

Voodoo, Zombies, and Mermaids: U.S. Newspaper Coverage of Haiti

Author(s): Amy E. Potter

Source: *Geographical Review*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (Apr., 2009), pp. 208-230

Published by: American Geographical Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40377381>

Accessed: 16-01-2018 07:34 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

American Geographical Society is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Geographical Review*

VOODOO, ZOMBIES, AND MERMAIDS: U.S. NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF HAITI*

AMY E. POTTER

ABSTRACT. Newspaper articles in the United States paint a picture of Haiti as a failed state, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. These articles place the blame of the country's problems entirely on Haiti itself, with little regard for the outside forces that also contributed to the country's present-day state. This study is a critical geopolitical analysis of Haitian representation in U.S. newspapers. I empirically examine a year's worth of articles from 2004 written in five major U.S. newspapers. From these articles I analyze both the words used to describe Haiti and the emerging media frames. Critical studies have shown that representation in the media can greatly impact the conventional wisdom surrounding a place and legitimize social inequalities. By understanding the images used to describe Haiti, I hope to develop a means of rethinking popular perceptions of the country. I argue that only then can the problems of Haiti be more effectively addressed and a new dialogue created, one that encompasses the entire story of this Caribbean country. *Keywords:* Caribbean, content analysis, geopolitics, Haiti, media, newspapers.

On 14 March 2004 the *New York Times* ran an article entitled "Life Is Hard and Short in Haiti's Bleak Villages" (Weiner 2004). In the lead paragraph is the statement that "diplomats call Haiti 'a failed state,' a nation done in by dictators and disasters." This notion of Haiti as a failed state, unable to properly govern itself, done in by itself and acts of nature, is a common frame that can be found on the pages of U.S. newspapers. When one examines the history of Haiti, one finds a nation caught in the crossfire of geopolitics, its fate resting mostly on the fickle interests of the United States, Canada, and France. Yet the press shows little regard for the role outsiders have played in helping to create the so-called failed state (Lawless 1992; Klak 1994; Sack 1997; Farmer 2006).

A growing collection of geopolitical studies has critically examined place images in newspapers and magazines (K. Dodds 1993; Sharp 1993; Klak 1994; Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996; Larsen forthcoming). Although both Thomas Klak and Soren Larsen chose Caribbean locations for their studies, Haiti has never been the subject of a critical geopolitical study of media that concentrates solely on representations of it in the daily media (Yin 2003). In this article I present the results of both qualitative and quantitative content analyses of more than 700 articles on Haiti in six major U.S. newspapers. My research revealed that the coverage in 2004 rarely acknowledged the connections of the past and the broader relationship of Haiti to the rest of the world. I do not mean to privilege an academic account over a journalistic

* I would like to thank my adviser, Garth Myers, at the University of Kansas for both inspiration and continual support throughout this study. Special thanks to the Department of Geography at the University of Kansas and Bryant Freeman, director of its Institute for Haitian Studies. I am also indebted to the helpful comments by my anonymous reviewers and to Tim Brock, who reminded me about Wyclef Jean and Shakira's "Hips Don't Lie" duet.

✉ Ms. POTTER is a doctoral candidate in geography at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803.

one in this article, but I do seek to show some of the flaws in daily newspaper coverage, while highlighting some of the language used to describe Haiti. Unlike most academic publications, newspapers have a broad audience and tend to write about topics with greater frequency, thus generating a large impact on knowledge. This alone makes critical media analysis imperative if we are to understand the public's daily consumption of information.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

I adopt Alison Blunt's definition of representation as "the ways in which meanings are conveyed and depicted" (1999, 234). Geographical study of representation concerns itself with place, in terms of how place meanings are conveyed or contested. Blunt wrote, "if geography means 'writing the world' then representation—in this case 'writing' in its broadest sense—is one of geography's central concerns" (p. 234). Representations of place, as portrayed in such media as maps, landscape paintings, government proclamations, films, and literature, have been of interest to geographers since at least the 1960s and 1970s (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Harley 1988, 1992; Zonn 1990; Barnes and Duncan 1992; Duncan and Ley 1993; Avraham 2000).

Critical geopolitics has emerged from modern representation studies in geography and seeks to question the language of conventional geopolitics or the modes of discourse that shape political practices and to "uncover the politics involved in writing the geography of global space" (Sharp 1999, 184; O'Tuathail 1996). In the past, critical geopolitics concerned itself with three areas: power, knowledge, and space; the spatial Other; and the deconstruction of texts (O'Tuathail 1996; Johnston and others 2000). Newspapers are essential texts of this geopolitical discussion. "Although the linkages between the press and geopolitical discourse have scarcely been examined, print coverage of geopolitical events or processes is often the medium by which national political discourses are disseminated" (Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996, 22). Critical geopolitics takes the predominant story that appears quite natural or commonsense and seeks to deconstruct that story (Sharp 1999, 188). This area of inquiry in the field of geography is significant because much of what the contemporary U.S. public knows about other parts of the world comes not from scholarly literature but from the media. Reporters can also be considered geographers because they tell the story of places to the citizens of the world (Sharp 1993).

Geographical research incorporates an established methodology and employs scholarly literature, social and economic statistics, and fieldwork in order to gain a balanced understanding of place. Journalists, unlike social scientists, do not operate "within explicit theory and method," although they do abide by a journalistic code of ethics (Lett 1986, 33).

The anthropologist James Lett attributed improper news coverage to journalists' need to reinforce the views already held by the general public (Lett 1986, 33). Klak noted that, in addition to reinforcing ideological convictions or views, the media also tend to report solely for entertainment value: "We could deem the difference between media images of foreign places and those from geographical research as

simply two alternative versions of reality were it not for the news media's seductive authority" (1994, 319). The news media makes daily decisions that affect the construction of place. In the process of writing a story, they must first decide what is worth covering, how to gather information, whom to interview, how to shape a narrative from the information compiled, what points should be emphasized, and, finally, where to place the story (Lee and Solomon 1990, 16). This is not to say that geographers and other social scientists are without their biases. In his book on the geopolitics of the Caribbean, the geographer Thomas Anderson stated that "but, *aside from Haiti*, the Caribbean is not a backward region" (1984, 41; italics added).

Objectivity on the part of all parties, whether they be academics or journalists, is impossible; we can never be completely partial or impartial (Sack 1997). This realization, however, should not overwhelm us or discourage us from questioning place imagery, but it does need to enter into our analysis of how and why particular images gain salience and in effect come to stand for truth.

Although audience autonomy is still an area that requires more study, Robert Entman suggested that "the politically relevant bulk of the audience will tend to go along" with the information despite the opportunity for its members to question and draw their own meanings from the text (1991, 24). When newsmakers fail to challenge the dominant frame, an authoritative position dominates the news pages, and opposing information is often obscured rather than highlighted in dominant frames (p. 24).

Place images in the media have the potential to have tremendous impact on the people of that particular location and can perpetuate or even legitimize social inequalities. This is especially important for understanding the history of Haiti and its geopolitical relationships with surrounding nations. Eli Avraham described how representation predominantly affects three groups: the general public, the policymakers, and the inhabitants of that place (2000). Although Avraham's ideas are set in the context of cities, they can also be applied to the representation of Haiti.

Representation of place first affects the U.S. general public's attitude toward matters like tourism, migration, investments, and the establishment of businesses. Haiti's tourism industry was all but wiped out in the 1980s from the AIDS coverage that inaccurately portrayed the country as a breeding ground for the disease. When further research corrected these misconceptions, this information failed to receive the publicity given to the initial reports, and the tourist industry never fully recovered from the stigma (Bentivegna 1991; Farmer 1992).

The second group Avraham mentions are policymakers who make decisions about resource allocation, legislation, and rule making based on place image (Entman 1991; Walker 1997; Avraham 2000). When the media portray Haiti as a failed state, with little hope of improvement, foreign governments have little incentive to offer aid. This sentiment was expressed by Ted Galen Carpenter, a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute who was quoted in *USA Today* as saying, "This is a case where the United States has tried repeatedly to stabilize Haiti and to get that country to have a workable democratic government and a functioning economy—and it has

repeatedly failed. There is no reason to be more optimistic this time” (Michaels, Nichols, and Keen 2004). This quotation also reinforces the notion of Haiti’s inability to govern itself and the need for outside interference.

The final group affected by the representation of place comprises its inhabitants. They must face their own self-image and also try to cope with the prejudices of others (Avraham 2000). Haitians have seen their share of prejudices, whether from their neighbors in the Dominican Republic, with which Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola, or in trying to gain admittance into the United States. One Haitian American writer, Edwidge Danticat, described the shame she feels when revealing her native identity. “It was very hard. . . ‘Haitian’ was like a curse. People were calling you ‘Frenchy, go back to the banana boat,’ and a lot of kids would lie about where they came from. They would say anything but Haitian” (Pierre-Pierre 1999, 201).

PRESS COVERAGE OF HAITI

Newspaper articles in the United States, whether consciously or not, have a tendency to portray Haiti as completely isolated from the rest of the world. However, if one looks more closely, particularly at Haiti’s relationship with the United States over the past 300 years, one finds that these two countries have historically been—and remain—intricately connected through geography, the Haitian diaspora, and the global economy. Although here I focus primarily on U.S. media coverage of Haiti, what I hope will also come forth are some of the historical interactions between the two countries, historical interactions that are also briefly highlighted to establish the context for the various frames that came forth.

The anthropologist Robert Lawless conducted one of the most comprehensive studies of Haitian press coverage (1992). His findings and those of earlier authors suggest that Haiti fell victim to some of the worst U.S. press coverage of any individual country at the hands of foreign observers (Mintz 1966; Murray 1977; Goldberg 1981). According to Lawless, “By saying that Haiti has a bad press, I mean both Haiti is presented in a bad light and that the quality of the media is inferior to its coverage of many other subjects” (1992, 1).

Some of the earliest media coverage of Haiti in the Western world during the nineteenth century emphasized cannibalism (Lawless 1992, 1). In the 1960s the perceived communist threat took center stage, followed by the Tontons Macoutes and zombies.¹ In the 1980s, press coverage of Haiti centered around AIDS and the belief that being Haitian made one more susceptible to the disease (Farmer 1992). The unfavorable media coverage associating AIDS with Haiti prompted Fritz Cineas, the Haitian ambassador to the United States at the time, to publish a letter in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in which he reprimanded newspapers for placing damaging information about the AIDS association and Haiti on the outer pages while putting stories about new evidence vindicating Haitians in their inner pages (cited in Bentivegna 1991, 122–123).

Haiti’s identity crisis is not wrapped up solely in the mass media. Books, films, and travelogues have helped to perpetuate stereotypes. The U.S. military historians

Robert and Nancy Heinl, authors of one of the longest histories of Haiti, helped perpetuate the bloody image of Haiti with passages like “Are the Haitian people, living endlessly in a perverse continuum, oblivious of their past, doomed always to repeat a history that has been written in blood?” (1978, 665). Graham Greene’s novel *The Comedians*, published in 1966 and made into a motion picture starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in 1967, continued to advance the image of Haiti “as a bizarre land of madman rulers manipulating a Voodoo-infested interior of superstitious savages” (Lawless 1992, 3).

U.S. media coverage of the first attempt to overthrow Jean-Bertrand Aristide—who ruled the nation off and on from 1991 until 2004—in August 1991 helped advance a secret Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report to congressional leaders that branded the president as a murderer, a psychopath, and a mentally ill man (Farmer 2006, 184). The CIA report was later proved without foundation, when Canada’s national medical association found that the Canadian doctor who was the source for the claim of mental illness did not exist. Despite this announcement, U.S. television networks continued to run less-than-favorable reports on Aristide that cited the false CIA report as their source. James Carroll did offer a counternarrative on the editorial pages of the *Boston Globe* during this time: “The main purpose of attacks on Aristide at this crucial moment of course, is to distract from the character of the real murderers and psychopaths who refuse to yield power in Haiti” (1993), but this counter narrative was an exception.

The U.S. media, in the years following Aristide’s first overthrow, described his successor, General Raoul Cédras, as a professional and flexible moderate while portraying Aristide as a bloodthirsty extremist. From 1991 to 1992, the coup government of Cédras presided over 99.8 percent of human rights abuses, while Aristide’s Lavalas political party presided over just 0.2 percent (Farmer 2006, 186)—statistics that the media reports of the time failed to report. A study conducted by Boston Media Action found that from 30 September to 14 October 1991 the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Miami Herald*, and the *Boston Globe* attributed 60 percent of all paragraphs on human rights abuses to Aristide but only 40 percent to Cédras’s government (Farmer 2006, 186). “Although it is difficult to assign to the media—which consist, of course, of journalists and other commentators writing from a variety of positions—an inordinate role in shaping public perceptions of current events, there can be little doubt that readings of the Haitian coup were strongly shaped by key stories” (p. 185).

The 2004 newspaper articles I examined for this study do not, as a whole, deviate from past media coverage. They too, repeatedly noted the themes of Haiti’s poverty, disease, and illiterate population. Lawless commented that, although good reason to note such characteristics exists, very seldom did any work give Haitians credit for their accomplishments (1992). He traced the origin of many of Haiti’s contemporary political woes to the questionable dealings of the U.S. government with nondemocratic forces in Haiti (p. 139). He attributed the biased coverage of Haiti to two main factors: the basic problems of Haiti were old and, in the eyes of

journalists, did not fall into the category of news; and the problems of Haiti seemed “beyond the reach of any mortals currently on the scene” (p. 169).

My spring 2005 interview with Bryant Freeman, director of the Institute for Haitian Studies at the University of Kansas, was most revealing because of his insider’s understanding of the practicalities of journalistic coverage of Haiti. With the exception of those from the *Miami Herald*, he said, journalists who traveled to Haiti for two or three days to cover a story cannot speak Haitian Creole. This linguistic lack limited the journalists to interactions through a third-party interpreter or to interviewing only English-speaking Haitians. Some interpreters were even former Tontons Macoutes.

METHODOLOGY

Klaus Krippendorff defined content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (1980, 21). The systematic methodology employed in my content analysis reveals the repetition of key words and phrases that can then be grouped together in order to expose the dominant frames established to describe Haiti (Krippendorff 1980; Riffe, Lacy, and Fico 1998).

Understanding the device of the frame is essential for representation of place studies. The frame is the underlying perspective, a consistent message beneath the information contained in media reports (Entman 1991; Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996, 25). Frames convey values and ideological convictions of a group, and they often depend on references to other information within the cultural framework of the reader (Larsen forthcoming). Frames tend to make news accounts simpler and more understandable in a chaotic world; and this simplification can lead to a homogenized perspective. Robert Sack argued that, as geographical mobility and communication globalize us, we also have a tendency to homogenize places and perspectives. He argued that homogenization can threaten geographical awareness because it limits the number of perspectives put forth (1997, 19). If a single viewpoint does emerge, we must determine whether it “is due to the measured and reasoned acceptance of a position or to the domination of one culture’s partial view over all others” (p. 19).

Frames make it difficult not only for a variety of viewpoints to emerge but also for the public to comprehend them (Entman 1991). According to Entman, frames can even lead to political action. In the case of Haiti, the dominant frame suggested that the nation was inept at governing itself, which may have made it easier for American readers to accept the nonintervention of the United States in Aristide’s removal in 2004. Detecting and defining frames is the fundamental goal in interpreting place images and their impacts on public perception (Entman 1991, 6; Klak 1994, 322).

In order to properly examine articles from the five major newspapers with enough depth, I narrowed the period of evaluation to one year, 1 January to 31 December 2004. I chose 2004 because that year allows me to study three specific themes:

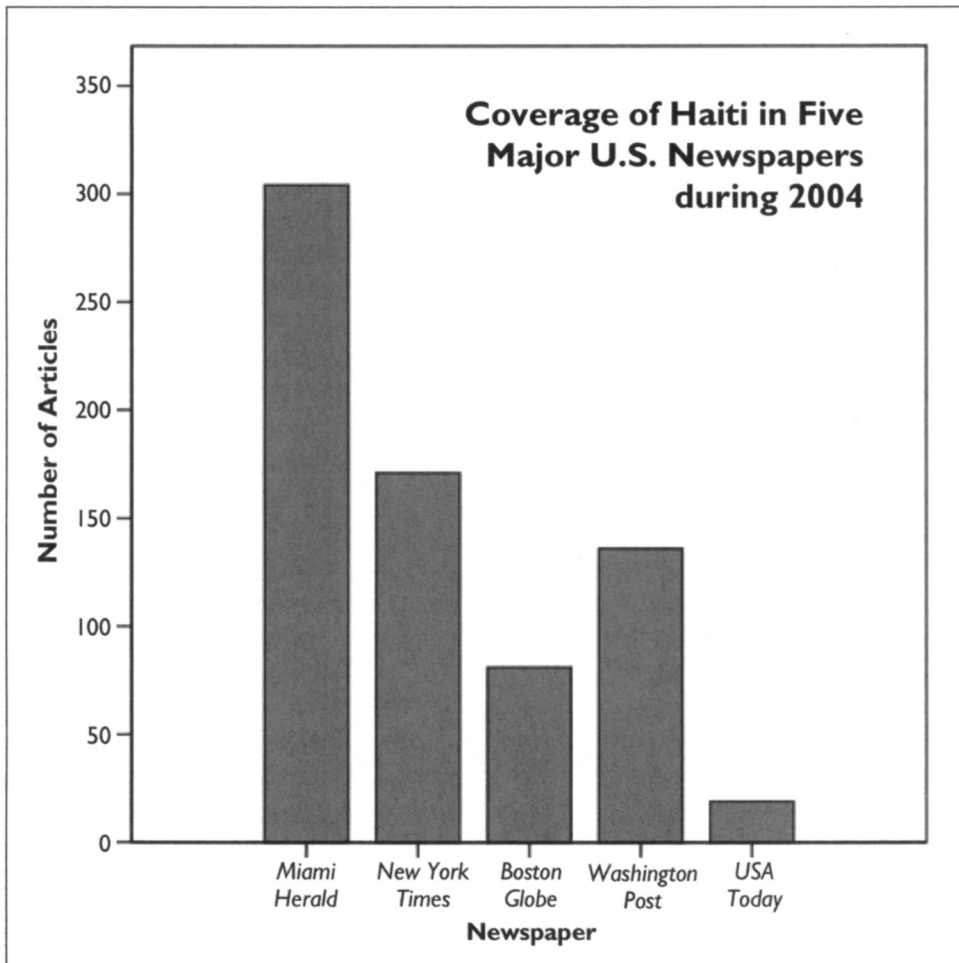


FIG. 1.—Coverage of Haiti during 2004 varied among the five major U.S. newspapers analyzed. The *Miami Herald* had the most extensive coverage, with 304 articles; *USA Today* had the fewest, with only 19 articles. (Graph by the author)

celebration of Haiti's 200th anniversary of independence from France; the political upheaval surrounding Aristide's removal; and the destruction caused by Hurricane Jeanne.

I chose the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Miami Herald*, *USA Today*, and the *Boston Globe* because they have foreign correspondents in Haiti and because most of them provide substantial coverage on international issues. *USA Today* is the exception, but I selected it because it has the greatest circulation of any U.S. newspaper. The five major newspapers varied in their reporting on Haiti. In total, they published 1,439 articles that referred to Haiti in either the headline or the lead paragraph. Of those references, I deemed 711 articles relevant for this study, because they focused entirely on Haiti instead of simply referring to it while addressing another topic. The *Miami Herald* had the most extensive coverage of Haiti,

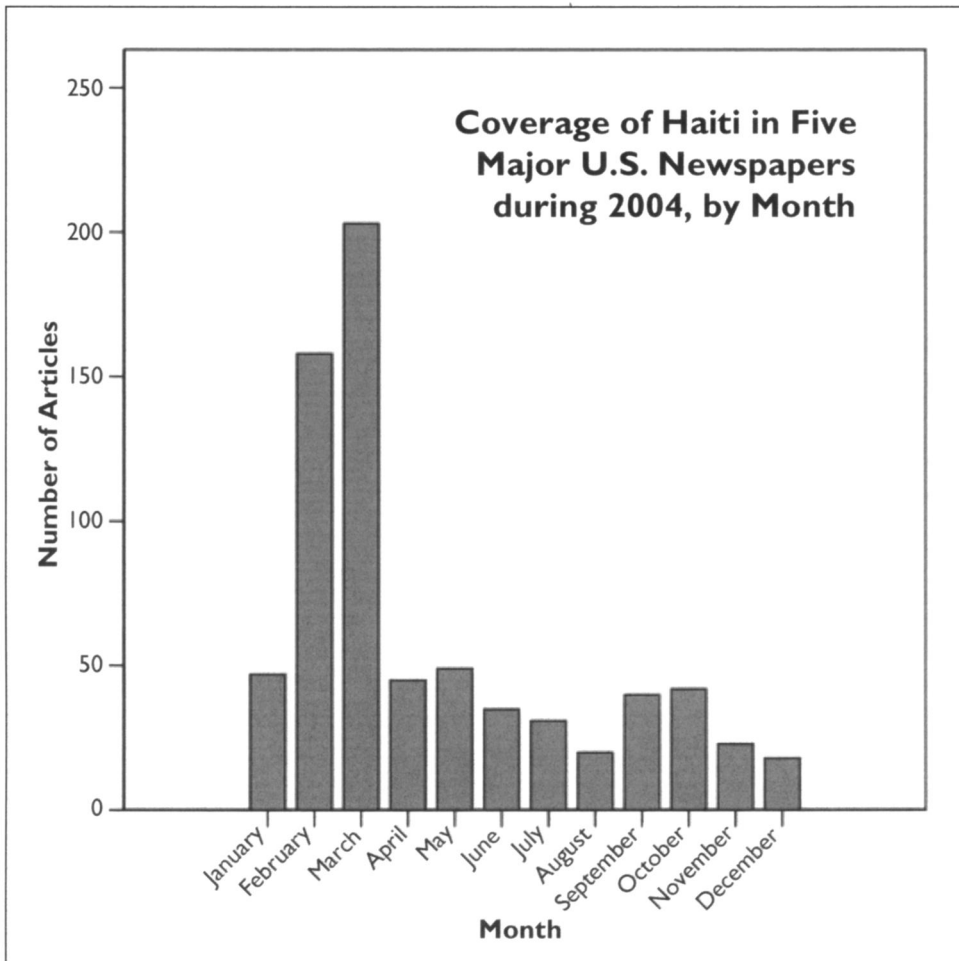


FIG. 2—Analysis of 711 articles focused on Haiti in five major U.S. newspapers during 2004 revealed that the most extensive coverage occurred during February and March. (Graph by the author)

representing nearly half of the articles evaluated; *USA Today*, the least extensive (Figure 1). The majority of coverage concerning Haiti in 2004 for all five newspapers was concentrated in February and March (Figure 2). These two months were significant because they marked the lead-up and the actual controversial removal/resignation of Aristide.

To come up with the articles that focus on Haiti I utilized Lexis Nexis and News Bank, both of which are electronic databases that contain full text. I then recorded words or phrases describing Haiti within thirty words of any form of the word “Haiti” in each of the 711 articles I found. My purpose for the content analysis, like that in other newspaper analyses, was to determine what words journalists used to describe Haiti, the frequency of usage, their context, and their underlying purpose (Krippendorff 1980; Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996). Cataloguing word usage helped

me identify those newspaper articles, editorials, and letters to the editor that diverged from the scholarly portrayal of Haiti and revealed potential frames. I included editorials and letters to the editors in my analysis because they, like news stories, have the power to form knowledge, shape issues, and even inform dialogue that comes forth about a topic. Much like the stories newspapers deem newsworthy, editorial boards have the power to choose which letters to the editor to run and what topics are appropriate for their opinion page.

KEY FRAMES

Frames provide a basic interpretation of the daily events that unfold in a chaotic world and make it easy for news consumers to digest information. Beneath the frame is an overarching message or ideological principle (Entman 1991). My analysis revealed several dominant frames when I grouped words and phrases used to describe Haiti in 2004 on the basis of their common attributes (Riffe, Lacy, and Fico 1998, 73). A number of other ideas emerged in the news coverage that were too inconsistent to cast as individual frames. For example, acronyms “HIV” or “AIDS” appeared in eighteen of the newspaper articles I analyzed. Authors wrote such phrases as “wracked by AIDS” or described the grip of AIDS on Haiti as “rampant” or “widespread.”

THE VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL UNREST FRAME

The most common word used to describe Haiti in all five newspapers was “violence,” which appeared in 211 articles, with reference to Haiti’s political instability (Table I). The media described Haiti as a politically unstable place, full of violence, turmoil, chaos, corruption, and a multitude of other problems. Since the turn of the twentieth century many U.S. decisions concerning Haiti have helped initiate political instability and violence. One example of the lasting legacy of the American occupation of Haiti—from 1915 to 1934—was the reestablishment of its military (Arthur and Dash 1999), which inflicted considerable damage on the country and deposed a number of presidents, including Élie Lescot in 1946, Dumarsais Estimé in 1950, and Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991. A combined analysis of all five newspapers revealed use of some form of the word “blood” to describe Haiti—fifty-nine references in all. Lawless wrote that “the image of blood is, of course, easily connected in the minds of naïve readers with the notion of Voodoo sacrifices. . . . The history of Haiti is, in fact, surprisingly void of ‘blood’ by any objective measurement of casualties per capita in coups, elections, and various other changes in government” (1992, 2).

All five newspapers used words that did not portray the removal of Jean Bertrand Aristide accurately. As time passed, the controversy surrounding the removal of Aristide and Aristide’s accusations of kidnapping all but disappeared. When the newspapers referenced the situation, they simplified it to a version like this account in the *Miami Herald*: “Aristide was ousted Feb. 29 amid a bloody revolt against his government” (Charles 2004b). *USA Today* was worse because coverage was sparse: It did not adequately acknowledge that Aristide claimed he was kidnapped, whereas

TABLE I—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL UNREST IN HAITI, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Violence	211
Crisis! ^a	150
Chaos! ^a	81
Blood; bloody; bloodshed; bloody dictatorship; bloody history; potential blood-bath; independence born in bloodshed	59
Unrest; unstable; instability	44
Corruption	31
Anarchy; revolution	24
Trouble! ^a	22
Turmoil	22
Fledgling democracy; pseudo-democracy; fragile democracy; elusive democracy; democracy in flames; struggling democracy; flirtation with democracy; “democracy” in any other phrase referring to a democracy that is not working	18
Misery	17
Problems; conflict	17
Failed nation; failed state	15

^a “!” = Any suffix.

both the United States and France said he resigned. As the year progressed, when newspaper editors did mention the discrepancy in stories they placed it at the end of the article.

THE POVERTY FRAME

One of the most popular phrases found in the 2004 coverage of Haiti referred to its impoverished condition in the Western Hemisphere or the Americas (Table II). As with every other reference to a problem, the media predominantly portrayed the poverty of Haiti’s people or of the country as entirely its own. “Haiti’s particular characteristics are, of course, unique, but the general contours of her cumulative experiences of externally imposed underdevelopment have parallels elsewhere in the Caribbean and, in the broader sense, throughout the Third World” (Richardson 1992, 2). Haiti is a part of the global periphery, which includes a great many countries with characteristically low wages and intimate links—through uneven economic exchange—with the core countries (Wallerstein 1974; Richardson 1992, 2). Yet the media rarely examined this set of integral links.

THE ECONOMY FRAME

The 2004 accounts expressed surprise that Haiti was ruined economically and had been for the majority of its history (Table III). Very few people, it seems, know that in 1825 the young nation of Haiti had to pay reparations to France in the form of 90 million gold francs in order for its independence to be acknowledged. In more recent times the media have failed to acknowledge the industrial development initia-

TABLE II—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF POVERTY IN HAITI, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere; “nation” in any other phrase referring to poverty in the Western Hemisphere or the Americas	91
Poverty	70
Poor country; impoverished, poor nation, impoverished Caribbean nation	57
Poor! ^a	38
Hung! ^a ; malnutrition; underfed; food shortage; famine	37
Illiterate; illiteracy; least well educated nation in the Western Hemisphere; lack of education; poor education; undereducated	10
Unemployed	6
Thirsty	4

^a “!” = Any suffix.

TABLE III—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF THE HAITIAN ECONOMY, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Economic woes; economic hardship; few economic openings; economic stagnation; battered social and economic infrastructure; social and economic poverty; of little strategic, political, or economic value to the United States; ongoing economic crisis; political-economic problem; political socioeconomic crisis; worsening social and economic conditions; economic struggles; “economic” followed by any other word	16
Sputtering economy; ravaged economy; withering economy; contorted economy; economy impoverished and uncompetitive; economy worsened; plummeting economy; shattered economy; broken economy; battered economy; eroded the economy; failed economy; totally devastated economy; stricken economy; any other word followed by “economy”	13
Bankrupt	2

tives of the 1980s, which favored U.S. investors who sought to take advantage of Haiti’s cheap labor. These initiatives only made Haiti more dependent on imports. Such ideas are missing from the discussion of Haiti’s bankrupt state and failed economy.

The roots of Haiti’s poverty run deep, to its colonial history, its 200-year dependence on the major Western industrial powers and its narrowly-based oligarchy. In the latter half of the twentieth century, the oligarchy has maintained tight control of the economy with the sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit—but always crucial—support of the United States. (Ridgeway 1994, 85)

Much of this support from the United States, which in James Ridgeway’s opinion only strengthened the control of Haiti’s oligarchy, arrives in the form of monetary

aid. Discussion of Haiti's reliance on U.S. aid in particular was common, but the words describing the situation were not. The articles rarely mentioned policies that helped create Haiti's near-total dependence on international assistance and food. "Allocated for the overt purpose of eradicating Haiti's awful poverty (which it dismally failed to do), the aid has in fact provided support for Haiti's elites—but it also has played a critical role in directing the Haitian economy in line with U.S. multinational corporate interests" (Ridgeway 1994, 85). An editorial in the *New York Times* mentioned that U.S. rice subsidies were undercutting Haitian farmers: "Washington should also make it easier for Haiti to earn its way out of poverty by eliminating the American rice subsidies that have contributed to pricing poor Haitian rice farmers out of the market" (NYT 2004a), but this was an exception to the general frame.

THE HISTORY FRAME

In 2004 Haiti celebrated 200 years of independence from France. The newspapers often mentioned this historical feat in light of Haiti's current political struggles. The overall frame that emerges in the pages of these newspapers in discussions of Haiti's accomplishment as the world's first black republic, though, is clearly one of disappointment that the nation failed to achieve its potential. An example of this can be found in an article in the *Miami Herald*, which acknowledged Haiti's "pride for throwing off France's slave regime 200 years ago" but then discussed the state of "shame in not having lived up to the nation's promise" (Spangler, Charles, and Arthur 2004). The predominant message is one of failure. How could the "mother of liberty" (Polgreen 2004) succumb to such a "bitter history" (Polgreen and Weiner 2004), one in which "bloody overthrows are the norm" (Wilentz 2004)? Of course, most of the newspaper articles that referred to Haiti's "turbulent 200-year history" failed to acknowledge the difficulties the first black republic endured (Jones 2004). They ignored how other countries contributed to Haiti's political strife.

In the early nineteenth century an independent black republic was an abomination in the eyes of not only American slaveholders but also the Western world. Representations of failure for the first independent black republic fell in step with notions of slavery and justified discriminatory racial policies. Alfred Hunt wrote, "To those looking for failure in the emancipation of the former French colony, Haiti represented an affront to the laws of nature and the republic was therefore doomed to fail" (1988, 2). These representations also worked alongside discriminatory U.S. immigration policies (Mitchell 1994), which I discuss briefly below.

In all five newspapers a total of thirty-eight articles refer to coups, "centuries of horror," the "tragic legacy of militarism," and similar topics (Table IV). On two occasions the *Miami Herald* described the island nation in light of its history. The statement that "a republic that endured decades of rejection and neglect" acknowledged the period in which Haiti was a pariah state to the white world (DeVise 2004, §BH, 13); and the phrase "a stain on the conscience of its former colonial masters, America and France" showed some understanding of the interconnectedness of Haiti and the rest of the world, in particular the United States in the era of new

colonialism and France in the old (Herald Staff 2004). Again, though, these more nuanced articles were rare.

THE ILLICIT DRUGS FRAME

Illicit drugs, particularly cocaine, flow through Haiti. The elites and the military have been known to rely on the trade as an important source of revenue with which to maintain their dominant position. The issue that arises from my study is how the media portray and perhaps even exaggerate drug transshipment in Haiti. The Haitian rapper Wyclef Jean mentions this idea in his musical duet with Columbian vocalist Shakira when he sings, "Why the CIA wanna watch us? Colombians and Haitians. I ain't guilty, it's a musical transaction," implying that a Columbian/Haitian musical duet does not necessarily mean involvement in the drug trade (Shakira 2006).

The combined coverage in 2004, with the exception of *USA Today*, comprised forty-two references to Haiti's role in cocaine transshipment from Colombia (Table V). Of these references, eight insinuated that Haiti was a major transshipment point for U.S.-bound Colombian cocaine. According to the *New York Times*, "nearly a quarter of Colombian cocaine reaching the U.S. flows through Haiti" (Polgreen and Weiner 2004). The *Miami Herald* suggested that Haiti was a "major pipeline for heroin, marijuana and cocaine" (Ottey 2004a), and the *Boston Globe* said that it was the "largest narcotics transshipment center in the Caribbean" (Dudley 2004). Information from the National Drug Intelligence Center, which investigated drug transshipment in the Caribbean and has estimated the combined involvement of both nations on Hispaniola, failed to corroborate these claims. Although Haiti does play a role in cocaine transshipment from South America, the severity of the words chosen is not warranted. According to the 2003 Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement, only 22 percent of cocaine bound for the U.S. traveled through the Caribbean; the vast majority of it, 77 percent, traveled through Central America and Mexico (USDOJ 2005). As a whole, Hispaniola was involved with only an estimated 7 percent of all cocaine headed to the U.S.²

The concern on the part of the U.S. government over Haiti's role in cocaine transshipment as played out in the pages of the daily newspapers also does not correspond with past U.S. action in Haiti. Aristide took a strong stance against the narcotics trade, which infringed upon the source of revenue for some elites and military personnel. "Aristide's anti-corruption campaign had promised not only to reform the state apparatus, but to halt drug trafficking and other smuggling. This had been the army's bailiwick, and some thought Aristide was going too far. But here too, real headway was made, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency reported that the amount of cocaine passing through Haiti decreased under the new government" (Farmer 2006, 142).

However, the drug trade financed the 1991 military coup that deposed Aristide. The U.S. government was slow to take measures that would paralyze the military dictatorship and restore the elected president, an elected leader who forcefully op-

TABLE IV—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF HAITIAN HISTORY, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
200-year history; turbulent 200-year history; unhappy 200-year history of dictatorship/insurrection; centuries of horror; 200 years of misrule; latest wrong in Haiti's 200-year history; [for the] past 200 years Haiti has been unstable; misery that has afflicted Haiti for most of its 200 years as an independent nation	15
World's first black republic; world's first independent black nation; mother of liberty; arguably the most radical revolution of the eighteenth century	12
Dictatorships; legacy of bloody dictatorships; tragic legacy of militarism	9
Former slave colony; former colony; abolish slavery; bloody slave revolt	9
Coups: 33rd unplanned change of government; 32 coups	8
Bitter history; brutal history; wrenching history; murderous contemporary history; bumpy history; troubled history; any other word followed by "history"	7
French and African cultures: rich mixture of French and African cultures; French-speaking, Afro-Caribbean people; African descent	6
Former sugar-rich French colony; once [France's] richest colony in the New World	2

TABLE V—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF ILLICIT DRUGS IN HAITI, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Drug trafficking; narco smuggling; cocaine trafficking; cocaine shipments; drug trade; drug money flows freely; worsening drug trade; growing drug trade; major pipeline for heroin, marijuana, and cocaine	25
Transshipment point for cocaine; transshipment point for illegal drugs; haven for drug traffickers; shipping center for drugs; transshipment of Colombian cocaine; way station for Colombian cocaine bound for the United States; narcotics transshipment center	14
Colombian cocaine: flow of Colombian cocaine; magnet in the Caribbean for cocaine flows; nearly a quarter of Colombian cocaine reaching the United States flows through Haiti	3

posed the narcotics trade. In fact, some members of the Haitian military who were involved in the drug trade were on the CIA payroll (Farmer 2006, 185), and U.S. actions supported leaders, like General Cédras, with known connections to the narcotics trade. Blaming drug traffickers, the U.S. government failed to address the real problem, the demand for the drug at home. The *World Factbook* reinforces this idea, describing Haiti in this way: "Colombian narcotics traffickers favor Haiti for illicit financial transactions; pervasive corruption" (CIA 2008). In a speech before the United Nations General Assembly in 1991, Aristide said, "As regards the drug traffic itself, it is important to note that it is generated and sustained by the demand from the North. It is thus necessary to eliminate this demand for production, which comes from consumers in the industrialized countries." The U.S. media, at least in 2004,

TABLE VI—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF THE HAITIAN LANDSCAPE, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Deforestation; bald hills; denuded; lack of trees; barren mountains; no forests; desolate hills	33
Floods	30
Infrastructure: substandard infrastructure; collapsed infrastructure; fragile infrastructure; anemic institutions; hostile institutions; lack of services; crumbling infrastructure; inadequate infrastructure	23
Natural disaster; natural hazard; manmade misery	18
Mud! ^a	17
Streets, roads: dirty streets; dusty streets; filthy streets; treacherous, unpaved roads; dusty villages; ruined, pockmarked streets; cratered streets; few highways; deteriorated roads	17
Trash; garbage; debris	17
Slum; shantytown	14
Tourism: struggles to attract tourists; on the margins of the tourism world; great tourism potential; bygone tourism era; beautiful place; ancient castles; turquoise beaches; cobalt waters of the Gulf of Gonâve; culturally interesting place	10
Raw sewage; open sewers; refuse	7
Mountains; hilly	6
Erosion	5
Location (in relation to Florida): 500 miles from our shores; starving nation 500 miles from Florida; 650 miles from Florida; crumbling democracy in our own backyard; land 600 miles from Florida	5
Once-lush	2

^a “!” = Any suffix.

consistently failed to report on Haiti’s—or Aristide’s— relationship to the narcotics trade in a factual matter.

THE LANDSCAPE FRAME

The majority of Haiti’s physical descriptors in the media refer to its environmental problems and natural disasters (Table VI). Flooding in June 2004 and the havoc wreaked by Hurricane Jeanne in September of the same year were important events that evoked descriptions of Haiti’s landscape. Thirty-three references were to the overall deforestation of Haiti. With the exception of a handful of articles, news coverage placed the blame for the present-day problem of deforestation and erosion on the Haitian people, “who wreck the land to survive” (Weiner 2004). The overall impression of Haiti’s landscape from the cataloguing of words was that of a dirty, muddy, trash-filled, mountainous, deforested country awaiting its next humanmade disaster.

If one were to look into Haiti’s environmental past, particularly in terms of the most prominent issues concerning deforestation and erosion, one would find that it in fact began during the colonial period, when the new agricultural techniques

that the French introduced to maximize the production of sugar began to weaken the soil. French plantation owners initiated the process of cutting and selling trees. Mahogany was the most sought-after of timber, and sawyers had cut them to near extinction by the end of World War I. Bonham Richardson attributed the Caribbean's legacy of land degradation to a "half millennium" of foreign control.

The centuries of European exploitation (mainly France in Haiti's case) were marked by massive environmental change. West African slaves laboring under European supervision stripped the natural vegetation from Caribbean islands and planted tropical staple crops—mainly sugar cane—in its place. Heterogeneous insular ecosystems were thus transformed into monocrop economies. Local environmental corrective actions were negligible because the decisions affecting the Caribbean environment were made by external market forces and implemented by European planters. (Richardson 1992, 14)

Foreign control continued in the twentieth century with the American occupation, which brought about changes in the original Haitian constitution to permit foreigners to own land. With this change foreign companies, especially U.S.-owned businesses, practiced monoculture and extensive agriculture practices. This again pushed the peasants off productive land and onto degraded mountainsides. Since 1934, when the occupation ended, the leading causes of environmental degradation appear to have been urbanization and, in the 1980s, the partial expansion of industry in Port-au-Prince (Arthur and Dash 1999). Both urban settlement and industry require charcoal for energy, charcoal that comes from trees. In mountainous rural settings, population growth has continued to put pressure on the Haitian landscape. When one has a greater context of the history of environmental degradation on the island, one can look beyond the simplistic portrayal of the sole Haitian "who wrecks the land to survive" (Weiner 2004).

Against the dominant landscape frame is the occasional story like the one in the *Miami Herald* that described Haiti as a "beautiful place" (Ottey 2004b), with ancient castles and cobalt beaches. Yet the article implied that Haiti's solution might rest in developing itself as a tourism destination—which is surely problematic. The media lack the full historical and geographical context needed for adequate comprehension of deforestation and soil erosion.

THE REFUGEE FRAME

The driving force that stimulated discussion of Haitian refugees was the fear that the political situation would lead to a mass exit of Haitians by boat. Phrases like "growing exodus" and "impending mass exodus" hinted at this fear (Table VII). News coverage described the migration in ways that evoked images of large numbers of people traveling by boat. The word "boatloads" and "mass boat migration" perpetuated readers' anxiety that the United States would be overrun by "boat people" in their "flimsy boats."³

My analysis revealed a tendency to portray the Haitian people as "other." Lawless noted that "it is much easier to observe actual behavior in other cultures and

then point out how these behaviors deviate from normative experiences" (1992, 158). The most obvious example in the coverage I studied came from an article in the *Washington Post* that referred to voodoo, zombies, and mermaids. "But in Haiti nothing is as it seems. In this poor country of about 8 million people, where voodoo is considered a national religion and some people believe in mermaids and that the dead walk the streets, the political situation is mired in complexities. There are shades of meaning in a simple handshake and twists of truth in the flash of a smile" (Brown 2004). The author cast judgment on Haitians and in doing so was trying to portray the people of Haiti as ridiculous and the country as bizarre by suggesting that voodoo was the national religion and that people believed in mermaids. The *New York Times* also commented on how the "people actually make food out of mud" and were "too poor to own televisions" (NYT 2004b; Herbert 2004).

Some of the harshest descriptions of Haiti and Haitians used recognizable objects or feelings to draw attention to the supposedly severe problems in the nation and among its people. Coverage in 2004 referred to Haiti as the "basketcase of the Caribbean" (Putney 2004), "a volcano of unrest" (Ottey 2004d), a "jalopy" (Charles 2004c), "the hemisphere's open wound" (Rothkopf 2004), and a "very bad omelet" (Shacochis 2004). The *New York Times* described Haiti's plains as "tear soaked" (Weiner 2004). The overall impression these articles give is that Haitians are somehow "other" than the rest of humanity.

POSITIVE NEWS COVERAGE

Rare indeed was news coverage of the Haitian people or their land positive. The *Washington Post* said the Haitian people were "generous" (Weeks 2004). The *New York Times* described the Haitian people as "politically astute" and "beautiful and clean" (Maloney 2004; Vecsey 2004); and the *Miami Herald* called Haitians "hardworking," "wonderful, intelligent people" with "simple lives" who liked to dance (Davies 2004a; P. Dodds 2004; Kaufman 2004; Ottey 2004a). The *Boston Globe* wrote that the people of Haiti were both "religious" and "a strong people" (Dade 2004), that Haiti was "a sad and beautiful nation" (Jones 2004), and that "everything in Haiti is art" (Harnois 2004). To the *New York Times*, Haiti was "such a great country and it's going down, down" (Robbins 2004). The nation as a whole was depicted as "soccer obsessed" in three of the five newspapers. Even these so-called positive descriptions can be seen as somewhat condescending, as contributing to the image of the noble savage. Such representations are still marginal to the overall frame.

A GEOGRAPHICAL FRAME

Even without additional research, a geographical frame consistently emerged from my newspaper analysis. The first component of the geographical frame is its overall lack of geographical connectedness; or, rather, its failure to acknowledge the interdependence of countries (Wallerstein 1974). It isolates the problems of various places and constrains them within their political borders. In *USA Today*, the article "Haiti Begins Again" offers to provide historical background to the situation in Haiti but

instead simply reinforces the helpful role of the U.S. in Haitian history while failing to acknowledge outsiders' contributions to its problems: "But hopeful expectations need tempering with some historical perspective about the former sugar-rich French colony that has slid into desperate poverty. For two centuries, Haiti's persistent character traits have been corruption, wobbly governments (including 32 coups) and

TABLE VII—WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY FIVE MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF HAITIAN REFUGEES, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2004
(N = 711)

SEARCH WORD OR PHRASE	NUMBER OF REFERENCES
Refugees: anarchy; revolution	23
Boat people; boat refugee	15
Exodus: massive exodus by sea; exodus of Haitians on rickety craft; growing exodus; impending possible mass exodus; threat of massive migrant flow; would-be illegal immigrants	10
Flimsy vessels; rickety boats; flimsy boats; poorly constructed boats	6
Boatloads of fleeing Haitian refugees; boatloads en route; mass boat migration	4

fighting" (USA Today 2004). Garth Myers, Thomas Klak, and Timothy Koehl also suggested this idea in their study of media representation of conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda (1996). They found that coverage of the civil war in Rwanda neglected the long-term involvement of Europeans in that nation: "The newspapers convey little sense that Europeans helped establish the vitriol underlying Rwanda's warring factions, and were crucial players since the 1970s, in propping up the late President, Juvenal Habyarimana, and his authoritarian, extremist supporters" (p. 36).

Sack's discussion of advertisements in a globalized world reveals some curious similarities that directly relate to the notion of a geographical frame: "In mass production, as opposed to crafts, [an advertisement] appears full-blown, complete, and 'new,' often without a trace of its real origins and history. It is plucked from the many contexts which gave it form, and, as a new product, it appears to have no real context of its own" (1988, 653). The places and problems presented in news stories have a tendency to appear with little context and with little consideration of history.

The second element of the geographical frame takes the dominant political frame of a country and applies it to reflect its landscape. Klak's study of the disparities in the representation of Havana and Kingston (1994), two similar cities "in crisis" yet with vastly different coverage, comes to conclusions like those regarding Haiti. Although the cities were experiencing similar problems, the media described Havana as a city in crisis and brought its urban deterioration and poverty to the forefront when these same problems were virtually nonexistent in the coverage of Kingston.

The heavy coverage of Havana compared to Kingston is consistent with the argument that the press chooses to report more bad news about Cuba because it provides positive reinforcement for the pervasive anticommunist attitudes in the U.S. (Herman and Chomsky 1988). To report the shortcomings of the Castro government is to

evidence the failure of communism worldwide. Heavy press coverage of Cuba therefore is explained less by its geographical location in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and more by its political location as an enemy state socialist country. (Klak 1994, 328–329)

The U.S. government has had a precarious relationship with Aristide that dates back to his first term in office. The CIA smear campaign and its support of Aristide's military opponents, the delayed reaction in supporting him in 2004, and the bizarre training session of political opponents that took place in the Dominican Republic in December 2002 all reinforce the U.S. government's distaste of Aristide (Bogdanich and Nordberg 2006; Farmer 2006).⁴

Haiti's geographical frame, which establishes the country as the political, economic, and environmental wreck of the Western Hemisphere, set out to justify U.S. policy toward Haiti. The media's portrayal of Haiti as a political mess and a country in deep poverty work alongside one another. The country's political failures and the violence that often occurs because of that disunion allow the U.S. government to disregard and remove Haitian leaders that fall out of favor. The portrayal of landscape as one of extreme poverty helps enforce U.S. immigration policy, which turns away Haitian refugees on the grounds that they flee because of economic hardship rather than political persecution. The two ideas seem to work alongside one another for use wherever they are most advantageous.

FOUR YEARS LATER

Nearly four years after the destruction caused by Hurricane Jeanne, Hurricane Gustav wreaked similar havoc on the island in September 2008. In its aftermath, media reports again depicted Haiti in ways that expressed concerns similar to those raised by my analysis of the 2004 coverage. One Bloomberg report had a lead that read, "Tropical Storm Gustav stalled off Haiti, bringing heavy rains to the *former French colony* and menacing Cuba, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands" (Morales 2008; italics added). This story could appear to be quite innocent, except for the fact that Haiti is the only country identified by its former colonial status, even though, with the exception of the United States, it has been independent longer than any other nation in the Western Hemisphere. Media reports would never dare to refer to the United States as a "former British colony," so why is Haiti identified in this manner? A *New York Times* article that also addressed the aftermath of Gustav described Gonaïves, Haiti in this way: "Suffering long ago became normal here, passed down through generations of children who learn that crying does no good" (Lacey 2008). Although I picked these two quotations to reinforce the present condition of Haitian media coverage, it would seem that not much has changed since 2004.

The media representation of Haiti is perhaps one of the most devastating problems it faces today. Paul Farmer writes that "Haiti's 'bad press' is bad indeed—not merely because it is defamatory . . . [but also] because it obscures Haiti's real problems, their causes and their possible cures" (2006, 191–192). The place image the U.S. media put forth about this island nation fails to adequately acknowledge the

full extent of its present problems or place them in their properly complex geohistorical context, thus inhibiting an understanding that will offer real solutions to its problems. Although this article focused solely on U.S. media representations of Haiti, it calls for further research on other Haitian media representations both within and outside the country.

Critical geopolitical studies have shown that “there is a politics to geographical knowledge [and] there is a geography to all political practice.” These two ideas can only be exposed by challenging conventional place wisdom (Johnston and others 2000, 126). In this article I sought to challenge some of the conventional wisdom about Haiti in U.S. newspaper coverage from a single year. It is my hope that my analysis will convince journalists, academic writers, and politicians to discuss Haiti in a productive manner, acknowledging its complex historical and present connections rather than relying on catchy clichés and stereotypes.

NOTES

1. In Haiti, the Tontons Macoutes are mythical bogeymen with sacks into which, it is said, sleeping children are stuffed. Dr. François “Papa Doc” Duvalier, dictator of Haiti from 1957 to 1971, formed a militia, his own personal security force, the Volunteers for National Security, members of which were later nicknamed “Tontons Macoutes.” The gun-toting volunteers, following the orders of their leader, are reported to have killed tens of thousands of Haitians who did not fall in line with Duvalier (Farmer 2006, 92).

2. According to the 2003 Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement, another 7 percent of cocaine was transshipped through Jamaica; 4 percent, through Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands; 3 percent through Aruba or the Lesser Antilles; and 1 percent through unidentified places (USD0J 2005).

3. Garth Myers, Thomas Klak, and Timothy Koehl noted the use of the term “boat people” in their article, which mentioned U.S. immigration policy and what seemed to be the unequal favoring of Cubans over Haitians. They wrote that Haitians were described in the media as the more derogatory term “boat people,” whereas Cubans were simply called “rafters,” even though they used the same mode of transportation (1996). This representation further emphasized the point that Haitians were fleeing the island for economic hardships whereas Cubans were fleeing for political reasons.

4. The *New York Times* ran an expansive article in 2006 which found that a democracy-building group close to the administration of President George W. Bush had used taxpayers’ money to train Aristide opposition leaders in the Dominican Republic in 2002. Members of Aristide’s Lavalas party were not included in the political training. As a side note, two leaders of the armed rebellion in 2004 admitted to *New York Times* reporters that they were staying at the same hotel during the training session but did not attend it (Bogdanich and Nordberg 2006).

REFERENCES

- Anderson, T. 1984. *Geopolitics in the Caribbean: Ministates in the Wider World*. New York: Praeger.
- Aristide, J.-B. 1991. The Ten Commandments of Politics. Speech given at the United Nations General Assembly, 23 September.
- Arthur, C., and M. Dash, eds. 1999. *A Haiti Anthology: Libète*. Princeton, N.J.: Marcus Wiener Publishers.
- Avraham, E. 2000. Cities and Their News Media Images. *Cities* 17 (5): 363–370.
- Barnes, T. J., and J. S. Duncan, eds. 1992. *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text, and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*. London: Routledge.
- Bentivegna, J. 1991. *The Neglected and Abused: A Physician’s Year in Haiti*. Rocky Hill, Conn.: Michelle Publishing Co.
- Blunt, A. 1999. Representation. In *A Feminist Glossary of Human Geography*, edited by L. McDowell and J. P. Sharp, 234–235. London: Arnold.

- Bogdanich, W., and J. Nordberg. 2006. Mixed U.S. Signals Helped Tilt Haiti toward Chaos. *New York Times*, 26 January, §A, 1.
- Brown, D. 2004. In Haiti, Two Sides and Bloodshed Between; Political Crisis Deepens as President's Supporters Opposition Trade Accusations. *Washington Post*, 3 February, §A, 13.
- Carroll, J. 1993. The CIA Can Be a Poor Judge of Character. *Boston Globe*, 26 October, §A, 1.
- . 2004b. Nelson, Meek Assess Crisis in Haiti. *Miami Herald*, 14 April, §A, 15.
- . 2004c. Poor, Weary Population Sees No Advance in Haiti. *Miami Herald*, 24 April, §A, 11.
- CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]. 2008. Haiti: Transnational Issues. In *The 2008 World Factbook*. Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency. [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html].
- Cosgrove, D., and S. Daniels, eds. 1988. *The Iconography of Landscape*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Dade, C. 2004. Reaching out to Haitians O'Malley Becomes First Catholic Leader in Boston to Offer Mass in Creole. *Boston Globe*, 2 January, §B, 1.
- Davies, F. 2004a. U.S. Goals in Haiti: Halting Violence, Graft. *Miami Herald*, 15 April, §A, 12.
- . 2004b. With Aristide out, U.S. Aid Likely to Rise with Stability. *Miami Herald*, 3 March, §A, 14.
- DeVise, D. 2004. Tragedy and Triumph. *Miami Herald*, 8 February, §BH, 13.
- Dodds, K. 1993. War Stories: British Elite Narrative of the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11 (6): 619–640.
- Dodds, P. 2004. Vodou Rite Touched by Politics. *Miami Herald*, 12 April, §A, 9.
- Dudley, S. 2004. Change in Haiti/Drugs; US Officials, Specialists Link Some in Insurgency to Trafficking. *Boston Globe*, 3 March, §A, 14.
- Duncan, J., and D. Ley, eds. 1993. *Place/Culture/Representation*. New York: Routledge.
- Entman, R. 1991. Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents. *Journal of Communication* 41 (4): 6–27.
- Farmer, P. 1992. *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 2006. *The Uses of Haiti*. Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press.
- Freeman, B. 2005. Interview with the author. Lawrence, Kans., 5 April.
- Glenville, P., dir. 1967. *The Comedians*. Maximillian Productions and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer: 12 minutes.
- Goldberg, A. 1981. Commercial Folklore and Voodoo in Haiti: International Tourism and the Sale of Culture. Ph.D. diss., Indiana University.
- Greene, G. 1966. *The Comedians*. New York: Viking Press.
- Harley, J. 1988. Maps, Knowledge and Power. In *The Iconography of Landscape*, edited by D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels, 277–312. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1992. Deconstructing the Map. In *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Texts; and Metaphors in the Representation of Landscape*, edited by T. Barnes and J. Duncan, 231–247. London: Routledge.
- Harnois, E. 2004. From a Troubled Land, Burst of Vibrant Art. *Boston Globe*, 24 October, City Weekly §, 10.
- Heinl, R., and N. Heinl. 1978. *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People, 1492–1971*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Herald Staff. 2004. Editorial Excerpts. *Miami Herald*, 7 March, §B, 2.
- Herbert, B. 2004. Ashcroft's Quiet Prisoner. *New York Times*, 13 August, §A, 21.
- Herman, E. S., and N. Chomsky. 1988. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hunt, A. 1988. *Haiti's Influence on Antebellum America: Slumbering Volcano in the Caribbean*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Jones, R. 2004. Haiti's Neighbors Are Pressing Aristide for Reforms. *New York Times*, 30 January, §A, 3.
- Kaufman, M. 2004. Playing for a Greater Goal. *Miami Herald*, 13 November, §D, 3.
- Klak, T. 1994. Havana and Kingston: Mass Media Images and Empirical Observations of Two Caribbean Cities in Crisis. *Urban Geography* 15 (4): 318–344.
- Krippendorff, K. 1980. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Lacey, M. 2008. Meager Living of Haitians Is Wiped Out by Storms. *New York Times*, 10 September, §A, 1.

- Larsen, S. Forthcoming. Negril in the News: Content Analysis of a Contested Paradise. *Caribbean Geography*.
- Lawless, R. 1992. *Haiti's Bad Press*. Rochester, Vt.: Schenkman Books.
- Lee, M. A., and N. Solomon. 1990. *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in the News Media*. Secaucus, N.J.: Carol Publishing Group.
- Lett, J. 1986. Anthropology and Journalism. *Communicator*, May, 33–35.
- Maloney, F. 2004. Haitian Heartbeat. *New York Times*, 15 February, Cityweek §, 1.
- Michaels, J. 2004. Embattled Aristide Flees. *USA Today*, 1 March, §A, 1.
- Michaels, J., B. Nichols, and J. Keen. 2004. Haiti Faces Long Odds of Escaping “Sad Story.” *USA Today*, 2 March, §A, 1.
- Mintz, S. 1966. Introduction to the Second Edition. In *The Haitian People*, edited by J. Leyburn, v–xlvii. Rev. ed. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Mitchell, C. 1994. U.S. Policy toward Haitian Boat People, 1972–93. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 534 (1): 69–80.
- Morales, A. 2008. Gustav Soaks Haiti, Forecast to Be Hurricane in Gulf (Update1). RecallFind.com. [www.recallfind.com/2008/08/27/gustav-soaks-haiti-forecast-to-be-hurricane-in-gulf-update1-bloomberg/].
- Murray, G. 1977. The Evolution of Haitian Peasant Land Tenure: A Case Study in Agricultural Adaptation to Population Growth. Ph.D. diss., Columbia University.
- Myers, G., T. Klak, and T. Koehl. 1996. The Inscription of Difference: News Coverage of the Conflicts in Rwanda and Bosnia. *Political Geography* 15 (1): 21–46.
- NYT [New York Times]. 2004a. Hour of the Gunmen in Haiti. *New York Times*, 24 February, §A, 34.
- . 2004b. Letting Haiti Down. *New York Times*, 2 November, §A, 26.
- Ottey, M. 2004a. The Small, Forgotten Town That Started a Revolution. *Miami Herald*, 26 April, §A, 14.
- . 2004b. Tourists Staying Away From a Chaotic Haiti. *Miami Herald*, 5 February, §A, 12.
- . 2004c. U.S. Official: Haitian Drug Trade Slowing. *Miami Herald*, 23 April, §A, 14.
- . 2004d. World Opens Wallet to Help Haiti. *Miami Herald*, 21 July, §A, 10.
- O’Tuathail, G. 1996. *Critical Geopolitics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pierre-Pierre, G. 1999. Edwidge Danticat: Chronicling the Haitian-American Experience. In *A Haiti Anthology: Libète*, edited by C. Arthur and M. Dash, 203–204. Princeton, N.J.: Marcus Wiener Publishers.
- Polgreen, L. 2004. 200 Years after Napoleon, Haiti Finds Little to Celebrate. *New York Times*, 2 January, §A, 13.
- Polgreen, L., and T. Weiner. 2004. An Interim President for Haiti Is Sworn In. *New York Times*, 9 March, §A, 6.
- Putney, M. 2004. Don’t Let Lethal Squads Prevail. *Miami Herald*, 25 February, §A, 29.
- Richardson, B. 1992. *The Caribbean in the Wider World, 1492–1992: A Regional Geography*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Ridgeway, J. 1994. Untitled introduction to the section on “The Coup and U.S. Foreign Policy.” In *The Haiti Files: Decoding the Crisis*, edited by J. Ridgeway, 85. Washington, D.C.: Essential Books.
- Riffe, D., S. Lacy, and F. Fico. 1998. *Analyzing Media Messages Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Robbins, L. 2004. Sixers Dalember Is Keeping Haiti Near to His Heart. *New York Times*, 26 December, Sports §, 2.
- Rothkopf, D. 2004. Haiti Offers Nation-Building Lessons—Should U.S. Leaders Care Enough to Look. *USA Today*, 23 February, §A, 19.
- Sack, R. 1988. The Consumer’s World: Place as Context. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 78 (4): 642–664.
- . 1997. *Homo Geographicus: A Framework for Action, Awareness, and Moral Concern*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Shacochis, B. 2004. Our Military, Haiti’s Hope. *Washington Post*, 4 March, §A, 23.
- Shakira. 2006. “Hips Don’t Lie.” Performed by Shakira and W. Jean. *Oral Fixation*, vol. 2. Epic Records.
- Sharp, J. 1993. Publishing American Identity: Popular Geopolitics, Myth and *The Reader’s Digest*. *Political Geography* 12 (6): 491–503.
- . 1999. Critical Geopolitics. In *Introducing Human Geographies*, edited by P. Cloke, P. Crang, and M. Goodwin, 181–188. London: Arnold Publishers.

- Spangler, N., J. Charles, and L. Arthur. 2004. Haiti's Plight Felt in Dade. *Miami Herald*, 2 January, §B, 1.
- Taylor, P. 2000. Critical Geopolitics. In *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, edited by R. J. Johnston, D. Gregory, G. Pratt, and M. Watts, 125–126. 4th ed. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing.
- USA Today. 2004. Haiti Begins Again. 2004. *USA Today*, 2 March, §A, 11.
- USDOJ [U.S. Department of Justice]. 2005. Transportation. In *National Drug Threat Assessment 2005*. Washington, D.C.: National Drug Intelligence Center. [www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs11/12620/cocaine.htm#Transportation].
- Vecsey, G. 2004. Haitian Players Watch the Ball and the Tube. *New York Times*, 4 March, §D, 2.
- Walker, D. 1997. *Public Relations in Local Government: Strategic Approaches to Better Communication*. London: Pitman Publishing.
- Wallerstein, I. 1974. *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press.
- Weeks, L. 2004. The Fictional Reality of Edwidge Danticat's Haiti. *Washington Post*, 8 April, Style §C, 1.
- Weiner, T. 2004. Life Is Hard and Short in Haiti's Bleak Villages. *New York Times*, 14 March, §A, 1.
- Wilentz, A. 2004. Haiti's Man of the People Lost His Way. *New York Times*, 15 February, Week in Review Desk §, 5.
- Yin, R. K. 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Zonn, L. 1990. *Place Images in Media: Portrayal, Experience and Meaning*. Savage, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.