The international community has suggested that the Martelly administration lacks electoral support to carry out reconstruction because of delays in conducting local elections after his win in the 2011 presidential race. Since the Martelly government still does not hold widespread political support, the largest donors to the Fund have been skeptical about releasing funds they pledged in 2010. In September 2012, Ban Ki Moon told Martelly that “his leadership in advancing reconstruction and stabilization efforts” was noted by the international community, but pointed in the delays of “a permanent electoral council so that the long overdue local and legislative elections are held in a credible and transparent manner,” as explanation to the reluctance of donors directly giving to the government.\(^5^5\) The United States, the Fund’s largest nation donor also stated through a State Department representative that the delay of the local elections was “the biggest challenge right now confronting Haiti.” The official continued that “to have an election effectively, they have to be able to step through what it means to actually appoint an electoral council board.”\(^5^6\) In other words, the international community felt that the Martelly government had failed to demonstrate that an independent electoral council would oversee other key elections needing to take place in Haiti after a contentious presidential elections in 2011.

Martelly on the other hand painted a different picture to world leaders as he
addressed them on the state of Haiti’s democracy in a September 2012 UN speech.

Martelly said:

> The ideal space for peace in the world, for prosperity and for the fight against poverty remains the democratic framework…Haiti under my leadership understands this and works at it actively by strengthening local institutions, which are considered weak or not functioning…Haiti…has understood that only a real democracy can produce stability. 

At home, Martelly has had to ask Haitians to remain patient with the international community as wheat and rice prices, main staples of the Haitian diet, have doubled since the earthquake leading to protests in urban centers. Martelly has argued that he does not hold “a magic wand” to get donors to release funds for projects. Foreign diplomats have argued that government corruption persists, citing a telecom tax on foreign calls to fund free schools. According to a state department official, amidst these charges, it is up to the Haitian government to prove its efficiency. The official said: “It’s an opportunity for them to say to the donors for the first time we are actually in the driver’s seat and we are looking to be able to coordinate [with] you in a fundamentally different way and be able to ensure that our leadership actually produces results.”

Despite progress by the government in working with the Fund to reduce tent cities after the earthquake from 1.5 million residents to 370,000, according to the UN office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, aid to Haiti dropped from $4 billion when the earthquake first hit to $438 million for 2012 with only 10 percent of funds going to the Haitian government itself. As Deputy U.N. Special Envoy Paul Farmer has argued in the past, bypassing strengthening Haiti’s political institutions could result in the ineffective execution of aid.

In countries like Haiti that are most reliant on foreign aid, donors often avoid investing directly in the government, wary of perceived levels of corruption and institutional incapacity…Such legitimate concerns should not preclude investment in important public institutions, but rather should be linked to investments in technologies and systems that might enable the government of Haiti to be accountable, both to its own citizens and to its donors.
One of President Martelly’s responses to the political critiques of his administration has been to underscore that the opposition party, which is in control of the parliament, has blocked his two picks for prime minister and has become an obstacle for other appointments needed to set up the electoral council. Yet despite the political clashes, his government has attempted to deliver on external demands for seeing signs of “reconstruction.” In 2012, then acting Prime Minister, Garry Connille, in declaring 2012 the “year of construction,” pointed to sending 1 million children to school, planting trees to stop deforestation and improving basic healthcare as signs that the government is getting moving on reconstruction. Local organizations have also pointed out that Haiti Reconstruction Fund projects require a bidding process and requirements for job creation that mean that individual projects may take years to come to fruition.

As Fund official Diego Osorio stated in the HRF’s defense: “Reconstruction is not the same thing as humanitarian work; humanitarian work has to be done quickly…Reconstruction projects require planning, and there are not going to be visible accomplishments on a day-to-day basis.”Ironically two of the most promoted projects by the U.N. Special Envoy President Clinton, have been unrelated to relief, but presented as long-term investment projects. The first is a $30 million university in North Haiti equipped with science and computer labs and a library, and built by Dominican Republic firms. The second is the Carocal industrial park, costing $224 million, funded by the United States and expected to be run by a South Korean garment company creating 65,000 jobs for workers in rural areas beginning in September 2012. Another project, a waste-water plant costing $200 million and funded by Spain and the Inter-American Development Bank was initially stalled when a powerful business man laid claim to the
plant’s land prompting politicians to get involved and secure the projects completion by 2015.\textsuperscript{62}

While projects sponsored by individual national governments are taking place, the Fund itself stalled as its original 18-month mandate expired. The opposition party obstructed Martelly’s request for a 12-month renewal of the Fund’s mandate since October of 2012. The Center for Economic Policy and Research has suggested that it may not be entirely fair for the Haitian government to be facing so much criticism over the stalled progress of the Fund. A CEPR report explains that “while the Fund has transferred a large amount of resources, the partner entities have disbursed very little of it on the ground.”\textsuperscript{63}

While international observers cite the Haitian government for its failures to move reconstruction along, it is in fact the recipient entities on the ground, who receive 90 percent of the Fund’s resources, who are the ones who are responsible for carrying out the activities the Fund has outlined. Given the current structure of the Fund, Haiti’s former Prime Minister Gary Connille has pointed that the funds remain “unutilized, collecting interest in bank accounts.”\textsuperscript{64} By mid-2012 Josef Leitman, the head of the Fund pointed fingers at the now defunct Interim Haitian Reconstruction Commission arguing that despite the $100 million in cash available, the Fund had received no funding requests from the Haitian government since August 2011. Leitman states in the Fund’s February 2012 financial report that:

The money is to finance reconstruction, but there is no formal proposal from the Haitian government...In the meantime, funds remain in the bank and are not being allocated in the citizens’ interests. This is nothing to be proud of.\textsuperscript{65}

New Prime Minister in place, Laurent Lamonthe, appointed in May 2012, has been designated to represent Martelly’s government’s stake and voice in the Fund. Haiti
now has a direct liaison to the Fund and expects to renew its processes for requesting financing through the Fund. Meanwhile, the Haitian government itself, independent of the Fund, has launched modest programs in education, basic healthcare, tent city reduction and transportation to get the country on its feet again. However, politics within Haitian governance has weakened donor confidence in the reconstruction vision, and major donor interference, mainly from the United States, has bolstered the opponents of the current Martelly administration to challenge the new president mostly through where opposition parties hold a majority.

The series of political and economic developments recapped in this section have dominated foreign news reports on Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. Such negative news frames remain the official narrative of Haiti’s reconstruction if readers are to look through the lens of sporadic foreign news accounts of updates on where things currently stand in Haiti. The image painted reinforces reader fatigue about Haiti as a place of persistent malfeasance, corruption, political instability and disaster. A master’s thesis study conducted in 2012 by Hillary Brown examined 2010 coverage of Haiti in *The New York Times, The Globe and Mail* and *the Agence-France Presse*. Brown’s work provides data that confirms the above summary of post earthquake external media coverage. In searching key words used in 90 articles in 2010, Brown counted seven common framing themes about Haiti. Brown writes: “these frames were the benevolence of the West, poverty, violence, poor infrastructure, poor government, history and culture. All frames contributed to the marginalization of Haitians and the empowerment of the West.”
The image Brown finds in her sample of a stalled reconstruction effort with no reliable Haitian parties at the planning table supports the idea that what’s best for Haiti is an external project of “reconstruction.” What is lacking from this narrative are the voices of ordinary Haitians on what reconstruction means, can and should look like. Based on interviews conducted in Haiti in 2013 for this research study, ordinary Haitians do desire some measure of physical reconstruction to occur more effectively that would not just see the capital rebuilt or new hotels, but their homes, schools and places of congregation. Haitian intellectuals want to see the debate about reconstruction extend to address social and political concerns that continue to plague the country.

As recapped above, neither the 2010-earthquake, the decade of floods, the political and economic starts and stops of the 1990s, the liberalization of the economy under the Duvaliers and the U.S. occupation, nor the first century of post-colonial nation building inform the current external debates about why Haiti is currently under “reconstruction.” Unfortunately, Haiti is currently being described as “undergoing reconstruction” because the international community has declared so through its Haiti Reconstruction Fund launched not in Port-au-Prince but in Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic and then reaffirmed in New York in 2010. Haitian observers in media and academia has described this rebranding of Haiti as a tool to keep weary donors committed to projects in Haiti without a critical look at why international aid in Haiti has been failing.

The external location in which the concept of “reconstruction” after the earthquake was born is symbolic. It reflects the distance ordinary Haitians feel from the reconstruction of their country in which they are not equal players at the table. In fact,
Haitians have for decades repeatedly been picking up the pieces after each natural and man-made disaster without ever declaring a grand project of reconstruction. It is in this context that the Haitian government, the Haitian people, and the Haitian press now view a foreign reconstruction of their country. All of these Haitian actors are wrestling to capture or gain some control in charting a path forward for all. The purpose of this dissertation is not to find answers to political questions, or social questions about what reconstruction means. This dissertation attempts to explore how Haiti’s “Fourth Estate” has participated in the civic and political debates since 2010 about the future of the country.
CHAPTER 2: FRAMING HAITI’S HISTORY

To understand Haiti’s press, one must first understand Haiti itself. The goal of this chapter is to explain how historical events have influenced the space and conditions in which Haiti’s press exists and thrives. One of the most well cited quotes in the field of media studies argues that “the press always take on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates.” Additionally, the press “reflects the system of social control whereby the relations of individuals and institutions are adjusted” and “that an understanding of these aspects of society is basic to any systematic understanding of the press.”¹ Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini elaborate on this line of inquiry by arguing that “one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature of the state, the system of political parties, the pattern of relations between economic and political interests, and the development of civil society, among other elements of social structures.”² The work of scholars in Haitian studies provides the entry point to the treatment of “patterns of relations” in the development of Haiti’s civil society.

Haitian studies is the field of inquiry dedicated to just one country: Haiti. The study of Haiti has evolved from fields such as African Diaspora studies, Latin American studies, International Development studies and Francophone studies and has evolved into a field of inquiry of its own. Haitian Studies, as a field, has attracted historians, anthropologists, linguists, cultural studies scholars, literary studies scholars, and
international relations and development scholars. Haiti has been the source of comparative analysis for critical theory works on colonialism, post-colonialism, slavery, structuralism, Marxism, gender studies, cultural anthropology, linguistics theories and postmodernism. Such diverse scholarship taking place both in Haiti and in North America has attempted to offer answers to the question of who and what is Haiti.

This chapter outlines the development of Haiti’s political, economic, and social structures with a focus on five key events in Haiti’s history. These events include the colonization of Saint-Domingue, the Haitian Revolution, the U.S. Occupation, the Duvalier dictatorship, and the rise of Aristide and democracy. These five historical and contemporary events have received the most treatment by scholarship about Haiti’s institutions. However, the debate about key questions about Haiti’s history is one that continues to this day among leading researchers. Two recent monographs on the role of historical events in understanding Haiti demonstrates this divide. The first is Phillippe Gerard’s *Haiti: The Tumultuous History*, published in 2010, and Laurent Dubois’ *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*, published in 2012. A comparison of the thesis of both recently published books provides a snapshot of the types of debates that will be outlined in this chapter.

Phillippe Gerard’s text presents a critique that is dismissive of the role of historical events on the country’s misfortunes. With the 2010 earthquake as his contextual reference, Gerard writes:

> History hangs like a long shadow over Haiti. The violence and exploitation of the past are difficult to forget; and yet, past ills too often serve as a convenient excuse for Haiti’s present shortcomings. However painful this might be for a historian to write, Haitians would be better served forgetting their past and looking at their current problems afresh. Unfortunately, most do not, and still live in an intellectual world inherited from the colonial days.
Laurent Dubois, on the other hand, opens *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History* with a critique of the very assumptions Gerard makes above. Dubois begins his text with the story of a nineteenth century Haitian student Louis-Joseph Janvier who decided to write a 600-page history titled “Haiti and its Visitors” in response to newspaper articles published by Victor Cochinat, a visitor from Martinique. After a few weeks in Haiti, Cochinat described Haitians as “lazy” and “ashamed” of work, as his explanation for their poverty.7 Cochinat wrote in the French press that Haiti was a “farce, a ‘phantasmagoria of civilization’” and that “its attempt to look like a modern country was nothing more than a ‘joke.’”*8 In 1883, Janvier responded to Cochinat’s attack on Haitians with the charge that: “For eighty years Haiti has been judged” and “incessantly ‘accused’ by outsiders.”9 Dubois summarizes Janvier’s response to Cochinat’s newspaper articles below:

Janvier demanded at least a shred of objectivity. Was Haiti the only country with beggars in the streets? He’d noticed quite a few in Paris….Janvier found himself having to remind his readers that Haitians were real people, living in a real society. They had their problems, to be sure, but they could not be reduced to mere caricatures, presented with no sense of context or history.10

Since the international press had been the source for early historical works on Haiti, Dubois points out that since the founding of Haiti, “when Haiti appears at all in the media, it registers largely as a place of disaster, poverty, and suffering, populated by desperate people trying to escape.”11 This has been the subject of anthropologist Robert Lawless’ in his 1992 monograph, *Haiti’s Bad Press.*12 Lawless’ work attempts to explain Sidney Mintz’ 1960 assertion that “few countries in modern times have received as bad a press at the hands of foreign observers as Haiti.”13 Lawless argues that the uniformed myths perpetrated about Haiti have been “intimately connected with broader forms of racism against blacks” and as the world has become more politically correct,
“contemporary journalists” have become better skilled at masking their “ethnocentric assumptions” making it more “difficult to spot their more unconscious prejudices.”

What is a common argument throughout Haiti’s history is that the country and its people have been misunderstood, and that this external authoritative interpretation by foreigners has unfortunately stuck. The work of Haitian Studies scholars has attempted to reconstruct Haiti’s image in academia. This field has tried to challenge the existing framing of Haitians in foreign historical works, and in the foreign mainstream press, by adding context to the key events at the forefront of Haiti’s history, and by calling out the prejudices that have been published under the disguise of sound research and eyewitness accounts.

1. Colonial Saint-Domingue

Before Haiti, there was the colony of Saint-Domingue. Colonization affected the island of Saint-Dominge in three key ways: economically, physically and demographically as outlined by Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus. The strong response of metropolitan France to a revolting Haiti was a direct result of the value placed on its colony Saint-Domingue in the eighteenth century. The Spanish had ignored Saint-Domingue up to the seventeenth century. Under French control, Saint-Domingue, “by the middle of the eighteenth century….was the world’s largest sugar exporter, producing more sugar than all of Britain’s West Indies put together.” Haiti rapidly transformed from an “outlaw territory” to the “Pearl of the Antilles.” Firstly, Saint-Domingue’s size exceeded both Martinique and Guadeloupe together, tenfold. Secondly, its fertile soils and coastal plains allowed for the space to create large plantations. Many of Saint-Domingue’s early planters actually lived on or frequented their estates. That
direct planter involvement saw high volumes of capital investment into sugar production and later sugar refining that ensured the highest levels of productivity for returns on investment. Early French colonists who settled the island as filibustiers and privateers maintained strong economic ties forged with the British and the Dutch, whilst the Spanish crown heavily restricted its colonists in the seventeenth century from trading with the Dutch. These trade ties established by the fiercely independent Saint-Domingue colonists maximized profits and empowered the planter class on the island.

In an attempt to catch up to other colonial powers, as well as to assert its authority in Saint-Domingue, the French crown also made investments on the island. France improved irrigation systems for dryer portions of the island in a network that watered fields, powered mills and crushed cane. The French crown also encouraged planters to mechanize production and increase output far greater than “animal-powered machines” could do. All of these economic transformations benefited the French metropolis. France’s port cities rapidly developed as a result, providing new wealth to a merchant class that re-exported colonial products to the rest of Europe.

Physically, colonization and the plantation economy altered Saint-Domingue as well. The country became sectioned off into three provinces mostly because the differences in terrain dictated practices in agriculture and transportation. The first was the north province with Le Cap or Cap Français, now renamed Cap Haitien, as its center. The second was the southern province with no major cities during the eighteenth century. This structure allowed for free people of color to gain land, wealth and liberties in the south. The third province was the west with Port-au-Prince as its center. Le Cap naturally grew to become the hub of colonial Saint-Domingue because of its port at the heart of the
Atlantic trade and its fertile plains. Le Cap was a “truly Atlantic city” Dubois and Garrigus write, “more connected to France than the official colonial capital, Port-au-Prince.” Dubois and Garrigus further explain that: “With governors and other high administrators maintaining residences there and the colony’s leading cultural institutions – theatres, printing presses, a scientific academy – located there, Le Cap was the showplace for private and government architecture by the 1780s.” Given its links to France and the outside world, it is no surprise to historians that Le Cap was the first battleground in the Haitian Revolution for both mulatto and slave revolts. Despite French attempts to provide administrative structure to the north, south and west provinces, in effect, Haiti’s provinces functioned like separate territories of the same colony because of the difficulty of crossing the country internally.

As such, Dubois and Garrigus explain that while the north remained connected to France, planters in the south violated crown laws and traded with the rest of the Caribbean under different European powers. The west, on the other hand, became somewhat isolated because of its lack of access to shipping. However, its vast plains at Croix des Bouquets which had yields in not only sugar but coffee and indigo exceeded the yields at Le Cap. The west also became tightly controlled by its planter class due to the scope of investment into its operations as well as its isolation from traders and the rest of the country. France responded to the demands of providing administration to a geographically segregated Saint-Domingue by increasing its administrative staff in the provinces and investing in agriculture technology to enhance the productivity of the plains.
Thirdly, colonization dramatically affected Haiti demographically. To become the most prosperous colony in the eighteenth century within fifty years after three centuries of neglect by the Spanish required a populating feat on the part of French planters. The primary source of Haiti’s population explosion was forced human labor. Beginning in 1700, scholars counted that Haiti’s population doubled itself in 15-year increments. In, 1725, records showed imports of 2,000 bonded African slave men, women and children. By 1791, recorded import numbers of Africans rose to 685,000, with half of them arriving in the last 15-year period. This resulted in a 10-to-1, slave-to-colonist ratio. Only a third of the slaves were actually born in Saint-Domingue by 1790. The first wave of African born slaves originated from West Africa (the Aradas) followed by larger numbers from West-central Africa (the Congos). The effect of this make-up meant that “religious ideas and practices, languages, agricultural techniques, political ideologies, and military knowledge and experience (notable among Congo slaves, many of whom were veterans of central African wars of the late eighteenth century) were all brought to Saint-Domingue, shaping its culture, landscape, and ultimately the course of its revolutionary transformation.” This demographic imbalance also prompted the French crown to respond. It did so with its Code Noir, which was first issued by Louis XIV in 1685. The Code’s protections for slaves went largely ignored by planters. The crown reinforced its colonial militia by adding a maréchaussé or police force, where the French employed free men of color to police the slaves. This colored police force was an attempt to forge an alliance between free non-whites and whites, who equaled the number of white planters and colonists by 1789.
Additionally, as slaves considerably outnumbered whites, free coloreds began to see the loss of privileges they had gained in the seventeenth century. French crown officials sought new ways to implement social controls to balance the demographic equation. Free coloreds had amassed land, wealth and slaves after a century and a half of French rule. Their social rivals, petits blancs or poor whites, had failed to wrestle land away from large estates. They had become resistant to the planter class and French administrators who had enabled the free colored population’s acquisition of property at the expense of their very own.26 As John Garrigus argues in Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue “an important mid-century shift in the way French colonists defined their own identity deliberately alienated Saint-Domingue’s wealthy freeborn families, recasting them as “freedmen,” or ex-slaves.”27 The rapid increase in African slaves in the eighteenth century intensified white planter responses to the plantation society. Where mixed race créole families who passed as white once were accepted as part of societal structure based on economic status alone, this concept was re-defined after the Seven Years’ Wars to one in which the purity of one’s color became the determiner for one’s rights and liberties. The seventeenth century Saint-Domingue mulatto who passed as white lost this title and the privileges that accompanied it a century later. It is this reversal of social and political access, although not fully an economic one, that distinguished Haiti’s free colored and mixed-race classes from other slave societies like Brazil and Jamaica who also had large numbers of freed people of color around the same time.28

French planters’ treatment of the majority slave population in Haiti, also sets it apart from other slave societies at the time. “Degrees of freedom” experienced by Haiti’s
slaves depended on the century, the planter, the province the estate was located, where the slave was born and other psychological aspects of social control. The Saint-Domingue slave’s freedoms and liberties resembled that of freed men. With the cultivation of loyalty, the planter could grant his slave tremendous responsibilities and expect his slave to do so without escaping. After a comparative look at British, French, Dutch and Spanish treatment of slaves, Arthur Stitchcombe concludes that “the French were somewhat more likely to free slaves and to treat them as they treated free people.” The explanation for the French response to its slaves, particularly in Saint-Domingue, was a practical one based on three conditions, all of which describe seventeenth century Saint-Domingue ideally. According to Stinchcombe, slave freedoms were likely to increase with:

…sugar as a large proportion of the economy, (2) a planter aristocracy with a solidary style of life in which managers of family estates had an interest in slave institutions. (3) and empires that let planters run island government.

Slaves were also more likely to be manumitted or “freer” if they were creole or locally born, if they were on a small estate compared to a large plantation, if the slave was from an urban city compared to a rural one, if the sugar economy had rapidly expanded, and if the political situation had changed, particularly during the French Revolution. With these variables in mind, it is clear to see how slaves from the north of Haiti could have more in common with slaves in Jamaica, while slaves to the isolated west province of Saint-Domingue could have more in common with slaves in Bahia, Brazil, while slaves to the South province of Saint-Domingue could have more in common with slaves in Barbados. The experience of varied degrees of freedom in the same island at the same time resulted in diverse relationships between slaves and whites and slaves and freed people of color. This dynamic was to play itself out in the Haitian
Revolution and provide decades of tension for the newly independent nation to unite itself.  

However, Haiti’s slaves were not just the deciding factors of the planter class, they were decision makers of their own fates as well. Marronage, or the escape of slaves to form settlements independent of the colonial administration, was as old as Saint-Domingue itself. Saint-Domingue’s slaves had successfully found means to permanently evade their former masters and the condition of servitude until death. A careful review of Saint-Domingue by Carolyn Fick shows that maroon communities before 1791, and as early as 1522, were responsible for assisting in the planning of revolts, massacres, and plantation sabotage. In the eighteenth century, maroons aided in Makandal’s 1757 conspiracy, and the organization of the 1791 slave revolt in Le Cap. In 1775, a planter’s memoir captured the significance of this persistent menace of maroonage to the slave society:

…marronage, or the desertion of the black slaves in our colonies since they were founded, has always been regarded as one of the possible causes of their destruction….the Minister should be informed that there are inaccessible or reputedly inaccessible areas in different sections of our colony which serve as retreat and shelter for maroons; it is in the mountains and in the forests that these tribes of slaves establish themselves and multiply, invading the plains from time to time, spreading alarm and always causing great damage to inhabitants.

The response to marronnage also forced the royal administration in Saint-Domingue to order free people of color to serve in the maréchaussée to “hunt down and capture fugitive slaves” in the north. The social order of the plantation economy pitted poor whites against colonial administrators, planters against the French crown, whites against mixed-raced free people of color, freed colors against maroons and runaway slaves, city slaves against rural slaves, and domestic slaves against field slaves. The isolation of plantation estates from Le Cap the commercial hub, and Port-au-Prince, the
administrative hub, meant that the primary common thread that brought Saint-
Domingue’s enslaved together was the desire to be free. For people of mixed race across
the provinces, their shared commonality was the desire for access to liberties. For Saint-
Domingue’s white planter class, there was the shared desire to control the economic
affairs of their estates without interference from the French crown. It is these
commonalities across regions on the island of Saint-Domingue that allowed for
revolution on all levels. However, it was the differences born out of the plantation society
that frustrated the Haitian Revolution, which had attempted to undo 400 years of
colonization and slavery through 15 years of bloodshed.

2. The Haitian Revolution

The effects of the Haitian Revolution had internal and external ramifications. The
obstacles faced by revolutionary leaders to accomplish it and sustain it, also continued in
the efforts to reconstruct a society after it. As Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph
Trouillot summarizes in Silencing the Past:

From “the mass insurrection (1791) to the crumbling of the colonial apparatus (1793),
from general liberty (1794) to the conquest of the state machinery (1797-98), from Louverture’s
taming of that machinery (1801) to the proclamation of Haitian independence with Dessalines
(1804)...each and every one of these steps – leading up to and culminating in the emergence of a
modern “black state,” still largely part of the unthinkable until the twentieth century – challenged
further the ontological order of the West and the global order of colonialism.

The debate surrounding the Haitian Revolution was whether the conditions in
Saint-Domingue described in the section above would have inevitably led to such a
revolution. Or, if in the words of Trouillot, at the height of colonization and slavery
throughout the Americas, what occurred in Haiti at that specific time was “unthinkable.”
Additionally, historians continue to debate the weight of any of these events Trouillot
summed up above, on the final outcome – the overthrow of slavery and colonialism.
British historian David Patrick Geggus, considered by American and Haitian scholars,
including Trouillot, to be the most precise author on his archival work on the Revolution
to date, grappled with this issue in his 2002 text *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*. In the
chapter “Historiography and Sources” Geggus asks:\(^{37}\)

> What was it in the circumstances of 1791 that brought about this change? How should we
> weigh the significance of questions of ideology against perceived shifts in the balance of power?
> Did the French Revolution transform *mentalités* in the slave quarters, or did it merely facilitate the
> realization of existing aspirations? Something changed in 1791, but should we look for it in the
> apparatus of social control, in levels of discontent, or in changes of consciousness?

> Avoiding the twin perils of exoticizing or Occidentalizing the slaves, how are we to
> imagine the attitudes and beliefs of those Africans and children of Africans of two centuries ago:
> those who called their white enemies “the monkeys” or “the citizens”; those who in their native
> languages had no word for “liberty” even though thousands of them died in its pursuit? This in my
> opinion, remains the most intractable question facing historians of the Haitian Revolution.

The study of the Haitian Revolution has attempted to grapple with Geggus’
concerns of what ideology guided the Haitian Revolution. The study of the Haitian
Revolution remains central, to this day, to understanding Haiti. It seeks to revisit this
event to explain the impact of colonialism and slavery and revolutionary overthrow of
these institutions, to the descendants of the people who were the only group in history to
successfully liberate themselves, and to have to have done so by force. Firstly, historians
have tried to reframe this event and to denounce nineteenth century accounts of this
revolutionary event. The two standard monographs of this field are Trinidadian
historian and Marxist scholar C.L.R. James’ 1938 *The Black Jacobins*\(^{38}\) and James’
student Carolyn Fick’s 1989 *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from
Below*.\(^{39}\) The majority of Revolution scholars describe James’ *Black Jacobins* as “the
classic narrative” of the revolution, despite several of them having revised on his thesis,
including Fick. The reason why James’ book is canonical for Haitian Revolutionary
Studies is because before it, the Haitian Revolution was a footnote, if not reduced to a
mere slave revolt, in major European and North American writings on revolutionary
theory. What occurred in Saint-Domingue C.L.R. James elevated as revolutionary,
because it was the only event of that era, both in the New and Old worlds, to overthrow successfully both the institutions of colonialism and slavery, which the American Revolution had failed to do.

Additionally, early nineteenth century writers’ reports failed to capture the revolutionary nature of what occurred in St. Domingue, in favor of both negative or positive portrayals of the new black state. In the nineteenth century, Haitian historians and politicians began to challenge such writings with the works of Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d’Haiti* and Beaubrun Ardouin, *Etudes sur l’histoire d’Haiti*. The two accounts were slanted in favor of the mulatto’s role in the revolution and independence (such as Vincent Ogé and Jean-Baptiste Chavannes’ revolt in 1791). However, Madiou and Ardouin’s nineteenth century work were also important, particularly for Fick’s work later on, because it provided the first accounts of oral histories on the role of the freed slaves in the uprisings and groupings. Other early nineteenth century work on the revolution such as Victor Schoelcher’s *Vie de Toussaint Louverture*, and R. P. Adolphe Cabon’s, *Histoire d’Haiti*, place the Haitian revolution in terms of post-emancipation struggles and the questions surrounding the abolition of slavery. None of these four works place the Haitian Revolution on equal echelon with the French and American revolutions until James book is published and to a lesser extent Alejo Carpentier’s literary work *The Kingdom of this World*.

What both James in history and Carpentier in literature accomplish is to place the Haitian revolution as a heroic accomplishment, one that Trouillot qualifies decades later as an unthinkable moment. James is able to center the Haitian Revolution as impacting the course, debates, and actions stemming from the French Revolution. Saint-Domingue
alters the course of French revolutionary ideology because it introduced the question of the rights of the colonies and revised declarations and proclamations coming out of France to include the rights to free men of color and even the abolition of slavery. James’ work, Trouillot argues however, diminished the revolutionary nature of a slave revolution, because it equated it to colonial or imperialist revolt. Even James concedes that: “It is subsidiary to the class question in politics and to think of imperialism in terms of race is disastrous. But to neglect the racial factor as merely incidental is an error only less grave than to make it fundamental.”

His student Carolyn Fick, however, provides the pivotal turn in the Revolutionary narratives in her treatment of the Revolution from Below, by arguing against James’ presentation of the Haitian Revolution as a pivotal extension of the French Revolution. For Fick, the slaves had “pre-revolutionary consciousness,” that was not backward looking or escapist. The slaves had hoped to kill all whites and live in independence as expressed in the Makandal revolt of 1757. Thirty years after Makandal, Fick skips to 1792-1793 and the maroon community of Platons which had set up a restorationist community with a king to fight to end slavery. She argues that “whether the slaves, or the maroons, or the “insurgents,” or “brigands,” or the ordinary black plantation laborers were acting paradoxically or not in their prolonged fight for freedom and then for land, they were acting according to self-defined needs and aspirations.”

Trouillot, on the other hand, thinks Fick and James both misunderstood the revolutionary musings about the slaves, or any other group for that matter during the Revolution. Trouillot argues that:

Not only was the Revolution unthinkable and, therefore, unannounced in the West, it was also – to a large extent – unspoken among the slaves themselves. By this I mean that the Revolution was not preceded or even accompanied by an explicit intellectual discourse…..The
Haitian Revolution expressed itself mainly through its deeds, and it is through political practice that it challenged Western philosophy and colonialism.\textsuperscript{50} Trouillot’s 1995 critique that no one, neither the French, the North Americans, the Spanish colonists, the British, or even the slaves, saw a slave revolution as even possible in their lifetime, dominated historical debates on the revolution. Laurent Dubois, in his 2004 monograph \textit{Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution} tries to place this question within a wider understanding of the Atlantic World. Dubois argued that revolution as one that was ideologically unfolding for both whites, mulattoes and slaves in response to the entire experience that was the Americas. As Dubois sums up “these events represented the most radical political transformation of the Age of Revolution that stretched from 1779 to the 1830s.”\textsuperscript{51} To live in the New World, during the “Age of Revolutions” was to be caught up in a web of newly forged identity that saw peoples of all color, bond and free, being transformed by the creolizing effect of place and time. To that end, Dubois has had one of the most resounding theses on the Revolution in recent times.

When looking externally at the impact of the Haitian Revolution, scholars have attempted to base the effects of the revolution in the New World. The response by actors in the New World is important in understanding the reaction to the newly formed Haiti at the time by its immediate neighbors, and the ability of the black state to thrive in the nineteenth century. The leading text to launch this sub-field remains David Gaspar and David Geggus edited volume: \textit{A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean}.\textsuperscript{52} This volume was followed up by David Geggus’ edited volume: \textit{The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World}\textsuperscript{53} and then the bicentennial commemorative text David Geggus and Norman Fiering’s edited volume: \textit{The World of}
In taking a departure from the debates of the James-Fick-Trouillot treatments, Geggus changes the historiography by putting forward that the repercussions of the Haitian revolution should be measured more by its positive or negative impacts and less on its significance. “An event of unique significance does not necessarily have uniquely significant repercussions,” Geggus wrote. Geggus in the 2001 edited volume calls attention to Seymour Drescher’s essay of viewing the Haitian Revolution as symbol rather than substance. Geggus firstly affirms that C.L.R. James’ book was important for metropolitan, i.e. French historians to understand that the adoption of anti-colonial, anti-slavery and anti-racism tendencies of *La Grande Révolution* had less to do with their own Jacobins, but with the events of the Haitian Revolution in its first phase. Secondly, Geggus’ volume adds that Saint-Domingue served as inspiration to slave resistance in the Age of Revolutions.

Geggus stands out because he disagrees with Eugene Genovese thesis in *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* that the Haitian Revolution marked a turning point in slave resistance. He argued that “There is no doubt that, after the unprecedented successes of Saint-Domingue’s insurgents, all subsequent rebels must have gained courage from contemplating their example, but slaves had always rebelled ever since there was slavery, and they did so with no greater success after the Haitian Revolution than before.”

In terms of negative impacts of the Revolution, Geggus writes that the Haitian Revolution had a controversial correlation with slave emancipation in the rest of the Atlantic. He cites the 1831 Jamaican rebellion as having Haitian roots, speeding up the British emancipation act of 1833. It also prompted the newly independent Latin
American nations and the Dutch, Danish, French and British colonies to reform race relations through new laws and constitutions in the case of the Spanish American republics. In the post-Revolution era it may have emboldened people of color to engage in political activism as represented by Marixa Lasso’s essay on Gran Colombia, David Davis’ essay on the U.S., Mott in Brazil, Mimi Sheller in Jamaica and Paquette and Ada Ferrer in Cuba. However, the Revolution’s symbolism worked both ways as black leaders across the Americas were accused of inspiring black republic type politics in Brazil, Jamaica and Cuba. Additionally, these scholars argue that local factors also created space for black political activism, compared to external motivations alone that stemmed from neighboring Haiti.

Thirdly, when looking at Atlantic politics, the Revolution did hurt the French, Spanish and English in terms of dollars and land. Yet on the other hand, Geggus cautions scholars that the Revolution negatively triggered an expansion of plantation economy in Jamaica, Louisiana and the remaining Spanish colonies as planters fleeing St. Domingue were displaced. The final impact that Geggus’ volumes outline from the Revolution, was a cultural one. Revolutionary leaders during the Revolution and then afterward, spread Creole/French political and social interactions to places like Louisiana as shown in Paul Lachance’s work, and to maroons in Cuba as in Gabino La Rosa Corzo’s *Los Palenques del Oriente de Cuba; Resistencia y acoso* and in Jane Landers work. Additional works have addressed the impact of the revolution in North America.

The final sub-field of Haitian Revolutionary Studies seeks to look at specific events within the 15 years of revolution. David Patrick Geggus’s *War and Revolution:*
The British Occupation of Saint Domingue, 1793-1798 has been the benchmark for meticulous archival work on phases of the revolution. More recently Jeremy Popkin’s 2010 prize winning monograph: You Are All Free: The Haitian Revolution and the Abolition of Slavery and to a less degree his 2007: Facing Revolution: First Person Narratives of the Haitian Revolution have focused on events within the Revolution. Geggus’ has taken the conservative critique that the losses of the British excursion to Saint-Domingue prompted England, the rising power in the World at the time to rethink its position with regards to abolition of slavery. Popkins, on the other hand, arrives at the more provocative conclusion that abolishing slavery in Saint-Domingue was due to the New World’s experiment with conquest and colonization, and less to do with the individual fights of the respective groups that comprised the Haitian Revolution. Popkins puts forward that:

The individuals who set the events of June 20, 1793 in motion were not black insurgents fighting for freedom, or white colonists defending their privileged positions, but white sailors from outside the island and a white general who thought he was defending the interests of revolutionary France…The historic emancipation proclamations of 1793 in Saint-Domingue and the French national Convention’s degree of 1794 came about, not through the systematic efforts of slave insurgents in Saint-Domingue, nor in response to an organized campaign for abolition in revolutionary France, but as a result of a crisis that had little to do with slavery.

Thus Popkins work has reset the benchmark that C.L.R. James set in the 1930s by once again confusing the question of what sparked the Haitian Revolution. If looking at the entire revolution, or its impact, or the different groups involved still has not answered the question, then what has? To answer this question, scholars have begun to study the key individuals of the revolution. Several key texts have been published on the “heroes” of the Revolution. Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot has since challenged this scholarly approach in his chapter “The Three Faces of San Souci” in 1995’s Silencing the Past. Here, Trouillot examined the peoples and events of the “war within the war” that
occurred between June 1802 to August 1803 in Haiti. The story of the Congo Jean-Baptiste Sans Souci, his allies Makaya and Sylla and their forces, who evaded capture from LeClerc’s expedition, his deputy French general Philibert Fressinet, Toussaint, Dessalines and Christophe, is according to Trouillot, the greatest silence, not of the revolution, but also of the historiography of the revolution. While Trouillot believed at some point the history of the Revolution will finally be written, although he passed in 2012 before he could do so himself, he theorized then that “silences are inherent in history because any single event enters history with some of its constituting parts missing. Something is always left out while something else is recorded.”

On what is still to be written of the Revolution, Trouillot writes:

For most writers sympathetic to the cause of freedom, Haitians and foreigners alike, the war within the war is an amalgam of unhappy incidents that pitted the black Jacobins, Creole slaves and freedmen alike, against hordes of uneducated “Congos,” African-born slaves, Bossale men with strange surnames, like Sans Souci, Makaya, Sylla, Mavougou, Lamour de la Rance, Petit-Noël Prieur (or Prière), Va-Malheureux, Macaque, Alou, Coco, Sanglaou—slave names quite distinguishable from the French sounding ones of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Alexandre Pétion, Henry Christophe, Augustin Clervaux, and the like.

That many of those Congos were early leaders of the 1791 uprising, that a few had become bona fide officers of Louverture’s army, that all were staunch defenders of the cause of freedom have been passed over. The military experience gathered in Africa during the Congo civil wars, which may have been crucial to the slave revolution, is a non-issue in Haiti. Not just because few Haitians are intimate with African history, but because Haitian historians (like everyone else) long assumed that victorious strategies could only come from the Europeans or the most Europeanized slaves.

That le nommé Sans Souci did not trust the French, or wish to submit to Toussaint, Dessalines and Christophe, who he considered traitors, is testament enough to the layered aspects of the Haitian Revolution. Although John Thornton’s work has brought to the forefront the ways in which Congo slaves’ military tactics were crucial in the revolution, we still know little about how Sans Souci, and other silenced leaders like him, envisioned the Revolution and the Haitian Republic that was to follow. The fact that Haitians themselves, Christophe and then historians Madiou and Ardouin, have dismissed
key players like Sans Souci in Haitian national history, is the gnawing question left unanswered about over 200 years of scholarship on this unique, one of a kind revolution.

3. The U.S. Occupation

In the first century of independence Haiti’s political classes governed under the threat of foreign intervention from France. This dynamic did not change even as the United States exerted its right to police the Western Hemisphere through the Monroe Doctrine and its Roosevelt Corollary. Haitian Studies researchers have pointed to the U.S. Occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934 as the turning point for the shift in power relations between Haiti and an external imperialist power.

The United States had worked to keep “Haiti out of a fledgling Inter-American system in 1825.” The U.S. had never truly embraced Haiti’s push for independence, choosing not to intervene during the Revolution, despite its fears of what the Revolution would mean to its retention of slavery after the American Revolution. The decision of the U.S. to sit on the sidelines during the Haitian Revolution was two-fold. It distracted the other colonial powers: the Spanish, the French and the British, as they diverted military assets to the conflict in Saint-Domingue. This allowed the newly independent U.S. and its 14 states the breathing room to develop its institutions both politically and economically. Secondly, the loss of their initial freedom by slaves in Martinique and Guadeloupe during revolution elsewhere in the French Antilles led a complacent United States to assume that successful revolution in Saint-Domingue was impossible and even reversible. However, the U.S. had been wrong, and its attempts to squeeze Haiti out of an alliance with an emerging independent Spanish America was the beginning of its attempts to dominate Hemispheric relations with regards to Haiti.
Scholars have argued that a “globalist” critique explains Haiti’s deteriorating conditions in the twentieth century. They point to the U.S. hegemonic take over from France as key to shaping Haiti’s trajectory, and in most cases, for the worse. Scholars cite a series of events that define early U.S.-Haitian relations. The French indemnity of 150 million francs occurred the same year the US isolated Haiti in 1825, only for US banks to refinance the loan in 1922. This 1922 loan refinance came in part due to the U.S. occupation of Haiti from July 1915. Once the U.S. seized control of Haiti’s customs during military intervention, the U.S. assigned 80-percent of custom revenues to continue to service the French indemnity. Washington, D.C. described the 1915 marine invasion as one of “national interest.” The U.S. sent its navy to escort a private enterprise, the National City Bank, to take control of the Haitian National Bank. The U.S. Navy transported Haiti’s gold reserves back to New York after refusal by Haiti’s government to pay key U.S. investors. The invasion also brought other sovereign violations upon the Haitian people. U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s rewrote Haiti’s Occupation constitution to open land to foreigners and to set up French as the national language.

Even before the marine invasion, the United States used threat, coercion and withdrawal of aid to pressure then Haitian president François Antoine Simon and his successors to give in to U.S. business demands and for control of the Haitian Customs House. Haiti’s president was pressured to continue payments for a flawed National Railway contract held by American businessman James P. McDonald. The Haitian government was also constrained by the foreign-owned National Bank of Haiti, which refused to release funds for the government to pay its receipts. U.S. Secretary of State Philander Knox instructed the National Bank to withhold funds to the government with
the hope that it would lead to U.S. intervention and a takeover of the Haitian customs house. The National Bank of Haiti was a syndicate of U.S., French, and German banks. The U.S. shareholders of the bank eventually bought out its European partners on the outset of the first World War. As the United States State Department became directly more involved in making financial and contractual affairs with the Haitian government, the U.S. resorted firstly to threats and then to military action under the disguise of protecting U.S. interests in Haiti, after meeting resistance from Haitian officials.

President Warren Harding described such tactics 5 years later as “a veil of secrecy,” and “repeated acts of unwarranted interference in the domestic affairs of the little republics of the western hemisphere.” With specific mention to how Haiti was occupied and forced to accept U.S. terms, then candidate Harding stated in 1920: “If I should be elected President, I will not empower an Assistant Secretary General of the Navy to draft a constitution for helpless neighbors in the West Indies and jam it down their throats at the points of bayonets borne by United States marines.” This was the nature of the beginning of the United States occupation of Haiti from 1915-1925, which was forcibly renewed in the first year for an additional 10 years.

In the context of development, Paul Douglas argues that the United States conducted a military-style kind of development of the country within those 19 years. At its worst, Haitians, particularly in the north, were forced to build roads with no pay, but food. Those who resisted, the Cacos, were captured and killed. The country’s French style roads had been drastically improved during the occupation, but by forcible labor and coercion. The U.S. control of the Haitian budget through the U.S. Financial Advisor restricted the Haitian government from spending funds to improve education, although
the United States built more schools. The presence of U.S. marines meant that medical care improved on the island given an increase in U.S. physicians, however, little training of Haitian doctors took place.

The biggest boost to Haitian development during the occupation came through foreign loans and aid. The Americans were able to secure better loan and interest deals for Haiti during this period than would have been the case. However, many of those loans were used to service the country’s national debt to creditors in Europe and the United States, as opposed to developing the country. As the United States held control of Haiti’s customs house, revenue from exports were used to service the national debt to creditors. The U.S. financial advisor to the Haitian governing council also placed heavy restrictions on the country’s domestic budget.

If one was living during this time period, one would assume, that invading Haiti was a good thing – that is, if one read the foreign press, U.S. government document articles, military accounts and even academic publishings. Frederick Douglass wrote in the nineteenth century while serving as a foreign representative to Haiti for the U.S. that the U.S. should take over Haiti under a protectorate status for the good of all Haitians. The wide range of documents produced by U.S. actors during this entry point of Haitian history outnumbered good reports on Haiti from the prior century. Outsiders looking at Haiti at the turn of the century would not have had access to key events such as when the Vatican recognized the country in 1860 or to describe the role Haiti played in the U.S. civil war. Such accounts presented an alternative version of Haiti’s accomplishments during the nineteenth century despite economic and political isolation.

The U.S. Occupation of Haiti brought infrastructure gains such as the National
Highway, and the semblance of political stability under the watch of U.S. marines. What was damaging about the U.S. occupation, scholars wrote, is that it interrupted the organic development of Haiti’s political institutions, no matter the starts and set-backs of the nineteenth century. Once the fear of the marines was gone, a weakened political structure remained, with the U.S. as its base of legitimacy, and not the masses. This meant that those with their eyes on power could attain it with even more force than the century before, backed by a U.S.-trained Haitian military to sustain their claim to power for a longer period than before.\textsuperscript{87} Mark Schuller articulates this in his conclusion of the effect of the U.S. army’s destruction and marginalization of the Caco peasant opposition to the occupation, and its resistance leader Charlemagne Peralte. Mary Renda, in \textit{Taking Haiti}, adds that “by destroying resistance, the Occupation thus removed barriers and safeguards against future dictatorships.”\textsuperscript{88}

The significance of the July 27, 1915 Occupation of Haiti by US Marines, Renda argued, had less to do with what Haiti offered the U.S. in terms of economic resources, but what the successful conquering of a weak state apparatus meant for solidifying U.S. hegemony when it failed to do so a century before. This argument is important for understanding the ramifications of the U.S. threat to Haiti’s sovereignty going into the twenty-first century. Whenever Haiti’s political classes failed to tow U.S. lines they often saw their attempt at successful elections undermined by the financing of a candidate friendly to U.S. diplomatic interests. For the U.S. to assert itself as the new power of the twentieth century, it needed to send a strong message to the rest of the Western Hemisphere about the consequences of going against the United States. In other words, in
1915, Haiti was an easy target. *Taking Haiti*, Renda argues, was the stuff of “empire building”, and to assert its hegemony the U.S. required “stories as well as guns.”

The U.S. occupation for Renda was “no sideshow.” While the League of Nations was being forged in Versailles from a Peace Treaty led by President Woodrow Wilson, the true theatre for the emergence of the U.S. as an imperialist power after World War 1 comes from the exploits of its military in creating the cultural part of this empire in places like Puerto Rico, Cuba, Nicaragua, China, the Philippines and of course Haiti. Therefore, if the press conference on the creation of the League was the signal to global elites of U.S. hegemony, then the occupation by U.S. marines of small and large states in the Western Hemisphere and in the Pacific was the signal to the publics of the world that there was a new imperial power in town.

Renda’s book differs from the leading texts exploring this event because she argued that the occupation was not just a paternalistic project on the part of the American marines. As General Smedly Butler testified before a Senate committee on the occupation, U.S. marines had acted as “the trustees of a huge estate that belonged to minors.” Butler added that Haitians were “their wards,” with the marines working to make them a “rich and productive property, to be turned over to them at such a time as our government saw fit.” What they were in fact doing, Renda argued in her text, was propelling “the cultural logic of ‘American greatness’ and “reshaping prevailing conceptions of national identity” to serve for greater battles to come for U.S. marines and American actors during the World War I and II period. The occupation introduced aspects of race and masculinity, Renda argues, that later emboldened black and feminine discourses in response to the occupation as is discussed in Chapter 3.
Renda’s book thus places the Haitian occupation as an event that included a wider context of U.S. empire building that involved the perpetuating of U.S. cultural products and norms. It advances the frame set out by Ludwell Montague that U.S. relations with Haiti was part of a test run with the rest of Latin America to determine what other states would tolerate from U.S. interference. Montague points out that Wilson’s gunboat diplomacy, Harding’s “social and economic cultivation,” and Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy all played out in Haiti as a litmus test for Latin America. Likewise, the decision to withdraw U.S. marines from Haiti, thanks to sustained protests by Haitian peasants during the occupation, was also an attempt to appease Latin America. “The change in attitude toward Caribbean problems,” Montague wrote, “was designed to bring about an appeasement in inter-American relations.”

Hans Schmidt’s text refines Montague’s thesis by clarifying that while the U.S. interventions in other parts of the world were to establish open door, military presence under liberal intentionalism, “Haiti entailed a complete departure.” Instead, the “occupation of Haiti was a closed-door, sphere of influence diplomacy,” that only when completed, required a redefining of the Good Neighbor Policy of non-intervention, unless, of course, another threat occurred as in the case of Guatemala, for instance, in 1954.

The only departure to this narrative comes from David Healy and then later on during the attempted Marine intervention from Col. Charles Williamson of the Duvalier regime. Healy, and later on Williamson, take a revisionist approach on Montague and Schmidt’s foreign policy narrative. Healy contests that the tensions the occupation created between the U.S. and Haitian elites was needed, because it took money out of the
hands of the elites into the programs needed to help the masses. In this positivist view of
the occupation, Healy suggests that “since it was the United States, however, which had
intruded itself on the affairs of another nation, the question is ultimately not one of the
relative merits of the occupation and its Haitian opponents, but whether the occupation
should ever have existed at all.” Healy argues here that it was not that the Haitian
occupation was unsuccessful by President Wilson’s objectives of spreading democracy
and bringing political stability, but that U.S. tactics, such as buying out the election of
Sudre Dartiguenave, undermined what good the U.S. was trying to accomplish.
Healy’s critique is useful for developmental specialists who argue that intervention can
be beneficial if it is the “right” kind of intervention, one that fosters democracy and
development, but not breeds corruption and dictatorship.

For instance, the attempted Marine intervention to infiltrate communist groups
during François Duvalier’s regime, is seen by Col. Charles T. Williamson’s in his text,
published by the U.S. Naval Institute Press as being benevolent. Describing “the U.S.
Naval Mission to Haiti,” as being a venture “which began full of promise in 1959, [but]
ended in frustration and dismay in 1963,” Williamson presents the failure of U.S.
attempts to stamp out communism by training the Haitian armed forces as a failure of the
Duvalier leadership, and less of the meddling of the U.S. itself. Like Healy, Williamson,
an insider of the military experiment, argues that U.S. military efforts in Haiti challenged
and shook up Haitian elites to do better by the country and its people. Healy and
Williamson see this as the source of the tension of the U.S. presence, and not the mere
concept of occupation in and of itself.
The interventionist analysis of the occupation has since been critiqued by Magdaline Shannon in *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian elite and the American occupation, 1915-1935*; Brenda Gayle Plummer in *Black and White in the Caribbean: Haitian-American Relations, 1902-1934* and Jean-Price Mars in *La Vocation de l’Elite*. In works like these, scholars have outlined the armed resistance among Haitian peasants, and the intellectual resistance during this period of loss of sovereignty. This resistance, which also played itself out in Haiti’s media during this period, is discussed further in Chapter 3.

4. The Duvalier dictatorship

After valiantly fighting during the Revolution, the loss of the nation’s sovereignty as a result of the Occupation led to a project in national reconstruction once again. This time, Haiti sought to rebuild not with imperialist France in the background, but with the continued threat of US interference. It was out of the Occupation and its resistance, that François Duvalier saw his rise to power. Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues this in *Haiti: State Against Nation* that:

> The 1915-34 occupation of Haiti by the United States removed those counterweights and aggravated an already explosive situation in two ways. First, it heightened the economic irrationality of the system by increasing both the forced contribution of the peasantry to the state and the dependency on a monocrop. Second, it worsened the political panorama by centralizing the state apparatus (especially the army) and by disarming the provinces, both militarily and economically. While the military, fiscal and commercial centralization imposed by the occupiers postponed Haiti’s day of reckoning for thirty years, it also guaranteed that that reckoning would be bloody.

Trouillot’s text is important in the scholarly looks at the Duvalier dictatorship of father and son for 29 years, because he challenged scholars who believed that the Duvaliers were merely a continuation of Haiti’s authoritarian state. Trouillot argued that François Duvalier transformed “the authoritarian political model of the past into a totalitarian apparatus. In so doing, he pitted the state against the nation.” Key to
Duvalier’s survival, Trouillot, and Mathew Smith, points out, is the external support the United States offered to keep Duvalier’s regime in place and then to sanction the pass over of the regime to his son Jean Claude in 1971. The United States did so both with diplomatic support as well as economic support in exchange for Haiti’s Cold War alliance with the U.S. who had feared that most of Latin America could turn red.  

The Duvalier regime altered Haiti’s political institutions because François Duvalier consolidated power within the state, and away from the political classes, in which he became the central decider. The Duvaliers also transformed Haiti’s economy from a nineteenth century peasant life to one in “agreement with foreign ‘experts,’” who “had completely dismissed the rural world in favor of a gamble on the returns from cheap urban labor.” This “economic revolution” from light assembly industries from U.S. corporations, Trouillot argued “reinforced the urban-rural polarization.”

From his rise to power to his maintaining of that power, François Duvalier mastered control over Haiti’s internal and external forces. At the beginning of “Papa Doc’s” rise to power, he seemed to foreign observers as a neutral candidate, with strong ties to the US, who would serve as a friendly ally for the U.S. trained Haitian army. Duvalier studied public health at Michigan University for two terms after working in Haiti’s hospitals and clinics. He then assisted the US army’s medical mission from 1943 to 1946. When he returned from the Michigan program, he worked in a US sponsored program to rid malaria and yaws in the country, earning him the name “Papa Doc” among his patients. He had spent a lot of time working with the country’s rural poor through health programs organized by the United States during the occupation. It was because of this background that US observers saw his rise to office in the latter part of the 1950s as
perhaps a good thing for Haiti. However, Duvalier swiftly moved to an authoritarian form of governance to squash his opposition, counterbalance the U.S. trained military, and ensure the longevity of his hold on power as “president for life.” His ruthless style of governing severely hampered development on the island during the 1960s, so much that at the end of this decade, the country became far more impoverished and its people even more malnourished than during the U.S. occupation.113

François Duvalier varied over time on the philosophies that drove his authoritarian regime. Firstly, as a student and doctor, he followed the movement of Black Nationalism that swept Haiti after the occupation. His writings for the journal *Les Griots*, and for his book *Le Problème des classes a travers l’histoire d’Haiti*114 suggested that Duvalier wanted to uplift the country’s peasant class. In his book, he outlined that the mulatto elites in the country held wealth purely because of their race and not because of some “economic phenomenon.”115 He rejected Marxist understandings of class, and at the beginning of his political career, championed social democracy as Secretary General of the country’s Mouvement Ouvrier Paysan or (MOP), a working class organization, that was overtly anti-communist.116 Yet Duvalier’s political leanings were fluid, and when the Assembly elected a moderate black candidate to the presidency, Dumarsais Estimé, Duvalier took up a position in Estimé’s administration as Minister of Public Health and Labour leading up to 1950.

Duvalier may have embraced concepts of social democracy and national development that targeted the poor masses, but as a political actor, Duvalier was less committed. When Paul Magloire, Duvalier’s predecessor, became more unpopular after his mishandling of foreign aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Hazel and a slumping
economy, Duvalier emerged as a champion for the country’s black poor. Duvalier ran for office in an election that was controlled by the Haitian military, and he successfully played all sides of the electorate preaching a rhetoric of help for the masses under the guise of “patriotism, racism and mysticism.”

His electoral platform also aimed to reassure the US, reminding foreign observers of his work in public health programs as a way to let the outsiders know he was one of theirs. Once in office, Duvalier’s governing philosophies were never quite clear. His administration included his fellow writers and intellectuals from Les Griots, as well as his medical colleagues from the anti-yaws and malaria campaigns. Two of his advisors, including his brother-in-law were stated communists, another two were open Marxists, and another advisor was a member of the French Communist Party while a student in Paris. To that mix, Duvalier added exiles from France, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, as well as questionable American advisors to his list of consultants for his new administration. Duvalier held to no one particular ideal or concept, be it capitalism or structuralism, in his intent to lead a black nationalistic movement that would bring change to Haiti. If needed, he used Marxist or communist thought to develop his rhetoric for support among the masses. At the same time, he reminded US and foreign observers of his work in public health as an indication to trust his administration and to support capitalistic-style governance of the island.

Nothing is more clear of Duvalier’s tactics than his manipulating of the growing Cold War climate playing out in the Western Hemisphere. Initially, the US was pleased to have Duvalier in power because he had worked with the US during the occupation, and he initially invited the Marines to train the Haitian army after he reorganized it. This
gesture early on brought Duvalier direct financial aid and increased loans under military spending initiatives from the U.S. Congress.\textsuperscript{119} However, as more failed attempts at coup d’états from Haitians exiled in the U.S. began to occur, Duvalier grew suspicious of the US. He was also aware that the US were suspicious of open Marxists and communists in his administration. Duvalier played to the fears of US diplomats, stating that Haiti would have to turn to Cuba or other sources for aid, should the United States not do so. In 1960 in the town of Jacmel, Duvalier made a speech “Cri de Jacmel” alluding for more aid from the US without imposed conditions in return for loyalty or else the Haitian government would be forced to look to the communist world for help.\textsuperscript{120}

Once Duvalier consolidated power, backed by his personal militia, the Tontons Macoutes, he secured his position as President for Life, under the disguise of a questionable referendum and constitutional reforms. He then sort to pressure the United States to support his administration. Duvalier did so again in January 1962, criticizing the Kennedy administration for its policy in the Caribbean and calling for more aid in return. The same day, Duvalier publicized a visit from a Polish trade group to discuss aid to Haiti through a Warsaw Pact.\textsuperscript{121} The same year an important Hemispheric event allowed Duvalier to further manipulate the U.S. given the increasing threat of communism taking hold in the region. At the meeting of the countries of the Organization of American States in Punta del Este, Uruguay, the item on the agenda was the US proposal to exclude the newly communist Cuba from the OAS. The proposal included setting sanctions and required two-thirds majority vote from all members. The US faced stiff opposition as Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Mexico did not support the US proposal. Duvalier and his foreign minister René Chalmers approached the US delegation head Dean Rusk and
stated that Haiti’s vote on the Cuba issue would be useful if he worked to agree to a substantial foreign aid package for Haiti in return. Reluctantly, Rusk and his delegation gave in and Washington supplied Haiti with its demanded aid, particularly for the building of his proposed François Duvalier International airport at Port-au-Prince.\textsuperscript{122} With Cuba’s revolution spreading to other parts of Latin America, Duvalier saw a way to insert Haiti into a regional rift that benefited the country’s need for foreign aid.

The U.S. adopted a “pragmatic policy of accommodation”\textsuperscript{123} toward Duvalier’s requests and removed imposed conditions for U.S. foreign aid. Without such accountability, Duvalier was able to redirect funds to hand-picked private contractors and personal accounts in an effort to fund his Tontons Macoutes militia, as a counter balance to the Haitian army, of whom Duvalier had never fully trusted.\textsuperscript{124} Additionally, the US sought an alternative for its military base at Guantánamo Bay, and Duvalier flaunted the idea of military development of Môle St. Nicolas, a place of interest for the U.S. since its occupation. The issue became a source for extorting more U.S. military aid up to the 1980s under Papa Doc’s son Jean-Claude Duvalier, who would succeed him. Jean-Claude set up several “investment” programs where U.S. army engineers were to assess a malfunctioning hydroelectric dam, which did not exist, as one example. The proposed base became a source of bilateral aid from the US with bids ranging from $500 million to $700 million.\textsuperscript{125}

François Duvalier was also quite clever with multilateral aid as well. IMF loans were tied with preconditions to paying the country’s national debt, at about 50-percent of the government’s budget.\textsuperscript{126} Therefore, Duvalier’s government sought and received aid for public sector programs and for hurricane and storm relief. Such aid was tied to
specific sectors or problems the country was facing. However, the government found a way to circumnavigate the problem by contracting the program to private entities, both foreign and among Haiti’s elite. In return, the government would receive kickbacks that would be channeled into private accounts for the president and his ministers.\textsuperscript{127}

Duvalier died in office on 21 April, 1971 and through a dubious referendum had his son constitutionally placed as the next president for life. International corruption agencies listed the 14 years of Duvalier’s presidency as the “social and economic ruin of Haiti.”\textsuperscript{128} Firstly, some 30,000 to 60,000 Haitians were murdered through state terrorism at the hands of the president’s personal militia, the Tontons Macoutes. The social fear lead to the beginning of Haiti’s brain drain as the country’s professionals and intellectuals fled to Europe, Canada and the new African nations to teach at universities, and to practice medicine. At the end of the first Duvalier regime, there were double the amount of Haitian born doctors who practiced medicine in Montreal than there were doctors in Haiti.\textsuperscript{129}

By the end of the 1960s, Haiti officially became the poorest country and most fragile society in the Western Hemisphere for every statistic: child mortality, illiteracy, and life expectancy, according to the World Bank.\textsuperscript{130} Social scientists cannot cite one infrastructural improvement to Haiti under François Duvalier, other than the U.S. funded international airport. In fact, the roads and ports and other modernization programs that US marines organized under the Occupation, and which continued under General Paul Magloire, fell into disrepair. Many of the rural towns became far more isolated and in decay compared to the linkages that took place during the US Occupation.\textsuperscript{131}
Duvalier’s only attempt for infrastructural development was his failed Duvalierville, part of the mysticism around his presidency for life. From 1961, he had hoped to turn the rural town of Cabaret where he worked as a public health professional early on, into a replica of Brasilia in Brazil. Duvalier felt that a technologically designed town, like Brasilia, would be a memorial of his presidency. It turned out to be just that, as the project was corrupt and an extortion of the Haitian people. From 1961, Duvalier assigned a député from the Macoutes to form the Mouvement de Rénovation Nationale. The front organization was set up to collect funds for the development of Duvalierville. The MRN looted and killed businessmen to collect sums ranging from $1,000 to $5,000 for the project. Peasants were also asked to pay tolls through roadblocks for the MRN fund, and telephone subscribers in Port-au-Prince were charged a levy for the fund for phones that did not work for 20 years. The government failed to develop any of the country’s potential sectors in the 1960s. Instead, Duvalier sent countless Haitians to work in the Dominican Republic for Dominican-owned and U.S. owned sugar plantations. For sending 20,000 Haitian peasants a year, Duvalier’s government earned $10 for each worker sent, and then took $49 from each worker’s pay. By 1969, Duvalier, instead of creating new industries, welcomed US offshore industries to Haiti, advertising low-wage workers. Haitian workers were producing almost every baseball for the US league. Haitian workers hand-stitched some 40 baseballs a day at a rate of $2 daily, in un-unionized assembly plants in Port-au-Prince.
For Haitians working in the public sector, wages were also reduced. Duvalier set up a mandatory old-age pension scheme at 3-percent of worker’s incomes. However, workers could not receive the pension until after 64 when the life expectancy at the time stood at 40. Additionally, Duvalier charged civil servants $15 from their salary as an exchange for “free” copies of his writings or propaganda. Meanwhile, the country’s wealthy mulatto elites sought to avoid Duvalier’s new taxes by bribing the government or offering kickbacks to maintain access to bids for international aid dollars for domestic contracts over American firms.

The Haitian government also nationalized several industries such as the Régie du Tabac where revenues from the production, export and sale of tobacco and other products such as flour, sugar, motor cars, alcohol and electronic equipment, were never included into the country’s budget. The president controlled the company and it produced no annual accounts. The revenues from the Régie were said to provide a significant portion of the President’s “unofficial” income. At the end of Papa Doc’s regime, US Senator Edward Burke released a report, in defense of the Duvalier’s though, that at least 20-percent of the country’s revenues was not fiscalized in the budget.

Public works projects were completely abandoned by Duvalier given the large scale of corruption of international aid dollars. The International Commission of Jurists estimated that 80-percent of the aid that flowed into Haiti in the 60s and 70s under François Duvalier was either stolen or wasted. Additionally, Duvalier himself stole from the Haitian treasury some $10 million a year. About two-thirds of Haiti’s foreign aid from the IMF was channeled through private companies as opposed to the government.
This allowed the Haitian government to avoid imposed conditions placed on it by multilateral aid agencies, but still receive kickbacks after it awarded contracts.\textsuperscript{142}

Additionally, foreign firms or agencies doing business in Haiti under François Duvalier experienced what was called a “shake-down” after the hurricane or storm season passed for relief aid for the people.\textsuperscript{143} Many foreign organizations or firms handed over a sum in exchange for avoiding harassment from the Macoutes. The proceeds from such hurricane relief donations were channeled into private accounts and never reached its intended destinations.

All told, the systemic corruption of foreign aid, the country’s budget, national revenues, and of the Haitian workforce, explained the social, economic and political decline of Haiti under François Duvalier. The corruption sort to sustain what Duvalier called his “political revolution.” Duvalier’s regime did not go unchallenged. He barely avoided nine failed invasions from exiles, and several assassination attempts. Yet, Duvalier sacrificed the cost of improving conditions in Haiti in order to maintain power.

François Duvalier’s son, Jean Claude, initially followed his father’s example. Jean Claude manipulated Haiti’s political class and the United States at the beginning of his regime. However, Jean Claude’s marriage to Michèle Bennett on May 27, 1980, marked the end to the prominence of hardline “Duvalierists” called “the dinosaurs” in Haitian politics.\textsuperscript{144} Bennett’s father, Ernest Bennett, was a Haitian mulatto millionaire whose business interests spanned from coffee and cocoa exports to luxury car imports. Ernest Bennett belonged to a class of Haitian businessmen who called themselves “capitalists,” and with this new alliance, Jean-Claude shifted his governing style and policies in line with the interests of this group.\textsuperscript{145} When Haiti, like most of the developing world, ran into...
economic hardship during the debt crisis of the 1980s, the ideas and suggestions of the “capitalists” dictated the types of economic programs pursued under Jean-Claude Duvalier up to his departure in 1987.

Corruption also increased under Jean Claude. In 1981, rising oil prices, minimum state investment, and an expensive bureaucracy to fund the dictatorship prompted Jean-Claude Duvalier to deliver a speech on what he described as the country’s “economic impasse.”¹⁴⁶ The state bureaucracy continued to be the government’s biggest expense. Jean-Claude Duvalier’s state-run wedding cost the Haitian people $7 million to conduct two-weeks of national celebrating, and to fly in dignitaries such as the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, whose support Duvalier coveted against U.S. interference in his regime.¹⁴⁷ Duvalier’s wife, Michèle Bennett now earned an annual salary of $100,000 that she spent in creating a “cold room” for her French collection of mink and fur coats.¹⁴⁸

Aside from state extravagance, there was a clear strategy from the “capitalists” described as *Jean-claudisme*. It called for economic liberalism and a break from the economic policies of Jean-Claude’s father, François Duvalier, which stifled the economic advantages of many of the country’s mulatto elites.¹⁴⁹ To support the liberal corporate policies under *Jean-claudisme*, Jean-Claude Duvalier set up the Conseil National d’Action Jean-Claudiste or CONAJEC to spread propaganda about his new economic revolution. CONAJEC’s role also involved informing ordinary Haitians about political changes to the dictatorship, such as the 1983 Constitution, which forbade discrimination in schools, protected property ownership and religious freedom.¹⁵⁰
For Jean-Claude Duvalier, his economic plans focused on urban development where the elite lived prompting the rural poor to call the country the “republic of Port-au-Prince.” During the 1980s, the capitalists and their business allies received 83-percent of public expenditure dollars for projects that were carried out in the capital and in wealthy towns such as Pétionville. While Haitian farmers and rural peasants were neglected under economic liberalism, the urban wealthy lived comfortably. Wealthy Haitians in the capital had access to 85-percent of the country’s medical facilities, and 98-percent of the country’s energy consumption, despite the fact that 75-percent of the population lived outside the capital area.\textsuperscript{151} Under economic liberalism, wealthy Haitian capitalists air-conditioned their luxurious homes and imported Land Rovers, while the rural road system decayed. Shopping trips to Miami and New York for the rich saw an increase in revenues for privately owned Haitian airlines.\textsuperscript{152}

However, a boom for the wealthy under economic liberalism or \textit{jean-claudisme}, only spelled more decline for the poor. Tourism and travel to Haiti became a one-way stream. Roughly 14-percent of the country’s population, over 1 million people, according to The World Bank, had left the country to migrate to the United States, Canada, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas in search of work. That figure included both the country’s intellectual and professional elites as well as peasants who came to the city and failed to find work. The 1980s saw the climax of Haitian refugees, called “boat people,” into the South Florida area. In the first half of the decade, World Bank figures show that refugee figures increased by 4 percent from the late 1970s.

Another reason why travel in Haiti became a one-way stream out of the country during this decade was due to a fall in tourism. Jean-Claude Duvalier and the capitalists
tried to encourage tourism, promoting the country as a Caribbean destination by building a new cruise ship dock at Cap-Haitian. However, due to an increase in prostitution from the urban poor, the country quickly gained a reputation as a haven for the spread of the HIV-AIDS virus. The increased numbers of Haitian refugees showing up in the U.S. with the virus, plus a 1981 US Center for Disease Control report defining Haitians as a “high-risk group” for the virus, on par with the U.S. gay community, dealt a death-blow to tourism in the 1980s. The World Bank data for the period showed that in 1980 for instance, 190,000 tourists visited the country. Three years later, only 40,000 tourists visited the island. Given the decline in tourism, the Haitian government closed bars and nightclubs in the capital where gay Haitians and prostitutes frequented.

Jean-Claudisme did not occur in a vacuum, or through some economic savvy on the part of the capitalists. The Haitian government was for the first time under tremendous pressure from the United States and the International Monetary Fund to demonstrate economic reform for the dollars it had received. U.S. criticism of the country’s budget crisis began as early as October 1981 with the new Ambassador to Haiti, Ernest Preeg, who accused the government of showing no “credible start” to modernization.

The first two years of the 1980s also saw the quick inclusion and then removal of the “technocrats” in Haitian government. The most prominent of them was Marc Bazin, who in 1982 Jean-Claude Duvalier appointed as Minister of Finance. Given the country’s own internal debt budget crisis, Jean-Claude Duvalier desperately picked Bazin, a former World Bank official, who immediately adopted the World Bank’s policies during the global debt crisis for bringing about fiscal responsibility to Haiti. Bazin’s programs were
decisive and included regulating the country’s national bank, removing the state as sole
controller of the national bank to tackle corruption and smuggling, and streamlining the
budget.\textsuperscript{157} However, within five months of Bazin’s tenure as Minister of Finance, a group
of capitalists, led by Ernest Bennett, protested the former World Bank officials programs,
and he was removed on the charges that his programs attacked “vested and family
interests.” His replacement Frantz Merceron, abandoned Bazin’s fiscal program.

With World Bank friendly Bazin gone, the IMF finally stepped up its critique of
Jean-Claude’s policies and for the first time, in August 1982, it pressured to withhold
$37.2 million from the Haitian government if it did not agree to structuralization. The
Haitian government agreed and for the first time the Régie du Tabac, the governments
import-export company would be controlled by the central bank, instead of Duvalier and
his private interests.\textsuperscript{158} As part of structuralization, Duvalier was forced to implement a
new tax system, increase direct taxation, an encourage foreign investment. U.S. offshore
assembly plants increased on the island by 10-percent under such structural changes.\textsuperscript{159}

Reactions were mixed to Duvalier’s economic plans. For France, President
François Mitterand cut off bilateral aid in 1981 because he objected to Duvalier’s long-
running dictatorship and as a socialist, he disapproved of the human rights abuses on the
country’s poor.\textsuperscript{160} Meanwhile, Haiti won support with U.S. Presidential Ronald Reagan
who stated that Haiti had demonstrated a commitment to “private enterprise and
economic reform” as well as a “determined opposition to Cuban adventurism.”\textsuperscript{161} Thus in
following the prevailing international economic programs at the time, Jean Claude
Duvalier was able to preserve his presidency for seven more years, much to the detriment
of the poor majority of Haitians. However, Haiti’s poor were not to be forgotten. Thanks
to a March 1983 visit to Port-au-Prince by Pope John-Paul II, the charismatic Pope issued a call to justice for the country’s poor. Pope John-Paul’s speech became a call to arms for the country’s 860 priests and clergy in the country who had been laboring among the poor to mobilize. The fruits of the pope’s speech would later be realized toward the end of the decade and in the early 1990s.162

Given the heavy focus by foreign investors and donors in Haiti’s agribusiness sector, the Fédération des Amis de la Nature conducted a study during the 1980s about conditions in the sector and how it affected peasants.163 The FAN report found that by 1986, 33-percent of the countryside was extremely eroded, abandoned, sterile, or “lost forever.” Due to erosion, 6,000 hectares of Haitian land could no longer be farmed each year. From 1923 to 1986 the fraction of the country that was covered by forests shrunk from 23-percent to 1.5-percent. While Haitians in Port-au-Prince had access to 98-percent of electricity provided on the island, the peasants relied on wood and charcoal as an energy source at a rate of 72-percent; on bagasse or sugar-cane at 7.5-percent; on hydro-electricity at 3.5-percent and on petrol/and oil at 1.5-percent.

Given the reliance on wood, the FAN study found that 20,000 tons of wood from mango, campeche, acajou and chene trees were being removed for the poor’s energy needs. Some of the rural industries such as lime juice factories and vetiver factories used wood for 75-percent of energy needs and 24.5-percent as a heating-oil. As bakers in the capital, and as cooks in the informal industries, peasants used some 12,000 tons of wood each year for energy and gas and oil. For rum distilleries, another major sector in Haiti, wood continued to be the major source for energy and heating.
By the end of the 1980s, the Haitian environment, according to a report by The Haitian Collective for the Protection of the Environment, was 10 times more susceptible to massive destruction due to flooding and soil erosion.\textsuperscript{164} Not only were major agribusiness and informal sector industries dependent on wood as a source of energy and heating, but wood was also a main source for everyday life for various uses in the household. Additionally, the COHPEDA report pointed out that under the Duvaliers, hectares of forests were destroyed to root out safe haven spots for opponents who took up hiding there. The shift from light-scale agricultural use of the land to heavy agribusiness in the 1980s further worsened rural environmental conditions in Haiti that affected farmers and peasants alike.

World Bank figures during the 1980s also reflect a setback for the country’s poor. In 1982, informant mortality rate was 124 per thousand and average life expectancy was 48 years old. In the first half of the decade before Jean-Claude Duvalier fled, GDP grew at an estimated 0.9 percent. In 1985 public expenditure on education was 1-percent of GDP and public expenditure on health care was about the same or $3.44 per capita. The ratio of teachers to soldiers was 1:189 and the ratio of schools to prisons was 1:35.\textsuperscript{165} For the last three years of the decade after Jean-Claude Duvalier fled, military governments did little to improve economic conditions as the short-lived nature of the regimes meant that little to no reforms could take place.

5. Aristide and democracy

The end of the Duvaliers was a frantic time in Haitian politics and civic mobilization. During this transition, Haiti’s military wielded power. For four years, the country struggled to move from dictatorship to elections. Firstly, General Henri Namphy
ruled the country under a provisional military government from 1986 to 1988. Jean-
Claude had left for France in 1986 under pressure to step down by the U.S. but had left
behind a military junta led by Namphy. The military held elections in 1988 that placed
Leslie Manigat as president. Manigat’s presidency only lasted from February to June
1988 when he was removed from office by a coup d’état by General Namphy. Namphy
took over as president but served only from June to September 1988 when he too was
forced from the presidency by a coup d’état staged by Brigadier-General Prosper Avril.
Avril then assumed the presidency from September 1988 to March 1990 when he
resigned under pressure. Ertha Pascal Trouillot then followed as the provisional president
from March 1990 to February 1991 after General Hérard Abraham transferred power
from the military to Trouillot, once Avril stepped down. Pascal Trouillot then oversaw
Haiti’s first democratic presidential elections in Haiti in 1991.

This was the series of events that transferred power from the hands of a dictator,
to the military to the people to elect a priest who had labored among the poor. The
election in 1991 of the country’s first democratic president had come with much
bloodshed. The reformist Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide took 67.5 percent of the
vote, eliminating the need for a run-off. His attempts to bring much needed change to
Haiti was quickly overturned when a military coup led by General Raoul Cédras forced
Aristide and his government from power the same year he took office. Aristide continued
to act as “President in Exile” in Washington, D.C. as both U.S. Presidents George H.W.
Bush and then President Bill Clinton sort to intervene in the situation.

Now that Haiti had its first democratic president three diverging strategies
existed: that of Aristide’s; that of the U.S. and Haiti’s elite; and that of the international
aid community in the country. Aristide’s reform campaign began with addressing the conditions of the poor that were ignored during the dictatorship and the military counsels that followed it. Aristide was a follower of liberation theology, “which seeks to blend the teachings of Christ with inspiring the poor to organize to resist their oppression.”

Aristide was not the favored candidate by U.S. interests in the country in the 1990 election. Marc Bazin, the former World Bank official, who was removed as Minister of Finance by Jean-Claude Duvalier, was the U.S. backed candidate. The U.S. had wanted a candidate who would push neo-liberal policies for the country, particularly when it came to international trade. However, Aristide sought an agenda to address the concerns of the poor and to begin an economic overhaul that efficiently taxed the wealthy, and provided opportunity for the poor.

The World Bank at this time continued to conduct its assessment of Haiti’s political stability in issuing more aid over the decade. The agency favored a multi-approach in which non-government agencies, bilateral donors and the World Bank offered the best options to a country with a fledgling democracy. Bolstered by a 1994 study of donors to Haiti that concluded that “international cooperation has had two basic shortcomings: no impact and no sustainability,” the World Bank concluded that the Haitian government and political climate, was the major obstacle to development. The Bank cited its 20 macro-economic projects in the 1970s and 1980s to the Haitian government under some US $300 million in lending that translated into no confidence in Haitian governance.

The World Bank’s 1998 Poverty Report continued that since Jean-Claude Duvalier’s regime collapsed in 1986, the country’s 13 failed governments have prompted
the bank to withhold aid twice. The report further concluded that “Haiti has never had a
tradition of governance aimed at providing services to the population or creating an
environment conducive to sustainable growth.” While the report does distinguish that
the root of the political problems came from “a small economic elite” that has “supported
a ‘predatory state’ that makes only negligible investments in human resources and basic
infrastructure,” it also stated that repression from army, police and paramilitary groups
make “democratic decision making” difficult.

The World Bank and other multilateral agencies however did withhold aid from
Haiti under the leadership of Cédras and his military junta. Yet, as Aristide waited in
exile, the United States continued to provide aid to the junta, particularly for covert
military operations. It was not until the United States and the international community
came agreed to a plan for Haiti, that Aristide was restored to power in 1994 with U.S. and
United Nations assistance. However, Aristide was not restored with the free mandate
given to him in 1991 to carry out a liberal agenda. Instead, he was pressured into signing
an agreement that pardoned the coup leaders, favored the country’s elite, and developed
the country under a neo-liberal agenda, neither of which was sustainable, or reformist as
the World Bank studies had called for and the people had wanted when they first put
Aristide in power.

During the 1990s, the United Nations had classified Haiti as a “post-conflict”
country. While Haiti had been experiencing extreme repression under the military
government regimes, even World Bank supporters such as Marc Bazin had argued that
the classification was unfavorable in its dismissal of the capabilities of a democratic
Haitian government. Haiti, its leaders argued, should not be considered a failed
government state as many African nations were being considered at the time. It’s newly elected government under Aristide in 1991, and then as Aristide resumed the rest of his term in 1994, had not been given the opportunity to carry out any effective reforms without international restrictions. The World Bank then limited its lending approach to Aristide’s administration, continuing basic needs programs, as opposed to macro-economic projects.

The U.S. on the other hand continued its involvement in the country throughout the decade. Central Intelligence Agency operations, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Endowment for Democracy, along with USAID dollars all worked together to destabilize the newly elected Aristide. Aristide was even prevented from taking office in January 1991 thanks to a CIA-linked attempted coup. The head of the Haitian Center for the Defense of Rights and Freedom, Jean-Jacques Honorat, had received some $189,000 in USAID funds the same year of the coup, and Honorat was selected by the military junta to serve as prime minister in the coup government. At one point, both Aristide and Cédras both publicly acknowledged that it would only take one phone call, from the U.S. president, to ask the coup leaders to step down. In fact, it was the United States that organized the 1993 UN-mediated meeting on Governor’s Island in New York, to negotiate with the military government for Aristide’s return, but under U.S. and UN terms for financial support of Aristide’s restored government. One of the provisions was that Aristide would abide by the Haitian constitution and end his term in six years, counting the years he lived in exile. Thus, Aristide was forced to only serve the remaining year and a half of his six-year term subjected to the conditions of the U.S. and the multilateral agencies. As such the first popular, democratically elected president of
Haiti only held less than two years to conduct any reforms with both the military and the U.S. government threatening his stay in power, while the United Nations judged his worthiness for foreign aid based on the malfeasance those before him had done in office.

In an effort to govern and show good faith, Aristide attempted in his return to the presidency in October 1994 to adopt the World Bank’s Emergency Economic Recovery Plan that international lenders and the World Bank had agreed on for Haiti.\textsuperscript{181} The EERP was a combination of fiscal stabilization measures, private sector incentives, short-term social program development, and technical assistance to manage aid.\textsuperscript{182} From 1994 to 1997, the World Bank concluded that only the EERC had any institutional success in Haiti and could be sustained for economic reform. For the other five projects approved for lending to Haiti, the World Bank cancelled one and closed two, as the Haitian government rejected some, and abandoned others.\textsuperscript{183}

At this point, Aristide’s government began to grow frustrated with the World Bank, as it continued to stifle efforts from the newly democratic government to carry out its own reforms. Of particular concern were the Bank’s structural terms for privatization of several nationally owned industries.\textsuperscript{184} For instance in 1994, the International Finance Corporation offered U.S. $0.6 million in assistance to privatize nine public sector companies from banks to manufacturing and infrastructure. In defiance, Aristide only privatized two of those companies. The Haitian government even rejected a second Technical Assistance credit in 1997 to support such structural measures.\textsuperscript{185}

The International Monetary Fund took over monitoring macro-economic projects under Aristide. Project Management Units or PMUs were set up to implement and monitor all projects in Haiti. For instance, the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation
program was monitored by a foreign firm with a contract whose main goal was to look for signs of misprocurement from weak governments. Local IMF staff made up the remaining PMU units for other macro-economic projects. However, the short fall of the PMUs was that they provided the IMF with reports for mismanagement. They failed to adequately assess whether the programs were failing or succeeding in Haiti.\textsuperscript{186}

The U.S. for its part, kept up lending to Haiti, but mostly for defense and security. A Government Accountability Office report at the end of the decade stated that the US provided some $100 million in assistance to the police and justice system in Haiti, which both continued to function ineffectively by the end of the decade.\textsuperscript{187} Much of this military and law enforcement spending took place under the military junta at the beginning of the decade and after Aristide’s term had ended in 1996. Far more US spending remains unaccounted for, as it was funneled through the CIA for Haitians on its spy payroll and for paramilitary groups such as the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti or FRAPH.\textsuperscript{188}

The 1990s were a difficult time for Aristide to sell Haitian governance to an international community that had already stacked the decks against his administration. The inability to turn around economic indicators prompted the World Bank in 1998 to recommend “entrusting the delivery of education, health, family planning, and water supply and sanitation to NGOs.”\textsuperscript{189} The World Bank also concluded that in the case of Haiti, working with NGOs was a “relatively successful experience” because it was the best short-term solution as the country’s institutions remained weak. Thus during the 1990s, NGOs were given multilateral and bilateral funds for rural infrastructure programs, road maintenance contracts, TB health projects, and even forest and parks
restoration projects, tasks that typically should be managed by the state.\textsuperscript{190} This method of isolating the Haitian state became the sole strategy employed by the USAID office in Port-au-Prince during the 1990s.\textsuperscript{191}

The irony remained that at the start of democratization in Haiti, the international community aggressively began to ignore Haiti’s democratically elected state, one that desperately needed foreign aid in order to achieve political and economic reforms. From 1993, the World Bank formalized aid coordination among donors and NGOs with meetings taking place annually without the Haitian state. The World Bank sent a United Nations Development Fund mission to organize donors and NGOs in 1993 before Aristide’s return, pooling together some $1 billion among all donors under a Consultative Group by 1995 to implement aid in sectors that the donors considered to be a priority. Then in 1997, the Consultative Group designed a post-conflict program for Haiti. The World Bank reported that by 1997 the meetings expanded to include a “political presence,” but one for representatives of the U.S. State Department, the Organization of American States, and a Canadian Foreign Affairs representatives.\textsuperscript{192} “The meetings” the Bank stated, provided “a forum for donors to exchange information and views in an effort to have coherent and complementary approach to development in Haiti.”\textsuperscript{193}

A “coherent and complementary approach” to develop Haiti in the 1990s without the inclusion of the first democratically elected government weakened the state. Additionally, the government was expected to produce macro-economic results, when the funding for micro-economic programs were awarded to NGOs. Skepticism about corruption from the Haitian government were warranted by the World Bank during the Cedras coup. The year and half that Aristide was allowed to return to Haiti in 1994 and to
serve out the rest of his term, the democratically elected reformist was neither able to carry out the projects he saw as priority, nor receive the funding for it.\textsuperscript{194} NGOs and donors during the same period were able to manage $1 billion in funds and set priority sectors and public sector contracts it wished to carry out in Haiti without the say of the restored government. This perhaps can be considered the biggest failure of the experiment with participatory democracy in Haiti. Preceding Aristide, the international community had cried out for democratic leadership in the country. When such leadership showed up, and challenged neo-liberal policies, the international community sought to stifle that government and limit its ability to conduct reforms. Thus the failures of 1990s was a missed opportunity on the part of the international community, more so than on the Haitian people who finally presented the world with a legitimate government.

As discussed in chapter 1, the decade leading up to the 2010 earthquake also saw a repeat of the 1990s, with Aristide being overwhelmingly re-elected for a second term only to be slapped with an economic and aid embargo by President George W. Bush’ administration and the IMF. The U.S. continued to support opposition to Aristide in Haiti because of his reform agenda in his second term. Aristide’s inability to change general conditions, coupled with violent protests in Haiti at the beginning of 2004, saw the U.S. once again intervening in Haiti’s democracy, forcing Aristide from power again. Through a U.S. orchestrated coup, Aristide was forced into exile for a second time, and an interim government assumed power. Former President René Préval, Aristide’s former prime minister, then won a questionable second term in office that was mired by one natural disaster after another. Such political and humanitarian crises strengthened the presence of
the international community in Haiti, and further weakened the ability of the Haitian state to act.

**The construction of Haiti’s image**

Anthropologists have captured how ordinary Haitians have looked at this recent history. The American doctor Paul Farmer, who set up clinics in Haiti in the last two decades, writes that despite the histories of the U.S. and Haiti being as old as each other, and linked together since colonial times, “Haitians are, by and large, fully aware of this historical fact.” Farmer continues that “citizens of the United States, are, by and large, oblivious to these links – ignorant even, of the two-decade U.S. military occupation of Haiti earlier in this century.”195 Haitians, on the other hand, Farmer writes, had developed a U.S. paranoia. Haitians blame the CIA for its sabotage of their politics and the “dark motives to U.S. foreign policy” have become a Haitian obsession.

Farmer calls on Americans to take a “candid and careful assessment of our ruinous policies towards Haiti” arguing that the “Haitian people are asking not for charity, but for justice.”196 At the time Farmer was writing, that justice involved the restoration of Haiti’s democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide after a coup sent him into exile in 1991. Farmer also critiques the U.S. discourse of Aristide as unfit to rule as contributing to undermining the wishes and desires of the Haitian people. Noam Chomsky echoed Farmer’s call in 2004 when Aristide was once again forced out of office with U.S. interference. Chomsky writes that “Washington was appalled by the election of a populist candidate with grass-roots constituency just as it had been appalled by the prospect of the hemisphere’s first free country on its doorstep two centuries earlier.”197
Nor did even the “benevolence” of President Bill Clinton sit well with ordinary Haitians during democratization. Diplomat Ralph Pezzullo in his 2006 book *Plunging into Haiti*, calls the ignorance of the Clinton White house of “190 years of Haitian history” as racist. It was racist, because ordinary Haitians saw Aristide restored to power on one hand, with their people rejected on the other hand. The policy enacted by the U.S. to return Haitian refugees in boats from the coast of Florida back to Haiti, allowing Cuban refugees to stay, was the source of this perception.

Further articulating this line of critique, Brenda Gayle Plummer describes Americans as being “repulsed” by Haiti’s two centuries of turbulence. Americans have concluded that Haiti is “a doomed land, beyond comprehension, beyond help, and outside history.” For outsiders, to have a history, is to make progress, and Haiti’s lack of progress for outsiders, erases its history, Plummer writes. America’s defense policy toward Haiti, Michael Dash offers, is therefore one of “emotion.” The sense of pride Haitians have in their material culture, is misconstrued as lack, or primitive, triggering a desire in Americans to intervene to create material wealth.

Even Haitian politics takes on a larger than life interpretation in the American psyche. In his analysis of the impact of Graham Greene’s *The Comedians*, Michael Dash argues that “one should not minimize the brutality of the Duvalier regime. But it is surely unwarranted to see Haitian politics as black lunacy. Yet this was the abiding impression left by Greene’s account of Haiti as the throbbing organic centre of darkness in the Western Hemisphere.” Yet what is left unanswered by both Dash and Plummer, is after 200 years of Independence, what exactly should outsiders think about Haitians, and what narrative discourse should inform this?
To answer this question, we ironically return to the historians of the Haitian Revolution Laurent DuBois and Philippe Gerard for their latest works on Haitian history. Dubois’ title sums it up that Haiti’s dilemma, is its *Aftershocks of History*, while Gerard chooses the less sympathetic *Tumultuous History*. The texts are good contrasts to each other. Dubois places Haiti as the object of historical events, and Gerard argues that Haiti is the subject in historical events. Haitian actors have both been in the driver’s seat of historical outcomes, as well as victims in the resulting “broken nation” Girard describes Haiti as being today.

For Gerard, Haiti’s greatest generation was that of its founding fathers because he argued that they were determining leaders in Haiti’s future. However, Gerard’s assessment of leadership is flawed because the paranoia of Revolutionary leaders to France can arguably compare to the “paranoia” he describes Haitians as having towards the United States today. Gerard laments that U.S. humanitarian relief after the earthquake still did little to dispel the paranoia that the Haitian people, its press and leaders held about the United States. Citing the left-leaning *Haiti Progès* newspaper, Gerard writes that the “United States had secretly developed a weapon to spark earthquakes at will, so as to justify a military takeover under the guise of humanitarian effort.” It was not just the masses believing such rumors, but political elites. President Jean-Bellerive urged parliamentarians not to participate in “stigmatizing the presence of the U.S. Army” handling USAID supplies in the earthquake’s aftermath. Even among the diaspora, Gerard writes that Haitian expats via the New York-based *Haiti Observateur* were urging Haitians to be “vigilant” because of the “risk inherent in any intervention of this kind,” citing President Barack Obama being pressured by U.S. Republicans to maintain U.S.
imperial policy, not only in the Middle East but with Haiti. While in *Le Nouvelliste*, Haiti’s oldest newspaper, intellectuals lamented the “invasion of NGOs” once again robbing the resources needed by the state, undermining its legitimacy with the renewed attention of the world spotlight brought on by the earthquake’s aftermath.

For Gerard, the U.S. relief efforts for the Haiti earthquake should have been a sufficient do-over for the U.S. now with a black “commander in chief.” However, Haitian fears were materialized as word spread that U.S. missionaries had begun smuggling Haitian children out of the country. The international goodwill and U.S. solidarity with Haitians in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, Gerard argued, was squandered by infighting and political instability that once again put the world and the U.S. on notice as to whether Haitians have the political ability to manage its own recovery. It is no wonder, with this frame, Gerard is nostalgic for the Haitian founding fathers, calling them the country’s greatest generation.

Dubois, however, would caution Gerard’s reading of history and current events. He argued that Haiti is not a failed state, as many have described. It accomplishes what its constitution set out to do: concentrate a large amount of power in the hands of small group of people, and it does this successfully. Thus for this cycle to be broken, Dubois explains that political actors have taken “extra-constitutional” and violent means to circumnavigate this. Leading up to the U.S. occupation, Dubois argues that Haitians governed themselves with resilience despite the indemnity and other internal political divisions that were inherited from the aftershocks of the Haitian Revolution. It is the turn of the century, he argued, that “the U.S. occupation transformed Haiti in ways that are still playing out today.” Dubois argues that this hold has been far more severe than
Haiti’s relationship with the French post the Haitian Revolution. The occupation, Dubois writes, “exacerbated the rift within society” “deprived peasants of the land by promoting monopolies in agriculture,” and it “deepened Haiti’s economic and political dependence on outside powers.”

The political aspect being the most severe, Dubois explains, because now Haitian political elites have sought their legitimacy from “outside forces” rather than the population or the power-sharing rules of Haitian political elites as was the case before the Occupation. In essence, the courses taken by political actors have been more severe for the Haitian people than was the case before the Occupation. Dubois lamented that after the earthquake, former President Bill Clinton, as head of the UN-led Haiti Reconstruction Fund, held more political power over Haitian governance than the country’s president. The next chapter of this relationship is still to be written.

Surely, as Gerard points out, the presence of a black commander in chief in the U.S. offered the entry point for questioning if anything has changed in the relationship. Likewise, President Clinton’s post-earthquake apologies to the Haitian people for the failure of his administration’s policies during the Aristide era also provides a change of tone from external actors. What is still missing is where the Haitian people fit in such global and geo-politics that have played itself out in Haiti in recent times. We know much about the ignorance of the American people towards the Haitians. However, the question still remains what do Haitians truly want, expect, or desire of the world community. While Plummer and Shannon have attempted to speculate on this, this area has not been thoroughly presented. As Farmer advocated, the Haitian people want justice, not charity. Farmer may be speaking for himself, and perhaps the Haitian people may want both.
What would this justice look like? Perhaps Haitians would prefer American solidarity rather than charity. Whatever the answer to this question, the literature is still to address.

It is easy to see where a review of Haiti’s history by key historical events gives the image that supports Phillippe Gerard’s critique that Haitians have allowed themselves to be the dependent variable of internal and external powers beyond their control. However, to believe this interpretation by Gerard, is to nullify the very fact that Haiti was born out of defying the greatest superpower of the eighteenth century, France, and by causing the next superpower, Great Britain, to have its largest military defeat in the New World before the twentieth century.\(^\text{212}\) Additionally, the Haitian people remained the continued fighting forces during the American Occupation, and it is their fighting in the streets that ensured that a democratically elected president and not a military general held power after the fall of the Duvaliers. These works on historical events mainly describe how key actors in Haitian society, political and economic classes, as well as foreign powers and the international press have framed who, what, when, how and why is Haiti? Chapter 3 will outline the other side of Haiti, as captured by the Haitian press building up to the earthquake, demonstrating the agency and activism of not only the country’s elites, but the masses who have been overlooked and in many cases, caricatured in the framing of Haiti both in scholarly writings and foreign journalism.\(^\text{213}\)
CHAPTER 3: HAITI'S PRESS

The centrality of the Haitian press to the country’s key historical developments and contemporary events is unmistakable. Then army generals Jean François, Georges Biassou and Toussaint Louverture corresponded to France’s *Le Moniteur* for publication in French newspapers during the Haitian Revolution. Haiti’s nineteenth century historians that comprised the renown “School of 1836” owned and ran Haiti’s first newspapers during Independence. Early Haitian twentieth century intellects such as Jean Price Mars launched magazines to protest the U.S. occupation. A pre-dictatorship François Duvalier was co-founder of the magazine *Les Griots* that disseminated the ideas of negritude. As dictator, Jean-Claude Duvalier used Haiti’s publicly owned *Radio Nationale d’Haiti* as his political mouthpiece, and then oversaw the creation of the first public television station *Télé Nationale d’Haiti* in 1979. During the 1980s, Haiti’s first democratically elected president rode to power from his Creole speeches and sermons broadcast under the Catholic Church-owned *Radio Soleil*. In 2010, Haiti’s network of community and corporate radio stations relayed information across the nation bringing citizens to the capital to help rescue, clothe and feed victims long before the state and the international community had mobilized to coordinate disaster relief.

The constant presence of the media in the course of events in Haiti solidifies the study of the press as a vital political and civic institution. This chapter argues that throughout Haiti’s history, and up to the present modern era, Haiti’s press has served as a tool for reconstructing the country’s image and changing the course of events both by
political actors as well as by emerging civic actors in different periods of the country’s history. With both elite and non-elite factions of Haiti’s society deploying the press as a communicative and revolutionary tool, Haiti’s press throughout history defies the patterns of press development that has been well documented in the United States and in key works on other Latin American nations, mainly Mexico, Venezuela and Brazil.3

What scholars argue in the case of the U.S. and Latin America, is that the press was mostly a tool for elite hands until either mass consumption, political liberalization or democratization occurs. This chapter argues that because of Haiti’s unique revolutionary history, elite and non-elite factions of society used the press to advance causes even in the absence of democratization for two centuries. There was no penny press revolution in Haiti that brought about news and information to the masses, as was the case in the nineteenth century United States. However the proliferation of some 885 newspapers in the first 100 years of Haiti’s independence provided a press tradition where both elite and non-elite sources advocated positions that created a robust civic debate on the rights of man and the purpose of the state at a time when the United States still had not ended slavery. Within the global context of the nineteenth century, Haiti’s earliest media owners were not elites because they were former slaves or second-class colonial citizens who now had access to printing presses during a revolutionary and post-revolutionary nation building experiment. For those of their brethren who could not read or do so in French, Haiti’s first century of media owners tapped into the Creole oral tradition to verbally disseminate intellectual critiques being published in Haiti’s vibrant nineteenth century press. For recently freed slaves and their first generation of descendants to own and run presses when their brethren to the north were still in bondage constitutes a break from
models of press development that have been applied to theories of the press in the Western Hemisphere.

In order to support this characterization of the Haitian press historically and today, the first half of this chapter explains how Haiti’s press defies the existing theoretical concepts and models for press development. The second part of this chapter then takes a closer look at three key periods to demonstrate that while Haiti’s press may resemble foreign press structures, how it has been used by various actors, and the substance of news content sets apart the role of Haiti’s press from narrow theoretical models of press evolution, media opening and media democratization.

The three key periods for treatment of the press include Haiti’s Revolutionary period from 1789 to 1804 and the post-Revolutionary/Independence century from 1804 to 1915. The second period begins with the U.S. Occupation of Haiti in 1915 to the Duvalier dictatorship. The third period begins with the end of Duvalier rule to the transition to democracy leading up to the 2010 earthquake. The three periods outlined here have been used before by scholars writing on the Haitian press’ development and as such the second half of this chapter will follow this grouping.

A handful of works, mostly by Haitian authors, have specifically captured the Haitian press within these three periods. The first attempt to specifically capture Haiti’s historical press was published in 1919 by Father Adolphe Cabon of the Seminaire Saint-Martial in Port-au-Prince. *Un Siecle et Demi de Journalisme en Haiti (A Century and a Half of Journalism in Haiti)* lists and names the key newspapers in Haiti in the first 100 years of the nation and their function and role. It was not until 1996 that Jean Desquiron’s *Haiti a la Une, Une Anthologie de la Presse, Haitienne de 1724 a 1934 4 vols* was
published in Port-au-Prince, providing a window into the substance of Haitian media news content up to the U.S. occupation. In 2009, Haitian journalist and professor Vario Sérant had his monograph *Media and Responsibility* published in Port-au-Prince and forthcoming publications from Professor Ari Régis, head of the communications department at the Faculté des Sciences Humaines, of L’Universite d’État Haïti (the State University of Haiti).

Outside of Haiti, Leara Rhodes’ published monograph, a revised version of her dissertation *Democracy and the Role of the Haitian Media*, was published in 2001. Additionally well renowned Haitian journalist Michèle Montas-Dominique’s 2001 essay titled “The Role of the Press in Helping to Create the conditions of Democracy to Develop in Haiti” was published in the University of Miami’s Law Review.

Yet despite the slim literature solely dedicated to Haiti’s press in the three periods this chapter covers, the role of Haiti’s press for over 200 years has been captured in historical texts and recently published monographs where the author’s intention was not to directly address matters of the press, but by their extensive use of press archives, does so indirectly. From Haiti’s most well known nineteenth century historical accounts written by Haitians: Thomas Madiou’s *Histoire d’Haiti* and Beaubrun Ardouin’s *Etudes sur l’Histoire d’Haiti* to the more contemporary works of Jeremy Popkin’s 2010 *You Are All Free* and Deborah Jenson’s 2011 *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution*, the press is given a central place in re-exploring the events of Haiti’s colonization and first century. The body of literature on Haiti’s occupation by the United States, its 29 years of authoritarian rule under the Duvalier dictatorship, as well as its transition to democracy with the rise of Father Jean-Bertrand
Aristide all include windows into the role of the press in key periods of the country’s modern history. What this chapter attempts to do is to highlight the recurring theme throughout these works of the uniqueness of the Haitian press to established theoretical models of how the press functions in a society. Haiti’s press did not simply transition from a historically elite machine to one employed by the alternative, community based press that exists in 2013. Haiti’s press has always had a tradition of either collaborating with or advocating on behalf of parts of civic society who were marginalized, excluded from participation, and considered non-elite social classes throughout the country’s key developments.

**Part 1: Theoretical models of the press**

To understand how Haiti’s press defies theories of the Fourth Estate, it is important to spell out the central concepts of the role of the press in a society. The core text in media studies that was the first major comparative study of the press was 1956’s *Four Theories of the Press* by Fred Seibert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm. Writing in a Cold War era context, Seibert, Peterson and Schramm put forward that their four theories of the press: the Authoritarian theory, the Libertarian theory, the Social Responsibility theory and the Soviet Communist theory – are normative for any society. In fact, contrary to the book’s title, the authors then clarify that there are only two central theories – the Authoritarian and Libertarian theory. They argued that the Soviet Communist theory is a derivative of the Authoritarian model and the Social Responsibility Theory is a derivative of the Libertarian theory, and because the latter two have evolved far beyond the original two theories, given the socio-political context to which they were writing the book, the Cold War and Civil Rights eras, the two secondary
theories deserved separate chapters in the book.\textsuperscript{10} Given that there are only in essence two theories of the use of the media to describe the relation of the state to its people, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm argue that all countries experienced an authoritative relationship with its state in the early part of its formation. Following this, all countries would then eventually experience a liberal relationship with the state, and thus the media would naturally react or respond the same way to these two society-to-state phases, and that this dynamic would be common for all countries. Therefore, if it is common, it is normative, and thus the Authoritarian theory and the Libertarian theory are true for all states, depending on which phase they are in with regards to the relation of the people to their state.\textsuperscript{11}

In addition, each of the \textit{Four Theories} is rooted in philosophical theories of the state and of man. The guiding philosophy behind the Authoritarian theory comes from political thought of Plato and Machiavelli. In monarchies and dictatorships, the Authoritarian theory advocates that the state, under the direction of the most wise and elite of a society, know best how to control and authorize freedoms, including speech and expression, for the good of the people.\textsuperscript{12} The Libertarian political thought comes from John Milton, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and the Enlightenment era. The notion of the press as being a free enterprise from state control or a \textit{Fourth Estate} representing public opinion calls for the removal of state controls such as taxation, that restrict press ownership and expression.\textsuperscript{13} The Social Responsibility theory is grounded in more recent twentieth century civil rights movements and the report of the United States Commission on the Freedom of the Press in 1949. While Libertarian concepts of the press carry the power to publish and broadcast without state control, the Social Responsibility theory
argues that such power comes with responsibility and that market forces have not always allowed for all classes and social issues to be brought into the public sphere because of elite ownership of the press. Fourthly, the Soviet Communist theory is rooted in the political ideals of Marx, Lenin and Stalin, and the Communist Party of the then Soviet Union. The Soviet model seeks to use the press as a communicative tool for the state. However, it breaks with the Authoritarian model in that the Soviet model seeks to use the press to galvanize the working class against the excesses of private ownership and elite control.

Several key monographs and essays have been published since to challenge the Four Theories of the Press’ canonization, of which the most well referenced is Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini’s Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics. However, Hallin and Mancini’s additional models still focus on Europe and North America and fails to address a nation like Haiti. Haiti already defies the distinctions set out by these four original theories and Hallin and Mancini’s additional models, because even with roughly 200 years of variations of authoritarian rule in Haiti as outlined in Chapter 2, Haiti’s press has assumed far more roles other than the sole apparatus for state propaganda as the Authoritarian model and Soviet Communist model would propose. Likewise, the state’s press, while not completely being free in Haiti in the first 100 years of independence, has carried aspects of Social Responsibility long before U.S. civil rights struggles advocated in the nineteenth century African American press had become mainstream coverage by the middle of the twentieth century.

Along Hallin and Mancini’s line of critique, media theorists must question the classification of a nation like Haiti, whose push for independence occurred arguably
around the same time as the U.S. Had Haiti’s slaves quest for freedom not intensified due to decades of bloodshed, Haiti could have been independent around the same time as the U.S. and not three decades later. In other words, Haiti’s designation as part of the developing world, when studying media system traditions, is a misplacement when it comes to media theories, because the nation’s historical trajectory starts closer to the entry point of the United States, and less so with say African nations, the Middle East and other post World War II independent countries. To start theorizing about Haiti’s press tradition a century late is to invalidate the country’s first century experiment with its *Fourth Estate*.

As Dennis McQuail\textsuperscript{17} argues in a 2009 book that challenges the ‘normative theories’ of the *Four Theories of the Press*, they are normative because they fit specific political and/or economic theories and “mainly express ideas of how the media ought to or can be expected to operate under a prevailing set of conditions and values.”\textsuperscript{18} Additionally McQuail and his co-authors argue that democracy does not in fact equate a natural progression to media independence. Drawing on the writings of Raymond Williams and Noam Chomsky, McQuail et al. argue that particularly outside the Western world, the traditions of the press, coupled with social, political and economic forces shape press freedom and not merely philosophy and political systems independent of a country’s social development.\textsuperscript{19}

It is in looking outside of Western developed nations that researchers have begun to define media transformations taking place elsewhere and to look for common trends through comparative regional studies. The goal of such case studies has been to
determine in what other ways the media has participated in the project of nation building and has served society within such a grand project.

**Latin American media systems**

In *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, Silvio Waisbord writes in his chapter on “Media in South America” that Latin America’s media is caught between the “rock of the state and the hard place of the market.” South American media has gone through several phases that make it hard for the Liberal model of media to stick. Firstly, its partisan press was introduced and influenced by French, Italian, and Spanish dailies in the mid-1800s under colonial systems. It was only after the World Wars, a century later, that the Anglo-Saxon model, spread by the “liberal gospel of US news organizations” tried but failed through the Inter-American Press Association, to fully usurp press traits that were set up under colonial and post-colonial times. One of the main reasons Waisbord says U.S. liberal press models could not work in South America was because “nowhere in the region do we find a commercial revolution similar to the one that US newspapers experienced, a process in which the economic bases of the press remained attached to both states and the markets.” Additionally, newspapers were seen as started up for political purposes. As Daniel Hallin and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos write in their 2002 article on political clientelism and the media, media owners would tell the state to “give me a ministry or I will start a newspaper.” Yet, the best way to consider South America’s relationship with the state, Waisbord writes, is less in the way that the authoritarian model would consider it. It was more “cooperation rather than adversarialism, mutual advantages rather than complete autonomy, were typical.”
During the authoritarian era that swept South America in the 1970s, except for Venezuela and Colombia, the continent’s media supported military coups, the economic plans of the regimes and hushed human rights abuses. Here is where Waisbord points out some differences occurred in South America. With the technological changes in media, particularly television, the Argentinian military did not share media with private interests, keeping the four leading Buenos Aires stations for their own uses, filling it with foreign imported content. On the other hand in Brazil, the government, in spreading its technological reach throughout the country, implemented policies in which private companies like Globo were able to take advantage of, in terms of market penetration. Peru, lies somewhere between Brazil and Argentina as the Alvarado government took over media organizations, but not to fill it with imported content like Argentina, but to develop nationalism through cultural products from social organizations.

One other caveat of state intrusion in broadcasting, which comes later, is found under Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez. As pointed out in Jairo Lugo-Ocando’s edited volume *The Media in Latin America*, Chavez, on the other hand, used media to challenge the position of powerful private owners who had benefited from the state-press clientelism that existed under a democratic Venezuela before Chavez. Andrés Cañizález and Jairo Lugo-Ocando write in their chapter on Venezuela that Chavez had even expanded the state’s use of the media by creating Telesur to rival CNN and BBC, with the goal of creating regional content that would present an alternative platform for the continent, similar to what Chavez believed the private Al-Jazeera has done for the Middle East.

Once the authoritarian era of the 1970s had ended, Waisbord argues that the picture becomes even more diverse throughout South America, as evident with the case
described above in Venezuela. In questioning how South American media has been able to serve both masters, the state and the public, Waisbord invokes cultural studies scholars who he said “rightly have criticized the former for its media-centric perspective and its overdeterministic view of media effects.”

Within this line of critique, the audience is autonomous, they share several relationships to media structures and media content, and they are also autonomous in making sense of their media environment. The rise in audience and media consumption in South America has prompted scholars to focus less on “how political and economic interest influence the organization of media systems.”

Even Mauro Porto, who looks at media power in Brazil, would perhaps agree that the audience and media consumer accounts for the media system that emerged in Brazil. Porto writes in his exploration of Brazilian media giant TV Globo that:

…changes in TV Globo, Brazil’s dominant media company, both reflected and shaped the complex processes of democratization that took place since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985. I argue that the democracy established in this period was deeply affected by the power of TV Globo. At the same time, the democratization of Brazilian politics and the mobilization of civil society created a new environment for the media, forcing powerful communication conglomerates like TV Globo to adapt.

Likewise Sallie Hughes, who looks at the opening of the press in Mexico, explained that the profitability in newly created civic-minded newspapers was as a result of popular demand within the culture and society for news that reflected or influenced political outcomes. Thus the ability in Brazil and Mexico to create dominant media structures that had to cater to both state and/or public, had much to do with civil society power and consumption, and less to do with political liberalization as Chappell Lawson argues in Building the Fourth Estate. Political transformations alone do not guarantee survival of a commercial press, which relies on market or consumer demand to remain profitable. While Lawson points to market competition that Hughes describes in the
creation of new newspapers in Mexico, Porto on the opposite spectrum is able to show that even without strong market competition, changes in the media do occur in the case of the monopoly TV Globo due to other forces at play in transitional societies. As Porto writes:

Lawson’s argument about the impact of market competition and privatization on media opening is insufficient. It is rooted in liberal theories of the press, which assume that only by anchoring the media to a free market is it possible to ensure their independence from government control and interference. Nevertheless, processes of privatization and the consolidation of private media systems in Latin America have not prevented media owners from operating in a symbiotic relationship with (mostly authoritarian) states, creating serious obstacles for democratization. The strengthening of competition in Brazil’s television market helps explain the transformation of TV Globo. However it was not the main factor.

The issue Porto raises in *Media Power and Democratization in Brazil*, is also addressed in Rick Rockwell and Noreen Janus’ *Media Power in Central America*. The stark divide between rich and poor in Central American countries means that media privatization does not translate into press freedom, and nor that free markets produce a press that aids in democracy. In fact, the opposite has been the case with private ownership of media in Central America concentrating economic and political power into few, elite hands. For instance Costa Rica’s leading television station which captures 50-percent of the market, skews its news to reflect the right-leading politics of the Picado Cozza family, its owners. In El Salvador, one company owns the three most popular television stations watched by 90-percent of viewers, the Telecorporación Salvadoreño (TCS). Also on Salvadoran radio, the ARENA party takes advantage of popular radio programming, paying for the most listened-to segments for airtime. Government control in Central America is also indirect in terms of self-censorship as a result of threats made toward journalists, and assassinations of reporters and publishers in the 1990s.

Media consumers, therefore, are not without their own media power, forcing even conglomerates to make changes to hold onto the market. Rockwell and Janus show that a
series of advertising boycotts in several of the countries, in opposition to the stance taken by conglomerate media organizations have been a test to the strength of media firms in Central America to only cater to powerful interests.\textsuperscript{38}

It is within this backdrop described above that it is possible to see similarities that Haiti shares with the political and social climate of Latin America nations, particularly Central America to be more precise. Scholars looking at Latin American media systems have argued that with democratization taking place in the region, few countries in Latin America have media systems that fully “reinforce popular representation and government accountability.”\textsuperscript{39} Sallie Hughes and Chappell Lawson attempt to summarize common findings about media transitions within the region by setting out five key barriers that countries in the region face towards sustaining civic and independent media systems. These five barriers include:

(a) violence against journalists encouraged by a generalized weakness in the rule of law;
(b) holdover authoritarian laws and policies that chill assertive reporting;
(c) oligarchic ownership of television, the region’s dominant medium;
(d) the continuing spottiness of professional journalistic norms;
(e) the limited reach of print media, community-based broadcasters, and new communication technologies.\textsuperscript{40}

The first clarification the authors make about this regional comparative look at media systems best explains why Haiti defies patterns in media transitions taking place across the region. Hughes and Lawson clarify: “In this study, we focus on Brazil and the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which share certain social and cultural legacies. We refer to other countries in the hemisphere only to illustrate specific points.”\textsuperscript{41} While Haiti fits the criteria of a hemispheric nation undergoing a democratic transition from authoritarian rule, Haiti’s media system has always been diverse and exerted independence from the state since its founding, as the second part of this chapter will outline. While Haiti’s state has always had its official
media apparatus, and has exerted controls on the privately owned press under twenty-first century dictatorship, such authoritarian controls were unsuccessful in silencing independent and diverse civic oriented journalism from taking place in the country. Therefore, both violence against journalists and authoritarian policies, many of which still exist in Haiti’s legal code today, have not reduced civic approaches to journalism in Haiti, in fact, it has encouraged it. Hughes and Lawson further write that such “laws adversely affect assertive reporting.” However, when such laws were at their height during the Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti, assertive reporting increased among commercial radio. It was under democratization in Haiti that civic-minded reporting was at its worst. Therefore, for Haiti, the reverse is true for the first two barriers.

The third barrier to media opening states that market concentration of mainly broadcast media outlets was a result of “media owner’s collusive relations with political elites, be they the autocrats of previous years or today’s elected leaders.” The result is that “media owners rarely rock the boat politically.” Additionally, media owners control editorial content that restricts assertive and diverse news coverage. Haiti has also defied this characteristic because despite close ties between ownership and editorial content, owners have encouraged and led assertive news coverage during authoritarian regimes in Haiti. Hughes and Lawson further state that “the fact that no media system in the region (outside of Cuba) is truly a monopoly encourages some measure of balance and independence.” The opposite has been the case for Haiti under democratization. The country experienced its largest expansion of broadcast media ownership in the last two decades, and reporting became more partisan than it had ever been in recent history and lacked balance despite a wealth of competing news sources.
Finally, the description of broadcast media ownership does not fully describe the Haitian case. Television broadcasting remains the dominant news format in the region, but in Haiti, the primary source for news is the radio. Most of the case studies conducted in Latin America explore the role of the printed media in introducing civic approaches to journalism. However, in Haiti, within the twentieth century alone, radio broadcasting had done this during the Duvalier dictatorship, and before then, print media had done so during the U.S. occupation as is discussed further in this chapter. In fact, Lawson also complicates this fifth barrier in his own characterization of the significance of radio broadcasting to civic mobilization that led to disenchantment with Mexico’s ruling party. In a similar case to Haiti, Lawson states that in the absence of objective reporting in Mexico by Televisa, the nation’s leading television broadcaster on the impact of the 1985 earthquake, the Mexican population turned to the “more assertive and professional” reports of stations like Radio Red about the disaster. The effect of assertive coverage by radio in Mexico had the effect of not just challenging other electronic media for the quality of its accurate reporting, but it also “woke a sleeping country.” Therefore, the dominance of print media or television broadcasting in Latin American media systems does not reduce the impact of other media formats or even the alternative press from participating in a project of civic journalism that challenges ownership practices by media conglomerates.

Much of the explanation of Haiti’s lack of conformity to the Latin American case has much to do with the country’s independence experience and its inheritance of early French norms about the practice of journalism that defined who or what is journalism in Haiti. Jean Chalaby’s look at France’s historical press best explains who or what French
journalism was during its revolutionary era and key aspects of Haiti’s journalistic traditions can be found in Chalaby’s essay. It helps provide some explanation of the assertive nature of Haiti’s press in the absence of democracy for more than two centuries.

We learn from Chalaby, for instance of the social structures that influence the rise of the French press from as early as the nineteenth century where French writers can specifically pick out social markers that influenced the French media system. One of them was the French literary movement, where admittance to the Académie Française was the epitome of French social society. Likewise the use of the literary novel as a form of social and civic engagement with the public and political actors was far more powerful than that of engagement with the press. However journalism remained a crucial stepping tool or launch pad for literary social engagement such as in the career of Victor Hugo.48

Another social factor that distinguished the French press to that of the Anglo-American press was the language constraints of print. Here is where Haiti shares a crucial similarity with French media traditions. As Chalaby notes49 “the English language is the best ‘media language’ because it is rich in monosyllabic words and it’s precise vocabulary allows an ‘economy of words.’” 50 The verbosity of the French language made news printing difficult for the development of French news norms at the time with its focus on key details in concise sentences. Phrases that had specific meaning in a longer sentence form in the French language would be lost in the Anglo-American style of news published at the same time. Likewise in Haiti, Creole a primarily spoken language at the time, did not conform to the printed press. Even today in Haiti, scholars can count on one hand the historical and fictional works that have been written and published in Haitian
Creole. The accepted tenants of writing plays, novels, histories and news reports often leave out the richness of the language in its spoken format.

Likewise, at the turn of the century, international factors were of major concern for the average Englishman, compared to the average Frenchman, as London was the economic and political center of the world, and therefore news was a vehicle that was in demand in English societies for their daily lives, compared to the going-ons of the French. The French were particularly concerned with intellectual debates at the time, and this was heavily reflected in the articles published in the leading French newspapers. Likewise, Haiti’s early newspapers largely published the essays, intellectual debates, fictional works and nation building decrees that were the concerns of a revolutionary society, instead of an empire building one.

Chalaby is also clear to include the major political differences of the French and English system such as a two-party structure in the Anglo-American context, compared to a multi-spectrum political sphere from anarchists to royalists in the French case. French society’s response to its political transformations involved violent, intense class struggles that played out in the French press and further distinguish the French media system to an Anglo-American media system. If in the same Revolutionary time period in Europe, the British keep their monarchy during social and political change, but the French did not, suggests fundamental differences in social structures between these two nations. Likewise in Haiti, its revolution and post-revolutionary period also involved violent and intense class struggles that played out in its media landscape. Haiti transitioned from an emperor, to a nation split in two with a King to the North and a National Assembly lead by the mulatto class to the south, to a civil war that reconciled
the country and even saw the Dominican Republic temporarily becoming part of the nation. Such political changes in the post-revolutionary period of the country’s political structures also affected Haiti’s media landscape in its first century of independence.

Social aspects and who is a journalist in a given country at a given time period, as Chalaby spells out in his article about French literary writers, has been a missed aspect in interpreting media systems. Hebert Gans first advanced the importance of newsworkers to a media system in his well-received text *Deciding What’s News.*\(^{54}\) In writing on journalists, and their role in the building of media institutions, and thus systems, Gans writes of the American journalists in his fieldwork that “they had little knowledge about the actual audience and rejected feedback from it…They filmed and wrote for their superiors and themselves, assuming….that what interested them would interest the audience.”\(^{55}\) If this is the case for American journalists, journalists in Haiti, by contrast, were attuned to the social and political transformations taking place at different periods in the country’s development. In fact, many journalists started up media outlets. American journalists, by their training and independence, carry a measure of detachment from social movements that they cover. On the other hand, Haitian journalists have remained attached to many causes throughout the history of journalism in the country. This attachment has influenced Haitian media norms.

Katrin Voltmer writes in her chapter “How Far can Media Systems Travel?” in Hallin and Mancini’s 2012 volume\(^{56}\) that it is time to consider media systems as social constructions. She asks: “Why is it so difficult, often impossible, to implement institutions in a one-to-one fashion in a different context?”\(^{57}\) Her answer:

One of the reasons is that concepts such as representative government, elections, and media pluralism are not as unanimous as they appear to the Western eye. Neither democracy nor the notion of a democratic media – nor that of related ideas such as press freedom, objectivity, and
the watchdog role – has a fixed meaning that could claim validity outside time and space. In fact, the meaning of these notions is far more elastic than text book knowledge usually implies and therefore has to be renegotiated in the context in which they are implemented.\textsuperscript{58}

The search for understanding media systems, Voltmer argues, should lie in the characteristics that make a group of people, ‘a people’ and by extension, a nation. It is the space in which its media system, to use Voltmer’s words, is “negotiated, or renegotiated,” in how it is implemented. Two such theories have since been put forward to describe the global south, mostly by the fields of International Development and Latin American Studies. The first is called Development Communication Theory, and the second Democratization/Democratic Participant Media Theory. The former has received strong support from United Nations agencies and calls for the media to advocate economic and political programs that support development. Some scholars have critiqued this theory because it asks the media to become a quasi-mouthpiece for either the state’s agenda or international bodies who may be at odds with public opinion.\textsuperscript{59} The latter theory has been mostly pursued by Latin American studies media specialists and seeks to explore how the media acts in a counter-hegemonic fashion filtering the activism of social groups into national dialogue even as the media operates under commercialized structures. Within the Democratization/Democratic Participation theory freedom of the press and access to information is a key fight of the press, and alliances with social groups, as well as the creation of alternative press outlets are characteristic of such media systems.\textsuperscript{60} This is the direction with which scholars on the global south, and Latin America in particular, such as Chappell Lawson, Sallie Hughes and Mauro Porto\textsuperscript{61} have centered their research on the emerging nations of the Western Hemisphere. While distinctions exist among scholars in this field in theorizing the relation of the state to media opening or autonomy, one key aspect of characterizing media systems in Latin America, under this new
scholarship, is the central role of civil society in leading or participating in such press transformations and shaping the “coloration” of journalism and news content.

With regards to the relationship between the media and the state, the research on the parallels between political transitions and media system transitions has been broken into mostly two camps. In both looking at the case of Mexico, Daniel Hallin, on one hand, has argued that political change by the dominant Mexico Partido Revolucionario Institutional (PRI) has led to media change. Hallin writes that “during the many years of PRI hegemony, the media were, for the most part, fully integrated into the structure of power. Today, with that structure in crisis, the media system has entered a period of significant and probably irreversible change.” However, Sallie Hughes, on the other hand, has challenged Hallin’s analysis of the relation of the state to the media system by arguing that changes in journalistic norms by media owners is often over-looked in the discussion. Both Hallin and Hughes have their debate centered in what Hughes describes as “democratic” journalism or when the arrival of participatory elections has already liberalized political institutions. In the Haiti case, agency by media owners existed decades before the advent of democratic elections and can be seen as early as the nineteenth century as this chapter will further outline.

The relation of Haiti’s media to the Haitian state is best characterized by Silvio Waisbord’s critique that even an assertive media system requires an functioning political institutions in the grand project of nation building. Waisbord states that “Democratic journalism, no matter its specifics, is not viable as long as states are not able to meet some its key obligations.” However, in the case of Haiti, democratic journalism, even in the absence of a functioning state, has been viable in accomplishing specific goals. With
regards to Haiti’s transition to democracy, democratic journalism kept public
mobilization going for four years in order to get Haiti’s military government to hold
elections in the absence of a legitimate government.

Some scholars have also argued that even when the media is successful in
bringing about civic mobilization, political institutions are still required to complete the
work begun in the media. James Curran states that “the most important site of politics is
the state. This is where laws are framed and enforced, and where peace or war is
determined. The state is also the principal agency of social redress.” In Haiti’s case, its
democratic governments have remained weak since the country has transitioned from
authoritarian rule. Therefore social redress that should take place as part of the
responsibilities of the government are still arguably a few years away and is the core of
the current reconstruction debate. However, Haiti’s press has conducted the work of
democratic journalism not because of the functioning of a strong government apparatus
but with a weak one. Haiti’s media has become even more viable because it has chosen to
advocate on behalf of its weak state, particularly when Haiti’s government goes largely
ignored by the international community, mainly the United States. This critique best
defines the historical view of Haiti’s media system that has either advocated as an
independent entity on behalf of its new independent state, has demanded the country’s
sovereignty be respected during a twentieth century occupation, and has required a
legitimate political organization in order to transition from dictatorship to democracy.
Therefore, Haiti’s assertive media system has required both a mobilized civic society and
a state willing to act, in order for the role played by its Fourth Estate to have outcomes
that impacts society as a whole.
Haiti’s media system

As Haitian renowned journalist Michelle Montas-Dominique writes in the *University of Miami Law Review*, the Haitian press has undergone three waves beginning with elite journalism from the period of the country’s revolutionary independence in 1804, to 1950 before the Duvalier dictatorship. Citing Father Cabon’s work, Montas writes that some 885 newspapers were published and disbanded, with only 30 having a lifespan of at least a year, of the forty-two leading newspapers that existed leading up the U.S. occupation in 1915. Two of them *Le Nouvelliste* (1896) and *Le Matin* (1907) still exist, and the other four Haitian newspapers were created in the U.S. in the 1980s.

The second phase Montas calls the media revolution of the 1970s. Here the Haitian press had a brief period to flourish at the beginning of the dictatorship of François Duvalier until Duvalier silenced dissent in order to consolidate power. Then Jean Claude Duvalier later opened up radio licenses to private citizens under a brief period of liberalization, mostly as a symbolic gesture to the U.S. Presidency of Jimmy Carter global human rights campaign. The opening up of radio licenses, Montas argues, was revolutionary, because Haitian newspapers, published in French, had never been truly a mass media, as only a small elite of the population could speak and read French fluently, while 100-percent of the population speaks Haitian Creole. Yet despite the use of French for 150 years in Haiti’s early media history, this chapter will later argue that Haiti’s press was in fact revolutionary, particularly because of the advocacy that took place by intellects and historians, on behalf of the masses who were excluded from access to the press by the very nature of it being a printed document for a society with an oral
communicative tradition. No other contemporary example of this argument is clearer than the lives and careers of both Montas and her husband Jean Dominique.

Jean Dominique who in 1968 purchased Radio Haiti Inter that was started in the 1930s, revolutionized broadcasting in Haiti by doing so in Creole. He had been born into a bourgeois family, like Montas herself, benefited from state funding for the children of elite Haitians to study agronomy abroad and used his access to elite circles to fund and operate what researchers consider to be the first truly independent radio station in Haiti during dictatorship. Dominique, who was Montas’ spouse, and was assassinated in April 2000 had spent his childhood and college days working with Haitian peasants. By understanding that news in Creole was the only way to communicate to the Haitian masses, Dominique used his Radio Haiti Inter to broadcast in Creole throughout the country. Dominique’s Radio Haiti Inter was a privately owned enterprise, operating off of commercial means and profit, but one that saw profit in engaging the masses and was able to transform Haiti’s media industry through this strategy. As such, Radio Haiti Inter provides a classic example of how the Haitian press does not fit into normative Western theories of the press but the recent evolving models by Latin Americanists who base their analysis by studying global south countries and their press traditions first, instead of automatically applying existing models to fit structures that on the surface appear Western in design.

Once Jean Claude Duvalier reneged on his media liberalization strategy in 1980, he rounded up key Haitian journalists operating under this new press tradition, tortured many, damaged stations and forced journalists into exile. However, Duvalier was unprepared for the backlash from silencing the media in that it did not silence civil
society’s participation in democratization that the journalists and stations under this radio revolution had created. Montas stated in her article that another civil society institution, Haiti’s “powerful Catholic Church” continued the work of the exiled radio journalists by starting Radio Soleil, which among other things, aired the Creole sermons of the priest Father Bertrand Aristide, who later become the first democratic president of Haiti in 1991. In other words, it was another institution in Haiti’s civil society that protected the *Fourth Estate* from state reprisal, and assured that journalism continued with the press in exile, under its watch and public support. Thus even under authoritarian regimes in Haiti, social institutions, such as religious ones, became gatekeepers of the role, exercise and practice of the press, when the commercial press lost freedoms from the state.

The third and current era of Haitian media, Montas describes as the “balkanization of the modern Haitian press.” In this phase, the Duvalier regime collapses thanks to the work of the ti-legliz, or little churches, and other segments of civil society, alongside the media at home and in exile. However, the coup d’etat of President Aristide in 1991, seven months after his election, saw the rise of a military regime that sold off the leading FM bands to military members and to private elite families, some of whom financed the 1991 coup. Thus they did not need advertisement to stay in business, and they opposed the reforms the restored democratic government wished to make in 1994. Of this current split or balkanization, Montas writes that “their sheer multiplicity has worsened the confusion that has plagued Haitian society by keeping the population split into thousands of voices.”

She sums up the millennial forecast for Haitian media in 2001 as such:

The control of commercial interest over the media translates into a new form of censorship that has nothing to do with government control of the press. Some stories are under reported or slanted…This could not have happened in the 1980s. Additionally, it should be noted
that very few journalists now live strictly off their salaries. Many receive additional paychecks from different sources, such as private companies or government services, and think nothing of it. More importantly, the media does very little to help integrate the majority of the country to the “Republic of Port-au-Prince.” Very few positive stories on issues that are of concern to the peasantry ever make it to the front page of a newspaper or a news broadcast, unless there is some international organization involved in a project. To the major private media, once more, as was the case in the past, the majority is becoming invisible.\textsuperscript{75}

Here is where the Haitian press shares some similarities with Central American media systems, compared to South American ones. The capacity of its mostly impoverished citizens, who do not own televisions but radios given the practicality of having a battery-operated one in a makeshift home that has no electricity, means that as consumers, there are no dollars to take elsewhere to a competitor. Therefore, radio stations in Haiti, the primary news medium, were funded by those who can fund it, the wealthy elites. They are not in need of consumer dollars for market share or support, because consumer power is not a factor in Haiti’s media system, as was the case in Brazil and Mexico. However, since 2001, advertisers for Haitian media, do expect and demand that radio stations be able to demonstrate that they capture the market through their programming in order for regional companies like telecommunications giant Digicel, to sell as many smartphones and post-paid minute plans as possible out of an impoverished market.\textsuperscript{76} In order to do so, media owners have learned in the last decade to include programming and news and information formats that engage the masses on all manner of public information, politics, entertainment and the like, a development that is further discussed in Chapter 4.

However, media power in Haiti, does play a role in democratization. As Leara Rhodes’ dissertation research argues that the Haitian media has become both a political resource for those in power and for civil society and economic elites who wish to further policies that support their ends.\textsuperscript{77} Rhodes argues that:
The Haitian mass media, although operating in an authoritarian society, do not fit comfortably in Hachten’s category of an authoritarian press. Although Haitian media are committed to developmental goals and could thus fall into another of Hachten’s categories, I will argue that this is not the conception of the media that owners are struggling to establish. My position is that in Haitian political culture, the media are conceptually constructed as a political resource. When constructed primarily as a political resource, press freedom has been difficult to regulate.  

Rhodes is also provocative in her conclusion because she argues that even among the elite Haitian press, such as *Le Nouvelliste* and *Le Matin* compared to the community radio stations, that advocacy on behalf of the state is also needed. This is what sets Haiti apart, Rhodes writes, because Haitian media also see as their role to uphold the state when it is under attack, such as by strong international players, like the United States, or the U.N. which has its peacekeeping forces, MINUSTAH, still operating in Haiti today. This is less so in the advocacy press in Haiti. According to the Freedom of the Press’ 2012 report and the Committee to Protect Journalists 2010 report on Haiti, community radio continues to experience repression by the government or civil entities attached to various factions of political groups that still exert influence in Haiti. Likewise, according to the CPJ report, the effects of the 2010 earthquake meant that the community press such as “*Bon Nouvèl*, Haiti’s sole Creole-language newspaper, disappeared under the rubble of the earthquake.” Meanwhile, the elite press was able to pick itself back up months later after the 2010 earthquake, although it was forced to lay off many of its staff as advertising had still not returned.

Haiti poses a unique question to studies of the role of the press and democratization. As Rhodes argues, when a weak state faces international pressure, can scholars argue that the need for a state-press relationship is not important? Secondly, when media cannot be supported commercially by an impoverished civil society, one that is the poorest in the Hemisphere, then does this mean that the media is abandoned as a
Fourth Estate, elevating other institutions in civil society such as the Catholic Church? Or that other institutions such as the Catholic Church, then assume the role of operating the media as in Haiti, when the Catholic Church launched the newspaper *La Phalange* in the 1970s and then Radio Soleil in the 1980s when Haiti’s journalists were sent into exile. The case of Haiti challenges and supports the notion advanced by Lawson and expanded by Hughes, Matos and Porto, that media can impact the process of democratization in transitioning societies. It supports this because it has championed news in Haitian Creole, revolutionizing media consumption through radio in Haiti, allowing the masses to hear the critiques of the Duvalier dictatorship. However, it also challenges this notion, because Haitian journalists have been silenced by exile, and natural disasters. Haitians have had to rely on other social institutions to assume the role of the media or to provide a public space for political struggles, and many times, as sermons, or speeches – not in the news and media formats that took place under media opening in Latin America, or the commercialization of the press in Western societies. As the second part of this chapter will now outline, Haiti has experienced its share of crisis in its two-plus centuries of Independence. The interweaving of the rest of civil society with the state and the press has created a press tradition in Haiti that defies clear demarcations that normative theories of the press dictate for evolution of press structures over time.

**Haiti’s media traditions**

**From the Haitian Revolution into the First Century**

News from France about the proclamation of the newly formed French National Assembly in 1789 about the rights of man propelled the mulatto leaders Vincent Ogé and Jean-Baptiste Chavannes to fight to their death for the rights of free men of color to vote
in 1790. At the same time, among the newly freed slaves, the early generals Jean François, Georges Biassou, and other deputies Desprez, Mauzeau, Aubert, and then Toussaint Breda, still lower among the revolutionary ranks, signed their names to proclamations written by secretaries on their behalf to be printed in the leading newspapers in France to communicate their wishes to the French National Assembly in December 6, 1791. During Haiti’s revolution, while still a French colony, Haiti’s leaders wore the hats of journalists, or better yet, foreign correspondents.

Deborah Jenson in her 2011 monograph Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution describes Toussaint Louverture’s successful rise to power, management of the revolution and skillful diplomacy with France, the U.S. and the rest of Latin America as “correspondence as journalism.” Likewise, Toussaint’s successor Jean Jacques Dessalines dictated to his secretary, his correspondence addressed to the presses of France, Pennsylvania and New York, including his most infamous Haitian Declaration of Independence in 1804. Post-revolution Haiti saw its key intellects, particularly those of the School of 1838 either be appointed to state-run presses, or launch and successfully run their own newspapers.

As Deborah Jenson articulates “the Haitian Revolution begs to be explored as a media phenomena.” Deborah Jenson’s study of French reports of news of the Haitian revolution is one of the first to clearly advance that Haitian revolutionary leaders: white, mulatto and black, used the French media as a publicity tool at the time when Saint-Domingue was still a colony.

Deborah Jenson proposes that Toussaint Louverture was the ultimate “Spin Doctor,” carefully carving out decree after decree sent through emissaries for publication
in France. Toussaint had subscribed to leading publications like *Le Moniteur*, and fluent in both French and Creole, he studied the concepts of the French Enlightenment, using the prose of these ideals to dictate to his French secretaries letters to French newspapers on how the Haitian Revolution bore the fruits of French revolutionary ideals. Later as French correspondents interviewed Toussaint directly, he continued to speak the language his revolutionary French bourgeois could understand.

Toussaint’s letter writing campaign in French newspapers *Ancien moniteur* and *Gazette de France* were published from 1797 to 1802. The insurrection and the fate of white French citizens continued to fair negatively in France in leading newspapers like *Moniteur Universel*. During this time, letters and proclamations served as news and had the ability to sway public opinion. As Jensen described it “the journalistic element of political correspondence in this time period reveals its unusual communicative power: letters and proclamations published in the press had the power to mold public opinion.” Through such correspondence, Toussaint appealed to the psychology of his potential readers, using sympathy as a tactic. For instance in March 1796, the *Moniteur* published a letter Toussaint wrote to French overseas minister in Philadelphia. He evoked the terms of the French revolution to demonstrate his solidarity and to explain the violence that occurred:

…sovereignty was greatly violated…most dire blow was struck against the principles of the National Convention, liberty and equality; and if the plotters plan had had the success it fully expected, it would have been all over for the white race in this part of the Republic; the evildoers had set their sights on complete extinction, and slavery was going to follow liberty.

Beside downplaying the violence or need for reprisal during the numerous conflicts, Jenson writes that Toussaint was skilled at flattering his audience. In a letter published in 1797 in the *Moniteur*, Toussaint reassured potential readers that “France
could count on the army of Saint-Domingue under his command” and that refuting a report by an ex-colonist Vaublanc warning the French not to trust the black army. Toussaint attempts to dispel the report by writing to “la France entière,” or “to all France,” that as long as “she” protects the freedom of her citizens, France does not need to worry about disloyal ex-slaves.

It is clear to see why the French readership took a positive view of Toussaint. As he writes in January 1798 in a letter published in the Moniteur:

Convey to the Directory the great affliction that Vaublanc’s report concerning the blacks has caused me,...what injustice! What falsity!...What a thunderbolt for a sensitive heart like mine, for one who loves his brothers and does everything possible to make them worthy of the benefits that France has granted them through her immutable decree!

Thus not only did Toussaint, wearing the “journalist” hat, wish to influence the framing of the numerous conflicts the Black army engaged in, but he also sought to make the Haitian Revolution, though it was not considered as such at the time, an extension of the French Revolution, at least up to 1803. Additionally, Toussaint’s successors Jean Jacques Dessalines, Henri Christophe, Alexandre Pétion and Jean-Pierre Boyer all adopted Toussaint’s “spin doctor” tactics in the years leading and after independence.

However Jenson makes an interesting caveat about the use of the press in this revolutionary time. When it came to the use of language, Haitian revolutionary leaders understood the ‘language politics’ of using ‘French vs Creole.’ Haiti’s leaders understood that to articulate and defend the existence of a black state in the nineteenth century they must “parlez comme un colon” (speak like a colonist) to quote Henry Christophe to outsiders. Yet they used the oratory tradition to deliver speeches to the troops and to the masses and in their language, Creole. At this time, the use of the press by Haiti’s revolutionary leadership was as a communicative tool to speak the language of
outsiders. Former slaves like Toussaint had to learn the tricks and trades of journalism, as a general, not for authoritarian control of an internal audience, but to launch a defense strategy and later on in the case of Christophe, Pétion and Boyer, a charm offensive to the outside world to defend the right of the black state to exist and do business with the rest of the world. The use of the Haitian Revolutionary and Independence press to publish, “letters, proclamations, and addresses…the stuff of media reporting in that era…disseminated as news”\(^99\) when researchers examine the content of speeches, and take into consideration that the majority of the population was French-illiterate, was not for authoritarian control of the society, but was a state tool from a marginalized new nation to fight for its right to exist and to be free from colonial rule and bonded labor.

In fact, Haiti’s newly independent state struggled for a century to truly use the press for internal controls over a society still reeling from the social effects of slavery and colonization. As David Nicholls writes, as early as the rivalry between the generals Toussaint and Rigaud:

> Politics in the rest of the nineteenth century can generally be seen as a tussle between a mulatto elite centered in the capital and in the cities of the South, on the one hand, and a small black elite often in alliance with army leaders and peasant irregulars, on the other. In the years following 1867 these groups formalized themselves into a largely mulatto Liberal Party, and a preponderantly black National Party.\(^{100}\)

> In other words, Christophe to the North used his own presses to gain sway with black nationalists, and to legitimize his claim to power to mostly the external British press.\(^{101}\) While Pétion used writers like Hérard Dumesle and then Boyer the writers associated with *Le Republicain* and *L’Union* to justify to the French that the nation, under mulatto leadership, was the sole Republic with which to negotiate a ceasefire and indemnity.\(^{102}\) Once again, Haiti’s so-called partisan press’ acted as state mouthpieces for a nation in civil war with two camps, a mulatto one to the South and a black one to the
North, with the sole purpose of publishing decrees and speeches for external audiences as during the Revolutionary period. Despite this external gaze of Haiti’s early press owners, this did not mean that the rest of Haitian society, who did not speak or read French, went largely ignored by the early press.

Mimi Sheller’s *Democracy after Slavery* offers an insightful analysis of this first century of what is really occurring with Haitian civil society, one that was not mass consumers of the state or elite press, and certainly did not do so in French. Additionally, the writings of Haitian renowned anthropologist Anténor Firmin, who published *De l'égalité des races humaines*¹⁰³ and himself ran a late nineteenth century publication called *Le Messager du Nord*¹⁰⁴ counteracts Haitian historians Thomas Madiou (also editor of the government run *Le Moniteur* under Emperor Faustin Soulouque), Beaubrun Ardoiun’s and Joseph St. Remy’s earlier nation-state building writings through the state-controlled press.¹⁰⁵ While Madiou and Ardoiun advocated that the mulatto leaders of the revolution, by virtue of their status were best equipped to take the new nation forward,¹⁰⁶ writers like St. Remy and later Firmin published that “all men are endowed with the same qualities and the same faults, without distinction of color or anatomical form. The races are equal.”¹⁰⁷

In her examination of the Piquet Rebellion in Haiti in 1843, Mimi Sheller finds that Haiti’s peasants “those who struggled out of slavery in Haiti…developed a shared radical vision of democracy based on post-slavery ideology of freedom”¹⁰⁸ Haiti’s black and mulatto elites failed to indoctrinate Haiti’s “black publics” to elite concepts of democracy under the new independent order because of a persistent “self determination within the colonized and enslaved communities” born out of the revolutionary
experience. Sheller argues that Haitian peasants silence in the first century, had less to do with their preference for traditional and conservative governance such as a monarchy, as Haitian Revolutionary scholars argue, but their silence was for the practical reason that they lived under the microscope of the revolutionary Haitian army which suppressed dissent and militarized labor as early as Toussaint and continued by Boyer.

The Piquet movement initially started with a push to liberalism through Haiti’s 1843 constitution that initially brought about fissures between the mulatto elite and black bourgeoisie. With a significant break in alliance among the ruling elites, black peasants in Haiti revolted under the religious-political leadership of Acaau, where “armed peasants and cultivators seized the initiative, and demanded economic reform, land reform and the protection of their constitutional rights as Haitian citizens.” Sheller describes the involvement of peasants as a “crucial contest between military and civil power” and one that was only suppressed by a reunification among mulattoes and black elites by 1844 in a show of force. Sheller puts forward that “in spite of their democratic rhetoric [through the press and speeches], liberals were not prepared for real democracy, especially if accompanied by radical calls for land distribution and political enfranchisement”

However, the peasant revolt of the Piquet Rebellion is also an interesting aspect of Haitian society because it “was not the triumph of blacks over mulattoes, but the triumph of statist autocracy over the potentially democratic alliance of radical segments of the bourgeoisie with peasants and cultivators”. As described in the first half of this chapter where Jean Dominique, born to an elite family, used the press to form alliances with peasant communities to oppose a dictatorship, as early as the eighteenth century, radical elite groups joined forces with Haiti’s peasants in armed struggle against a militarized
state. With the state deciding to grant liberal privileges to the people, Acaau’s democratic organizing from below, met with bourgeois discontent from above. In other words, Haiti’s peasant classes were always fully capable of self-organizing without bourgeois enlightenment or propaganda. What Haiti’s black republics were fighting for, Sheller writes, for the freedom to truly define one’s liberty, which in Haiti’s peasant’s case ran counter to that of the state. Sheller argued that “the formal abolition of slavery may itself be less important than the ongoing struggle for actual on-the-ground freedoms”¹¹³ which she described as a “continuous variable, a sliding continuum of programatic relationships rather than an existential state or legal status.”¹¹⁴

The sentiments of Haiti’s masses were captured and published as articles by disenchaned elites, acting as conveyers of public sentiment. Haitian historian Pauléus Sannon in his work on the same time period captures civic society during the Piquet movement with his *Essai historique sur la Révolution de 1843*, which was published in 1905.

Dès le début de ces événements une opposition visible se manifeste en effet dans les sentiments et les tendances non seulement des chefs mais encore des populations de ces deux régions du pays opposition qui nourrie fortifiée grandie par les ambitions rivales de Pétion et de Christophe ne devait guère tarder à se transformer en guerre civile. Il s’agit maintenant que le fait est établi de rechercher d’où pouvait provenir cette préférence marquée du Sud pour les institutions libres. Le régime absolu et tout militaire de Toussaint Louverture et de Dessalines avait pesé sans doute particulièrement sur les provinces du Nord où se trouvait le siège de leurs gouvernements mais l’autorité de ces deux chefs ne s’étendait pas moins sur le pays tout entier.¹¹⁵

Sannon argues that this regional social divide had more to do with the desires for true freedom from a new form of tyranny of the state in the new nation, compared to any specific objections to notions of European society and civilization. Despite these differences, Sannon calls on his fellow citoyens to act “comme collectivité autonome” outside the influence of Haitian leadership because “il ne nous reste pas moins une chance sérieuse de nous relever, si nous avons la résolution et le courage
nécessaires.” Sannon’s writings at the turn of the century reflect a continued desire for Haiti’s intellectuals to align themselves with an already mobilized peasant class as will be discussed in the treatment of the press during the Occupation and Duvalier dictatorship.

So how did the press figure into the activism of peasants during the Piquet Rebellion of the mid-nineteenth century? It is Sheller’s comparative research that brings this to light in looking at the effects of the Piquet Rebellion on neighboring Jamaica’s Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865. Faced with a closed off, state-control press apparatus, Haiti’s peasant groups and radical bourgeois entities corresponded to Jamaica’s *The Morning Journal* which was a source for news and accounts brought to Jamaica by Haitian exiles wishing to overthrow President Geffrard in Haiti. Through such coverage to external audiences, Sheller points out that one could find “strong links between Haitian politics and the development of a racially conscious and democratic public culture among Jamaicans of colour.” The essays published in the Jamaican press from Haitian alternative news sources argued for true emancipation, where the freed slave could co-exist in a pan-African post-colonial world freed of the trappings of nation-state identities. In essence, Haitian peasant classes within the first century of Haiti’s history, had not fully bought into the elite propaganda of what it meant to be free living in a new state called Haiti, and the voices of Haiti’s nineteenth century peasant groups were published in the exiled press in neighboring territories like Jamaica.

**From Occupation to Duvalier**

The alliance between Haiti’s intellectual class of black and mulatto radicals, as Mathew Smith describes in the turn of the century, with Haiti’s active peasant communities was on that needed to be translated in the press as was in the case with the
Piquet Rebellion. It is important to note here that the press, by its very nature of being a limited form of expression, could not truly capture who or what were the Haitian people a generation removed from slavery. In the twentieth century, Haitian anthropologist, Jean Price Mars, points out, the peasants lived in a world of folklore. In explaining Haiti’s peasants to French observers, and a United States interventionist government, Mars clarified that the clichéd term for folklore, really meant “folk: people: lore, savoir, c’est-à-dire: the lore of the people, le savoir du people.” Mars argues in his articles published in *Le Messager du Nord* and his subsequent monographs that the world view of Haiti’s peasants should be analyzed in the vein that Western scholars have treated the beliefs of the Greeks and Romans, the great societies that Europeans revere.

While Haitian philosophers like Mars and Firmin are writing during a process of nation building, contemporary Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot reflected on Haiti at the beginning of its second century and concluded in *Haiti: State Against Nation, the Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism* that there was not a unified concept of “nation” from the beginning. Trouillot writes that the “masses remained indifferent” upon the great leader Toussaint Louverture’s capture. Trouillot claims that “Louverture’s party, and the fundamental contradiction of his regime, was the leadership’s failure to face the fact that the goal of unconditional freedom was incompatible with the maintenance of the plantation system, despite the mass exodus of white planters.” Therefore despite the end of slavery and 100 years of Independence, Trouillot agrees with Mars’ thesis of the masses, in that they would have preferred slavery, if their masters allowed them the freedom to work the land to their choosing, own that land, and then do as they wish with their produce, as opposed to a new form of slavery. Clearly, the peasant class was not a
lazy one, but one that defined freedom in a manner that was in contradiction with the mercantilist, and later capitalist determinations of the leaders at the helm of the Haitian state.

Trouillot takes up Mars’ call to reevaluate the knowledge of the peasants, by showing that politically, their understanding of freedom required no Parisian elite education, but was one that viewed their leaders as a new form of oppression, and that they doubted the motives of this leadership from the very birth of the nation. Once peasant life was undermined toward the middle of the twentieth century due to immense competition from U.S. imports and offshore jobs after the military occupation, peasants loss their economic and regional bargaining position with the state to be as effective a counter force in the discourse of nation building, as they were at the beginning of the revolution and then in the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century, the peasants great stand was embodied in the Cacos rebellion at the beginning of the U.S. occupation, in 1915 and then again from 1918 to 1922. The Cacos rebels of banded groups of armed peasant communities echoed the Piquet Rebellion almost a century early. Once again, Haiti’s Caco rebels found sympathy with Haiti’s intellects, some writing and publishing in exile, as well as with a growing U.S. African American press also facing down its own segregation to the North. African American correspondents who travelled to Haiti during the U.S. Occupation captured the fighting spirit of Haiti’s Caco leaders and rebels they interviewed when mainstream media in Haiti and abroad had failed to do so under the fear of U.S. marine censorship. As Mary Renda writes in *Taking Haiti*, black U.S. foreign correspondents like James Weldon Johnson, writing for *The Nation*, and Langston Hughes writing for *New Masses*
and Crisis, on a trip sponsored by the NAACP in 1931, reported on the retaliation of U.S.
marines by Haiti’s peasant class. Johnson’s reports began to change the external
narrative, that Haiti’s ruling classes lack of resistance to the occupation, was indicative of
mass public opinion.\textsuperscript{123}

Magdaline Shannon’s aptly named 1996 text Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian elite
and the American occupation, 1915-1935 is useful in taking up the sidelined accounts of
the Cacos and other resistance groups during this period. Shannon’s work argues that
U.S. marines faced a unified mass population in opposition to its occupation, compared to
a disjointed elite that could be manipulated to give the U.S. their way. Shannon recalls
that Jean-Price Mars in La Vocation de l’Elite summoned Haitian intellectuals to the
lecture halls and to their presses to galvanize public resistance to the occupation.\textsuperscript{124} Mars
writes that “My whole ambition…is to recall the elite to the simple duty of his vocation
by advising him to make better use of his moral, social and intellectual worth.”\textsuperscript{125} This
came after Price had witnessed the bravery of the Haitian cacos resistance to Gen.
Caperton under the leaderships of Charlemagne Peralte and Benoit Batraville.\textsuperscript{126} For
Mars, it was time for the Haitian intellectual elites to do their share in the resistance by
using such tools as the press to challenge both Haitian politicians and the U.S.

The U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934, in effect was the “neocolonial
period of the American Occupation that shook Haitian writing out of its mimetic mode
[of imitating French culture] and led to the nation’s first genuine literary flowering,” as
Martin Munro states.\textsuperscript{127} As Jean Chalaby describes of the early French press, the use of
Haiti’s press as a forum for publishing poems, essays, editorials, and monograph excepts
of Haiti’s emerging intellects of the twentieth century, led by Jean Price Mars, was
indicative of the use of the press by French novelists writing about the French masses, such as Victor Hugo, during the French Revolution.\textsuperscript{128} What constituted as news in twentieth century Haiti, during a more liberalized period of the press, was a form of literary protest to the failures of the state, particularly in their failure to defend the nation to foreign occupation, after the country had done so with blood a century earlier.\textsuperscript{129} In looking at the published works of Haiti’s intellects, poets and novelists, Munro explains that, “the Haitian Revolution did not truly liberate the nation culturally, and that the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a necessary second “revolution,” a radical shake-up of complacent (elite) moral and cultural values.”\textsuperscript{130} It was out of this cultural and literary revolution of the early twentieth century, that François Duvalier’s early political ideologies were rooted. He published his essays in the newspapers and magazines run by the group of intellectuals he was apart of, called \textit{Le Groupe de Griots}, who published their own journal called \textit{Les Griots}.\textsuperscript{131} Additionally in the mid 1930s, Duvalier was a regular contributor to the daily newspaper \textit{Action Nationale}.\textsuperscript{132}

The tradition of the use of the press to publish the key works or excerpts of Haiti’s cultural revolution in the twentieth century echoes the use of the press in the nineteenth century by Haiti’s revolutionary leaders and early Haitian historians to define, mostly to a threatening outside world who Haitians are and what they want. Once again, the case of who is acting as the Haitian journalist in both these two centuries is a departure from the independently trained journalist who emerged in the U.S. and Great Britain at the time, who were separated from allegiances to partisan politics and social movements. This was not the case in Haiti for its early twentieth century cadre of journalists. Haiti’s twentieth century journalists were activists, anthropologists, intellectuals, poets and novelists, who had
emerged weary of the failures of the nation-state building project of the first century, and who took up arms with the press in support of peasant Cacos rebels to resist Haiti’s occupation for almost 20 years in the face of a weakened state and political class.

It is with this backdrop that François Duvalier came to power in a political vacuum that arose with the departure of U.S. marines, and a political class still seen as being loyal to U.S. vested interests. Duvalier’s published articles in newspapers on black nationalism was a philosophical departure from the universal concepts of negritude intellectuals of the era, Duvalier was able to develop a popular following for his political ideology and platform for reform that sustained his resistance to President Paul Magloire. His overwhelming election in 1957 with Magloire’s resignation was testament to the use of the press as a tool for disseminating his political ideologies with an emerging black educated class. The Haiti that brought François Duvalier to power, was one in which Marxists like Jacques Roumain, socialists like Max Hudicourt, black nationalists like Daniel Fignole, noiristes like Duvalier, peasant activists like Dumarsais Estimé collided.

As Matthew Smith points out in *Red and Black in Haiti: Radicalism, Conflict, and Political Change*, the state tolerated such protests with articles published in the Marxist newspaper *La Nation*, the workers union paper *Le Peuple*, the alliance of mainstream newspaper *Le Matin* with Marxist poets of the group *La Ruche* and the noiriste paper *La République*. Even Haiti’s oldest daily newspaper *Le Nouvelliste* adapted to the radicalism among Haiti’s educated class by dramatically changing its coverage to report on color discrimination in Estime’s administration. This post Occupation period Smith explained, was “a breakdown in the legitimacy of elite political supremacy; forcefully asserted radical ideology as a political weapon; gave the black middle class
unprecedented political leverage; announced the crucial role of the labor movement as a force in national politics; and strengthened the role of the military.\textsuperscript{139}

Given the proliferation of newspapers to support various radical ideologies, Trouillot\textsuperscript{140} argues that Duvalier’s dictatorship was one that was a departure from Haiti’s authoritative state in the past. The press experienced a tolerated liberal relationship with the state in publishing dissent. However, in an effort to consolidate power in the face of competing political ideologies among the educated classes, peasant activists, and emerging workers unions, Duvalier’s state repression used the military, and state-run press propaganda through the new format of broadcasting that saw many of Haiti’s intellectuals forced into exile. However in the absence of Haiti’s intellectuals, like Rene Dépestre who criticized his former ally Duvalier in the mainstream press in 1957 as being a “‘a shameful déjoiste,’ and an opportunist of the right”\textsuperscript{141} for Duvalier’s abandonment of radical ideology and shift to autocratic rule. In the absence of the radical press, David Nicholls in his 1988 book \textit{From Dessalines to Duvalier} writes that the Catholic Church launched a series of “church-state contest(s)” aligning themselves with university students to protest Duvalier declarations with regards to religion and education. Nicholls recalled how the Church used its newspaper \textit{La Phalange} the last of the oppositional press during this period:

Five priests attacked the policy of the government in the columns of \textit{La Phalange}, and the first round in the church-state battle was over. The generally defiant attitude of many Catholics was characteristically expressed by Père P. Halaby, who had received notice from the director general of education that he was no longer to teach religion in the lycée. ‘I very much regret to inform you,’ he wrote, ‘that as a teacher of religion I am responsible to his grace the archbishop and not to the Department of National Education. If certain Catholics and even certain priests have sold their consciences, Père Halaby has not yet arrived at this position.’\textsuperscript{142}

By 1960 Nicholls writes that after \textit{La Phalange} reported on its front page “an open letter to the secretary of state for education from a number of priests, brothers, and
sisters” denouncing a decree for education restrictions, the government shut the newspaper down on January 9 of that year.\textsuperscript{143} What ensued, Nicholls continued, was the use of the state-run press, particularly radio, to publish and air Duvalier’s “presidential speeches and messages” to “reinforce his claims to legitimacy.”\textsuperscript{144} While the dictatorship of François Duvalier represented one of the bleakest moments for Haiti’s independent press on the island as Michelle Montas points out, Haiti’s press in exile as Leara Rhodes writes continued a press tradition of advocacy that stayed connected to events on the ground. Additionally, Haiti’s mainstream newspapers adapted to the controls of the state in what they described as a survival mode, but challenged the state whenever possible during this period of state attacks on the press. Yet despite the closure of \textit{La Phalange} in 1960, by 1965 the ownership of radio licenses by private firms in Haiti began to assume the next wave of advocacy journalism that tested the waters of tolerance with François Duvalier’s regime and then burst the flood waters open as his son Jean Claude Duvalier assumed the presidency with his father’s death in 1971.

\textbf{From Dictatorship to Democracy}

When Jean Léopold Dominique bought over Radio Haiti Inter in 1968, he revolutionized broadcasting news by doing so in Haitian Creole. He had started a media revolution that for the first time targeted the masses as an audience, and not necessarily as an ally and source for news as Haiti’s elite, educated, and intellectual classes had aligned themselves with the masses for. During this period of Haiti’s media system, the work of radio, led by Radio Haiti Inter’s example, was a game changer. As chief of news for Radio Inter, Michele Montas recalls “Radio Haiti introduced Creole, spoken by all Haitians, as a working language for its news. On its programming, Radio Haiti carried
French newscasts with interviews in Creole and one major newscast a day was entirely in Creole.”

Haiti’s Revolution, as discussed at the beginning of Chapter 2, did not make gains in overthrowing the French and colonialism, until Haiti’s masses, the slaves, were brought into the fight. The mulattoes Ogé and Chavannes could not defeat the French, Biassou, François and Toussaint could not remove the Spanish and then the British, and the white French commissioners Polverel and Sonthanax could not fight for representation and then Independence until Sonthonax proclaimed the already fighting slaves free, defying the French National Assembly in October 1793. Haiti’s push for democracy dragged along for slightly over a century and a half. While Haiti’s founding fathers, historians and nineteenth century intellects felt they spoke on behalf of the masses, and even formed alliances with them during ruptures in the political classes, they had not truly spoken the language of the masses or engaged them in the direction of the country’s future since 1789. The use of radio to share and disseminate news, information, current events, government decrees, editorials and the like, in Haitian Creole, was the spark that finally propelled ordinary Haitians to unify against a dictatorship that was already crumbling.

Jean Claude Duvalier was just as ruthless with journalists and the press, particularly radio, as his father was. Both father and son loosened and tightened the rope of press freedoms and liberalism at various times of their regimes responding to external pressures from the United States, and possible threats to their grip on power. U.S. President Jimmy Carter had demanded human rights improvements in Haiti as a condition for aid, namely by guaranteeing freedom of the press. In response, Jean Claude
tolerated Radio Haiti Inter’s reporting of firstly corruption in the regime, under the helm of reporter Michele Montas, who later married Dominique. Radio Haiti Inter grew in popularity with its outreach and inclusion of peasant communities through its AM and FM signals and Dominique’s broadcasting from the countryside. The station’s news strategy under the Duvaliers started out first by reporting on regime changes in Latin America and Africa under the disguise of foreign news, translating it in Creole, and providing context to the foreign events as a subtle way to educate Haitians about the need for democracy in Haiti. The regime retaliated by arresting Dominique and other reporters, and by closing the station in 1980. However with Dominique in exile, Haiti’s Catholic Church then picked up the work of advocating, in Creole, for democracy through its station Radio Soleil. Not only Radio Haiti Inter’s reporters were arrested but those of Radio Kiskeya, Radio Lumière, Radio Metropole, Radio Caraïbes and Radio Ginen.

On the use of creole in radio for the push for democratic change, the following except from a journalist working in this era, Michelle Montas, articulates best the democratic revolution taking place through the central role of the press in this period. Montas writes:

The use of Creole as an information tool had a tremendous impact on expanding the democratic horizons of the majority of Haitians in the early 1970s. First it broke the traditional isolation of the majority. The transistor age provided cheap radios that were available in even the most remote areas of Haiti. People from the rural areas, the area that had been called for almost two centuries “the country outside” could suddenly learn about and understand what was happening in the “Republic of Port au Prince.” One of the means of ruling Haiti under the Duvalier dictatorship was to divide the country into smaller units. Regional Macoute commanders controlled the Artibonite, or the South. Suddenly, on the airwaves, these artificial barriers erected by the central power in Port au Prince were breaking down.

The voices of the Creole-speaking poor – the peasants, the small shopkeepers in Cap Haitien or Gonaïves, the fisherman of Lully or Anse d’Hainault – were heard, not by proxy, but directly. Through radio, those who had been systematically isolated by a repressive power but also by geography, bad roads, and illiteracy could now reach each other. Economic frontiers began to break down. The coffee growers in Plaisance could now learn the price of coffee on the international markets, and at the same time, could listen to coffee growers in Fond Jean Noel talk of the unfair prices paid by coffee traders. The use of Creole in the news also mean empowerment
for the majority who, for the first time, could express themselves directly via a microphone to a listening audience, discuss their own problems, and suggest their own solutions. It also spread the spirit and the methods of resistance to repression anchored in Haiti’s revolutionary past, from one part of the country to the next.  

What Montas explains above is crucial to understanding the third revolution taking place in Haiti on the eve of democracy – this one being a communications revolution. After the Haitian revolution of the first century, the cultural revolution of Haiti’s intellectual generation at the turn of the century, Haiti’s democracy was ushered in by a communications revolution where both the medium, radio, and the content of the medium, news in Haitian Creole, connected the country and classes for political, social and economic reforms. It was not that Haiti’s intellects had not attempted to capture popular sentiments in the press, it was just that the medium restricted the conversation from being two-directional. With the communication revolution brought on by radio, Haiti’s media could now be used by all.

The pioneering work of Dominique’s Radio Haïti Inter is the most well referenced case study of how Haiti’s mainstream media has acted in an advocacy role at its best. In Haitian Creole, two words are best used to describe the way Haitians view how information is communicated and acted on. The first word, teledjòl, roughly translated as word-of-mouth is at least what the English translation says. However, it is more than that. Haitians, particularly in rural settings, will hear information and pass it along, mostly by women, filtering it through each household. As the information passes from family to family and home to home, it is embellished and radicalized so that by the time the community gets together the initial news is so enriched and enflamed that the community is ready to act. The second Haitian term, konbit, is a system where peasant workers assist each other, plot by plot, as a unified force to work the land whereby every peasant gets
his or her work done faster and more efficiently compared to had they done so on their own.

These two Creole words matter in adapting Haitian media, because for an adult population that is mostly illiterate and Creole-speaking, the use of media is often a community effort and one that sees information being transferred in a relay system across media outlets and communities. Often times this effort is heavily practiced through licensed community radio, particularly through Haiti’s alternative press networks such as Alterpresse, SAKS, its community radio network and Refraka, Haiti’s women press network of which these networks will be further discussed in chapter 4. Additionally, mainstream print and television news outlets either own or have relationships with commercial and community radio stations where their news, often published in French, is translated and reported in Creole over the airwaves. Most Haitians do not have access to reliable modern electricity, however a simple battery operated radio can provide continuous information to an entire village at the cost of $2. A sense of involvement and ownership by the audience in the information being relayed over the airwaves is the premise that Haitian radio has built itself on, a model that Dominique’s Inter mastered. As Kathie Klarreich of the Christian Science Monitor observed in 1995; her report’s title demonstrates this “Lost a cow? Rural radio, Haiti style, can help.” Klarreich’s report explains:

When a farmer in the Haitian town of Dame Marie found a stray cow ravaging his vegetable crop recently, he marched it straight away to the local radio station. Once there, he asked the station to broadcast an appeal for the cow’s owner to claim his bothersome bovine. Though many media outlets around the world might scoff at such a request, Radio Dame Marie led their nightly news program with the farmer’s plea. In isolated Dame Marie, a small town that is three hours by car from the nearest city, radio is the glue holding the community together. And it is the only link to the outside world for the roughly 30,000 residents in the area - Dame Marie has had electricity only for the past three years and still has no telephone.
“We are the eyes and light of the people,” says Kenol Andirs, a co-founder of the station. “Our door is always open for people to come in and voice whatever they want, to address their problems to the population. “In a city that now has no representative in the government, no real security force, we serve an important role in educating and guiding the population,” he adds.

The station’s director Emilio Passe stated that the role of rural radio was to facilitate the participation of local citizens, and can report on anything from “misplaced cows to birth and death announcements,” as well as repackaged news from the capital Port-au-Prince. The goal is to let the listeners drive the radio’s content and to develop a sense of community pride. This is demonstrated through the fact that the peasant communities offer what little they have to keep the stations going. Radio Dame Marie runs on solar panels, and another rural station Horizon in Gros Morne in Haiti’s northwest province runs on car batteries, which when drained, the station stops broadcasting for two days in order to recharge them. A Horizon broadcaster Derrison Rener told Klarreich that “Every time we broadcast, it’s a small victory. People constantly come in and tell us how happy they are that we’re here.

“That’s a huge encouragement for us. We want to work to promote democracy and help people understand what their role is. Gestures like this show us they already understand.”

The foundation that was created through community radio networks across Haiti and their relationships across print and television media have become bedrock for relaying information across the island. What Klarriech discovered in 1995, 15 years later was a corner stone for citizen journalism during the 2010 earthquake.

Foreign news sources during the 2010 earthquake failed to capture how Haitians were able to help themselves during the earthquake using media technology. The story of Radio One mirrors Mexico’s Radio Red after the 1985 earthquake. It demonstrates how
Haitians were able to help themselves with or without the help of international rescue workers.

At the moment of the quake on 12 January 2010, music producer and Radio One DJ Carel Pedre got out of his car that he had been driving through Port-au-Prince at the time and began taking pictures of collapsed buildings around him on his Blackberry. He uploaded them to his Twitter feed and Facebook page as he began running through the rubble to see if his home and his daughter were safe. Within minutes, responses began to pour in: shock, sympathy – and pleas for Carel’s help in finding loved ones. Carel found his daughter safe, returned to the radio studio, turned on the microphone and began to talk. As he did, people began arriving at the studio desperate to make announcements that they were alive. Carel and his team realized they had the power to connect people – and began to develop a family reunification system. Carel Pedre was just one of many Haitians after 12 January who used their technological and communications expertise to generate local information systems.

Radio One was one of several stations that found themselves managing ad hoc reunification but it was especially influential because it broadcasts nationwide and online, and because Carel himself is a well-known broadcaster with an established presence on Twitter and Facebook. He and his team developed a system using the tools Haitians were using to contact them: social media, radio and face-to-face contact.155

What Carel and other radio stations argued was that there was a need for the media, as large numbers of victims queued outside of radio stations for hours to express their views or seek help. What researchers found was that “many callers or visitors to their studio simply wanted to tell their story and to feel that someone was listening to them; for them the process of being able to communicate was as significant as whether their question was answered or their issue dealt with.”

In a major international crisis such as the Haiti 2010 earthquake where the Haitian government felt overwhelmed by international forces attempting to manage the situation, local media provided a forum for Haitians to be empowered in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. This is important because foreign news reports for days chronicled how Haitian president Rene Préval had been unable to manage the presence of so many multilateral relief agencies that had rushed to the aid of the country, and many of these relief services were unable to get to victims in a crucial manner.156 However, local media allowed Haitians to take the search and rescue process into their own hands, to relay
information on the ground, to pull trapped loved ones from beneath the rubble, to set up camps and food and to draw officials to their location for relief goods and services that were waiting to be given out by the international respondents. Therefore, while the Haitian government may have been decapacitated in the immediate days of this crisis, the Haitian people were mobilized and the media teledjòl structure that Haitians had developed before the crisis was at the heart of this konbit effort that Radio One and stations like it participated in after the earthquake. As the head of Noula, or We Are Here, another one of these services that facilitated the teleguele style relay of information in Haiti during the crisis, the outside world can pay attention to how victims help themselves, a story that seldom gets out in the international media when such crises occur. Noula director Kurt Jean Charles put it this way: “We wanted to show that we could take some responsibility to change things at our own level, at a Haitian level. The more we can take responsibility for our situation, the more we can communicate and negotiate with the aid world.”

Therefore to be able to communicate is to be able to negotiate, and Haiti’s twenty-first century media has allowed Haitians to be involved in this process of development and reconstruction, independent of the Haitian government. The characteristics of Haiti’s press systems and traditions may resemble aspects of the Liberal theory of the press and Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini’s Polarized model of the press with regards to the relation of the press to the state. However, the direct involvement of the masses in Haiti’s press today not just as passive audiences, but as originators, collaborators and disseminators of news and information in Haiti’s dynamic mainstream and alternative press networks is a departure from normative understandings of the media. The
communications revolution that is taking place among Haitian media because of the shift to news in Haitian Creole, and the collaborations of the mainstream and alternative/community press in the post 2010 earthquake environment challenges the existing deterministic models for how the press functions in a state under democracy. The second half of this dissertation provides support for this argument through an analysis of interviews conducted with Haitian journalists and a critique of samples of Haitian broadcast and print news collected at Haiti’s key mainstream and alternative news outlets during original field research conducted in Haiti in 2013.
CHAPTER 4: HAITIAN MEDIA OWNERSHIP

Background

This chapter addresses the first of three research areas that studies the impact of the 2010 earthquake on Haiti’s media. The first component research area explored how the earthquake impacted the alignments of news organizations that had existed in the past. The second research area explored the impact of the disaster on news workers perceptions and practice of journalism. This will be discussed in chapter 5. The third and final research area examined news content produced by the journalists to determine the degree of change in Haiti’s news as a result of the disaster. This will be covered in chapter 6.

Firstly, this chapter reviews the landscape of Haiti’s news organizations in the last two decades, the categories under which they fall into, and how the 2010 earthquake has collapsed many of these rigid definitions. The literature in this area remains slim, and continues to be written as scholars seek to assess what if anything the last 20 years of democratization in Haiti has accomplished. As such, it required original research with scholars in Haiti to piece this information together. This chapter looks back at what the last two decades has meant for the categorization and divisions among Haiti’s media. However, it is also important to note that the chameleon, rebellious and adaptive nature of Haiti’s media is not a new or recent trait of Haitian media. In times of crisis, rigid media categories and affiliations in the country have become blurred, as outlined in
chapter 3. Haitian media, including commercial outlets, have always participated in a project of national deconstruction and reconstruction. The owners and journalists of Haitian media over the last two hundred years have been rebellious colonial commissioners, former presidents, government officials, priests, poets, authors, novelists, playwrights, academics and peasant leaders. In writing about the rich diversity that is Haiti’s media tradition, Haitian scholars of the press have argued that Haiti’s press is a social institution. In looking at developments in the mainstream/commercial press, as well as the rise of Haiti’s alternative media outlets, it is clear to see how Haiti’s divergent media groups have worked in consort with each other. These developments help set up and explain the types of collaborations taking place since the earthquake.

The mainstream, commercial press

Hérold Toussaint, a Haitian professor, wrote that the process of communication is a psychological one that comes out of a given social situation that requires a specific type of exchange of information that includes psychological, cognitive and social variables. Jean Desquiron, the Haitian scholar who has put together the most comprehensive catalog of Haiti’s printed media to date, recalls that owners of Haiti’s first known newspaper in 1764, La Gazette de Saint Domingue, were as much intrigued in writing about the declining existence of the native Tainos, as they were “d’investiguer la littérature orale des esclaves ainsi que cette extraordinaire institution Haïtienne, le “télédiol” (littéralement: téléguele).”

[1 Author’s translation: as they were “to investigate the oral literature of the slaves as part of this extraordinary Haitian institution called le téledjòl, literally teledjòl, (the manner in which Haitian peasants relay information within the community and across the country).]
Desquiron notes in his encyclopedic work of five volumes on Haiti’s print history that for a country that was roughly 80-percent illiterate, for some roughly 1,000 newspapers, and 4,318 titles of literary works and anthologies to be produced from 1804 to 1948 is evidence of a people with clarity of thought and ability.4 The press became the home for critique of the Haitian experience, Desquiron writes. To understand how Haiti’s press functioned in the first half of the country’s existence is to recognize the ability of Haiti’s press to draw all comers, all formats, and story-telling structures as a way to communicate to those in power and to relay back to the people, the concerns of the time.

With new technology taking off during the Duvalier dictatorship, Léara Rhodes points out that Haitian scholars see a merging of this literary tradition. While Desquiron notes that Haiti’s nineteenth and twentieth century printed press was aware that the transfer process of published information took place through teledjòl, Rhodes writes that this relay of communication naturally continued with the advent of broadcast radio. However, the teledjòl is not simply a flow of information from published or reported sources to a non-French speaking public. It is the codifying of this information within news reports, be it published or reported, in a manner that draws on societal cues that are picked up during the relay of information.

In 1985, Rhodes points out that Radio Soleil used a program called Garanti la Loi or Guarantee the Law to codify its opposition to censorship under Jean-Claude Duvalier. When the program first started up, it consisted of morning meetings under a tree that included a peasant man and woman, peasant youths and a griot (a respected elder). The peasants would describe their hunger, ask questions of the griot, and express in Haitian Creole phrases that something is going to happen in the country to change conditions.5
When the government realized the potential influence of the popular program it first attempted to jam the broadcast signal of the program, and then used its Ministry of Information to force the station to play a segment produced from the government in the show. Radio Soleil developed a compromise where it inserted the government broadcast into the Garanti la Loi show, but the station then let the program participants cleverly critique the government inserts in an attempt to undermine it. In order to preserve the program, Rhodes summarizes that ordinary Haitians slept at the station to protect it, fed the station’s staff, shared news with the announcers for them to report on air and shared any resources possible.6

In the absence of democracy, the mainstream press took a leadership role in organizing civil society in the 1970s, according to Michele Montas, Radio Haiti Inter’s chief journalist.7 The use of Creole in radio broadcasting was the beginning of a media revolution era that defined Haiti’s broadcasting, Montas writes. Censored foreign news, national political news, local government news, and rural news could all be broadcast in Creole disguised and dressed up under different news formats from news talk to skits, in order to spread concepts about democracy to all corners of the country. An example of this involved Radio Haiti’s report on the end of the Nicaraguan dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in 1979. Montas explains that “since it was not possible to talk about our own dictatorship…” Radio Haiti Inter translated international news about democratization, the turning over of oppressive regimes in Africa and Latin America and concepts of human rights as a tactic to “indirectly reach the political sphere.”8 The Duvalier dictatorship period was a revolutionary period for Haitian media because it required creativity, if not
deceptive maneuvering in broadcast style formats and structure, for not merely journalism to take place, but for civic awakening.

What followed was a “spring time” among Haitian mainstream media as it ushered in a new era of hope for democracy once the Duvalier regime collapsed in 1986. Montas stated of up and coming reporters that “they learned their new trade through the streets.” Montas describes the turbulent transition to democracy as a moment of “collective Haitian catharsis” with the press working to capture the speeches, demonstrations, violent protests, and reorganization of labor and cooperatives under the guarantees of the 1987 Constitution protecting free speech and the right to associate.

With civil society now re-emerging, Montas explains that the media became less of a leader in the movement to democracy as it had done under the dictatorship. The rise of new commercially owned stations which sought not to offend the military junta meant that investigative or civic-minded reporting stayed with a few diehards, except for stories involving national outrage. Montas describes this democratic transition as creating a “balkanization” of Haiti’s press in the 1990s, or a separation by the mainstream media into different camps or alliances. The political chaos of the country’s struggle to transition to democracy in the 1990s defined this “balkanization, with the divisions in the press reaching a height after Haiti’s first democratically elected president was ousted by a 1991 coup d’état. The return of the military to power after this coup worsened the divisions among commercial broadcast outlets, as the military government oversaw a distribution of FM station bands to owners supportive of the military regime. With more radio stations opposing the democratic experiment receiving broadcast licenses, Haiti’s media grew more divided, corrupt and sensational in its coverage during the 1990s.
The dictatorship period, and Haiti’s transition to democracy provided some of the richest contemporary examples of radical journalism among the country’s mainstream, commercial media outlets. However, the media’s experience with democratization was far less fruitful. Haiti’s media divided generally into two camps, one that was either pro-President Aristide, or against President Aristide, for roughly the two decades just before the 2010 earthquake struck. Democracy, and its starts and stops, had a negative impact on the ability of the commercial press to function professionally and independently. The newness of the experiment of democracy, and the fragility of the newly elected government operating under the threat of military coup resulted in a media environment where the leading commercial outlets became politically partisan. Haitian journalists of the dictatorship era experiment described this as a low point for the role of the press in solidifying Haiti’s democracy. For this reason, many mainstream journalists shifted from the new mainstream outlets to the growing alternative media landscape in order to stare the national press back to accountability and a measure of responsibility.

**Alternative media**

The dense rise of commercial radio stations taking advantage of the newfound freedom of expression guaranteed in the 1987 constitution, and at the dawn of democracy, was not the only noteworthy media event taking place in the last two decades in Haiti. The nineties also solidified the presence and importance of Haiti’s alternative media outlets. Like the radical changes in the commercial press began with the work of Radio Soleil and Radio Haïti Inter in the 1970s, so too did the roots of the current alternative media groups emerge out of popular organization that resulted from civil
society demand for regime change, particularly under the collapsing dictatorship of Jean Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier.

It took the public a decade to become disillusioned with the commercial press once democratization had begun in Haiti. On the other hand, several journalists of the dictatorship era began to build alliances outside commercial media outlets, to continue the legacy of the journalism that took place at Radio Haiti Inter and Radio Soleil, to name a few. In fact, the founders of Haiti’s alternative news outlets were former journalists at the leading mainstream news outlets that were instrumental in civic awakening during the dictatorship. Of note, Haiti’s alternative press never truly distinguished or set itself apart from the commercial broadcast and print newspapers. Journalists who worked for alternative news sources also worked for new independent radio and television stations at various stages of their career and found outlets for their work as hosts of programs on commercial stations.

As Haitian broadcaster and professor Vario Sérant explains in his work on the role of Haiti’s press during this time, the goal of the alternative press was to hold the commercial press accountable during the 1990s and early 2000s. Alternative media outlets challenged the work of the mainstream media through its investigative reporting. However, it also sought to work alongside the mainstream media by making its content available for commercial news organizations to re-package and print or broadcast at their will. This combined tactic allowed the alternative media to elevate the role of the media as one that should make a positive contribution to the country’s process of democratization. In describing the role of all forms of Haiti’s media, Sérant wrote that Haiti’s press in general, be it commercial or alternative, was to empower the people
through information that would allow them to form opinions and to make decisions that
would allow them to act in a manner that would improve their lives. The goal of Haiti’s
alternative news outlets was to call for ethics among news workers, analysis of
information given from official sources before dissemination to the public, and for
restraint against the manipulation of the public given the influence of news
organizations.

Haiti’s alternative media in the last two decades sought to include itself into the
mix of commercially influenced news organizations, understand the influence of the
privately owned news outlets and seek to hold it accountable. Of even more significance
of the reach of the alternative news outlets, was the geographic gap that the alternative
press filled. Haiti’s leading commercial media outlets are based in Haiti’s capital, Port-
au-Prince. However, Haiti’s alternative media outlets comprise a network of the
community radios of the countryside that sprung up toward the end of the dictatorship.
Run by peasant groups, women groups, community groups and even youth groups,
community or popular radio stations carrying names like “Voice of the Peasant Radio”
were instrumental in returning President Aristide back to power in the first half of the
nineties and advocating for the strengthening of democracy. As described by Jane Regan,
who has worked for decades with Haiti’s community radio in the countryside:

They had names like... “Wozo” and “Tenite grass” radios (Wozo is a bamboo plant that
even in violent Caribbean storms, “bends but does not break” according to the Haitian proverb,
while Tenite grass is a grass which withstands brutal sun and heat and, even if pulled up, will
grow back.) The organizations which founded them said they were part of a struggle for “total,
complete change,” for “another kind of society” and for “justice.”

Community radio in Haiti, Jane Regan writes, had become a movement by the
early 2000s with “alternative communication” not entirely defining the radical and
revolutionary nature of some of its characteristics. Alternative media in Haiti, of which
community radio was a part of, embodied three core characteristics. Firstly it was participatory for constituents. Secondly, it was horizontal as opposed to vertical, in that it drew a balance between “expert intervention” and “communications populism.” Then, thirdly it was linked to organizations and movements in order to sustain the media project.

Haiti’s alternative press should be considered as mainstream as its commercial press. The characteristics above merely describe its structure and source of support. However, its appeal and consumption levels, particularly in the provinces in Haiti, makes it as mainstream as the content produced by the commercial press. Alternative news in Haiti should not be considered as the go-to outlets for a few radical groups, it carries news and information that is consumed by audiences across all ideological spectrums.

In trying to place Haiti’s alternative media into international trends and theories, Jane Regan writes that “the word ‘alternative’ means nothing and everything.” Likewise, the word “community” is also misplaced because it was simply borrowed from one of the key funding organizations: the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). The term community, like grassroots, “conceals more than it reveals” removing notions of class and social rifts in a specific geographic area. The word best suited for Haitian alternative media, although not without its flaws, is also the one scholars have found embraced throughout Latin America and that is “popular.” In describing the nature and structure of Latin American popular communication,” Perez-Sanchez describes them as radio stations,

directed towards urban and rural sectors; try to offer a mix of education, entertainment and political orientation; use of new formats […] prepared by local, non-professional sectors; financed with publicity, international assistance or audience contributions, the staff usually comes from commercial radio; its it the property of the Church or educational organizations.
Additionally, in pointing out the very mainstream nature of alternative media, Regan writes that the word “radio popular” first appeared in the Latin American context and not in the North American one. Its meanings in Spanish translated to “of the people,” or “of, representing, or carried on by the people,” while in Haitian Creole popular translated to “the popular masses,” or the “popular majority.” While the international non-profit AMARC adopted the term community radio, it is the Latin-American Association of Radiophonic Education (ALER), Regan states that adopted the term popular radio to take the term beyond the notion of radio for “workers, peasants and marginalized sectors.” The definition of popular radio today in Latin America is as such:

….it has a larger and more global meaning and includes sectors excluded or marginalized from their rights or from economic, social and political benefits of society for various reasons: some for their gender, ethnicity, location in the productive system, geographic location, participation in the distribution of wealth, etc.

The definitions for popular radio from ALER had a great influence in shaping the mission and structure of alternative media in Haiti, but it was not the only factor in its evolution. As Jane Regan points out, in the first decade of the rise of alternative news organizations in Haiti, there has been continued redefining of who they are as many local radio stations were born out of popular organization from the fall of the dictatorship, and less out of the transplanting of community radio projects from international associations. It was this evolution that embodied alternative media in Haiti, Regan writes, and which has given Haiti’s alternative news outlets mainstream positioning during the first decade of its rise and currently in the post-2010 earthquake reconstruction context.

Haiti’s alternative media warrants and deserve inclusion in the study of the post-2010 earthquake media landscape given the nature of its inception, popular support, and
news worker’s career background in the commercial press. This dissertation argues that
alternative news groups are merely labels, but that their existence and influence is no less
mainstream and that the lack of a commercial funding base does not disqualify them from
legitimate study as the commercial press. Likewise, the research conducted for this study
from 2010 to 2013 argues that the crisis has forced a realignment of Haiti’s media
landscape from what existed prior to 2010, merging the worlds of the commercial and
alternative media outlets in meaningful ways than what existed under the partisan divides
of the first two decades of Haiti’s fledgling democracy.

**The 2010 earthquake and beyond**

In 2013, the leading mainstream and alternative media outlets in Haiti were
members or affiliates of three key associations (see Table 1 below). These three
associations were the subjects for original research conducted for this dissertation. They
include two commercial media affiliations: the Association Nationale des Médias
Haïtiens (ANMH) and the Association des Médias Indépendants (AMIH). The third
association is a collective effort of the largest alternative media outlets under the Ayiti
Kale Je banner or Haiti Grassroots Watch, which is an attempt to harness the strengths of
the alternative media platform for reporting and disseminating investigative news about
Haiti’s current reconstruction (see Table 1 for members of each affiliation).
## Table 1: 2013 Haitian media associations/affiliations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L’Association Nationale des Médias Haïtiens (ANMH)</th>
<th>L’Association des Médias Indépendants (AMIH)</th>
<th>Ayiti Kale Je consortium (AKJ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Nouvelliste</td>
<td>Mélodie FM 103.3</td>
<td>The Society for the Animation of Social Communications (Sosyete Animasyon Kominikasyon Sosyal or SAKS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Signal FM</td>
<td>Solidarité 107.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Antilles International</td>
<td>Radio Télé Ginen</td>
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<td>Radio Télé Kiskeya</td>
<td>Radio Télé MegaStar</td>
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<td>Radio Télé Galaxie</td>
<td>Haïti en Marche</td>
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<td>Radio Télé Métropole</td>
<td>Agence de Nouvelles en Ligne (AHP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Ibo</td>
<td>Mega FM 95.5</td>
<td>The Haitian Women’s Community Radio Network (Réseau des Femmes des Radios Communautaires Haïtiennes or REFRAKA)</td>
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<td>Radio Super Star</td>
<td>Radio Télé Indigène</td>
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<td>Radio Sud FM</td>
<td>Canal 1</td>
<td>Alterm_LOGO 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio One</td>
<td>Tropic FM 91.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Magik 9</td>
<td>Yaguana FM Léogane</td>
<td>Faculté des Sciences Humaines, L’Université D’État D’Haïti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Interstellaire des Gonaires</td>
<td>L’Heure de Vérité Lestère</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Télédiffusion Cayenne</td>
<td>Radio Télé Mirebalais</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Planet FM</td>
<td>Cool FM 97.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Caraïbes</td>
<td>RD Plus FM 87.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Bleu</td>
<td>La Brise Camp Perrin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Zenith</td>
<td>Radio Macaya</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RFM</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Télé Sans Frontières</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambiance FM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Vision Plus</td>
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</table>

The following is a brief history and recent developments of the three key associations in order to explain the media realignments that are taking place under the reconstruction. Firstly, what follows below is a summary of the memberships of each group and secondly, a discussion of the media ownership of these three associations.
L’Association Nationale des Médias Haïtiens (ANMH)

Formed in 2001, the ANMH is an association that represents the owners of Haiti’s most prominent mainstream news organizations. What began as an association of 12 radio stations and 3 TV stations, the ANMH currently holds the largest number of members of any media association in Haiti. Most importantly, Haiti’s oldest newspaper, *Le Nouvelliste*, owned for generations by the Chauvet family, is a key member of the ANMH. In 2013, *Le Nouvelliste* was the only newspaper publishing daily after the 2010 earthquake. Members of the ANMH have been ranked from 2010 to 2013 as having the highest radio and television audiences in the country with their programs syndicated to affiliate stations outside the capital. Therefore, beyond their core members, their reach and representation extends throughout the entire country. In 2012, broadcaster Lilliane Pierre-Paul, founder and co-owner of Radio Télé Kiskeya, took over as the head of the ANMH. Max Chauvet, the current owner of *Le Nouvelliste*, preceded her. Chauvet led the ANMH during the immediate aftermath of the earthquake and he spoke on behalf of all Haitian commercial media outlets at international events following the disaster.²⁷

Media observers have criticized the nine years in which the ANMH existed before the earthquake because of the political affiliations and stances taken by the ANMH. The ANMH had been described as taking a “hostile” stance against President Jean Bertrand Aristide’s second term in office from 2001 and in supporting Aristide’s force from office in 2004. Critics also pointed to the ANMH’s support of the regime that replaced Aristide. It was because of such political maneuvering that the AMIH was born in 2005, as a separate media association to challenge such political stances taken by the ANMH.²⁸ The ANMH was criticized in the Haiti chapter of the 2005 World Press Freedom report
published by the International Press Institute to offer a global survey of state controls on the press and media independence in crisis areas. The 2005 report stated that the ANMH published editorial positions in support of the Group 184, of which some media owners also belonged to. The Group 184 developed into an alliance of business owners in 2002, from various sectors, which opposed President Aristide’s policies. The group has disputed its ties to the Washington, D.C. funded Haiti Democracy Project and the American International Republican Institute, that researchers have noted to have funding ties to groups behind President Aristide’s forced ousting from office in 2004. Additionally, the 2005 World Press Freedom report stated that the ANMH’s negatively reported on clashes with supporters of Aristide’s Fanmi Lavalas party and the interim government put in place after Aristide’s 2004 ouster. Aristide supporters from poor shanty towns were described as “outlaws” and “terrorists” as the ANMH reports carried sourcing mostly from police and politicians.

The 2005 World Press Freedom described the rift brewing within Haiti’s commercial news outlets as such:

> a clear division had emerged, with one section of the media slanting its broadcasts in such a way as to appeal to the preconceived opinions and hardening prejudices of the small middle and upper classes, and another actively seeking the voices of ordinary people and those critical of the interim government, and thereby appealing more to the majority poor population.

The ANMH has stated that its mission has been to professionalize journalism in Haiti and assistance from North American democracy and media programs has funded training for journalists on norms. However, the very creation of the rival organization AMIH was to call for neutrality among media organizations and in some cases to support the democratic election of the Aristide administration and the right for the Lavalas party to contest elections.
Media Ownership Patterns

To better explain the rift described above that led to the formation of the L’Association des Médias Indépendants, or AMIH, the media ownership background of the membership of the ANMH should be addressed. The analysis of media ownership is significant for media scholars in order to contextualize the influences within media structures that shape news content. A look at media ownership helps to explain the “market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship” that takes place within the media system in the absence of “overt-coercion.”

It is also important not to make generalizations about all members of the ANMH, but to distinguish key players who may have influenced stances taken by the association in the decade before the 2010 earthquake. The membership of the ANMH has a diverse media ownership background. To make this illustration of the group’s diversity clear, a quick comparison of key members demonstrates this. The Chauvet family, which owns Le Nouvelliste, has had a patriarch owner, Ernest Chauvet, arrested in 1927 for criticism of the Council of Government set up during the U.S. Occupation, and the paper was closed for three months in 1922 by the Council when another patriarch Henri Chauvet refused to reveal an informant for a political news report. The family early on established Le Nouvelliste to provide objective journalism as the country’s paper of record. During the Duvalier dictatorship, the paper carefully censored itself to ensure survival, however it demonstrated challenges to the dictatorship over time and increased its critique particularly during Jean-Claude Duvalier’s regime. Another member, Radio Télé Kiskeya has a more recent history of providing critical advocacy journalism as Le Nouvelliste had done during the U.S. Occupation. Radio Kiskeya was founded in 1994 by
three well-respected Haitian journalists Lillianne Pierre-Paul, Marvel Dandin and Sony Bastien. All three founders were reporters at Radio Haïti Inter during the dictatorship, the station most critical to advocacy journalism during this time.³⁵

Additionally, the ANMH membership also includes owners who are described as “media entrepreneurs” and “multi-investment” businessmen. Such owners range from Patrick Moussignac, who owns several broadcast stations, of which the flagship is Radio Télé Caraïbes, and Réginald Boulos, who in 2003 bought over and restructured Le Matin, founded in 1907. Le Matin, the other newspaper of record in Haiti, published on a weekly schedule in 2013 as a result of the earthquake’s affect on its resources. Boulos’ radio station holdings are members of the ANMH, and Boulos background includes several titles ranging from the president of Haiti’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry as well as the head of the G184 that opposed Aristide’s second term in office from 2001 to 2004. Boulos’ investments range from media, to banking, to ownership of the Delimart supermarket chain, and auto vehicle imports. Therefore, the owners of the ANMH are both recent and historical players in Haiti’s media landscape. Some are exclusively rooted in the world of journalism while others carry a range of business interests of which radio broadcast ownership is the primary media investment. Table 2 below further lists the major media groups in Haiti with entities that are members of the ANMH and factors of note for each group that define their media ownership philosophies.
### Table 2: Major media groups in Haiti: ANMH members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Group Name</th>
<th>Key holdings</th>
<th>Ownership background</th>
<th>2013 revenue sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANMH members:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groupe Le Nouvelliste</td>
<td><em>Le Nouvelliste</em> Radio Magik 9 Visa FM 88.1 Magic Haiti magazine Lakay Weekly</td>
<td><em>Le Nouvelliste</em> founded in 1898 by Guillaume Chéraquit and Henri Chauvet. -Max Chauvet and son Pierre Chauvet are current owners -Opposed U.S. occupation -Self-censored during François Duvalier dictatorship when other media forced into exile. -Became more critical during Jean Claude dictatorship. -Neutral during first Aristide administration -Took anti-Aristide editorial position in 2004. -Max Chauvet led the ANMH after the 2010 earthquake.</td>
<td>-Haiti’s private sector advertising -State ads -NGO ads -U.N. agency ads -USAID ads -Journalists at the newspaper also work at the radio stations to supplement incomes from multi-ad platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Kiskeya</td>
<td><em>Radio Télé Kiskeya</em> 88.5 FM Partners: Tet a Tet 202.9 FM Sans Souci 106.9 FM Platinum 88.9 FM</td>
<td>-founded in 1994 by former Radio Haiti Inter veteran journalists Lilianne Pierre-Paul, Marvel Dandin, Sony Bastien -Pierre-Paul is host of popular 4 pm radio news program -Dandin hosts a daily two-hour call in current affairs program -Haitian novelist Lionel Trouillot hosts a literature radio show</td>
<td>-Private sector ads -NGO ads. -State ads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Nouveau Matin SA/ Multipresse</td>
<td><em>Le Matin Radio Vision 2000 99.3FM Chain of 8 local radio stations</em></td>
<td>-Owned by Reginald Boulos, M.D. [Earned a masters in Public Health and Tropical Medicine from Tulane University, New Orleans in 1982 and medical degree in 1981 from Port-au-Prince School of Medicine in Haiti. -Boulos is CEO of Boulos Investment Group which owns Autoplaza S.A., the second largest car dealership in Haiti Delimart, Haiti’s largest supermarket chain and two media companies Le Nouveau Matin and Multipresse</td>
<td>-MINUSTAH FM, the radio station for the U.N. peacekeeping forces in Haiti rents the 8 local station transmitters owned by Le Nouveau Matin. -Le Matin is printed in the Dominican Republic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Moussignac Group | -Boulos is past president of the Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
-Boulos is member of Haitian American Chamber of Commerce, Haitian Medical Association Haitian Association of Public Health  
-Involved in health care and education development projects in Haiti.  
-Boulos’ brother is Senator Rudolph Boulos was a founding member of the U.S. funded Haiti Democracy Project | -USAID ads  
-Private sector ads  
-NGO ads  
-UN agency ads. |
| --- | --- | --- |
L’Association des Médias Indépendants (AMIH).

The AMIH was formed in 2005 by media organizations opposed the ANMH editorial stance against President Aristide’s second term. The association included radio stations with strong U.S. diaspora audiences, as well as a weekly newspaper *Haïti en Marche*, distributed in major diaspora cities such as Miami and New York. In 2013, the head of the AMIH was Marcus Garcia, the co-owner of Radio Mélodie FM and *Haïti en Marche*. Garcia was a former journalist of Radio Métropole who was arrested in 1990 by the military and who later fled into exile in Miami. Garcia’s co-owner, Elsie Ethéart was also arrested and sent into exile in 1980 under Jean Claude Duvalier. Both Garcia and Ethéart set up the newspaper office for *Haïti en Marche* in the “Little Haiti” community in Miami. The other major media group that is a member of the AMIH association is Radio Télé Ginen. Haitian media entrepreneur Jean Lucien Borges owns RTG and like Ethéart and Garcia, Borges first launched his broadcast station to the expatriate community in New York in the 1980s. In 2013, Radio Télé Ginen, which began operating in Port-au-Prince in 1994 ranked second behind the ANMH’s Radio Télé Caraïbes as the most watched and listened to television and radio stations in the country.

The 2010 earthquake wreaked extreme havoc on the physical structures of many of AMIH’s members, most notably with the complete collapse of Radio Mélodie FM and Radio Télé Ginen, of which relatives and staffers lost their lives. As of 2013 Radio Télé Ginen was completely rebuilt in part by a grant program set up by the Préval government to restore key institutions after the earthquake, such as private educational and media organizations (see Appendix A). On the other hand, other members continue to operate in makeshift stations while repair and renovation is underway. While Radio Télé Ginen has
returned to full staff, others like Mélodie FM were operating under a core staff while its building reconstruction took place in 2013. Details about the media ownership of the two key AMIH members is further outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Major media groups in Haiti: AMIH Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Group Name</th>
<th>Key holdings</th>
<th>Ownership background</th>
<th>Revenue sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMIH members:</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Haiti en Marche founded and owned by Elsie Ethheart and Marcus Garcia while in exile in Miami in 1987. -Paper published weekly in Miami and sold in Haiti and across the Haitian diaspora</td>
<td>-Expatriate subscription and ads from grassroots groups, expatriate businesses, religious groups and individual subscribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti en Marche/Mélodie</td>
<td>Haití en Marche Mélodie FM</td>
<td>- Haití en Marche founded and owned by Elsie Ethheart and Marcus Garcia while in exile in Miami in 1987. -Paper published weekly in Miami and sold in Haiti and across the Haitian diaspora</td>
<td>-Expatriate subscription and ads from grassroots groups, expatriate businesses, religious groups and individual subscribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginen Broadcasting Group</td>
<td>Radio Télé Ginen Rebroadcasted on eight different FM stations in the provinces: Port-au-Prince (92.9 FM and 1030 AM) Miragoane 99.5 FM Hinche 92.9 FM Marmelade 100.7 FM Cap-Haïtien 92.1 FM Port-de-Paix 92.9 FM</td>
<td>Jean Lucien Borges is the owner -Broadcasting began in New York in 1987. -Established in Port-au-Prince on April 3, 1994. -Borges has taken a hands-on approach to editorial content from RTG. -The station was aired coverage sympathetic to Lavalas supporters before the earthquake -The station has appeal to both Lavalas supporters and detractors -Station has strong Haitian expatriate appeal</td>
<td>-Private sector ads -NGO ads -State ads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are also other media groups operating in Haiti whose impact are significant but who are not affiliated as members of either the ANMH and AMIH given their ownership. The groups that fall into this category serve niche areas such as religious broadcasting and official public broadcasting. However, the significance of these groups, particularly to Haiti’s recent media history should be noted, especially Radio Soleil, owned and operated by the Catholic Church, that was discussed in chapter 3. Others groups with no affiliation are outlined in Table 4 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Group Name</th>
<th>Key holdings</th>
<th>Ownership background</th>
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</table>
| Roman Catholic Church Radio Stations, Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince | -Port-au-Prince: Radio Soleil 105.7 FM  
-Les Cayes: Radio Men Kontre 95.5 FM  
-Jacmel: Radio Ephphatha 91.7 FM  
-Hinche: Centre Radio de L’Immaculée Conception 103.5 FM  
-Gonaïves: Radio Christ Roi 98.7 FM  
-Jérémie: Radio Tet Ansanm 105.9 FM  
-Cap-Haïtien: Radio Voix Ave Maria 98.5 FM  
-Port-de-Paix: Radio Voix de la Paix 94.7 FM  
-Port-Liberté: Radio Parole de Vie 89.9 FM | -Radio Soleil started broadcasting in 1978.  
-Reported on the crackdown of the mainstream media in the 1980s under Jean-Claude Duvalier that saw journalists arrested and radio stations closed.  
-Jean-Claude expelled the director of Radio Soleil in 1985 and closed Soleil and Radio Ave Maria.  
The regime was forced to reopen Radio Soleil 18 days later after the U.S. government pressured Jean Claude.  
-All 9 stations run separately but coordinated by director of Radio Soleil Father Désinor Jean  
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese is the funding source for its broadcast holdings and printed publications. |
| Radio Télé Lumière Ile-de-la-Tortue: 100.3 FM  
Beaumont: 91.7 FM | -Owned by the Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti (MEBSH)  
-Radio Lumière first broadcasted in Les Cayes in 1958 by Canadian Baptist |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port-de-Paix: 94.7 FM</td>
<td>missionary. -Radio Lumière, like Radio Soleil, covered the mainstream media crackdown by the Duvalier regime in the 1980s. -Jean-Claude Duvalier closed Radio Lumière in 1985. -Télé Lumière has broadcasted since 2001. -2013 Director General: Pastor Varnel Jeune -RTL has a news division</td>
<td>-Run by Haiti’s Ministry of Communication -Jean-Claude Duvalier launched RNH in 1977 and TNH in 1979. -Government information station, airs parliament proceedings, government events and national documentaries -Shares news teams of 40 newworkers -Local soap opera Destinee is extremely popular on TNH -Aired political debates for 2010 elections -During the media crackdown of the 1980s, Jean Claude Duvalier dismissed the director of TNH for speaking to foreign reporters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSTAH FM</td>
<td>MINUSTAH FM</td>
<td>-Radio station for the U.N’s peacekeeping force in Haiti also called MINUSTAH -Started broadcasting in 2007 via internet after Préval administration refused to grant it a license. -Bought air time from Le Nouveau Matin SA stations and started broadcasting in Creole in 2008 -Employs 40 Haitian broadcasters -Managed by Haitian expatriates -Provides 24/7 development news coverage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ayiti Kale Je consortium

Ayiti Kale Je, or Haiti Grassroots Watch, is a collaborative journalism effort by Haiti’s leading alternative media news outlets to pool resources to maintain accountability during the reconstruction process. Many of Haiti’s commercial and alternative news organizations alike experienced mild to complete destruction of their facilities, and an immediate halt in revenues, following the 2010 earthquake. Ayiti Kale Je, which began its work in August 2010 became the first example of media collaboration to emerge in Haiti with a specific goal of covering the aftermath of the disaster.

AKJ maintains its own office but shares staff, resources, news content and distribution throughout its network of journalism produced under the effort. The key organizations involved in AKJ are Alterpresse, the online news site for Groupe Mediaalternatif; the Society for the Animation of Social Communications (Sosyete Animasyon Kominikasyon Sosyal – SAKS), Haiti’s community radio network; and the Haitian Women’s Community Radio Network (Réseau des Femmes des Radios Communautaires Haïtiennes or REFRAKA). In addition to the three alternative media groups and their networks of stations across the country, journalism students at the State University of Haiti’s Faculty of Human Sciences (Faculté des Sciences Humaines, L’Université D’État) also participate in the project as reporters and intern staffers in what the program founders described as a “teaching hospital for journalism”.

According to Jane Regan, the founder and coordinator of the effort, the following are the stated goals of the consortium:

- To do investigative journalism examining and exposing projects and issues related to Haiti’s “reconstruction” from a progressive grassroots perspective;
- To expose lies or obfuscations in mainstream media and/or coming from government, multilateral, bilateral and humanitarian institutions involved in reconstruction;
- To build capacity at every single step of the reporting and content production process;
• To create content which – while characterized by in-depth analysis – is accessible to all levels of the public in Haiti as well as in North America and Europe:
  o Audio in Haitian Creole
  o Text in French and English
  o Video in Haitian Creole, with a subtitled English version;
• To distribute content via “networked” methods, via traditional “mainstream,” “alternative” and social media channels, as well as via video screenings accompanied by discussions.41

As such, AKJ has attempted to channel reporting that would speak to the international community’s control of the reconstruction process, as well as to hold the Haitian government accountable for its responsibility to its citizens in getting the country moving again. Despite its heavy use of the networks of alternative or community media organizations, AKJ states that its work is mainstream with the goal of running through mainstream news sources and conducting journalism in the public interest.42

The final mission of the AKJ consortium stated above, distinguishes it from the understanding of how alternative media functions in the North American sense. It also differs from the role of grassroots media in the Latin American sense as well. The AKJ consortium measures its impact by its use by the mainstream commercial press. The more the reporting of the AKJ consortium is reprinted, re-aired, or seized upon by the mainstream press to generate additional coverage is the benchmark of its success. In the North American sense, alternative media platforms have used the Internet and the blogosphere, or have attached themselves to leftist or conservative causes to disseminate its reports. In the Latin American sense, alternative media has often been restricted to being the mouthpiece for grassroots organizations or causes and may or may not strive for direct ties to the commercial press as is discussed in Chapter 3. In the Haiti case, the alternative media existed before in this Latin American approach as separate entities. However, under the combined effort of the AKJ project, the alternative media outlets now have a direct relationship with the commercial mainstream press and radio for
disseminating their reports. This makes the AKJ project a unique relationship that defines
the current media landscape in Haiti compared to elsewhere in the region. Chapter 5 and
6 further outlines key ways in which the AKJ project and the mainstream media have
collaborated since the 2010 earthquake.

**Media collaboration during the earthquake and reconstruction**

The impetus for collaboration among media groups after the 2010 earthquake was
one born out of necessity. The crisis created an opportunity for media organizations to
rise to the challenge of the public’s need for information or face irrelevance after the
preceding decade undermined press credibility due to the pro-and-anti Aristide stances of
the largest organizations. The first sign of this change began in 2011 with the mending of
bridges between the ANMH and the AMIH. Both organizations came together to issue a
unified statement with regards to the state of the country a year after the disaster and to
speak out against the closing of television and radio stations in smaller towns in 2012 and
2013 by the Ministry of Communication’s telecommunications division.  

With President Michel Martelly’s controversial election in 2011, the ANMH and
AMIH began acting jointly, releasing statements against the administration for its critical
statements against the press, and inciting of its followers to harm journalists. The
administration has issued memos to the media via the Ministry of Justice stating that the
“Haitian legal code severely punishes defamation, threats and calls to violence,” in
response to critical radio broadcasts of the organization of the 2013 carnival.

The associations have stopped short of stating that journalists’ lives are in danger.
However, they have found their broadcast licenses under threat for renewal, or changes in
tax structure and fees as reprisal from the administration for critical reporting.  

In other
cases, officials have sidelined journalists who produce reports critical of the government for interviews, and in other cases journalists have had their equipment damaged by administration supporters at public events.  

Concerns about the Martelly government has not been the only cause of joint action by both the ANMH and AMIH. The two media associations have spoken about the need for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which operates a radio station MINUSTAH FM, to leave the country. Additionally, both associations have been vocal about the distribution of reconstruction aid dollars that has largely bypassed the Haitian government and Haitian people and has been redirected to non-governmental agencies with pet projects.

Despite joint editorial stances and a show of solidarity, media observers have argued that at least in the first two years of the reconstruction, little mainstream media content, outside of editorials, has reflected journalism challenging the course of the reconstruction. While the adversarial tone among news fraternities instantly changed, the quality of news reporting has had a slower turnaround from the decade before. As Jane Regan pointed out in a report advocating the importance of the AKJ project, the inclination for journalists at commercial outlets to fall prey to corruption remains given low salaries at some outlets and old habits at larger ones. Additionally, a 2013 Code of Ethics signed by members of Haiti’s media associations, as well as workshops provided by aid agencies to “reconstruct Haitian journalism” has not resulted in quantitative increases in quality journalism.

Examples of questionable journalistic ethics under the current conditions include the practice of accepting of all-expense covered trips to report on the projects in the
countryside or overseas by aid agencies. Additionally, journalists accept hundreds or thousands of dollars in per diem reimbursements for travel to press conferences of donor agencies. Additionally, journalists may hold more than one jobs reporting for news organizations and conducting communications work for international agencies. As one observer wrote in a 2012 report “decisions that may seem unethical elsewhere in the world are status quo here.”

Journalists revealed that the cost of rebuilding their homes, funding their families who they have sent abroad, paying for limited public services has led to such actions among their colleagues. One 2012 study found that journalists typically could earn as low as $100 US a month to $500 US a month if they worked at major outlets in Port-au-Prince. For those who worked in the provinces, the earnings were far less.

Outside of the Code of Ethics set in place by the media organizations, journalism education in the country consists of mostly in-house reporter training, workshops and mentorships. Among the established academia in the country, there is no bachelor’s degree program in journalism, only courses offered through the Faculté des Science Humaines of the State University of Haiti. After the earthquake, one private university attempted to offer a Masters in Journalism program where no undergraduate communications or journalism program even existed. The short-lived master’s program received a grant of 350 thousand Euro from a donor, that trained 26 journalists, costing $17,230 US per student, with only a retention rate in the profession of a one-third of the graduates. The others left to go on to other fields and the program ran out of funding in 2012 and subsequently closed.
A content analysis carried out by Haitian university professor Vario Sérant found that mainstream news reports largely continued to publish state press releases in full, unchallenged reports from political opponents or the state, and the event coverage from press conferences of reconstruction projects.\textsuperscript{52}

However, the slow pace of the reconstruction and the impact of the devastation on the commercial press’ bottom line have led economic concerns to improve journalistic practices. After three years of the AKJ project’s presence, mainstream reporting on the reconstruction had been challenged and forced to improve. As of 2013, \textit{Le Nouvelliste} has received backlash from the government for its complete re-publication of AKJ investigative reports and its original follow-up reporting. This has been extended to their affiliations, with AKJ reports now becoming the subject of the leading radio and television programs in the country using their interview or news programs to re-package the reports or to conduct follow up interviews with officials with regards to the findings of the reports. Additionally, the affiliates of the members of the AKJ consortium air audio versions of the investigative reconstruction reports throughout the provinces, triggering a train reaction of local investigative reports on projects taking place outside of the capital.\textsuperscript{53} Chapters 5 and 6 further outline the changes found in 2013 among journalists and in their news content, as a result of this collaboration-taking place stemming from the movement of reconstruction news across news groups and formats.

\textbf{The disaster’s effect on News Ownership Philosophies}

The first half of this chapter outlined how the political fallout of the first two decades of democratization in Haiti created partisan divides in mainstream journalism and undermined the commercial press. The second half of this chapter, which relies on
interviews conducted with key informants in Haiti’s media landscape helps explain the demands on journalism, the constraints on owners and the changes they have made, as well as the sustainability of quality journalism under the current media environment.

Methodology

Sample

In keeping with the most recent studies conducted on the Haitian media, the case study approach has been selected in picking news organizations, news workers, as well as related news content for research analysis. As discussed earlier, the goal of this dissertation was to assess the effect the 2010 earthquake and subsequent reconstruction had on Haiti’s news organizations, news workers and the content they produced. Beginning with the alignment of news organizations, the subject of this chapter, the most recent count in 2012 of Haitian radio stations included 375, with 50 being based in the capital, Port-au-Prince. The report also counted 60 TV stations in the country, with 20 based in the capital. Daily radio use by the general population averages above 90-percent with less than 8-percent of the population having access to daily television programming. After 2010, the country was left with only one of its two daily newspapers Le Nouvelliste, publishing on a daily schedule. Estimated daily printing for Le Nouvelliste was 15,000 copies in 2012. Le Matin, which switched to weekly publishing schedule after the earthquake, expects to resume its daily publishing schedule in 2014. Another dozen bi-weekly and monthly newspapers are published in Port-au-Prince and in the provinces but none rival the print circulation and online readership levels of Le Nouvelliste and Le Matin, particularly online for Haitians in the diaspora.
Given the general population for news organizations in Haiti in 2012, the ANMH, the AMIH and AKJ allowed for a wide net of views and opinions from the different organizations because of the membership of the vast majority of Haitian media outlets in one of the three affiliations. Likewise, the three organizations’ core members consists of the oldest operating news organizations in the country that have endured regime changes, and whose longevity are testament to their market prominence, given the tendency for high news organization turnover in Haiti as stations and newspapers would open only to close their doors the next year. Additionally, one of the founding members of the ANMH remains Haiti’s oldest commercial newspaper, *Le Nouvelliste*, which is 115 years old and considered the nation’s paper of record. As shown in table 1 above, the organizations represented by these three organizations include the broadcast stations with the largest market share, mostly in the capital. It is also significant to note that the vast majority of stations in the provinces are affiliated with the leading metropolitan stations and syndicate, rebroadcast or share content agreements with the most popular broadcast stations located in Port-au-Prince.

The AKJ consortium represents the rest of Haiti’s media landscape because its members are the community and regionally owned radio stations that fall outside of the affiliations of the mainstream commercial press. With the largest of this network being SAKs (see Appendix B) its members share philosophy platforms, resources, news content, and staff.

Research was conducted in Port-au-Prince, Haiti over a six-month period from March to August 2013 at 30 news organizations belonging to the three affiliations. A total of 75 news workers were interviewed for this study overall. Of the 75 newsworkers
interviewed, only the key informants for this dissertation are identified by name and are
listed in Appendix C. Key informants are media industry leaders in Haiti be it owners or
news editors who have spoken on national and international platforms on behalf of
Haitian media associations and who are most familiar with North American academic
research. The total number of key informants in this study is 15. The other 60
newsworkers interviewed in this study are primarily reporters, radio announcers, editors
and producers. While all 75 subjects interviewed for this dissertation provided consent
for the use of their names, only key informants were identified in this dissertation and all
other newsworkers were kept anonymous so as not to endanger their jobs. This decision
was taken after careful consideration of the Tulane University Institutional Review Board
guidelines for working with subjects in crisis situations, in high-risk positions whose
primary language is different from the published research. However, news workers
whose names remain anonymous in this dissertation are identified by their rank, job
description and the type of news organization they work for to place their interviews in
context.

Factors that affected the sampling included the lack of communication feedback
from potential subjects for participation in the study. This study targeted 100 news
organizations for inclusion in this research project, with a response rate to various
methods of invitation at about 65-percent. Many news organizations provided news
content for analysis, but deferred interviews to their parent companies, or news
organization affiliations. In some cases, station owners resided abroad and were
unavailable for interviews for scheduled visits. As such the heads of the three
organizations/consortiums spoke on behalf of their membership, as well as provided
follow up communication for station owners indicating their desire for the head of the association to speak on their behalf. This reluctance in participation was improved on the ground after face-to-face visits with station owners who were reluctant about the interests of North American based researchers into their news organization backgrounds, affiliations and practices. As such, on meeting the primary researcher, who was also of Caribbean descent, the participation rate within organizations expanded in a snowball effect, which allowed for larger sample of news workers to be included in the project, compared to the total number of news organizations themselves within the larger population sample.

**Protocol**

The three key organizations offered their consent to represent their association/consortium members for this study. As international representatives and spokespersons of the Haitian media, they also agreed to be identified fully in this dissertation as they have indicated that their public comments are in keeping with the research nature of this study and in no way compromises their positions or places them in any personal harm or jeopardy. The interviews were conducted in French, English and in some cases included Haitian Creole phrases and terms. The list of key informants for this first research component area can be found in Appendix C.

**Research Component One**

The purpose of interviewing the heads of the three key media associations/consortiums in Haiti was to determine the impact of the 2010 natural disaster on new organization principles and practices after the earthquake. Interviews conducted with key informants addressed the following research areas:
1: How has the earthquake and reconstruction impacted the dynamics of the media landscape in Haiti that existed before 2010?

2: In what ways have media organizations altered principles and practices in response to these changes?

Findings

1: How has the earthquake and reconstruction impacted the dynamics of the media landscape in Haiti that existed before 2010?

Six months after the 2010 earthquake, Max E. Chauvet, the owner of Haiti’s oldest surviving newspaper was elected by the members of the ANMH, Haiti’s largest media association to take over the helm. In a personal interview conducted at Le Nouvelliste’s office in June 2013 with Chauvet, the veteran media owner sought to clarify what the rest of the world thought was going on in Haiti and what was really taking place. For outsiders, it was as if Haitian institutions had gone silent, abandoned their duty, and that the population was left to chaos. Chauvet stated that unlike Hurricane Katrina when neighboring cities to New Orleans could continue the local coverage or provide resources for displaced journalists to be housed and continue their jobs, the leading media outlets in Port-au-Prince, the center of the disaster, were crippled. The media houses outside the capital had relied on Port-au-Prince outlets for news and information as they had limited staff and resources to provide that coverage.

Marcus Garcia, the head of AMIH, Haiti’s rival association, not only narrowly escaped the collapse of his radio station, but remembered running through the streets of the centre ville (downtown) to his house to discover it had collapsed, killing his wife. The events taking place in the hours after the earthquake with Marcus Garcia echoed similarly
over at the head offices of SAKs, the community radio network, and REFRAKA, the women-broadcasting network, which also saw their buildings completely damaged. Marie Guyleine Justin, the director of REFRAKA, sustained serious injury to her face, with Justin almost losing an ear in the destruction.

With news bureaus collapsing in part or in full and journalists still returning from assignment that Tuesday, January 12, 2010, only minutes before newsroom deadlines around 5 pm, the first instinct to reporters and news managers battling a plume of smoke from collapsed buildings was “is my family alive, are my children okay, is the staff hurt?” Within the first 24 hours after the disaster, the international aid community on the ground was also crippled and tending to their own staffers, leaving the Haitian people to their own efforts, Chauvet, Garcia and Sony Esteus of SAKs recalled.

So who came to the help of the local media? What happened among Haitian media outlets was something natural to the konbit spirit of community assistance. Within hours of the destruction stations in Pétionville that had feared better in the disaster came to the aid of media outlets and their staffers in the heart of the city. Garcia recalled AMIH affiliates in unaffected provinces bringing water and food supplies to the aid of Mélodie FM. The vast network of provincial community radio stations in the province reached out to help the devastated SAKs located in a suburb of Port-au-Prince. The primary nature of this help was a humanitarian one. With Chauvet turning the newspaper’s building into a makeshift lodging for staffers and their families to pool access to limited water and to share food, reporting was secondary, survival was primary. While the international community already based in Haiti saw about themselves first, Haitians took care of their own and the same was the case for the national media devastated in Port-au-Prince.
Within the first two days of the damage, when loved ones were accounted for, it was only then that media owners organized the most senior of their staffers to get back on air under makeshift partnerships with stations still functioning in the suburbs or in Pétionville or in neighboring cities outside the capital and affected areas. Garcia recalled that as his station and staffers slept in the streets, the general public began arriving at news stations asking for help, making pleas for loved ones and setting up rendezvous points for family members to reconnect or to connect to relatives living outside the capital. The demand for the relay of information in the capital altered the nature of reporting in the aftermath of the crisis and became the primary function of Haitian national radio stations. This too was also the mission of *Le Nouvelliste*, which reset the radio station associated with the paper, *Magik 9*, at the home of the editor in chief Frantz Duval, allowing a core team of national reporters to relay news and information over the radio airwaves, until the paper could begin publishing online first and then in print again.

The disaster aftermath brought news workers of all affiliations together. Chauvet remembered receiving an invitation in the first few months after the disaster to deliver an address in Aruba at the semi-annual meeting of the Inter American Press Association, the IAPA, as *Le Nouvelliste* was a member, and the organizers had hoped his presence would articulate to the international press corp ways they could help Haiti’s national media get back on its feet. Chauvet’s response to questions about what help the paper received: “I got one laptop and 2 cameras to take pictures. Basically, that is it.” Marcus Garcia, head of AMIH, echoed a similar response to Chauvet “il nous a donné 5 ordinateurs et un petit laptop.” [Author’s translation: They gave us five computers and a small laptop.]
Garcia had a similar experience with international assistance for Haiti’s national media outlets. He had found out that the U.S. Federal Communications Commission was looking into ways to assist Haitian broadcasting in the crisis because as the FCC saw it “qu’ils comprennent très bien comme ils nous ont expliqué le rôle que jouent les médias.” [Author’s translation: that they understood very well, as they explained to us, the role the media plays]. In terms of deciding whom to distribute such assistance too, Garcia advised that the FCC team chat with Conatel, the telecommunications division of the Ministry of Communication. Garcia pointed out that the FCC had announced it had given out aide.

The FCC had given its assistance “aux américains en Haïti,” a Conatel official informed Garcia, but the official had no knowledge of what American agency local media outlets should go to. As such, of that broadcasting aid given by the FCC, Garcia said no national broadcasters received money, equipment or transmitters from such benevolence.

For the alternative media, the story was slightly different. With their funding sources coming from international non-profit agencies (see Appendix D), SAKs and REFRAKA were able to quickly find a new building to house their operations and begin to pool reporting capacity on the disaster and its aftermath as the Ayiti Kale Je project picked up funding towards the middle of 2010. The story for the commercial national press was a bit bleaker, and in some cases the progress and rebuilding process was still in preliminary phases in 2013. The lack of response from the international community to the devastation of Haiti’s commercial press led to one natural progression, Max Chauvet said. “We create alliance between us. We stick together, but I don’t think we can create alliance with anybody. I don’t think so. We are too small.”
The alliance was an ironic necessity, Chauvet continued, since it meant media owners who must compete against each other are also helping one another to survive.

What we have to do does not have to be essentially linked to the earthquake. It is more of a societal problem. The press has done a lot [to be] honest. People listen to radio, people, let me explain this to you. We have a problem here, the society is weak, public opinion is weak, the media are the public opinion in Haiti. The media are too weak because there are too many radios too many TVs in Haiti. For solid enough of revenues, our revenues are only from advertising. It is the same amount that instead being divided by ten is divided by 60, 80. So you have an income issue. You won’t get good journalism if your journalists are not well paid, if they don’t live a decent life. They will be corrupted or they will have to go for another job. So it is an economic problem first.

….Media is weak, let’s say they are weak. I believe that Le Nouvelliste has the largest staff of newsmen, some of them, they work with affiliated radio station. We have to make synergy so they can get fair salary so they are as professional as they can be and few of them, I [may] be one but not the only one, the very few that are willing to send people to formation program, whatever. So all of this shows you that I don’t think we have the capacity to be a major player in the reconstruction. We cannot do investigation, we don’t have the people. We don’t have the means for that. You go to some radios and you tell them you are going to work on an investigation. You give us a journalist one day a week, they cannot afford it. They are under staff. Well, what am I gonna do? It is very complicated. It’s, it’s, it’s, I don’t know. You know sometimes you go after a [project], you are aware of a situation, and everything that ONGs (ONGs) that have about 10 people on their staff writing articles and communicating saying everything. They have the means that we don’t have so it is gonna be a though fight. We can only influence the government.29

2: In what ways have media organizations altered principles and practices in response to these changes?

In making an address to an international meeting on the state of reconstruction in Haiti, Max Chauvet was openly critical of the international community’s handling of international aid to Haiti. As the owner of a leading news organization and head of a media association, Chauvet gathered his team of reporters together and instructed them within the first year of the disaster that it was no longer business as usual.

This new found vigor had come in part from a re-organized alternative media under the Ayiti Kale Je consortium that had begun pounding out report after report about the stalled reconstruction of the country in an attempt to reveal the true nature of international assistance and foreign meddling in the post-earthquake presidential election process. As pointed out by Sony Esteus, the executive director for SAKs, “Oui avec Ayiti
Kale Je, on réussit à infiltrer des certaines informations, *Le Nouvelliste* utilise, Radio Télé Métropole, Radio Kiskeya utilise nos reportages, nos investigations.”

[Author’s translation: Yes, with Ayiti Kale Je, we succeeded in spreading certain information, *Le Nouvelliste* uses it, Radio Télé Métropole, Radio Kiskeya uses it, our reporting, our investigations.]

In addition to mainstream national news outlets using the reports from the AKJ consortium, the truth of the reconstruction as now a nationally disseminated story. As Esteus pointed out, the information provided from the reports of the AKJ network are re-broadcast on community radio in the provinces. With Alterpresse as part of the consortium, Gotson Pierre, the head of Mediaalternatif stated that the investigative pieces also receive significant online presence through their site, reaching not just the headquarters of international agencies who have operations participating in the reconstruction, but also of the Haitian diaspora concerned about the progress of the country since 2010.

The work of the AKJ project has reinvigorated the commercial press that felt burdened under the weight of rebuilding their facilities, paying their staffers and trying to survive on whatever little advertising existed from commerce that had returned since the disaster. The synergy between the alternative media networks and the audience of the mainstream commercial news outlets has been a mutually beneficial outcome of the disaster. As Sony Esteus of SAKs described,

Oui c’est un succès parce que quand le journal du *Nouvelliste* qui est le journal quotidien le plus lu au niveau du pays, mais aussi lu par toutes les classes surtout la classe moyenne et aussi la bourgeoisie. Donc ça a permis de connaître notre travail, mais aussi d’avoir une autre perspective de ce qui se passe au-delà de la reconstruction parce que nos investigations c’est pas seulement à Port-au-Prince, mais nous allons on dit à Caracole, on fait une zone franche, on va à Caracole pour interroger les gens, les ouvriers, les économistes qu’est-ce qui se passe pour ne pas laisser seulement la propagande internationale et la propagande gouvernementale et aussi du secteur privé qui dit que la zone franche soutraite c’est le sauveur pour Haïti. Alors, quand on
utilise des terre qu’on pouvait cultiver, qui pouvaient faire de la nourriture pour mettre des usines, on parle des mines, de l’exploitation minière, donc on va sur le terrain on rencontre les paysans, les acteurs on diffuse ça sur Port-au-Prince, on diffuse ça sur l’internationale qui permet d’écouter la voix aussi des exclus de l’information; c’est ainsi qu’on arrive à porter notre contribution sur ce qui se passe sur la reconstruction.

[Author’s translation: Yes it is a success because when the newspaper, Le Nouvelliste, which is the daily journal, the most read of the country, but also read among all the classes, especially the middle classes and the bourgeoisie. This allows them to know of our work, but also to have another perspective of what is taking place with the reconstruction because our investigations are not only in Port-au-Prince, but we have said about Caracole, where they have made a free zone, we have gone to Caracole to investigate the owners, the workers, the economists about what has happened that has allowed the international propaganda, and the government propaganda and also that of the private sector that says that the free zone’s success is the savior of Haiti. Yet, when you use the land that could be cultivated, that could provide food for the peasants, the actors of this [free zone] spread their views in Port-au-Prince, they spread this internationally, allowing their voices to be heard with the exclusion of this information. This is where our contribution on what is taking place in the reconstruction comes in.]

While some observers have argued that the mainstream media needs to be more consistent with its critical approach to reporting on the reconstruction, Max Chauvet has pointed out that the commercial press have been consistent on its critical reports about international aid dollars, the presence and cost of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in Haiti and the delivery of promises by the Martelly government. The stance Chauvet said he and other key media owners has taken has also placed him at odds with the private sector in Haiti, of which they, in belong.

The media is an institution, but like I said, I am the owner of a newspaper and few other institutions tell me why don’t you join us. I said but I am here to criticize you to observe you. I can’t be part of you. It is not [that] I am against you. Either it is a chamber of commerce, either it is so and so, I have to be out of you because I have to criticize.

The importance of the ability of the Haiti’s media to function and compete is not only important for civil society and for the private sector but also for governance. In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, Marcus Garcia explained that the outgoing administration of President Rene Préval made an important decision. Through a grant, mostly from a fund set up by Venezuela’s Petro-Caribe initiative, Préval’s administration funded the rebuilding of Radio Télé Ginen, the number two broadcaster in the country,
and of Canal 11 TV station, Radio Ibo, Radio Antilles, Radio Tropic FM and Radio Télé Antilles, some of which are AMIH members. However, the Préval government also funded the reconstruction of the building of ANMH stations as well, through business grants it could allocate. The decision, Garcia recalled, was not to soften the press. It was because after two decades of divides among the commercial press, the Préval presidency believed that a more diverse commercial press would strengthen the quality of journalism and public expression and provide more avenues for the dissemination of information for the public good “parce qu’ils savent que le pays ne peut rester sans les communications,” Garcia said. [Author’s translation: because he knew the country could not remain without communications, Garcia said.]

The nature of competition has changed, Garcia stated, because the politics has changed as well. While Garcia believes some stations may be more sympathetic to the Presidency of Michel Martelly, Martelly has made it clear that he is no friend to the media. At the same time, Garcia concedes that the media is well aware of the challenges that the Martelly administration is facing from the international community. While some may be calling for more teeth from the mainstream media with regards to the state, the media understands the limitations the state faces and their frustrations with media criticism. Garcia explained:

Le président Martelly est un peu différent lui. Lui il a ses médias, il a ses amis, mais je crois que tout le monde arrive plus ou moins à se faire mais lui il ne fournit pas d’aide au média, non donc c’est un autre genre ; il dit même qu’il n’écoute pas la radio, donc là, mais je vois que tout doucement on arrive à maintenir, mais la situation économique est très difficile pour le gouvernement aussi parce que l’aide internationale qui était assez abondante après le séisme a maintenant beaucoup diminué et le gouvernement a des problèmes de trésorier absolument évident puisqu’ils sont obligés de mettre la pression fiscale, bon tu comprends, ils ne reçoivent pas. Il y a ce qu’ils appellent le support budgétaire qu’ils ne reçoivent pas parce que l’Union Européenne est en très mauvais état, les États-Unis comptent chaque dollars, les États-Unis aussi veulent faire leurs choses eux-mêmes et USAID a ses propres projets en accord avec le gouvernement mais l’USAID a ses projets. Des projets agricoles, des projets etc., etc. tu comprends qui ne sont pas mauvais, mais le problème c’est que, il peut y avoir double projets i.e. le projet est ici et le même
projet est fait ailleurs donc ils ne sont pas arrivés à aligner la politique, mais donc pour l’instant on en est là.  

[Author’s translation: President Martelly is a bit different. He has his media, he has his friends, but I think that everyone arrives more or less at what they make of him, but he does not provide assistance to the media, he is another type of person; he himself says he does not listen to the radio, so there, but I see slowly he is becoming more stable, but the economic situation is very difficult for the government also because the international aid that was so abundant after the earthquake has now diminished a lot and the government has some budgeting problems because they are obliged to have fiscal responsibility, but you understand they have not received it. There is what they call budgetary support that they have not received because the European Union is in a bad state, the United States is counting each dollar, the United States also wants to do their things themselves, and USAID has their own projects in connection with the government, but the USAID has their projects, agriculture projects, that project, etc. etc. You understand that he is not bad, but the problem is that there cannot be double projects, i.e. the project is here and the same project is done elsewhere so they have not been able to line up the politics, but for the moment, this is how it is.]

Discussion

The constraints of the post-earthquake environment have helped to repair the tensions that existed among news outlets during the first two decades of democracy in Haiti. While news owners acknowledge the differences of the past, the conditions of the present necessitate they work together. The current head of the ANMH, Lilliane Pierre-Paul, co-owner of Radio Télé Kiskeya stated in an interview in June 2013 that issues like the government marginalization of the national press corp, retaliation by rescinding licenses, and hostile statements about the press has pulled media managers together during the reconstruction to protect the media as an enterprise as well as a civic institution. Pierre-Paul acknowledged that:

Oui la constitution garantit la liberté de la presse mais on n’a pas encore des lois d’accompagnement qui dit comment de façon équitable, on n’a pas besoin d’avoir des relations privilégiées avec un Président avec un Ministre avec un Premier Ministre pour avoir accès à ses sources, et que tout le monde doit avoir accès de façon équitable à ces sources. Donc, le Président par exemple se tarde de ne pas écouter les radios et que il n’a pas besoin de savoir ce qui se dit à la radio. Il le dit, il le redit parce qu’il n y a pas une loi qui l’oblige à nous donner l’accès aux sources. Et c est la même chose non seulement au point de vue étatique, mais au point de vue privé aussi. Le sport le plus pratiqué en Haïti, c est l’opacité, c’est pas la transparence.  

[Author’s translation: Yes the constitution guarantees freedom of the press but there aren’t other laws to accompany this that say how in a similar fashion that one has privileges with the President, with the Prime Minister to have access to these sources, and that everyone has access to these sources on an equal plane. Well, the president has said that he does not listen to the radios and that he does not have a need to know what is said on the radio. He has said this and re-
stated this because there isn’t a law that he gives the media access to information and sources. And it is the same thing not only with regards to the state, but with regards to the private sector as well. The most practical sport in Haiti is to be opaque, it’s not transparence.]

The circumstances have empowered the mainstream press – facing constrained reporting resources – to employ the investigative journalism of the AKJ consortium in order to have a launching point for advocacy journalism to account for the state of the country’s reconstruction. News owners and managers, even those within the alternative media, have stated they have not been perfect or consistent, but that they have been aggressive when news events required it. As Jane Regan, coordinator of the AKJ consortium recalled, even the alternative media outlets place themselves under a self-imposed industry pressure to produce and constantly produce news content. Regan said she has had to point out that an entire article based on a news release is not acceptable from an alternative news source as investigative journalism is often slow to produce content given the difficulty to access critical information. As such, Regan argued that it is easy for reporters of all affiliations to fall into reporting techniques, many times overlooked or encouraged by editors and managers, that gets information on the air or in print, but is not always vetted, or properly reported.

The training of new journalists into the AKJ consortium who are now taking up positions at mainstream news outlets is a positive sign for the future of critical reporting in the commercial media, Regan stated. Many of Regan’s prior students have reported back to her of incorporating investigative techniques into their assignments, but acknowledge the practice is often difficult to maintain from a lack of editorial support and the demands, mostly of broadcast schedules on quick reporting that favors re-packaging news releases rather than conducting original reporting as would be further explored in chapter 5.
While journalists and other news workers try to redefine the craft on the ground, they are receiving support from media owners for this new effort. The change in tone among media owners towards one another is also a positive sign for restoration of the Fourth Estate in Haiti from its more recent days of political “balkanization.” As Max Chauvet reflected on the changes he stated:

"Look, every media, every journalist has his own sensibility but he has to try to be as objective as he can but it is clear in the media we are not thinking the same way, we are different. But anyway we are an association, we get together based on the basic principles of the freedom of the press. We need to have that liberty of expressing ourselves and other people to express themselves. That is what keeps us together. We are different, some may be favorable to that government, some other against that government, but that does not make us enemies we get along quiet well…. I think the press in general has done a fantastic job compared to when you look at their needs, I think they have done a lot. I always said that to my peers. I am proud of what all of you guys have done looking at the situation.

Under the current direction of Lilliane Pierre-Paul, media owners are prepared to take their role in the course of Haiti’s future seriously as the economic conditions of the crisis has affected them all and continues to do so. She affirms that the media is proceeding with determination: “bon on lutte, on continue de lutter. C’est une lutte quotidienne, c’est chaque jour on recommence, chaque jour on recommence.” [Author’s translation: we fight, we continue to fight. It is a daily fight, it is every day we start over, every day we start over.]
CHAPTER 5: HAITIAN JOURNALISTS NEWS VALUES

Background

The signing of the December 8, 2011 Code of Ethics of Haitian media was the symbolic moment of the coming together of news workers in Haiti, a year after the disaster, to define, for the first time, what their collective role and goals were. Although the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Port-au-Prince office was the site of the signing and home for consensus building, the code was representative of the changes among Haiti’s media that was outlined in Chapter 4. The representatives that signed the code are listed in Table 4 below.

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>National Association of Haitian Media (ANMH)</td>
<td>Max Chauvet (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Association of Independent Media of Haiti (AMIH)</td>
<td>Marcus Garcia (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Association of Haitian Journalists (AJH)</td>
<td>Jacques Desrosiers (Secretary General)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>SOS Journalists Association</td>
<td>Guyler Delva (Secretary General)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Union of Haitian Journalist Photographers (UNJPH)</td>
<td>Jean-Jacques Augustin (Coordinator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Society for Animation and Social Communication (SAKS)</td>
<td>Sony Esteus (Executive Director)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Médiaalternatif</td>
<td>Gotson Pierre (Executive Director)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Haitian Women Community Radio Network (Refraka)</td>
<td>Marie Guyrleine Justin (Director)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The 22 items in the Code that took a series of meetings to decide upon by the 8 associations, ranging from mainstream to alternative media groups, are outlined in Appendix E. The first article in the code outlines the “Freedom of the Press” and the last article in the code wraps up a series of guidelines about the practice of journalism, ending with code 22 “Brotherhood” (See Figure 1 below.)

**Figure 1: Opening and Closing items of the Code of Ethics**

1. **Freedom of the Press** Freedom of the press is an essential condition of freedom of expression. The media and journalists defending freedom of the press and expression, in accordance with Article 28 of the Haitian Constitution.

22. **Brotherhood** Teamwork, collaboration and collegiality should guide journalists. Mutual respect between colleagues should be encouraged. The reporter does not use newspaper columns or antennas for the purpose of settling scores with colleagues.

Using the Haitian constitution of 1987 for its guarantees towards the press, the official English translation of the 2011 Code of Ethics focuses on discrimination, bribes, conduct during elections, facticity and access to information. However the preamble to the list of codes is what best typifies what ordinary Haitian journalists grasp about their role on a day to day basis and what was found in a study of 75 in-depth interviews conducted with Haitian journalists and news-workers in 2013. The English version of the preamble defines value of their work as such:

Convinced that the pursuit of truth is at the heart of the journalistic profession, anxious to preserve the integrity and freedom of the press, recognizing the importance of ensuring the
credibility of the profession to all citizens, aware of the potential role of the press in building a democratic state in Haiti, the media and Haitian journalists have adopted the code of ethics as follows.\(^1\)

The 2011 Codes of Ethics is noteworthy for three reasons in establishing what the current norms for practicing journalism in Haiti ought to be since the earthquake. Firstly, the Code of Ethics is one that was agreed upon by the media owners, news directors and journalists working at mainstream and alternative media outlets in Haiti. Therefore, in terms of the standards and ideal of the media in Haiti, both mainstream and alternative journalists now agree on the same standards, which had not existed before. This was an attempt to turn the page on the divisions that existed in Haiti in the two decades preceding the earthquake that was outlined in Chapter 4. The code is considered a signed commitment by all leading Haitian media associations, including journalists, to avoid such problems that occurred with the beginning of democratization in the country.

Secondly, the code encourages the tangible ways in which such media solidarity can take place, most importantly a collaboration of news content production that is in the interest of the public good. Where news organizations are inherently rivals for revenue sources, the code seeks to put the dissemination of news content in the public good above the political economy of each individual news outlet. Therefore, despite the need to make profits, the social responsibility of the media should not be sacrificed for the political economy of the media.

Thirdly, the code addresses journalistic practices. It seeks to explicitly state that journalists should not be corrupt, should not accept bribes or work that poses conflicts of interest. This is a standard that the code wishes to implement and as Chapter 4 outlined, this standard has posed the most challenges in the Haitian case given the low wages of news workers and the alluring salaries offered by the large non-profit aid sector in Haiti.
This chapter begins to outline how the earthquake has affected news values that Haitian journalists hold and that matches the spirit of the code of ethics. While the code of ethics may be the new guiding principle that news directors point to, further study would be required to see what impact the code has had in reducing corrupt practices by journalists. Yet, this study as shown in Chapter 4 has already demonstrated the ways in which newsrooms and news owners have been enforcing and encouraging the various items on the 2011 code. However, this chapter demonstrates that other items within the code of ethics are held by Haiti’s journalists and are strengthened by the shared experience Haiti’s news workers have as victims of this crisis themselves.

This chapter outlines the experience of the 2010 earthquake disaster and aftermath and how it affected journalists and news-workers, in general. While the term journalist immediately evokes the image of the news reporter, the term news-worker expands the notion of news gatherers beyond those who conduct interviews and gather information to include the entire newsroom team involved in news production such as photographers, copy-editors, editors-in-chief, video editors, and online staff. While chapter 4 discussed changes in news controls in Haiti from the perspective of media owners, this chapter focuses on those who must produce news within this crisis, balancing owners’ expectations, societal demands of news consumption, civic and altruistic notions of their profession of journalism and the realities of their pocketbooks as citizens of a poor nation who must also feed and house their families and educate their children.
Methodology

Sample/Procedure

A total of 75 news-workers were interviewed in person throughout 2013. Sixty of which were news-workers, 15 of which were media owners, news editors and directors and who are named as key informants to the study in Appendix C. As discussed in Chapter 5, only key informants were identified by name in this study because they have spoken publicly on behalf of Haitian news workers since the earthquake. While all 75 subjects gave permission to use their names, only key informants were identified by name and all other news-workers were kept anonymous given Tulane University Institutional Review Board concerns about the security of their jobs. The news-workers were employed in 2013 at 30 media outlets in Haiti (see Table 1 in chapter 4), with both daily newspapers *Le Nouvelliste* and *Le Matin*, being represented in the sample; the leading commercial radio/television stations being represented; and all alternative media operations being represented in the sample. Interviews lasted from 10 minutes to two hours in some cases depending on the news-worker’s time and availability. All interviews took place at newsrooms in and around Port-au-Prince. News directors selected the news-workers who participated in the study. Participants selected were chosen because they were those reporters assigned directly to reconstruction-related coverage, or those most senior within the reporting ranks.

For the purpose of this component within the dissertation, all respondents have been kept anonymous and were identified in this chapter by their rank, type of news organization they worked for or media format, be it print or broadcast; and their job
specification, that of reporter, editor or news director. A list of semi-structured questions was used in the interview\textsuperscript{2} and are listed in Appendix F.

**Research Questions**

The findings from the interview process were used to answer the following research questions on the impact of the 2010 earthquake and its aftermath on the Haitian media, with the focus on journalists’ news values.

RQ1) What impact did the 2010 earthquake and its aftermath have on your ability to practice daily journalism and to do your job?

RQ2) Have there been any changes to how you and/or your colleagues perform your job as a result and if so what are those changes?

RQ3) What challenges currently exist in gathering and producing the news and how have you or your colleagues overcome them?

RQ4) Looking forward, what is the likelihood of sustaining any journalistic practices that have emerged out of the current crisis?

**Findings**

RQ1) What impact did the 2010 earthquake and its aftermath have on your ability to practice daily journalism and to do your job?

When I felt the first vibration, and the first shock, shaking, I say it’s an earthquake and I start warning, I take the stairs and I went out. When I got out and I realize and I said to myself shit, it happened, my wife and my kids, are they safe? Are they alive? In the front of the building, under the walls, cars were totally mashed up, people started screaming, people praying on their knees, it was awful and very unreal moment for me to walk through the streets, and watching dead people, watching buildings collapse, and find out that the National Palace was down. Hopefully, my wife survive…my kids also. And it was that, that was the day…\textsuperscript{3}

Stories like the one above told by one of Haiti’s top print journalists were echoed almost in replica as if the earthquake took place the day before interviews were conducted with respondents in 2013. Some took time to pause, others became emotional,
some looked out in the distance as if they had seen an event they would never unsee in their lifetime. The print reporter, in his narrative above, also made a common statement that was echoed from managers to copy editors. The day the earthquake struck, he was not a professional with his pen and pad in hand looking for a victim to give him a quote or sound bite. He was a husband, a father, in search of his family. “I did not think like a journalist. I was the guy who had one focus to find his wife and kids,” he said in English. “I see things during that short moment I was listening to my heart beating, my breath, but at that moment I wasn’t thinking as a journalist.”

Many of the reporters that day were on assignment or preparing to return to their news bureaus to file stories. The print reporter above was in the midst of covering a demonstration of university students when he felt the building shaking at the radio station affiliated with the newspaper. Two days later he was given some camera equipment and sent to cover the disaster with the paper’s top reporters. However when his wife became wounded, he decided to take his extended family, included his traumatized children out of the country for the short-term.

Haitian journalists, without the understanding of where their income would come from, discovering their homes had collapsed, trying to figure out how to house and feed their wives and children took practical decisions in the first two months until owners could provide some answers on how they would continue to earn a living. As one print news director explained,

C’était difficile. C’était difficile. Parce que il y avait aussi les revenues, les salaires, on a dû couper les salaires plus de 50% des fois, vous comprenez. Donc on ne pouvait pas payer régulièrement parce que l’argent ne venait pas parce que tout le monde payait en retard. Le pays était un petit peu dans le cafoïllage. C’était stressant, angoissant. On a eu aussi des employés qui ont perdu ici tous les membres de leurs familles, femmes, enfants. Il y a eu un graphiste là, le graphiste du journal et il y a eu sa femme et ses cinq enfants sont morts. Il a été, il était presque devenu fou. Donc pas été du tout facile, ça pas été facile.
[Author’s translation: It was difficult. It was difficult. Since there were also the revenues, the salaries, we had to cut salaries by more than half at times, you understand. We could not pay regularly because money was not coming because everyone was paying late. The country was a bit in a disarray. It was stressful, scary. We had workers who had lost all the members of their family, their wives, children. There was a graphic artist at the paper and his wife and five children were dead. He almost went mad. So it was not at all easy, it was not easy.]

Even with all the uncertainty, not one of them stated they quit or abandoned their jobs, but many took varied absences in order to manage family affairs and signed up to contribute to a rotating cycle of eye-witness reporting in the first month that could be relayed over the radio air waves or via the Internet. Senior reporters abroad were assigned to cover the key international donor conferences taking place with regards to the immediate humanitarian disaster and then on the delivery of aid for the short and long-term. The toll of managing family affairs, rebuilding homes, trying to find income and having to report on the disaster has impacted the psychological state of Haiti’s journalists. “That’s also one of the unseen sides of the earthquake,” said the top print journalist, who sees his family every three months, since 2010, “family gets split, family gets split.”

One broadcast news director described how the crisis was affecting his team:

Non, tout le monde était sérieusement affecté. On ne pouvait pas donner le meilleur de soi-même. On a mis du temps avant de pouvoir récupérer, avant de pouvoir recommencer à travailler comme on le faisait avant ça. Je pense qu’on peut même dire qu’on a mis plusieurs [temps] avant de se sentir équilibrer pour faire son travail correctement parce qu’il y avait les répliques qui se faisaient, qu’on ressentait aussi de temps à autre. »

Au temps que faire se peut, bon moi aussi j’étais aussi traumatisé. Même si j’étais chef d’équipe, je pouvais pas apporter grand-chose eh à l’équipe sauf que certains d’entre eux ont pu bénéficier de certaines formations. Je crois qu’il y a eu des organisations internationales qui étaient venues en Haïti. On avait reçu pas mal qui animaient des séminaires de formations à l’intention des journalistes surtout qui étaient sur le choc, qui étaient traumatisés, quand même il y avait des stations de radios dont les édifices étaient également effondrés, des journalistes qui avaient péri aussi et voilà. 7

[Author’s translation: Everyone was seriously affected. They could not give the best of themselves. They needed time to recuperate, time in order to restart their work like they had done it before. I felt that they needed time for themselves before they could feel balanced in order to do their work correctly because they could not replicate what they used to do.

At times, I also felt traumatized. But as the head of the news team, I had a lot to bring to the team who needed to benefit from certain skillsets. I know that there were organizations that
came to Haiti. There were seminars to train journalists how to handle certain shocks, who were traumatized, because there were stations that were totally destroyed and journalists that had lost their lives.]

For other reporters, they found their will to go on reporting not in the training sessions of foreign non-profits but in the scenes playing out in the streets among ordinary Haitians as they pulled together to help one another days after the disaster. One reporter recalled:

Mais ce qui était, ce qu’il faut remarquer également, ce qu’il faut souligner et partager c’est que tout justement après, ce que j’ai apprécié franchement, c’est extraordinaire, c’est la plus bonne image, c’est la bonne image que je garde de cette mauvaise image. C’est cette dimension de solidarité qui tout de suite après a été. Cette manifestation de solidarité qu’on a eue. On n’avait pas besoin de s’identifier comme Haïtiens ou du moins la zone dont on venait était peu importante. On pouvait sortir, je ne sais pas du Nord de la Capitale pour aller au sud de la capitale, on voit des gens qui nous accueillent qui nous invitent à dormir avec eux. Il n’y a pas de problème. On reste là. On prie avec eux. On mange avec eux. Je sais pas. Là c’était un élan de solidarité jusqu’au moment où l’aide internationale commençait par arriver. Et là, tu n’es pas de ce quartier. Tu dois aller dans ton quartier pour prendre l’aide là ou tu vis, tout du genre. Et on a commencé par, l’aide internationale a crasé franchement, quoique c’était pour le bien du pays à un certain niveau mais cette aide-là a crasé ce niveau de solidarité qui commençait par manifester. ¹

[Author’s translation: What was equally remarkable, what is necessary to underline and share was that just after, what I frankly appreciated, that is extraordinary, is the most lovely image that I saw of this horrible scene. It was this dimension of solidarity that right away showed up. This manifestation of solidarity that there was. There wasn’t a need to identify oneself as Haitians or even the area one came from as less important. Those from the North of the capital came to help those to the south of the capital. We saw people welcome us to sleep at their homes. There was no problem; one could stay there. Some prayed with others. Some ate with others. It was a range of solidarity before the moment that international aid arrived. You did not have these fractions among the people. It began frankly when as the international aid broke it frankly, but this aid broke the level of solidarity that had begun to manifest.]

RQ2) Have there been any changes to how you and/or your colleagues perform your job as a result and if so what are those changes?

We were much more aggressive [in our reporting] than before the earthquake, [the owners] decided so, because they say if the earthquake can kill, wound all those people who live in Pétionville, and if we’ve been through such wasting time and money from international aid of development, aide d’development, so-called, some how we have a responsibility, we have to be more tough, we have to go further more in our story and we have to play our role as a watchdog and we did that. We did that and if you can see the editorials, if you can read papers, a few places we make about it, we try to do our job, we try to give our perspective what we live on our end, me, [names deleted] and other journalists, we travel in big events about reconstruction, we were there, we are there, we see them when they make their promises they never keep. So now we have our own conviction and when we say they are mother-fuckers, they are ass, we got reason for that.²
Having lived through the tragedy themselves, Haiti’s news workers were looking for answers as they slowly returned to daily reporting. They were seeking answers firstly from their own officials, and then from the international community who they saw as playing a significant role in influencing actions by their own officials who they described as merely “puppets” of international consensus. Overnight, their need to go deeper in investigative or critical reports was clear to senior reporters. As one news editor recalled, the last time Haiti experienced a wave of advocacy journalism was during the militant period of political journalism of the 1980s that worked to push forward democracy. Since then journalists had lost their way, leaving the profession for more lucrative positions with non-government organizations making the trade less professional. The earthquake has forced journalists to take their social responsibility role more seriously or risk becoming irrelevant in the current crisis. Many key journalists on air decided it was necessary taken up this mantle. “Mon rôle à la radio, c’est de dénoncer ces faits, je dénonce les gouvernements corrompus chez nous qui acceptent cette situation de fait, qui ne peuvent pas les dénoncer parce que eux aussi ils sont la grâce à l’Oncle Sam.”

[Author’s translation: “My role in radio is to denounce these facts. I denounce the corruption in government that we have that accepts this situation that they cannot denounce because they are there in power thanks to Uncle Sam.”] One radio journalist offered an example of how this line of critique was critical for the country’s sovereignty.

Donc nous sommes coincés avec cette réalité. Il y aura de nouvelles élections dans le pays. On a eu un budget trop exigu pour les organiser. Moi je dis tout le temps à la radio, les élections, c’est un attribut de souveraineté. Même si vous ne pouvez pas manger, même si vous ne pouvez pas envoyer les enfants à l’école. Fais en sorte au moins les élections que nous soyons à même de les organiser avec nos propres moyens, mais si Les EU financent les élections c’est normale qu’ils décident des résultats. C’est normal qu’il décide qui doit être Président, qui doit être Sénateur, qui doit être Ministre, donc c est comme ça ça se fait.
[Author’s translation: We are aware of this reality. There was a new election in the country. There was a very important budget to organize. I said all the time on the radio, the elections, it is an attribute of sovereignty. But if you cannot eat, if you cannot send your children to school, you make an election where you cannot organize it by your own means, but the EU finances the election, it is normal that they [the EU] would decide the results. It is normal that they would decide who would be president, who would be senator, who would be ministers, so that is how it was.]

Another wide-reaching critique made by Haitian news workers early on was the externally accepted notion that Haiti is currently under reconstruction. Journalists recalled that the international community threw out a few different labeling phrases to describe the influx of humanitarian aid, debating in the end between ‘re-foundation’ and ‘reconstruction,’ with the latter being the term they chose. The first debate the media attempted to enter was to decide on the future of the country, with the post-2010 presidential elections being an important part of exploring the country’s future.

Très tôt la [communauté internationale a] commencé à parler de la reconstruction et même il y avait tout un débat sur la reconstruction ou bien la refondation de la société haïtienne parce que les gens font, oui il y avait des débats où les gens disaient mais est-ce qu’il faut reconstruire ce qui a été mal construit enfin il y avait tout un débat autour de la reconstruction et c’est pour ça que certains secteurs sont venu et à parler de la refondation i.e. il faut construire une autre société, bon nous on a été au cœur de ce débat mais en même temps on sait qu’il y a eu beaucoup de questions très vite sur les politiques mise en œuvre d’une part par les tenants du pouvoir de l’époque mais d’autre part aussi la manière dont les conditions qu’avaient causé la communauté internationale pour aider ou bien la manière dont la communauté internationale donnait son aide. Donc tout ça a été objet de débat et de prise de position diverse donc nous même on a essayé de relayer ce débat, de relayer autour de la reconstruction. 

[Author’s translation: Very early, they began to talk about a reconstruction and likewise there was a debate on whether it was a reconstruction or that of a refoundation of the Haitian society because there was a debate as to whether it was possible to reconstruct what was badly constructed and for this reason some sectors came forward and spoke of a refoundation i.e. it was necessary to construct another society and we were at the heart of this debate. But at the same time one knows that there were other pressing questions about the policies put in place by those who held power at the time and also about the factors that have caused the international community to help, as well as the manner in which the international aid was being given out. So all of this was a part of the debate, and there were diverse positions put forward but we ourselves tried to relay this debate about the reconstruction.]

However, in the first few months of the disaster, Haitian journalists bemoaned the fact that the Haitian people were lost in the discussion of their future. One print reporter described the reconstruction conversation as being one lead by Blans (foreigners),
referring to the process as a “blackout” lacking people of color, the Haitian people, at the table.

They start the process to change the lives of Haitian people without the Haitian people. In the beginning they decided to keep, to the side, the Haitian people, the real people, who are involved in the community. In the beginning there was that exclusion set, and beside that exclusion, there was a fight to get hand on the billions because destruction means shelter to provide, means program to put in place, means school to build, means money.

You see, its some kind of big plot against the country, and Haitians in business, in politics, in civil society are involved in that big plot against the country, its sad to accept that but its true. No, people now we are living as usual, we are living as usual, we are not waiting for nothing from the international community, from the government.

In New York [we had representing us] President Preval, Jean Maxwell Bellerive, who was prime minister, few Haitian businessmen and people from the civil society, which was in reality puppets, people with no representation and no real power over the money. And after that you have a triangle…that’s Haiti, I try to give you the storytellers point of view, now the U.S. the public opinion thinks [Bill] Clinton is the good guy but for me he is an ass.13

The goal of representation, particularly by alternative media outlets, was taken up by Haitian journalists to counteract an external perception that all Haitians were in agreement with an external plan for reconstruction. The importance of challenging this perception, Haitian news-workers said, was because it emboldened the international community to proceed with their project of reconstruction that only saw 1-percent of aid flow through the Haitian government. If international perception was the Haitians had welcomed foreigners with open arms, there would be little international pressure on members of the United Nations organized Haiti Reconstruction Fund to give Haitian officials equal say at the bargaining table. One news director recalled the urgency of challenging this runaway discourse of the earthquake aftermath and reconstruction:

Alors là il y a une chose essentielle au lendemain du tremblement de terre, le fait qu’il n’y avait pas beaucoup de média en Haïti oui c’est les étrangers qui parlaient à la place des haïtiens i.e. que c’est eux-mêmes qui rapportaient, c’est eux-mêmes qui expliquaient, c’est eux-mêmes qui disaient la réalité haïtienne pour nous aussi lorsqu’on discutait au lendemain du tremblement de terre, pour nous c’était une urgence de faire entendre la voix des haïtiens, le point de vue des haïtiens sur ce qui se passait en Haïti et un de nos premiers objectifs c’était ça, mais au fur et à mesure on se rend compte aujourd’hui encore qu’il est nécessaire de travailler à une réappropriation du discours sur Haïti parce que on a bien vu c’est pas parce que les médias ont été remis en place que les haïtiens sont écoutés i.e. aujourd’hui encore au niveau international lorsqu’on quand on parle d’Haïti c’est par la voix des haïtiens qu’on entend, qui domine, donc je
pense que c’est très important de pouvoir donner de la place aux haïtiens dans les débats sur Haïti i.e. que se ne sont pas des débats qui peuvent faire sans les haïtiens, les haïtiens doivent être partie prenante du débat international sur Haïti et c’est pour ça que nous-mêmes nous travaillons à faire en sorte qu’a contribuer, à proposer cette vision des haïtiens eux-mêmes sur la situation haïtienne.  14

[Author’s translation: There was essentially something that took place the next day after the earthquake, the fact that there was not a lot of media in Haiti and that foreigners spoke on behalf of Haitians, in that it was their reports, it was them who explained, it was them who told the Haitian reality. For us it was urgent to make them understand the Haitian voice, the Haitian point of view on what is happening in Haiti and that was one of our primary objectives. It was necessary to have a reappropriation on the discourse on Haiti because today when one speaks of Haiti on an international level, it is not the voice of Haitians one hears, that dominates, so I think it is important to give space to Haitians in the international debates on Haiti, that is to say that these are not debates that one can have without Haitians, Haitians must be a central part of the international debate on Haiti and it is this that we have worked to do to contribute to propose this vision of Haitians of themselves on the Haitian situation.]

Another tactic some journalists took was to highlight what the international community was doing and to contrast that with what victims of the disaster really needed. According to one of Haiti’s senior print reporters, some NGOs were offering portable toilets for the temporary shelters, however since 10 to 15 Haitians shared a building, it wasn’t necessary for a community toilet, nor was it culturally accepted.  15

The experience of living through the disaster and experiencing it as victims themselves meant that Haitian journalists saw the crisis and the unfolding developments in the way their audiences did. They sought to use their platform in the media firstly to get answers, secondly to speak up for ordinary Haiti and thirdly, to keep an eye on what those in power were doing despite the lack of public say-so in the country’s recovery. “Notre rôle c’est de faire savoir comment ça marche, comment ça se passe, qu’est ce qui a été réalisé et qu’est ce qui reste encore à faire…jouer le rôle de chien de garde autant que faire se peut,” one broadcast news director said.  16 [Author’s translation: Our role is to make known what is working, how things are going, what has been accomplished what remains to be done, to play the role of watchdog over what could be done.]
RQ3) What challenges currently exist in gathering and producing the news and how have you or your colleagues overcome them?

Haitian news workers acknowledged that there were limitations on accomplishing their role of truth-seeking that often resulted in stories being reported insufficiently or without the depth it required. The first common grievance was a denial to the access of public information. Whereas in the United States, journalists have the Freedom of Information Act that guarantees their right to access information and public records, and a due process to challenge official blocking to information, such legal protections do not exist in Haiti. As such, if a state official or ministry refused to provide documents, there was little legal recourse. This forced Haitian journalists to use news conferences as an opportunity to put forward questions to officials directly for public data, with such questions being circumvented, stonewalled or flat out ignored. As one broadcast news director put it:

Je dirais que l’accès à l’info n’est pas toujours, n’est pas totalement garanti. On fait ce qu’on peut. On trouve aussi ce qu’on peut mais on n’a pas tous les détails. Même les meilleures enquêtes initiées n’ont pas pour aboutir étant donné qu’il y a toujours des obstacles. C’est pas toujours facile d’accéder aux sources d’information. [Author’s translation: I would say that access to information was not always totally guaranteed. We did what we could. We found out what we could but we did not always have all the details. Also the best interviews initiated were not about to disclose that there were obstacles. It was not always easy to get access to sources of information.]

With regards to dealing with the international community, Haitian news-workers acknowledged a lack of follow-up and even outright discrimination. In many occasions, the Ayiti Kale Je consortium reporters only received a return response from a foreign agency or official when they allowed their U.S. partners to place the call on their behalf.
Some alternatives to being overlooked by international power-players involved using their scheduled press conferences to find opportunities to ask questions. At one such event, the handlers for an international agency damaged the equipment of a broadcast cameraman for AKJ consortium. The consortium wrote about the incidence and received support from the mainstream press, which resulted in the international agency having to contact the local journalists to address its conduct and to provide a response for the request for information on its project. “Généralement, il n’y pas toujours de réponses qui nous arrive comme ça du genre, on n’apprécie pas votre article, » one alternative media reporter explained. \[\text{Author’s translation: Generally, there were not a lot of responses towards us if someone did not like our articles.}\]

Another tactic used by Haitian media outlets was to let ordinary Haitians speak of their realities when officials and international agencies failed to address questions about the successes or lack thereof of their reconstruction projects. The alternative media forums used this tactic most of interviewing perspective beneficiaries of projects with the goal of assessing whether or not the project was succeeding or had not accomplished its stated objectives. Given the lack of access to information, details and sources, one alternative media report used public sentiments towards the development of a mining industry in Haiti that prompted debate within the government for the respective ministries to respond to the claims made in the report in the interest of the Haitian people. The reporter recalled the outcome of the investigative report:

Qu’est ce qui s’est passé ? Donc le parlement haïtien étant informé de ce travail donc il a convoqué le ministère ou encore le ministre de transport et de communication pour qu’il puisse donner des comptes à la population, pour qu’il puisse rendre compte à la population de ce qui se passe dans le secteur minier. \[\text{Author’s translation: So what was the outcome? Well the Haitian parliament become informed of our work and so they pressured the minister, also the minister of transport and of}\]
communication that the give account to the population of what was taking place in the mining sector.

One senior Haitian print reporter offered up his personal strategy for carrying out investigative pieces that allowed him to expose a project in a manner that would not blackball him for future requests for information. The reporter explained that it was better to write about an entire organization than to try to target an individual, often times it would be received as being less personal, and the organization would respond in an attempt to clarify. Secondly, he would call up the organization or source and offer them an opportunity to respond to the claims he will make in the article and to let them know it was not flattering. Often times he would receive a response of some sort and less backlash after the article was published.  

RQ4) Looking forward, what is the likelihood of sustaining any journalistic practices that have emerged out of the current crisis?

It’s not a part of my work as a journalist to present a sexy image of Haiti. I just have to be honest by covering topics and by presenting what I’ve got. And it must connect to the reality, we don’t have to invent, we don’t have to present sexy information, we present the things, how they are. Even if it’s good or bad, its there.

Haitian journalists were the first ones to be self-critical of their own efforts, acknowledge their shortcomings and point out exactly where they could do more. One print reporter described the lack of depth of reporting on a consistent basis as the habit of being lazy, the lack of skills, and the easy fallback for a difficult source for a story. Others have been more introspective, arguing that the shock and trauma of the disaster, and the on-going challenges of living in the aftermath make it difficult for reporters to
shake the experience on a daily basis. As one broadcast news director noticed about his
staff:

On se sent plus ou moins équilibrées. On a récupéré avec le temps évidemment bon, on n a
pas oublié le 12. On n’est pas prêts d’oublier le 12 janvier mais le traumatisme qu’on avait
s’envolait petit à petit et la maintenant, on n’est pas aussi, bon ça c’est plutôt amélioré, je dirais
avec le temps, 3 ans après. 22

[Author’s translation: One does not feel more or less balanced. We have recovered with
time a bit but we cannot forget the 12th. We cannot soon forget the 12th of January and the trauma
that enfolded little by little and even now, we are not always well, even though some things get
better, and even with the passing of time, three years later.]

Broadcast journalists, who have more direct relationship with the general public
said their commitment is reaffirmed daily as their listeners can directly express their
expectations of journalism and the Haitian media. As one of Haiti’s most well known
broadcast journalists said,

On a un discours qui est proche du peuple. On ne dit pas ce que le peuple veut entendre,
On ne dit pas ce que le peuple veut entendre, on dit la réalité. Et la réalité dans un pays aussi
pauvre qu’Haïti, elle est ce qu’elle est, un pays misèreux, exploité, avili, oublié et quand vous avez
cet genre de discours, c’est discours qui fait recette. 23

[Author’s translation: “We have a format that is close to the people. We do not say what
the people want to hear, we tell the reality. And the reality in a country as poor as Haiti, it is what
it is, a country with misery, exploited, availed, forgotten, and with this type of discourse, it is this
discourse that is received.”]

The support of the public, and the pressures from officials is confirmation that in
the current crisis, Haitian journalists feel they are doing something right. Haiti’s Ministry
of Justice released a statement in 2013 stating that it had uncovered a plot to assassinate
one of Haiti’s most popular radio broadcast journalists, who was interviewed in this
study. Haiti’s media association saw that as an attempt by the government to trump up a
fake plot to intimidate the journalist from using his popular program to critique the
country’s reconstruction. 24 For this reason, Haitian journalists, almost unanimously felt
optimistic that they could make an impact in the short-term and long run on the future of
their country.
Par nature, oui. C est une déformation professionnelle. Je suis par nature optimiste. Dans mon cas précis, des fois, je me demande pourquoi je suis là, j’ai ma famille, ma femme, mes enfants. Ils sont tous Canadiens. Ils vivent à Montréal. Je suis pratiquement ici seul à subir des menaces aussi de gens qui sont des fanatiques de Martelly, qui m’écritrent à longueur de journée, qui me font toute sorte de menace. Donc si j’étais pas optimiste que ça peut changer même si c est pas forcément avec lui ou peut être je ne serais pas là.  

[Author’s translation: By nature yes, it’s a professional deformity that I am by nature optimistic. In my case, I ask myself why I am like this, I have my family, my wife, my children. They are all Canadians, they live in Montreal. I am here practically alone to undergo threats by people who are Martelly supporters, who write me long notes, who make me threats. So if I was not optimistic that things will change even if it’s not by force, I would not be here.]

In terms of what it took to sustain the effort, veteran news directors pointed out that Haiti’s media and journalists have survived on little resources in the past, and they are doing so now, and would continue to do so in the future. Many veterans of the era that ushered in Haiti’s democracy said that to abandon journalism at this time is to leave the job they started two decades ago of becoming change agents for the people. “C’est comme ça que je me sens utile, c’est ma manière d’être utile à la société et je ne vois pas comment j’existerais sans faire quelque chose qui soit utile à ma communauté, à la société en générale et de manière plus égoïste je dirais c’est aussi pour moi la manière de valoriser ce que je fais.” In the words of another veteran news director, “je reste optimiste parce que il me faut le rester.” [Author’s translation: This is how I feel useful, its my way of being useful to society and I cannot see how I would exist without doing something that would be useful to my community, to society in general and in a personal way, I would say it is a way to validate what I do each day. I remain optimistic, because that’s the only way I need to remain.]

Discussion

In gauging the responses of Haitian news-workers on the impact of the disaster on their news values, it was clear that the experience of being a victim of the disaster affected their practice of the trade, and elevated their perceptions of their role. For
journalists who were lax about the role of the media in society, the ongoing crisis has challenged their complacency and pressured them to use and reporting skills at their disposal to firstly go deeper in their reporting and secondly to represent the points of views of ordinary Haitians.

Haitian journalists may work in an environment that could be often hostile to their attempt to portray the Haitian version of an internationally driven story of reconstruction. They have acknowledged how such discrimination from overseas has affected the quality of their reporting and how local blockage to information has placed them at odds with state officials. Yet at the same time, they do not accept that this is a deterrent to producing quality news reports with regards to the welfare of the country. They have employed editorials, news-talk, scathing reports and group solidarity that has resulted in getting them a place at the table with power brokers as representatives of their audiences.

Haitian news-workers may have found agreement on their depiction of international and state actors, but when it came to clarifying the depiction of the Haitian people, they were mixed in responses. Some felt that Haitian victims of the disaster remain in shock, but cautioned that they are not representative of all Haitians, only the ones in cities who were affected. As one journalist pointed out, the peasants of rural provinces have been neglected by the state for decades and as such, life has continued as usual for them regardless of the earthquake with their lack of access to running water, sanitation, clinics or education. In other instances, some journalists blamed Haitians in the city for empowering non-government agencies over the state because of the dependency on free aid distribution. Such a dependency has made it difficult for urban Haitians to self-organize to hold officials accountable for delivering assistance to the
people, or for weakening the hold of non-profit groups on the urban population. Such a rural-urban divide has made journalists question how effective their reporting is on bringing the average citizen into collective action for their own benefit. Only alternative media journalists argued for the additional role of the media as an educative source and not just an informational one, to teach Haitians beyond the news of the day. Some journalists have cautioned that this may be beyond their scope and would be difficult to accomplish within traditional news realms.

Finally, there is a general acceptance and solidarity among news workers. Print journalists were described as the most well trained and paid, broadcast journalists were described as the most commercially appealing, with some having popularity as high as politicians. And alternative media journalists were described as being the most militant. However, despite the spectrum, journalists acknowledged that there was a place at the table for all degrees of journalism in Haiti and that each corner added to the vitality of the profession, despite cutting in at each other’s bottom line. The diversity of Haitian journalism within the crisis, from 2010-2013 was a benefit for the overall quality of journalism, even though this diversity was at times a hazard for the economic profitability/commercial success of the news business.
CHAPTER 6: HAITIAN MEDIA NEWS CONTENT

Scholars are still to publish research using content analysis of Haitian news, particularly in the post 2010-earthquake context. A search of research articles about media coverage of Haiti’s 2010 earthquake and beyond turns up a dozen or so journal articles, not about Haiti’s news, but that of content analyses of foreign media.¹ Researchers in international development have conducted media content analysis of foreign news coverage of NGOs; others have conducted analysis of representations of Haitian citizens as victims in the crisis, but all of these studies have focused on the leading international news outlets of the United States, Canada and France.²

The 2013 25th Silver Anniversary conference of the Haitian Studies Association, the leading academic organization of research conducted on and in Haiti, also did not offer recent research on Haiti’s media. The conference held in Port-au-Prince in November 2013 was titled “Representations, Revisions and Responsibilities: Towards New Narratives for Haiti in 2013 and Beyond.”³ However, the single mass communication researcher, Dr. Manoucheka Celeste, a former Haitian journalist, now teaching at a U.S. university, presented research on representations of Haiti in U.S. media, not Haitian media.⁴ The last comprehensive attempt to study Haiti’s media and their content, in Haiti, by U.S. researchers, remains Dr. Leara Rhodes’ dissertation research project. However, while Rhodes did interview Haitian media news owners, her content analysis focused on Haitian American diaspora publications, located in the
Rhodes has acknowledged in a personal interview that the study of Haiti’s media has been sidelined within the Haitian Studies academic world, and that she has found herself being placed on conference panels with researchers in music, performance and art, without recognition of the Haitian media as being a major civic institution.

Outside of Rhodes research conducted in the 1990s, the most recent content analysis of Haiti’s media’s news content is Vario Sérant’s 2009 study of news content in Haiti. Sérant has also conducted follow up studies as part of his student’s coursework as a journalism professor at L’Université D’État Haïti, the State University of Haiti. Additionally, Jane Regan has done smaller qualitative analysis of alternative media news content for conference presentations, but all of these findings are yet to be circulated in academic publications. While conducting research in Haiti in 2013, the principal researcher was told by news organizations that she was the first U.S. based academic researcher to ask specifically for samples of news content and to even visit news operations since the earthquake to conduct research.

As a result, little is known about how much news Haitians receive from their own media sources about the state of their country’s reconstruction. Additionally, few scholars have examined the nature and quality. This chapter deploys the method of content analysis to identify key patterns in news content produced by journalists. It is important to note that this chapter offers a preliminary analysis of news coverage by Haiti’s main news organizations, but that more research is required to allow broader generalizations.
about newsgathering and presentation practices, presented in the previous chapter, with
the actual output of their work.

Mass media content analysis

Media research of news content seeks to develop certain understandings of news
production decisions made by journalists. As Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese
advanced in their study of media contents, the goal of content analysis is to “impose some
sort of order” to understanding media messages and that “part of this ordering process
consists of singling out the key features that we think are important and to which we want
to pay attention.” They also argued that content analysis allows researchers to look at
“medium, production techniques, messages, sources quoted or referred to, and context.”
Similarly, Kimberly Neuendorf argued that content analysis provides important
information about news outputs, such as the volume or mentions of a topic or issue, the
use of key words, message frequency and message reach.

While Neuendorf sees basic media content analysis as a quantitative process using
scientific method, researchers like Shoemaker and Reese have called for a mixed
quantitative and qualitative approach, particularly in studying news framing and news
sourcing. Since news production is a daily, routinized event, its production can be
tracked, counted and aggregated to show overall trends. However, qualitative study of
news content helps to account for variations within the sample and to explain when
certain news practices deviate based on the research area in question.

In employing Neuendorf’s approach to the value of quantitative media content
analysis, this chapter looks at the frequency of a message’s publication over a specific
time period. While it may be assumed that the subject of Haiti’s reconstruction looms
largely in current Haitian news reports, this chapter seeks to measure the frequency of the
topic in comparison to other subjects carried in the news on a given day in Haiti. The
value in doing so, as Neuendorf points out, is that the prevalence of a topic directly
correlates to the agenda setting role of the media. If a topic’s presence in news content is
prominent, centerfold and enduring over a specific time period, the public agenda will
tend to reflect this emphasis.

The first part of this chapter’s content analysis looks at the media’s agenda-setting
role in relation to the topic of reconstruction. It counts the prevalence of keywords
associated with the topic in a random sample of news stories that aired or printed in 2013.
The second part of the analysis identifies framing patterns in media content. It draws on
Shanto Iyengar’s typology, which includes two core framing techniques deployed by
journalists, “episodic framing” and “thematic framing”. Episodic framing focuses on
specific events or particular cases, while the thematic news frame places political issues
and events in some general context. For example, a standard news report about
information presented at a news conference for a reconstruction project in Haiti reflects
an episodic framing. Thematic framing, on the other hand, places events or topics within
broader socio-economic or political trends, contextualizing the information beyond a
specific occurrence. Therefore, an investigative report by the Ayiti Kale Je consortium
that looks at all the housing construction projects that took place in 2012 and measures
their success in relation to Haitians’ housing needs is an example of thematic framing.
While the first part of the content analysis identifies the volume and frequency of
reconstruction stories and helps demonstrate the media’s agenda setting role, the analysis
of Iyengar’s two frames provides a more qualitative perspective on the content of news
reports. By identifying the frequency of episodic and thematic frames, this chapter also examines the quality of news reporting.

**Research Questions**

The analysis of the frequency of news stories about reconstruction seeks to answer two main research questions:

RQ1) How prevalent was news of Haiti’s reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

RQ2) What other formats and types of information, besides the traditional news report, have Haiti’s media organizations deployed to discuss reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

The analysis of news framing seeks to answer two main research questions:

RQ3) What frames did journalists deploy to package news about Haiti’s reconstruction?

RQ4) To what extent has alternative media coverage of Haiti’s reconstruction impacted mainstream news reports?

RQ1) How prevalent was news of Haiti’s reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

RQ1: Sampling and procedures for newspapers

This section explains the sampling and procedures used to analyze data from newspapers in order to answer RQ1 above.

The content analysis examines both the frequency and the framing of reconstruction news by Haiti’s two newspapers of record, *Le Nouvelliste* and *Le Matin*. It is important to note that in 2013 *Le Nouvelliste* published daily editions, while *Le Matin* became a weekly after the 2010 earthquake. Since *Le Nouvelliste* publishes daily
and *Le Matin* weekly, this difference required different sampling procedures for both newspapers. This study deliberately sampled both newspapers to account for differences in newsroom practices between the two newspapers and to provide a wider look at news coverage.  

This first phase of the content analysis is based on a sample of news stories published by both newspapers in 2013. The author collected hard copies of the two publications in their respective archives during fieldwork in Haiti and the sample was restricted by their availability. Random stratified samples are preferred in content analysis, but due to availability constraints the sample used in this study comprises two periods, one week in the first six months of 2010 and another week in the second half of the year (see Appendix G for details).

To measure the percentage of reconstruction news articles from each edition, the author counted the total number of stories that carried a byline by a in-house reporter. Therefore, the unit of analysis was the individual news story. To identify reporting about reconstruction, the author developed a list of keywords with the assistance of reporters and archivists listed in Appendix H. Based on these keywords, the author was able to identify 187 reconstruction news articles from *Le Nouvelliste* and 91 articles from *Le Matin*.

**Table 5** below presents the results of the classification of the subject of each news story published by *Le Nouvelliste*. It shows that in the case of Haiti’s main daily 39.5% of the reports discussed some aspect of Haiti’s reconstruction or effects of the 2010 earthquake. The other 60.5% included reports about several topics, including politics,
government proceedings, arts and culture, and sports, which did not include references to the earthquake or to reconstruction efforts.

Table 5: Subjects of news stories published by *Le Nouvelliste* in 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total articles</td>
<td>N=263</td>
<td>N=218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruction-related articles</td>
<td>N=82</td>
<td>N=105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of reconstruction news</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average reconstruction news in a given daily newspaper edition in 2013 [Average of week one and week 2]</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 below presents the results of the classification of the subject of each news story published by *Le Matin*. It shows that 38% of the reports published by the weekly discussed some aspect of Haiti’s reconstruction or effects of the 2010 earthquake. This amount of news coverage is significant and very similar to that provided by *Le Nouvelliste*. These results demonstrate that both newspapers offered their readers a very substantial volume of reconstruction news coverage.
Table 6: Subjects of news stories published by *Le Matin* in 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total articles</strong></td>
<td>N=117</td>
<td>N=120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reconstruction-related articles</strong></td>
<td>N=45</td>
<td>N=46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of reconstruction news</strong></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average reconstruction news in given weekly newspaper edition in 2013 [Average of month one and month 2]</strong></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ1: Sampling and procedures for radio

The content analysis also investigated news coverage provided by the four leading radio stations in Haiti: Radio Télé Caraïbes, Radio Télé Kiskeya, Radio Télé Ginen and Radio Télé Métropole. It is important to note that the newsrooms of the last two also produce the daily newscasts of their company’s respective television station. Therefore, radio news coverage is a good proxy for patterns of television news coverage in Haiti.

The sample of radio news stories includes recordings of each radio station made by the author through a variety of means. In some cases, the author recorded programs live in the studios with a digital recording device. In other cases, the author recorded programs via streaming feeds over the Internet. The sample of radio news stories includes the same dates used for the newspaper sample, as documented in Appendix G. The procedure for coding the subject of the news stories was the same one adopted for newspapers, including the use of keywords to identify reconstruction-related news reports.
RQ 1: Findings about radio

For 2013, reconstruction-related broadcast news packages averaged 69.5% of all news packages for the prime-time news broadcasts on four radio stations. Radio Télé Ginen led all four stations with the highest volume of reconstruction news, followed by Radio Télé Kiskeya. Radio news in Haiti heavily focused on the reconstruction and the effects of the earthquake in 2013. Across all four stations, more than half of news stories focused on this topic. This demonstrated a higher level of agenda-setting on the airwaves than in print media in bringing news of the reconstruction to listening audiences. Radio findings for RQ1 are further analyzed in the discussion section of this chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Daily average # of reconstruction-related news stories</th>
<th>Daily average total number of news stories in broadcast</th>
<th>Percent of total news stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Caraïbes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Ginen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Kiskeya</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Métropole</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total week 1 radio average</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>76%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio stations</th>
<th>Daily average # of reconstruction-related news stories</th>
<th>Daily average total number of news stories in broadcast</th>
<th>Percent of total news stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Caraïbes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Ginen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Kiskeya</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Télé Métropole</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total week 2 radio average</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>63%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2013 average for both weeks** 69.5%
RQ2) What other formats and types of information, besides the traditional news report, have Haiti’s media organizations deployed to discuss reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

RQ2: Findings for newspapers

RQ2 helps address some of the questions that the quantitative count in RQ1 does not. The researcher made qualitative notes about both the newspaper and radio data sets during the quantitative coding process for RQ1 in order to answer RQ2. While the articles coded in RQ1 were traditional news stories written by an in-house reporter, newspapers also published a variety of other materials that discussed reconstruction and that were not considered in the article count. These additional items included the daily editorial, interviews with prominent public figures, Haitian Creole commentaries, essays from guest writers and regular columnists and first-hand accounts from the editor-in-chief about events or topics.

Aside from in-house generated content, newspapers published inserts ranging from 5 to 10 pages that came from outside sources, including the Catholic Church, non-governmental organizations and governmental agencies. These external inserts sometimes looked like traditional news articles, but were in fact paid insert or advertisements. Many of them featured reconstruction projects or programs, issues affecting different neighborhoods or communities or in the case of state-sponsored content, announcement of new plans. It is therefore important to note that discussion of reconstruction-related issues in the media went well beyond the news reports analyzed to answer RQ1.
RQ2: Findings for radio

The news reports coded for Table 7 above included traditional broadcast news packages, which typically feature a reporter’s voice over, sound-bites and anchor lead-ins. However, these were not the only reconstruction-related items broadcast by the stations. Other items included the airing of news conferences with no reporter voice overs, the airing of pre-taped phone calls made to key sources, pre-taped edited interviews or Q&As with sources with no reporter framing, and sound-bites of quotes read by anchors without the use of pre-recorded sound-bites. In some cases, the news program anchor read all the news stories, as well as conducted interviews without the support of reporters. Some of these reports were re-written versions of reports published in print sources or provided from the state or other agencies from press releases.

News-talk shows, which were excluded from the sample coded in Table 7 varied in format. Some carried news round-ups at the top, mid-point and end of the show. Others interspersed news items to change segments. Some included a group of two to three reporters within the program, others were lead by a single host, who was a traditional reporter. The shows ranged from one hour to three hours in length and featured call-in interviews, in-studio guests, full in-studio panels and pre-taped interviews (See Appendix J for image).
RQ3) What frames did journalists deploy to package news about Haiti’s reconstruction?

RQ 3: Newspaper sampling and procedures

The second phase of the content analysis examined framing patterns in order to answer RQ3. To answer this question, the author developed a different sample. While RQ1 used an entire newspaper edition for two random weeks constructed in 2013, the sample of RQ3 is a result of a database search in the archives of both newspapers. RQ1 focused on 2013 alone, when the author was physically present in Haiti to collect hard copy editions of printed newspapers. For RQ3, the author gathered a sample of reconstruction articles through the newspaper’s website archives from as early as 2010. It is important to note that not all articles that appear in hard copy editions are posted on the website and is available in the newspapers’ archives. This explains the smaller average of news articles in the sample of RQ3, when compared to the more accurate count found from the hard copy newspaper analysis conducted for RQ1.

The keywords used to retrieve reconstruction articles for 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 are the same keywords listed in Appendix H. The unit of analysis was the individual reconstruction news article. *Le Nouvelliste* yielded a total of 828 reconstruction news articles over a four-year period search, while *Le Matin* yielded a total of 504 reconstruction news articles over the same period.

The goal of the second phase of the content analysis is to identify framing patterns deployed in news coverage of the reconstruction. Articles were coded according to two framing categories: episodic or thematic, based on Shanto Iyengar’s work. As put forward by Iyengar, episodic news is a report about a specific event, for instance a press conference, a murder scene, a car accident, or the plight of a homeless person. Within the
sample, typical examples of episodic stories were NGO press conferences about projects, government ministry events about the reconstruction or the opening or completion of a reconstruction project. In other words, they were staged or planned news events designed to cover media attention and were covered as such in the news article.

Thematic news places events and issues in broader contexts. Examples include an exposé on the roots of a city’s murder rate, or an analysis of a government administration’s performance. Within the sample, reports adopting the thematic frame evaluated the broader context of several issues, including the general state of international aid, the lack of housing, or the continued presence of U.N. peacekeeping troops.

Two coders, both Haitian university students, identified the dominant frame of each news story. The coders also wrote down qualitative descriptive markers to document any other framing techniques used by journalists to present additional story angles. Coders used the Excel software to enter the data and to generate tables of descriptive quantitative data. An inter-coder reliability test was conducted using Holsti’s formula in a sub-sample with 10 percent of the total number of articles in the sample. The test showed a 89-percent level agreement in how both coders identified episodic and thematic frames.

RQ3: Findings for newspapers

As shown in Table 8 below, in the period 2010-2013 Le Nouvelliste carried more episodic framing of reconstruction-related news than Le Matin in the same period. Le Nouvelliste had more articles in the total sample, by its very nature of being a daily, as opposed to a weekly edition newspaper for the sample years. More than a half of Le
Matin’s articles in the sample carried thematic framing while a quarter of all articles sampled in Le Nouvelliste carried thematic framing. These results are further analyzed in the discussion section of this chapter.

Table 8: Thematic and Episodic framing of the reconstruction from 2010 to 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total number of articles</th>
<th>Episodic</th>
<th>Thematic</th>
<th>% Episodic</th>
<th>% Thematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Nouvelliste</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Matin</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall framing</td>
<td>N=1332</td>
<td>N=828</td>
<td>N=504</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ3: Findings for radio

The content analysis for radio examined the same four stations previously analyzed: Radio Télé Caraïbes, Radio Télé Ginen, Radio Télé Kiskeya and Radio Télé Métropole. Given the difficulty of obtaining a sample that dated back to 2010 for broadcast news reports, the analysis of framing in radio used the same sample from RQ1. It therefore includes only reports aired in 2013. This time, coders analyzed only the reconstruction-related news reports. The coding of news frames for stories to determine story treatment and reporting technique was similar to the coding conducted on newspapers. Inter-coder reliability for broadcast was higher than that of print (94-percent).
The results show that 92-percent of all reconstruction-related news stories aired in the four stations adopted an episodic frame. The news stories featured sound bites selected from press conferences, official broadcast statements from officials, or from in-house coverage of agency-prepared reconstruction program events. The remaining 8-percent of news packages that carried thematic framing had different formats. In other words, the anchor or the reporter conducted an on-air, or pre-taped follow up interview with an expert, critic or alternative source with regards to an ongoing reconstruction issue unrelated to a single event or press conference. The majority of such interviews were coded from news programs from Radio Télé Kiskeya.

On the other hand, reconstruction news that aired at the beginning of popular news-talk shows was thematic in framing. The show’s host would introduce the topic, the related news associated with the topic, the points of views of a series of sources and any developments with regards to the topic in order to set up the show segment. As such, the news was not tied to a single news conference or news event, but featured ongoing discussion about the topic or issue with regards to the reconstruction. Additionally, the introduction of phone interviews, and panel discussions during the news show was an additional format feature that determined if a report was more thematic in nature than episodic.
RQ4) To what extent has alternative media coverage of Haiti’s reconstruction impacted mainstream news reports?

RQ4: Newspaper Sample and Procedures

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis was used to answer RQ4 to describe the impact of alternative news reporting on mainstream news reports within the samples derived from print and broadcast sources. Specific key words were derived to determine the attribution of mainstream news reports to alternative news reports in order to count the prevalence of this in the sample weeks for 2013 (see Appendix I).

Using the newspaper articles retrieved dating back to 2010, a longer-term attempt was made to look for attribution of mainstream news reports to alternative news sources beyond the sample weeks selected in 2013. The Ayiti Kale Je consortium released a total of 38 investigative reports from 2010 to 2013 that are called dossiers. Through the keywords listed in Appendix I, the researcher was able to track the use of each of these dossiers either in part or in whole, by the two newspapers. The nature and presentation of alternative news within mainstream news articles was given both quantitative and qualitative discussion in this study in order to fully describe how mainstream news outlets treated alternative media reports.\(^\text{16}\)

RQ 4: Newspapers Findings

Alternative news media reports steadily increased in mainstream news from 2010 to 2013 by roughly 10-percent each year. *Le Nouvelliste* best demonstrated this change over time by publishing a half of all alternative news reconstruction reports in 2010 to publishing in full or in part 100-percent of alternative news reconstruction reports by
2013. *Le Matin* was less consistent with its presentation of alternative media reconstruction reports, experiencing a decline from 2011 to 2013. This was less in part due to a lack of alternative media reports, but a decline in direct attribution within news articles to specific alternative media news outlets or investigative dossiers. As such similar stories resembling alternative media reports appeared in the sample year for *Le Matin* but the articles lacked specific attribution to the alternative media consortium as the genesis of the news story.

Table 9: Alternative media reports published in mainstream newspapers over four years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Le Nouvelliste</th>
<th>Le Matin</th>
<th>Total AKJ reports</th>
<th>Le Nouvelliste % of total AKJ reports</th>
<th>Le Matin % of total AKJ reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year average</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ4: Broadcast:

The sample week for broadcast news programs only carried two direct attributions to alternative media reconstruction reports, both of which occurred in the same Week 1 for Radio Télé Kiskeya. As such qualitative notes were taken to account for alternative
news reports within mainstream broadcast in 2013, the only year where access to reports was available for this study. Given the high volume of episodic news reports in broadcast, mostly press conferences, alternative media reports, which are thematic in nature, failed to show up regularly in prime-time radio and television news broadcasts.

The highest occurrence of direct attribution to alternative media outlet reconstruction reports appeared on news-talk programs, which remain the most popular aired programs on radio. As such shows like Caraïbe’s Ranmasse and Kiskeya’s Andikape, directly used alternative media reports within these programs. The consortium was directly attributed by name and report to either open the show, generate a question for panelists or interview subjects, or lead into follow-up reporting by the program host. As such in keeping with the findings on broadcast news framing, the stations that carried the highest volume of episodic news used less alternative news reports, such as Ginen and Métropole. Likewise, stations with more thematic news stories incorporated more alternative media reports, such as Kiskeya and Caraïbes.

**Discussion**

The above findings are important because they attempt to measure the interview responses of Haitian news workers and news outlet owners with the realities of what they have been able to accomplish in practice. The findings of each research question help to determine how much weight should be given to the interviews conducted with news workers and owners in this dissertation. While the earthquake may have affected them on a personal and professional level as described in chapter 5, it is important to determine if such changes have presented themselves within the news content. The content analysis
helps to explain what, if any, of news worker agency, is being relayed to the receiver of these messages: the Haitian news consumer.

RQ1) How prevalent was news of Haiti’s reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

Beginning with research question 1, this content analysis found that in the year 2013 roughly 40-percent of news published in Haiti’s two newspapers on a given day in the sample, covered some aspect of the reconstruction. Additionally, in 2013, roughly 70-percent of radio broadcast news reports in a daily news show covered the reconstruction among Haiti’s four leading radio stations: Radio Télé Caraïbes, Radio Télé Ginen, Radio Télé Kiskeya and Radio Télé Métropole. Radio broadcasting was far more aggressive in its placement of reconstruction reports on the airwaves than newspapers given these findings. Two factors explain this. Firstly, radio format restricts the volume of news reports. The typical radio news show lasts 30 minutes and news update shows can be as short as 15 minutes given the need to hold audiences between music programs and to allow time for advertisement. As a result, the radio news show may only carry 4 to 5 stories, also called news broadcast packages, in a given news show. In the case of the four radio stations sampled, the news show may be divided into news reports and then news interviews. The news of the reconstruction provided the most accessible routine for broadcast journalists that fit their production schedules for collecting sound bites at news conferences, returning to the station to edit and record voice overs, and to write lead-ins and lead-outs into each story. Additionally, the stations, particularly, Télé Ginen simply used sound bites from government officials that were aired on Radio Télé Nationale D’Haïti, the state broadcast station, which aired reconstruction events held by the state in full. Radio stations easily edited the sound bites they needed from the state broadcast
station and packaged their own additional interviews conducted in the studio or via the phone to produce a news story.

Secondly, newspaper format allows for more diversity of content given a longer production schedule. Newspaper sections carry not just news articles in the News section, but in other areas such as Politics, Education, Features, Sports, Religion, Community and the like. These other column sections in the daily newspaper attract specific advertisement and also have appeal for subscribers. Therefore, the remaining 60-percent of news articles published in the sample came from these set section areas that the newspaper needs to attract a wide audience. Therefore, since reconstruction news dominated the News section of Haiti’s newspaper, this demonstrated the importance of news about the reconstruction on the part of journalists and editors. While it may be assumed that the reconstruction provides the most stories for Haitian journalists to cover in Haiti, the findings of the sample analysis for research question 1 specified the scale of the coverage in newspapers and radios in 2013. Since news editors assigned journalists more stories about the reconstruction for the News section of the newspaper and for broadcast news shows as a whole, it demonstrated that the topic of reconstruction would not go ignored within Haiti’s mainstream newsrooms.

RQ2) What other formats and types of information, besides the traditional news report, have Haiti’s media organizations deployed to discuss reconstruction from the 2010 earthquake?

While news articles and news broadcast packages were counted for research question 1, research question 2 sought to document the other media content carried in the newspaper and in the news shows. While journalists produce articles and stories, the
news editorial team decides on what additional content to offer consumers. As such, this is an additional level of agency on the part of newsroom managers in providing additional content outside of the standard news report to consumers. For newspapers, this study counted that another 20-percent or one-fifth of other news content in the sample on a given day also discussed the reconstruction. The additional items found in the newspapers were the editorial, guest columnists, Q&As with officials, stand alone picture essays, reporters first-person accounts of events.

For radio broadcast news shows, while the opening portion of news shows included news updates with the rundown of prepared news packages or stories, the remainder of the news show included other content. Such content ranged from live guest studio interviews, live guest phone-in interviews, pre-recorded guest interviews, panel discussions or listener call in segments where the host would either allow callers to pose questions to guests or the host would interact with callers directly. Coders documented these additional news broadcast features. The subject matter of such additional news show items focused on the news reports of the day or the week, of which the reconstruction was a dominant topic for radio.

While research question 1 specifically addressed the volume of reporting on the reconstruction by journalists, research question 2 sought to place the quantity of news articles and reports in the wider context of all newsroom decision making about media content provided to consumers. Research question 2 demonstrates that it is valid to consider all media content as products offered by newsroom managers in an effort to attract different segments of the consumer population. The consumer who may read a news article may or may not be the same consumer who gets the daily newspaper to read
their favorite guest columnist. Additionally, the radio listener who tunes in for the call-in segment of a news show, may not be attentive to the reports carried at the beginning of the news show. This study does not survey audience consumption patterns. However, RQ2 shows that newsroom managers considered other media content offered to consumers on a daily basis as tools for packaging information about the reconstruction, above and beyond the articles and reports journalists were assigned to produce. This additional newsroom decision-making increased the volume and prominence of the reconstruction as a subject source in the media.

**RQ3) What frames did journalists deploy to package news about Haiti’s reconstruction?**

When sampling both newspapers over a four-year time period, the ratio of episodic-to-thematic framing of news articles about the reconstruction was 62-percent-to-42-percent respectively. When sampling reconstruction news reports in four broadcast stations in 2013 alone, episodic framing stood at 92-percent for all four stations combined. News articles and news reports, the media content produced by journalists, showed the least level of in-depth reporting. Haitian journalists may have written consistently about the reconstruction, however the articles and reports they produced failed to go beyond the replication or packaging of quotes and sound bites relayed at news events or press conferences. Two factors explain this shortcoming. The first factor is time and convenience and the second factor is journalism access. As Jane Regan described in chapter 4, even alternative news journalists feel pressured to produce news content on a regular basis when they have the longest time span to produce news reports and articles among all categories of journalists in Haiti. Therefore, reporters at *Le Nouvelliste*, the daily newspaper, and at the four leading radio stations, face a tremendous
amount of pressure to turn around news reports on a daily deadline schedule. That daily schedule is even earlier for radio reporters who must revise the same news report for several news shows or news updates across the day. The convenience that a press conference offers the journalist on a daily deadline crunch is that quotes and sound bites from various official sources can be found in one location. Journalists can often ask additional questions at the conference or event to vary their stories. But since a news conference is designed to control information being passed onto the media, journalists are not always able to ask or receive responses for questions that may be controversial or would provide answers to frame stories in a thematic style. For this reason, it is important to note that *Le Matin*, which publishes on a weekly schedule, carried more thematic framing of reconstruction news than did *Le Nouvelliste*. In a four-year period, 57-percent of reconstruction articles in *Le Matin* were framed thematically and 43-percent were framed episodically. Therefore, time and convenience does affect the ability of the journalist to go further in-depth with a news article or report.

The second factor that explained the results of measuring framing is journalism access. As described in chapter 5, both broadcast and print reporters described the enormous number of hurdles to getting access to information from official sources. A request for information on a project or budget, or a request for an interview with a government official or international agency official could either go ignored or delayed for an indefinite amount of time. For journalists operating on a daily schedule this can reduce their productivity when newsroom demands require daily reports of some sort in order to fill the column inches or airtime. Therefore episodic framing of news events meets the need for daily productivity with the more in-depth report being put off until all sources
respond. Additionally, the need to access credible information is important to protecting journalists and their newsroom managers from backlash from officials. Journalists in Haiti are therefore reluctant to publish critical information about government action or international projects if they lack data to support their claims, or interviews from official sources that support their claims. This is a means of protecting the news organization from charges of libel and from further retribution from government sources should data prove to be inaccurate.

There is a slight note to be made about what journalists will be hesitant to publish in the newspaper or package in a news report, and what journalists will more readily discuss in other media platforms. RQ2 provided examples of other media content produced by journalists and newsrooms that appeal to other audiences. The consumers of news articles in the newspaper are elite consumers who read French, and operate in government positions, in the private sector and in academic settings. Haitian journalists are far more careful about the framing of news articles for this purpose. However, in news-talk programs hosted by the same journalists, the standards for attribution and accuracy are much lower. The language format of such news-talk shows is in Creole; the journalists are surrounded by guests, experts and even officials and the length format of such talk shows allow reporters to go more in-depth. As such, issues that journalists could not address or include in their daily episodic news reports are often addressed in more looser broadcast format. An example of this is that the leading reporters at *Le Nouvelliste* also host the morning news program at *Majik 9* radio station owned by the newspaper and managed by the editor in chief for the newspaper. The news show begins with one of the reporters reading a summary recap of the news published in that day’s print edition. The
reporters then divide the stories and provide news analysis to their stories, they raise questions about the story that were not published and they even make pleas to official sources to return their calls for comments. The journalists may even reference quotes made in other media outlets that were not used in their reports and they may pose questions to guests to address rumors and speculations without the journalist himself having to introduce information that may not be fully vetted or accurate.

The incorporation of call-in segments from the public also provides journalists with additional questions, comments and feedback to expand the news analysis beyond the episodic report published in the newspaper. These additional avenues used by journalists to expand on their reports may not be thematic framing in its standard, purest format like that of an investigative report, series or exposé. However, it describes the ways in which journalists feel limited by their time and format constraints and demonstrates that journalists are determined to expand their news coverage in other content platforms offered in the mainstream media.

RQ4) To what extent has alternative media coverage of Haiti’s reconstruction impacted mainstream news reports?

Alternative media reports provided by the Ayiti Kale Je consortium are standard, in-depth investigative news reports. The AKJ project prepares them as “dossiers” in French, English and Haitian Creole and in print and broadcast format. From 2010 to 2013, the AKJ project produced 38 dossiers for dissemination within their membership and for wider publication among mainstream media outlets. In 2010, *Le Nouvelliste* only utilized half of all dossiers released in that year. However by 2013, *Le Nouvelliste* utilized all dossiers released by the AKJ project for that year, as was shown in Table 9.
For radio broadcasting, the study only had the 2013 sample year of news reports to analyze and only found one example of the direct use of an AKJ dossier by Radio Télé Kiskeya. This was a relatively small random sample compared to the newspaper sample that did not capture when the dossier reports may have been released generating more coverage in the broadcast media. However, both Kiskeya and Radio Télé Caraïbes directly referenced and used AKJ dossiers in their most popular news-talk shows in directing questions to guests and panelists in 2013.

The value of the AKJ “dossier” reports is that it provided vetted, supported and credible data and interviews framed in thematic presentation of issues affecting the reconstruction. The reporters within the AKJ project benefited from their news format, which allowed them more time to prepare reports, and to find other ways to access information. One common tactic used by the AKJ reporters was to allow their American director to place calls for information with international agencies or with Haitian government officials. The assumption that an international or U.S. journalist was seeking information sometimes resulted in a more prompt response from Haitian official sources, the granting of an interview, or the delivery of statistics or data. Had a Haitian journalist working for the AKJ project attempted to make the same request, the official would have denied it or ignored it. As such the AKJ project benefited from its affiliation to the international media-watch non-profit groups that fund it and the trained journalists that direct and assist the AKJ affiliates and journalists in Haiti.

For mainstream news organizations who use the AKJ “dossiers” either in whole or in part this provided another layer of protection from retribution from officials. As Max Chauvet, the owner of *Le Nouvelliste*, stated in chapter 5, the newspaper has
reprinted AKJ dossiers in full or in part in the newspaper. Whenever that occurred, Chauvet or his editor-in-chief Frantz Duval would receive calls of complaints from government ministers and other officials not because of the credibility of the report, but because the mainstream newspaper has, by its publication, endorsed the report, and has offered its prestige to further circulate the report’s claims. Chauvet and Duval have stated in response that as the newspaper of record it would be negligent on their part not to publish such a report. As such, the owners of mainstream news outlets are shielded from direct retribution from officials because they did not originate the report, they were merely reprinting or re-airing it. This is in no way to reduce the agency of mainstream news outlets in utilizing the AKJ reports when government, private sector and aid groups make up a substantial portion of their revenues from advertising. Therefore, given the threat to their bottom line, publishing or broadcasting AKJ reports that were most critical of their advertising base or potential advertising base, requires a measure of courage, particularly in tough economic times. While their own reporters may have only conducted such critical reporting at more modest levels, the use of AKJ dossiers by the mainstream media in Haiti offers the most radical and comprehensive critiques of the reconstruction a very prominent space in mainstream media discourse.

For this reason, the alliance between alternative and mainstream news media in the sharing of content elevates the quality Haitian media discourse across multiple platforms. Research questions 1, 2 and 3 in this content analysis show limited levels of agency among mainstream Haitian news workers in providing content that challenges official framing and presentation of the reconstruction. However, research question 4 demonstrates that as a collective whole, Haiti’s mainstream media, by its embrace of
alternative media news of the reconstruction, has offered itself as a disseminator of critical news of the crisis, if not originators of such content themselves on a consistent basis. Likewise, the mass consuming audiences of Haiti’s broadcast and print media outlets, which far outnumber the audience for Haiti’s alternative media, are exposed to credible critical coverage of the reconstruction. While some stations and newspapers may do so more frequently than others, making alternative news a mainstream source of content is perhaps the most vital role the mainstream media has played in post-earthquake coverage.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

You just never know, that’s why you have to keep doing the job of journalism and media work, you never know when you are going to reach... that tipping point... you keep pushing and pushing and pushing and pushing and eventually the thing is going to fall down, is it gonna happen while you are alive?..you don’t know, but you gotta fight for the things you believe in. It’s like a kid, you... read out loud to them all day and all of a sudden they start reading. Who knows how and when that thing, where it all of a sudden starts happening, but its that same kind of thing with media and journalism. So the people that really believe in the roles that good mainstream journalism as well as progressive and radical journalism can play we just keep doing it even if our income keeps going down which is what’s been happening.¹

In 2013 Haiti, a fierce commitment to the promise of journalism to bring about hope and change can be found within the rank and file of Haitian journalists who have stuck to their professions in a time of personal and societal trauma. As this dissertation has shown, and the above quote describes, Haitian journalists remain optimistic that even if their commitment in the short-term is slow to bring about change in the country, they are determined to be a part of some grand spark within civic society that would alter the current course of Haiti’s current political, economic and social trajectory. Haitian journalists have recent history on their side of their efforts in bringing about democratic change in Haiti. Even though Haitians have undergone two decades of a faulty start at democratization that has left citizens skeptical of the ideal of true political representation, the 2010 earthquake that destroyed the presidential palace and more than 200,000 lives has hit a reset button as it has amplified the level of despair and urgency among Haitians for change. That urgency has been personally felt by members of Haiti’s media and has
helped them rekindle a critical advocacy role of the Fourth Estate, with the practice of journalism providing them a sense of duty to their country.

This dissertation has highlighted four key findings of the impact of the 2010 earthquake on Haiti’s Fourth Estate. Firstly, Haiti’s starkly divided media under the first two years of democratization have joined forces to use their platform to influence the course of the country’s immediate and long-term future. Secondly, Haitian journalists who had become lax about their civic duty have become revitalized in the practice of journalism as a result of their own direct experiences with the trauma of the earthquake disaster and its effect on the country. Thirdly, Haitian news reports have attempted to widely cover developments coming out of the ongoing reconstruction. But this study showed that daily news coverage of the reconstruction has not consistently debated the course of decision-making taken by leaders. However, the inclusion of investigative reports about the reconstruction conducted by the Ayiti Kale Je alternative media consortium, as well as the analytical news-talk taking place on commercial radio has elevated the critical nature of coverage found in the mainstream media since the disaster. Finally, while Haitian institutions such as the media may be economically weakened by the effects of a catastrophe, the ability of Haiti’s Fourth Estate’s to thrive under the current circumstances is testament to the fact that Haitians can and wish to speak up for themselves and for their right to determine their path forward in an international development context that has often pushed them to the sidelines.
Media Realignment

Beginning with the first key finding, twenty-years of experimenting with democracy had weakened the credibility of Haiti’s media. Haiti’s start to democracy was dominated by one key figure President Jean Bertrand-Aristide who held ruptured terms in both decades, the 90s and the 2000s. Aristide’s forcing from office in both decades resulted in a mainstream media that was pro-or-against Aristide. The partisan divide that played out among the commercial media with Haiti’s first popular democratically elected president saw Haitian journalists as recipients of political bribes, and news owners having open alliances to political factions within the country.

The start of a new decade saw the end of the second term of Aristide’s successor President Rene Préval, and the country’s worst modern natural disaster that reduced the drama of the presidential palace to rubble. What emerged when the dust settled was a joining of forces and a reconciliation among Haiti’s leading media outlets with the signed commitment that they would be an independent institution in the country. Acting on the good faith of that pledge this study showed in chapter 4 that Haitian news owners were willing to come together on several issues. In interviews conducted for this study, chapter 4 showed that news owners were unified about their critique of the government’s handling of the humanitarian crisis after the disaster. They were unified about the external controls of Haiti’s 2011 presidential election primary and run-off process that only saw 10-percent of registered voter participation. Haiti’s media owners were unified about their criticism of current President Michel Martelly’s attempts to isolate and ostracize local media from detailed information on the country’s budget, financial state, international involvement in the reconstruction and the assessment of the
accomplishments of official promises made. These official stances were made in official releases published and aired across all media platforms in Haiti and were described in more detail in chapter 4 with interviews by key informants of this dissertation.

This is not to say that Haiti’s media is against its own government. In fact, key informants in this study expressed a measure of concern for the treatment of the Haitian government by the international community, as described in chapter 4. Haitian media outlets have been clear to acknowledge when things have gone right, but have been quick to point out that too many things continue to go wrong. They have stood up for the right of the Haitian state to receive control of more than 1-percent of humanitarian aid and reconstruction funds that have been distributed in the first three years of the crisis. They have also decreed the stereotypes made in the international press about Haitians being incapable of handling their own affairs and the excuse of systemic corruption as justification for international power-brokers to manage the country’s recovery without directly channeling such efforts through the state, rendering the state powerless.

A weakened, and readily-overlooked state apparatus – even one brought to power in a poorly executed post-earthquake election – means that Haitians do not have a voice to object to international projects favored by global donors that may not be in the interest of the people. For this reason, the earthquake has evened out the relationship between the press and the state that existed before from one that was partisan, to one that admonishes the state for its failures, but also one that stands behind the state in the face of international pressure.
Haitian Journalism

The Haitian journalist of the 2000s was a celebrity, a rock star, one who would report positively about a senator for the right fee, one who moonlighted for many of the thousands of non-profits offering jobs to prolific writers, or one who lacked the training or conviction to explore investigative reporting that served the public good. Where media owners were divided by their loyalties to the state or the opposition, their workers were unprofessional and discredited the craft. While this may not have been the case among all of Haiti’s reporters, this was the widespread perception by those veteran Haitian journalists who had come out of the dictatorship era and who were observing the conduct of the new class of news-workers who had entered the profession without ties to the prior turbulent era. The decline in the quality of journalism that existed in the first two decades of democracy supports this depiction of Haitian mainstream journalism before the earthquake made by veteran journalist Michele Montas-Dominique and key informants in this study who now work at alternative media outlets. Instead of Haiti’s journalists producing fair and balanced reporting that clarified the source of violence and social upheaval during the Aristide years, media content was divided depending on a news organization’s affiliation as described in chapter 4.

Today, the current cadre of Haiti’s news-workers have encountered their own personal and professional crisis as a result of their contact with extreme loss and trauma due to the 2010 earthquake. As a result, they have signed on to a pledge for a new code of conduct that decries the behavior of the past two decades and that has called for standards within the media that advances truth, facts, fairness, balance, representation of the people and solidarity among news-workers. This new code of ethics may prove difficult to
commit to given low wages at many media outlets and the lure of salaries from non-
governmental agencies, which require skills journalists have. However, in chapter 5,
interviews with Haiti’s journalists have shown their adherence to some aspects of their
ethical code by speaking up while on assignment for: their right to access information,
the protection of their sources and for the respect of the freedom of the press (See
Appendix E). Through interviews conducted in chapter 5, this dissertation has shown that
Haitian journalists have been harassed and ignored at press conferences for asking critical
questions of local and international power-players. Such intimidation did not deter them
from returning to their laptops determined to file a news article that may be critical a
specific reconstruction project or to highlight that officials had refused to answer their
questions or provide information. Some have had their equipment broken at press
conferences and others have had claims made by government officials that they are the
object of assassination attempts. Haitian news-workers acknowledge they do not make
enough money in some cases to rebuild their homes, or to provide their children with
bright futures and that they could easily make twice the earnings at an NGO. However,
the more they commit to professional standards of conduct and integrity, they are better
able to report in depth with a sense of moral independence.

Likewise, such practices are reinforced from above. As media owners sense the
urgency to be less partisan, reporters are given cover and support to write stories that are
unflattering to officials or that are representative of societal concerns. They acknowledge
that they are not perfect, or that they are not consistent as they ought to be, but that they
recognize under the current circumstances that their profession is critical to not just
bringing about a change in the lives of their audiences but for their own families as well.
The News

This dissertation has argued that news in Haiti in 2013 should be critiqued by broadening the definition of what Western media defines as the structure of a news report. If Haiti’s media reports are to be judged by Western standards, then Haitian journalists are failing miserably on a daily business. This study found that the majority of news stories that appear as traditional articles were episodic in the third year after the earthquake. This meant that Haitian reporters mostly covered events such as the who, what, when and why of press conferences for instance, but failed to cover issues in depth. However, even within this finding, it is important to note that the majority of these events are related to the reconstruction, demonstrating that the news and information coming out of the aftermath are foremost in the pages and airwaves of news outlets.

Investigative reports regarding the reconstruction do occur within Haiti’s media, but they are mostly thanks to the origination and efforts of Haiti’s established alternative media news outlets. The Ayiti Kale Je collaborative effort has been central in providing the mainstream media with consistent, substantive exposés that provide interviews, data and critical analysis by expert sources on specific aspects of the reconstruction. The funding structure of the AKJ project, and longer deadlines afforded AKJ reporters encourage the production of such comprehensive, detailed reporting. What this dissertation has argued is that the embracing of the AKJ effort by the mainstream media is significant and valuable in the analysis of Haiti’s media. Haiti’s mainstream news media re-publish and broadcast these investigative reports in whole or in part and then fashion follow up reports around it. The prevalence of alternative media originated content within the mainstream press has filled a gap for the need for more timely and
costly in-depth reporting that is often difficult for daily journalists to produce when the daily grind requires they fill the news pages and broadcast segments with the going-ons of the day. Likewise, the alternative media alone, through its own community radio networks do not have the reach of mass consumer attention as do popular radio programs on commercial radios. When Haiti’s leading newspaper is criticized by the presidential administration for publishing an AKJ dossier report, and when key radio programs on Radio Télé Caraïbes and Radio Télé Kiskeya used Ayiti Kale Je reports as part of their daily news reports and weekly news-talk shows, this demonstrates the power of the alliance between mainstream and alternative media in ensuring that critical reporting of the reconstruction is carried throughout Haiti’s media landscape.

The findings of the content analysis of this dissertation may suggest that the quality of criticism and advocacy in mainstream media in Haiti remains weak, and that aside from the efforts of the AKJ project, little agency can be found in news content produced by the mainstream media. This study argues for examining both traditional news content such as articles and broadcast packages, as well as exploring additional media content such as news analysis essays and news-talk programs. This study has argued that media content most critical of the reconstruction that is produced by the mainstream media is partitioned off and packaged elsewhere among other products that the media offers. But such media content are, in fact, the most popular products among the citizens. Popular radio news-talk programs, which are hosted by the very same reporters who write and produce episodic news stories, as well as printed columns, essays, and editorials were found to be the places where critical analysis of the day’s news and events are housed. These formats provide more flexibility for journalists to
point out that officials did not return their calls, made false claims at press conferences, or flat out harassed news workers. These formats provide for the introduction of new information that would be contrary to official quotes and sound bites, or which would pose questioning about how various programs have improved the lives of citizens.

These additional formats are extensions of the work of journalism, particularly in a multi-media environment and one in a country where the majority of the population does not read or write, nor does so in French. Haiti’s cultural expression remains an oral one in Haitian Creole, and the formats that lend themselves best to popular expression, but not to journalistic confines, are where critical expression from news-workers were most often found. This does not negate the fact that journalists have excused themselves from producing investigative reports. However, with the interviews conducted with Haitian alternative media reporters, such projects are labors of love that takes months, and sometimes weeks with no leads. For the mainstream news reporter who must earn his or her keep by producing daily content, investigative or in-depth reports, given the barriers to obtaining factual information that exists, continues to be one of the biggest hurdles of producing timely critical reports. As such, the additional formats allow for breaking out of the daily report and providing reporter notes on the news of the day that poses these questions to other experts who can highlight those issues that daily news reports have missed.

Haitian Representation

The experience with Haiti’s fledging democracy and the continued survival mode of ordinary Haitians has disenchanted Haitian civil society. The disillusionment among ordinary Haitians about the state of their affairs does not mean that they do not have clear
understandings of what they want for their lives or their country. What exists is a lack of collective civic action in the post-2010 earthquake environment as the experiment with democracy has so far failed to demonstrate that collective action at the polls would result in tangible changes.

Haiti’s press in 2013 has recognized that their role is to continue a dialog with officials and with the population that reminds them of the people’s seat at the table in the affairs of the country. In other words, Haiti’s media sees themselves as actors on behalf of a traumatized citizenry, as well as partners with civic society when such a popular change does come about. As embodied in the quote at the opening of this chapter, when asked if they were optimistic about what their profession can do or about the state of their future, respondents were unanimous and resolute about their optimism that some day things will change. In the meantime, it was important for them to continue laying down the sparks that would resonate with civic society to bring about a change in the country’s trajectory either through government accountability, or through popular demonstration of some sort.

Additionally, Haiti’s media also sees the importance of letting outsiders know that they are aware of the stereotypes labeled at the country’s feet and how these stereotypes continue to disenfranchise the country in international affairs. Haiti’s media has been critical of the creation of the Haiti Reconstruction Commission and Fund and its control of the money and grand plan for Haiti’s development. Haiti’s media has questioned how a weak state could be representative of the will of the people in projects that involve the use of Haiti’s land, resources, and sovereignty. Given Haiti’s dependency on foreign aid,
Haiti’s media has advocated on behalf of Haitians and the state for the country’s self-determination in the face of powerful international interests.

**Implications**

The findings of this dissertation have relevance for scholars focused on Haiti in the field of Haitian Studies; researchers who write about the role of the media in society in the Mass Communication/Media Studies field and for practitioners of international development.

Haitian Studies, which spans a variety of fields including history, literature, cultural studies and international development has sought to answer the question of who or what is Haiti, a nation that defies historical and contemporary labels. This study adds to the scholarly literature that has sought to debunk stereotypes about the country. This dissertation argues that despite Haiti’s economic status, the country is rich in civic institutions and one of those institutions that continues to endure crisis after crisis in Haiti is the Haitian media. Haiti’s media is not without its ups and down, but in moments of persistent crisis in the country, it has emerged as a bright spot, and a vital platform for the internal struggle for the country’s path forward. Haiti’s media has been at the forefront of Haiti’s push to democracy under dictatorship. And in keeping with that scholarship by Leara Rhodes, Haiti’s media is currently at the forefront of a grand project for economic and social reconstruction that has eluded the country with the advent of democracy.

Haiti’s media continues to redefine how that message can serve the public good. Within the field of mass communication, scholars have defined what professional media systems are and what they are not, how they should present news and what specific roles they can play. Media scholars have allowed short-lived crises to push the boundaries of
journalism norms, however, they argue that such norms return when crises are averted. For a nation in a prolonged state of crisis and political evolution, Haiti’s media has had to go beyond the traditional theoretical definitions of the role of the media, expanding the role of information gathering and government watchdog to that of civic engagement, representation and advocacy. Within the context of the 2010 earthquake, Haiti’s media acted as humanitarian entity, with citizens walking miles to radio stations, in the absence of an incapacitated and overwhelmed state apparatus. As such, Haiti challenges normative theories of the press, particularly those that pertain to how the commercial media would behave under democratization because Haiti’s experience thus far has been quite the opposite to the theoretical determination for media evolution.

Thirdly, international development experts have emphasized that the solution to development in Haiti lies in more coordination among NGOs to reduce the replication of projects. However, this dissertation seeks to add to the critique made by Paul Farmer that helping Haiti is best done when Haiti’s institutions are empowered to sustain the effort begun by the dense concentration of NGOs operation in Haiti. Farmer’s Partners in Health clinics in Haiti’s Artibonite region function under the direction and jurisdiction of Haiti’s Ministry of Health and as such empowers Haiti in sustaining a model for rural healthcare.\(^3\) On the other hand, the distribution of aid since the 2010 reconstruction has resulted in benevolent agencies and donor nations building housing settlements while the Haitian government has little resources to help families rebuild their properties. This study has outlined the critiques made by a vital Haitian institution affirming that the current status quo with regards to development in Haiti has stifled the country, weakened the state, and created a level of dependency among citizens who have come to depend on
handouts from foreign benevolence. International aid has done little to place ordinary Haitians on a sustainable path of taking care of their families without daily foreign help. Likewise, media development has proven to be a bright spot for development in Haiti. The funding of Haiti’s alternative media by international donors is an aspect of international development that this dissertation considers to be working. Without funding for groups like SAKs, Refraka, Alterpresse, and the AKJ project, that operate with no commercial base, the quality of journalism in Haiti would go unchallenged by a resources-strapped commercial mainstream press. The funding of alternative media in impoverished countries that helps enable existing community media projects to thrive is an area of international development that the Haiti case shows is of vital benefit to supporting key civic institutions.

**Limitations and Future Research**

This is a study about Haiti and as such the very unique historical and contemporary developments in Haiti shape Haiti’s Fourth Estate. While these conditions may not be the identical to conditions in other developing nations, specific political, economic and social situations apply to other areas. Haiti’s most recent political developments are not far removed from the experiences of other Latin American and African nations that have experienced dictatorship or autocratic rule in recent history. How their media systems have adapted to the political environment is the subject of ongoing new scholarship that seeks to explain how key institutions, like the media, behave in the developing world. Scholars of Western media systems have had a deterministic approach that suggests that as these countries industrialize and modernize, their media systems will automatically resemble those of Western nations. The findings
of this study suggests that the recent and enduring effects of political events in developing countries have more effect on the evolution of their media systems, more so than the achievement of democracy or modernization. This study therefore adds to the few and scattered works on Haiti’s media that exists to demonstrate over time how such political experiences endure and shape media systems in a developing country such as Haiti.

Additionally, Haiti’s economic situation resembles closely countries outside the region such as many in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. In such parts of the world, economic aid per capita is high, with Haiti’s being the highest in the world. As such in countries where a commercial press has few resources for its economic base restricting the quality of journalism, this study begins to show the benefits of cooperation between mainstream and alternative media.

However, it must be noted that Haiti’s mainstream media’s experience with advocacy has a history very different to media systems in countries in Africa where the colonial system is far more recent than that of Haiti. In considering whether the that the mainstream press experience in Haiti might be reflected elsewhere, researchers will always have to consider the fact that Haiti is a country where freedom of expression for the masses is as old as 200 years when Haitians took their freedom from colonialism and slavery by force.

This dissertation has also provided a preliminary look at news content in Haiti in 2013, an exercise that is rarely conducted by media researchers of Haiti. Therefore, this study only looked at basic framing of the reconstruction as it pertained to episodic and thematic news framing and news topic frequency. Additional analysis of news content in
Haiti for future research can begin to measure advocacy levels in Haiti’s news content. This would require a closer examination of sourcing patterns within news stories that show both the frequency and framing of unofficial and unaffiliated sources in Haitian media news content. Such studies would help to determine positive and negative treatments of ordinary citizens compared to similar treatments of officials that elevate the credibility of one source over another. The present study has only provided limited insight into the potential of other media products offered by Haiti’s mainstream media such as the popular news-talk shows. Such a unique staple of Haiti’s media environment warrants further study to the origin, development and appeal of this platform for mass consumers of commercial radio programs hosted by journalists.

Finally, socially, Haiti closely resembles Central America where a small elite class owns most of the nation’s key industries, including commercial mainstream outlets. This study argues that Haiti’s elites, particularly those involved in media ownership, should not be discounted in the grand project of social and civic reconstruction. Haiti’s elites have used their commercial mainstream enterprises for good and for bad in recent history. Yet in times of national crisis, they have demonstrated that they can be on the side of the public good. This has been the case time and time again in Haiti’s history and is outlined in chapter 4 of this dissertation. This study challenges the assumption made by scholars of countries with high economic disproportion that elite ownership of media enterprises necessarily leads to more negatives than positives. This study is in line with scholarship made by Latin American media researchers such as Mauro Porto and Chappell Lawson who have demonstrated that even elite media ownership of Brazil’s Globo and Mexico’s Televisa have changed in the face of political and civic
transformations. Likewise in Haiti, elite media owners have been responsive to the demands of the current crisis, putting aside old partisan divides in order to ensure that Haiti’s Fourth Estate advocates progress and does not stand in the way of it.
APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Radio Télé Ginen rebuilt building, 2013

Newly rebuilt television editing and production suite at the new site for Radio Télé Ginen
Photo by Shearon Roberts, June 2013.
APPENDIX B: SAKS Network of community radio stations

Map of distribution of SAKs community radio affiliates in all provinces in Haiti. Graphic courtesy SAKS, June 2013.
### Key of Radio Stations across Haiti affiliated with SAKS’ network.

Graphic courtesy SAKS, June 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radios communautaires qui diffusent les émissions produites par SAKS:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pipirit – Anse d’Hainault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Zantray – Dame Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vwa Peyizan Sid – Pliché (94.1 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Presqu’île Sud Grande Anse PSG-Miragoâne(92.5FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sakà – Grand Goâve (93.3 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Klofà Pyè - Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Radyo Ansapit – Anse à Pitres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Peyizan Montòganize – Mont Organisé (102.7FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Atlantique – Quartier Morin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Vwa Gwo Mòn – Gros Morne (99.9 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ansapit ente-Anse a pitre (88.3 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Radyo enpery St marc (90.7 FM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Pawollavi -Ouanamint (</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Radio Kazal-Casale (93.3 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Radio Lavale-Lavalee (91.3 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Radyo Xplozyon-Gonaives (96’5 FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Masak - Ouamaninthe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Riva – Grande Rivière du Nord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Laser – Grande Rivière du Nord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Planet FM-Grande Rivière du Nord (98.7)</td>
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### Projets de radios:

1. Petit Goaves
2. Iles a vache
APPENDIX C: List of Key Informants from Haitian media outlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Max Chauvet</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Le Nouvelliste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Frantz Duval</td>
<td>Editor in Chief</td>
<td>Le Nouvelliste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Daly Valet</td>
<td>Editor in Chief</td>
<td>Le Matin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Marcus Garcia</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Haití en Marche/Melodie FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>L’Association des Médias Indépendants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lillianne Pierre Paul</td>
<td>Owner/Broadcaster</td>
<td>Radio Télé Kiskeya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Association Nationale de Médias Haïtiens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dr. Wien Wiebert Arthus</td>
<td>Vice president/Head of TV</td>
<td>Radio Télévision Caraïbes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jean-Monard Metellus</td>
<td>Host of Ranmasse/Broadcaster</td>
<td>Radio Télévision Caraïbes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jane Regan</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>Ayiti Kale Je</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jean-Wickens Méroué</td>
<td>Director General</td>
<td>Radio Télévision Nationale d’Haïti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sony Esteus</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>SAKS: Sosyete Animasyon Kominikasyon Sosyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Marie Guyleine Justin</td>
<td>Director/Broadcaster</td>
<td>REFRAKA: Réseau des Femmes des Radios Communautaires Haïtiennes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Gotson Pierre</td>
<td>Director/Founder</td>
<td>Mediaalternatif/Alterpresse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Vario Sérant</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>L’Université D’État Haïti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ari Régis</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>L’Université D’État Haïti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Maude Malendrez</td>
<td>Head of Media Outreach</td>
<td>FOKAL: Fondasyon Konesans ak Libète</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 75 Haitian news workers participated in the research conducted for this dissertation. The list of key informants above gave consent for their name and affiliation to be identified throughout the dissertation. They have given interviews about the state of Haitian media since the earthquake in foreign media and in other platforms. The remaining 60 news workers are journalists, editors, announcers, and producers who were interviewed in Haiti between March and July 2013. Their respective news organizations are listed below. Their names were not published in the dissertation given strict guidelines for research with foreign subjects set by Tulane University’s Institutional Review Board. Extracts from their interviews have been used in the dissertation with the only identifying information being the informant’s rank, job title and the type of media the informant worked for.
List of Print Media Consulted:
Le Nouvelliste
Le Matin
Haiti en Marche

List of Broadcast Media Consulted:
Radio Télévision Nationale d’Haiti (RTNH)
Radio Télévision Caraïbes
Radio Télé Ginen
Radio Télé Lumière
Radio Télé Kiskeya
Radio Télé Métropole
Radio Magik 9
Radio Melodie FM
Radio Télé MegaStar
Radio Télé Galaxie
Radio Vision 2000
Radio Signal FM
Radio Télé Zenith
Canal Bleu
Canal 11
Radio Ibo
Tropic FM

List of Alternative Media Consulted:
SAKS: Sosyete Animasyon Kominikasyon Sosyal or Society for Animation and Social Communication
Refraka: Réseau des Femmes des Radios Communautaires Haïtiennes or Haitian Women’s Community Radio Network
Mediaalternatif/Alterpresse
Ayiti Kale Je

Additional research sites for informants:
CONATEL: Conseil National des Télécommunications
FOKAL: Fondasyon Konesans ak Libète
L’Université D’État Haïti
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SAKS: Sosyete Animasyon Kominikasyon Sosyal</td>
<td>Broederlijk-Delen WACC Développement et Paix IMS UNESCO AJWS Entraide et Fraternite AMARC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Refraka: Réseau des Femmes des Radios Communautaires Haïtiennes</td>
<td>Fond Kore Fanmn FOKAL WACC Broderlijk Delen Fond Mondial AMI Developpemen et Paix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mediaalternatif/Alterpresse</td>
<td>Broederlijk Delen CDAC UNESCO Reporters Sans Frontieres Oxfam Quebec Collectif Haiti de France Plate-Forme Haiti de Suisse FOKAL WACC MédiaTerre American Jewish World Service International Media Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ayiti Kale Je</td>
<td>International Media Support American Jewish World Service Church World Service Somerville Community Access Television</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Freedom of expression is a fundamental right of man, without it, public opinion cannot be properly informed. It is guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the Constitution of Haiti in 1987. Convinced that the pursuit of truth is at the heart of the journalistic profession, Anxious to preserve the integrity and freedom of the press, Recognizing the importance of ensuring the credibility of the profession to all citizens, Aware of the potential role of the press in building a democratic state in Haiti The media and Haitian journalists have adopted the code of ethics as follows:

1. **Freedom of the Press** Freedom of the press is an essential condition of freedom of expression. The media and journalists defending freedom of the press and expression, in accordance with Article 28 of the Haitian Constitution.

2. **Veracity and authenticity of the facts** Search for public information, check them, place them in a context, prioritize and disseminate is one of the main tasks of the press. In this logic, the facts must be reported with impartiality, balance and accuracy.

3. **Information and opinion** The media and journalists can speak on any issue or subject. However, they have a duty to separate the comments made to the public not to throw into confusion. The media and journalists have a duty to tell the difference between the true facts, which is about the observation, and trial, which is about the meaning and significance to not throw the public in the confusion. The media and journalists should clearly indicate when they defend a position or opinion, such as editorials or points of view.

4. **Human dignity and privacy** The media and journalists respect the rights of the individual's dignity and privacy. This includes the actions that the individual wants to share with relatives, friends or acquaintances. Until that privacy does not interfere with the public interest, it must be scrupulously respected. Is a new public interest when it is useful to participation in democratic life or that jeopardizes the functioning of public institutions or private institutions. Journalists and the media can talk about the private lives of public figures by the existence of a high public interest.

5. **Discrimination** Discrimination violates equality rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. The press recognizes and cherishes the diversity of opinions and non-discrimination. The media and journalists opposed to any form of discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic origin, race or perceived color, physical or mental disability, language, political convictions, social origin or other status.

6. **Presumption of innocence** The media and journalists in Haiti must respect the principle of presumption of innocence which is clearly defined in Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. "Everyone charged with a crime is presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a trial where all the guarantees
necessary for his defense was guaranteed." The media and journalists fail to condemn the first trial defendants.

7. **Portrayal of violence** The media and journalists should avoid the language of hate and confrontation. They shall refrain from publishing scenes of violence, grisly images and obscene for sensational. They refuse to relay the reactions of readers, listeners, viewers or users that feed hatred, discrimination or prejudice against individuals or groups.

8. **Protection of persons in a weak position** Journalists need to show understanding and respect for those who are suffering, especially those who have been victims of crime or traumatic events. They will avoid harassing them for information. The questions addressed to them must be made with sensitivity and restraint. Journalists should treat victims of traumatic events with dignity.

9. **Data processing** In the processing of information, journalists must scrutinize and vigilance critical information, documents, images and sounds that reach them. The concern to achieve the faster dissemination of information does not provide a prior verification of the credibility of sources. The media and journalists should avoid mentioning phrases out of context, use of graphic material, photos or audiovisual content, which have undergone any change. Journalists have a duty to report slideshows available to the public.

10. **Right of reply and correction of erroneous information** Any error in the information needs to be rectified as soon as possible. Those unjustly implicated, are entitled to compensation by the right of reply. The right of reply can only be exercised in the body that issued the disputed information.

11. **Access to information** The media and journalists have access to all sources of information. They have the right to conduct investigations on all matters relating to public life. However, they are prohibited from using unfair methods to obtain information, images and documents.

12. **Protection of sources of information** The media and journalists must respect professional secrecy. They must not disclose the names of sources of information obtained in confidence without their express permission. However, they have a duty to verify the authenticity and accuracy of information, especially in the overlapping with other information sources. This right is enshrined in Article 28.2 of the Haitian Constitution of 1987.

13. **Rumor** The rumor is information to be true, but unverified and often unverifiable, relating to facts or opinions distorted, exaggerated or even invented. A rumor is not information. It may not be published, unless it is meaningful and useful to understand an event. The media and journalists must always identify it as rumor and make sure that the media coverage did not increase and does not amplify misinterpretation.

14. **Plagiarism** Journalists must refrain from plagiarism. They cite the brothers and
sisters which he or she repeat the information. Journalists should not pretend to be the
author of the written material, audio, moving images and pictures that they have not
themselves produced.

15. Independence The media and journalists should not yield to any pressure. Their main
interest is to allow the public to enjoy their right to be informed. They are wary of any
steps that could be established between themselves and their sources a relationship of
dependency or connivance. Independent media and journalists is the fundamental
condition of a free, pluralistic and responsible.

16. Impartiality during elections During the election campaign, the media and
journalists should not be advocating a political party or candidate. They must treat all
parties and candidates in a fair, impartial and neutral. The media and journalists must
obey the principle of balance by relaying several conflicting opinions in articles and
broadcasts. Extracts from statements made by candidates and political leaders must be
substantially reproduced, respecting the context in which they were delivered. The media
and journalists must learn and respect the electoral law.

17. Information and publicity Advertising commercial or policy must be clearly
distinguished from the information or analysis. It is mandatory to specify when any type
of announcement is part of a trade agreement with media. The media and journalists
refuse to disseminate information in exchange for advertising contract or other benefit for
their business news.

18. Gifts and gratuities The media and journalists refuse any gift or gratuity that could
compromise their impartiality. They refuse as companies, institutions or organizations to
pay to cover events.

19. Remuneration To contribute to or enhance the professional status of journalists,
media managers must work to provide compensation for journalists to live a decent life
and decent.

20. The duty of competence The journalist must take into account their skills or abilities.
He must constantly seek to refine and master the skills they need to better practice his
profession with the support of the media for which he works. The journalist should strive
to participate in continuing education activities organized by various professional
associations. The heads of the media will encourage journalists to participate in all forms
of training to their integration into the profession.

21. Media and Gender The media and journalists should exercise particular sensitivity
regarding issues related to gender stereotypes. The media and journalists make sure they
reflect the intellectual and emotional equality of men and women. They must encourage
the participation of women in the media, including positions of responsibility.

22. Brotherhood Teamwork, collaboration and collegiality should guide journalists.
Mutual respect between colleagues should be encouraged. The reporter does not use
newspaper columns or antennas for the purpose of settling scores with colleagues.

**Signatories to the code of ethics for the media and journalists in Haiti December 8, 2011**

Max Chauvet President of the National Association of Media in Haiti (ANMH)
Marc Garcia President of the Association of Independent Media of Haiti (AMIH)
Jacques Desrosiers Secretary General of the Association of Haitian Journalists (AJH)
Guyler Delva Secretary General of SOS Journalists
Marie Guylrleine JUSTIN Director Women's Network of Community Radios (REFRAKA)
Jean-Jacques Augustin Coordinator of the Haitian Journalists Union photographers (UNJPH)
Sony Esteus Director General of the Society of Animation and Social Communication (SAKS)
PIERRE Gotson Coordinator of Médialternatif
APPENDIX F: Interview Questions for Haitian newworkers

Journalists
1) Pouvez-vous vous rappeler le jour du tremblement de terre ? Qu’est-ce qui s’est passé ici ou qu’est-ce qui vous est arrivé ?
   1) Can you recall the day the earthquake occurred? What happened here or with you?

2) Comment étaient les jours et les mois après le tremblement de terre pour votre travail ? Qu’en est-il du journal ?
   2) What were the days and months after the earthquake like for your work at the newspaper?

3) Comment le tremblement de terre a-t-il interrompu vos tâches quotidiennes et la manière dont vous avez produit les nouvelles ?
   3) In what ways did the earthquake interrupt your daily assignments and how you produce the news?

4) Et la salle de presse, de quelle manière le tremblement de terre a-t-il affecté la main d’œuvre et les actualités ?
   4) And for the newsroom, in what way did the earthquake affect manpower and the news topics?

5) Maintenant combien de journalistes travaillent ici et quelles sont les spécialisations. Comment cette structure a-t-elle changé depuis le tremblement de terre ?
   5) How many journalists work here now and what are the specializations. How did this structure change since the earthquake?

6) Pensez-vous que les nouvelles de la reconstruction représentent tous les Haïtiens ? Comment les nouvelles répondent-elles en même tant aux préoccupations des haïtiens pauvres et riches ?
   6) Do you think that the news of the reconstruction represents all Haitian people? How does the news of the reconstruction address the concerns of ordinary Haitians, as well as those with power?

7) S’agit-il d’une véritable reconstruction ou quelque chose fabriquée par la communauté internationale pour attirer l’attention sur leur programme de développent pour Haïti ? Est-ce que les dimensions de ce désastre exigent des autorités un grand projet de reconstruction ou selon votre évaluation c’est toujours la même chose après un désastre en Haïti (une approche de statu quo).
   7) Do you consider this to be a true reconstruction or one established by the international community to gain more attention to their development plan for Haiti. Does the scale of this disaster require from officials a large reconstruction project or in your assessment is it business as usual after a disaster in Haiti?

8) Qu’est ce que vous avez observé à propos des nouvelles de la reconstruction à travers les medias internationaux ici et hors d’Haïti ? Pensez-vous que ce qu’ils disent sur Haïti
soit juste ou cela contribue à l’image négative ou à la mauvaise réputation du pays? Qu’est que vous faites différemment quand vous faites un rapport sur la reconstruction?

8) What have you observed about the news of the reconstruction by the international media here and outside of Haiti? Do you think that it is fair or does it contribute to a negative image or reputation for the country? What, if anything, do you do differently when you report on the reconstruction?

9) Qu’est ce que vous pouvez faire mieux quand vous donnez des nouvelles sur la reconstruction? Pensez-vous que les médias poussent les haïtiens à examiner les programmes qui peuvent affecter leurs vies?

9) What do you think that you can do better when you report on the news of the reconstruction? Do you thing that ordinary Haitians are engaged by the media on news about programs that affect their lives?

10) Pensez-vous que la relation de la presse avec le gouvernement doive être antagoniste? Il y a-t-il un temps pour supporter le gouvernement ou leurs programmes, compte tenu de la pression venant de la communauté internationale? Qu’en pensez-vous?

10) Do you think that the relationship of the press with the Haitian government must be antagonistic? Is there a time to give support to the government or their programs, in light of pressure of the international community, or no?

Thank you for your time and your perspective and point of view. Is it okay to follow up through email if I have any questions as I write my dissertation and who would I contact for that?

Merci pour votre temps, votre perspective et point de vue. Est-ce possible d’envoyer des emails si j’ai des questions en écrivant ma thèse (pour entreprendre un suivi afin d’obtenir l’information qui reste ? A qui m’adresserais-je dans ce cas ?

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

For News Organizations’ Owners (sample for Le Nouvelliste)

1) Please state your name and title at this organization, what your duties are, and how long you have been in this position.

S’il vous plait, dites votre nom et la position que vous occupez dans cette organisation, ce que vous faites, et depuis combien de temps vous remplissez cette fonction.

2) How did the 2010 earthquake affect the newspaper and its operations? How are things now?

Comment le tremblement de terre de 2010 a-t-il affecté le journal et son fonctionnement? Comment sont les choses maintenant ?

3) As former head of ANMH how common were the problems Le Nouvelliste faced, also affecting other news outlets?

En tant qu’ancien chef de l’association des médias haïtiens, les problèmes auxquels le Nouvelliste avait à faire face, étaient-ils commun ? Qu’en est-il des autres organisations ?
4) How would you say Le Nouvelliste has been able to survive over a century, and what adaptations has Le Nouvelliste made to survive since the earthquake, both economically and politically?
Comment Le Nouvelliste a-t-il pu survivre pendant plus d’un siècle, et quels ajustements le nouvelliste a-t-il fait pour survivre après le tremblement de terre économiquement et politiquement ?

5) Comment on the general state of news in Haiti. What do you feel is the role of the Haitian press right now, compared to 10 years ago? How would you describe news in Haiti, how has it changed, where does Le Nouvelliste fit?
Parlez d’une façon générale de la condition des informations en Haïti. Comparativement aux dix dernières années, d’après vous, quel est le rôle de la presse haïtienne maintenant ? Comment décririez-vous la diffusion des informations en Haïti ? Y –a-t-il un changement, quel rôle Le Nouvelliste joue-t-il ?

6) Describe some of the ways Le Nouvelliste has had to deal with those in government, international organizations etc, that has been challenging or a partnership of some sort. Give some examples.
Comment Le Nouvelliste faisait-il pour donner des informations au sujet du gouvernement et des organisations internationales ? Etait-ce difficile, ou il y avait de coopération ? Donnez quelques exemples.

7) What do you think of international news, here in Haiti or abroad, and their coverage of the reconstruction?
Qu’est ce que vous pensez des nouvelles internationales, ici en Haïti ou à l’étranger, et leur reportage sur la reconstruction ?

8) What do you think Le Nouvelliste does the same or differently from international news agencies with regards to the news of the reconstruction?
Quels sont les points de convergence et de divergence entre Le Nouvelliste et les agences d’informations internationales en ce qui concerne le reportage sur la reconstruction ?

9) Do you think the international news image of Haiti is getting better, worse or about the same and how so?
Pensez-vous que l’image que la presse internationale projette d’Haïti commence à s’améliorer, s’empruir ou reste intact? Expliquez.

10) Do you think Haitian news media are getting better about providing the news and how so? What critique do you have about news in Haiti, and news in Le Nouvelliste? What do you think Le Nouvelliste has done right, what do you think Le Nouvelliste can do better?
Pensez-vous que les médias haïtiens soient entrain de faire un meilleur travail de diffusion d’informations? Quelle critique pouvez-vous faire au sujet des informations en
Haïti et les informations dans Le Nouvelliste? Qu’est-ce que Le Nouvelliste a bien fait, qu’est-ce qu’il peut améliorer?

11) How do you feel ordinary Haitians respond to the news Le Nouvelliste provides? In what ways do you feel Le Nouvelliste is doing a good job representing their views, and not just of the rich and powerful and also what more can be done?

12) What about the Haitian government, do you believe that the Haitian press has a role in supporting the democratic Haitian government given international pressures or not?

13) Finally, do you think that this is a true reconstruction or one established by the international community here to gain support to continue their development plan for Haiti? Is this a reconstruction for the Haitian people in reality, or is it the same thing after every disaster?

Thank you for your time and your perspective and point of view. Is it okay to follow up through email if I have any questions as I write my dissertation and who would I contact for that?
APPENDIX G: 2013 Random Constructed Sample Week for News Content Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Monday, June 3</td>
<td>Monday, October 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 26</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wednesday, February 6</td>
<td>Wednesday, September 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thursday, April 4</td>
<td>Thursday, October 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Friday, June 28</td>
<td>Friday, August 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Saturday, January 26</td>
<td>Saturday, July 27</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Sunday, May 12</td>
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APPENDIX H: Search Keywords for Retrieving Articles

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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tremblement de terre</td>
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<td>Désastre</td>
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APPENDIX I: Search Keywords for Attributing Alternative Media Stories

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<td>Refraka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dossier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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APPENDIX J: Image of Haiti’s news-talk show

Live show of Ranmase hosted by Haitian journalists and broadcaster Jean-Monard Metellus (left) June 1, 2013.
Photo courtesy Wilner Saint-Val, Radio Télévision Caraïbes
ENDNOTES

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14. This is the lower house in Haiti’s National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale).


16. Research conducted with Haitian journalists from March 2013 to September 2013.


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22. Ibid., 175.

23. Ibid., 176.
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26. Ibid.


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32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.


35. Stephen Lendman, “Haiti’s Achievements Under Aristide and Lavalas.”

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40. Ibid.

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42. Ibid.


46. Ibid.

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51. Ibid., 5.

52. USIP, “Haiti: A Republic of NGOs?” 2.


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58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.


61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.


64. CEPR, “Haiti Reconstruction Fund: Building Back…When?.”

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8. Dubois, 2.

9. Ibid., 1.

10. Ibid., 2.

11. Ibid., 3.


14. Ibid.


16. Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, 11.

17. Ibid., 10-11.

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21. Dubois and Gariggus, 11-12.


24. Ibid., 13.

25. Ibid., 15.

26. Ibid., 16.


28. Ibid.


31. Ibid., 920.

32. cite Reinhardt forgotten claims to liberty somewhere here.


34. Ibid., 50.
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35. Ibid., 53.


49. Ibid., 9.

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70. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past, 66.
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77. Ibid.


81. Ibid.


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91. Ibid., 13.

92. Ibid., 20.

93. Ibid., 306.

94. Ibid., 304-305.


98. Ibid.


102. Ibid., 223.


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119. Ibid., 42.

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122. Ibid., 44.

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133. Ibid.


137. Ibid.


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158. Ibid.

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161. Ibid.

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206. Ibid., 5.
207. Ibid., 6.
208. Ibid., 7-9.
210. Ibid., 8-9.
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15. Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 105-108.


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52. Chalaby, 319.

53. Ibid., 318.


58. Ibid, 233.


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21. Ibid., 65.


26. List of 2013 membership compiled directly from each organization during interviews with association heads.

27. Interview conducted with Max Chauvet, June 2013.

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31. Ibid.


34. Leara Rhodes, *Democracy and the Role of the Haitian Media*, 70-71.


36. Table information compiled from research conducted at news organizations in 2013 and from additional sources: INFOASAID, *Haiti - Media and Telecoms Landscape Guide*; Leara Rhodes, *Democracy and the Role of the Haitian Media*.


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42. Ibid., 8-9.

43. Interviews conducted in Haiti in May 2013; also Jane Regan, Hybrid in Haiti; 6.

44. Jane Regan, Hybrid in Haiti, 6; quote originally published as Haiti Ministry of Justice and Public Security, Note de Presse, February 10, 2013.

45. Interview conducted in person with Lillianne Pierre Paul in June 2013.
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47. Interviews conducted with association heads in Haiti, May-June 2013.

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53. Interview conducted with Jane Regan, March 2013.

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56. INFOASAID, 18.

57. Interview conducted with Daly Valet in Haiti June 2013.

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59. Excerpt from interview conducted in Haiti with Max Chauvet in June 2013.

60. Excerpt from interview conducted in Haiti with Sony Esteus in March 2013.

61. Max Chauvet interview, June 2013.

62. Excerpt from interview conducted in Haiti with Marcus Garcia in June 2013.

63. Excerpt from interview conducted in Haiti with Lilliane Pierre-Paul in June 2013.
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2. For methodology debate see Sandy Qu & John Dumay, “The Qualitative Research Interview,” Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management, 8(3) (2011): 238-264.

3. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013, conducted in English, French and Creole, extract spoken in English.

4. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013, extract spoken in English.

5. Print editor in chief interview, June 2013.

6. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013, extract spoken in English.


9. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013, extract spoken in English.


13. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013, extract spoken in English.


15. Senior print reporter interview, March 2013.


17. Television/radio broadcast news director interview, June 2013.


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27. Radio broadcast news director, June 2013.
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9. Interviews conducted with Roberson Alphonse, Marcus Garcia and Dr. Weibert Arthus in June 2013.

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Chapter 7: Conclusion

1. Jane Regan interview, September 2013, extract spoken in English.


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BIOGRAPHY

Shearon Roberts is a native of Trinidad and Tobago. After graduating high school at St. Joseph’s Convent, San Fernando, Trinidad she moved to the United States to attend college. In 2005, she graduated as the class valedictorian of Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana with a B.A. in Mass Communication and a double-minor in French and Spanish. She then completed her Master’s in Mass Communication from Louisiana State University’s Manship School of Mass Communication in 2007.

Thanks to prestigious internships and reporting programs, she has worked at The New York Times Student Journalism Institute, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Times Picayune and The News & Observer. She then worked as an international correspondent based in Miami covering Latin America and the Caribbean for several U.S. and international news outlets including The China Daily News, The Miami Today, The Trinidad Guardian and The Trinidad Express. Her reporting has been reprinted and carried in news wires such as The Associated Press and Reuters. She has also worked in broadcast radio and television production and has produced two documentary films. In 2010, she entered Tulane University’s Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies to earn a PhD in Latin American Studies.