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Life Pathways of Haitian-American Young Adults in South Florida

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

LIFE PATHWAYS OF HAITIAN-AMERICAN YOUNG ADULTS IN SOUTH
FLORIDA

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY

by

Patricia N. Vanderkooy

2011

To: Dean Kenneth Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

This dissertation, written by Patricia N. Vanderkooy, and entitled Life Pathways of Haitian-American Young Adults in South Florida, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

Sarah J. Mahler

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Date of Defense: April 11, 2011

The dissertation of Patricia N. Vanderkooy is approved.

Dean Kenneth Furton
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Florida International University, 2011

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DEDICATION

For my parents, for loving me through it all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I moved to Haiti in 1999, I quickly learned a few basic greetings in Creole. A general question about how a person was doing was often followed by the response, *M'ap kenbe, pitit pitit* (I'm holding on, bit by bit). This dissertation has been my biggest exercise thus far in holding on, bit by bit. Through tumultuous situations – both dissertation related and otherwise – I developed tenacity and came to deeply appreciate the people holding onto me when my own ability to hold on was compromised.

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Without a doubt, my parents brought kenbe to a whole new level. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for holding onto me with the strength of a thousand horses, and more than anything, for demonstrating that love is a verb.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
LIFE PATHWAYS OF HAITIAN-AMERICAN YOUNG ADULTS IN SOUTH
FLORIDA

by

Patricia N. Vanderkooy

Florida International University, 2011

Miami, Florida

Professor Alex Stepick, Major Professor

This research examines the life pathways of 1.5 and second generation Haitian immigrants in South Florida. The purpose of the research is to better understand how integration occurs for the children of Haitian immigrants as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. Building upon a prior study of second-generation immigrant adolescents between 1995 and 2000, a sub-set of the original participants was located to participate in this follow-up research. Qualitative interviews were conducted as well as in-depth ethnographic research, including participant observation. Survey instruments used with other second-generation populations were also administered, enabling comparisons with the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS). The results indicate that educational and occupational achievements were markedly below the participants' original expectations as adolescents. Gender figures prominently in participants' familial roles and relationships, with men and women distinctly incorporating both Haitian and American cultural practices within their households. Contrary to previous research, these results on the identification of participants suggest that these young adults claim attachment to both Haiti and to the United States. The

unique longitudinal and ethnographic nature of this study contributes to the ongoing discussion of the integration of the children of immigrants by demonstrating significant variation from the prior integration trends observed with Haitian adolescents. The results cast doubt on existing theory on the children of immigrants for explaining the trajectory of Haitian-American integration patterns. Specifically, this research indicates that Haitians are not downwardly mobile and integrating as African Americans. They have higher education and economic standing than their parents and are continuing their education well into their thirties. The respondents have multiple identities in which they increasingly express identification with Haiti, but in some contexts are also developing racialized identifications with African Americans and others of the African diaspora.

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I. INTRODUCTION: THE STORY OF HAITIAN IMMIGRANTS

Migration is deeply rooted within Haiti's past and present, and many of the migrants make their way to the United States. Geographically, Haiti is a close neighbor to the Florida peninsula. But fraternity has not been extended to the treatment of Haitian immigrants in the United States. Haitian immigrants have been subject to discrimination and unequal opportunity on the basis of race, class, language, and national origin.

A popular expression in Haiti is to *chache lavi*, or "to search for life," which means to seek the resources necessary to sustain life. The earliest members of the Haitian republic sought life through a victorious freedom-fight. Subsequent generations have struggled to find life within Haiti's borders and have repeatedly turned to emigration as a life-seeking strategy. Recent disasters, such as hurricanes in 2008 and the devastating earthquake in January, 2010, have only increased the difficulty of "seeking life" in Haiti. Although the early story of Haiti's nationhood is framed by movement to the island-nation, the past several decades have seen large numbers of migrants leaving Haiti for other destinations. Currently, approximately 1 million Haitians live outside of the physical territory of Haiti, and 9 million within the country itself. Large diasporas of Haitians are located in France, Canada, and the United States (Catanese 1999; Mooney 2009). The 2000 Census of the United States counted nearly 430,000 foreign-born Haitians, not including people born in the U.S. to Haitian parents. Of these, nearly half lived in Florida (43%) and another third (30%) in New York.¹

Migration is not a singular experience for Haitians; experiences differ on the basis of class, gender, race, era of migration, and means of arrival, among others (Charles

¹ 2000 Census, 5% PUMS

2006; Charles 2003; Laguerre 1998; Mooney 2009; Nicholas, Stepick, and Dutton Stepick 2008; Stepick 1998). The overall patterns and movements have been shaped by situations external to Haiti (such as economic embargos) and internal situations within the nation (political regimes) (Charles 2006; Charles 1995). However, one of the enduring realities for Haitian migrants is the discrimination they experience wherever they go, just by virtue of being Haitian (Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998; Stepick and Portes 1986) The struggle of these migrants against negative treatment reinforces their tenacity in searching for life outside of their homeland (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; McCarthy Brown 1991; Mooney 2009; Richman 2005).

This chapter introduces the dissertation with a brief review of Haitian migration to the United States. From a steady stream of professional émigrés in the 1960s to a cascading wave of arrivals by boat in the 1980s, Haitians have faced continuous discrimination and mistreatment in the United States. This chapter lays out the broader context surrounding Haitian migrant experiences. I also introduce key theoretical concepts examined in this dissertation, namely assimilation and segmented assimilation, although these concepts are more thoroughly discussed in the following theory chapter. I close the chapter with a look forward at the structure and themes of the dissertation chapters.

This dissertation examines the experiences of one specific sub-set of Haitian migrants: the children of Haitian migrants. Some of these immigrant offspring were born in Haiti and spent some of their childhood in the homeland. Others were born in the United States to Haitian immigrant parents. All of them were shaped by both Haitian and American influences as they grew up in the United States. These immigrant offspring

were first studied as adolescents, nearly 15 years ago, when they were in high school. The current dissertation project examines their integration experiences in the United States as they embark upon adulthood, especially considering how race and gender have shaped these experiences. It specifically addresses issues of immigrant assimilation, particularly their educational, occupational, family relations, and identifications. The most relevant theory is the children of immigrants theory, or segmented assimilation theory, developed by Alejandro Portes and colleagues (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). My dissertation research challenges some important assertions of that theory. First, the children of immigrants theory does not address issues of gender differences. My dissertation also indicates, contrary to the claims of segmented assimilation, that Haitians are not downwardly mobile and integrating as African Americans. They have higher education and economic standing than their parents and are continuing their education well into their thirties. The respondents have multiple identities in which they increasingly express identification with Haiti, but in some contexts are also developing racialized identifications with African Americans and others of the African diaspora. All of these findings contradict the children of immigrants theory. Each of these findings is presented and developed in subsequent chapters. First, I present the broader context of the population of study.

Haitian Migration to the United States

Migration has long been utilized as a resource strategy by Haitian households across economic levels (Itzigsohn 1995). Intra-regional movements within the island of Hispaniola, which Haiti shares with the Dominican Republic, and with other nations

within the Caribbean, have occurred throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (Brodwin 2003a; Brodwin 2003b; Brown 2002; Turnbull 2005). Migration to northern destinations was largely precipitated by deteriorating political and economic circumstances within Haiti, combined with changing immigration policies and practices of receiving nations (Catanese 1999; Charles 1995; Heintl, Heintl, and Heintl 1996; Stepick and Portes 1986).

Early Periods of Migration from Haiti

Haitian emigrants in the 1960's and 1970's were often highly educated and represented the political, economic, and social elite of the country. Their departure from Haiti was brought on by the rule of Francois Duvalier, whose *noiriste* popular movement marginalized the *mulattes* and light-skinned elites.² From 1961 to 1970, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) statistics record a total of 34,499 Haitians who moved to the United States (Gaines 2004). The figures would likely be much higher if we were to account for other popular destinations, such as France and Canada, and those who did not hold immigrant visas. The intellectuals who left in this period, such as doctors, teachers, business people, and journalists, established themselves in the traditional immigrant gateway cities of the era, such as Boston and New York. Other substantial Haitian migrant communities formed in Montreal, Canada and in Paris, France. Many of these trained professionals experienced downward class mobility upon their arrival to the United States (Catanese 1999; Fournon and Glick Schiller 1997; Laguerre 2005; Mooney 2009).

² *Noiriste* refers to a pro-Black orientation. Historically, political and economic power rested with Haiti's light-skinned elites and *mullatres* (mixed-race). The *noiriste* movement celebrated African ancestry and claimed political power on behalf of the black masses. See Heintl et al. (1996) and DuBois (2004).

The significant numbers of Haitian émigrés in New York prompted the development of a diasporic community, united by their shared exile from their homeland and continued interest and involvement in homeland politics (Charles 2006; Charles 1995; Laguerre 1998; Laguerre 2005; Pierre-Louis 2006). Haitians in Brooklyn relied on each other for information, assistance and support when it was not available through official means (McCarthy Brown 1991). Associations of people from various hometowns helped to institutionalize the connections with Haiti, and to form strategic alliances with other special-interest groups in the United States, and differentiate Haitian immigrants from the label ‘African American’ (Pierre-Louis 2006).

The Boat People

The second wave of Haitian emigration occurred in the 1980’s. Increasingly difficult political and economic conditions in Haiti led increasing numbers of people to board small boats and ships, often for a fee to traffickers, and set sail for the U.S. shoreline. Many of these migrants were peasants from rural areas, looking for new ways to *chache lavi* or “seek life” (Farmer 1992; Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998; Stepick and Portes 1986) The collapse of domestic industry within Haiti, under the repressive regime of the Duvaliers, led to increasing urbanization and limited ability to support families on depleted rural lands (Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl 1996; Vander Zaag 1999) The changed immigration laws of the United States in 1965, which had facilitated the departure of some middle class Haitians towards New York and Boston, also permitted U.S. residents to sponsor close relatives, enlarging the diaspora populations in these northern cities(Catanese 1999; Charles 2006; Stepick 1998).

Many Haitians lacked the familial connections to establish legal residence in the United States, Canada, or France. The Haitian State enacted policies aimed to increase the labor pool of industrial workers in factories located in Port-au-Prince and reduce the small-scale agriculture of traditional peasant farmers. Grain and rice, subsidized by U.S. aid (and transfers to U.S. rice farmers) undercut the prices of Haitian producers, further crippling domestic agriculture. The result was a collapse of many domestic industries within Haiti, increasing urbanization, and economic pressures which led many rural peasants to consider leaving Haiti for opportunities elsewhere (Catanese 1999; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Richman 2005; Stepick 1998; Vander Zaag 1999).

A burgeoning boat industry arose off the northern coast of Haiti. Packed in densely populated boats, people fled for the not-too-distant shores of Florida, seeking desperately the better jobs and opportunities which awaited them (Brown 1979; Stepick and Portes 1986). Media images were saturated of the flotillas of boats leaving Haiti destined for US shores (Jaynes 1981; Press 1980). These images were juxtaposed with the arrival of Cubans, also fleeing repressive government and limited economic possibilities, who were met with a much more friendly arrival in Florida (Babcock 1980; Morgan 1982). In Haiti, the exodus of Jean Claude Duvalier in 1986 led to a succession of military juntas and leaders filing through Haiti's presidential palace. Democratic elections were held in 1991, when Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a fiery and charismatic parish priest, was elected. However, only months later, Aristide was ousted by a military coup d'état. To register disapproval of the military junta, an economic embargo was put in place by the United Nations (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998).

Given the political status of Haiti's military regime, Haitian boat people could no longer be summarily returned to Haiti as "economic refugees". Instead, they were eventually recognized as political refugees, equal in legal standing to their Cuban compatriots (Crossette 1991; Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998). The result was a growing unease in South Florida as Haitian arrivals entered the labor market and registered their children for school. Haitian migrants carried the derisive label of "boat people" in these years. The term was used to pejoratively imply a lack of education, low social status, and illicit entry into the United States (Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998).

The 'boat people' phenomena came to be associated particularly with Haitians during the 1980s, as thousands upon thousands of people risked their lives to traverse the Caribbean Sea (Catanese 1999; Pierre-Louis 2006; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998; Stepick and Portes 1986). The interdiction of Haitians at sea afforded little opportunity for these migrants to assert claims for refugee protection. Of a total of 22,940 Haitians intercepted at sea between 1981 and 1990, only 11 individuals were allowed to apply for asylum in the United States. The remaining 22,929 individuals were repatriated to Haiti (Gaines 2004).

By the late 1990s, boat people were on the wane as the Coast Guard stepped up enforcement measures. Once again, Haitians making their way to North America often step onto airplanes with professional clothes, university degrees, and a one-way ticket north. Increasing numbers of professionals, frustrated by continued political instability and limited economic prospects, are choosing emigration (Charles 2006; Laguerre 2005; Pierre-Louis 2006). According to the World Bank, a staggering 83.6% of professionals

had already left Haiti, placing it among the top five countries in the world in terms of the emigration rate of professionals (Docquier and Marfouk 2005). In addition to the professional émigrés, increasing numbers of Haitians were boarding vessels again destined for other Caribbean islands or Florida. In the first five months of 2007, the U.S. Coast Guard reported the interdiction of 909 Haitians at sea, while more than the 769 Haitian individuals who were stopped during all of 2006 (United States Coast Guard 2007).

Context of Reception

The 1980s and 1990s were particularly difficult periods for unskilled Haitian migrants. Public sentiment in the US was decidedly against the boat people, whose presence on the shores of South Florida brought Third World poverty much too close to American affluence (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998). Despite earlier movements of professionals and trained migrants to Canada and the US, the second wave of unskilled, poor Haitian migrants colored the public and media perceptions regarding Haitians as a whole. In Miami, where many of the boat people stayed, Haitians were relegated to the lowest place on the social and economic hierarchy (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1992; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). The Miami community was largely hostile to the new arrivals from Haiti. The local community was formed primarily by Anglos and Cubans, with some other Spanish-speaking groups (such as Colombians and Nicaraguans) scattered throughout. The darkly skinned Haitians, who spoke Creole, were not welcome additions to the local social landscape. They became triple minorities – experiencing isolation on the basis of their race, poverty, and language (Portes and Stepick 1993).

A significant implication of the wave of ‘boat people’ from Haiti was changing ideas about Haitian ethnicity within the public perception. Increasingly, Haitians were all associated with images of poor, black, desperate refugees (Stepick 1998; Zephir 2004). The complexity of Haitian social structure, with its divisions of race, class, and gender, was reduced to an overly simplistic and singular conception of “Haitian” which was largely poor, black, and marked by desperation (Charles 2003). The Haitian diaspora, and individual members within the Haitian community, came to be associated with the stark images of desperation flashing across the nightly news (Zephir 2001).

Haitians were also given the unfortunate and erroneous stigma of being one of the groups responsible for the presence of HIV/AIDS in the US (the others being homosexuals, hemophiliacs, and heroin drug users) (Farmer 1992). When it was first identified, AIDS prompted extensive fear and panic amongst the general population. Little was known about how exactly it was transmitted and there was a lot of attention towards understanding how it had arrived in the United States. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) released a list of four groups considered highly at-risk for infection and transmission of the virus: Hemophiliacs, Heroin-users, Homosexuals and Haitians (Farmer 1992).

The inclusion of Haitians on this CDC list prompted outcry within the Haitian-American population. Haitians of all economic levels were affected by the negative labeling, one of the few instances in which both poor and rich Haitian émigrés were similarly affected by a specific policy (Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy 2010). The CDC’s action brought together previous Haitian migrants, with higher levels of education and occupations, located in the northern cities of New York and Boston,

together with the newly arrived Boat People, in a shared state of outrage at the discriminatory and racist allegations. At rallies and demonstrations, through printed media, and through politicians in the Congressional Black Caucus, Haitians in the United States lobbied against the discriminatory policy enacted by the CDC (Farmer 1992).

Under mounting political pressure and with clear scientific evidence, the CDC removed Haitians from the list of high risk groups for HIV. However, the damage done to Haitians' reputations was already extensive. HIV/AIDS continued to fuel the paranoia of the wider culture, with continued stigmatization of Haitians as possible vectors of the disease (Farmer 1992).

Haitians in the United States

The arrival of Haitian immigrants is part of a larger expansion of migration within the United States. In 1965, immigration regulations which largely restricted migrant flows to only permit entry from Europe, were changed in favor of race-neutral policies (Hing 2004). Previously, migration was primarily between England and Western Europe; when migrant supply from these areas waned, recruitment expanded to Italy and Ireland (Joppke 1999). These Irish and Italian immigrants were not racially categorized white at the time; however, the gradual re-definition of the category white meant that Irish and Italians gradually came to be considered white (Hing 2004; Roediger 2005; Schrag 2010; Waldinger 2007; Zolberg 2006). The new immigration law of 1965 expanded the potential immigrant streams to areas beyond continental Europe; post-1965, immigrants increasingly came from South America, Africa and Asia (Hing 2004; Joppke 1999; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Roediger 2005; Schrag 2010; Zolberg 2006).

Haitian migration, therefore, was part of a larger trend in changing demographics in immigrant populations, towards more racial minorities of non-European origins. Even among these non-white migrant populations, however, Haitian immigrants have faced some of the most substantial hurdles to their acceptance and incorporation into United States' society. They are first of all immigrants, subject to suspicion in an era of invasive national security in which foreigners are highly suspect. Haitians are also predominantly black, which in the United States confers a wide array of disadvantages and prejudice (Dunn 1997; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Laguerre 1998; Mooney 2009; Richman 2005; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). In addition to these barriers, Haitians are also non-English and non-Spanish speakers. The availability of employment and opportunities is extremely limited for a typical Haitian immigrant who speaks Haitian Creole exclusively. Add to this mix the low economic status of many Haitian immigrants, and the scenario becomes vivid: Haitians face some of the most daunting barriers to their successful incorporation into U.S. society (Farmer 1992; Fouron and Glick Schiller 1997; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Lopez 1999; Pierre-Louis 2006; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Zephir 2001).

The official policies and state practices of the United States government have only added to the difficulties Haitian immigrants face. Refugees interdicted at sea headed to Florida are returned to Haiti, and those who arrive on land are detained indefinitely while they appeal for asylum. Detainees are most often denied asylum on the grounds that they are fleeing economic hardship rather than political persecution (Preston 2007a). The hostile treatment from American society, along with discriminatory treatment of Haitians

which was institutionalized within official policies, constitutes an extremely negative context of reception for Haitian migrants.

Assimilation/Integration of Haitian Immigrants

The dominant paradigm shaping immigration in the United States has been, and remains, assimilation. Assimilation refers to the process by which immigrant populations come to adopt the practices, language, and culture of the new host society until they are seamlessly part of the host society (Gordon 1964). Assimilation is largely assumed to be unilateral and progressing over the course of several generations in the United States (Gordon 1964). Assimilation is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, including a comprehensive review of its theoretical origins and implications for the study at hand. The expectations of migrants are clear, however, and are evident throughout present political discourse: immigrants are expected to learn English, adopt American values and norms of behavior, and generally culturally become American.

As measured according to the assimilation paradigm, Haitians have not adapted to the American context: they maintain ethnic associations and churches, speak Creole, and resist categorizations as African-American (Mooney 2009; Pierre-Louis 2006; Stepick 1998; Zephir 2001). “Assimilation” in a national sense is idealized as an adaptation to the “mainstream” beliefs and practices of the host country, which in the United States, has historically meant white Anglo norms (Gordon 1964; Salins 1997; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming). On a local or regional level, assimilation is certainly complexified by local power structures and the particular composition of local elites of definitions of “mainstream” (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). Nonetheless, integration or assimilation to the U.S. has been a project of considerable

difficulty for black Caribbean immigrants. The migration experiences of Haitian first-generation immigrants were shaped by the racial and stratified society which they encountered (Charles 2006; Charles 2003; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Laguerre 1998; Stepick 1998). Encountering this racially-bound model for assimilation, Haitian immigrants retain a separate ethnic community in which their ethnic identification is celebrated for its strengths (Charles 2003; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Laguerre 1998; McCarthy Brown 1991; Stepick 1998; Zephir 2004). To some extent, the presence of a non-English language and ethnic networks is somewhat acceptable for first-generation immigrants. However, the expectations for the children of immigrants, born or at least raised in the U.S., differ; this population is expected to assume more American practices than their immigrant parents may. Thus the extent to which the community as a whole is able to find a place within the cultural mosaic of the United States is a question which is perhaps better addressed when considering their children – those for whom integration is no longer a dream, but has the potential to become reality.

Segmented Assimilation & Haitians

For second generation immigrants, the daily demands of life are different than those of their parents (Foner 2009; Levitt and Waters 2002a; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). These are individuals who were either born in their family's new homeland, or they migrated at a young age. Oftentimes, they are the cultural mediators and gatekeepers, linking their immigrant parents with American social institutions, such as schools and government (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Warikoo 2011). While their parents often labor long hours and for meager pay, sometimes in positions of lower status than in the homeland, the children of

immigrants represent dreams and change. They embody their parents' desires for a better future and opportunities (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Lopez 2003b). Yet it is not an easy task to navigate the difficult terrain of familial expectations, cultural influences, and identity construction.

At its core, assimilation presumes that over time, individuals and groups of immigrant stock drop their 'ethnic' qualities and take on more American ones (Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming). The process of "Americanization" is often understood, albeit inexplicitly, to be conflated with rising level of economic status (Gans 2007a). However, what happens when the economic and social tides do not inspire more "Americanization"? A significant alteration to assimilation was offered by segmented assimilation theory. The segmented assimilation model considers the modes of incorporation of the first generation to be critical to the relative opportunities of the second generation for advancement and entry into the American mainstream (Portes and Zhou 1993; Stepick and Stepick 2010). The theoretical development is detailed further in Chapter Two through a comprehensive literature review.

One aspect of segmented assimilation theory is particularly pertinent for the current discussion of Haitian migrants and their children. A key feature of segmented assimilation is the argument that some immigrant youth will follow a track towards "downwards segmented assimilation." The theory predicts that by virtue of high levels of discrimination, along with relative proximity to native minorities in the U.S., some immigrant youth would reject the American mainstream, adopting more "reactive" ethnicity which emphasizes identification with native minorities and the adoption of

adversarial stances towards education found among native minorities. The opportunity structure of these youth would be extremely limited, given their racialized status in The U.S. and their incorporation into a disadvantaged urban underclass (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Portes and Zhou 1993; Stepick and Stepick 2010).

The case of Haitian integration has been used as an emblematic example of downwards segmented assimilation, in that the second generation is following a path of downward assimilation to a disadvantaged segment of African-American society (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Stepick 1998). For Haitians, the ethnic identification of the second generation has tended to support the segmented assimilation paradigm, in that many individuals tended towards identification with African-American society more than that of their Haitian origin (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Stepick, Eugene, Teed, and Labissiere 2001; Zephir 2001). In the context of discrimination against Haiti and Haitians, some youth do take on identification with African-American clothing, musical styles, and can take on “oppositional identities” which de-emphasize academic and occupational achievement (Warikoo 2011; Waters 1999a:8).

Support for downwards assimilation can be found in follow-up research with Haitian respondents to large longitudinal study of the children of immigrants. Portes and his colleagues report strong evidence of downward assimilation within the Haitian community, which they attribute both to the wider structural issues such as racism and lack of opportunities, and to the lack of significant human capital in the Haitian community (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). However, the analysis does not

separate the effects clearly: is it affiliation with African-American society which facilitates the downward trajectory within the Haitian community? Or is it the wider structural factors governing the Haitian immigrant experience in the United States? Gans (2007a) also questions the lack of empirical validation concerning assimilation to African-American groups and downward mobility. Significant populations of black middle-class professionals may provide positive role models for success (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002), which is not accounted for in the literature or analysis of the Haitian community to date. Martinez and his colleagues found little drug-related violence concentrated in Little Haiti, a finding which they state “does not fit the pattern predicted by the negative aspects of segmented assimilation” (Martinez, Lee, and Nielsen 2004:153). Their findings suggest that the Haitian community retains a strong network of social solidarity and control which lessens the chances of drug-related violence. Thus, downwards segmented assimilation may help explain the integration experiences of some individuals; however, it may be that downwards segmented assimilation does not fully explain the trajectory of the children of Haitian immigrants.

There is some indication that although the downwards trend has largely been used as a descriptor for the Haitian community as a whole, some individuals manage to embrace ethnic identity and avoid downwards paths (Stepick 1998). Ethnic identification needs to be studied in a post-adolescent study group, looking at how identifications may change as individuals leave the intense context of secondary school. My dissertation contributes towards an empirical assessment of the validity of the downwards segmented assimilation model to the experiences of the children of Haitian immigrants.

Contribution of this Dissertation

For Haitian immigrants, the question of integration is critical. Discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, and language has limited the opportunities of immigrant offspring for achieving economic success in The U.S. (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; White and Glick 2009). However, many Haitian youth have expressed high aspirations for their futures (Nicholas, Stepick, and Dutton Stepick 2008; Stepick 1998). What are the integration patterns of the children of Haitian immigrants? And how do existing theories, including segmented assimilation, fit the empirical reality of Haitian young adults? My dissertation problematizes existing research with the children of Haitian immigrants, demonstrating variability in integration patterns and enriching the theoretical explanations for these patterns. The research consists of longitudinal analysis of a post-secondary population, providing a unique post-adolescent ethnographic examination of how integration occurs for this sample in their every-day lives. My study is the only longitudinal ethnographic research project focused on the children of Haitian immigrants, and thus this research addresses a critical gap in our understanding of the life pathways of Haitian-American young adults.

Overview of Dissertation

My dissertation concerns the assimilation, or integration, of the children of Haitian immigrants over the life course. Follow-up research was conducted with a subgroup of a larger research project following immigrant youth throughout adolescence; thus, the dissertation reviews both existing theories and literature relevant to the topic at hand as well as presents the findings from the research.

Chapter Two begins by reviewing the key literature concerning both the integration of immigrants and the children of immigrants. The principal theories are discussed, including greater detail towards assimilation and segmented assimilation which were briefly introduced in this first chapter. Chapter Three details the methods employed in this doctoral research project. This chapter also includes discussion on how integration has been empirically assessed, and how these measures of assessment were operationalized within the research project at hand. This chapter also provides an overview of the three community contexts in which study participants spent their adolescence in high school.

The results from the research are presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six. The chapters focus on several areas integration, namely, Education, Employment, Family, and Identification. These chapters review the data from the initial period of research, when the respondents were adolescents, but focus on the latter research from their young adulthood. These topical areas are interwoven with discussion relevant to the immigrant integration literature, as well as consideration of how the present sample compares to other immigrant cohorts. Particular attention is placed on comparison of the sample to Haitian respondents to the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS).³

Chapter Seven reviews the empirical findings and key arguments of the preceding chapters and considers their cumulative effect on the question at hand: what integration patterns are evident among the children of Haitian immigrants? The data suggest that gender and race greatly shape the experiences of this cohort. They achieve higher degrees of economic and social success than their parents; however they do not generally

³The CILS project is explained in greater detail in Chapters Two and Three.

realize their dreams of university education and professional careers in medicine or law. The discussion in Chapter Seven considers these findings in light of the segmented assimilation model, offering a contribution towards the model based on the project findings.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

The United States carries the unofficial moniker of “a nation of immigrants.” Few of the millions of current inhabitants are descendants from Native Americans; rather, global immigration was pivotal in establishing the nation (Zolberg 2006). Nonetheless, current public discourse labels immigration a “problem” and immigrants are treated as a public burden and potential terrorists (Massey and Sánchez R. 2010). Debates in the public arena regarding possible immigration reform highlight the critical political, economic, and social ramifications of immigration and immigrants (Brooks 2007; Preston 2007b). These ongoing theoretical and policy level debates shed light on the underlying beliefs about immigrants in American society. Immigrants are largely expected to adapt and conform to the culture, values, and practices of the new host society (Kotlowitz 2007; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Salins 1997). Despite these expectations, in most cases, immigrants do not integrate seamlessly into the American mainstream (Preston 2006)

The rupture between immigrants and natives is acknowledged throughout public discourse; however its causes and solutions vary considerably among various groups. Some accuse immigrants of not learning English, of self-segregation, and of refusing to adapt to “American” cultures and practices (Kotlowitz 2007; Salins 2007). Others point to the impossibility of adapting to a white, Anglo-Saxon mainstream culture when many of the new arrivals are culturally, linguistically, and phenotypically different from these “American” standards (Constable 2007; Davis 2007; Smedley 2007).

This chapter reviews the existing literature on immigrant integration. The literature considers how immigrants are incorporated into the receiving societies and identify with the complex myriad of cultures and influences in their lives. Identity plays

a major role in human society, and this is especially evident when people move between cultures and societies. Identities are selected and employed along various axes of differentiation, including gender, race, ethnicity, and other ways in which societies employ socially constructed notions of group formation. Identity often becomes crystallized and especially evident when people move from one society to another.

Identity is critical to understanding the adaptation experiences of immigrants, both for recent arrivals and over the *longue durée* [long term]. I examine the historical importance of identity as a lived reality and conceptual tool, framing its emergence within a critical political economy perspective. The main theoretical approaches to understanding identifications are also explained. I then follow with a more focused examination of identification in two critical areas: race and gender. The discussion considers the historical and contextual significance of identification by race and gender, and the ways in which these axes of identification figure prominently for understanding individual location within the identification landscape.

After considering these aspects of identifications, I turn to a discussion of how they change: looking at how immigrants adapt while moving from one society to another. I review the evolution of immigrant studies, particularly within the United States context. Research on the adaptation of first-generation immigrants has historically focused on models of acculturation and assimilation, driven largely by the context into which U.S. immigration in the 19th century occurred and the dominance of Anglo-Saxon groups in the U.S. I examine the evolution of assimilation perspective as the primary understanding of immigrant incorporation, and the extent to which it has been revised, contextualized, and reshaped by scholars over the past several decades.

Having examined the various ways of understanding first-generation immigrant adaptation, I then focus on the literature pertaining to the children of immigrants. The discussion and analysis highlight the progress that has been made for studies of immigrant integration, and the complexity of the identity formation process for these groups. The established literature on these cohorts highlights the established metrics for empirically assessing integration. I argue that integration of second generation immigrants is best assessed through a comprehensive examination of both structural measures of incorporation (such as education and labor market placement) as well as cultural measures (such as identity and belonging).

The literature review highlights a critical gap in existing knowledge which is relevant for this dissertation. Existing theory, and particularly the theory of segmented assimilation, suggests that the offspring of Haitian immigrants – predominantly black, poor, and located in urban areas of educational disopportunity – will most likely become absorbed within a black segment of U.S. society (Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Waters 1999a; Waters, Tran, Kasinitz, and Mollenkopf 2010). However, a critical need exists to understand integration trajectories which do *not* fit this theoretical model. The established understanding of segmented assimilation must be further complexified as the children of immigrants, including the cohort of Haitian-Americans studied in this dissertation, transitions from adolescence and into adulthood.

Literature on Identity

The study of human relationships is the core focus of the social sciences – understanding how humans relate to each other and the world around them. Within a diverse social landscape, individuals root themselves to particular groups, or affiliations.

These attachments or groupings are what we call “identity.” This section discusses the notion of identity and the primary areas around which identity forms. The discussion will also consider various theories of identity, and an argument is made in favor of a social constructionist approach towards identity formation. The discussion highlights the role of colonialism and political economy in creating the context from which identification theories emerged. I argue that contextual circumstances are critical for understanding identifications and their explanations.

Hale (2004:34) defines identity as “the set of points of personal reference on which people rely to navigate the social world they inhabit, to make sense of the myriad constellations of social relationships that they encounter, to discern their place in these constellations, and to understand the opportunities for action in this context.” Hale’s definition reminds us that identity is a broad term referring to a wide variety of reference points which individuals attach themselves to. Thus, identity operates simultaneously across multiple axes of identification, including gender, nationality, class, race, and ethnicity (Alleyne 2002; Lopez 2003a; Lopez 2003b; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Rahier 1999b; Stephens and Few 2007; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming; Warikoo 2011). After establishing a theoretical context for the discussion, I then turn to a brief overview of several key areas within the identification literature.

Identity or Identification?

Identity is a fluid, changing reality (Hintzen and Rahier 2003). Although the word as it is most often employed implies a sense of immobility, or a state which is unchanged and constant, identity is perhaps more accurately termed “identification.” Although one’s sexual categorization is unlikely to change over time, one’s

understanding of oneself as a male or as a female, and the social meanings given to each gendered term, are continually in flux and contribute to fluidity in gender identification (Epps, Valens, and González 2005). Similarly, racial and ethnic identities are employed selectively, depending on various factors (Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Rahier 1999b). Waters (1990) highlights various factors in the selective use of ancestral identities among white ethnics, including knowledge of one's ancestors, surnames, and the social stature of the ancestral group(s). Nederveen Pieterse (2007) considers the term "*identity*" as overly static – using the more fluid "*identification*" highlights the agency involved in the processes. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) name several tensions between various ways in which "identity" is used by scholars; the authors argue that the term has been overused as an analytical concept. Instead, they propose more specification about the social forces at play in given situations and contexts.

In this dissertation, I generally use the term "identification" rather than "identity" although both are employed. The term "identification" encompasses both the agency which Nederveen Pieterse (2007) stresses, as well as fluidity across time and space. Rahier describes identities as "defined and redefined, imagined and re-imagined, performed and performed again within the flux of history and within specific, changing, spatially determined societal structures" (Rahier 1999a:xxiv). Thus, identifications occur within a specific historical, contextual, and temporal setting (Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010; Stephens and Few 2007; Stephens and Phillips 2005; Stephens, Phillips, and Few 2009; Thomas and Clarke 2006). In order to better understand the emergence of current perspectives and theories of identification, an examination of past scholarship is in order.

Theories of Identity & Identification

The ways in which people understand and operationalize identification are rooted in deeply-held beliefs about human society. The dominant theoretical perspective on identifications has shifted significantly over the past centuries – from primordial to constructivist explanations (Alleyne 2002; Smedley 2007). In this section, I briefly review both primordialism and constructivism, arguing that the latter perspective is better suited for explanations of identification. I then proceed to discuss several areas of identification, using a social constructivist lens of analysis.

The modern period is marked by a profound belief in progress, that human societies move forward in a linear progression towards some state which is considered ‘better’ in some comparative format (Cowen and Shenton 1995; Giddens 1990; Hoogvelt 2001). Of course, this resonates with Marxist beliefs in progressive movement through capitalism and towards socialism (Collins 1994; Tucker 1978). Modernism itself, however, carried the message of progress and order (Cowen and Shenton 1995; Giddens 1990; McDonald 1993). The colonialist project was a manifestation of this conviction that this progress and order was to be shared with the colonies by their superiors – the ‘trustees’ of their future development (Cowen and Shenton 1995; Hoogvelt 2001). Modernism was considered both innately preferred and an inevitable reality for all societies throughout the world (Schuurman 1993). The Eurocentric philosophy presupposed that identifications by tribe or clan are pre-modern, and that with modernity comes affiliation with a nation-state and within the boundaries of racial hierarchies of

white privilege (Hoogvelt 2001; Nederveen Pieterse 2007; Smedley 2007).⁴ The modernist period is critical for the issue of ‘identity’ for several reasons. It provides impetus for colonial expansion – aided, of course, by technological developments, religious dogma, and other factors (Cowen and Shenton 1995; Hoogvelt 2001; Nederveen Pieterse 2007). Modernism also instills the belief that pre-modern societies are innately inferior to modern, ‘civilized’ ones (Giddens 1990). Third, it establishes racial hierarchies within its colonial empire and beyond, institutionalizing gradients of humanity and global advantage for white Europeans (Lee and Bean 2010; Placide 2010; Rogers 2006).

According to a modernist perspective, identification consists of immutable, primordial attachments (Schrag 2010; Smedley 2007; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming; Zolberg 2006). For example, in the late 1800s, the French psychologist Binet measured cranial capacity of various racial groups, reducing racial differences to supposedly measurable physical attributes (Sanjek 1994). In this way, race was considered a biological reality, and mental capacity and intelligence were considered linked to physical attributes (Gould 1981; Sanjek 1994). Racial classifications had evolved following the European colonial expansion; the search for scientific and empirical evidence for these beliefs promptly ensued (Sanjek 1994; Smedley 2007). Sanjek reports that racial classification began at least by 1795, when Blumenbach divided the world into several races. From this categorization arose a tradition of associating races with physical characteristics that could be measured through scientific means

⁴ An abundance of literature on both development theory and post-modernity explains these historical circumstances in detail. However, for the sake of brevity, they are not elaborated on here. See Hoogvelt (2001) and Nederveen Pieterse (2007).

(Sanjek 1994; Smedley 2007). In this way, “science” was used to buttress pre-existing beliefs that had arisen from colonial exploitation (Gould 1981; Lévi-Strauss 1975; Roediger 2005; Schrag 2010; Smedley 2007; Zolberg 2006). Race was considered an innate characteristic which separated groups of human beings (Smedley 2007). Within this framework, lighter-skinned people (Western Europeans) were not only innately more intelligent, but also more capable of assuming positions of dominance and control over the other “less intelligent” races (Smedley 2007). Thus, one’s identifications were considered primordial characteristics rooted in biology rather than the social realm (Alleyne 2002; Roediger 2005; Schrag 2010; Smedley 2007; Zolberg 2006).

While the notions of racial hierarchy were spread by European colonialists widely across the world, the impact on identifications and theory construction is particularly apt in the United States context. A history of slavery and essentialized notions of race, for example through the ‘one drop rule’, created a system in which one’s racial categorization was a profound indicator of one’s identification (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Placide 2010). Racial identification was true for those who were cast in the role of the racialized ‘other’, or those groups who were considered racial minorities and thus were subject to discrimination and the differential allocation of resources and opportunities (Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010). Racial/ethnic identification constitutes a large part of individual and group identities largely because these continue to be important constellations of reference for American society; based on these categorizations, both imposed and chosen, power and resources are divided (Gilroy 1993; Gilroy 1995; Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010). Thus for many racial/ethnic minorities,

identification is very much rooted in being “otherized” by mainstream society (Gilroy 1993; Gilroy 1995; Rahier 1999b; Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010).

Primordialism is not the only perspective which explains the identifications which humans express. In the 1900’s, attention focused on alternative ways to explain difference identities, both racial and otherwise. Van den Berghe (1967) notes that a growing realization of the complex social and economic factors influencing individuals and cultures helped propel the social constructivist perspective into the wider mainstream. It was increasingly apparent that identifications varied widely – and in the context of women’s suffrage, civil rights, and colonial liberation – primordialism was considered inadequate for explaining human difference (Lee and Bean 2010; Rogers 2006; Schrag 2010; Smedley 2007; Van den Berghe 1967; Zolberg 2006). Once again, the emergence of a social-constructivist perspective for understanding race highlights the shifts in society. Lévi-Strauss (1975) makes a social-constructivist argument for conceptualizing race. He sketches out a broad view of human history, in which innovation and change have resulted from contact and synergy between cultures. He also highlights the importance of positionality in one’s research, that in evaluating cultures, we can never escape our own interests: “the quality of the history of a culture or a cultural progression . . . depends not on its intrinsic qualities but on our situation with regard to it and on the number and variety of our interests involved” (1975: 111). The “advancements” made in Western civilization in the past 100 years have perhaps skewed many people’s perspectives on what they consider a “superior” culture. Lévi-Strauss, however, claims that the encroachment of Western society upon the world may have occurred simply for the lack of other options, and that each culture has its own

knowledge and discoveries, rendering Western culture not superior, but simply one of many cultures, each with its own unique insights and attributes (Lévi-Strauss 1975).

The movement towards a social constructivist position and away from a primordial perspective in both popular and scientific realms has been extremely gradual. In the era of Nazi Germany and the deeply segregated American South, biological grounds for racial differences dominated into the 1950's (Rogers 2006; Sanjek 1994). However, the civil rights movement and shifts in anthropologists' thinking helped to propel the debate in a different direction (Alleyne 2002; Smedley 2007; Zolberg 2006). Sanjek (1994) reports that by the 1960's, anthropology had progressed from questions regarding racial ranking and environmental factors to question the very nature of race itself. The social constructive perspective is markedly different from the primordial perspective; rather than claiming that races are rooted in physical characteristics, this perspective holds that races are categories created by humans for differentiation, and are only meaningful so long as those categories are used to denigrate one or more of the groups (Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming). Sanjek summarizes the social-constructivist position well. He writes: "racial ranking has no basis in substance, and the categories themselves are historical precipitates of a five-hundred-year world epoch that we must envision ending, and that we must struggle to hasten towards its end Clear thinking may help to purge humankind of race, but political action is needed to end racism" (Sanjek 1994:11).

Both the essentialist theories of identification and the social constructivist perspective acknowledge the primary place which identifications play in peoples' lives. The movement towards a social constructivist understanding of identification has helped

to show that it is the meaning and significance of the identification which is critical, rather than some primordial physical connection with a specific group (Gilroy 1993; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Waters 1990; Waters 1999a). The social constructivist perspective has demonstrated first of all that identities are value-laden, and their importance lies in the values ascribed to various groups and affiliations (Smedley 2007; Warikoo 2005). There is also increasing attention towards the ways in which identities are fluid and constantly changing (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Gilroy 1995; Hale 2004; Hintzen 2002; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Rahier 1999b). However, as Hale (2004) notes, many scholars of identity operate within their compartmentalized, discipline-parametered corners of academia, with little discussion and debate across disciplines. Nonetheless, research has demonstrated that identities are formed in connection with specific social settings, and in complex balancing acts between various attachments: racial, ethnic, gender, etc. (Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Wright 2004). The issue of identification is salient in multiple spheres of life, and along various axes of difference (Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Lopez 2003a; Lopez 2003b; Rahier 1999b; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming).

Areas of Identification

Individuals identify along multiple axes of differentiation. Historically, people have claimed affiliation with a specific family grouping, or along gendered lines (Nederveen Pieterse 2007). As mentioned previously, oftentimes attachments to family groupings or 'tribes' not within a nation-state system were deemed uncivilized by colonialists; power and subordination of minority groups were critical ways in which

identifications were reconfigured and through the modernist project. (Nederveen Pieterse 2007).

The discussion has focused heavily on racial and ethnic attachments in the transition from primordial to social constructivist theories of identification. The predominant status of racial/ethnic markers within the modernist state system resulted in a focus on race and ethnicity as the identifications to which much scholarship and theory construction was directed (Lee and Bean 2010; Rahier 1999b; Rogers 2001; Rogers 2006; Smedley 2007; Wright 2004). Nederveen Pieterse (2007:34) notes that “a single consistent identity is a requirement for states Yet as anthropologists point out, these conditions don’t exist in peripheral societies and generally in conditions where borders are unstable and contested, border crossing is frequent, so identities are shifting and multiple.” Identification by ethnicity is part of the colonialist, and arguably post colonialist, dogma. The creation of modern nation-states involved the idealization of group affiliations, usually formed in reference to ethnic/racial and/or nationalist groupings (Lee and Bean 2010; Smedley 2007). However, these ideals stand juxtaposed to the realities of more complex identifications.

While ethnic/racial considerations are primary in identification, they are not the only axes of differentiation along which identifications are constructed. Gilroy argues that a racial/ethnic identity does not render other aspects of identity mute:

The implosive obsession with racial identity conjures away material, ideological, and sexual differences, but they live on stubbornly under the very signs of their attempted erasure. In these circumstances, the idea that there is a fixed, invariant, and essential Black identity that can be held constant while supposedly superficial differences like money, power, and sex proliferate is a defeat (Gilroy 1995:16)

Differences in class, sexuality, and gender operate simultaneously with differences by race and ethnicity (Lopez 2003b; Warikoo 2011). As Gilroy argues, essentialist racial notions of identity obscure the importance of these other identity markers (Gilroy 1995). Waters (1999a) describes the complexities of identity composition within phenotypically ‘black’ communities by highlighting disjunctures along class and educational lines. Identifications are also shaped by sexual orientation, and other major markers such as HIV/AIDS (Sandoval-Sanchez 2005). Discrimination on the basis of one’s status, for example, as an indigenous woman, necessitates an awareness of identifications along these lines (Alcade 2007). Identifications are also constructed in reference to specific geographic spaces, including regional divisions within nation-states which can bear great significance for some people (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Pierre-Louis 2006).

Gender is another prominent fault line along which identities operate. Researchers have noted different expectations and messages for girls and boys regarding their behavior, educational expectations, and future aspirations (Lopez 1999; Lopez 2003b; Stephens, Phillips, and Few 2009; Warikoo 2011; Waters 1999a). In these studies, gender was a critical lens through which individuals formed their identifications and engaged with the social world around them. Gender is critical to how individuals experience the world; boys’ and girls’ identifications are shaped by expectations others have of them and their performance of these scripted roles (Lopez 2003b; Mahler 1999; Pessar and Mahler 2003; Smith 2006; Warikoo 2005). Gender operates as a primary line of demarcation for many immigrants; a Jamaican woman in New York experiences her new home as *both* a Jamaican *and* as a woman (Foner 2005). Yet a gendered

identification is not a uniquely female experience; males also form and negotiate gendered identities, both within and beyond the household sphere (Foner 2005; Lopez 2003b; Smith 2006; Warikoo 2005). However, some scholars would argue that male gendered identities tend to assert power and control over female gendered identities; thus gendered identifications are best understood only in their relational context (Alcade 2007; Hondagneau-Sotelo 1994).

Identifications are complex. They signify attachments with others, determined by various connections and linkages: family, neighborhood, gender, nation, and race/ethnicity (Hale 2004; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Nederveen Pieterse 2007; Rahier 1999b). Historically, primordial explanations for essentialist identities were rooted in the emergence of a modernist worldview. Social constructivism helped to contextualize the processes of identification – rooting them in time and place. I argue that identification is best understood with a social constructivist lens. Particularly for racial/ethnic identifications, the essentialism was furthered by colonialism (Placide 2010; Smedley 2007). Thus, in this area and others, identifications involve both the self and the surrounding structure (Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004). Understanding individuals' identifications, therefore, mandates a thorough investigation of the contextual circumstances.

Literature on Immigrant Assimilation/Integration

Identifications are seriously challenged when people move from one society to another. Much of the recent study and research of identifications has been conducted with immigrants and their descendants (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Massey and Sánchez

R. 2010; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Warikoo 2011; Waters 1999a). One of the most potent barometers for the “successful” incorporation of immigrants into a new society is the extent to which the newcomers take on identification with the society they move to (Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming). The incorporation of immigrants to the receiving society confronts all countries with influxes of people, and as migration continues to intensify as a global phenomenon, more and more countries are increasingly concerned with how immigrants function in their new homes (Alba 2005; Boswell 2003; Joppke 1999). Despite the global nature of this issue, historically the preponderance of social research and theory on the matter has been focused on the United States, given its position as a major immigrant-receiving society (See Smedley 2007). As such, much of the early and historical literature focuses on the case of the United States (Alba and Nee 1997; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; DeWind and Kasinitz 1997; Gans 1997; Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Gordon 1964; Kazal 1995; Park and Burgess 1969; Portes and Zhou 1993; Waldinger 1989; Waters 1994; Waters 1999a; Waters 1999b). Other case examples emerging from other immigrant-receiving contexts, such as Canada, Australia, and Europe, will also help to broaden our understanding (Alba 2005; Boswell 2003; Joppke 1999; Palmer 1981; Plaza 2006; Shahsiah 2006). I examine the emergence of ‘identity’ as a hallmark of immigrant adaptation, and the ways in which immigrant adaptation and social incorporation has been theorized.

Key Terms

Before progressing with this discussion, several key terms merit clarification. One of the most confounding distinctions in the literature on immigrant integration is the

way in which terms such as acculturation, assimilation, integration, and others, are employed with seemingly little attention to their conceptual boundaries and significance. As clarified by Teske and Nelson (1974), acculturation is a process in which two groups interact and impact change upon each another. However, the change is not necessarily equal, as power differentials greatly affect the flow of information, resources, and overall change. Similarly, assimilation is viewed as both an individual process as well as a group process involving inter-group contact. However, assimilation differs in that it hinges on the acceptance of the newcomer by the wider society. In addition, assimilation indicates identification with the new society (Park and Burgess 1969; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy Forthcoming; Stepick and Stepick 2010; Teske and Nelson 1974).

The terms “integration” and “assimilation” tend to be employed in their respective European and U.S. contexts (Schneider and Crul 2010; Stepick and Stepick 2010; Vermeulen 2010). Both are seen as multiple-generations processes of immigrant incorporation, encompassing acceptance into the social system and identification with the new society (Vermeulen 2010). However, I prefer the term “integration” as it confers a greater sense of dynamic cultural contact than the static and unidirectional “assimilation.” Nonetheless, given the dominance of “assimilation” in U.S. theory and research, I employ both terms throughout this dissertation.

Assimilation in the U.S.

Ideas about immigrant integration and acculturation arose in the United States during historical periods influenced by capitalism, nation-building, and the formation of an autonomous nation-state. The 1800’s consisted of large influxes of migrants, mostly from Western, Northern and Southern Europe, but also including areas such as Asia and

the Americas (Hing 2004; Schrag 2010). Immigrants to the United States largely settled in the industrial centers of the country, located in the northeast and Midwestern cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and Pittsburg (Castles and Miller 2003). By many accounts, the manufacturing industry played a critical role in the livelihoods of immigrant groups who settled in the cities (Waldinger 2007). The earliest recorded attempt to systematically study the lives and communities of these immigrants was undertaken by research funded by the nascent Russell Sage Foundation.

In 1907, the Russell Sage Foundation funded extensive research with immigrant laborers throughout Pittsburgh's industries, and reporting of the survey began in 1909 (Butler 1909). The resulting publication documented the ways in which peoples' lives were shaped by axes of differentiation; attention was primarily focused on sex differences⁵ and ethnic/national origin:

Length of settlement becomes a measure, then, both of the domestic life and of the industrial success of an immigrant group. Irish and Germans, in fact, we no longer think of as immigrants. Their households are as much wrought into the fabric of the nation as those which we are pleased to call American. . . . The garment factories, then, employ Jewish and American girls, while Irish and German women, the hill-dwelling wives of the miners, hold the subordinate place. The inferior work of stogy factories falls to Slavic women, some of them married and others raw immigrant girls (Butler 1909).

Although Butler stops short of developing any larger theoretical notion about immigrant integration, the undertones of the survey mirror that of its better-known cousin: the research of the Chicago School in the early 1900's.

At the University of Chicago, research was conducted by Park, Burgess, and their students following a huge swell in migration from Europe towards the United States, and

⁵ While attention was placed on how women's and men's lives differed from one another, they did not go so far as to analyze the power differentials demarcating the gender divide.

in a city (Chicago) which was primarily populated by immigrants (Park and Burgess 1969). Similar to Butler, Park and Burgess systematically document the conditions and attributes of immigrant groups, their occupations, and household descriptions. However, the Chicago School progressed from description to analytical theory-building. The authors describe immigrant adaptation as a series of stages, in which “persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other person and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life” (Park and Burgess 1969). Adaptation or, rather, assimilation as this was the term of choice among these scholars of the Chicago School, involved progression from contact, to competition, to accommodation, and eventually, to assimilation. The research took place in the context of a nation which was not yet sure of its national identity, and as such, the framework of assimilation was a value-laden normative construction which helped to solidify the nation-building project which it was part of (Foner 2006). Thus, rather than representing neutral attempts to document social processes and realities, this research operated to consolidate state-supported notions of a racialized hierarchy and power structure within the United States.

After the wave of immigrants to the United States abated after the 1920’s, relatively less attention was placed on understanding the social adaptation of newcomers. Various conceptions were presented in the academic field of how immigrants were adapting to American society, but it was not until the publication of Milton Gordon’s *Assimilation in American Life* (1964) that the issues were systematically addressed with a theoretical focus. Gordon presents a framework in which immigrants progressively increased their incorporation into American society, from acculturation until “structural”

assimilation (Gordon 1964). Gordon's views were lauded not only for their content, but also for the manner in which they lent themselves to testable hypothesis and empirical verification. Alba and Nee (1997) highlight that Gordon's scheme was "oriented to a micro sociological account of assimilation not conceptually integrated to larger social processes." Gordon saw acculturation, i.e., cultural assimilation, as an inevitable part of immigration; newcomers would invariably absorb some level of language, food, and activities. But Gordon did not see all the other stages in his model of assimilation as equally inevitable. In Gordon's model the highest form of immigrant integration was assimilation into the very structures of society, or the entry of the minority group into the dominant group's social circles and institutions, however the attainment of this level of integration was not assured.

Gordon's seminal contribution towards the definition of assimilation merits some further clarification. In his view, the process of assimilation was a unidirectional flow of cultural change, from the dominant host culture to the minority immigrant group (Gordon 1964). Gordon's framework also rested heavily upon two fictional groups, one which was the dominant host group and the other the minority immigrant "one." Gordon's intellectual exercise failed in an important aspect: the contexts of reception are hardly ever so simplistic, and multi-ethnic dynamics complicate the resulting relationships and power structures. Increasingly, immigrants encounter varied and diverse contexts comprised of multiple social groups, with varying power relations. Thus, the analytical framework employed by Gordon constitutes a significant limitation on the applicability of assimilation theory, as he describes it, to more complex, and diverse, inter-group relations (Alba and Nee 1997; Gordon 1964). Despite the weaknesses of assimilation

theory, its normative stance provided a nearly irresistible model for comparative analysis; its dominance as the default framework of immigrant adaptation continues today (Alba 2005; Boyd 2002; Gans 1997; Kazal 1995; Rumbaut 1997; Waters and Jimenez 2005).

Assimilation: Theory vs. Reality

Assimilation theory has been both accepted and rejected on many different levels. While Gordon's ideas addressed immigrant incorporation in The U.S. from the lens of the "mainstream" and thus tapped into underlying notions about racial and ethnic hierarchies governing American social relations, the theory was perhaps more normative than descriptive. Researchers have placed increased attention on how assimilation theory failed to account for a wide variety of immigrant experiences. Increasingly, social researchers began studying groups for whom assimilation did not provide a meaningful and complete explanation (Alba and Nee 1997; DeWind and Kasinitz 1997; Fernandez-Kelly and Schauflyer 1994; Gans 1997; Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002; Kazal 1995; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). Gans (1997) argues that the earlier focus on assimilation was the partial result of *outsiders* (to use Robert K. Merton's terminology, referring to non-group members⁶), conducting the research on the incoming groups. As the immigrant groups began to settle in the United States and obtain higher education, more *insiders* (group members) began to undertake research in their own racial/ethnic grouping. Gans argues that these insiders are more likely to emphasize the cultural retention aspects of the group than previous outsider researcher would have. Thus, the

⁶ See Merton, R. K. 1972. "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge." *The American Journal of Sociology* 78:9-47.

changing understanding of immigrant ethnic processes may be subject to the perspectives of the researchers themselves.

In the same era as Gordon, Glazer and Moynihan published a study which offered a significantly different perspective on immigrant incorporation. They studied the diverse paths of acculturation and integration of several different groups, arguing that assimilation to a singular normative culture did not occur, and that ethnicity and culture figure prominently in the adaptation experiences of immigrant groups (Glazer and Moynihan 1970). Other studies of immigrant adaptation built upon these foci, looking at unique adaptive strategies which various immigrant groups employ (Espiritu 2003; Gibson 1988; Portes and Stepick 1993; Waters 1999a; Waters 1999b). Some researchers noted groups which retained their ethnic characteristics, not collapsing their identifications into the so-called “mainstream” American identifier (Alba and Nee 1997; Lopez 1999; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Waters 1994). Alba and Nee attribute this retention of ethnic identification to the continual inflow of immigrants from their homelands into existing centers of ethnic concentration (i.e., residential enclaves), which reinforce and maintain the ethnic community identifications. They predict the reverse as well, stating, “for groups whose immigration abates, the prediction of ethnic communities continually revitalized by new immigration will prove inaccurate” (Alba and Nee 1997:844).

Assimilation theory that posits as the endpoint of the assimilation process the absorption of immigrants into a “mainstream” is problematic for most immigrants who encounter structures that discriminate based on race, gender, and ethnic origin. In the original assimilation paradigm, race operates as a backdrop to the larger process of

adaptation and acculturation. However, the experience of many immigrant groups indicates that race operates in powerful and substantial ways, oftentimes limiting an individual's and a group's ability to fully incorporate into American culture (Boyd 2002; Espiritu 2003; Foner 2005; Gibson 1988; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Lopez 2003b; Plaza 2006; Portes and Zhou 1993; Waters 1999a; Zephyr 2001). The powerful 'one-drop' rule of race relations in the United States dictates that anyone with any portion of African heritage is categorized as "Black." Thus for many immigrants, adaptation and acculturation in the United States is a crash-course in adopting Americanized race relations, with its socially constructed group demarcations and rules of behavior and opportunity (Bailey 2001; Hintzen 2002; Hintzen and Rahier 2003; Placide 2010; Waters 1999a; Zephyr 2001; Zephyr 2004).

Alba and Nee (1997) explain that newer immigrants do not have the option of assimilating, because of darker skin complexions and non-European origins, as did the earlier Western European migrants. In response to the lack of choice regarding assimilation, migrants then retain their ethnic and racial identities. Alba and Nee (1997:845) counter this argument, claiming that it "treats perceptions of racial difference as more rigid than they have proven themselves historically." Thus, the authors argue that assimilation is occurring in American society, although it is accompanied by ethnic identification. Race, for these authors, offers a moderate barrier to assimilation. They cite the example of Asian adaptation to American society, in which the Asian migrants became an economically powerful minority group that has crossed over to the white dominant majority. They do acknowledge, however, that this status for Asian Americans came only after they severed all associational ties with the darker African Americans,

suggesting, “the appearance of connection to the African-American group raises the most impassable racist barriers in the United States” (Alba and Nee 1997:844). These views are supported by research with black immigrants; for example, some Dominican immigrants demonstrate resistance to the black/white racial dichotomy they encounter in the United States (Bailey 2001; Duany 1998; Pessar 1995).

Many immigrant groups, such as West Indians and other phenotypically Black groups, engage with U.S. society then as racial minorities who are ‘otherized’ on multiple levels: as domestic minorities, as immigrants, and oftentimes, as economically disadvantaged (Rogers 2001). Some groups have the further distinction of being non-native English speakers, and within these populations, women are further disadvantaged because of the dominant gender structure which favors males in American society (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Lopez 1999; Reynolds 2006). These axes of differentiation highlight the need to understand immigrant adaptation with all its complexity, relying on empirical data that emphasize not only the unique characteristics of particular immigrant groups, but also examines the mode of incorporation and context of reception which immigrant groups encounter (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004).

Complexifying “America”

Although the initial assimilation theorists, and even their earliest critics, emerged in a historical context largely still bound by the notion of a white, Anglo-Saxon normative structure within the U.S., present-day immigrants encounter a nation significantly more diverse and cosmopolitan than did those in the 1960s (Portes and Rumbaut 1996). “Americanization” no longer infers a singular notion of “mainstream

America,” conjuring images of a melting-pot experience wherein newcomers start speaking English and enjoy apple pie and baseball (Alba and Nee 2003). Certainly, these cultural symbols and others like them remain powerful aspects of the national narrative, yet localized contexts and regional geographies add diversity and complexity to the notion of incorporation or assimilation within the U.S (Alba and Nee 2003; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). For example, a Haitian immigrant in Miami may need to speak Spanish more than she needs English or start eating *arepas* before cotton candy. Similarly, the particular context of the U.S. border region in the southwest shapes the integration experiences of newcomers to that region (Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2007) and the cosmopolitan diversity comprising New York City engenders a unique understanding of “America” within immigrant communities in that context (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Smith 2006).

Within these local geographies, “Americanization” is further complexified by globalized youth culture which uses new forms of social media to link disparate social actors (Warikoo 2011). Global youth culture is promoted through globalized systems of media production and consumption; for example, films produced in Bollywood, India are consumed and disseminated amongst youth globally, intensifying interest in symbols of Indian culture or ethnicity (Warikoo 2005). Social media will undoubtedly continue to transform how immigrant youth engage with globalized cultures, including homelands and new lands, as representations of culture are filtered through these media. The emergence of global youth cultures challenges our existing understanding of acculturation, assimilation, and “Americanization,” as people move between cultural

spaces in virtual spheres and technological bridges permit ongoing engagement with others around the world.

Challenges to assimilation theory have enriched our understanding of the processes of adaptation amongst immigrants. Models of immigrant adaptation have shifted towards a more context-based approach, which considers the unique attributes of time, space, and population. The focus now rests largely on the modes of incorporation and the contexts of reception, rejecting assimilation in its most utopian sense for most immigrants. Segmented assimilation is now the dominant theoretical construct employed in the study of the children of immigrants (Stepick and Stepick 2010). The existing research has done much to add depth and highlight the complexity of immigrant adaptation. Its applicability is tested especially when considered in light of how the children of immigrants, the second-generation, engage with American norms and axes of difference.

Literature on the Children of Immigrants

For second generation immigrants, the daily demands of life are different than those of their parents. These are individuals who were either born in their family's new homeland, or migrated at a young age. Oftentimes, they are the cultural mediators and gatekeepers, linking immigrant parents with American social institutions, such as school and government. While their parents often labor long hours and for meager pay, or occupy positions of lower status than in the homeland, the children of immigrants represent dreams and change. They embody their parents' desires for a better future and opportunities. Yet it is not an easy task to navigate the difficult terrain of familial expectations, cultural influences, and identity construction. Here, I explore the issues

paramount to second generation immigrants, continuing with the questions of integration posed previously: How are immigrants incorporated into American society? What does ‘integration’ mean for immigrants and their children? To this we also add, ‘How is integration measured for the children of immigrants?’ The children of immigrants are scrutinized even more intensely than their parents for the hallmarks of integration – namely, academic achievement and identification. These two variables in particular have operated as the most popular measures of assimilation and integration.

This section of the chapter discusses major studies that have been conducted with second generation immigrants, mostly in traditional gateway cities such as Miami, San Diego, and New York. Given the dominance of a handful of studies in the literature, it is critical to understand the particularities of these pivotal research projects. I also discuss other studies of a smaller scale which have added increased diversity and nuance to the established literature. These research endeavors with second generation immigrants have stimulated increased theory building and conceptual frameworks regarding integration; although none have radically challenged the assimilation paradigm.

I also discuss measures of integration for second generation immigrants. Existing studies examining the integration of second generation immigrants focus overwhelmingly on academic achievement and identification as the predominant measures of integration. I argue that measures of integration need to move beyond existing boundaries, adding pertinent measures for these cohorts’ transition from adolescence and into adulthood.

Principal Studies

The current tide of immigrants is reminiscent of the early 20th century movements towards North America. Primarily European migrants, from places like Ireland and Italy,

came to the United States in search of opportunity and adventure (Hing 2004). Then, as is found in present times, fears abounded that immigrants were not doing what immigrants *should* do: learn English, and generally adapt to ‘American’ traditions and customs. General fears were allayed when the children of these arrivals grew up speaking English fluently, navigated the educational system and labor market, and dropped parental language and customs for those of the new homeland (Portes and Rumbaut 2005; Waldinger 2007). The model of the white European immigrants conforming and integrating into mainstream American society was one of the key inspirations for assimilation theory. Strikingly, a recent analysis of this cohort of immigrant children gave evidence to the contrary:

[S]econd-generation success, such as it was, had little to do with the diffusionary processes central to the assimilation perspective. . . . Assimilation necessarily entails a contrast between outsiders of foreign origins, and a bounded, integrated society But as the results of this study underscore, the societal imagery bound up with the concept of assimilation is largely illusion: what helped the immigrant offspring of the past were regional and sectoral sources of national *dis*-integration, factors which bore no relationship to ethnicity as such. (Waldinger 2007: 33)

The changing of immigration policy in 1965 brought a large shift in the demographic characteristics of newly arriving immigrants. They were increasingly from countries in Latin America, Asia, and to a lesser extent, Africa (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). They also complicated the simplistic racial divisions governing American society; neither black nor white, but usually something in-between. Whereas adjustment difficulties in language, employment, and social status are expected for first generation immigrants, understanding the longer-term integration of this cohort is best understood through their children.

Several key studies have been conducted with the children of immigrants from the post-1965 migration flows. One of the principal studies was initiated by Portes & Rumbaut in 1990, entitled “The Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study” (CILS). Study participants ranged in age from 12 to 17 years, and were selected from various schools in South Florida and San Diego. The roughly 5,000 respondents varied in national origin, and represented the major immigrant groups in their respective geographic areas. Early results highlighted the strong influence of race and ethnicity within the students’ lives (Portes and MacLeod 1996; Portes and Zhou 1993). The study also shed early light on the disjuncture of assimilation theory with the lived experiences of the second generation cohort. The data suggested that some immigrants, rather than adapting to mainstream American society, could assimilate to specific sectors within the American mosaic. Given the proclivity for American society towards racial hierarchies and classifications, immigrant youth were thrust into a racialized social structure (Omi and Winant 1994). Rather than move ‘up’ the social ladder towards prosperity, mainstream acceptance and integration, some immigrant youth were assimilating more to subcultures, such as Haitian immigrants assimilating to African American society, which Haitians were often associated because of phenotypical stereotypes (Portes and Zhou 1993). The results were not assured nor even; variations were evidenced on the basis of ethnic origin, economic status of households and the community, and the educational and occupational resources of the household (Portes and MacLeod 1996).

The CILS study was replicated several years after the initial data collection effort, both following up on the original respondents (with a response rate of over 80%) and with their parents. The results gave further support to the idea of segmented assimilation;

yet overall, the study suggested that immigrant children *were* adapting to American society, albeit in different ways than previous cohorts of second-generation immigrants. Several variables emerged as critical determinants of the processes of adaptation: academic achievement, language, and ethnic identification. Using these variables, the researchers identified three different ideal type integration pathways: (1) traditional assimilation in which ethnicity was abandoned in favor of ‘American’ norms, (2) segmented assimilation in which minority attachments and disadvantages prevailed, and (3) a path in which ethnic pride provides a means to overcome racial discrimination faced by minority immigrants (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). Subsequent follow-up research with the CILS cohort illustrated the continuation of these patterns into early adulthood (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2005). While this research broke new theoretical ground by disaggregating assimilation as a one-way, uniform process, critics have argued that the segmented assimilation hypothesis put forth does not represent a novelty in immigrant integration, but experiences from past immigrants shows multiple pathways, both upwards and downwards, in American society (Waldinger 2007).

In addition to the CILS study in South Florida and San Diego, the other principal project of immigrant second generation integration is the “Immigrant Second Generation in Metropolitan New York Study.” The New York project commenced in the late 1990’s and has been conducted with a variety of ethnic/national groups residing in New York City. Educational achievement was examined, as well as the occupations of respondents. The results indicate a departure by the second generation young adults from the ethnic niches occupied by their parents; yet separation in new industries and concentrations

continues along ethnic lines (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002). Yet, second generation immigrants do not “choose” between static ethnic options; the researchers relate that a pan-ethnic youth identity also figures prominently (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002). The New York researchers also problematized what they deemed as the overly simplistic conceptualization of segmented assimilation as put forth by CILS researchers. The New York study indicates that native minorities do not solely represent downward assimilation, but they also present successful models for immigrant youth (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002).

Transnationalism

Transnationalism, or the way in which people conduct their lives across national borders, engaging in relationships, households, economic activity, and political activism irrespective of the boundaries of the nation-state, has reshaped prior perceptions of migration as a unidirectional trajectory (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Levitt and Waters 2002b; Mahler 1999; Pessar and Mahler 2003). Among second generation immigrants in particular, transnational behaviors are analyzed as potential indicators of identification within their constellation of attachments (Levitt and Waters 2002b). In many ethnic groups, second-generation immigrants do engage in transnational behaviors, including travel between their parents’ country of origin and the U.S., speaking their parents’ native language, and even sending remittances (Levitt and Waters 2002a). The incidence of these behaviors is sharply decreased from the intensity and regularity of these behaviors amongst first-generation immigrants, however. Survey data with second-generation cohorts indicates

approximately 10% of them engage in regular transnational activity (Levitt and Waters 2002a). Within this group, the extent of transnational behavior varies widely between different ethnicities and across different contexts. For example, stronger transnational ties were reported among Dominicans and South Americans than among other New York groups, particularly Russian Jews and Chinese (Levitt and Waters 2002b). And although for some second-generation immigrants, speaking their parents' language is a "social marker" of identity, for most, English is their preferred language (Jones-Correa 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001).

Transnational behavior is not evidenced in great quantity in second-generation populations, but several authors caution that the relative youth of this cohort, descendants of the post-1965 immigrants, means that further research is needed on transnational behaviors as they move into adulthood (Espiritu and Tran 2002; Fournon and Glick Schiller 2002; Jones-Correa 2002; Levitt 2002; Smith 2002). Furthermore, transnationalism does not negate the possibility of assimilation or integration with mainstream American culture, but may in fact, draw people into political processes in greater depth, in complimentary fashion (Jones-Correa 2002). The link is not always complimentary, but may also be competitive, as pulled between two seemingly dichotomous options – connection to the parents' culture and country of origin and incorporation into U.S. society – second-generation youth experience dissonance and conflict. The result is uncertain, and the data thus far unclear, as to whether these processes are more complimentary or more competitive. What is abundantly clear, according to Jones-Correa (2002:233), is that "the interaction between transnationalism

and assimilation should make it more worthwhile, not less, to pay attention to these processes.”

Identifications, Enclaves and Communities

Much of the discussion regarding the integration of second generation immigrants in American society focuses on the aforementioned studies. However, other scholars have contributed to the collective literature on the experiences and life trajectories of these groups. What follows is a brief summary of three key themes emerging from both this work and the aforementioned primary studies. The following section then discusses the measures of integration employed in the literature. I argue that more comprehensive measures of integration need to be applied as immigrant offspring transition to adulthood.

Complex Identifications – The ways in which second generation migrants engage with their parents’ culture and mainstream American culture are not assured. In some studies, the children identify to varying degrees with parental cultures (Bailey 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). A key aspect to the complexity of identifications is the multiple sites of identity performance. Identifications shift depending on circumstances, such as between school, home, and church environments (Stepick et al. 2001). Generally, second-generation immigrants tend to employ hyphenated identifications or ones in keeping with the U.S. racial structure (Bailey 2001; Espiritu and Wolf 2001; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Warikoo 2005). However, exceptions to this trend have been noted as well (Gibson 1988). Identifications are further complicated by their intersection with other axes of difference, such as gender (Lee and Bean 2010; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010). Warikoo (2005) observes different identifications between Indo-Caribbean adolescents in

the United States; girls embraced Indian ethnicity by association with fashion styles termed '*Indo-chic*' Boys, on the other hand, distanced themselves from identification with Indian ethnicity because of stigmatization as Arabic-looking or potential terrorists (Warikoo 2005; Warikoo 2011). An overarching theme in studies of immigrant second generations is the complexity of identifications; context and culture figure prominently in understanding the identifications which are employed.

Ethnic Enclave – Ethnic communities have provided strong networks of support and solidarity to immigrants in the past and present (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Waldinger 2007). However, the ethnic *enclave* has emerged as a distinctive case of ethnic networks of economic opportunity, used firstly and primarily in reference to Cubans in Miami (Portes and Stepick 1993). The entry of a highly skilled elite from Cuba, combined with favorable federal policies and grants, led to a significant advantage for first-generation Cubans. The subsequent economic strength of the Cuban immigrant community enabled the accumulation of political and cultural power in addition to economic leverage; rather than accommodate to the American mainstream, they were able to dictate accommodation to their demands (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). For the second generation, the enclave provided a context of safety and reliability; despite high drop-out figures, Cuban offspring could expect to “succeed without extraordinary effort” (Perez 2001:121). Subsequent research with Cuban second-generation immigrants in Miami lends further support to the importance of the ethnic enclave; Cubans were the least likely to have premature childbearing and reported the highest mean and median family incomes (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005).

The ethnic enclave has provided indisputable resources for the children of Cuban immigrants, and it is frequently referenced in the literature as a reference group. However, the danger lies in extrapolating the economic resources of the ethnic enclave to signify increased social ties.

Community Resources – Community resources, or what is often referred to as “social capital,” figures prominently in the literature on second generation integration.⁷ Family and community networks figure prominently in the ability of second-generation young adults in the Netherlands to navigate a discriminatory educational system and labor market (Crul and Doornik 2003). Research in the United States has found similar results (Gibson 1988; Lopez 2003b; Warikoo 2005).

Community resources, however, can oftentimes be conflated with economic resources. As discussed, the ethnic enclave community in Miami provided Cuban immigrants with a safe harbor of sorts (Portes and Stepick 1993). While other communities may not possess the political advantages and economic capital of this group, they do not necessarily lack for “social capital.” In one study of neighborhoods in Miami, Cubans were hypothesized to have strong social capital and Haitians weak social capital (Martinez, Lee, and Nielsen 2004). The empirical evidence failed to validate the researchers’ assertion. Thus, as the researchers conclude, social capital, or community resources, takes many forms which may be difficult to measure (Martinez, Lee, and Nielsen 2004).

⁷ I avoid using the term ‘social capital.’ Invoking its use validates the system of capitalism and obscures structural components to poverty and disadvantage. In addition, the term is overly broad in its use, frequently used as a ‘catch-all’ explanation. See Harriss, John. 2002. *Depoliticizing Development: The World Bank and Social Capital*. London: Anthem Press.

Measuring Integration

Integration of the second-generation is assessed using three predominant measures: academic achievement, occupation, and identification. First, academic achievement has been a common concern of immigration scholars, and has been employed as a predictor of future economic success. Immigrant children are disproportionately concentrated in urban areas with low socio-economic status; and encounter a system which marginalizes experiences outside of American “norms” derived from the white majority population (Espiritu 2003). Several authors have addressed the issue of the academic orientation and achievement of second generation immigrants (Gibson 1988; Lopez 1999; Lopez 2003b; Smith 2006; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). The results vary widely: some studies have linked household resources, such as parental education and involvement, to educational success (Gibson 1988; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). Others relate the structural confines of school systems which marginalize minorities and allocate meager resources to their educational success (Lopez 2003b; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). In addition to academic performance, labor market outcomes, i.e., employment in different sectors of the economy, have been examined as key indicators of integration. For example, in follow-up research to the CILS study, the percentage of those who graduated from high school, by nationality, was examined. Wide disparities in family income were reported between nationalities, from a low of \$26,974 for Haitians to a high of \$70,395 for Cuban private-school attendees (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). The CILS study also explored measures such as language, childbearing, and incarceration. Both academic

achievement and labor market placement are widely used and accepted structural measures of immigrant integration; these measures assess how immigrant cohorts are interwoven within the mainstream and within ethnic niche economies (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008).

Cultural measures of integration are also critical for assessing integration of the children of immigrants. Ethnic identification has been a primary concern of second generation scholars researching cultural integration (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Stepick et al. 2001). Understanding the myriad of ways in which these individuals embrace identification has highlighted that most second-generation immigrants balance the various cultural spheres and influences in their lives; many cohorts report some blending or hyphenated identities, or embrace a pan-ethnic identity rather than one tied to nationality (Espiritu 2003; Lopez 2003b; Perez 2001). The extent to which immigrant minorities feel a sense of attachment or belonging to their new homeland is critical to assessing their integration with the society at large.

In addition to identity or identification, cultural measures of integration could expand to encompass household relations and gendered roles within those households. While relatively understudied, gender has also emerged as a critical consideration for second generation experiences within the general literature. Increased attention has been placed on the ways in which males and females experience integration; social roles and expectations are clearly demarcated along gendered lines, and the variance in aspirations and outcomes suggest that gender is a critical area for consideration (Lopez 1999; Lopez

2003b; Smith 2006; Warikoo 2005). However, other researchers are largely silent about gender (Zephir 2001). Second generation experiences are gendered in several ways, as will be discussed in this dissertation. One recurring theme remains the sexual roles scripted for females. “Americanization” (or the adoption of the language, values, and culture of mainstream U.S. society) is associated by many immigrant families to bring increasing sexualization, particularly with daughters: “The activities of girls outside the home tend to be heavily monitored and controlled. While boys may be encouraged to venture into the new world, girls and young women are more likely to be kept close to the family hearth” (Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001:79). Lopez echoes the demarcation between girls and boys, observing significant differences in speech patterns between girls (discussing domestic life) and boys (discussing street play and outdoor-activity) (Espiritu 2003; Lopez 2003b). As second generation cohorts move beyond early adulthood and into realm of domestic partnerships, marriage, and rearing children, gender will continue to figure prominently in their experiences for gender is a central organizing principal of all human life (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler 2003). Recent data from CILS participants in California indicate that remaining unmarried was a significant factor in a woman achieving educational success; this factor was not significant for male participants, indicating that gender relations continually shape integration experiences (Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005). Numerous scholars have alluded to the pivotal role which gender plays in the integration of second generation immigrants, and have called for increased research and attention to this area (Lopez 2003b; Warikoo 2005; Worbs 2003). Thus, in addition to identity and belonging,

gendered roles and household practices serve as important measures of integration within a new society.

A Critical Gap in Knowledge

Having considered relevant studies of the immigrant second generation, it is clear that integration has been largely operationalized on three dimensions: academic achievement, labor market outcomes, and identification. These are certainly critical areas of examination; however, increased attention should be placed on other significant areas in which integration could be assessed. Integration should be assessed using both structural measures (such as academic achievement and labor market experiences) as well as cultural measures (such as identification and gendered roles and practices). These measures of integration form the basis of the current dissertation project.

The literature review also established that existing theory suggests that the children of Haitian immigrants – as mostly Black, economically disadvantaged youth growing up in urban areas in close proximity to African American peers – can be expected to follow a path of downwards segmented assimilation (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997). However, this theory may not fully explain the everyday lived experiences of this population. Although Haitian youth have been cited as emblematic of downwards segmented assimilation, the existing research focuses on research with adolescents (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993; Stepick 1998; Stepick et al. 2001). Does downwards segmented assimilation theory fit the experiences of this cohort after adolescence? My dissertation addresses this critical gap in knowledge with an exploratory longitudinal examination of how integration occurs for some 1.5 and second generation Haitian young adults in South

Florida. The longitudinal nature of the study allows for examination of whether segmented assimilation theory fits the experiences of this population in their post-adolescence years. Also, the in-depth ethnographic research conducted through this dissertation allows for deep analysis into the life pathways and processes of integration as they have played out in this group's early adulthood. The research therefore addresses a critical lack of understanding in how integration occurs for the children of Haitian immigrants, and contributes to theory-construction about the variations and complexities of segmented assimilation theory.

I have explored the literature on second-generation immigrant integration in the United States. The primary studies framing the research were examined, including the emergence from this work of segmented assimilation theory for explaining, and predicting, the trajectory of immigrant communities' integration. The section concluded with a look at some of the most common measures of integration employed thus far researchers, including academic performance, labor market outcomes, and identification. I argued that these concepts needed to be expanded to greater depth to account for gendered structures and integration experiences. Also, second-generation immigrant experiences need to be assessed by looking at school achievement, labor market positions, identifications, and gendered roles and behaviors.

In the United States, diversity is celebrated and feared, championed and derided. A strong cultural norm exists that expects newcomers to adopt the dominant culture, speak the language, and otherwise conform to the practices and principles of mainstream society. This strong belief in assimilation as a normative framework underlies current debates about diversity, immigration, and cultural change.

This chapter has explored the issues of identification, immigration, and assimilation. I first discussed the literature on identification, and the ways in which identifications shape our lives. I argued that identifications are complex and situational. They are socially constructed, and subject to change. They are perhaps most contested when people migrate – becoming exposed to new cultural influences and markers. The discussion of migration focused on assimilation theory, and the context in which it arose and the ability of the theory to account for immigrant experiences, in the United States and elsewhere. I argued that racial hierarchies within the receiving society makes assimilation a nearly unworkable prospect for immigrants who are racial minorities. This is perhaps most clearly evidenced in second-generation immigrants, who are expected to show greater affiliation for and attachment to the dominant American society (shaped by norms of whiteness and Anglo-Saxon Protestant cultural values) than their immigrant parents ever could. The discussion of second generation immigration highlighted the complexity of measuring integration – especially when considering groups with diverse receptions, racial compositions, and variations in class and gender. Second generation integration studies proposed the concept of segmented assimilation as an alternative to straight-line assimilation, a hypothesis which requires empirical validation as the children of immigrants progress into adulthood.

III. RESEARCH METHODS AND CONTEXT

This chapter details the methodology used in this research project. I also describe the sample's key demographic characteristics and compare its features with another longitudinal study following a cohort of 1.5 and second generation immigrants. The final section considers the limits of the research findings to this specific sample of young adults.

Project Overview

This dissertation is a continuation of prior research conducted with the children of Haitian immigrants in Miami-Dade County. From the mid-1990s until 2000, the Immigration and Ethnicity Institute at FIU, directed by Dr. Alex Stepick, coordinated a project examining the academic orientations and identities of various immigrant cohorts in several Miami high schools. The Academic Orientations project (subsequently referred to as "AO") followed youth from six key native-born and immigrant minority groups in Miami-Dade County – African-American, Cuban, Nicaraguan, Mexican, Haitian, and other Black West Indians. Two survey questionnaires were administered; one at the start of high school (referred to as "T1") and the second at the end of high school (referred to as "T2"). Qualitative data collection was also part of the project's methods, including participant observation by graduate student ethnographers within several different schools.

The present dissertation study was a follow-up with the Haitian contingent of the AO project, thus allowing comparison across time and within the cohort of this subgroup. In tabular presentations throughout this dissertation, I refer to the present study as "AO," as it constitutes a continuation of the earlier phases of research from this project.

Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS)

The sample for this project is compared throughout the dissertation with results from CILS. As mentioned in the previous chapter, CILS began in 1990. Study participants were between 12 and 17 years old at the start of the project. The research sites included South Florida (both Miami-Dade and Broward counties) and San Diego. The larger sample size of the CILS project, totally over 5,000 youth) enabled for comparison between various immigrant groups, as well as with native-born whites and native-born minorities. The project included a sample of Haitian students.

A follow-up wave of data collection was conducted with CILS respondents, with some published results in recent years (For example, Feliciano 2005; Rumbaut 2005). Three phases of surveys were conducted: T1 and T2 during high school and the follow-up round included the administration of the third survey (referred to as “T3”). The resources of the project enabled them to resume contact with a sizeable portion of the original sample, including 97 people of Haitian origin.

Although the CILS project follows a slightly earlier timeline than the AO project and this dissertation research, CILS allows for some contextualization of the present in-depth qualitative data within a larger dataset. The Haitian respondents in my sample generally resemble those who participated in CILS; thus, comparison with CILS helps to assess the reliability of the results from the present sample. The AO sample and the CILS sample are compared in detail at the end of this chapter.

Methods

The research population consisted of persons of Haitian descent who previously participated in the AO study of 1.5 and second-generation immigrants in Miami-Dade

County. The 88 individuals of Haitian descent in the original AO project were all either 1.5 or second generation, meaning that they had either immigrated to the U.S. before adulthood, spending some portion of their childhood in Haiti, or they had been born in the United States to Haitian immigrant parents.

The 88 youth of Haitian-origin who participated in the prior study had been asked for permanent contact information when they originally participated in the project. Contact with the sample was made through the following recruitment steps:

1. A letter was sent to each person's last known address, outlining the research project and requesting response via an included postage-paid postcard;
2. Names were entered into search engines on popular social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and hi5;
3. Information about the study was personally delivered to the addresses on file, only after a household member confirmed that the respondent still lived at that address;
4. Interviewees were asked for the contact information of their school peers who had also participated in the study.

Of the original 88 participants, 13 individuals were successfully located and agreed to participate for a follow-up rate of 15%. An additional six individuals were located but did not agree to be interviewed. The low follow-up participation rate could be increased by additional financial resources to use databases to locate the original study participants. My contact methods were limited to publically accessible records and contact information provided by participants ten years prior. Future research could

employ commercial databases to search for participants using social security numbers (provided by some participants in the earlier research).

Once participants were identified, an interview time was scheduled with them. Interviews took place in a variety of settings, most frequently in participants' homes or in local restaurants or establishments suggested by participants themselves. Interviews were conducted personally by the researcher and ranged in time from one to three hours in duration. After consent was obtained (see below for details), interviews began with a questionnaire that was modeled after the third survey from the CILS project (Appendix #1). Respondents mostly filled out the survey themselves, with some clarification from the researcher as necessary. The survey questions covered basic demographic information and responses to standardized questions used in the CILS data study. Following the completion of the survey, a semi-structured interview was conducted by the researcher (Appendix #2). The questions posed concerned the individuals' background, opinions and decision-making processes. The major areas of inquiry during the interview included: education and employment, language, culture and family, identity and relationships, and homeland connections. All interviews were recorded, with consent for the recording provided by the interviewees at the outset of the interview.

Following the interviews, many participants invited the researcher to join them at family gatherings and community functions. Thus, participant observation also formed part of the research. I participated in multiple social gatherings, including family dinners, a child's first communion with extended family and church members, a voodoo ceremony where one interviewee was a priestess, church services, and regular gatherings of relaxed social interaction with family and friends. Men and women were both

welcomed me into their social interactions; however invitations from one man without a female partner were not accepted because of the overtly romantic nature of his invitations. With other male respondents, social gatherings included their partner and/or family members and did not carry the same romantic insinuation. Female respondents tended to be particularly warm and interested in cultivating a friendship with me, inviting me to numerous social gatherings within their social and family circles.

Participants were asked during the initial contact for their consent to participate in the study. Consent was obtained through a signed consent form. At subsequent meetings, including while discussing the themes of the research project at casual gatherings, I reiterated the confidential and anonymous nature of the study. No participant expressed any concern about their participation in the study. All names and other identifying information have been changed to protect the identification of the study participants. Participants were given a cash stipend of \$20 in exchange for their time at the initial interview.

One respondent was reached while he was incarcerated at the Miami Dade County detention facility. A letter was sent by fax to the respondent at the facility, whereupon he informed the warden of his interest in meeting me. I met with this respondent at the detention facility, where we met in a private and completely soundproof room normally used for detainees' meetings with legal counsel. The consent form was carefully reviewed with the respondent, including specific mention that his participation in the research would not offer any foreseeable benefits. This respondent was not provided with the \$20 stipend because of the restrictions on inmates possessing cash.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed by a research assistant fluent in both Creole and English. Transcripts were recorded verbatim in the language used by the interviewer and respondent. The transcripts were coded by the researcher using MAXQDA software. A coding framework was employed based on themes in the literature, but the framework was further developed and refined according to the interview responses. After the coding scheme was finalized, a second review of all coding was conducted in order to ensure reliability in the application of the final codes. Questionnaire responses were entered into Stata, using a dataset that included the prior T1 survey information. Thus, individual cases from the prior wave of data were extended to include the T3 data. These T3 responses were compared with the T3 responses from the CILS dataset, which was obtained using the publically available dataset from the internet. The CILS codebook was also carefully referenced to ensure proper comparisons between the two datasets. Statistical analysis was limited to comparative review of frequencies between CILS and the AO study; the limited case numbers in the present dissertation research did not allow for statistical modeling or testing.

Description of Sample

Of the original 88 Haitian participants in the AO study, N=13 participated in this follow-up research. This included six men and seven women. Several key demographic characteristics of this sample population are reported in Table 3.1. The table also lists the same frequencies for Haitian respondents within the CILS sample.

The dissertation sample consists of people about 30 years-old. Most were single, although more than half of them were parents. They mostly claim affiliation with either

Protestant or Catholic religion, and although they were mostly born in Haiti, more than half of them are U.S. citizens. Many of the respondents are living on their own, although nearly equal numbers are living with parents or other relatives.

The CILS sample shares some key features with the dissertation sample population. Both samples had a slightly higher representation of females. Both groups

Table 3.1: Description of Samples: AO and CILS (Haitians)

		AO Study n=13		CILS Haitians n=97	
		Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Age (mean)		30.4 years		25.9 years	
	Males	30.2 years		25.7 years	
	Females	30.6 years		26.0 years	
Gender	Male	6	46%	32	33%
	Female	7	54%	65	67%
Marital Status*	Single	9	69%	75	77%
	Married	4	31%	22	23%
Parent	Yes	6	54%	23	25%
	No	4	46%	73	75%
Religion	Protestant	4	31%	21	23%
	Catholic	6	46%	26	28%
	Muslim	-	-	2	2%
	Other	2	15%	31	34%
	None	1	8%	12	13%
Birthplace	Haiti	9	69%	32	33%
	U.S.	4	31%	47	48%
	Bahamas	-	-	14	14%
	Canada	-	-	4	4%
Citizenship	U.S. Citizen by birth	4	31%	48	50%
	U.S. Citizen by naturalization	5	38%	21	22%
	Not a U.S. Citizen	4	31%	27	28%

Type of residence	Own place	7	54%	41	42%
	Live with parents	3	23%	50	52%
	Live with other relatives/friends	2	15%	3	3%
	Other	1	8%	3	3%

*“Married” includes responses Married, Engaged, and Living with Partner

“Single” includes responses Single, Divorced, and Separated.

also feature a high proportion of unmarried respondents. However, several key differences also exist. Respondents from CILS were considerably younger when they completed the T3 survey, as the mean age was approximately 26 years old whereas the dissertation research participants were about 30 years old. Consequently, fewer of the CILS respondents had become parents.

Overall, the two cohorts share a number of demographic features. Variations do occur, but the cohorts are reasonably similar to each other.

Limitations

The sample size for this research study consists of only 13 individuals. The participants were gathered through a non-random convenience sample. Thus, the findings are not generalizable beyond the sample itself. The results are used to illuminate the processes by which some of the children of Haitian immigrants navigate their way into adulthood. Outcome findings from the CILS survey are compared to the present sample to see if the two groups resemble each other.

The in-depth qualitative research which this study did generate helps to illuminate the ways in which these particular youth enter adulthood. The themes which emerge provide direction for future research with a larger sample. The current results, however, are limited in that they cannot be generalized beyond the sample itself.

South Florida Context

Immigrants comprise a large portion of the South Florida population. Much of the population of Miami-Dade county is either foreign-born themselves or has at least one parent who was foreign-born (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). The effects of this large immigrant population are easily visible: Spanish is spoken at least as much as English, if not more, coffee is served Cuban-style, and international calling cards sell briskly in local shops and *bodegas* [corner stores]. Immigration and integration thus takes on a specific localized meaning within this particular cultural milieu (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). South Florida is a regional center of linkages and economic relationships with global power brokers, serving as a gateway between the U.S. and Central and Southern America, and the population of the urban area reflects increasing movements of people within the hemisphere (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). Yet relationships are also intensely localized – shaped by particular social locations which divide people, most notably by race and national origin.

In this local South Florida context, political power, civic engagement, and religious institutions are shaped by the diverse population and their localized tensions (Stepick, Rey, and Mahler 2009). The local Cuban population has the greatest economic and political power, and other nationalities, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic, jockey for position and power relative to one another in the South Florida nexus (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). As Stepick and colleagues observe, South Florida has only five percent of the total Latino population in the U.S., but nearly half of the forty biggest companies that are Latin-owned; Miami functions as a cultural and economic doorway

between the U.S. and its southern hemispheric neighbors. Goods are brought into Miami's bustling port from *maquiladoras* in Central America, Colombian and Venezuelans fly into Miami International Airport to visit friends and relatives for the weekend, and Americans from across the country venture to Miami to embark upon a Caribbean cruise (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004).

In addition to Latinos, Miami has a large population of black residents, many of whom with Caribbean immigrant roots (Dunn 1997). Many Miami blacks trace their roots to the Bahamas, Jamaica, or Haiti, all of which have substantial communities within the South Florida region. In addition, since its early days, Miami's population included a community of African-Americans, who navigated exclusion, persecution, and marginalization throughout Miami's history (Dunn 1997). The historical precedents carried forth into the recent past, as black communities articulated frustration in the 1980s and 1990s with the increasingly Latino character of the city, feeling that the advancement of Cubans in Miami came at the detriment of the resident black community (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004).

The context for this study therefore is one of considerable variety, dynamism, and unique cultural attributes. South Florida is a context quite unlike any other in the United States. The local power structure was drastically transformed by Latino immigration, particularly Cuban immigration, and the relatively warm welcome those initial migrants received which facilitated their political and economic success (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). The historic denigration of Miami's black community, pre-dating Haitian arrivals and almost certainly amplified when poor Haitians began coming ashore, is another critical factor shaping the local context. The participants in this study,

therefore, experience a particular slice of U.S. life, shaped by the specificities of local power structures and historical factors.

Participants for this study were originally drawn from three high schools with substantial populations of Haitian students (Stepick et al. 2001). I now introduce the specific context of each of these schools – Miami Edison Senior High School in Little Haiti, North Miami Beach Senior High School in North Miami Beach, and Homestead Senior High School in Homestead, located in the southern part of Miami-Dade County. The schools reflect a unique brew of circumstances and environments in which the study population grew up, and this brief introduction helps to contextualize their experiences of growing up with Haitian roots in the diverse South Florida context.

Little Haiti

Little Haiti is the geographic and cultural heart of Miami's Haitian community (Mooney 2009; Stepick 1998). Miami Edison Senior High School (MESHS) lies at the junction of I-95 and NW 62nd Street, the main corridor which runs past the school, to the Notre Dame D'Haiti Catholic Church, and on to Biscayne Boulevard. Little Haiti earned its moniker when the first Haitian arrivals in the 1970s settled in that area, drawn to the historically black neighbourhoods where their presence was tolerated and cheap housing was available (Stepick 1998). The main thoroughfares of Little Haiti feature businesses catering to the local clientele: one can purchase phone cards to call Haiti, a plate of rice and beans, or even a stalk of juicy sugarcane for a snack. The neighbourhood is largely poor and working-class; it is often the first place newly arrived Haitians settle and if their economic situation improves, they will move northwards towards North Miami Beach and Broward County (Stepick 1998).

The AO study took place within Miami Edison Senior High from 1995 to 2000, thus the 2000 Census provides a snapshot of key demographic characteristics of the region at the time (See Table 3.2). The Census counted more than 18,000 Haitians within the City of Miami, the majority of whom are found in the Little Haiti area (Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program 2005). A large number of these people were foreign born (69.7%), and nearly 9 out of 10 Haitians reported speaking a language other than English at home (89%). These indicators suggest an immigrant population which is relatively newly-arrived. The economic indicators from the 2000 Census show that Haitians in the City of Miami have low levels of education and low incomes, as compared to the general population. Just over half of the general population (52.7%) had a high school education or higher, whereas just 35.4% of Haitians had reached this educational level.

Table 3.2: Demographic Characteristics of the City of Miami, FL

		General Population		Haitians	
		Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Total Population		362,471		18,309	5.1%
Race	White	241,470	66.6%		
	Black or African American	80,858	22.3%		
	Other	22,960	6.3%		
	Two or more races	17,182	4.7%		
Hispanic or Latino	(of any race)	238,351	65.8%		
Education	High school graduate, age 25+	133,069	52.7%	3,755	35.5%
Economics	Median household income (1999)	\$23,483		\$20,000	
	Families below poverty level	19,779	23.5%	1,522	-
	Individuals below poverty level	100,405	28.5%	6,841	37.4%

Source: Census 2000

The economic indicators in Table 3.2 reveal that the Haitian population in Miami lives on the margins of the economy, with lower household income than the general population. In 1999, the median income for Haitian households was \$20,000 while for the City of Miami in general it was \$23,483. Haitians composed 5% of the general population, yet they represented 7.7% of families living below the poverty level. Within an immigrant population of generally low income and education, Haitians faced especially daunting circumstances and conditions.

These difficult circumstances were reflected within the schools serving the Little Haiti area, including Miami Edison Senior High School (MESHS). The school sits on the border of Little Haiti, with its high concentration of Haitian immigrants, and Liberty City, a historically African American neighborhood. In 1995, when the AO study at MESHS started, 93% of the students were identified as Non-Hispanic Black by school authorities (Miami Edison Senior High School 2010b). At the time, more than 2,300 students attended MESHS, yet by 2009-2010, only 921 students attended the school, as students sought better opportunities elsewhere and district authorities pressured to close the poorly-performing school (Miami Edison Senior High School 2010b). MESHS has consistently earned poor performance grades based on students' performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT); the letter-grade assigned to MESHS hovered at either "D" or "F" for the 11 years between 1998-1999 and 2008-2009. The school board proposed closing MESHS on the basis of its poor results, yet the Haitian community rallied in its support in 2008 and 2009, leading to an influx of financial resources designed to improve student performance. For the first time, MESHS earned a grade of "C" in 2009-2010 (Miami Edison Senior High School 2010b).

Despite its recent improvements, at the time the AO students were entering their junior and senior years, MESHS was still a school of considerable disadvantage. In 2001-02, 59.3% of its students received a free or reduced lunch, indicating that they came from poor households (Miami Edison Senior High School 2002). About one-quarter of students were enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), most likely Haitian students with limited English skills (Miami Edison Senior High School 2002). FCAT Reading test results for 1998-99 indicate that 81% of the students scored a “1,” the lowest possible score on the five-point scale (Miami Edison Senior High School 2010a). The percentage dropped to 74% in 1999-2000, when many of the AO students in this sample were seniors at MESHS (Miami Edison Senior High School 2010a).

In addition to the educational difficulties underlying education at MESHS were racial and ethnic tensions between the two resident population groups, Haitians and African Americans. The school’s placement between Liberty City and Little Haiti means its boundary enrollment area encompasses both of these communities, and Haitians and African Americans were the predominant groups in the black-majority school. Within MESHS, simmering tensions between Haitians and African Americans played out in the interactions between adolescents. Wilkinson described the tension:

When I was in high school, there was a big rivalry between Haitians and Americans in Edison. Towards the back of Edison, right there, when you’re going south on NW 2nd Ave, there’s a plaza there, it’s in Little Haiti. While I was growing up in high school, that was considered the “Haitian” area, for all the Haitians. And majority of the black Americans were not allowed to be there. And all the black Americans were on the opposite side of Edison, 62nd, which is Liberty City. So they all hung out around McDonald’s in that area. So this went on like my whole senior year, and I watched my friends get into fights, like they’d get into fights, rivalries, back and forth. And it was deep.

The tensions between Haitians and African Americans played out in the establishment of territories for the respective groups in the streets around the school: each group had its designated area to socialize within. As Wilkinson observed, the Haitian area fell on the side of the school building towards Little Haiti, whereas African Americans congregated on the side of the school closer to Liberty City. The geographic proximity of their residential neighborhoods brought the groups together within the school hallways, however as Wilkinson related, the interactions were marked by considerable tension.

North Miami Beach

To the north of Little Haiti, in the corridor between I-95 and Biscayne Boulevard, lies a second geographic concentration of Haitians in Miami-Dade County. The Haitian residents of this area are often slightly better off than those to the south, in Little Haiti, and they have usually acquired some relative stability in terms of jobs and income (Stepick 1998). The local population includes other West Indian immigrants, adding to the diversity of immigrants and native minority groups represented within local schools and businesses.

Table 3.3 lists several demographic characteristics about North Miami Beach from the 2000 Census, when the students in the AO study were just leaving high school. Blacks and African Americans comprised a significant percentage (39%) of the general population. There were nearly 8,000 Haitians in North Miami Beach, suggesting that about half of the Black population was of Haitian origin. Educational levels were higher in North Miami Beach than in the Little Haiti area; in this region, 68.3% of adults over the age of 25 were high school graduates or higher. Among Haitians, higher levels of

education were seen in this area as compared to Little Haiti, with 58% of Haitian adults reporting at least a high school education.

Economic indicators also suggest that the Haitian population in North Miami Beach is slightly better off than that of Little Haiti. The median household income in 1999 was \$30,068, which is still below the median of the general population in the area of \$31,377. North Miami Beach reported that only 18.4% of families were living below the poverty level, but of those families, about a quarter of them were Haitians. The Haitians in North Miami Beach also had a relatively high rate of home-ownership, with more than half of Haitian households reporting that they owned the property.

Table 3.3: Demographic Characteristics of North Miami Beach, FL

		General Population		Haitians	
		Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Total Population		40,786	-	7,864	19.3%
Race	White	19,040	46.7%		
	Black or African American	15,895	39.0%		
	Other	3,675	9.0%		
	Two or more races	2,177	5.3%		
Hispanic or Latino	(of any race)	12,245	30.0%		
Education	High school graduate, age 25+	17,683	68.3%	2,495	58.2%
Economics	Median household income (1999)	\$31,377		\$30,068	
	Families below poverty level	1,828	18.4%	479	-
	Individuals below poverty level	8,230	20.5%	1883	23.9%

Source: Census 2000

North Miami Beach Senior High School (NMB) is the main secondary school serving the city of North Miami Beach. In 1998-1999, when many of the AO study

participants were entering their Junior and Senior years, the student population consisted of 53% Black Non-Hispanics, 19% White Non-Hispanics, and 25% Hispanics (North Miami Beach Senior High School 2010b). By 1999-2000, Black Non-Hispanic students represented 59% of the student body, and in 2000-2001 they made up 65% of the student population (North Miami Beach Senior High School 2010b). The school reported that in 2001-02, 9% of its students were of limited English proficiency, and 36% received free or reduced cost lunches (North Miami Beach Senior High School 2002). Thus, although the school community included Haitians who were relatively better off than their counterparts in Little Haiti, some families and students still faced significant disadvantage.

The challenges of student achievement are reflected in the school performance ratings based on students' scores on the FCAT over the past several years. In 1998-1999, NMB was assigned a "D" rating, only marginally better than failure. By 2001-2002, when the AO study participants had mostly left NMB, the school raised its score to "C", where it has mostly stayed through 2010, with a few years of dipping back down into the "D" range (North Miami Beach Senior High School 2010a). Students' scores in 1998-1999 reveal many students could not achieve even basic levels of accomplishment on the reading tests; 47% of Grade 10 students scored a "1", the lowest possible score on the five-point scale. In 1999-2000 this dropped to 44% of students (North Miami Beach Senior High School 2010a). Although these scores are low, they are marginally better than the results found at MESHS in Little Haiti, reflecting the slightly better opportunities found at NMB.

For Haitians, moving to North Miami Beach represents moving up a small rung on the socioeconomic ladder in the United States. The Haitians in this area have higher rates of home ownership and household incomes than Haitians in Little Haiti. And the high school their adolescents attend offers slightly better opportunities for their children: the students at NMB performed slightly better on FCAT tests and the school as a whole was rated just one notch above MESHS in Little Haiti.

Homestead

In comparison with Little Haiti and North Miami Beach, Homestead is a relatively rural enclave of Miami-Dade County. Irrigation canals line the roads throughout the southern part of the County, leading to fields of tomatoes, strawberries, and other produce items. These fields employ primarily immigrant workers, including many of Hispanic origin. Haitians also work in the agricultural sector, as well as in the hotels and restaurants catering to tourists throughout the Florida Keys. From the relatively affordable housing in Homestead, Haitians board buses early in the morning for their distant workplaces either southward in the Keys or northward in Miami, often spending more than an hour along the way.

The preliminary phases of the AO study took place in Homestead High School (HHS) between 1995 and 2000. Thus, the 2000 Census provides an appropriate snapshot of the material conditions in the community at the time these adolescents were growing up. Table 3.4 displays several characteristics of both the general population and the Haitian population in Homestead according to the 2000 Census. Of a total population of about 32,000, Haitians numbered about 1,500 according to this official count, making up 4.7% of the local population. The general population of Homestead was primarily

white (61%), and just about half indicated they were Hispanic or Latino (51%). The median household income for the general population was \$26,775, whereas for Haitians it was slightly lower at \$24,250. Haitians were overrepresented in the families and individuals living below the poverty level, comprising 6% and 7% respectively of the totals in Homestead.

Table 3.4: Demographic Characteristics of Homestead, FL

		General Population		Haitians	
		Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Total Population		32,046	100%	1,531	4.7%
Race	White	19,465	61%		
	Black or African American	7,194	22.5%		
	Other	3,569	11.2%		
	Two or more races	1,681	5.3%		
Hispanic or Latino	(of any race)	16,537	51.8%		
Education	High school graduate, age 25+	8,868	50.5%	191	27.9%
Economics	Median household income (1999)	\$26,775		\$24,250	
	Families below poverty level	2,083	29.1%	127	
	Individuals below poverty level	9,988	31.8%	706	

Source: Census 2000

The 2000 Census also illustrates the low levels of human capital which Haitian immigrants in this area possess. Half of the general population (50.5%) had graduated from high school, but among Haitian residents, this was only 27.9%. Both of these figures are significantly lower than the U.S.–wide average of 80%, demonstrating the low educational levels in Homestead relative to the general U.S. population. The educational

accomplishments of Haitians in the Homestead area is also markedly lower than the Haitian residents of Little Haiti and North Miami Beach.

The student population at Homestead High school reflected the high levels of poverty and low levels of human capital which the Census figures indicate. In 2000-01, 74.8% of students received either a free or reduced-cost lunch (Homestead Senior High School 2001-02). The student population numbered 3,123, and consistent with the general population, 47% of the students were Hispanic. 40% of the students were identified as Black Non-Hispanic, and just 11% of the students were White Non-Hispanic (Homestead Senior High School 2001-02). Although the school statistics do not demarcate between the Haitian and African American students, the small numbers of Haitians in the wider community indicates that Haitians made up only a small number of the 1,249 Black Non-Hispanic students (Homestead Senior High School 2001-02).

Homestead Senior High School students generally did not receive a high level of instruction or resources to help them meet their educational aspirations. In 1998-99, when the first students in the AO study reached their senior year, HSH was given a “D” rating by external evaluators, based on testing performance of students’ abilities in reading, writing and math (Homestead Senior High School 2010). In that year, grade 10 students at HSH were given reading and mathematics tests as part of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The test results were extremely poor, demonstrating that 51% of students tested for reading and 48% of students tested for mathematics scored a “1” – the lowest possible score on the 1-5 scale (Homestead Senior High School 2009). HSH hasn’t improved much since the 1998-1999 school year. Over

the past twelve years, it has consistently been rated either a “D” school (9 times) or an “F” school (3 times) (Homestead Senior High School 2010).

The students in this study who attended HSH largely encountered a context of severe material deprivation: they grew up amidst significant poverty, in a community lacking many material resources. The high school served a small community on the rural outskirts of Miami’s urban center, far from the concentrations of Haitians in Little Haiti and North Miami Beach, and the school population was mostly Hispanic and African American. Haitians were a minority in this setting, possibly only exacerbating the potential difficulty of embracing a heritage largely derided by the general public (Stepick 1998).

English & Ebonics

The contexts in which the study participants were raised included large populations of African-Americans and other immigrant groups, primarily Hispanics, but also including English-speaking West Indians. Scholars of linguistics have identified various forms of English among Black populations and argue that “non-standard”⁸ forms of English are integral expressions of Black identity and culture (Hecht, Jackson, and Ribeau 2003). These authors maintain that different forms of English entail style-switching, with specific styles of English being employed in various circumstances. They identify several major factors associated with the selective use of a specific language style:

Major factors influencing style choice, then, include the frequency of contact with conversant, the familiarity of the contact, and perceptions of the other as a

⁸ The term “non-standard” is problematic from an anthropological perspective; however this is the term used by Hect, Jackson, and Ribeau (2003).

member or nonmember of Black culture. Other minor factors that may influence style on a moment-by-moment basis include the presence of females, the topic being discussed, and the intensity of emotion concerning the topic; however, it is not always possible to predict which way such factors will send the switch (Hecht, Jackson, and Ribeau 2003:154).

The authors contend that individuals employ “non-standard” English according to specific contexts; the use of slang and urban forms of English is generally looked down upon within mainstream (i.e. white) U.S. society, and Black individuals alter their speech when a context requires them to do so.

The participants in this dissertation study generally spoke a style English which is consistent with the general linguistic patterns of urban Blacks in the U.S. (Hecht, Jackson, and Ribeau 2003). The linguistic patterns of speech are a ripe area for exploration of acculturation with an urban segment of Black American culture; however, the specific analysis of these speech patterns is beyond my specific realm of expertise and the focus of my dissertation. Some participants, such as Wilkinson, alternated between “non-standard” English and a more formal English which is frequently associated with high educational accomplishments. Wilkinson started his interview with this style of English, as the following quote demonstrates: “The Navy experience was excellent. I would actually still be there if it wasn’t for the disagreements I had in terms of my chain of command.” Later in the interview, as the familiarity between Wilkinson and myself grew, he used more “non-standard” English, particularly when quoting African-American schoolmates, as demonstrated in this recollection about an experience he had in high school:

Early on, when I was in high school, maybe 9th or 10th grade, a lot of Black Americans didn’t know I was Haitian. I still remember this Black American

chick, she asked me, “Francois,” she was like, “You not American?” I say “Nah”
“You speak Creole? For real?” I’m like, “Yeah! You never knew that?”

The quotes in this dissertation may appear incomplete and truncated to the reader. However, they are transcribed directly as they were spoken during the interview, even though at many times participants used “non-standard” English. Where appropriate, I have added explanations and clarifications to the direct quotes to ensure reader comprehension. However, alterations are minimal in order to preserve the direct voices and characteristic dialect of the participants themselves.

IV. IN PURSUIT OF DREAMS: EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Valerie runs a manicured hand lightly over her head, smoothing her hair in place. She brushes away a small wrinkle from her skirt and sighs. “It is so hard to find a job.” She had been working at a call center, in the customer service division of a large cable company. The supervisor did not like Valerie, and before long, Valerie was looking for work again. She answered ads in the paper and online, some of which gave her an uneasy feeling. “They were explaining the job and it wasn’t anything stable... it was selling stuff and you don’t get no money until you sell. I was so mad. Why did I get all dressed up in my nice clothes for that?”

Like many second-generation immigrants, Valerie aspires to earn a college degree and dreams of a stable job and financial stability. Valerie arrived in Miami as a girl on the precipice of adolescence, and she watched her parents work difficult, laborious jobs for meager pay in order to provide their children with opportunities which were not available to them in Haiti. Each child’s task was clear: go to school and get an education.

Valerie worked hard to meet her parents’ expectations. She studied English diligently and completed a high school diploma. Her parents were so proud! Valerie and her older brother, Yansmith, had both completed high school. Everyone, parents and children, knew that was not the final step: they needed to attend college. Just like her older brother, Valerie enrolled in Miami-Dade College.

Valerie chose her first major based on her passion: dance. She dreamed of becoming a professional dancer. But often, when she went to enroll in courses, the classes she needed were full and she had to sign up for courses that did not really interest her. Thinking of her job prospects, Valerie changed her major to tourism. A counselor

advised her to major in education as a practical option for future employment. So her major changed again to education, focusing on foreign languages. Valerie had a lot of courses completed and credits on her transcript, but not enough in any one area for a degree. Describing this process, Valerie lamented, “You feel like you are always back at the start again.”

Financial aid also posed challenges. Sometimes Valerie stopped attending a class, when the bus schedule was not convenient or if her shifts at work conflicted with her class schedule. But Valerie did not realize that she had to notify the college of her decision. She did not realize that, although she did not attend, the financial aid for these classes was not suspended; leaving Valerie still responsible for loans for these classes. Valerie looks back with regret at her years in college. After several years of classes, she still has not graduated. Valerie’s work history reflects her checkered educational background: several positions in fast-food restaurants, a brief stint in a call center, where she was happy to be working in an office and wearing professional clothing, and now, unemployment.

Valerie’s difficulties in achieving a post-secondary diploma mirror those of many participants in this study. A few, like Valerie’s brother Yansmith, managed to complete their post-secondary program. However, the process is invariably lengthy and fraught with difficulty. Resources and networks which other youth may be able to access were not available to Valerie. Her choices were constrained by multiple factors, including the financial pressure of school payments, the logistical difficulties of travel in a city without accessible public transit, and the informational deficits wrought by poor guidance in her high school.

This chapter explores the integration of Haitian-American young adults by looking specifically at the gaps between their educational aspirations and achievements. The chapter provides the launching point for the post-secondary educational expectations and occupational trajectories which are then explored. Many years ago, when they were breaking into adolescence and exploring their identities and worlds, respondents testified about their desires for educational excellence and employment in careers of high social standing and financial stability. These aspirations are compared to their educational and occupational accomplishments, demonstrating a considerable gap between aspirations and reality. The educational trajectories of these now-young adults sheds light on the process of leaving high school and entering higher education, including common obstacles and factors of success amongst this cohort. I argue that although participants shared aspirations for a middle class life, with the status and stability which professional employment usually affords, their shared difficulty in achieving educational success portends integration to the lower end of the economic spectrum in the United States.

Education & Haitians

Education offers a promising vehicle for upward mobility for Haitian immigrants. Haitians generally believe that education allows anyone entry into the professional class, and the commensurate social status and economic stability of that position (Zephir 2004). Education is a precious and scarce resource in Haiti, and families sacrifice greatly to afford the school fees and costs for uniforms and books in order to send their children, or even just one or two of their children, to school (Cadet 1998; Smith 2001). For Haitian immigrants, displaced by political and economic turmoil in their homeland, the

tantalizing possibility of educational opportunities in the United States offers some consolation for the sacrifices of migration.

Haitian Immigrant Values

Most Haitians aspire to success in education. Desiring educational success is common to many immigrant communities, and for Haitians, the emphasis on education certainly holds true and originates in Haiti itself. In Port-au-Prince, the streets throng with students in immaculately pressed uniforms on their way to and from school. Most families are preoccupied during the summer months with gathering the necessary funds to pay for school fees, uniforms, and books which must be paid in September. These fees are charged by all schools in Haiti, both public and private, and many families cannot afford even the basic charges levied by public schools. Education is a scarce resource, with families sometimes sending just one or two children, or alternating years when particular children are enrolled (Schwartz 2003).

Haitian children are raised with a strong reverence for education, undoubtedly drawn from the sacrifices their families make to register them for school and the generalized awareness that not all children have the opportunity to attend school. Uniforms are carefully washed and ironed each day, and children proudly display their school colors when travelling between home and school each day. Within a community, a family's social standing is closely tied to how many of their children attend school and which schools they attend, with more expensive private schools placing higher on the status-hierarchy than the larger public schools.

Stemming from the cultural appreciation for education, teachers are highly respected authority figures in Haiti. Students are expected to be quiet in the classroom, to

respond to the teacher with deference and respectful language. Many teachers in Haiti are given the honorific title of “Teacher” much as professors are acknowledged in college classrooms in the U.S. Haitian parents do not generally become involved in classroom affairs; rather, they defer to the expertise and rank of teachers and school officials in educating their children (Schwartz 2008).

Educational success is highly desired by Haitian students. Students with the best academic achievement are lauded with praise from parents, teachers, and peers. The centralized education system in Haiti necessitates that rural inhabitants move to a regional town or city to attend high school, and then onto Port-au-Prince to attend university (Schwartz 2008). The considerable expense of these relocations means that many bright students cannot advance their education, despite academic success. Nonetheless, academic achievement is regarded as the best opportunity to bring oneself, and one’s family, out of poverty. The widespread cultural appreciation for education is part of the value-system travelling with migrants to the United States; across social classes, geographic origin or settlement, and for both men and women, Haitians strongly value and believe in education (Lopez 1999; Stepick 1998).

Haitian society clearly places a very high value on education, an attitude which carries forth within the Haitian immigrant communities in the United States. For Haitian migrants, the homegrown cultural emphasis on education dovetails seamlessly with aspirations for a better life in the United States. The generalized and stereotyped American dream invariably involves financial security, prosperity, and high social status. For example, Bill Gates of Microsoft is an archetypal success for obtaining “the American dream”; through his ingenuity, hard work, and sheer determination, Gates built

a company that transformed society and amassed a personal fortune of billions in the process. Interestingly enough, Gates dropped out of college early on. The “American Dream” does not necessarily hinge upon education; however for Haitians and other immigrants, education is regarded as the best avenue for achieving that dream.

Immigrant versions of “the American Dream” strongly emphasize educational achievement and professional success. Believing in “the American Dream” is not a uniquely Haitian experience, as multiple immigrant groups emphasize educational achievement (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). Louie (2004), for example, describes a widespread belief in economic and social mobility through the vehicle of education among college students of Asian origin. Educational achievement offers dual motivations: economic security through professional advancement as well as the higher social status associated with higher socioeconomic levels. The immigrant-achiever-narrative is typically one which emphasizes educational accomplishments in science, engineering, and law leading to careers as doctors, engineers, and lawyers. While the trajectory of white American titans like Donald Trump or Bill Gates emphasizes their individual ingenuity, resiliency, and business acumen, the success story for many immigrants in the United States is more focused on education. Thus role models like Colin Powel, the son of Jamaican immigrants, achieved his professional success through a distinguished military career. Even President Barack Obama, whose father was an immigrant and whose family was of modest economic means, achieved Ivy League degrees and success as a lawyer in the course of building his political career. For immigrants, education and professional careers in stable professions are highly desirable and socially advantageous.

Dreams of a better life usually involve a path with clear signposts: graduation from high school, a college degree, and a career with high social status and financial security. Some individuals do reach their educational aspirations and establish careers of their choosing. However, for many immigrants the dreams remain tantalizingly out of reach (Feliciano 2005). High schools did not provide adequate instruction, or specialized services such as English-Second-Language classrooms delivered sub-par educational quality (Stepick 1998). Parents usually cannot provide any economic assistance for college aspirations, and employment demands threaten to distract young adults from continuing their education through high school, or after it. Dreams of education and stable, well-paid employment remain largely illusory, and the disappointment of these unrealized yearnings looms large in the lives of this cohort (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Lopez 2003b). The stories of Haitian-Americans in South Florida could similarly be impacted by the schools they attend, where dreams are generally not nurtured but slowly wither away.

Aspirations and Expectations for Education

Academic achievement has been a central area of interest for scholars of second-generation immigrants (See for example Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). Academic achievement was employed as a proxy indicator of future labor market participation. Assuming that students with better grades will continue on to higher education and attain professions within the middle class, academic achievement enables some speculation about future economic success (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). I will explore further the expectations for academic achievement which these study participants shared as

adolescents. First, however, I turn to the legacies of their parents, including the educational accomplishments of these first-generation Haitian immigrants.

Parental Legacies

Parents impart upon their offspring numerous qualities, some of which are particularly salient for the educational achievement of their children. Parents possess racial, economic, and social characteristics which shape their children's racial categorization, available material resources, context of upbringing, and other areas (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). For Haitian immigrants, the vast majority of whom share dark-skinned pigmentation and are classified as Black in the United States, racial discrimination is an ever-present reality which shapes their own immigrant narratives and those of their children.

Kerline is one study respondent who embraced her racial identity and acknowledged that, as a Black woman, she experienced discrimination on this basis. While filling out the survey, I read the question about racial identification aloud. "What racial category do you consider yourself to be?" I inquired. With a chuckle, Kerline said exuberantly, "I am black, honey!" Later, she pointed out, "Even here in Florida, if you put Cubans, Mexicans and Haitians in a line, you will see people paying attention to Cubans or Mexicans [rather] than Haitians." Kerline was reluctant to describe specific instances of racial discrimination, but she acknowledged that it was part of the social system in which she lived. Thus, citing a benign example of people of different ethnic backgrounds standing in a line, Kerline observed that Cubans and Mexicans will gain "attention" while Haitians will not. She points to the dominance of Latino nationalities, an observation rooted in her awareness of localized power structures predominantly

controlled by Miami's Cuban community. Kerline's experiences, including her educational pursuits, were shaped by the reality of her racial status in Miami as a black Haitian.

In addition to race, parents bestow upon their children orientations towards education. The education levels of parents is related to the future educational accomplishments of their children, as are other family characteristics such as income and occupation (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). Individuals with higher levels of education tend to have reasonably stable professions and incomes, advantages which translate into distinct advantages for their children's education. Feliciano (2005), however, argues that group-level characteristics are a stronger factor in the educational accomplishments of the second-generation than family background is. For immigrant households, the group's mode of incorporation (i.e., family class migration, political refugees, etc.) and the context of reception they encounter greatly shape the experiences of both the group as a whole and individuals therein. So, a doctor in Haiti may immigrate to the United States and find himself driving a taxi. A mother's professional training as an accountant in Jamaica may not produce an accounting job in New York. Although this phenomenon has evolved into a stereotype of the over-educated gardener or taxi driver, it is grounded in reality for many highly educated immigrants in the United States. Faced with language barriers, licensing requirements, or simply by virtue of insular professional networks, immigrants of all educational levels are often employed in low-wage jobs.

Although many Haitians who immigrated to the United States in the early waves of the 1960s and 1970s were drawn from the middle and upper classes, most Haitians in

Miami, at least until the mid to late 1990s, were drawn largely from the rural peasant population where access to education was limited (Catanese 1999; Vander Zaag 1999). The parents of this sample largely conform to these historical trends, with low levels of education (See Table 4.1). This mirrors the larger sample of Haitians in the CILS project. The CILS sample, which was mostly drawn from South Florida but outside of the Miami urban area, included some students whose parents had completed college degrees. Most of my respondents, however, had parents who had attended only a few years of elementary school or high school. Although a rare couple of them had taken some college classes, none of my interviewees' parents had finished college. Parents' highest levels of education are detailed further, for both the CILS sample and this study, in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Parents' Highest Level of Education

	CILS (Haitians) n=97				Present Study n=13			
	Father		Mother		Father		Mother	
Elementary / middle school	12	12%	14	14%	-	-	3	23%
Some high school	12	12%	18	19%	4	31%	5	38%
High school	20	21%	15	15%	4	31%	-	-
Some college	9	9%	16	16%	1	8%	2	15%
College graduate	12	12%	11	11%	-	-	-	-
Don't know / missing	32	33%	23	24%	4	31%	3	23%
Total	97	100%	97	100%	13	100%	13	100%

Although these parents tended not to have high levels of education themselves, they were keenly interested in their children's educational success. When their children

were adolescents, they strongly emphasized the importance of studying and attending school. They encouraged their children to pursue careers that would result in better pay and higher social status for the family, such as medicine, law, or engineering. As Haitian immigrant parents, they channeled their hopes and aspirations for familial attainment of the American dream into their children. Yansmith related what Haitian parents expect of their children:⁹

Gen anpil paran Ayisyen, yo pa gen pwoblèm si pitit yo fè yon lòt bagay apre. Sa yo bezwen se lakay yo pou yo di “oh! Men pitit mwen wi!” Diplom nan sèlman. De kat an a sèz an, sa paran an bezwen, l’ap pouse-w se diplom nan li bezwen.

There are lots of Haitian parents, they don’t have a problem if their children do something else after. What they need for themselves is to say, “Oh! Look at my child!” It’s only the diploma that matters. From four years old to sixteen years, what the parent wants, s/he is pushing you for the diploma that s/he needs.

Having limited educational accomplishments themselves, Haitian parents push their children to complete their high school education and hopefully continue on to higher education. According to Yansmith, perhaps the parent(s) will not mind if you do something else after you’re done school, but parental expectations in the meantime are clear: to obtain a diploma. The parents want to show their friends, family, and community their child’s accomplishments. These parental dreams resulted in consistent pressure from parents towards their children to achieve good marks, graduate from high school, and to pursue higher education.

Adolescents’ Dreams

The participants in this study held high expectations for their own educational accomplishments. Without a single exception, every individual wanted to obtain a

⁹ When respondents use Creole or French, original responses are first reported verbatim. English translations directly follow.

college degree. Many also aspired to attend graduate school. These desires are not surprising, given the Haitian cultural emphasis on education and parental expectations for academic success.

Table 4.2 details the educational expectations held as adolescents by both respondents from the AO study and respondents from the CILS project. As adolescents, study participants responded to two questions related to academic expectations. The first question asked about the highest level of education which the individual wanted to achieve and the second question asked the respondent to identify the highest level of education which they realistically expected to achieve. Feliciano (2005:74) differentiates these as *aspirations* and *expectations*, explaining: “Since expectations tend to be more realistic goals, educational aspirations are almost always higher than expectations.”

For the first question on educational *aspirations*, all of the respondents in the AO study indicated they wanted to complete college, with most of them desiring a graduate degree as well. This is consistent with responses from the CILS sample, where 81% of respondents had originally identified graduate education as the highest level of education which they wanted to reach.

The second question asked the adolescent youth to identify what level of education they could realistically *expect* to achieve. This second question enabled them to temper their idealism somewhat and analyze the prognosis for their educational aspirations. Among my respondents, two individuals reported in high school that realistically, they would not complete a college degree. However, most individuals maintained that their original aspirations were realistic. The CILS respondents as well tended to temper their aspirations for graduate degrees somewhat, although the vast

majority still saw college degrees as realistic expectations for their educational future. In Feliciano’s analysis, she assigned this question a dichotomous variable for whether respondents expected to complete a college degree or not. She reported that 87% of Asians, 83% of Blacks and 81% of Latinos expected to achieve at least a college degree (Feliciano 2005:76). The specific results for Haitians from the CILS sample are compared with the AO study in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: Educational Aspirations and Expectations as Adolescents

	CILS (Haitians) n=96				Present Study n=13			
	<i>Aspired education</i>		<i>Expected education</i>		<i>Aspired education</i>		<i>Expected education</i>	
Finish high school	2	2%	3	3%	0	0%	1	8%
Finish some college	1	1%	5	5%	0	0%	1	8%
Finish college	15	16%	33	34%	5	38%	5	38%
Finish graduate degree	78	81%	56	58%	8	62%	6	46%
Total	96	100%	97	100%	13	100%	13%	100%

The data indicate similarities between the two sample groups. Amongst Haitians in the CILS sample, only three individuals (3%) did not aspire to finish a college degree; amongst my sample, this figure is zero. The vast majority of both groups aspired to finish a graduate degree: a stunning 81% of the CILS sample and a still substantial 62% of my respondents. Regarding expectations, both sample groups did not respond in a substantially different manner than they did for their aspirations. Nearly all of the Haitian CILS respondents (92%) realistically expected to achieve at least a college

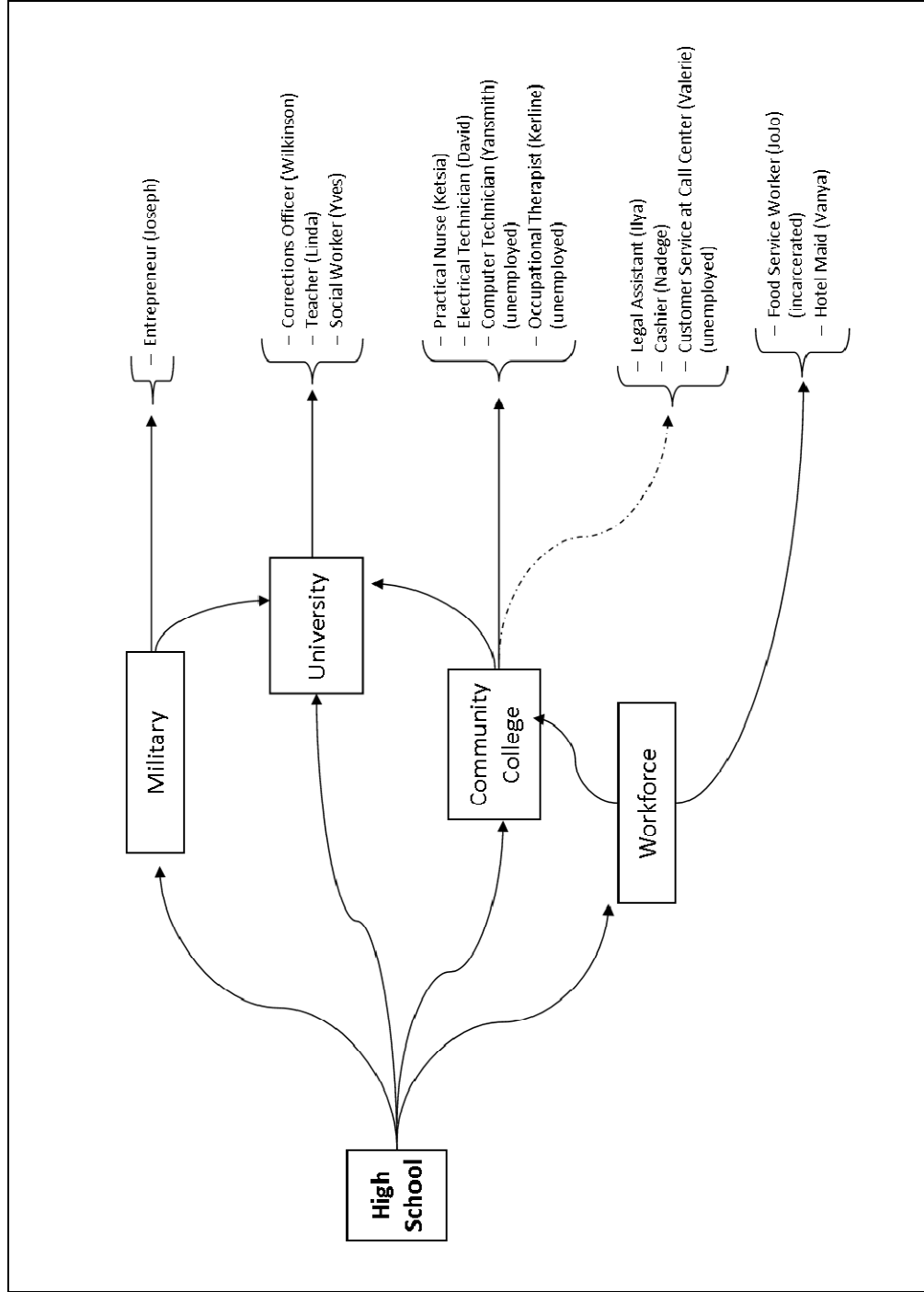
degree. Amongst my respondents, 84% expected to graduate from college, a somewhat lower percentage than the CILS sample but remarkably high nonetheless.

These aspirations and expectations conform to existing literature on both Haitians and other immigrant adolescents (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Stepick 1998). As youth, they hold many dreams for their lives in the United States. Parents emphasize the importance of education, pressuring their children to achieve high grades and open the family's path to a brighter, and financially stable, future in their new country of residence. The youth in this study *were* idealistic, dreaming of college campuses and higher degrees. Ten years later, most of them did not achieve their stated dreams, as the pathways towards higher education presented significant obstacles.

Educational & Occupational Pathways

As adolescents, the study participants revealed a great deal of idealism and optimism about their future educational accomplishments and occupational success. How would these dreams play out in reality? The respondents to this survey generally followed one of four pathways in their post-secondary lives. One pathway was joining the military and possible university study thereafter. The second pathway was the most common, where respondents enrolled in local community colleges for degrees in professional fields and technical careers. The third pathway leads from high school directly to university. The fourth pathway bypassed higher education, with respondents entering the workforce directly, mostly due to economic pressures thwarting other options. These pathways are depicted in Figure 4.1. The following section details the experiences of individuals within each of these pathways. Their stories show constant

Figure 4.1: Pathways to Education & Employment



effort, resiliency, and creativity in the face of significant obstacles to obtain higher education and realize their adolescent aspirations.

Pathway #1: Joining the Military

Wilkinson speaks in a measured, even voice as a smile draws slowly across his face: “I didn’t ever think about quitting. It’s just about applying yourself, you know.” He had joined the military two months after graduating from Miami Edison Senior High school, located in the heart of Little Haiti and notoriously one of Miami’s worst performing and chronically underfunded institutions. Wilkinson does not speak of that, however. He is matter of fact about his choices, seeing nothing much spectacular about his experiences. His scores on the technical aptitude test, administered after basic training, showed “average” abilities, he told me. On the basis of these test results, he was assigned to a technical school in Virginia, where he became an Operation Specialist with the Navy, learning about computers, radar communications, and satellite systems. Wilkinson is both excited to describe his Navy responsibilities yet modest: “I could go on all day about this stuff,” he says, “and my job wasn’t even the most sophisticated one in terms of responsibilities.” Wilkinson spent four years with the Navy, and a further two and a half years in the reserves. He did two tours in the Arabian Gulf, patrolling the waters off of Iraq and Iran.

For Wilkinson, joining the military was an anticipated stepping stone to higher education. When Wilkinson returned to his base in Hawaii, he took advantage of on-base college courses, where professors were brought “from the outside” to teach classes. After his Navy contract was up, he opted not to reenlist, choosing to stay close to his family in South Florida. Wilkinson signed up for military educational benefits that helped pay for

classes first at Miami Dade College and later at Florida International University. Wilkinson graduated with a Bachelor's degree, realizing a long dream of both his and his parents. He is now taking part-time classes in an M.B.A. program while working full-time as a Corrections Officer for the federal government.

The military opened many opportunities for Wilkinson: in a critical period of adolescent indecision, he joined an institution that provided structure, discipline, and opportunity in his life. As a high school senior, Wilkinson chafed under his father's strict control. His father runs a convenience store in Little Haiti, and Wilkinson went there daily after classes finished at Edison. He would work for a few hours alongside his father, stocking shelves or handling the cash register, before going home to do his homework. "I couldn't do anything," Wilkinson remembered, "Just school, work, homework. That was it." He admits that he did not have a sense of direction back then: "I just felt like I needed a change, and I didn't really have the motivation to continue with school, and I didn't know what I wanted to do." Spurred by this desire to change his life in some way, and lacking the motivation to go on to college, Wilkinson followed his younger sister's suggestion to join the Navy.

Like Wilkinson, Joseph joined the military after high school. He could not afford to attend College and he was attracted to the opportunities the military could offer him. Joseph related his decision:

The reason [I joined the Navy] is that after High School, my parents did not have the money to put me in college really. I was playing football because I was waiting for a football scholarship and it was late, late during the year I graduated. Nobody was calling me, and I had a consultant that suggested to me to do that [military entrance] test. When I took the test, one recruiter called me and came to my house and told me "If you don't graduate you know, you can always pursue your ambition." I wanted to be a pilot. I was living right here by the [Air Force]

base and I told them I want to fly planes. “The Navy will pay for your school; you are going and get your degree.”

Joseph’s opportunities for post-secondary education were limited by the economic circumstances of his family. The sports scholarship he wanted did not materialize. The military recruiter enticed Joseph with the offer of a paid education and the possibility of becoming a pilot. Homestead is the site of an Air Force base, and the base’s proximity inspired in Joseph the desire to fly planes. Leaving home and earning money brought Joseph a great deal of independence which he enjoyed: “I just enjoyed the moments. I was young, I moved out my parents’ house, bought my first car, my first apartment. I was comfortable. I feel totally independent. There was no obstruction to become a man.” Joseph stayed with the Navy for five years, completing several tours and visiting many different countries along the way. Joseph’s choice to join the military was sparked by the failure of other opportunities to materialize, namely a sports scholarship to attend college. By joining the Navy, Joseph developed a great deal of independence, moving away from South Florida, earning his own income, and enjoying his own car and apartment. This independence permitted him, in his words, “to become a man.”

The Navy provided Wilkinson with training as an Operation Specialist which allowed him to learn about information systems; after leaving the Navy, Wilkinson finished a University degree and became a Corrections officer for the federal government. Similarly, the Navy provided extensive training for Joseph, allowing him to study aviation mechanics: “My first 2 years I worked on jet engines, my last 3 years I was pretty much on compound engines. Later in my last year, I became a flight engineer, which was a step ahead of the mechanic. You fly with the pilots to see if there is trouble

with the motors so this is when you go on missions, and doing things. It's really an interesting job.” Joseph ended up leaving the Navy after five years, and he did not translate his mechanic experience directly into his post-military employment. Nonetheless, joining the military opened up his life to new experiences, helped him to develop discipline, and provided technical skill training. The military pathway opened up opportunities for both Wilkinson and Joseph in training, independence, and career possibilities which would have likely been inaccessible to them, given their disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.

Pathway #2: Community College

The most common educational pathway among my respondents was into community college as they are locally accessible. However, most respondents still faced significant barriers to actually *completing* a community college degree and leveraging their education for material benefits. Attending a community college requires the student to navigate a complex bureaucracy, making sense of the various rules and structures in place, often with little guidance from anyone knowledgeable about the process. Valerie faced considerable challenges in understanding the financial aid system at the local community college. She regrets now that the system was not explained to her, including the requisite course fees, deadlines to drop courses, and the accrual of interest. One of Valerie's biggest difficulties was in simply understanding the college system; she and her brother were the first in their family to attend college. Valerie took many classes, changed her major so many times, and still there was not a degree to show for it. Valerie explained her initial confusion:

- Valerie: They tried to explain financial aid to me. But I didn't quite understand. They said, you know, financial aid has a length for you to pay them. So and so. You have to find out. They will never tell you. You come and take classes, they never tell you. Before you go to college, there is a lot of things you are not clear on. Or maybe it's your parents' job to do that for you. A lot of things that you are learning through. You know, when you are going through, you understand a lot of thing about the country, the economy you know?
- Patricia: Do you feel like you understand it a bit better now?
- Valerie: Much! Much! Much better
- Patricia: What do you know now that you wish you knew when you were in high school?
- Valerie: Like about the school, how financial aid pays--sixty credits for you when you go to [community] college and sixty credits when you go to university. How like when you go, like about certain majors, when withdrawing classes, like when you register to certain classes, after you say that's not the classes I want. You drop it. The numbers of time you register for it stay on your transcript; I didn't know that.

Valerie wishes she understood some very practical things about the collegiate system – how to access financial aid, limits to financial aid, registration procedures, and other bureaucratic systems. Valerie wondered if parents would usually inform their children about these things, or potentially shepherd them through the process. Valerie's immigrant parents, with limited English proficiency and minimal education themselves, were not up to the task. So she stumbled through, acquiring unnecessary student loans, amassing a long transcript but still short of getting her degree. The difficulties Valerie encountered could have been averted, rather easily, with timely interventions of guidance counseling, information, and mentoring.

Valerie's brother Yansmith also had some trouble with the financial aid system. In his case, the temptation of a large loan was too great to bear. Switching from English into Creole, Yansmith explained why he did not have the bachelor's degree "that I was supposed to have by now". He said:

M te gen financial aid, m komanse epi m te bezwen achte yon machin. Ou konn ki jan sa ye mwen pwan yon loan; loan nan te sipoze pou m peye lekòl mwen. M use li. Epi le m gen ... la m pa ret sou kòb loan nan. Lè m gen kòb taks mwen, m peye lekòl mwen, vin rive yon kote, yo pa banm financial aid ankò. Se lè sa am te plis pwan loan nan. M achte machin mwen, m pwan nan kòb loan nan pou m ka al lekòl.

I had financial aid, I started and I had to buy a car. You know how it goes, I took from the loan. The loan was supposed to pay for my schooling. I used it. And then the loan money was gone. When I received my tax return, I paid my schooling, but there came a point when they didn't give me any more financial aid. That's when I took out even more loans. I bought my car, and I took some of the loan money to go to school.

Yansmith indicates that receiving a large sum of money at one time was difficult for him, and before long, the money was spent on things other than schooling. Although he did pay his school fees for awhile, ultimately he could not maintain a full-time job and a full course load, and he ended with an Associate's degree, rather than the Bachelor's degree he had originally sought.

In addition to navigating the bureaucracy of high education, several respondents who attended community college struggled to actually complete an Associate's degree. Nearly ten years after finishing high school, several were still enrolled in classes towards a degree. In the course of this research, Kerline finished her Associate's degree in Occupational Therapy. She was ecstatic at realizing her dream of a college degree. In the course of her studies, Kerline had moved to New York, then to Atlanta, and finally back to Miami. She married and divorced, had two children, and negotiated responsibilities for their care and upbringing with each of their fathers. Kerline's path to achieving her degree was arduous and complicated, and her accomplishment of her goal was a significant thing and it merited a festive graduation party.

Completing a degree was also delayed by changes in the midst of an educational program. Several individuals reported somewhat dramatic career changes in the brief span of their post-secondary lives. Mostly, this took the form of shifting college majors or programs, a phenomenon to be expected among young adults seeking their life path. However, the delay in education was significant for individuals balancing full time work with part-time study. Ten years after completing high school, Nadege, Ilya and Valerie were all still working towards an Associate's degree. For these Haitian young adults, career changes were undertaken to position oneself in a field offering both stable and well-remunerated employment.

Valerie had changed her major at Miami Dade College several times over the past several years. Initially she chose to major in dance, an area which Valerie was passionate about. But then she began to worry about what kind of employment prospects she'd have with a diploma in dance. She related her decision-making process to me:

Actually my majorI change it for tourism, but I was like I ...my cousin said even though you take tourism, the airline always trained their people. They are not going to, you know. Then I will be like ok. You know you could go one day you're having this and then people tell you: you know look this is not how you are going to make money; whatever makes you happy to get up in the morning. And I would change it back to dance. And I was like: what is it? I didn't get any answer. I get into a car accident I can't dance no more, I was like: what I am going to do now? And I talked to an advisor she told me why don't you take education? You could teach. And without knowing a lot about the school, I didn't have a lot of information. I was like okay let me major in foreign language. I know French already, so let me take Spanish. I was like all minor in dance. I went to talk to my dance teacher. She was like, "I have had minor in humanity and teaching, and I was teaching dance too." So now she doesn't teach dance no more, she teaches humanity. And I was like, "ok." So I am taking classes, I am going down taking Spanish classes, I am taking education classes, I am taking you know the classes for both major.

Valerie struggled to balance her passion for dance with the pragmatic reality of future employment. She was aware as well that a career as a dancer was predicated on her physical health; the car accident affected her ability to dance, which worried her. So Valerie shifted her focus to education, improving her linguistic abilities in Spanish, in order to improve her prospects as a future teacher.

Career plans were also shifted even after community college degrees were awarded, leading to more education in the new area. Linda's pathway actually bypassed community college, leading directly to university (discussed below). Yet, having completed a degree in computer science, Linda returned to school to pursue a nursing diploma. She considered this field much more stable and well remunerated than her completed degree. Yansmith also considered it risky to plan on one sole employment field. Even with an Associate's degree in Computer Science, Yansmith was not able to locate employment in that field, instead working a series of retail positions before his unemployed status when we met. Yvens described the need to diversify one's career options to protect against the experience he was undergoing at the time: "The thing is, I am going for computer science. In that[computer science] field there is no money on it. You could do a switch. . . .The thing is you get to have a plan B. When you go to school with a plan B, you earn more." Having a back-up plan, for Yansmith, meant that in addition to his computer training, he would have a practical diploma, such as education, which would enable him to teach or coach.

Valerie, Linda, and Yansmith are well aware of the fragility of the labor economy in their areas of training. In a bifurcated labor market, where jobs are increasingly either positions in the knowledge economy of the highly educated or poorly paid positions in

the service sector, these individuals, and others in this study, are struggling to enter the upper portion of the labor market. Valerie worried about her employment prospects as a dancer, given physical vulnerabilities and practical realities. Linda and Yansmith both struggled to find employment in computers, once seen as a burgeoning area of potential employment, but one which has not resulted in stable and well-paid employment for either of them. Given these vulnerabilities to changing labor markets, diversifying ones education is a choice of strategic importance, undertaken to maximize the chances of success in the labor market. Thus, Linda opts to shift towards a nursing career, despite the time and money she had already invested in her first option. Yvens weighs his options for more education, wanting to earn a Bachelor's degree but unsure as to which area offers him the best prospects for stable employment. And Valerie chooses to obtain a major in Education, where at least she will have the possibility of teaching dance.

The diversification strategies employed by these individuals – and others like them – fit their established pattern of determination in the face on constant struggles. Rather than abandoning all hopes of education bringing material benefits to one's life, these participants adjusted their plans and forged ahead. They did so by following the pathway which was accessible to them, given financial constraints. The struggle to obtain the diplomas and degrees was arduous; yet, even when those certifications do not translate into good jobs and benefits, they soldier on. After a long evening nursing class, Linda catches a few hours of sleep at home before rising to teach elementary school children. Valerie perseveres through unemployment, a difficult pregnancy, divorce, and not understanding the educational system in order to earn her diploma. Kerline celebrates her graduation with a festive celebration, even as she has no immediate prospects for

stable work in her field of study. In the face of these constant struggles, changing careers is yet another way in which Haitian-American second generation young adults demonstrate flexibility and resiliency regarding their circumstances.

Pathway #3: University

For a small group of people, high school leads directly to university. The only member of the present sample who entered university directly from high school was Linda. Linda has always achieved educational success, despite significant obstacles along the way. She earned good grades in high school as a diligent student with strong English skills. Those grades resulted in a scholarship to a local university, where Linda majored in Computer Science. She liked computers, and she had done very well in the technical careers training program in her high school. Linda worked part time at the airport, first for Air Canada and then Air France, practicing her French and relishing the engagement with customers. “I’m very good at Customer Service,” she said with a laugh. Maintaining a job and going to school meant a very busy schedule, with long bus trips between the airport, campus and home. Linda’s father worked as a dishwasher in a restaurant, but he managed to pay the household bills, never asking Linda to contribute to the basic expenses while she was in school. Linda’s mother passed away in these years as well, a significant emotional event in Linda’s life. When asked about her college graduation, Linda conveyed a mixture of emotions and family reactions from that day:

Linda: Oh, it was... it was tough for me. I missed my mother so much. Paske lè [Because when it was] High School, oh my God, she was thrilled. She was. And, you know as soon as I had that diploma, she just took it and hold it. And that day, I felt like she did from my college. I think she was there, you know. I know wherever she was, she was very happy. She was. I was crying, like I didn’t want

to walk. But, all my friends were like... Oh it was rough, but you need to, you know.

Patricia: Was your dad there?

Linda: Yes, he was.

Patricia: What was he like when you graduated? “

Linda : Li di, “Sa se pitit mwen, oh Bon Dye.” M fè sa li renmen, ou konprann? [He said, ”This is my child, oh dear God.” I did what he liked, you know ?] And then, he was thrilled. He was happy. My little brother wasn’t there. But, I think it’s - we started together and then - li wè ke li pa la, li pa make it. [he saw that he wasn’t there, he didn’t make it.] M kwè li gen yon ti jalouzi tou piti, my little brother. [I think he had a little bit of jealousy, my little brother.]

Linda’s graduation from college was a joyous event in her family. Her father praised God for her accomplishment, proud of Linda’s achievement of a bachelor’s degree. Linda also wished her mother, deceased just a couple years, was there to witness the event. High school graduation had been a moment of parental pride, as Linda’s mother held onto her daughter’s diploma. The cherished paper symbolized the promise of new careers and opportunities for her daughter, something that both parents had sacrificed greatly for.

Yves and Wilkinson both completed university degrees, however both used stepping stones to get to university-level study. Wilkinson’s military training exposed him to the discipline and sacrifice necessary for university education; as discussed earlier, the financial benefits of his military service facilitated his enrollment in university after leaving the Navy. Yves started at Miami Dade College, earning an Associate’s degree before transferring to Florida International University to complete both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Social Work. Yves initially attended MDC because it was affordable and accessible; he saw it as the logical next step after completing his high school education. Community college provided Yves with information about the university

system and confidence in his ability to complete a university degree, leading eventually to successful completion of a graduate degree.

Although Linda did finish a university degree, she does not consider her own situation a success story. Her bachelor's degree in Computer Science did not translate into employment in the technology sector. Pursuing a lead from a friend, Linda ended up with a temporary teacher's certification for Miami Dade Schools, where she was placed first in computer classrooms and later assigned to teach kindergarten. And now Linda teaches 18 young children in an urban elementary school. She regrets that she is not in a job that she really loves. Although it is better than the gardening and restaurant jobs which her parents toiled in, Linda is not content with her present employment and started taking evening courses at a technical college for a nursing license. Linda does not see much use in getting a college degree if you are going to be working a job you do not really care about, or not making enough money to justify the sacrifices. Her job as a teacher is tiring and poorly paid; Linda regrets that her education was not more practical.

She said:

[My father] ap travan nan restoran, dishwasher. Huh! That's why he really pushed me. He always say that to me. Li toujou di "Si'm te al lekòl," you know. Even my younger brother, papa marasa yo, menm men menm, m kouri dèyè l poul al lekòl. I always advise all my friends, m di yo, you know, ou pa bezwen ale nan college pou w get trained. You'll be working from job to job. You will not stay jobless; and then, you will do what you don't like to do. Se sak fè koulyea, m bezwen yon Plan B.

[My father] is working in a restaurant, dishwasher. Huh! That's why he really pushed me. He always say that to me. He always said to me "If I went to school" you know. Even my younger brother, my nieces' father, even him, I chase after him for him to go to school. I always advise all my friends, I tell them, you know, you don't need to go to college just to get trained. You'll be working from job to job. You will not stay jobless; and then, you will do what you don't like to do. That's why now, I need a Plan B.

Linda did not regret completing a university education; however, as a poorly paid public school teacher, she was frustrated that her education had not resulted in more material benefits to her life. Her father pushed her in school, and she pushes her brother. And yet, admittedly, Linda does not recommend going to college “just to get trained.” She did not want to move from job to job, in an endless parade of poorly-paid work, spending her time as her father does, in a job which he does not enjoy. Linda was pursuing another career, her “Plan B,” in nursing, a not uncommon career choice in the Haitian community.

Wilkinson, Linda and Yves’ stories illuminate the experiences of a minority of Haitian-Americans. Despite poor schools and households near the poverty line, these respondents managed to accomplish some of their higher educational goals. As Portes and colleagues attest, “the opportunities for a successful career and a respected standing in society are wildly divergent” (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005:1032). Wilkinson, Linda, and Yves, along with their high school peers, faced structural factors which significantly limited their opportunities. Their families were poor, their parents did not speak English and were not engaged in their children’s education beyond verbal encouragement. In addition to these human capital considerations, Wilkinson and Linda both grew up in a context largely hostile to Haitians. This context of reception meant a constant barrage of negative images and stereotypes about Haitian identity and ancestry, a reality which is further explored in Chapter VII. Despite these factors counting against their success, these university graduates do share one factor which is positively associated with educational achievements amongst second generation young adults

(Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). All three individuals came from a dual-parent household, with parents who actively encouraged their educational success. Haitian parents all encourage education, however dual-parent households provide stability and consistency predictive of educational success (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2001) .

Pathway #4: Direct Entrance to the Workforce

Although most of the children of Haitian immigrants aspire to education beyond high school, some follow a pathway directly into the workforce. Such was the experience of three respondents in this study. Two of these individuals represent the lowest educational achievements (and professional success) of the cohort, while one was able to transition to community college.

Vanya did not complete her high school diploma. She had completed all the courses but failed to pass the final exam, meaning she did not obtain the diploma. Before long Vanya was pregnant and was busy with the day-to-day struggle of finances and family responsibilities. She worked in a variety of low-wage service sector jobs, primarily in the restaurant and tourism industries. At the time of our interview, Vanya worked at a hotel on the way to the Florida Keys, cleaning hotel rooms for barely minimum wage. Vanya still wanted to go to improve her education, however the difficulties of being a single mother, with three young children, left little prospect for education in her future.

JoJo, on the other hand, had obtained his high school diploma. He had been transferred out of Homestead High School because of his involvement in violent fights between Haitian and African American students. JoJo did complete his diploma at his

new school and entered the workforce directly afterwards. He made money in the drug industry – the particulars about his involvement were unclear – and JoJo admitted that the easy and plentiful money was the temptation that drew him:

When I left High School, I was working, you know, even try to stay at the job, I was worked and keep the job more than 3 months. I was working in different fast food restaurants. Then I had my friends, who wanted to go down to Key West, they go do illegal money. So I left because the money I was making, that was like nothing, left the job, start to going down to Key West.

Not long after JoJo started his involvement in the drug trade, he was arrested. He was convicted and sentenced to two years in state penitentiary. Thus started a cycle of employment in the informal economy and prison: two years in state prison, a brief release, then eight months in the Monroe County jail, then release, then 36 months in state prison in Northern Florida. After our interview, JoJo was sentenced to another three years in state prison for assault. JoJo felt that he had been labeled by his convictions, but he expressed his deep feelings of regret, wishing he could go back in time:

JoJo: I am not the one which they called like a gangster. Yeah, I did things. And inside I have feelings too! I cry. I am going, if I can go back to 2000, to 6th grade, I will go back right now. Back in the Middle School.

Patricia: What would you do differently?

JoJo: I would take my education seriously.

JoJo's voice swelled with emotion during this exchange as he proclaimed his humanity: "I have feelings too! I cry." He was disappointed by his pathway into the workforce after high school, which led to a cycle of illegal activity, incarceration and recidivism.

Ketsia also entered the workforce after high school, but she managed to change her pathway and pursue a college education. Ketsia's greatest difficulties were legal and financial. Without legal immigration documents, Ketsia couldn't enroll in local universities or colleges at the domestic-student rate. Her family scraped by month-to-

month, and international student rates were vastly beyond their means. So for several years after high school, Ketsia worked. The first job was in a restaurant preparing Haitian food. Ketsia next worked as a cashier in a pharmacy and then as a security guard. She was desperate to take classes to become a nurse, searching for a way to resolve her immigration paperwork so that she could pursue her education. Ketsia found a Haitian man – a U.S. citizen – to marry, not for love but to facilitate her residency petition.¹⁰

With her legal status resolved, Ketsia was eager to pursue training to be a nurse. She was keenly aware that her friends from high school had already worked towards their educational goals while she had been working and seeking legal status. In her words, “All my close friends, they’re already something except me.” For Ketsia, to be “something” meant professional training as a nurse. She enrolled in a local professional school, first for a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program, and later for a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program. Ketsia’s job was far from her school and her home, leaving her to make her way with the Miami-Dade public transit system, a decrepit patchwork of transit options used mostly by poor, working-class people. Ketsia spent many long days shuttling to work and school, leaving only a few hours at home for sleeping. But at the end of the two-year program, Ketsia had her LPN certification. She had acquired permanent residency. She had met her present partner, who would become her future husband and the father of her children. Ketsia had entered the workforce directly after high school, yet despite the significant difficulty in doing so, she managed

¹⁰ Ketsia was not forthcoming about this fact, leading me initially to believe that her husband, the father of her child, had sponsored her in the U.S. But I happened to witness a frenzied telephone exchange one evening as Ketsia, visibly upset, walked outside the café where we were meeting to finish her conversation. Kerline, her good friend and also a study participant, nonchalantly informed me that Ketsia was trying to secure a divorce from her “paper husband” (*mari papye*) so that she could legally wed her real partner, the father of her child.

to re-enter the educational system. In the process, Ketsia demonstrated tremendous resiliency and tenacity in her determination to obtain professional training as a nurse, changing the trajectory of her post-secondary pathway.

Ongoing Education

The Haitian young adults in this study went out into the world with bold dreams for their educational success. As time went on, most of them invariably adjusted their original expectations. The path to achieving their original dreams was rockier and substantially more difficult than they had originally envisioned as naïve adolescents. Compromising some of these dreams was a matter of survival. Nadege did not think much about graduate school anymore, but she was still trying to earn an Associate's degree at Miami Dade College. But, like many other Haitian young adults, Nadege is still working towards that goal, even though she left high school ten years ago.

Study participants consistently named ongoing educational goals for themselves. Even JoJo, facing time in a state penitentiary for the second time in his life, wanted to go to school when he got out. Education was such a deeply held value that *everyone* wanted to improve their education, in order to achieve either their original dream or, more likely, a revised version of that dream. In the course of completing the survey instrument administered in this study, respondents answered a question regarding the level of education they realistically expected to achieve by age 35.¹¹ These results are listed in Table 4.3, organized according to the respondents' highest level of completed education.

¹¹ As administered by CILS, the question asked for the level of education the respondent expected to achieve by age 30. Since many respondents were nearly 30 or past 30, the question was altered for this study to one's expected level of education by age 35.

Table 4.3: Future Education Goals

		Highest level of education <i>realistically expected</i> by age 35				
		High school diploma	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's / J.D.	Other
Highest level of education completed	Some High school	1				
	1 or 2 years of college		1	3		
	Associate's degree / vocational training			3		
	3 or more years of college			1	1	
	Graduated from college				1	
	Some graduate school				1	
	Master's degree					1
Total		1	1	7	3	1

All 13 respondents reported ongoing educational goals. Of these, only six individuals reported being currently enrolled in school; nonetheless, *all* respondents reported future educational goals which they realistically expected to achieve by age 35. This is consistent with results from the CILS Haitian sample, where about half (58%) of respondents were currently enrolled in school. A lower percentage of CILS respondents (81 of 97 respondents, or 84%) reported future educational goals.

The data in Table 4.3 also demonstrate a remarkable pattern: respondents report future goals just above their present educational level. Vanya, the lone respondent without a high school diploma, wants to obtain her G.E.D. in the next few years. Valerie had been taking college classes and aims to finish her associate's degree. Wilkinson has a Bachelor's degree under his belt, and he aims towards the next level: a Master's degree. Individuals somewhat tempered their original adolescent expectations of college and graduate degrees, maintaining those expectations depending on the level of education they have accomplished over the past ten years. Yet without exception, every individual aimed to improve their education over the next several years. Yves was the lone

respondent with a Master's degree already completed. He had earned a bachelor's degree in Social Work, and then a Master's degree in the same field. Yet even Yves was looking to improve his resume, aiming for professional certification as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

The results demonstrated in this section indicate that these Haitian-Americans are extremely dedicated to self-advancement through education. Although more systematic comparisons with other groups would be necessary to confirm, this focus on education appears to exceed the generalized orientation towards education amongst other immigrant populations. Certainly, other minority groups, such as West Indians and Asians, also place a strong emphasis on education which continues within the second generation in the United States context (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004; Lopez 2003b; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). However, these Haitian young adults have been out of high school for approximately ten years, have navigated considerable difficulty during those years, and still articulate ambitious goals for their future educational accomplishments. Haitian values strongly emphasize education as the means to improving one's economic and social standing; the relative scarcity of education, which is not universally available in Haiti, adds to the primary importance accorded education within the Haitian diaspora (Lopez 1999; Stepick 1998; Zephir 2001). The respondents' motivation for educational success is a clear indication of the perpetual role of Haitian values in shaping the hopes and dreams of the second-generation.

Staying Hopeful

The ongoing challenges presented by difficult life circumstances are discouraging to many of the study participants. While reflecting on their life path and experiences since leaving high school, nearly all participants expressed some pain and discouragement at the difficulties along the way. JoJo, locked up in the Miami-Dade County justice system to face assault charges, regretted the path his life had taken. Holding his head between his hands, he said sorrowfully, “I am not the one which they called like a gangster. Yeah, I did things. And inside, I have feeling too! I cry. I am going, if I can go back to 2000 to sixth grade, I will go back right now I would take my education seriously.” JoJo acutely regretted that he hadn’t taken his education more seriously, wishing for a chance to remake the past.

For these study participants, life has generally not been easy, and education is the vehicle for staying hopeful about achieving a better future. The present may present its difficulties, such as low-paying jobs, difficulties finding childcare, lack of funds, or any other kind of struggle. But the present is bearable when believing that the future will be better. And belief in a better future is possible when pursuing an education. Valerie explains:

Imagine I don’t have a job and I don’t go to school, what do I have? I don’t have no hope. When you go to school, at least, even though you might don’t make it. This is the only hope you have; this is the only gift you have. If I don’t have anything, what do I offer to my child? He is going to be struggling the same way I am struggling right now. You know what I mean? That’s the only thing. Any job that is not compatible to my school is not a job for me. When I go to university I told them that. You have to be able to work with me, you know, ‘cause life is getting harder.

It is education which gives Valerie hope for the future. The legacy Valerie wants to give her son is the benefit of her education and employment. She does not want him to struggle in the same way she is, so she works towards a better future by prioritizing her education. She believes in this so strongly that she says without school “I don’t have no hope.” By going to school, she believes she is improving her life, and that of her son. She even admits “you might don’t make it” with the schooling, yet education is a “gift” which must be prioritized above all other things, including work schedules. “Life is getting harder,” Valerie says. She feels the urgency of her educational dreams more than ever.

Education is hope. For these respondents, education offers the promise of a pathway out of poverty. The tantalizing dream of a life of stable employment and income is what continually drives the ongoing steps towards their goals of educational success. From adolescents in high school, who dreamt of college classrooms and post-graduate careers as doctors and lawyers, to struggling young adults resolutely navigating the bureaucracies of financial aid and college enrollment, to young parents dreaming of their own children’s futures. These individuals have adjusted their initial expectations of themselves somewhat, as the reality of life’s challenges became apparent. However, they display remarkable fortitude in continual belief in future educational accomplishments, almost always to the level just above their present accomplishments.

Resiliency and determination are the characteristics which underlie the diverse narratives and experiences of these study participants. Although structural obstacles affected many of their initial dreams, they refuse to abandon all hope of a better future. Some did achieve college degrees, and these individuals too, continue to push themselves

further. These individuals continue to reach for their dreams of success in education, hoping to achieve stable and prosperous employment.

V. FAMILIES IN FLUX: NEGOTIATING FAMILY PRACTICES

The room is filled with pink tissue-paper flowers. Streamers and balloons, pink and white, hang from the rafters of the community hall in Pembroke Pines. The closest few family members sit at the head table, on a platform at the front of the room. The rest of the guests, perhaps a hundred and fifty in all, wait impatiently as the nearby buffets give off enticing aromas of rice and beans, *banann peze* (plantain chips), and shrimp *kreyol* (Creole sauce). “Thank you so much for celebrating with our family,” the host intones, gripping the microphone nervously to his chest. “This communion celebration is another blessing from God for our family.” His honored son, the six-year-old communicant himself, hangs tiredly onto his father’s belt as the greetings continue. “Please excuse me my English” the father goes on, “as we are in the United States now so we speak English, otherwise the little ones will not understand us.” A prayer is given to *BonDye* (God), and the crowd eagerly lines up at the buffet tables. Ketsia proudly introduces me to aunts, cousins, and siblings around us. She wipes her forehead with a paper napkin, tired from a long day of preparation for this celebration honoring her nephew. “Family is life,” Ketsia tells me, citing a Haitian proverb. “*Fanmi se lavi.*”

This child’s first communion is an important milestone for this Haitian-American family. The communion is a rite of passage, marking a child’s transition into a greater understanding of their religious community. In addition, the communion celebration is an opportunity for families to come together with friends, relatives, and church members, to eat familiar foods and enjoy the festive occasion. This gathering of Ketsia’s family and friends continued several traditions carried over from the homeland, with some changes made for being in the United States. The food was typically Haitian, as were the

ceramic figurines handed out to each guest, a glossy white cherub inscribed with the communicant's name and date in gold handwriting. However, not everything happened in typically Haitian fashion. The host spoke English so that the children, who as indicated were presumed to favor English over French or Creole, might understand. In the midst of Haitian food, traditions, guests, and even a bottle of Haitian Barbancourt rum passed surreptitiously around the room, the English incantation indicated our location outside of Haiti. The world of the young boy at the center of it all, the one who tiredly rubs his eyes while his father thanks the guests, is shaped by these experiences: hearing Creole-accented English in a hall draped in pink tissue paper flowers, buffet tables piled high with Haitian food, while family members look on with pride.

Ketsia, a young woman on the brink of her 30th birthday, was largely responsible for planning her nephew's celebration; she bought the necessary supplies, decorated the hall, and ensured that a Haitian restaurant catered the affair. Ketsia's efforts ensured that the familial celebration, as witnessed by members of their community and church, was a moment of pride for her brother, the proud father of the young child, and for her wider family, including those in Haiti. Ketsia's family is reflective of the remarkably elastic ways in which many Haitian families respond to the demands of migration, demonstrating impressive agility and resilience in the process.

Ketsia came to Miami just prior to adolescence, and, like many 1.5 and second-generation immigrants, she embraces elements of both Haitian and American culture in her life. She speaks English fluently, dresses in popular mainstream American fashions, and considers South Florida home. At the same time, a celebratory event in Ketsia's

home invariably includes a buffet of Haitian delicacies and kompa music playing in the background.

Ketsia's experience is emblematic of that of many 1.5 and second-generation Haitians in South Florida, for whom the composition and contours of family life includes elements of both Haitian and American culture. Some aspects of familial practices bear strong resemblance to those in Haiti, so that events like the communion described above remain foundational to their U.S.-raised children. Family relationships are critical to both migrants themselves and to their offspring. However, Haitian families are also sites of negotiation and conflict, as parents and offspring navigate between Haitian and American influences. So, while Ketsia's brother spoke English at the communion celebration, in other instances, Haitian parents may insist on using Creole or French. Cultural influences are also examined in light of gendered roles and responsibilities, both between and within generations. Ketsia's marriage, to a fellow Haitian-American, entails constant negotiation over the expectations of husband and wife in this unique cultural space, which is neither fully Haitian nor fully American.

The previous chapters have explored the educational and employment experiences of second-generation Haitians in young adulthood. The offspring of Haitian migrants have achieved lower levels of educational success than they had expected when they were adolescents, largely due to limited opportunities. Employment realities for this group have also revealed a distinct pattern of achievement below expectations. Yet, individuals demonstrate ingenuity and resourcefulness in making ends meet in the midst of employment in low wage service-sector jobs. Throughout these chapters, families are critical elements of individuals' trajectories. Lionel attributed his successful graduation

from high school and enrollment in the military to his father's strict rules and constant surveillance. Kerline, on the other hand, sought to leave her father's home owing to his disciplinary standards, interrupting her educational aspirations after high school. Whether positive or negative, or a combination of both, families play a large role in shaping the educational and occupational outcomes of this cohort.

This chapter examines the families of these study participants. I begin with family life in adolescence, considering how these Haitian families were critical in transmitting cultural ideas about gendered roles and expectations. Next I consider the families that these formerly adolescent participants form themselves in adulthood, including selection of romantic partners and choices surrounding childbearing and childrearing. The experiences detailed here, in which a unique blend of Haitian and American practices forms the basis of familial life, suggest that these men and women are negotiating and reinterpreting the constitution and meaning of cultural practices in the family unit. As these adolescents began their transition to adulthood, they integrated both Haitian and American elements into their cultural repertoire, developing ways to highlight their dual cultural influences within their households and social spheres. These dualities are explored in reference both to romantic partners and to their offspring, the third generation.

Gender in Haiti & in the Diaspora

Across the world, gender is a central organizing principle of societies and relationships (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler 2003). Haiti is no exception to this rule, and gender is a critical aspect shaping both women's and men's life experiences (Gammage 2004; Smith 2001). Males

and females encounter a cultural system that accords great weight to one's gendered status. According to N'Zengou-Tayo (1998), public institutions in Haiti legalize exclusion from equal education, land inheritance, and limit women's rights within a marriage union. Other researchers support these assertions, including commentary that women are commonly considered property held by male husbands or fathers (Rey 1999). Haitian social practices also dictate that women take on their male partner's name, not only as a surname, as in the United States, but as a primary identifier (N'Zengou-Tayo 1998). Ketsia, whose story opened this chapter, would intermittently call herself "Madam Jimmy," when in my company, linking her primary identification with her spouse's given name. Charles (1995:137) notes that in Haiti, "women are barely recognized as equal citizens and political actors but are legally defined as dependent wives and daughters."

Many social interactions throughout Haiti take place with a minimum of explicit attention towards these gendered divisions of power. Women are represented within classrooms and universities with equal or nearly equal representation as men. The candidate garnering the most votes in the primary round of Haiti's presidential elections held in November 2010 is a woman; she has advanced to the run-off election and is a serious contender to be Haiti's next president. Haitian women also do generally have influence within their households and within certain economic spheres, for example as market vendors, businesspeople, and traders. These achievements are especially significant considering that the dominant cultural narrative marginalizes women's voices, aspirations, and experiences. Institutions, such as the state and religious authorities, codify this gendered system within rules and procedures that recognize male leadership and authority over women, motivated supposedly by divine decree or a paternalistic

protective desire (Charles 1995; Fouron and Glick Schiller 2001; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001).

Gender in the Haitian Diaspora

Cultural understandings of gendered roles and responsibilities have been transported from Haiti and reproduced within the Haitian diaspora. For example, organizational power structures that buttress male power structures in Haiti are evident in Haitian hometown associations, diaspora-formed groups that enable their members to build social status within their communities of origin; these associations ensconce male leaders with positions of power and privilege in both the homeland and the diasporic community (Fouron and Glick Schiller 2001; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Pierre-Louis 2006). Stepick (1998) describes a Haitian community leader's radio show that sought to educate immigrants about U.S. laws circumscribing domestic violence; a caller to the program shared that he had taken his wife to Haiti and beat her there, away from U.S. jurisdiction. Richman's (2002) research also documents that gender relations within the household typically consist of male dominance, even when the household spans transnational spaces. However, diasporic communities help to challenge existing gender hierarchies in Haiti, as female wage-earners build their economic and social status through remittances; paradoxically, the remittances serve to buttress the state system which sanctions gender inequality (Fouron and Glick Schiller 2001; Gammage 2004; Richman 2005).

Within the Haitian diaspora, second-generation females are negotiators and cultural mediators, as they navigate challenges in their predominantly Haitian households in the midst of U.S. society. Authors such as Gammage (2004) and Richman (2002) have

demonstrated the challenges women face in navigating their discrimination-charged environs, including within households. These authors also make clear, however, that Haitian women – both in Haiti and in the diaspora – demonstrate resiliency in the face of their challenges, and unique social structures, such as matriarchal-households, reflect women’s creative responses to a deeply divided society (See also McCarthy Brown 1991).

Linda is a Haitian-American woman navigating between gendered roles and influences in her life. Upon first meeting Linda, one is likely to notice her shy smile and gentle laugh. A large black woman, Linda is all softness and curves, reaching her arms wide to give a warm hug, her eyes lighting up when asked about the kindergarten kids she teaches. “Those kids just need to be loved,” she says softly, “And some days it breaks my heart.” Linda lives with her father in a small house in North Miami Beach, where she takes regular care of her nieces while they spend court-mandated time with their father, Linda’s brother, who, according to Linda, often neglects his parenting duties. Linda’s mother died several years ago, and Linda now occupies the matriarchal role vacated by her mother. Linda shares the financial responsibility for the household with her father, contributing part of her teaching salary to the mortgage and utility expenses. She also takes considerable responsibility for her nieces, particularly ensuring that they learn to speak Creole and learn about Haitian history and customs. But the biggest mantle which Linda has assumed from her mother is that of voodoo priestess.

Linda’s mother introduced her to voodoo, and Linda herself was initiated as a priestess several years ago. Recalling her childhood, when she heard negative things about voodoo from her peers, Linda said, “But when I went into voodoo myself, I saw

that everything they had said about it wasn't true at all." Instead, voodoo opened up a world of cultural meaning and connection for Linda. In the next breath, she confesses "I wish my little brother might start coming too." Taking up her mother's role as matriarch, provider, and guardian, Linda also assumes the responsibility of cultural reproduction, linking her brother and nieces with the rich cultural history and practices she celebrates with her voodoo community. Linda regards her participation in voodoo as central to her identity as a Haitian-American woman: "Without voodoo, what else is there?" she asked rhetorically. "Just the food, some music, what's that? Voodoo is about honoring our ancestors." Continuing her mother's connection to the voodoo community is one way in which Linda ensures her family retains its connections with Haitian culture; by encouraging her brother to attend religious rites, and speaking about her voodoo community positively with her nieces, Linda connects her family with this aspect of Haitian culture which holds deep meaning for her.

Linda exemplifies the highly gendered script which shapes life in many Haitian households; unsurprisingly, it was Linda, and not her brother, who stepped into her mother's empty place. And as in many Haitian households, gendered roles place a great deal of responsibility upon females. Linda nursed her mother through her sickness, took over her mother's financial responsibilities, and assumed a care-giving role with her nieces. She was deeply vested in ensuring that her family members, particularly her brother and nieces, were connected to Haitian culture and history, as expressed through voodoo. Linda's life changed considerably with her mother's passing. She became the matriarchal center of their household, assuming the increased responsibilities which accompany the role.

Linda's experience represents one example of how immigrant offspring navigate the challenges presented before them. In Linda's situation, the challenges are framed by gendered expectations that were placed upon her, as the sole daughter in her family. Yet her experience is not completely unique, as roles and expectations are constantly negotiated by many youth in many settings. As 1.5 and second generation immigrants – like Linda and her brother - integrate Haitian values and practices with those of the U.S. society they inhabit, the specific challenges, expectations, and roles will undoubtedly shift. The consistent element is that of negotiation. For this group, the tumultuous processes of negotiating between Haitian and American influences began many years ago when, as children, they started their lives in Miami.

Life in Miami

On the streets of Port-au-Prince, an entire lexicon refers to the mythical land of opportunity to the north. “The other side of the water,” “the other place,” and “Miami” are interchangeably used as descriptors for the United States. For some children in Port-au-Prince, however, “Miyami” was not merely a mythical place of the imagination, or somewhere called in an emergency, or the place where your cousin made so much money he built his mother a new house. For these select few children, Miami became home.

Ketsia had heard often about “the other side of the water” while growing up in Bolosse, a densely packed urban area adjacent to downtown Port-au-Prince. She came to Miami at the age of 17, using a tourist visa to enter the U.S. A few relatives were already in the area – an uncle, an older sister, and later, her mother. For several years, Ketsia lived with various extended family members, usually in her uncle's house in North Miami Beach. She was given strict curfews, and instructions to stay away from boys and

focus on her studies. Ketsia spoke regularly on the phone to her father in Haiti, who occasionally sent money to her as she worked towards high school graduation in Florida.

Life in Miami was different than Ketsia had imagined. Learning a new language and attending a new school were difficult transitions for an adolescent. She wanted to wear clothing that was popular with her peers and fashionable. Ketsia grew her fingernails much longer than she ever did in Haiti; doing so made her fit in with the styles popular in her urban high school. She wanted to do well in school, but Ketsia was embarrassed about her heavily-accented English. Speaking up in class was difficult and Ketsia rarely did so. Her uncle and father were continually telling her to study more. They both wanted Ketsia to be a doctor, something that she knew they would be really proud of. Whenever Ketsia wanted to go out with friends, her uncle wanted her to stay in and do schoolwork. The pressure to succeed was intense, and the obstacles to reaching her goal – a college education – were overwhelming.

Adolescent Homes

The narrative of Ketsia's story is woven throughout the adolescent experiences of the individuals interviewed. They were often caught between disparate worlds –Haitian parents and U.S. schools – and negotiated their way through these varying influences. In their households, Haitian parents expected their children to exhibit traditionally-Haitian behaviors, such as studying hard, obtaining good grades, and proceeding to post-secondary education. Girls, such as Ketsia, were often subject to proportionally more direction from guardians regarding their male-female relationships. Boys, on the other hand, tended to be freer to come and go as they please, while still expected to perform well in school. This is largely consistent with other immigrants' experiences (Espiritu

2001; Espiritu 2003; Lopez 2003b; Warikoo 2005; Warikoo 2011). In the school context, both boys and girls experienced popular American culture, with the typically-teenage manifestations of independence, freedom, and status-seeking found therein. Between these contexts, with their respective Haitian and American cultural influences, these youth navigated their way through adolescence.

As described in Chapter One, participants for this study were originally drawn from three high schools in Miami-Dade County. These three schools are in areas with a concentration of Haitian residents: Homestead, Little Haiti and North Miami Beach. The students in this study came from households typical of the region: parents tended to have little to no formal education and worked in low-wage service-sector jobs, often working multiple jobs in order to pay the bills. David's mother was often absent from his childhood home. As a divorced mother of five, she faced a great deal of financial pressure. David remembers her absence:

My mom had to raise up five kids by her own. She had been doing three jobs; one full time and two part times. Never off. She was going from one to another. That was the reason why we lost our Creole. We would like to speak Creole too. She had been doing CNA like Nursing Assistant, cleaning houses, working at McDonald's, fast food places, just to support us.

David's mother toiled in multiple low-wage jobs in order to provide for her children. David notes the detrimental effect on himself and his siblings, how they stopped speaking Creole which they would like to know better. Yet David admired her resolve and diligence to provide for her family, stating simply, "We love her and we respect her."

JoJo also remembers his parents' absence from the household when he was young. From his position in the Miami-Dade county jail, physically separated from his

family, JoJo recalled that his father was often working, something JoJo both wants to emulate and disdains:

I will raise [my son] the same way my dad raised me because, all I know, my dad is a dignity man. He is always working. I don't want to be like how I grow up, I think it is going to be different. I just know I will make sure that I'm there, because my dad never left me when I was a baby. So right now, I feel like 'dam!' I am not there for my son, it hurts me.

JoJo respected his father's work ethic for the sake of his family. JoJo calls him "a dignity man," a term laden with powerful reverence from a son to his father. Separated from his own young son, JoJo laments that he is not present, just as his own father was not present. JoJo respects his father's work ethic, yet does not want to repeat the pattern of continual absence in his own son's life.

Although interviewees' parents tended to work long hours at their job(s), their children were expected to behave in their absence. Wilkinson recalls that his father was very strict with him, expecting him home after school in order to do schoolwork all evening. Recalling this, Wilkinson ruminated, "He was strict! But I did stay out of trouble." David, whose mother was rarely home due to her multiple jobs, was impressed with his mother's continual ability to monitor his behavior despite her busy schedule. Ruefully, David admitted that as a young man, "I still got in a lot of trouble, and my mom always found time to beat my behind. I was the one who cause a lot of trouble." Parents monitored behavior as best as their schedules permitted; disciplining children was considered an essential part of parenting.

Females tended to experience behavioral expectations that were especially strict and rigorously enforced. The issue of sex and promiscuity was a key area in which Haitian parents worried about their teenage daughters. Females had much less freedom

and faced higher expectations for their dress and behavior, as compared to their male peers. Female adolescents were often told they may not have a boyfriend until a certain age (often 18 years old). The underlying assumption behind this rule was that if a young woman were to be allowed to have a boyfriend earlier, she would be at risk for becoming pregnant and subsequently abandon school. Parents attempted to stave off such a situation through prohibitions for their daughters having boyfriends, whereas males were rarely given such restrictions.

Sometimes a parent's worst fear for their daughter, viz., pregnancy, came to fruition. Vanya's father demonstrated a high degree of influence over her social activities in high school, with constant pressure to achieve good grades and go to college. She went first to Tampa and then to Jacksonville, enrolling in a professional-training program for food service. But Vanya's father did not like that she was so far away, and demanded that she move back to their home in southern Miami-Dade County. Not long after she was back, Vanya told her father that she was pregnant. The pregnancy marked a significant shift in their relationship and demonstrated her newfound independence: "He was furious," she said with a sigh, "He was mad and stuff. You know, the way he talk, since I don't go to college. He was kind of mad, but he got over it. I am not getting younger, I am getting older, I am not a baby anymore, so he had to understand that."

Haitians are not the only immigrant community to disproportionately focus on females' sexuality. Gendered expectations of adolescent females as the keepers of community morality are a theme echoed by other researchers of other groups as well (Espiritu 2001; Espiritu 2003; Warikoo 2005). Espiritu (2003:167), for example, explains such observations within Filipino American communities: "Embodying the

moral integrity of the idealized ethnic community, immigrant women, particularly young daughters, are expected to comply with male-defined criteria of what constitutes ‘ideal’ feminine virtues.” Thus, restrictions are commonly placed disproportionately on girls’ social activities in immigrant households, including dating and activities outside the locus of the household, while boys rarely face such restrictions (Espiritu 2003; Lopez 2003b; Stepick 1998; Stepick et al. 2001).

Adolescent Negotiations in School Settings

Adolescence is a life stage linking childhood with adulthood in Western societies. In the midst of the significant biological transition of puberty, adolescents (generally defined as people between 12 and 17 years of age) also experience profound social development (Arnett 2004). This life period often brings a new school and new teachers, peer relationships of increased significance, and romantic relationships. These social interactions are sites within which individuals negotiate their individual roles and identifications. Gender shapes the way these negotiations occur, as boys and girls interact with unique understandings of gender and its interaction with their race, ethnicity, and other axes of differentiation.

Scholars have documented the profound effect that gender has on the lives of second generation immigrants (See, for example: Espiritu 2001; Espiritu 2003; Lopez 1999; Lopez 2003b; Warikoo 2005). Nancy Lopez (1999; 2003b), for example, examined the intersection of race and gender for various immigrant groups within New York City. She sought an explanation for different patterns of educational achievement between boys and girls within Dominican and Haitian immigrant communities. Lopez found that individuals experienced both race and gender on a daily basis: “Hegemonic

race and gender narratives about racially stigmatized communities filtered down to the classroom and ultimately affected the ways in which men and women from the same ethnic group experienced racialization processes” (Lopez 2003b:88). Within the school setting, boys were disciplined more harshly than girls were, however. Lopez’ findings mirror those found in Warikoo’s research (2005), who contends that Indo-Caribbean adolescents experienced vastly different scripts regarding gender. Within the school setting, females absorbed positive cultural and gendered messages which celebrated Indian-fashions and trends such as henna tattoos. Boys, on the other hand, expressly sought to disguise their Indian roots, due to negative images associated with Indian males as powerless (Warikoo 2005).

The school context provided a space for second-generation Haitians in this study to negotiate their relationships and understanding of gender. The school setting also tended to be a place where youth were more likely to display more mainstream, popularized American behaviors and clothing, things which were not necessarily permitted in settings such as home and church, which operated along more Haitian norms. In the late 1990’s, graduate student ethnographers placed within the participating high schools observed gendered interactions between the teens. Girls in one school regularly complained of boys touching them in the hallways, in class, and during free periods. These unwelcome physical gestures could be seen as innocent playfulness amongst typical pubescent youth. However, the constant expressions of frustration from the girls indicated that the actions were not received playfully; the touching itself, combined with the appeals to school authorities, reflects the students’ negotiation of behavioral norms.

Sometimes the school setting was a place to negotiate gendered identifications not normally permitted within Haitian households. Haitian girls are traditionally expected to wear conservative clothing without sexual innuendo. The school setting was one in which some girls could wear a different style of clothing more permissible, or even expected, within black urban-American culture. Ketsia had this experience in high school, telling me that she used to “dress like Black African American.” For Ketsia this style of clothing was described as more sexy, with attention to details such as long fingernails: “I used to wear, you know, I use to be sexy, skinny. African American, they used to be sexy with a long body. My body used to be like that. So people use to think that I am African American and my nails used to be long. That was a long time ago.” Within the high school context, Ketsia navigated between both US-inspired and Haitian influences, choosing clothing and grooming herself according to African-American norms. The school setting facilitated these processes of cultural navigation, as youth were able to try on and experiment more American styles of dress, speech, and behavior.

Second-generation Haitians navigate a complex world of competing influences, including elements of Haitian culture and family life, with its emphasis on female morality, as well as elements of Western popular culture, with its focus on teenage independence and freedom. The resulting tension manifests itself most acutely as these individuals enter adulthood, forming romantic attachments and creating their own family units.

Partner Selection

Family relationships are central to Haitian society; the strong kinship ties that bind many Haitian families are part of successful strategies to navigate difficult migration histories and a society largely hostile to the presence of poor, black immigrants. In the midst of difficulty and hostility, the family can be a protective cocoon, sheltering its members from the difficulty of life as an individual. The economic realities of low-wage earners also dictates that families finds ways of pooling resources, providing necessities such as shelter and transportation through the shared efficiencies of family life. Aside from economic partnerships, families are also sites of cultural reproduction, where Haitian identity is manifested and challenged. As the prior section detailed, growing up Haitian in Miami meant role negotiation for many youth; speaking Creole at home, and English as school; expectations of Haitian femininity at home and seeking American-peer approval at school. The following section describes the experiences of this cohort in forming their own romantic partnerships, negotiating the terms and roles of these relationships, and raising their American-born children.

Partner Selection Among Women

Ilya lets out a peal of laughter. Her infectious energy and boisterous spirit exude from her petite and voluptuous frame. She sits comfortably on her sofa, feet tucked up beneath her, shouting out commentary to her brother's girlfriend in the next room. "Oy, she wants to know if I'd like to get married? *Mezanmi!* [My goodness!]" Ilya exclaims in Creole, "I tell David every day, *chak jou*, that I'm waiting for that ring!" Ilya sighs in exaggerated fashion, lamenting her unmarried status.

Ilya's boyfriend is also Haitian-American. When asked what qualities she looks for in a man, Ilya was emphatic and direct: "A man that loves me, that is romantic, that's a must," she states. "[Someone] that is romantic, bring me flowers; I don't care [if they] sweep me off my feet. I don't care if you are working because we got to work together. Because that's the States; that's how it is. You don't have to have a lot of money to me. As long as I can support myself, you can support yourself, we can support each other. It's not because financial has to be part of it." Ilya had a long history of taking care of herself, working a variety of service sector jobs while she attended school. She had finally secured herself a decent position as a paralegal, while attending classes to complete a Bachelor's degree, with dreams of law school in her future. Ilya's relationship with David was predicated on her independence; she was not looking to him or other potential partners for economic security. Her confidence in herself was evident: "I don't have to prove nothing to nobody. I have to prove to me. I get to a point that I don't get to prove nothing to even my own boyfriend. You love me, thank you very much; you don't love me, I get to move on."

Like Ilya, all except one of the female respondents expressed a preference for male partners with a shared Haitian background. Vanya said she was more comfortable with Haitian men: "I don't feel comfortable with American guys. I just like my culture only." Kerline couldn't quite identify why she only dated Haitian men, but she did recognize it as her pattern and that of her Haitian-American friends. Puzzled, Kerline reflected: "I never get around to date anybody else beside Haitians. I don't know [why]. Maybe it's because I never really open myself to anybody else. I guess that's why. That's a good question. All my friends, pretty much married. I don't know why, but we never

really date Americans. I don't know.” Kerline’s response indicates that for this woman, and her Haitian-American friends, the tendency is to date men with a shared Haitian heritage.

Valerie was the sole respondent who was expressly not interested in dating Haitian men, after a failed relationship with a Haitian man. In the midst of a divorce from her son’s father, Valerie was frustrated with Haitian men in general: “If you’re Haitian, I don’t want to be like, you know, the same mentality as a Haitian man.” She also wanted to date people with whom she could speak English, preferring not to “speak too much Creole.” Female respondents oscillated between these two extremes, expressing either a strong preference or a strong disdain for dating men with their shared Haitian heritage.

Women wanted men to contribute financially to their household; however, men were not expected to assume all responsibility for their female partners. Rather, women tended to emphasize their financial autonomy in regards to personal relationships. Ilya’s experience fits this pattern, and as she described her criteria list for a partner, she said, “I can support myself, you can support yourself, we can support each other. It’s not because financial has to be part of it.” Kerline also strongly believed in her financial autonomy, something she wanted to transmit to her young daughter. Kerline wanted to provide her daughter with the things the young girl desired so that, as she grew up, a boy couldn’t impress her with gifts and items. In Kerline’s words:

I am not going to go outside and buy her a car. God knows I can’t even afford one! But you know, the little things that kids want. I am not going to look at three or four hundred dollars not to buy my kids something. What about when she is looking at somebody else to have it? Or when she reaches the age she start dating, a guy says, “Let me take you out to dinner” and then buy her something and she

goes like “Oh my God!” I don’t want money wise for my kids to be ... everything she says “Wow!” Like, “My mom couldn’t give it to me. I have some body that can give it to me.” Make a big deal.

Kerline wanted her daughter to grow up without expecting a man to give her gifts and items; she did not want her daughter to be overly impressed by such actions. Instead, Kerline sought to give her daughter as much as she could afford, so that the girl would not feel deprived and desperate for gifts and attention from men in the future. Underlying this sentiment is Kerline’s belief in financial independence. She has two children, each with a different father, and Kerline has protected her financial interests in both of these situations: “I’m not saying I am very smart but I’ll make sure with both my kids... their dad, I always make sure my name is on everything.” Kerline’s name was on the deed to her house, purchased with her ex-husband, and she ensured that their vehicles and accounts were all jointly held. Like many other women, Kerline wanted her financial life to include elements of not only partnership, sharing expenses and bills, but also autonomy, protecting her personal interests. Self-protection was particularly critical for unmarried women with children in their care.

Single Motherhood

For women with children, autonomy and economic self-sufficiency are much more difficult to achieve. Single mothers faced the greatest challenges in achieving economic stability, and often depended on their children’s father, or their current partner, to make ends meet. Valerie is a single mother, with a young son of four years, currently separated from her husband. However she shares an apartment with her cousin and sister, both single mothers themselves. As a teenager, Valerie’s parents forbid her from going out with boys, in keeping with many Haitian immigrant parents’ practices, and made

clear to Valerie that dating might lead to pregnancy, thereby thwarting her educational aspirations. At the age of 22 however, Valerie wanted to become a mother: “Then you know, with me I feel like as a woman thing, I felt like I was incomplete so I needed a child. I want a kid, you know I wasn’t focusing; you don’t have people to tell you a certain thing, so I wanted a kid. You feel like you are not living for somebody, you don’t have anything to live for.” Valerie’s desire for a child resulted in the birth of her son. She had her son with her boyfriend of a few years, Chausnel, a fellow Haitian-American who had attended the same high school as Valerie. Chausnel was trying to attend the local community college and was occasionally working in retail, but there was never very much money. Upon learning of the pregnancy, Chausnel and Valerie got married in a small civil ceremony. They could not afford their own place, so they moved in with Chausnel’s parents, whose house, while modest, did have a spare bedroom for the young couple. When Valerie’s son was born, she was immediately dedicated to his care, even withdrawing for a semester from school when the young infant became seriously ill with asthma. Valerie’s marriage soon unravelled under the joint strains of finances and parenting. Valerie ended up moving out of her in-law’s home and the couple officially separated. As a result, Valerie had to assume more responsibility for child care than previously, and it was a constant struggle to ensure that her ex-husband contributed to her costs for day care and housing their son.

Haitian-American women are single parents more often than Haitian men are. Households are usually organized around mothers, and cultural norms dictate that mothers should be the custodial parent. Amongst the Haitian population in the CILS study, 4 of 32 men (13%) and 20 of 65 women (31%) reported having children. Amongst

survey respondents, the rate of single parenthood is particularly revealing. Table 6.1 demonstrates the numbers of single parents among Haitian respondents in the CILS study and this AO study. In my admittedly small sample, one-third of men (2 of 6) and slightly more than half of women (4 of 7) were parents. While my smaller sample was even divided between parents with a partner and those not with a partner, for both males and females, amongst CILS respondents, all of the parents without a partner were women. Single parenthood is a reality for many Haitian-American women.

Table 5.1: Number of Respondents with Children

	CILS (Haitians)		AO Study	
	Male Parents	Female Parents	Male Parents	Female Parents
With Partner*	4	8	1	2
Not With Partner**	0	12	1	2
Total	4	20	2	4

*Includes married, engaged, and living with partner

**Includes single, divorced, and separated.

Vanya became pregnant not long after high school; she now has three young children. She cleans rooms at a Ramada Inn in the the Florida Keys along the main highway leading towards Key West. Vanya nervously plays with the buttons on her cell phone, her eyes focusing on some distant place while she recounts the struggles of the past years:

The baby daddy's didn't want to take care of the kids and stuff. I get three kids with three baby daddies, so it was really rough time for me on my first child. While I was pregnant with my baby daddy's baby, he left me, go get married in Haiti with somebody else. That was a rough time for me. I almost die on this baby. That's why I have three C-section, because of the first one, I almost die on it. You know, stressing out, crying all day, crying every day; it was hell for me. But the second one, it was no problem. I was at my house when I have my second

baby. The third one, not really, I don't go to so much with those two. But the first one is really a rough time for me.

As a single mother, Vanya's opportunities and choices are constrained. She works during the day and childcare responsibilities prevent her from attending school in the evenings. In order to offer her young daughter a "better life," Vanya sent her daughter to live with the child's father in Colorado. Her other son's father married someone else in Haiti, and Vanya struggles to have him send regular financial support for his son. She sighs in resignation at the situation and explains her decision to send her daughter to Colorado: "To me it's like I can't help all of them with me... that's his first child anyway, the only child he get too. That's why I let him have her. I could be able to take care of those two that I have with me. I miss her, she could have a better education, better life..." In the context of Haitian culture, with its focus on maternal caregivers, Vanya's difficult decision takes on even more significance. She described calling her daughter daily in Colorado. However, she was also aware of her limitations as an unmarried mother of three young children, and the positive benefits the arrangement brought to her daughter, receiving the full attention of her father. Vanya's situation is another example of the creative ways in which Haitian single mothers find solutions for their economic difficulties.

Partner Selection Among Men

Like the women, men interviewed for this study were generally forthcoming and candid about their romantic partner selection.¹² These males were primarily interested in relationships with women who shared their Haitian ancestry, although some had

¹² During the first interview with a male respondent, I was queried about my romantic attachments before the interview even started. I subsequently wore a ring on the fourth finger of my left hand to all interviews.

previously dated women of other backgrounds. David reported that he had dated “American girls” in the past. Thinking about his predominantly Haitian social circles, David reflected on his dating choices:

I never think about that. I think because we grew up together, I guess we stay close. What’s funny, some American girls sometimes said to me, “You only date Haitian girls.” I said, “No, I don’t discriminate.” It just happened that way. . . . My last three girlfriends were Haitians. Because I love Haitian food enough, I figure out that my girl have to be Haitian.

David saw himself as a man who did not discriminate potential romantic partners by their ethnicity. However, when queried about these patterns, he concluded that the cultural familiarity (specifically, ability to prepare Haitian food and presumably the willingness to do so) led him to select Haitian girlfriends. The social circles of his Haitian community also play a role; having his primary relationships (family, school friends, and church connections) occur within the Haitian ethnic enclave naturally coincides with more social relationships, and potential romantic partners, among Haitian-American women.

In addition to cultural familiarity, some men specifically desired women of Haitian origin to bear their children. The matriarchal focus of Haitian culture means that mothers are particularly important within the family system. A half-sibling with the same mother but different father is referred to as a *sè* (sister) or *frère* (brother), without qualification. A half-sibling with a shared father, however, may or may not be considered a sibling. These kinship practices certainly draw from, in the case of unmarried or separated parents, the overwhelming tendency of children to live with their mothers or mother’s extended family. Haitian mothers are the “*poto mitan*” (center pillar), the locus of connection from which households operate (N’Zengou-Tayo 1998). David’s mother was the key figure in his childhood home, as he avoided fighting with

fellow students at school for fear of his mother's discipline: "I was fear of that woman! I am telling you, just the thought of her name shake me up." This cultural norm of strong female figures is a point of pride. For all of David's fear, he spoke proudly about his mother's work ethic, stating simply: "We love her and we respect her. And fear her a lot." This matriarchal strength is highly regarded and valued by men. For some Haitian-American men, then, having children with a woman who shares their Haitian heritage is very important for ensuring the ongoing transmission of Haitian culture and identity to the next generation.

JoJo beamed with pride when talking about his infant son. His mother is Haitian, and JoJo referred to her as his "baby mama," a term originating within the African-American lexicon. With candidness, JoJo admitted to having another girlfriend who was not Haitian but African American. This girlfriend wanted to have a child with JoJo, however it was important that his children had a Haitian mother:

JoJo: I really got the Haitian girl [for my romantic partner]. I only want my Haitian son. 100% Haitian. I had been talking to the other girl [the African American girlfriend]. She was like called me, last night, "I want to make a kid by you."

Patricia: Would you like to have kids with her?

JoJo: She is sweet. She got two kids already. I want mine. I got love for my baby mama [the Haitian mother of his son], because I wish my baby mama to raise my children. I wish I could have both [the Haitian girlfriend and the African-American girlfriend].

By selecting a reproductive partner with a shared Haitian cultural background, JoJo ensures that his son will be raised in a household with Haitian influences. Although JoJo will not be physically present in his son's early years, since he is in jail, he is relieved to know that his son's household is one where Creole is spoken, rice and beans are cooked, and Haitian culture is celebrated. Although he expressed a lot of feeling for his African-

American girlfriend, JoJo did not want to have children with her. He exclaimed in a mixture of English and Creole, “I want both *fanm* (women)! How can I deal with both *fanm*?” Both relationships were important to JoJo, however, he was clear on which relationship he wanted to produce children: the Haitian woman was his “baby-mama” and the one who would raise his son.

Educational background and economic earning capacity were also important criteria for males’ partner selection. Wilkinson’s eyes lit up when asked about his wife. He recounted seeing her at work in a bank in Little Haiti, making regular visits to the branch until he summoned the courage to ask her out. When his wife later joined us in the coffee shop, he proudly described her work with the Department of Homeland Security. This position was seen as stable and well insulated from the dismal economy, a positive contribution to the financial and social status of their joint household. Kerline’s boyfriend, Lionel, was also interested in her due to her occupational aspirations. Lionel worked for an insurance agency, and he shepherded his girlfriend through the educational requirements for licensure as an insurance broker. “Kerline is so smart,” he told me in their home, “And this is a career we can do together.” Kerline was attractive to Lionel for many reasons, certainly including her naturally exuberant spirit, but one of the specific attributes she brought to their partnership was her aptitude and willingness to pursue a joint career with Lionel in the insurance industry.

While none of the Haitian men I spoke to expected their female partners to assume *all* the financial responsibility for their household, they did want to share economic responsibility for the household with their partner. Sharing financial responsibilities is partly borne out of economic necessity. As discussed previously, both

men and women tended to earn incomes insufficient to solely support a family. These income-earning practices within Haitian households mirror trends found in relationships generally in the United States, where the traditional model of the male-breadwinner and female-homemaker has given way to a model of dual-earner households (Hertz and Marshall 2001). Dual-earners within one household is not a uniquely American phenomenon; women and men have shared income earning responsibilities in Haiti long before it became a trend in American households (Smith 2001; Vander Zaag 1999). The participants in this study witnessed this in their own households; mothers and fathers worked for pay in equal instances. Thus, a model of shared financial responsibility between men and women came from multiple sources, including families of origin, Haitian cultural traditions, and emerging trends in American society. It's not possible to isolate the impact of these various effects, thwarting any speculation about assimilation in this regard. An immigrant group which takes on joint financial responsibility may be seen to be assimilating to mainstream American norms and practices; however, the existence of this practice within Haitian households suggests that its continuation in the households of the children of Haitian immigrants cannot be used as an indicator of assimilation. While men and women shared expectations for joint financial responsibility, the allocation of day-to-day non-waged tasks of domestic life was much more contentious.

Role Negotiation in Households

Males and females may share expectations to each contribute to the financial earnings of their household; however the division of roles and labor within the household is an area of constant negotiation. Drawing on both Haitian and American notions of

how household labor is allocated, respondents negotiated their gendered roles on a daily basis. These negotiations primarily centered on childcare and household tasks such as cooking and cleaning.

Households in Haiti may lack appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines, but they generally abound in Haiti's most plentiful resource: labor. Everyday tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare are all accomplished by one or more domestic servants in many households. Having servants is not a phenomena found only among elites; middle-class households typically employ domestics and Haitian households of lower classes may have a *restavèk*. *Restavèks* are child servants, sometimes taken in from a distant cousin or other poorer relative. In return for meager food and occasionally education, these child laborers perform the majority of the labor that the household requires.

Life in the USA offers the benefits of running water and electricity which facilitates many household tasks. However, many day-to-day responsibilities still require attention, such as shopping, cleaning, cooking, washing clothes, and childcare. Haitians who migrate invariably experience the increased burden of these tasks as they adjust to life in the U.S., where labor laws prohibit the reliance on forced labor prevalent within Haiti. Although exceptional cases exist of families who immigrated with a *restavèk* or other domestic servant to the United States (for example, Cadet 1998), the majority of migrants must allocate these domestic tasks among members of the household.

As women increasingly pursue education and careers outside of domestic activities, the scope of women's tasks has widened to include both domestic tasks within the home and wage labor outside of the home. Households do exist where men share

these responsibilities in proportional fashion; however, they remain the exceptions rather than the norm. Globally, women are typically expected to bear responsibility for domestic tasks (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004; George 2005; Parrenas 2001). Haitian culture is no exception to this generalization, and when a domestic servant is not available to perform a task, it generally falls within the purview of traditional women's work.

Ilya's household was middle-class in Haiti. They had a comfortable home and workers who took care of the day-to-day tasks of the household. Migrating to the United States meant these tasks now were done by Ilya or her mother. Ilya looked back nostalgically on her life in Haiti, when people catered to her needs:

And where I used to live, I had my butler. I am not saying now I go to Haiti, I take a butler in my room. When I was growing up, a butler can't come in my room. It was more like a kind of queen or princess. They were just soldiers, they can't come into queen's room. It was just more like this. But now everybody that come [are] from the States, where you are doing your own laundry.

Ilya remembers living in Haiti as if she were royalty, being waited on by her servants. Life in the United States was noticeably different, where domestic tasks, such as laundry, were your own responsibility.

Haitian-American men and women negotiate their respective roles within their households on a daily basis. For some, the roles are largely unquestioned, such as when David quipped that he needed a Haitian girlfriend because he loves Haitian food. When Ketsia was asked if her husband helps with childcare, she responded using the term "babysitting," perhaps indicating her acceptance of norms by which she is the principal caregiver. Ketsia did not quite trust her husband to care for their son either, saying, "When I leave my baby with my husband I always tell my sister to watch, because

sometimes he forget even to feed him. You know, that's the reason I told my sister to watch."

Ketsia was responsible for most aspects of household maintenance, which she considered a big burden. She felt responsible for taking care of her husband, their child, and the house, even switching to Creole to express her incredulity at her husband's domestic incompetence:

Ketsia: It is very difficult because every day I have to wake up at five o'clock in the morning. I have to clean the house. I like everything to be clean... I like *everything* to be clean: the floor, the kitchen, I like everything to be clean. And I make breakfast for my husband; and the baby, I have to give him shower in the morning, prepare everything. And I have to drop him off to his grandma's house. It is really hard.

Patricia: And so does your husband help you with those household things?

Ketsia: No, Nope

Patricia: How do you feel about that?

Ketsia: I feel bad because he doesn't know how to do nothing. The only thing he helps me with is give baby a shower, change his diaper, feed him. That's all. And the house things, I have to ask him, and when I ask him, he didn't do it right. I have to do it again. Because when he was in Haiti, his family had maid, they use to do everything for them. So they don't know how to do nothing.

Patricia: He can't do anything?

Ketsia: *Menm yon ze l pa konn bouyi. Non li menm li pa konn fè spageti! Li pa konn fè anyen.* [He can't even boil an egg. No, he doesn't even know how to make spaghetti! He can't make anything.]

Faced with the burden of essentially sole responsibility for her household, Ketsia found a creative solution, inviting her sister to move into the house. Ketsia's sister, her sister's husband, and their young son thus shared the household with Ketsia's family. Ketsia and her sister shared childcare responsibilities, cooking duties, and managed the household jointly. Sharing responsibilities enabled the sisters to maintain their jobs outside of the home while also meeting the expectations of their Haitian-American husbands. Valerie also spread household labor amongst several individuals by living with two female

cousins, also single mothers, with whom she could share childcare responsibilities. Several other participants lived with parents as a means of distributing the household labor amongst a wider group. David appreciated coming home to find food already prepared when he had been in class all afternoon. Kerline depended upon her mother's help for childcare, so that she could attend classes in the afternoons and evenings. These situations demonstrate ongoing creativity and flexibility in negotiating roles and responsibilities as households adapt to the lack of domestic labor which is plentiful in Haiti. For men and women, the terms of negotiation are still largely bound within a traditional demarcation of men's and women's responsibilities, however, this may well change in the future as cultural expectations and norms are tested in the new environment.

Raising the Next Generation

A popular Haitian proverb says "children are the wealth of the poor." For Haitian families, children are expected and encouraged, seen as a natural and joyous addition to life (Schwartz 2003). The men and women in this study conformed to this generality. JoJo spoke longingly about his infant son, separated by barbed wire and cement walls and uncertain sentence ahead of him. Kerline snuggled up with her baby daughter while we chatted, exuberant in her affection for her child. The interviewees who were not parents themselves *all* indicated that they wanted to have children in the future.

Participants generally held similar perspectives and followed similar behavior patterns regarding child-rearing. They all either had children or wanted them, and wanted to pass along elements of Haitian culture and identification to this next

generation. They were also keenly aware of their child(ren)'s birth in the United States, and they emphasized distinctly American practices in addition to the Haitian ones.

Raising Children in the Haitian Diaspora

When visiting Kerline's household in South Florida, one can easily feel transported to a middle-class gated community of suburban Port-au-Prince. A large television may be playing music videos or a sports event, her son and nephew run exuberantly about on cool tile floors, and I am welcomed to sit at an ornately carved dining room set, the cushion seats carefully preserved with plastic slipcovers. In this context, Kerline's son and nephew are growing up in an environment which is distinctly Haitian. Like other second-generation Haitians, Kerline and her friends raise their children in houses where the din of daily activities includes Creole, konpa music, and Haitian cuisine. Similar to in Haiti, children tend to amuse themselves, with little external controls regarding bedtime routines or television-watching. Gathering with several friends at the home of Ketsia's friend, the adults sipped wine and danced to konpa beats until the early hours of the morning. Across the house, the few young children played together until exhaustion took them over, eventually curling up on the master bedroom in a tired slumber. The parents allowed their children to sleep when they desired to, rather than enforcing external schedules around bedtimes.

Haitian households tend to emphasize corporal punishment for children who misbehave. Misbehavior itself is referred to as "*dezòd*" (literally, "disorder" but more accurately translated as misbehavior). A child who is *dezòd* is usually highly active, with an exuberant spirit and highly energetic. Sometimes the quality of *dezòd* is attributed to direct actions, such as when Ketsia's nephew hit his younger cousin, causing Ketsia to

exclaim, “Lolo! *Pa fè dezòd!*” [Lolo! Don’t misbehave!]. Other times *dezòd* behavior is less direct action and more exuberant spirit. As Lolo and his younger cousin played nearby, their happy laughter echoed in the lofted ceilings. Perhaps frustrated with the noise, Ketsia repeatedly shouted at them, “*Vini la, mwen pa vle dezòd sa! M’ap kale ’w!*” [“Come here, I don’t want this bad behavior! I will spank you!”] In these Haitian-American households, good behavior was implied to mean a child who is quiet and does not make disturbances. These child-rearing practices are highly consistent with notions of appropriate child comportment found in Haiti, with repercussions for spanking, or worse forms of corporal punishment, meted out to children who demonstrate negative behavior. Although I did not witness corporal punishment, it was unquestioned as the proper manner of disciplining children who were *dezòd*.

Raising Americans

Although third-generation children are being raised in Haitian-influenced households, the wider context which they inhabit is American society. Several practices of this cohort demonstrate keenly that their children are growing up in the United States, in a cultural milieu that is not completely Haitian nor mainstream American either. The dual cultural influences are particularly evident in language choices.

Nearly all parents spoke English with their children. Kerline’s daughter Jasmine smiled shyly at me when I greeted her in Creole, but she perked up when we switched to English. “She doesn’t like to speak Creole at all,” Kerline laughed, “But she understands it from her grandma.” Most other children also spoke only English. At social events, as the parents circulated together, the children were off in another room, playing games or watching television, and speaking English. At the communion celebration for Kerline’s

nephew, the story which opened this chapter, the host acknowledged speaking English so that the younger generation would understand the goings-on. In the survey questionnaire, four participants reported speaking only English or mostly English with their children. A similar proportion of the Haitian sample from the CILS study gave the same response, with about half of these respondents reporting Mostly or Only English spoken with their children. Notably, neither the respondents from my sample nor the CILS sample reported speaking in Only Non-English (presumably Creole) with their children. Only one CILS respondent reported speaking in mostly non-English. Table 5.2 compares the languages spoken with children of this cohort with the Haitian cohort from the CILS sample:

Table 5.2: Language(s) Spoken with Children

	CILS (Haitians)		AO Study	
	# Respondents	% of Respondents	# Respondents	% of Respondents
English Only	7	25%	2	29%
English Mostly	8	29%	2	29%
English & Non-English About the Same	12	43%	3	43%
Non-English Mostly	1	4%	0	-
Non-English Only	0	-	0	-
Total	28	100%	7	100%

Parents may have been reluctant to admit the true extent of their language interactions with their children. When filling this section out, for example, Valerie mused “With your children?...I put ‘mostly.’ It would be embarrassing if I put ‘English only.’” Although I assured her that there was no right or wrong response, Valerie applied her own

assessment of what the “right” answer would be, and she answered with that in mind. Nonetheless, the pattern is clear: these parents tend to speak English with their children.

Despite this pattern of speaking English nearly exclusively, parents often reported that they desired their child(ren) to speak Creole. Motivations for children speaking Creole included having a connection with Haitian ancestry and culture, and communicating with other non-English speaking family members. Valerie was particularly reflective on why and how her son would learn Creole:

Valerie: That’s my language, it’s very important, he should know the language. I come around people that their parents are Haitian, and they don’t speak Creole. It really hurt them, it affect them. I want him to speak Creole, when I take him...sometime I am on the phone and I was like, “Talk to grandpa.” My grandfather, so he wanted to talk to me. He was in the hospital. I was like “You want to talk to my son?” He was like, “What he gonna tell me? He don’t know how to talk!” I say, “Yeah.” He say, “Mama what is he saying?” He don’t understand. Even when you say “*kouman ou ye?*” he doesn’t understand that, he don’t know nothing, but he will learn though.

Patricia: How is he going to learn?

Valerie: Because, he is very interested in learning, like thing that he is doing bounce off. When people talk, he memorizes the words to use them. You know, that’s good, he is going to learn. And I try to help him now. “Mommy speaking Creole.” And I’m like, “Yes.” “What that means?” And I tell him. He’s very interested. I see when pappy speak French... I speak French with him too. He doesn’t seem to ask question like “What that mean?” He doesn’t ask. But he will tell you. His grandmother speaks French to him too. So when I said, “Do you like French?” He says, “No.” “What do you like?” He says, “Creole and Spanish.” He used to say “Why you guys speak English? Speak Spanish.”

Patricia: And what language does he speak with his father? English as well?

Valerie: He speaks English, he doesn’t speak Creole until he is around my aunt and my uncle or somebody, a kidthat’s why he started being interested when he sees others kids speaking Creole. So he wants to learn.

Despite these expressed desires, Valerie did little to actively nurture bilingualism in her son. English was the language she emphasized in her household, with her cousins and

their children. Linda also wanted her brother's daughters to speak Creole, and she did try to engage them in speaking the language, however at around 10 years of age, and living primarily with their mother, Linda's nieces did not have many opportunities with her to really master Creole. My interactions also indicated that children preferred to speak with their peers and interact with their parents in English; it was the parents who wanted their children to know Creole. However, this desire remained mostly an abstract ideal for these parents, rather than a concrete plan for nurturing bilingualism within the next generation.

This chapter has covered several areas of transition and change, in which influences from both Haitian and American culture come together within households. The processes necessitate negotiation, as second-generation Haitians emerge from their own adolescence and navigate their way through a tumultuous life period. In their adolescent years, these individuals absorbed a great deal of cultural messages, both American and Haitian, regarding their gendered roles, expectations, and responsibilities. As they emerged into their adult years, these negotiations became even more pronounced, as individuals sought out romantic partners and navigated the contentious terrain of their own households and relationships. Both men and women sought to incorporate both American and Haitian elements within their family lives, influencing the choice of romantic partners and the practices of childrearing.

VI. IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Ketsia is talking about Haiti. Her voice becomes wistful as she talks about the vibrancy and rhythm of life in Port-au-Prince. “I’ve been here for eleven years,” she says with wonder. “It’s time for me to have my paper. I really miss Haiti.” Ketsia is proud to be Haitian. She speaks Creole, cooks Haitian food, and turns up the volume to *kompa* music while dancing around the house. But in this moment, the air holds sadness and longing as she imagines her birthplace. “This morning I was telling my husband when I have my green card, I am gonna go to Haiti,” she continues, “And I told him when I arrive in Haiti I am going to kiss the... how do you call that? The land. He said, ‘People are going to think you are crazy.’ And I said to him, ‘I want them to think I am crazy. I really miss Haiti.’”

Ketsia imagines returning to Haiti, the land where she was born and spent the first 13 years of her life, with wistfulness and longing. She proudly describes herself as Haitian and celebrates her Haitian heritage and community in her life in Miami. But there is sadness too, because being Haitian in Miami carries different meaning and more difficulty than it does in Haiti. Navigating the fault lines of gender and race in her integration to the United States, Ketsia alludes to the challenge of identifications in her new home.

This chapter explores identifications among Haitian young adults, considering what it means to be Haitian and how identifications, of nationality as well as gender and race, are manifested through individuals’ lives. I start with a discussion of generalized perceptions of Haitians, reviewing the early displays of Haitian ethnicity which the original study participants displayed to ethnographers in the various high school settings.

I then consider the identifications of individuals as young adults, exploring what labels individuals employ in describing themselves, the lived meaning of these identifications, and the significance of these lived realities. Overwhelmingly, these young people identify to a great extent with their Haitian origins, despite difficulties expressing that identification during their adolescence. Most also identify, to some extent and in some contexts, with the United States, claiming affiliation with the umbrella-term “American.” The interviewees offer considerable insight on how racial identifications intersect with their Haitian and American identifications, illuminating the critical role of race in shaping immigrant integration experiences. The final section of the chapter examines how men and women expressed their national and racial identifications in gendered ways that speak to their respective experiences with both mainstream White and African American society.

Identifications among Adolescents

Adolescence is a critical period for the development of identities and attachments (Jensen 2004). In the social cauldron of schools, peer relationships, and self-discovery, youth develop an understanding of themselves in the world, figuring out what groups they belong to and negotiating their status and relationships with others around them. Within the adolescent experience, the school environment plays a pivotal role. Depending on the school’s demographics, youth encounter people who share attributes in common with or different from themselves (for example: gender, economic status, language, race, ethnicity) (Lopez 2003b; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). The introduction in Chapter Three to the specific contexts of the three high schools in this study – including the locales of Little Haiti, North Miami

Beach, and Homestead – indicate that the young adults in this study attended schools with substantial populations of students of Haitian origins. In all schools, Haitian students interacted with native-born Black students as well as Hispanics, especially in Homestead, where the majority of students were of Hispanic origin.

High schools that serve the majority of Haitian students in South Florida generally offer few academic opportunities to those students. The high schools are located in low-income areas with historical underperformance as majority black schools, with fewer resources and opportunities than white-serving schools in Miami-Dade County. The schools have significant African-American populations, as a result of the residential settlement patterns of Haitian immigrants near historically black areas of Miami (Nicholas and Severe 2011). As described in Chapter Three, the students of both Edison Senior and North Miami Senior High Schools were mostly Haitian and African-American. The ethnic composition of Homestead Senior was somewhat different, with more Hispanic and African American students and relatively fewer Haitian students. In all of the schools, however, students encountered highly negative perceptions of Haiti and Haitians from their peers and institutional authorities.

Perceptions of Haitians

Haitian immigrants generally relate pride in Haiti and in the accomplishments of their country. Despite facing widespread negative attitudes regarding their nation and homeland, Haitian immigrants tend to go about their daily lives with few complaints and with an overwhelming focus on creating a better path and life for their children and grandchildren. Their status as poor, non-English speaking black immigrants often does not allow for much advancement in U.S. society, yet they toil in low-wage occupations

with little visible integration into American society (Stepick 1998; Zephir 2004). The economic and social marginalization of Haitians has already been reviewed in previous chapters.

Generalized perceptions of Haitian immigrants are negative. As discussed in the first chapter, Haitians in the United States have borne the weight of triple-minority status: as poor, black immigrants from a non-English-speaking country (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1998). Since the 1980's, Haitians were also stigmatized as the source of the HIV/AIDS virus in the United States, and subsequently labeled as a high-risk group for transmission of the then-mysterious and deadly virus (Farmer 1992; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy 2010). Scientific knowledge surrounding this disease may have improved, but Haitians are still battling for better treatment within public perception. Ketsia acknowledged the legacy of Haitian identification when she said, "I know when you say Haitian, people always think bad."

Immigrants from Haiti walking along Miami's streets are often readily identifiable as Haitian; their Creole-accented speech and dress indicate their likely origin. The generalized context of negative public perception, however, can influence how and to what extent these individuals identify with Haiti. And for the children of immigrants, situated both within and between Haitian and American spaces, identification with Haiti is less assured. Sometimes the negative associations of Haitian identification lead individuals to distance themselves publically from identification with Haiti. Some people do reject acknowledgement of their Haitian ancestry, which Ketsia referred to when she said, "Some people they don't feel to say they are Haitian."

Claiming identification as Haitian is difficult when “being Haitian” is associated with many negative stereotypes. In the earlier phase of research with the study participants, when graduate student researchers from Florida International University conducted participant observation within the high schools, negative stereotyping of Haitians was observed on several occasions. Teachers in the schools made overtly derogatory statements about Haitians (Stepick et al. 2001). At times these comments or perceptions came in a veiled attempt to explain certain peculiarities about the immigrant group, and on other occasions, statements were made with little doubt to their meaning. In almost all cases, however, these comments were of a negative variety. For example, one teacher in the predominantly Hispanic high school in Homestead spoke about Haitians as “boat people,” a derogatory reference to the means of travel for the influx of refugees from Haiti. In response, one Haitian student removed his permanent resident card, holding it up to show her and proving that he himself was not a boat person. In this instance “boat people” were associated with poverty and low social status. On another occasion, also in Homestead high school, another teacher and some Haitian students were discussing another Haitian student. One youth called the student a “Jamaican want-to-be,” to which the teacher replied, “Who is going to believe he is Jamaican?” The exchange alluded to widespread acceptance of an ethnic hierarchy, in which Haitians occupy the lowest position (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004).

Negative stereotypes of Haitianness were also supported by the school institutions, reflecting the biases and negative perceptions of the wider society. Researchers at participating high schools observed assemblies designed to celebrate

African heritage and/or Haitian culture. On separate occasions, and in separate schools, administrators grew anxious at the sight of Haitians performing their traditional dance routines on stage before an audience of hundreds. The dances are by American standards sexually suggestive, and the pelvic thrusts and gyrations appear overtly sexual to many outside observers. These dances drew the disapproval of administrators in both schools, and in one case, the dancers were pulled off the stage (Stepick et al. 2001). Suspending the dances reinforced existing negative stereotypes of Haitian culture and identity, adding the weight of the school institution to the existing generalized negative impressions of the Haitian minority.

In the context of this negative stereotyping, both from the outside society and from the school administration, it's not surprising that some Haitian adolescents have rejected identification as Haitian. Research with adolescents has shown that some obscure their Haitian roots completely, denying affiliation with Haiti and claiming identification as African Americans (Stepick 1998; Zephir 2001). "Covering up" might involve pretending they aren't Haitian, not speaking Creole, dressing in more American clothing styles, and avoiding Haitian ethnic social groups. Sometimes these behaviors are employed selectively, given specific situations or contexts. A student might act more "American" at school, speaking English and referencing popular culture with friends, but at home return to speaking Creole with parents and family members. Given the stigma and prejudice which many Haitians experience, and especially given the difficulties of adolescence and navigating complex social relationships at school, in the streets, and at home, these outcomes are not surprising (Lopez 1999; Stepick 1998; Stepick et al. 2001; Zephir 2001).

Although being Haitian carries negative connotations in the wider public milieu, within Haitian communities, Haitianness is celebrated and embraced. While recognizing the difficulties and political chaos of the homeland, Haitian immigrants recall with nostalgia and pride the land of their birth (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001; Laguerre 2005). Religious ceremonies also provide opportunity for individuals to celebrate attachments to Haitian culture and heritage. McCarthy Brown (1991) relates that during religious ceremonies, the presence of certain Voudou spirits can incite role-playing and reenactments of key scenes from the Haitian revolution (McCarthy Brown 1991). In these instances, as well as in daily conversation celebrating Haitian culture and history, members of the Haitian diaspora claim membership in a powerful nation which altered the course of human history (Zephir 2001). Whereas in their daily lives as marginalized immigrants, they are subject to the policies and control of the American judicial structure, the narrative of Haitian history allows Haitian immigrants to reassert their claim to belonging in a nationhood beyond U.S. borders (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001).

Identifications of Adolescent Haitians

Research on the ethnic identification of second-generation Haitians has been conducted in the Northeastern U.S. (For example: Lopez 1999; Waters 1999a; Zephir 2001) and in South Florida (For example: Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Stepick et al. 2001; Zephir 2004). The labels which individuals employ reflect their immigration experiences, as members of the 1.5 and second generation, with connections spanning both Haiti and the U.S. The results from both the CILS study and the AO study are listed in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1: Ethnic identity among adolescents

<i>How do you identify yourself?</i>	CILS (Haitians), T1 n=167		AO Study, T1 n=87	
American	23	14%	1	1%
Anglo-American	1	1%		
Black American	20	12%		
Hispanic	4	2%		
Haitian	39	23%	62	71%
Haitian-American	44	26%	18	21%
Other nationality	14	8%	2	2%
Other hyphenated nationality	22	14%	1	1%
Mixed nationality/ethnicity			3	4%
Total	167	100%	87	100%

Among both sample groups, a significant portion of individuals identified strongly with the label “Haitian.” In the CILS sample, the proportion of respondents who identified either as “Haitian” or “Haitian-American” is nearly 50%; this figure was even higher amongst the adolescent cohort from the AO study, with 92% selecting one of those two labels. The CILS sample had a substantial number of respondents who identified solely as “American”, whereas the AO study sample had just one. Respondents in CILS also more frequently selected an identifier linked to their racial identity, with 12% describing themselves as “Black American.” Youth in the AO study identified as “Black” in terms of racial identity, however their responses to the question about ethnic identity did not elicit race-conscious labels, such as “Black American” or “African-American.”

These labels of ethnic identification are complex realities which on a survey are reduced to checkboxes for “Haitian,” “Black,” “Haitian-American” or “African-

American.” In everyday life, however, these are not mere labels but attachments which carry deep meaning in the practice and performance of identities. Identification with Haitianness, whether by itself or of a hyphenated variety, brings a measure of pride in the individual (Lopez 1999; Stepick 1998; Zephir 2001). Festivals celebrating Haitian music in downtown Miami, Haitian-themed night clubs in Broward County, and demonstrations of ethnic pride on the streets of Little Haiti confers pride in both Haiti and its people.

Identification intersects in complex ways with race (Thomas and Clarke 2006). Many Haitians do not consider a Haitian or Haitian-American identity to be race-neutral, but rather blackness is an unstated and widely assumed component of Haitian identity. Overt identification with blackness may indicate pride in and consciousness about a shared racial identity with other black minorities, like African Americans and English speaking West Indians. However, identification as “African American” or “Black” could indicate a weakening Haitian identity. Understanding what these identities mean, and the context in which they emerge, is aided by a retrospective view on adolescence by the study participants themselves.

Remembering Adolescence

Wilkinson is tall and muscular, with wide shoulders and a confident demeanor. Most people call him “Will” and if it were not for his French-sounding surname, Francois, you might think he hailed from Chicago or Atlanta. Wilkinson was born in the United States, and his articulate use of mainstream English suggests a suburban home of privilege or an Ivy League education. Instead, Wilkinson attended Miami Edison Senior High School (MESHS) in Little Haiti, where ongoing tensions between Haitians and African Americans were a constant backdrop to social interactions. At MESHS, not

everyone knew that Wilkinson was of Haitian background. Wilkinson remembered one of his peers questioning him about whether or not he was Haitian:

Early on, when I was in high school, maybe 9th or 10th grade, a lot of black Americans didn't know I was Haitian. I still remember this black American chick, she asked me, "Francois!" she was like, "You not American?" I say, "Nah." "You speak Creole? For real?" I'm like, "Yeah! You never knew that?" She said, "No, because you don't look or dress like that [meaning Haitian]." She said that! So I'm like, "What are Haitians supposed to look or dress like?" I just spoke back, you know.

Wilkinson recounted this exchange with wonder in his voice. His friend had really been surprised that he was Haitian, because he did not "look or dress" like she expected Haitians to. Wilkinson challenged her statement, claiming a place for himself within the range of expressions of Haitian identity, even though he did not look or dress like some other Haitians.

Unlike Wilkinson, Yansmith was one of those students who was easily identifiable as Haitian; he remembers that his clothing and appearance set him apart in North Miami Senior High. Yansmith grew up mostly in Haiti and immigrated to Miami as a young teen, where his Haitian style of dress drew attention to himself. Yansmith described his clothing as: "Dressy clothes, nice shirt, nice belt, put my shirts in [tuck them in], nice jeans...you know? I dressed like a cheap school teacher; casual, but jeans, whatever." In Haiti, students tend to wear uniforms which are carefully cleaned and ironed. Shirts are tucked into pants and the general appearance is one of tidiness and neatness. By conforming to these Haitian dress codes, Yansmith was ridiculed by his peers. He said, "You were not embraced if you wear that. Then, 'Oh, he's gay!'" Yansmith adjusted to his surroundings, as the pressure of peer ridicule heightened his awareness of his Haitian clothing style. In the midst of our interview, Yansmith pointed

out that his style of dress no longer visibly identified him as Haitian. Gesturing down at his casual American-style blue jeans and sports-themed t-shirt, Yansmith said, “Now my style is the style we have now.”

At Miami Edison, Wilkinson was not as easily identifiable as newly-arrived Yansmith had been at North Miami. Wilkinson was born in the United States to Haitian immigrant parents, so his speech and dress were more American than were Yansmith’s. Wilkinson explained why so many of his peers did not recognize his Haitian ancestry:

“We [Haitians] don’t have a uniform, you know. I never tried to hide it. In the majority of my classes, it was mostly all black Americans there. So, I had no reason to speak the language, so I’d just converse among them. But I never really tried to hide it, never did.”

Speaking non-accented English and attending classes with black Americans, Wilkinson was assumed by some peers to be black American. He did not display the most visible signs of Haitian ancestry, namely his clothing and speaking Creole. Wilkinson had friendships with African Americans in school, which was somewhat difficult when the tensions between blacks and Haitians escalated in the schoolyard. Wilkinson was offended by the derogatory insults about Haitians, but he also knew that he would defend his black American friends if necessary:

And at that time, you know, it wasn’t really a thing where I was trying to make a statement like “I am Haitian” but at the same time it was just, the black Americans had words, you know: “You freaking Haitians, go back where you came from” and all that stuff. The majority of us were mostly born here! But it was about respect. I mean, thank God. I was there, but I never really got into it. While that stuff was going on, I was like, “Why is this going on?” And I had black American friends. I still said “hi” to them and all that stuff. They were the ones that weren’t involved in stuff like that. But if it came down to it, you know being that age, and a fight broke out and all that stuff, they were my friends and I felt I would have to support them.

Wilkinson's memories highlight the tensions and complexities of identifications as they are lived day-to-day. Wilkinson did not hide his Haitian heritage; when asked about it, he willingly acknowledged it. He did not like the negative statements made about Haitians, feeling that it was disrespectful to his ancestry. However, Wilkinson was also born in the United States. He had black American friends. Thinking back on the past, Wilkinson thought that he would have supported those friends in a physical altercation. He was thankful that it did not come to that. Nonetheless, the tension surrounding the situation demonstrates that identification is more fluid and complicated than merely checking a box on a survey. Wilkinson was both Haitian and American, and within one setting – school – his identification with these various aspects of himself came into play simultaneously.

Like the schools in central Miami, considerable tension also existed between Haitians and African Americans in Homestead High School. Unlike the other two schools in this study, where Haitians and African Americans were the majority of students, Homestead students consisted of a majority of Hispanics and a minority of black students. JoJo was born in the United States to Haitian parents and identified strongly with his Haitian heritage, pointing back to middle school and high school as formative years in establishing this identity. JoJo described his experiences:

I have been fighting since in the Middle School. Haitians against blacks. They think they are better than us, they make fun about how Haitians are dressed. I don't know. Those things end in a lot of fights because of that.... One time I was on a school bus, I was born here, but some Haitians that came up here from Haiti, they just dressed like different and like African American would pick on them, not let them sit down on the bus, kicked on Haitians back on the bus. While moving they spit on them, "Fucking Haitians." That happened to me too, like I said, I have been in trouble each time by things like Haitians against black American. Stuff like that, to the point where we fight every day.

JoJo was born in the United States, but he had spent years fighting with other Haitians against black Americans. Slurs against Haitians were not even necessarily directed towards JoJo but towards Haitians who had more recently arrived and were more visibly distinctive as Haitian immigrants. JoJo remembers his early youth and adolescence as involving many such interactions, which often led to physical altercations. He eventually had to leave Homestead High School due to his fighting with non-Haitian students, and he graduated from another high school in Dade County.

Male respondents, like Wilkinson and JoJo, tended to mention physical fighting between Haitians and Black Americans in their memories of high school. Women sometimes referenced the fighting, but only in terms of observing it rather than participating in it directly. Women's interaction with other groups in the schools appears to have been less physical and more verbal than the men's interactions. Kerline recalled that a lot of her classmates at North Miami High School initially thought she was Hispanic. She remembered an exchange with other Haitians who were talking about her in Creole:

I remember the first time, it was funny. I was in high school here in Florida, it was the first day I went to school. A couple of my friends, one particular friend, we're still friends since that day, I was sitting in front of them and they were talking to another boy but they were talking in Creole. They were making comments in Creole about me. They didn't know I was Haitian. And then I turned around and I said something in Creole. They were surprised. "Oh God, I didn't know you were Haitian!" I remember saying something not very nice to them.

Kerline declared her Haitian heritage to her classmates, and thereafter they were friends. But before revealing herself as Haitian, the other students spoke about her in Creole. Language was used to exclude Kerline on the basis of race and ethnicity, when her

classmates presumed she was not Haitian. For both men and women, ethnic identity was a critical determination of social relationships within the school environment.

Thus far, I have described the ethnic identifications of the children of Haitian immigrants while they were adolescents. Consistent with other research on this population (Lopez 1999; Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004; Stepick et al. 2001; Zephir 2001; Zephir 2004), perceptions of Haitians were mostly negative within both the wider society and the school context. Most adolescents in this study identified as either “Haitian” or “Haitian-American” in high school, which was slightly less than the CILS group which had slightly more representation of “Black” and “African-American” identifications (see Table 6.1). The experiences related thus far, however, come from adolescence, a period of life fraught with change, self-discovery and turmoil regardless of geographic location or ethnic origin. Thus, I turn now to explore how these identifications shifted over time, as youth became young adults, experiencing the world beyond their school communities and acquiring further experiences and deeper understanding of their own affiliations and attachments.

Identifications among Young Adults

As these teenagers exited the school context, how would their identifications change? Would they continue to consider Haitian origins in their presentation of self to the world around them? Or would they perhaps start to use more American categories, such as “Black” or “African American,” to describe themselves? Other researchers have pointed to the case of Haitian-American adolescents as an emblematic case for downwards segmented assimilation, given the geographic proximity to African-American

communities, shared racial status as black minorities, and the structural obstacles facing Haitian immigrants in the U.S. (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993). Would the speculations that Haitian adolescents would increasingly identify themselves as African-American hold true? I turn now to examine the identifications of these young adults. The data demonstrates that they are not conforming to traditional American categories of identification, but rather, they are forging new places for themselves within the kaleidoscope of American society.

The research conducted with the present respondents while they were adolescents and CILS demonstrated that many children of Haitian immigrants, both 1.5 and 2nd generation, claim attachments and labels that are tied both to Haiti and to The U.S.. The subsequent wave of data collection, in early adulthood, also inquired about individuals' ethnic identification, as reflected in Table 6.2 below, where CILS results are compared with those from the AO study. The data from both CILS and the AO study show a strong preference for identification as either "Haitian" or "Haitian-American," accounting for a substantial portion of each sample population. There are some responses that invoke race directly, such as "Black," "African-American" as well as responses including both "Haitian" and "Black."

Table 6.2: Identifications of young adults (Haitian origin)

<i>How do you identify yourself?</i>	CILS (Haitians), T3 n=97		AO study, T3 n=13	
American	1	1%		
African-American	4	4%		
Black	9	10%		
Haitian	23	24%	4	31%

Haitian-American	46	47%	7	54%
Mixed nationality/ethnicity	4	4%		
West-Indian Nationality	2	2%		
Haitian + black	6	6%	2	15%
Other responses	2	2%		
Total	97	100%	13	100%

In order to compare these identities reported on the T3 questionnaire with the earlier results from the T1 questionnaire, I first excluded all T1 cases which did not have a T3 response. The identity responses were re-coded into five categories for simplified comparisons: the categories used were Haitian, Haitian-American, Black, African-American, and Other. Figures 7.1 and 7.2 below compare the responses between T1 and T3 in these categories for both CILS and the AO study:

Figure 6.1: Reported identification over time (CILS)

T1: n=95, T3: n=97

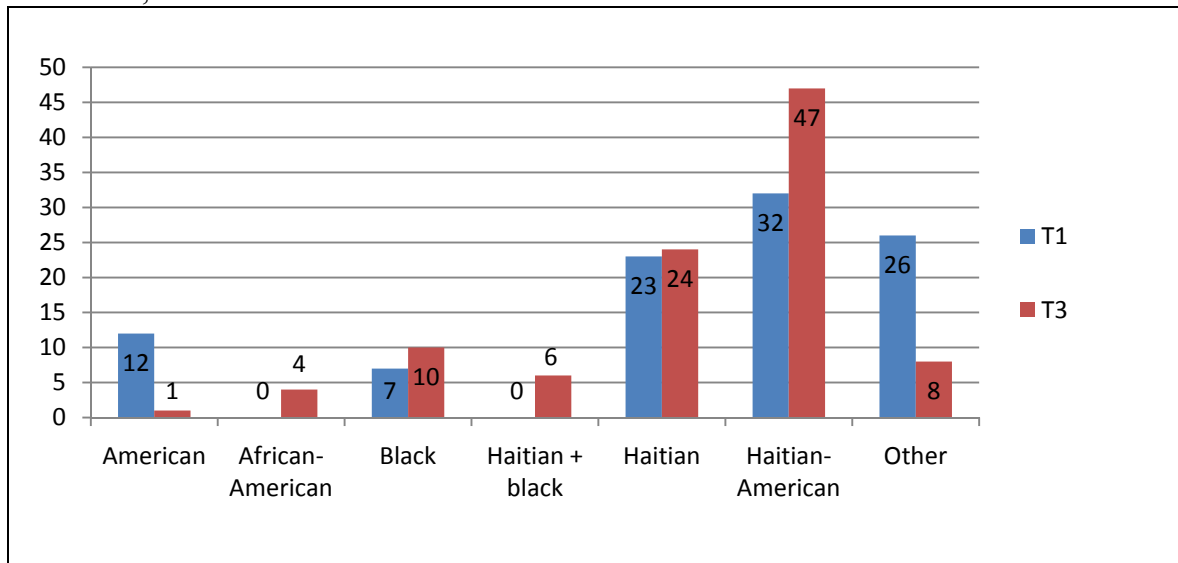
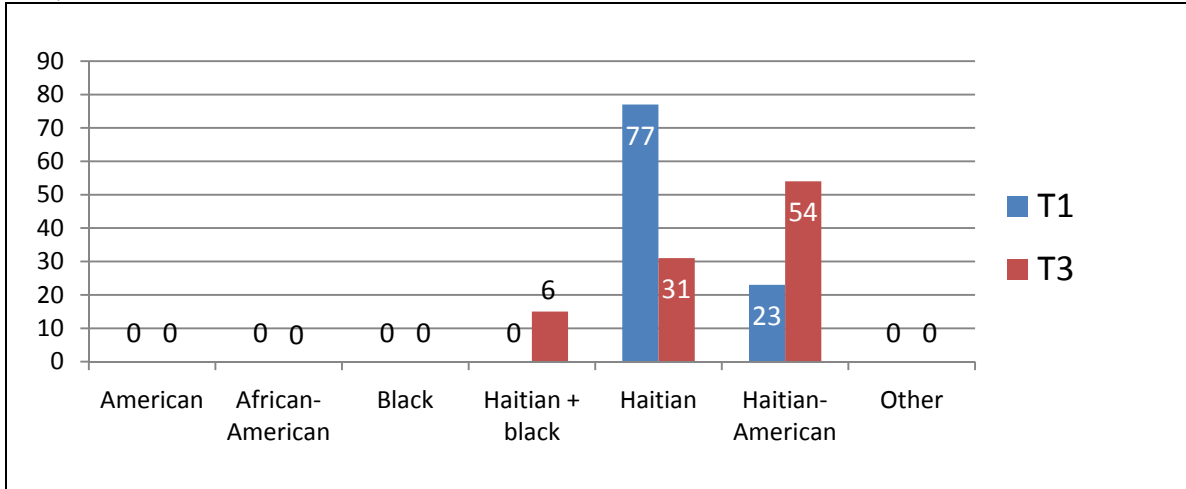


Figure 6.2: Reported identification over time (AO)
 T1, T3: n=13



The side-by-side comparisons of identification responses demonstrate some changes in the categorical responses of participants. Both samples saw an increase of responses in the “Haitian American” category between adolescence and adulthood. The larger CILS sample shows an increase in responses of “Black” and “African American” along with a decrease in responses of “American.” Even among the small sample of the AO study, two respondents specifically mentioned their race in reference to their selected identification label. The broad picture from the survey responses is one of attachment to both Haiti and The U.S., along with awareness and attachment to racial identifications.

Belonging to Haiti

A key part of these young adults’ identifications is a connection with Haiti. The Haitian diaspora and the homeland of Haiti serve as key pillars in the ethnic identification of immigrants from Haiti. The Haitian diaspora enables solidarity and celebrates Haitian ethnicity, in the midst of an environment hostile to blacks, to Haiti, and Haitian origins (Laguerre 2005; Pierre-Louis 2006). In Haiti and amongst its diaspora, the proud history of Haiti is celebrated, including its overthrow of colonial rulers and the establishment of

the world's first black republic. The celebration of historic revolution, and ongoing relationships with other members of the Haitian diaspora, foster a sense of belonging to Haiti.

Haiti's revolutionary past was mentioned by several respondents, including JoJo, who was born in the U.S. to Haitian parents. JoJo was in Miami Dade County's detention center, where he gladly provided his time and reflections on the question of identity and being Haitian. Facing assault charges, JoJo fits the stereotypical image of a young, violent black male. He slouched down on the bench and regarded me warily as I reviewed the study topic and ethics protocol. When he heard the phrase "What it means to be Haitian," JoJo perked up noticeably. "That's what we were talking about all yesterday in here," he told me. "Being Haitian is everything in here." JoJo's identification was intimately tied to his Haitian ancestry. JoJo was particularly proud of Haiti's revolutionary past, and before he was arrested, JoJo had undertaken to have Haiti's independence celebrated in his hometown of Florida City. JoJo recalled the experience:

Jo: You know, on the street, in Florida City, we were kind [of] jealous because in Miami they had their own little parade. So me, my brothers and all parents, Haitian people, go to talk to the Mayor in Florida City, Mr. O. Wallace, and we told him, "Man you know, in Miami, they let them [Haitians] have a little parade down there. So how can you help?" So now, every year, they have one in Florida City. They have one this year.

Patricia: So you were a part of starting that? How do you feel about that?

JoJo: I feel good. It's a kind of change things!

Patricia: Yes, it is a big deal! That's something to be proud of, for sure.

JoJo: A lot of passion! Man, 1804! Here is a tattoo!

JoJo pointed down to a tattoo on his hand, where four numbers were permanently marked on his skin: 1-8-0-4, one digit across each knuckle. The year refers to Haiti's declaration

of independence and the establishment of the first black republic in the world, when former slaves in Haiti overthrew their colonial enslavers and established a nation of free blacks. My conversation with JoJo highlights the importance of Haiti's revolutionary past in JoJo's identification with Haiti. JoJo wanted to have Haiti's past celebrated with a parade in Florida City and was part of setting the plan in motion with the mayor of the town. This linkage with Haiti was an indelible part of JoJo's self-conception of himself as a Haitian; his identification was linked both to Haiti and to the wider project of black self-emancipation.

Vanya also expressed a strong sense of belonging to Haiti. Vanya struggled significantly in her day-to-day life. She worked as a maid at the Ramada Inn along U.S. 1, the main highway leading south into the Florida Keys, raising two of her three children as a single mother. Vanya identifies herself as "Haitian," an identification which she links to her family ancestry. When asked about why she identifies as Haitian, Vanya responded, "Because I was raised by Haitians, my mom is Haitian, my dad, all my family, they are Haitians. I have to be, feel like I am Haitian." She felt a strong sense of belonging to Haiti, telling me "Haiti...that's where I come from." Vanya had not been back to visit Haiti since her arrival in the U.S. as a 12-year old girl. She wanted to go back to visit, but reflecting on the prospect, she admitted:

To tell you the true, if I go to Haiti I have to go with somebody. Because I don't know much about it, it's been a long time. Seventeen years, it's a long time. Really I can't say nothing about it. When people are talking about Haiti, I was like... standing there listening, because I don't know nothing, I can't say nothing.

Vanya feels connected to Haiti, yet she is also aware that she does not quite belong in Haiti anymore. She hasn't been back in seventeen years. When other people are talking

about Haiti, Vanya remains silent, feeling that she does not know enough about Haiti to contribute to the conversation. She identifies herself as “Haitian” because that is where she comes from. Her family is from Haiti and it is her ancestry. And despite all that, there is part of Vanya which does not quite belong to Haiti anymore, after she has made her new life in the U.S. Belonging to Haiti is not her only identification, because Vanya and her peers grew up in the U.S., with attachments to the new homeland.

Belonging to the U.S.

In addition to belonging to Haiti, most respondents also described a sense of belonging to the U.S. Identification with the U.S. was made primarily along legal and social lines by both men and women. Legal citizenship and residency papers were a key part of individuals’ identification with the U.S. Having legal status was a formal way in which the state claimed the individual, acknowledging that person’s membership within the national fabric. Some individuals reciprocated this claim by attaching their self-identification, at least in some part, to the nation-state.

Yansmith spoke to me about visiting Haiti someday. He hadn’t been back since he arrived as a young teen. Yansmith has legal permanent residency and had applied for U.S. citizenship. These documents signified his membership within the American state; contemplating a return trip to Haiti, he welcomed the protection that a U.S. passport would offer him. Yansmith pondered about what a return visit to Haiti might be like. He sat up in his chair, leaned forward and pointed towards the tape recorder, speaking directly into the microphone:

Make sure you record what I am saying! I want to be an American, you know why? If there is any problem, one phone call, either I call President Bush, even if he’s not going to be president anymore, whoever is president, McCain, whoever.

Say “Sir, I am in trouble.” They say “You know what? Where is your closest embassy? Do you have a cell phone with you? I will send it to you. Go to rue du centre, there is an embassy.”

Yansmith’s U.S. citizenship would provide him with an important advantage on this hypothetical return to Haiti: an escape. By virtue of his citizenship, Yansmith could access the assistance of his wealthy and powerful new country, with the choice to leave Haiti should trouble manifest itself. Yansmith jokes about calling the President personally; even in his humor, he speaks to a personal connection (with the President) between himself and his new country. Belonging to the United States is a critical part of Yansmith’s identity; he wants full citizenship to access the full range of benefits the state offers only to its citizens. Yansmith feels a deep attachment and sense of belonging to the U.S.

Joseph also explained his identification in terms of legal documentation. When asked why he chose the identifier “Haitian-American” to describe himself, Joseph replied, “I am Haitian. Because both my parents are Haitian, but I was born in USA, so I am American by soil.” Legal forms of belonging offer tangible proof to both Yansmith and Joseph that they have a place within American society, strengthening their identification with the umbrella-label “American.”

Just as legal identities can include individuals, so too can they exclude. Valerie was filling out the survey at the beginning of our interview. When she reached the question on identification, Valerie said out loud, “I can’t put down American because I’m not citizen yet.” I neutrally informed her that the question was about how she views herself, not just about her legal documentation, after which Valerie wrote down “Haitian-American.” Her initial hesitation indicates a sense of not fully belonging to the U.S. by

virtue of not being a citizen; Valerie did not claim full membership in American society which she would presumably claim if she were a U.S. citizen. However, when she did write down what she views herself, Valerie wrote a hyphenated label, alluding to her attachment and connection to both her Haitian heritage and American surroundings, despite not having legal citizenship yet.

For some individuals, then, identification with the United States is a key part of their self-perception. This is linked to legal identities, such as citizenship and holding a passport, as formal membership in the nation state is codified by the legal documentation. However, the processes of belonging to the U.S. are not only about legal forms of belonging, but are shaped significantly by experiences of race in the U.S.

Experiencing Race in the U.S.

For Haitian migrants and their children, belonging to the U.S. is mediated by their experiences of race and racism. The respondents to this study considered race and racism to be distinctly American, rather than Haitian. Kerline explained:

I didn't know what racism was until I moved here. When I tell people that, they said it's not true. I said it is true. In Haiti everybody is everybody. The only class we have is someone with money wise. That's about it. It doesn't matter how big you are, what your color is. It doesn't matter, we don't care. I never heard the word "fat" before I moved here. Or the words "You're black," "I am white," "I am brown."

Kerline claimed that racial categorizations were something she learned in the United States; in her perspective, Haiti was divided by class rather than race. Yansmith shared this perspective, attributing stratification and discrimination in Haiti to economic divisions rather than racial ones:

The only thing there is prejudice in Haiti is with education, or where is your family come from, whether your family is rich. That's why they say, "That's the

Francois family.” Francois family could be African as long as it’s the family, “Oh that’s Dr Francois’ family.” Like you have title “Doctor,” it doesn’t matter if you’re African. That’s the privilege they have in Haiti, it doesn’t matter if you’re light skinned or whatever. So that’s what they have in Haiti.

Kerline and Yansmith believe that Haiti does not have racial discrimination, seeing Haiti’s divisions as economic rather than racial. A careful reading of Haitian history reveals otherwise (Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl 1996). The very founding of Haiti as a nation was undertaken by the alignment and organization of various interest groups organized primarily according to the colonial racial groupings of black Africans, French *blancs* [whites], and *mullattres* of mixed-heritage (Dubois 2004). More contemporary analysis has also identified blackness and whiteness as one of several axes of differentiation demarcating Haiti’s elite (Farmer 1992). Yet for Kerline and Yansmith, their memories of Haiti are of a nation without racial divisions. They recall a nation in which black people were all around them, both rich and poor, and one’s social standing is not linked directly to the shade of one’s skin.

Racial categorization upon immigration has been especially pronounced for black immigrants. While many immigrants from Asia and Latin America also experience discrimination and “otherization,” there is reason to consider them separately from black immigrants. Asian and Latin American immigrants report higher rates of intermarriage with whites as compared to black immigrants. Also, Latinos and Asians are much more likely to report a multiracial identification, again as compared to blacks (Lee, Bean, Batalova, and Sandhu 2004). These results suggest that Latinos and Asians experience U.S. society in a specific fashion, and though they are subject to discrimination and prejudice, they may not fall within the “black” side of the traditional black/white

cleavage. Lee and her colleagues (2004) argue that Latinos and Asians encounter more fluid racial boundaries than do black immigrants, which can be linked to the ongoing legacy of historical slavery and institutional discrimination against blacks in American society. Thus, although race shapes the experiences of all minority immigrants, it appears to have an especially profound impact on black immigrants as compared to other migrant groups.

Racial categorization in the United States is certainly markedly different from that of Haiti. Ketsia was enjoying life in a upper-middle class neighborhood in 2008, where she and her family were one of the few black families in the suburban area. Ketsia found this to be a profound experience of being black in the U.S. after having spent several years in predominantly black neighborhoods in Miami's urban areas. Life in Ketsia's new neighborhood was markedly different:

When I go out, and there is a lot of white people, I said "Damn! I am black!" We use to live in North Miami Beach, I get pregnant there, for two years, we live there for two years. And then we decided to move to like a white people neighborhood because they have good school in Pembroke Pines. That's the reason we want to live there. We have a lot of white people living here. So when we go to the club house there is a pool. Oh my God! Always all the kids are white. . . . I feel proud because black people live in Pembroke Pines.

Ketsia spent her first dozen years in Haiti, a black nation, and then moved to North Miami Beach, an area with a high concentration of blacks. Moving to Pembroke Pines was a new experience for her, as the area had a higher concentration of white people. Ketsia experienced her race in a new way then, remarking on her own skin color in reference to all the white people in her new area. Her presence in that area is also a point of pride: she has succeeded to the places and neighborhoods where white people live.

She is claiming space for herself, as a black Haitian woman within these majority-white spaces.

Despite the evidence that race plays a pivotal role in the experiences of black immigrants, the respondents in this study tended to downplay their experiences of discrimination in the U.S. Kerline, for example, had said she did not know racism until she had moved to the U.S. Yet, when asked for an example of discrimination, Kerline had difficulty coming up with an answer, saying: “I don’t think it ever happened to me, if it did, I didn’t know it.” She thought about it for a few moments and continued on:

You are not stupid, you can see it. Or the way they’ll talk to you, you know... or first thing they always say when you go to places: “Do you speak English?” They don’t even talk to me. First question they ask is: “Do you speak English?” Just the fact that I am from Haiti doesn’t mean that I do not speak English. So yes, I get that a lot. Just little things. Personally I really don’t care. But I have seen it happens.

Kerline acknowledged that discrimination occurs in “little things” throughout her daily experiences in the U.S. Even so, she immediately qualified that she did not care about these experiences. In this, Kerline is not unique. Other respondents, even when acknowledging generalized discrimination against Haitians and blacks, claimed that it did not bother them. Yansmith related an experience of being asked where he was from. “I’m Haitian,” Yansmith told the man. The man protested, telling Yansmith “You are not Haitian. You are Jamaican, because Haitians are lazy.” When asked about his response to this man’s denigration of Haitians, Yansmith told me: “I didn’t respond to that. I just smiled. That is not his fault, I just forgive him. It’s because of the media.” Yansmith was not angry at the individual person, attributing the man’s negative perception of Haitians to media coverage. Even JoJo denied experiencing discrimination, after relating how

his detention in a Miami-Dade county facility stemmed from a rogue police officer in Homestead who allegedly pursued JoJo until the officer found a reason to arrest and charge him. Despite this experience, JoJo did not see discrimination in his experience, saying: “When you are here, you don’t feel discrimination. Everybody treat you the same way. You get locked up, everybody get the same treatment. I do something, I get punished. He does something, he gets punished, the same thing. There is no discrimination here.” JoJo, Yansmith, and Kerline’s words echo those of the other respondents, who while generally acknowledging *generalized* mistreatment and denigration of Haitians and blacks, were reluctant to see themselves *individually* as victims of racism. Racism was never employed as an excuse for negative circumstances in their own lives, even when it was acknowledged as a general condition affecting Haitians en masse.

In response to negative treatment or commentary about Haitians, respondents appealed to notions of common humanity linking people of all backgrounds. Sometimes this involved talking about building friendships across different racial and ethnic categories, while noting how everyone is all the same. Although her closest relationships were with other Haitian-Americans, Ilya had been friends with people of various backgrounds throughout her adolescence and young adulthood. She said, “There was a time I used to go out only with Indian people. And from there, from the Indians I get to Americans . . . there was a time I was hanging with Jewish people.” These relationships helped Ilya develop an understanding of people as essentially similar. She said:

I feel like when I am speaking with others, I don’t look at black and white. I can like to peel the skin off, and you see, if you look at it like that, you mean like a museum, and it’s beautiful. You’re looking not only at bodies. But each one of

them were raised as society build up. . . . Sometimes they tell you, “You are trying to be black, you are trying to be white.” It is just where you have been raised I think.

Ilya’s relationships with diverse groups led her to see that essentially everyone is the same underneath their skin. She talked about peeling the skin off, just as they would in a museum, and underneath “it’s beautiful.” Ilya is appealing to the common humanity linking all ethnic and racial groups. Irrespective of the color of one’s skin, we are all made of muscle, tendons, and flesh beneath the surface. Ilya saw the differences between people not as a result of some innate distinctions, but as a result of how and where one is raised. Race and ethnicity are socially constructed, as one’s understanding of oneself as black or white depend on where one is raised.

Like Ilya, Joseph spoke about underlying bodily structures in appealing to the commonalities linking different racial and ethnic groups. Joseph identified himself as “Haitian-American.” He observed that beneath the surface, humans were all the same: “I consider myself as a human being that happened to be blessed to be Haitian. Because there is no difference in color, I mean, there is no abnormally, we all have the same organs, our brains are the same size. . . . We have different skin colors, different eye colors.” Joseph’s comments mirror Ilya’s: both point to the internal composition of human bodies as similar, irrespective of external physical variations like pigmentation. These respondents appealed to a common sense of humanity uniting diverse groups, downplaying the differences emphasized by the wider society which denigrates Haitians.

Yansmith also appealed to ideas of common humanity when discussing relationships between different groups. He did this specifically by discussing how his racial heritage is mixed, including black, white and Hispanic ancestry. After Yansmith

shared an experience where a white man said that Haitians were lazy, I asked Yansmith how that remark made him feel. He responded:

I didn't feel hurt, because my godmother is white. My grandpa is white. It's like I get two sides. I get from my dad's side. So I grew up with mixes. When they say that, I just smile because I grew up with that. The maid in my country, my maid, she is white. I respect her. She used to pick me up from school. I respect her. I call her "Mrs." She said, "Can I do something for you Mr. Francois?" I said, "No, I am ok." I would try to teach her. When she take off my clothes, I would help her. When my parents are out I would try to do it. So there is equal, right? You understand?

Yansmith claimed that the negative remark about Haitians did not hurt him. He based that claim on his knowledge that his racial heritage is mixed. His statement may imply that Yansmith invoked his mixed racial heritage to set himself apart from other Haitians, who are mostly of African origin. However, his further comments allude that Yansmith's commentary was specifically about interactions and equality between different racial groups. His maid in Haiti was white, he said. He gives examples of their interactions, and of how she, as his family's maid, served him, even using honorific titles of "Mr." with a child. Yansmith claimed to respect her as well, saying that things were "equal" between them. Yansmith's comments obviously ignore divisions of class and gender which framed the social interactions he recalled. The example was used, however, as a way to appeal to a common humanity linking different racial groups, as a means of downplaying discrimination directed towards Haitians.

In addition to referring to the humanity linking different groups, respondents tended to attribute discrimination to the individual's ignorance or poor education. According to this logic, with education comes enlightenment about the inherent equality of all groups. Discrimination is something done by uneducated and ignorant people, who

can be pitied for their lack of insight. Linda explained how someone who focuses on her solely as a black person has individual deficits. She acknowledged the pain of that discrimination, while also stating that she does not focus on it or let it negatively affect her:

Patricia: Kijan w tap santi w si yon moun jus panse a ou sou- sou kategori nwa la?

Linda: M t'ap wè moun nan, li gen yon san prejije lakay li, you know. M pa t'ap...m t'ap feel bad pou moun nan. Aprè sa, m pa kite anyen fèm lose cool mwen. Eske ou konprann? Right. Paske I easily forget. Forgive and forget. Mwen, you know, fasilman pou'm pa kenbe yon moun lè'l di yon bagay because m kwè se inyoran. Ou konprann? Lè yon moun fè sa, m toujou, m eseye konprann moun nan nivo li. Paske lè'l fè yon bagay, moun nan vle ke pou'l fè-w parèt bad M konnen m pa sa. Ou pa konprann? Mwen nwa, but m konnen ke'm menm jan ak moun. Moun nan ap fè'm vin yon ti jan, bezwen fè'm feel enferyè. Epwi, epwi, you know...li fè'm mal. It hurts me. Di minit plus tard, m gen tan bliye'l. M pa kite anyen bother me. I'm a happy person, you know. M pa vle moun...Life is too short. M pa vle yon moun vin ap fè'm stress nan yon bagay e ke pou'm fè yon bagay ki pa vreman yon pwoblèm fè'l kreye yon pwoblèm nan vi'm.

Translation:

Patricia: How would you feel if a person was categorizing you solely as “black”?

Linda: I would see the person, that he has some prejudiced blood within himself, you know. I would...I would feel bad for the person. In addition, I don't let anything make me lose my cool. You understand? Right. Because I easily forget. Forgive and forget. I...you know...it's easy for me not to hold onto someone when he says something, because I believe he's ignorant. You get it? When someone does that, I always, I try to understand that person at their level. Because when he does something, the person wants to make you look bad...And I know that isn't me. You don't get it? I'm black, but I know that I'm the same as other people. The person is going to make me a little, needs to make me feel inferior. And, and, you know, it hurts me. It hurts me. Ten minutes later, I've already forgotten it. I don't let anything bother me. I'm a happy person, you know. I don't want anyone...Life is too short. I don't want anyone make me stress out about something and that I make something, which isn't really a problem, come to create a problem in my life.

Linda explains that a person who would focus on her race is “ignorant” and she wouldn’t want to “stress out” about something “which isn’t really a problem.” These comments are part of a larger pattern among respondents of seeing discrimination as stemming from individual personal characteristics rather than systemic structural causes. Linda does acknowledge that discrimination has some impact on her, telling me that it hurts her. But she says she easily lets go of it, testament to her resiliency in handling the pain of discrimination and prejudice.

Ilya, Joseph, and Yansmith all believed that differences between groups were just exterior facades; underneath the skin, we are all the same. Their understanding of discrimination as stemming from uneducated individuals minimizes the impact of these divisions; by appealing to the humanity common between all groups, interviewees attributed experiences of racism and mistreatment (especially related to Haitians) to ignorant individuals rather than systemic characteristics of U.S. society.

Gendered Interactions with Black America

Identifications were primarily expressed in terms of racial and ethnic heritage, but these identifications were layered in conjunction with existing gendered conceptions. Men and women expressed different reactions to identification as “African-American.” No one in my sample selected the label “African-American” as their primary identifier. Even individuals who were born in the United States and grew up with African-American peers and networks did not select this identity label. However, in general, men were more comfortable with identification as African-American than were the women.

Women generally rejected identification as African-American, even if during adolescence they had embraced African-American clothing styles. Ketsia related that she

used to dress in African-American styles when she was younger. When asked what specifically this meant, she said: “I used to be sexy, skinny. African American, they used to be sexy with long booty long booty. My body used to be like that. So people used to think that I am African American and my nails used to be long. That was a long time ago.” Ketsia wore clothing and personally groomed in styles consistent with African-American culture, yet she did not want to be mistaken for African-American herself. She did not think her clothing choices meant assimilating as an African American. We shared the following exchange in her interview:

Patricia: And how do you feel when people would think you are African American?

Ketsia: I told them I am Haitian. And they always think that Haitian wanna to be African American. And I told them I’m not. I wanna be Haitian American. I just want to try the new thing they have in America ‘cause I didn’t have that when I was in Haiti.

Ketsia was trying on the exterior elements of African American style while she was an adolescent. Dressing in a different style of clothing was a new thing for her, something which was different from Haiti, and perhaps part of her discovery of her own identity as a young person. However, identification as Haitian was critical to Ketsia and she did not consider herself African-American.

Linda also does not identify herself as African American. Linda was very concerned with being a positive role model for Haitianness to her young nieces. She saw identification as African-American as a threat to her Haitian identification. Linda used a mixture of English and Creole to convey these thoughts:

Patricia: Kijan w panse si yon moun t’ap rele w Afriken-Ameriken?

Linda: I don’t like it.

Patricia: Poukisa?

Linda: Because, you know. Even though we Afriken, desandan Afriken. Nou se desandan Afriken men lè yo di “African-American,” m wè-l jis Ameriken nwa sèlman ki isi-a. Se konsa m wè'l. Peryòd. Ou konprann? So, you know...

Patricia: Why don't you want be part of that?

Linda: Well, culture yon pèp se yon pèp ki pou kenbe li. M kwe nan tradisyon. Ou konprann? E ke si kè mwen aksepte li, pitit mwen pwal jis ou byen nyès mwen yo, because I'm just such a big icon for them, you know. M se yon icon pou yo. Yon modèl pou yo. Epwi, m ta renmen pou yo kanpe pou yo, menm jan ak yon Marlene Bastien. M ta renmen yo vin yon Marlene Bastien. And, I would like to be one too, of course. E ke, lè sèlman ou chita e ke ou jis, ou jis w'ap di tèt ou Afriken-Ameriken sèlman, se kom si ou bliye ki moun ou ye, ou bliye si ou se Ayisyen. E ke, nou bezwen sa nan kòminote-a paske gen yon pakèt moun ki chita. Yo fini lekòl, yo fè tout bagay, yo trè entelijan, entelektyèl. Yo pa focus sou bagay sa yo.

Translation:

Patricia: What do you think if someone calls you “African-American”?

Linda: I don't like it.

Patricia: Why is that?

Linda: Because, you know. Even though we are African, descendants from Africans. We are descendants from Africans but when they say “African-American” I see it as referring just to black Americans who are here. That's how I see it. Period. You get it? So, you know...

Patricia: Why don't you want be part of that?

Linda: Well, it's the people that need to hold onto the culture of the people. I believe in tradition. You get it? And if my heart has accepted it, my children or my nieces, because I'm just such a big icon for them, you know. I'm an icon for them. A model for them. And, I'd like them to stand up for themselves, the same way as a Marlene Bastien. I would like them to become a Marlene Bastien. And, I would like to be one too, of course. So, when you are just sitting around or you're just calling yourself only African-American, it's like you've forgotten who you are, you've forgotten that you're Haitian. So, we need that in the community because there are lots of people who just stay seated. They've finished school, they've done everything, they're very intelligent, intellectual. They don't focus on these things.

Linda does not see herself as African-American, and she does not see much value in adopting these American categories of reference. She strongly values Haitian culture, and she wants to pass along Haitian culture to her nieces. Linda specifically mentions

Marleine Bastien, director of Fanm Ayisyen nan Miyami (Haitian Women of Miami) and a longtime advocate for Haitians in the United States. Linda twice uses the Creole expression “chita” to refer to Haitians who identify themselves as African-American. Literally, the word means “to sit.” However, in a deeper, more nuanced understanding of how the Creole is used by Linda, “chita” means here “to hang around and do nothing.” Linda’s words indicate that, in this context, identifying as “African-American” is a passive acceptance of cultural decline. Linda sees this as doing nothing and forgetting who you are. Instead, Linda believes, Haitian culture must be actively nurtured, rather than passively sitting by as it slips away in the American context.

Ketsia and Linda’s experiences resonate with other scholars of West Indian immigration to the U.S. who note differences in conceptualizations of race between different cultures and countries (Bailey 2001; Rogers 2001; Waters 1999a). Growing up in the U.S., Charles (2003) began visibly identifying with her African-American peers, in her case by wearing an Afro hairstyle. The reaction from her Haitian family was strong, in that her actions demonstrated a desire to become a black American. For Charles’ Haitian family, they were *not* black Americans, but Haitians.

For Haitian women, rejection of identification as African-American focuses on the differences between African-Americans and Haitians. Negative perceptions of African-American women dominate within the Haitian community. Thus, Haitian women (and Haitian-American women) seek to emphasize their differences from African-American women, in order to maintain bright and distinct boundaries (Alba 2005). My female respondents worked and interacted with African-American women, yet their closest relationships were with fellow Haitians and Haitian-Americans. After

saying she did not identify herself as African-American, Ketsia added, “African Americans are very nice people, you know. But I heard they are really rough, not like the Haitian girls.” She wanted to qualify that African-Americans were “nice” people. As already demonstrated, people who exhibit prejudice and racism within the Haitian community are widely considered ignorant and uneducated. So, as a nurse with a college diploma, Ketsia would not likely make overtly derogatory comments about African-Americans. She does so instead in a codified fashion, informing me that they are “very nice people, you know,” as if I might assume the contrary. Ketsia goes on to say that African American women are “really rough” which is distinct from how Haitian girls are. Ketsia distinguishes Haitian women (including herself) from African American women. African-American women are rough, whereas Haitian women (“girls”) are not.

Kerline also alluded to negative perceptions of African Americans in her interview. She specifically discussed her dislike of socializing in large groups of Haitians, preferring small groups of her friends instead of large music events or clubs where Haitians frequent. When asked why she had this preference, Kerline explained, “Someone always has to be acting ghetto. When they do that I am not very proud.” I asked her what she meant by “acting ghetto”? Kerline replied:

Act ghetto. They will talk loud, they would make stupid “fuck you” comments. And the way they are dressed! They would take no pride on what they look, some of them. Whenever they are around, they are bound to be arguments or trouble around.

Kerline cites several behaviors she associates with “acting ghetto:” talking loud, cursing, dressing poorly (presumably casually or more like a gangster), arguing and causing trouble. All of these things are generalized stereotypes about African-Americans,

particularly stereotypes which prevail within the Haitian community. Kerline emphasized that she did not like being around large groups of Haitians who conform to these African-American styles and behaviors, something she regards in a negative light. In so doing, Kerline emphasizes her difference from African-American culture.

This distancing from African-Americans has been understood as a strategic positioning by some black Americans in order to establish themselves as a ‘model minority’ (Hintzen 2001; Hintzen 2004). Other research with second-generation black immigrants indicates that for those who do embrace ethnic identification, it may be about avoiding generalizations with African Americans (Foner 2005; Shulman 2004; Waters 1999a). However, there is also evidence that some black immigrants embrace identification with African Americans, based largely on their shared experiences of marginalization within the U.S. (Thomas and Clarke 2006).

Ketsia, Linda, and Kerline did not identify as African American, yet they all strongly identified with being black. When asked to describe her identity, Ketsia declared, “I call myself a proud black Haitian.” Charles (2003) relates that Haitians grow up with a strong sense of nationhood linked to blackness. Blackness is seen in positive terms. Similarly, Jamaicans immigrants come from a nation in which blacks regularly hold positions of leadership and authority (Vickerman 1999). Migrant communities may significantly challenge existing race ideologies, contributing to new ways of conceptualizing race and identity (Rogers 2001; Vickerman 2001). Black people in particular experienced the “collective phenomenon of displacement and dispersal” which is the common thread linking members of the African diaspora (Thomas and Clarke 2006:2). Blackness is a lived reality which underlies the experiences of diverse peoples

and groups within the broadness of the African diaspora (Brown 2005; Hintzen 2010; Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010). The female respondents in this study conform to these conceptualizations of the African diaspora; although these women largely rejected identification with the label “African-American,” they embraced their blackness, without seeing any contradiction between these actions.

Valerie emphasized the similarities between Haitians and African Americans, focusing on their shared experiences of blackness in the U.S. Valerie identified primarily as Haitian, and she did not reject African-American associations to the same degree as other women did. She emphasized the shared sense of blackness between the groups:

They have big problem with black American. Those people, like Cubans. They're like: "You are not American!" Like it's a bad thing. "You are Haitian." I say, "I am still black." They said, "You are not like Natasha." Natasha is a black American. And I am like, "What's the difference between me and her? You know, we are still black." I consider myself I am black.

Valerie's coworkers claimed that she was not like their colleague Natasha, an African American woman. Although others – Valerie specifically mentions Cuban colleagues – sought to emphasize her Haitian heritage, Valerie emphasized her shared sense of blackness with Natasha. Miami's Cuban community has historically maintained distance from local black communities; Cuban elites typically are light-skinned and anti-black racism pervades the Cuban community (Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004). Valerie observes this anti-black bias among her Cuban coworkers, citing their “big problem with black American.” Valerie also demonstrates how Haitian women can reject an African-American identity yet embrace a shared sense of blackness with other black women. Rogers (2001: 177) contends that Jamaican migrants and African-Americans understand race in different terms: Jamaicans “do not immediately attach the same

political and ideological meanings to their racial identity as do African Americans.” Similarly, it is not inconsistent for Haitian women to simultaneously reject African American identity and embrace blackness. Other authors have confirmed the centrality of blackness to the identification and experiences of various groups of African diaspora, and the common experiences of marginalization within a world organized around the premise of white supremacy (Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010). These shared experiences of blackness were reflected within this study population.

Young Black Males

Although women tended to reject African-American identification, men were more tolerant of this identity label. The distinctions display specific gendered patterns of interaction with race and racial categorizations in American society. Black men face deep-seated stereotypes in general society as potentially violent and criminal (Duneier 1999). They encounter widespread discrimination in applying for jobs, being targeted by police, and even nervous glances from passers-by as they walk down a street. Haitian men, as racial minorities, experience these same stereotypes with their African American peers. Haitian men are also subject to racial profiling, leading to more recognition of their shared experiences with African-American men.

Yansmith identified primarily as Haitian-American. He did not mind, however, if people called him African-American, telling me: “Yes, that’s okay with me. Some people think I’m from Zaire because of my accent. I say, ‘Wow! That’s good because I’m African.’” Joseph said it “didn’t bother him” if he was called African-American, although he wouldn’t choose to identify himself that way. He was matter-of-face about societal discrimination, saying “We are living in a world that’s based like that.”

Wilkinson was born in the U.S. and had navigated the fault lines dividing Haitians and African-Americans when he was a student at Edison high school. He also did not mind being identified as African-American, and he spoke admiringly about an African-American mentor he had while in the military. Wilkinson had models of accomplished African-American men in his life, yet when he moved back to Miami, he experienced a profound reminder of how young black males are treated in the city. Wilkinson related in detail how he was driving his new car one afternoon in the streets of Little Haiti. He obeyed the speed limit and was going about his activities, when he noticed a car trailing him. Wilkinson was cautious; it was an unmarked sports car, with dark tinted windows. Little Haiti has ongoing gang activity, as do some nearby neighborhoods. Wilkinson did not want any trouble, but clearly this vehicle was watching him carefully. Wilkinson took a couple turns, to see if the car would follow and it did. He turned suddenly down a side street, accelerating rapidly to evade his pursuer, fearful that he was about to be robbed or carjacked. The car pursued him and a short chase ensued, before the other driver announced through a loudspeaker: "This is the police. Pull over immediately."

Wilkinson was relieved – the police! He immediately pulled over. He opened his car door and got out. In matter of seconds, the officer opened the door of his unmarked car and pulled out his Tazer, shooting Wilkinson twice with strong electrical currents, without any provocation. Wilkinson was put in handcuffs, placed in the back of a squad car, and brought down to the police station. He was eventually released, and the charges were dropped. Wilkinson was faced with the harsh truth of his experience. He said,

I tried to analyze and understand why they did what they did. He tazed me so he needed to account for it. When he put me back in his police car, he could not

write that police report. And I watched him. He did not know what to write. And I'm just like, in my mind "Man, you know this is wrong."

Wilkinson knew the injustice of his experience: the police officer had trailed him, in an unmarked vehicle, simply because Wilkinson was a young black male. Fearful for harm, Wilkinson evaded the car without ever knowing it was a police vehicle. Wilkinson's subsequent efforts to file a complaint with the Miami Dade county police did not gain traction. He lost his job because of the arrest, which caused him to get behind on bills. It took him four years to recover his financial stability and credit report. Even relating this, Wilkinson was not evidently bitter. He smiled ruefully at the memories, pointing out the injustice but not lingering on them.

As a young black male in Miami, Wilkinson faced significant negative stereotypes about who he is. Yet he was determined to prevail despite those challenges. When leaving the military, Wilkinson's mentor tried to talk him into staying with the Navy, telling him that it would be difficult for him as a young black male. Wilkinson recalled:

He said I couldn't make it on the outside. He said it in the way so he could make me think to stay in. It was wrong for him to say that. He was just, looking at a long term thing, me being young and black and what not. I'm assuming; I'm not sure. But it didn't feel nice. Felt like, I wanted to prove him wrong. Yeah, I did. And I'm still trying to move up.

Wilkinson had graduated from university and owned a home with his wife. He was attending graduate school for an MBA. He was a war veteran, with two completed tours of duty in the Middle East. Yet even he felt the weight of stereotypes about young black males. This manifested itself most critically when he was unjustly tazed and detained by the police. However, he also felt that his mentor tried to scare him into staying with the

Navy with the reasoning that Wilkinson could not succeed as a young black male outside of the Navy. These experiences only further reinforced Wilkinson's desire to rise about the stereotypes. He wanted to prove his mentor wrong, and he's still striving to improve his life.

Male respondents generally accepted identification as "African-American," or at least tolerated it to an extent not evident amongst female respondents. Male respondents experience their race in distinctly gendered ways, as they navigate strongly negative stereotypes of young black males. Rogers (2001) also found that his West Indian interviewees indicated a shared identification with African Americans, based on a shared racial identity as members of the black minority in the United States. Other scholars have pointed to the centrality of blackness as a common experience linking diverse members of the African diaspora, as their common subjectation and resistance to white structures and practices of marginalization gives a shared sense of struggle and social experience (Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010; Thomas and Clarke 2006). The men in this study also identified themselves with other black men, using the shared prism of blackness to contextualize their common experiences in white-dominated U.S. society.

One male respondent was an exception to this trend, strongly rejecting identification with African-Americans. JoJo was born in the U.S. and considered his family heritage as linked primarily to Haiti and secondarily to Africa. JoJo's identity was forged through years of conflict between blacks and Haitians. His identity grew out of opposition, defending the honor of his ancestry against slurs and negative attitudes. Even JoJo however, who does not identify as African-American at all, recognizes his blackness

as an essential part of himself: I asked him what he thinks when someone calls him African American. JoJo replied:

I always tell them, I am not African American, I am Haitian. Oh yes. They can call you black. All right, that's good. My skin color is black, but I am Haitian. Nobody in my family is African American. My mom is Haitian, my dad is Haitian, so I am 100% Haitian. ...How can I be African American if my mom and dad are Haitians?

JoJo considers himself Haitian, through and through. His family is Haitian, and therefore so is he. Even though he rejects African-American identity, he embraces his blackness, acknowledging his skin color. JoJo does not go so far as to comment on the shared experiences of blackness between Haitians and African Americans, as a great deal of his life has been engaged in conflict against African Americans. Research on “oppositional identities” emphasizes the adoption of African-American behaviors and values which tend to diminish focus on academic achievement and occupational goals (Lopez 2003b; Portes and Zhou 1993). Interestingly, JoJo does not identify with African-American identity at all, yet he did not continue his education past high school and is following a downwards path, with his second incarceration by his 30th birthday. JoJo is experiencing some of the worst outcomes a young black male can experience in the U.S.: economic marginalization, low education levels, and incarceration. Yet his opposition is not against Haitian identity, but against African-American identity.

New Ways of Belonging

The respondents in this study are forging new ways of belonging to both Haiti and to the U.S. Their self-understanding is forged through the intersections of gender, class and race in their daily lives, leading to pathways of distinctly gendered and racialized integration with American society. Respondents' way of belonging invokes a strong

sense of Haitian nationalism while also claiming a place within the American national mosaic. There is a large emphasis placed on identification with blackness and recognition of the shared characteristics of blackness reflected in other African diaspora groups, while emphasizing the particular uniqueness around Haitianness. Belonging to multiple places and groups is not contradictory or a zero-sum-equation in which more Americanness means less Haitianness or vice versa. Rather, belonging to both Haiti and the U.S., and forming these attachments in gendered and racial terms, occurs simultaneously and in overlapping layers of complexity and experience.

People's lives are lived through a prism of identifications and statuses; for Haitians immigrants and their children, this invariably involves negotiation of a racial system which subjects Blacks to the highest degree of scrutiny and the lowest levels of opportunity. As a result, race is a particularly salient factor in the identifications of these individuals. The language of race was employed in the respondents' identifications, but in ways that reshape Americanized conceptions of race. In this way, these respondents are transforming existing racial meanings, consistent with other research on African diaspora groups (Brown 2005; Thomas and Clarke 2006). For Haitian immigrants and their children, racial identification is strongly linked with class status. Although narratives of class and race are linked in the United States, they are even more intertwined for Haitians. Charles (2003:171) relates: "To be black is to be poor. Thus, blackness in Haiti is understood in terms of class interests, even though it employs the language of race."

These participants conceptualized their particular sense of belonging in the United States in gendered ways. Haitian-American women tended to emphasize the

differences between themselves and African-American women. Yet, a shared language of race – blackness – is proudly embraced. As cultural mediators and loci of Haitian households, Haitian-American women seek to retain the cultural significance of their ancestral heritage. Haitian-American men, however, were generally more accepting of identification with African-Americans. Their experiences as young black males reinforced the commonalities of blackness between themselves and other black minorities. In this way, gender is mutually constituted with other axes of identification such as class and race. Lopez (2003b:5) argued second-generation West Indians experience race and gender in composite force, throughout their lives: “Race and gender not only are categories of identity, but also embody social relations, social organizations, and lived experience.... the second generation is treated like racialized and gendered bodies, not as “genderless” ethnics or “raceless” genders.” The men and women in this study had lived experiences borne out of their specific constellations of identification, in which their experiences were both racialized and gendered. Wilkinson’s roadside encounter with a police officer was shaped by perceptions of Wilkinson as a young, black male driving a nice car in a poor neighbourhood of urban Miami. Linda’s desire to be a role model for her nieces – so they can become community leaders with the cultural pride of the well-known activist Marleine Bastien – grows out of her matriarchal role in her household for transmitting Haitian culture and traditions to the next generation. The interplay between the various social locations of these individuals is complex and exemplary of the interactions of these social processes in shaping identifications. Individuals’ experiences are “not simply the addition of gender, racial, class or language

discrimination, but a complex entanglement and interaction of all these processes at once” (Lopez 2003b:157).

Despite the diversity of individuals’ lived experiences, the participants in this study shared two important similarities regarding their identifications. Without exception, all found ways of forging attachment to *both* the U.S. *and* to Haiti. Economic marginalization and social disparagement combine to create powerful reasons for a migrant group to disengage from a hostile environment, either rejecting the host nation or rejecting their ancestry, assimilating as quickly as possible (Portes and Zhou 1993). Despite the negative structural and social conditions facing the Haitian migrant community, all study participants fostered attachments to their new nation and nurtured ongoing connection with the nation of their ancestors. In the difficult journey from adolescence to adulthood, they are forging new ways of belonging to both Haiti and the U.S.

VII. CONCLUSION

The United States has been a nation of immigrants since its inception, incorporating newcomers into the social fabric of the nation (Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Vanderkooy 2010). The extent to which arriving immigrants embrace American norms, values and behaviors has been a matter of continual interest and concern to wide swaths of the American public (Hing 2004; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Waldinger 2007). Newcomers have been expected to learn English, work hard, and pursue the American dream, with most of these expectations staying true to this day. Despite their toil and sacrifice, for many immigrants and their children the quintessential “American dream” of prosperity and success often remains elusive (Feliciano 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2006).

This dissertation has considered the life pathways of one group of young adults, the children of Haitian immigrants in Miami. Like previous waves of immigrants throughout U.S. history, Haitian migrants and their children have dedicated themselves to hard work, education, and learning English in pursuit of the American dream of prosperity and security (Stepick 1998). This dissertation project revisited previous research with a sub-group of the original sample of 1.5 and second generation Haitian population, providing a longitudinal perspective on how some young people experience post-adolescent life in the U.S. This research sought to understand the processes of integration and assimilation as they play out over the life course, considering the pathways individuals pursued.

This final chapter of the dissertation reviews the key findings of the research and summarizes the principal arguments of the previous chapters. I then discuss the implications of the present research on theoretical models of immigrant integration,

specifically in regards to the segmented assimilation model, for which Haitians have frequently been cited as an emblematic example (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993). The empirical findings of the dissertation are considered in terms of how they specifically contribute to the existing literature.

Contributions to the Literature

This dissertation research project examined longitudinal outcomes for a group of 13 1.5 and second generation Haitian immigrants in Miami. As a result of the limitations of the sampling methodology, the findings cannot be generalized to a wider population. Nonetheless, the narratives revealed within these pages do offer insight into how this particular group of 13 is being incorporated into American society. The findings presented make a distinct contribution to the literature on immigrant integration and assimilation by extending the analysis to a post-adolescent population. The vast majority of studies with 1.5 and second immigrants have taken place during adolescence; research with adolescents shaped the development of segmented assimilation theory and early attempts to theorize what pathways these young people were following in their incorporation to U.S. society (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Waters 1994; Waters 1999a). These scholars have conducted some follow-up research with their original respondents, as they embarked upon their early adulthood, however these have primarily been quantitative-focused projects with an emphasis on outcome indicators (Feliciano 2005; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005). None of these studies examined the outcomes for Haitian young adults specifically. The present project adds to the literature by contributing a longitudinal ethnographic perspective on the integration patterns of the children of Haitian

immigrants, extending our collective understanding of how integration occurs for this population as they enter adulthood. This dissertation is also unique in that it uses in depth ethnographic methods to understand the processes of integration, rather than analysis of the outcome indicators as other authors have already done (Feliciano 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway 2008). The results presented in this dissertation make a substantive contribution to the literature, as detailed below.

Chapter Four presented participants' education and employment outcomes. Existing research indicates that for many different immigrant populations, educational achievement tends to be less than native-born comparison groups but higher than their immigrant parents (Stepick and Stepick 2010). My dissertation found that these Haitian-American youth also demonstrated higher educational achievement than their immigrant parents. The unique contribution of this research was its comparison of educational aspirations with achievements; the results indicate achievements significantly below the respondents' original goals. These respondents also are continuing their education well into their thirties, beyond when we might expect young adults to be still focused on their own education (Arnett 2004). Chapter four introduced the four pathways that describe the structural integration indicators from this research, an approach that has not been previously used in the literature. Respondents' pathways were either: 1) joining the military; 2) attending community college; 3) attending university or 4) joining the workforce directly after high school. Sometimes one pathway led to another, such as one respondent who joined the Navy and then used military benefits to attend university. Educational and occupational outcomes demonstrate lower accomplishments than the respondents' original expectations; significant challenges, including difficulty navigating

the bureaucracy of higher education and access to financial aid, hampered the educational achievements of these individuals. Nonetheless, the experiences of this group indicate a great degree of resiliency and determination to achieve the education which Haitian culture values so greatly. They also demonstrate, that counter to much theory on the children of immigrants and specifically segmented assimilation theory, the subjects of this study are not engaged in downward mobility. While not reaching their aspirations, they do have more education and a higher socioeconomic status than their parents.

Chapter Five discussed the family dynamics of this cohort. My study particularly advances our understanding of gender and its relationship to assimilation among the children of immigrants. Historically, gender has been under-examined in migration studies (Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler 2003) and segmented assimilation theory only mentions gender in passing (Portes and Zhou 1993). My dissertation makes a distinct contribution to our understanding of how integration patterns among Haitians are mediated by gender and demonstrates that gender is central to Haitian integration.

The findings on education and employment did not reveal distinct patterns according to gender; however, the limited sample size might not reveal any such patterns. Other research on the education of the children of immigrants has revealed that females tend to outperform males in school (Lopez 1999; Lopez 2003b; Portes and Hao 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001). These patterns were not evident within the sample group of this dissertation project. Certainly, the occupations which the respondents pursued were gendered. The two respondents who pursued the pathway of military service were both male. Females opted for, or originally envisioned if not actually pursued, training in education and

nursing, both traditional areas for women's employment (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004; Parrenas 2001).

This project did find significant gender differences, however, within the family. Gender is used as a primary lens for viewing the tension between cultural influences between Haiti and the U.S., as both men and women negotiate their roles and relationships in their families. Women bore a disproportionate amount of responsibility for domestic tasks within their household, which they juggled in conjunction with educational goals and employment. Women were parents, and especially single parents, to a greater degree. And even among women with partners within the household, the female was largely responsible for domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare. Thus, women demonstrated significant resiliency and fortitude in navigating their educational pathways along with managing households and raising children.

The dissertation also contributes to our understanding of emerging masculinity among young black immigrants (Smith 2006; Warikoo 2005; Warikoo 2011). Men did not generally bear responsibility for their household or childcare, yet male respondents faced significant social challenges as young black men in the U.S. Five out of six male respondents had a story about mistreatment because of race, and usually these stories were colorful descriptions of life experiences where their master status, or the feature of their identities which greatly shaped how they encountered the world, was being black men (See Merton 1972). Race and gender were deeply intertwined in these experiences. Wilkinson, a U.S. Navy veteran with two tours of duty in the Middle East, found himself sprawled in the dusty gravel of Little Haiti while a police officer needlessly used a tazer gun. Joseph was insulted by a white supervisor in Key Largo. For these men and most

of the other male respondents, their status as young black men greatly shaped their experiences in the U.S., as they confronted pervasive negative expectations and stereotypes about their prospects and character.

Chapter Six focused on a cultural indicator of integration, namely identity or identification. My dissertation contributes to existing literature on Haitian-American young adults' identifications and sense of belonging through post-adolescent research. Haitian migration exemplifies the structural barriers facing immigrants of color moving to the United States. Discrimination based on race, class, and national origin confronts Haitians in their migration experiences (Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 1998; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, and Dunn 2004).

Much of the literature on the children of immigrants' identity presumes that such identities are singular, i.e., that individuals identify either with their native origins (e.g., Haiti) or with the host society (e.g., the U.S.) (Portes and MacLeod 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). Some literature also allows for a third possibility, often referred to as the hyphenated identity (e.g. Haitian-American) or more theoretically referred to as a hybrid identity (Bailey 2001; Fourn and Glick Schiller 2002; Gans 2007b; Plaza 2006; Warikoo 2005). Other research has pointed out that among Haitian-American second generation adolescents, ethnic identification with African Americans becomes more prevalent (Stepick 1998; Stepick et al. 2001; Zephir 2001). Haitian youth identified with an African-American segment of U.S. society and were cited as emblematic of downwards segmented assimilation (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993).

This dissertation research casts doubt on downwards segmented assimilation for explaining the integration trajectory of Haitian-Americans, making a distinct contribution to existing understanding of this population. Respondents in this study reported a more complex sense of identifications that is more attuned to the most recent theoretical formulations of diasporic identifications (Brown 2005; Rahier, Hintzen, and Smith 2010; Thomas and Clarke 2006). In particular, the respondents reported in this dissertation expressed belonging or attachment to both Haiti and the U.S., a finding which was explored in relation to race, blackness, and gender. The complexity of identifications was highlighted in the narratives arising from the interviewees. Their stories indicate that these individuals are finding a new way of belonging to both Haiti and the U.S., in a way which celebrates their cultural heritage, embraces a black racial identity, yet which is distinct from African-American identity. The results of this study suggest that for this group of Haitian-Americans, integration with an African-American segment is not the overarching narrative of their early adulthood. Individual identifications are still strongly linked to Haitianness, with all respondents identifying in some way with their Haitian identity. Identification with African-Americans does exist for some individuals; however, this identification is rooted primarily in a shared sense of blackness, as shared racial characteristics influence both groups' experiences in white-dominated U.S. society. These findings suggest that the downwards segmented assimilation model may not explain the experiences of this particular group of young adults. Rather than adopt an African-American identity, most are incorporating their attachments to Haiti along with attachments to the United States and other groups in the African diaspora. This way of

belonging is both racial yet problematizes existing racial categories from both Haiti and the U.S.-based Miami context they inhabit.

An Uncertain Future

The participants in this study did not demonstrate a clear pattern of traditional assimilation into American society. Rather than losing their cultural identification, these individuals had a strong sense of Haitian identity which was a central attachment to the world around them. Nonetheless, their children are growing up with more Americanized influences. The young adults in this study with children tended to speak English with their children rather than Creole, even though speaking Creole was frequently cited as a critical part of expressing Haitian identity and respondents universally desired their children to cultivate a Haitian identity. This third generation is also being raised in an environment shaped by their parents' modest gains in education and employment. Most of these households have more financial stability than previous generations, yet survival on poorly paid service-industry professions is difficult. For this next generation, growing up in the U.S. speaking English, going to school with African-American peers in the cauldron of youth culture in a globalized world, segmented assimilation may be a model which fits their experiences. Yet their parents do express consistent desires to nurture identification with Haiti, including its rich history and culture, among the next generation. If they are successful in fostering this sense of belonging to Haiti amongst their children, then more comprehensive examination of the segmented assimilation model may be called for.

The future is uncertain for Haitian incorporation to the U.S. But the experiences of this group of young adults suggest that possibly new ways of belonging are emerging.

These ways are fully American and fully Haitian, with attachments claimed in both lands, propelling individuals forward despite the structural impediments limiting options for their future success.

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APPENDICES

Appendix #1 – Survey Instrument

Survey – Study of Haitian Young Adults in Miami

Name: _____
Street Address: _____ Apt: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____ Cell phone: _____
Email address: _____

- 1. What is your date of birth? Month: ___ Day: ___ Year: ___
2. What is your current marital status? (Please mark ONE response only and fill in the date, if applicable.)

- Married
Engaged to be married
Living with partner
Single
Divorced
Separated
Other (Please specify):

- 3. Do you have any children? Yes No

3a. If yes, how many?
3b. When were they born? (Dates of birth):

- 4. Where do you live now? That is, where do you stay most often? (Mark ONE response only.)

- Your parents' home
Your own place (apartment, house, etc.)
Another relative's home
A friend's home or apartment
Group quarters (college dorm, fraternity, military barracks, group home, etc.)

4a. What kind of group quarters are you living in?

- Other (Please specify):

5. How many people live with you? (If someone usually lives with you but is away temporarily, include him or her.)
 Number of people (**not including yourself**): _____
6. Since 1995, at how many different addresses have you lived?
 (**Number of addresses**): _____

The following questions are about your education:

7. What is the highest grade or year of school you have completed? (Mark only ONE response.)
- Some high school (grades 9-12, no diploma)
 - Graduated from high school
 - 1 or 2 years of post-high school vocational training or college (no degree)
 - Graduated from 2-year-college or vocational school (for example, Associate Degree)
 - 3 or more years of college (no degree yet)
 - Graduated from 4/5 year-college (for example, Bachelor's degree)
 - Some graduate school (no degree yet)
 - Master's degree
 - Professional or Doctoral degree (for example, JD, MD, DDS, Ph.D.)
 - Other (Please specify):

8. What degrees or diplomas have you received? (Mark ALL that apply; the year you received it, and your field.)

Degree or diploma received	Year you received it:	Major field of study:
<input type="radio"/> GED or high school equivalency degree		
<input type="radio"/> High school diploma		
<input type="radio"/> Associate or junior college degree (AA)		
<input type="radio"/> Bachelors degree (BA, AB, BS)		
<input type="radio"/> Master's degree (MA, MS, MPH)		
<input type="radio"/> Professional or Doctoral degree (JD, MD, DDS, Dr.PH, Ph.D. and so on)		

9. Are you currently enrolled in a school? Yes No [If NO, skip to Question 10]

9a. What type of school are you currently enrolled in? (Mark only ONE response)

- GED Program
- Vocational training (for example: auto repair, secretarial, trade school, etc)
- 2-year college (Junior College)
- 4-year college or University
- Graduate Program
- Professional School (for example: Law School, Medical School)
- Other (Please specify): _____

9b. What degree or certificate do you expect to receive there, in what field, and by when?

1. Degree or certificate, and major field: _____

2. When do you expect to receive it? (month/year): _____

10. What is the highest level of education you *realistically* expect to have achieved **when you reach age 35**?

Expected Degree

Field

These next questions are about your work and employment history:

11. What is your present work situation? (Mark the response that best describes your situation.)

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Unemployed and looking for work
- Laid off and not looking for work
- Unemployed and not looking for work
- On maternity/paternity leave
- Attending school full-time and not working
- Full-time homemaker and not working
- Disabled and not able to work

12. Since leaving high school, how many *full-time* jobs have you had – that is, how many jobs have you had where you worked for at least 35 hours a week and you had that job for at least **6 months or longer**?

Number of full-time jobs: _____ [if NONE, enter '0']

13. Since leaving high school, how many *part-time* jobs have you had – that is, how many jobs have you had where you worked **less than 35 hours a week**?

Number of part-time jobs: _____ [if NONE, enter '0']

14. Are you mostly self-employed or do you work for someone else? (Mark one response)

- Self-employed
- Working for someone else
- Other (Please specify):

15. (If you work for someone else) What is the race or ethnicity of your immediate supervisor? (Mark one response)

- Asian American
- Latin American/Hispanic
- African American/Black
- European American/White
- Other (Please specify):

16. What is the race or ethnicity of most of the employees doing the kind of work YOU do in that job? (Mark one response)

- Asian American
- Latin American/Hispanic
- African American/Black
- European American/White
- Other (Please specify):

17. How satisfied are you with this job, as a whole? (Mark one response)

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

18. How satisfied are you with your present income? (Mark one response)

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

18. Approximately, how much do you earn per month FROM ALL SOURCES?

\$_____per month

(Amount after taxes/deductions)

19. And what was the total income of your family FROM ALL SOURCES last year? (Include the sum of all earned and unearned incomes from yourself, your spouse or partner, and other family who live in your household.)

(Mark ONE response)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than \$5,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$30,000 – \$34,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$5,000 - \$9,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$35,000 – \$49,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$10,000 - \$14,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$50,000 – \$74,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$15,000 - \$19,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$75,000 – \$99,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$20,000 - \$24,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$100,000 – \$199,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 - \$29,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$200,000 or more |

20. Do you have health insurance at present? Yes No

21. At any time in the past 12 months, have you received cash assistance from government programs such as TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) or SSI?

Yes No

22. Do you own or rent the house or apartment where you live at present? (Mark one response)

Own Rent Other (Specify):

The remaining questions are about your cultural and civic life:

23. Do you know any language(s) other than English? Yes No

[If NO, skip to Question 33]

23a. (If YES) What other language(s) do you know?

24. How well do you *speak, understand, read* and *write* in Creole? **(Mark the ONE response that best applies in each column)**

	SPEAK	UNDERSTAND	READ	WRITE
Very Little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. How well do you *speak, understand, read* and *write* in English? **(Mark the ONE response that best applies in each column)**

	SPEAK	UNDERSTAND	READ	WRITE
Very Little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very Well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. In what language(s) do you speak with your parents, spouse or partner, children, friends, and co-workers? **(Mark the ONE response that best applies in each column)**

Language(s) you use to speak with:	Your parents	Your spouse or partner (if any)	Your children (if any)	Your closest friends	Your coworkers
English only	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English mostly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English and Creole about the same	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mostly in Creole	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Creole only	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27 How do you identify; that is, what do you call yourself? (Examples: Hispanic, Latino, American, Black, African-American, Cuban, Cuban-American, Nicaraguan, Nicaraguan American, Haitian, Haitian-American, Jamaican, Dominican, West Indian, Mexican, Mexican-American, Asian, Chinese, Chinese-American, etc.)

28. And how important is this identity to you, that is, what you call yourself?

- Not Important
- Somewhat Important
- Very Important

29. Which of the following race categories listed do you consider yourself to be? (Mark one response)

- White
- Black
- Asian
- Multi-racial
- Other (please specify): _____

30. What is your current religion? **(Mark one response)**

- Protestant (please specify denomination): _____
- Catholic
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Other religion (please specify): _____
- No religion

31. About how often do you attend religious services? **(Mark one response)**

- Never
- Less than once a year
- About once or twice a year
- Several times a year
- About once or twice a month
- Nearly every week
- Every week
- Several times a week

32. (If applicable) What is the name of the church/group where you attend religious services?

33. What is your citizenship status?

- U.S. citizen by birth
- U.S. citizen by naturalization
- Not a U.S. citizen
- Dual citizenship or nationality

34. Are you currently registered to vote? Yes No

35. What is your political party preference or affiliation? (Mark one response)

- Democratic
- Republican
- Other (please specify): _____
- No party preference or affiliation

36. During the last five years, have any of the following life change events happened to you or your family? (Mark one response for each line)

	Yes	No
a. I moved to a new home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I was divorced or separated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I got married	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I lost my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I became seriously ill or disabled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. One of my parents died	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. A member of my family was the victim of a crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. I was the victim of a crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. A member of my family was arrested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. I was arrested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. A family member spent time in a reform school, detention center, jail or prison	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. I spent time in a reform school, detention center, jail or prison	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. I graduated from college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. I had to take responsibility for caring for a seriously ill or disabled family member	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

37. In general, how is your health? (Mark one response for each line)

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

We may need to be able to contact you again in the future. Please print the name and address of someone who will know where you are in the event that you move:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Social Security Number: _____ (optional)

Appendix #2 - Interview Questions

Education & Employment

1. Tell me about what you did when you left high school.
 - Why did you do this job/schooling/other activity? How did you make the decision to do this?
 - What was your first full-time job? Who was your employer? When was this? How did you hear about the job?
 - What type of occupation do you realistically expect to have when you reach age 30? How do you envision achieving this job [if different from present job]? Why do you want to do this?

Language, Culture, & Family

2. What music do you listen to? What are your favorite musicians? Do you listen to any Haitian music? Which Haitian music do you listen to? Have you ever attended any Haitian music festivals or clubs? What music did you used to listen to? How have your musical tastes changed? Is this different from high school? Why do you think that is?
3. Do you speak Creole or French or both? In what language do YOU prefer to speak most of the time? Is this different from high school? Why do you think that is?
4. Do you have children? Who is the other parent of your child(ren)? What language do you speak with your children [or, if no children presently, what language do you plan to speak with potential children]? What is the racial/ethnic background of your child(ren)'s parent? Do you think you're going to raise your children differently than you were raised? How? Why is that?
5. For your (current or potential) children, what cultural influences do you plan to teach them? Is it important to you that they know about your Haitian heritage? How would you/do you share this heritage with your children? What did you do growing up that made you feel "Haitian"? Do you want to do this with your own children? Why or why not?
6. What kind of relationship do you have with your mother? With your father? What language(s) do you speak with them? Tell me about a time when you had a problem with them. How did you work it out? What did you like about your relationship with your parents?
7. I've had a lot of Haitians tell me that they face discrimination because they are Haitian. Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your race or because of your Haitian ancestry? Tell me about that time. [if applicable] Do you think there

is racial/ethnic discrimination against Haitians? Against other groups? Can you give me an example?

Identification & Relationships

8. When do you feel especially “Haitian”?
 - When do you feel “American”?
 - Do you feel ‘more American’ in some settings and ‘more Haitian’ in others? What situations? When do you feel more American? Why is that?
9. What is the ethnicity of your spouse or partner?
 - a. What is the race of your spouse or partner?
 - b. Is it important to you that your spouse/partner share your Haitian heritage?
 - c. What language do you speak with your spouse/partner? How did you meet? Why did you go out with/date/marry him/her?
 - d. Do you think it’s important to date other Haitians? Why or why not?
10. Which community groups are you a part of? (church?)
 - Why did you join?
 - What do you value about this community group?
 - Are there other Haitians there?
 - Does this matter to you?
11. Please tell me who your closest three friends are.
 - How do you know these people?
 - What is their racial/ethnic background?
 - What kinds of activities do you do together?
 - What language(s) do you speak together?

Homeland Connections

12. How many times have you ever been back to visit Haiti? Do you want to go? Do you think it’s important for you or your kids to go to Haiti? Do you plan to visit Haiti in the future? Do you plan to live there? Why or why not?
13. Have you ever gone back to Haiti and lived there for longer than 6 months?
14. How often do you send money to anyone there? Who do you send it to? Why do you send it? How much do you usually send? Do you think people should send money to Haiti?
15. Which feels more like ‘home’ to you: the United States, or Haiti? Why? Is this the same as in the past, or has it changed for you? How have your feelings changed?

VITA

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- 1999 – 2002 Program Consultant
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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- “Reconsidering Segmented Assimilation: lessons from Haitian youth in South Florida.” Organizer & presenter, Panel: Reaching for a Dream: The Elusive Promise of Education for Haitian Youth in South Florida, Haitian Studies Association, Boca Raton, FL. October 5, 2007.
- “Reconsidering Segmented Assimilation in a Global Era: lessons from Haitian youth in Miami.” American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C. December 2, 2007.
- “Looking in & looking out: measuring (segmented) assimilation of Haitians in Miami.” Indicators of Integration in Social Statistics International Workshop (International Union for the Scientific Study of Population). Montreal, Canada, December 10-11, 2007.
- “Over time and distance: Exploring Transnationalism within Haitian Second-generation Immigrants.” Organizer & presenter, Panel: Reshaping the Borders: migration experiences considered, Canadian Association for Studies in International Development, Vancouver, BC. June 5, 2008.
- “Immigrant Voices, Immigrant Votes: changing landscapes in civic participation.” Chair & presenter, Panel: Linking research & action: immigrant organizations

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- “Walls surround dreams: Life aspirations and outcomes of Haitian-Americans in Miami.” Organizer & presenter, Panel: Transforming Inequalities: Neoliberal Development, Immigrants and Native Minorities in South Florida, Society for the Study of Social Problems, Boston, MA. July 31, 2008.
- “Identifying the Battle Lines: Local-National Tensions in Organizing for Comprehensive Immigration Reform.” (With Dr. Stephanie Nawyn, Michigan State University). Invited presentation, Diverse Pathways to Immigrant Political Incorporation: Comparative Canadian and U.S. Perspectives, Miami, FL. January 15, 2009.
- “Beyond slogans and marches: contesting dialogues around immigration.” Canadian Sociology Association, Ottawa, ON. May 26, 2009.
- “Gendered Pathways: Exploring the Life Trajectories of Second-generation Haitians in Miami.” American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA. August 11, 2009.
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AWARDS AND HONORS

- Community Service Scholarship, Calvin College, 1996.
- Presidential Scholarship, Calvin College, 1996-1999.
- Dean’s List Distinction, Calvin College, 1999.
- Honors Medallion, Calvin College, 1999.
- Canada Graduate Scholarship – Master’s, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2003-2004.
- Doctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2004-2008.
- Presidential Fellowship, Florida International University, 2004-2007.
- Dissertation Year Fellowship, Florida International University, 2008-2009.
- Florida-Canada Linkage Institute Fellowship, 2009-2010.
- Recruitment of Policy Leaders Program, Government of Canada, 2011.