



## AP Seminar Summer Assignment 2024 - 2025

### Course Overview:

AP Seminar is a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives. Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading and analyzing articles, research studies, and foundational, literary, and philosophical texts; listening to and viewing speeches, broadcasts, and personal accounts; and experiencing artistic works and performances. Students learn to synthesize information from multiple sources, develop their own perspectives in written essays, and design and deliver oral and visual presentations, both individually and as part of a team. Ultimately, the course aims to equip students with the power to analyze and evaluate information with accuracy and precision in order to craft and communicate evidence-based arguments.

Please complete the following tasks:

- Read, annotate, and take notes on *A Raisin in the Sun*, a play by Lorraine Hansberry.
  - *I recommend purchasing a copy. If you are not able to purchase one, please stop by room 403 to get one from Mrs. Malott before summer break.*
- Read, annotate, and take notes on the provided texts from the AP Performance Task 2 Stimulus Set.
  - *You are reading a portion of the released stimulus set. Please refer to the provided PDF / copy rather than using a version found online to ensure you are reading the correct materials.*
- Use the linked summer reading annotation guide\*\* to help ensure you are gleaning what you need to be successful on the exam and tasks we will complete during the first week of school. Bring all texts with you to class!

*\*\* The annotations and notes will not be collected and graded, but they will be essential to your success on the assignments we complete the first week of school.*

[AP Seminar Summer Reading Annotation Guide 2024 - 2025 - Google Docs](#)

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. If you are not able to access the reading materials, you must let me know prior to school starting. A failure to do so will not result in an extension on the exam and additional reading-based assignments.

I am excited to work with you this year!

Mrs. Malott

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# AP Seminar Performance Task 2: Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation

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Directions and Stimulus Materials

January 2023

# AP Seminar 2024-2025 Summer Reading

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Species in urban settings are evolving along subtly different lines than their rural counterparts, researchers are finding. An example is the white clover plant, shown here being sampled in Mexico City. The plant has evolved to produce far less hydrogen cyanide in urban environments than in rural ones. CREDIT: DIEGO CARMONA

## Urban evolution: How species adapt to survive in cities

Plants and animals are evolving in cities around the world — offering ways to study longstanding scientific questions and clues to where climate change is taking us

By Eric Bender 03.21.2022

From *Knowable Magazine* (from *Annual Reviews*)

**B**rown rats in New York City may be evolving smaller rows of teeth. Tiny fish across the Eastern US have adapted to thrive in polluted urban waters. Around the globe, living things are evolving differently in cities than in the surrounding countryside.

It's happening in plants: White clover in downtown Toronto is less likely than clover in surrounding rural areas to produce a cyanide that deters herbivores — a trend mirrored in cities in many countries, a new study finds. And it's going on in birds: Songbirds in Europe and owls in Argentina show evidence of natural selection in genes associated with cognition.

All are examples of urban evolution: genetic changes that may help living things adapt to life in big city environments. “A city changes an environment dramatically. It creates a completely novel ecosystem,” says Marc Johnson, an evolutionary ecologist at the University of Toronto Mississauga.

The city is also the fastest-growing ecosystem on the planet, home to more than half of the world's people. So perhaps it's no surprise that studying the evolution of species in urban settings, a field that barely existed at the start of the millennium, now is a focus for many biology labs.

Cities can act as test beds to address longstanding questions in evolution. Do different populations of the same species evolve in similar ways when faced with the same environmental pressures? And do different species in the same locations evolve similar characteristics?

Many environmental factors are similar across thousands of cities, says Johnson: things like higher temperatures, pollution and habitats fragmented by buildings and roads. But cities also differ in age, amount of green space, climate and more.

“You can look at these similarities and these differences and start to ask, how can this drive evolution?” Johnson says.



A city rat enjoys a tasty snack. In New York City, brown rats in different neighborhoods have accrued genetic differences. The populations appear to be kept apart by intervening areas with more intense rat control and less human food to feast on.  
CREDIT: ERNIE JANES / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Observing how creatures respond to urban life also may help to improve conservation management or pest control, and to plan cities with functioning ecosystems that are environmentally more robust and better places for people to live.

And urban evolution may hold hints about our future world. “Cities are kind of the key for understanding responses to global climate change,” says Sarah Diamond, an evolutionary ecologist at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and coauthor of an article on urban evolution research in the *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics*. “You can step through time. You can say, ‘This city is giving you the global climate warming that we would expect by 2050 or 2070 or 2100.’”

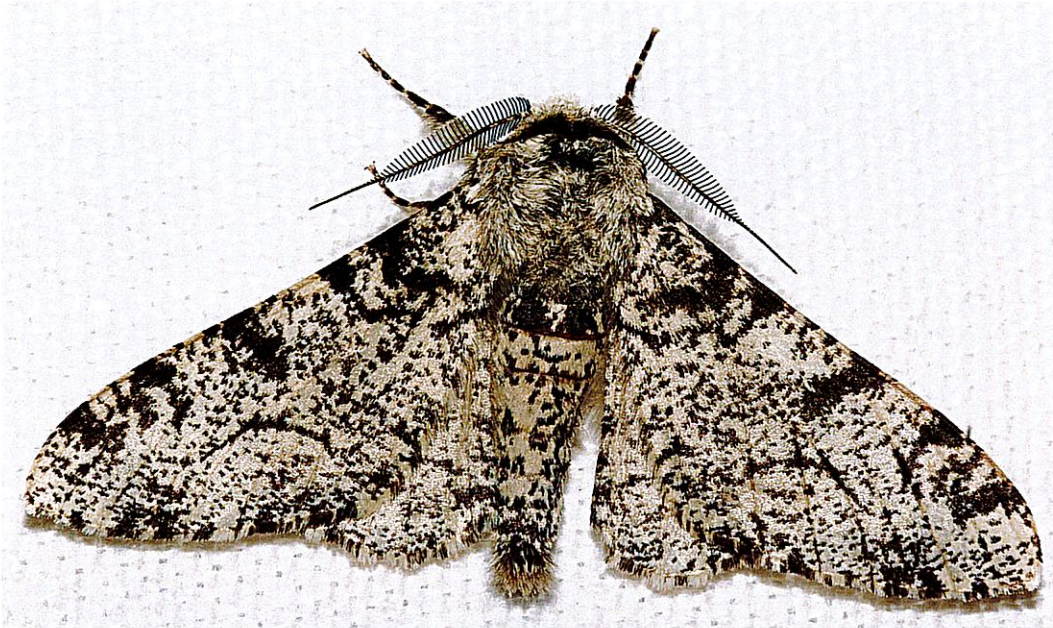
People often feel that city life is removed from nature, says Colin Garroway, an evolutionary ecologist at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. “But cities *are* nature.”

### Looking out our back doors

Probably the best-known example of urban evolution is the English peppered moth whose coloration darkened in the 19th century in response to coal pollution. In a famous 1955 paper, British geneticist Bernard Kettlewell presented evidence that this was a case of natural selection in which darkness helped the moths evade bird predation as they rested on sooty tree trunks.

But the field of urban evolutionary ecology remained tiny until recently: “Most evolutionary biologists would not be caught dead in a city,” says Johnson. That began to change with the rapid growth of urban ecology studies in the 1990s and accelerated with discoveries of surprisingly quick cases of evolution, such as Caribbean lizard populations that displayed larger toepad area, crucial for clinging to surfaces, after two major hurricanes in 2017.

It didn't hurt that professors of evolutionary biology generally are employed in urban universities and curious about what is happening in their backyards. "These dynamics are happening all around you," says Ryan Martin, an evolutionary ecologist at Case Western Reserve and coauthor with Diamond of the *Annual Reviews* article. "Go out and look in your garden, and you'll see a bunch of native pollinators that are all presumably evolving in response to these changes in the city.... You don't have to do anything special to see these cool dynamics; you walk out your door."



In industrial parts of England, black-bodied forms of the peppered moth *Biston betularia* became more abundant as air pollution increased after the Industrial Revolution, blackening trees and buildings. The frequency of black moths decreased again when the air became cleaner. CREDIT: CHISWICK CHAP / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The water flea *Daphnia magna* — a freshwater crustacean up to a few millimeters in size — is one species busy evolving in cities in response to heat, pollution and even local predators. These zooplankton can prevent algal blooms that overload ponds with toxic cyanobacteria, so this adaptation may have a big effect on freshwater ecosystems, says Kristien Brans, an evolutionary ecologist at KU Leuven in Belgium, who studies the water fleas.



One basic challenge in such urban investigations is to distinguish between two modes of response to altered environments: evolution (genetic alterations that appear across generations) and phenotypic plasticity (the flexibility to alter physical and/or behavioral characteristics in an organism's lifetime).

For water fleas, it turns out that both are at play. Fleas raised in lab experiments at temperatures matching urban ponds are smaller, and mature and reproduce more quickly, than fleas reared at rural pond temperatures that tend to be several degrees cooler. (That's phenotypic plasticity — no genetic changes have occurred.) But over time, urban water fleas living generation after generation in warmer, urban pond waters have genetically changed to have those same kinds of alterations. (That's evolution.)

In a 2017 paper, for example, Brans and her coworkers took populations of water fleas from a range of habitats — some more rural and some more urban — and reared them for many generations before testing their ability to survive in urban-temperature water and rural-temperature water. Fleas collected from urban ponds displayed higher heat tolerance in the warm ponds than those collected from rural ponds, along with smaller body size and other changes.

A follow-up study published in 2018 showed that urban *Daphnia* have significantly higher concentrations than rural water fleas of total body fat, proteins and sugars, trait changes that are associated with handling stresses such as heat as well as with faster life cycles.



Scientists studying the water flea *Daphnia magna* in rural and urban ponds have identified gene-based differences in traits such as tolerance to water temperature. CREDIT: HAJIME WATANABE FLICKR

Brans and coworkers have also recently found that urban water fleas are more likely than their rural cousins to survive exposure to a common pesticide, and that populations of *Daphnia* display different genetic adaptations to pesticides depending on whether they grow in ponds surrounded by conventional farms, organic farms or nature reserves. In lab tests, water fleas taken from ponds surrounded by conventional farmland displayed higher resistance to a pesticide called chlorpyrifos that's routinely employed in such farming. Fleas near organic farms were more resistant to two pesticides allowed in organic agriculture.

Looking up the food chain, Brans and colleagues have evidence that urban water fleas and predatory insects that eat them — damselflies — are evolving in step with each other. Urban damselfly larvae are far better than rural damselfly larvae at encountering and gobbling up rural water fleas, for example. But they have a tougher time preying on the urban fleas. In other words, when rural or city damselfly and flea populations are matched, there seems to be more balance — as you'd expect if two populations are evolving in step with each other.

Brans also is studying how the microbes that live in *Daphnia* guts differ between city and countryside. These microbial communities — or microbiome — shape what the water fleas can eat, and some flea genotypes encourage microbiomes that enable fleas to digest toxic cyanobacteria that can overrun ponds.

### **Adapting successfully, or maybe not**

Acorn ants offer another case of adaptive urban evolution. With colonies so tiny they can live inside a single acorn, they are easy to study. ("Put them in a little plastic cup with some sugar water and a little dead mealworm and they're totally happy," Martin says.) Colonies in Cleveland, Ohio — whose downtown temperatures average about 4 degrees Celsius warmer year-round than the rural surroundings — have higher heat tolerances but lower cold tolerances than rural ants, Martin and Diamond found. "We're pretty confident that it's due to underlying genetic differences," Martin says.

Brown rats in Manhattan offer yet another case of urban evolution, though it may not impart advantages to the unloved creatures. Jason Munshi-South, an evolutionary ecologist at Fordham University in New York, and colleagues analyzed the genomes of 262 rats and found that the animals have evolved distinct genomic profiles in different neighborhoods. The scientists believe it's because the rat populations don't move freely between these spots, and slowly, over time, accrue differences.

What's keeping them apart? Midtown Manhattan may act as a kind of soft barrier between Lower and Upper Manhattan, the scientists say, because it is less residential (providing less food) and the site of intense rat control efforts. Roads and waterways also can genetically split up rat populations, according to studies in New Orleans, Salvador in Brazil and Vancouver in Canada, where rats also show genetic variations by neighborhoods.

Such insights may prove useful in designing measures to suppress rat populations. "If you understand how rats move around and what facilitates or prevents their movement, you can break the city down into more manageable units for rodent control," Munshi-South says.

Other changes in rats may be adaptive. Munshi-South's lab has evidence that natural selection is changing the skulls of the rats such that they have longer noses and shorter sets of teeth. These might be adaptations to colder environments and a diet of human leftovers respectively, the scientists speculate. Similar changes in teeth have been spotted in urban white-footed mice, so this might be a general phenomenon in rodents in cities, Munshi-South says.

## In the clover

Urban plants are on the genetic move too — such as white clover, a perennial plant that thrives in human landscapes. The plant, due to the activity of two known genes, can produce hydrogen cyanide, if it invests the resources to do so. This protects it from browsing herbivores.

Sampling the plants from the center of Toronto out to surrounding rural areas, Johnson’s lab discovered a striking inherited correlation: The closer to the center, the less cyanide gets produced. Johnson and his colleagues suggest this happens because the center is colder in winter, due to less snow cover, and plants that make hydrogen cyanide are more susceptible to freezing. (His lab found generally similar results in several dozen other North American cities.)

To delve more deeply into urban evolution, a few years back Johnson and colleagues launched the Global Urban Evolution Project (GLUE), bringing together 287 scientists in 26 countries. (Many responded to tweets Johnson sent out while pursuing another project in the Galapagos.) “GLUE is the largest collaborative study in evolutionary biology ever attempted, if you don’t include the human genome project,” Johnson says.

GLUE took white clover’s cyanide production as a model to study three questions. Do instances of urbanization in different cities lead to similar local environments? Do those similar environments lead the clover to evolve along the same lines — display parallel evolution — in a trait of interest (in this case, cyanide production)? And if so, what environmental factors are driving the pattern?

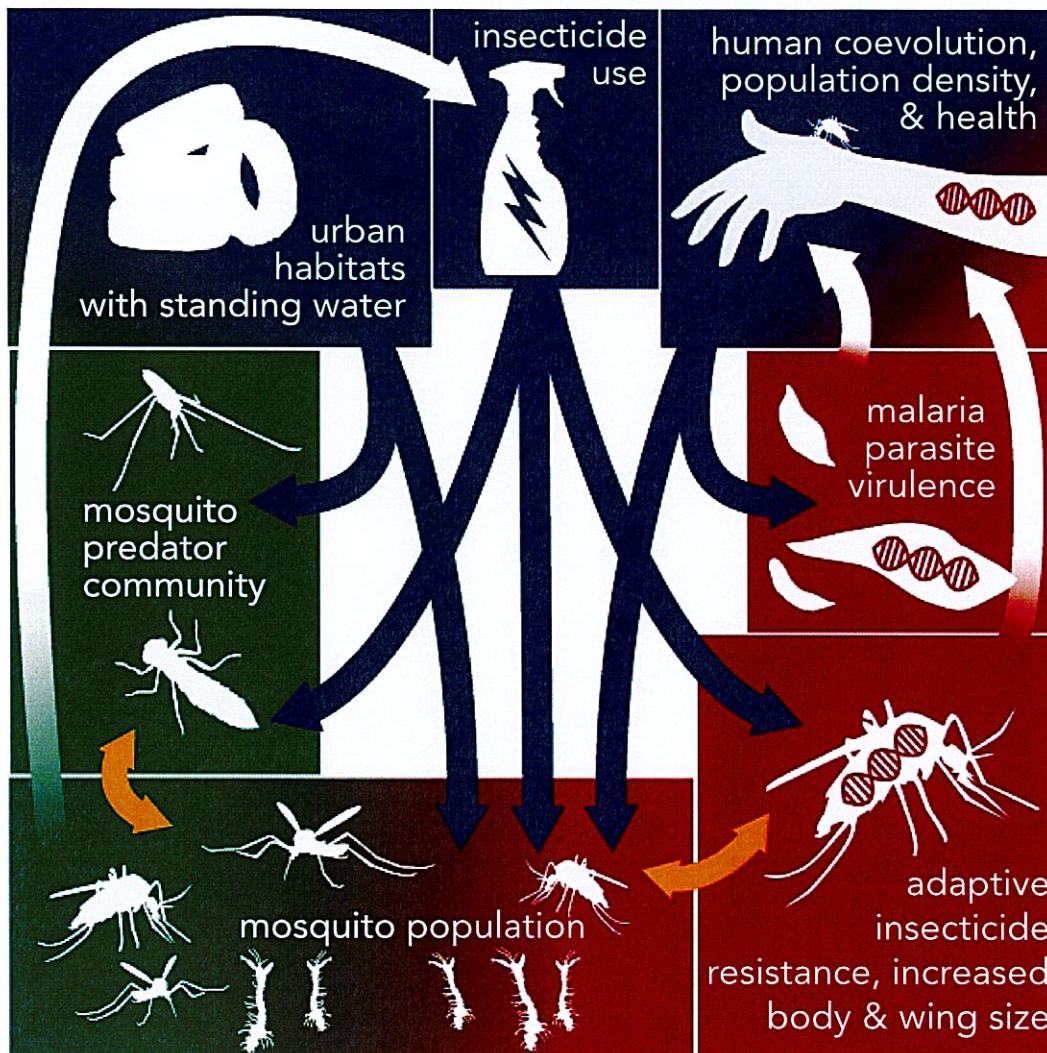
In a new *Science* paper, the collaborators showed that urban environments do indeed end up quite similar to each other, with less vegetation, more impervious surfaces and higher summer temperatures than their outlying rural areas. (In fact, downtowns of cities such as Beijing and Boston are more similar to each other in such factors than they are to their rural areas, Johnson comments.) Analyzing more than 110,000 clover plants from 160 cities in 26 countries, the GLUE investigators also demonstrated a strong link between urbanization and clover cyanide production. And after sequencing more than 2,000 clover genomes and analyzing the urban-rural differences, the researchers showed that natural selection truly is at work.

But what are the environmental factors driving this change in cyanide? “The answer is pretty complicated,” Johnson says, and may not be the same for all cities. The most important ones the team uncovered were changes in overall vegetation (probably related to the abundance and diversity of herbivores that eat clover) and the aridity of the environment. “We don’t see temperature clearly popping out, which is what we had identified when we looked at Boston, Toronto, Montreal and New York,” he says.

The first GLUE results show that white clover is a powerful global model for understanding evolution and ecology in response to urbanization, he adds.

## Disparities within cities

As researchers continue to study evolution in the big city, some are focusing on the effects of social and economic inequality. The question, says Simone Des Roches, an evolutionary ecologist at the University of Seattle in Washington, is whether plants and animals evolve differently in low- versus high-income neighborhoods. Lead author on a 2020 paper on the interaction of social, ecological and evolutionary dynamics in cities, Des Roches notes that racial discrimination in the United States has produced strikingly different urban environments.



The evolution of a species in a city involves an array of interacting factors, as shown here for mosquitoes. Factors can be social (blue), evolutionary (red) or ecological (green). In the case of mosquitoes, these interactions are important to understand due to the ability of the insects to carry dangerous pathogens such as the malaria parasite and the viruses causing Zika and West Nile disease.

CREDIT: S. DES ROCHES ET AL / *EVOLUTIONARY APPLICATIONS* 2020

Impoverished neighborhoods tend to have higher temperatures, greater exposure to pollutants and other environmental disadvantages. These can act as playgrounds for disease-carrying pests such as mosquitoes and rats that enjoy human company: Invasive tiger mosquitoes grow larger in neighborhoods with abandoned buildings in Baltimore, for example. Researchers want to know if, and how, organisms may evolve differently in these disadvantaged environments.

Urban evolution studies also can shed light on what lies ahead in this time of the Anthropocene and suggest steps that might achieve a friendlier world for humans and other forms of life. For example, in many cities, Diamond says, scientists can date the onset of high levels of warming from industrialization. Researchers then can measure how much a species' heat and cold tolerances have changed over time, infer the rate of evolution of those traits and apply those inferences to predict how life forms will respond to future climate change.

Diamond's work in acorn ants suggests that rural populations may be able to evolve to take the greater heat. But, she says, urban acorn ants appear less well-adapted to cities than the rural ants are adapted to their ancestral homes.

Brans, meanwhile, looks to apply her research to preserve urban biodiversity and public health — since urban conservation managers will want to see ponds growing healthy populations of water fleas that bolster those ecosystems against toxic algae blooms.

Unfortunately, the genetic biodiversity that can fuel adaptation often dwindles in urban areas. A genetic survey by Chloé Schmidt working in Garroway's lab, for example, found this to be the case, along with lower population sizes, for North American mammals living in more disturbed environments. That's a concern during a period when so many populations of animals and plants are seeing their natural habitats degraded or simply destroyed.

Scientists don't take urban environments as precise models for the impacts of climate change. But they say such studies will provide important clues to how creatures may respond to dwindling access to water and food, and exposure to pollution, heat, drought and other dangers.

“We're in the Anthropocene, and we don't understand how we're changing the environment on every level, from greenhouse gas emissions to changing the evolution of life around us,” Johnson says. “People realize this research is part of the solution.”

*10.1146/knownable-031822-1*

# Long Walk to Freedom, Excerpt from Ch. 60

By Nelson Mandela

*Nelson Mandela was the leader of the movement against South Africa's policy of apartheid in the 20th century, during which time he spent 27 years in prison. He won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1993 for having led the transition from apartheid to a multiracial democracy and became South Africa's first Black president in 1994.*

...Within a few months, our life settled into a pattern. Prison life is about routine: each day like the one before; each week like the one before it, so that the months and years blend into each other. Anything that departs from this pattern upsets the authorities, for routine is the sign of a well-run prison.

Routine is also comforting for the prisoner, which is why it can be a trap. Routine can be a pleasant mistress whom it is hard to resist, for routine makes the time go faster. Watches and timepieces of any kind were barred on Robben Island, so we never knew precisely what time it was. We were dependent on bells and warders' whistles and shouts. With each week resembling the one before, one must make an effort to recall what day and month it is. One of the first things I did was to make a calendar on the wall of my cell. Losing a sense of time is an easy way to lose one's grip and even one's sanity.

Time slows down in prison; the days seem endless. The cliché of time passing slowly usually has to do with idleness and inactivity. But this was not the case on Robben Island. We were busy almost all the time, with work, study, resolving disputes. Yet, time nevertheless moved glacially. This is partially because things that took a few hours or days outside would take months or years in prison. A request for a new toothbrush might take six months or a year to be filled. Ahmed Kathrada once said that in prison the minutes can seem like years, but the years go by like minutes. An afternoon pounding rocks in the courtyard might seem like forever, but suddenly it is the end of the year, and you do not know where all the months went.

The challenge for every prisoner, particularly every political prisoner, is how to survive prison intact, how to emerge from prison undiminished, how to conserve and even replenish one's beliefs. The first task in accomplishing that is learning exactly what one must do to survive. To that end, one must know the enemy's purpose before adopting a strategy to undermine it. Prison is designed to break one's spirit and to destroy one's resolve. To do this, the authorities attempt to exploit every weakness, demolish every initiative, negate all signs of individuality – all with the idea of stamping out that spark that makes each of us human and each of us who we are.

Our survival depended on understanding what the authorities were attempting to do to us, and sharing that understanding with each other. It would be very hard if not impossible for one man alone to resist. I do not know that I could have done it had I been alone. But the authorities' greatest mistake was keeping us together, for together our determination was reinforced. We supported each other and gained strength from each other. Whatever we knew, whatever we learned, we shared, and by sharing we multiplied whatever courage we had individually. That is not to say that we were all alike in our responses to the hardships we suffered. Men have different capacities and react differently to stress. But the stronger ones raised up the weaker ones, and both became stronger in the process. Ultimately, we had to create our own lives in prison. In a way that even the authorities acknowledged, order in prison was preserved not by the warders but by ourselves.

As a leader, one must sometimes take actions that are unpopular, or whose results will not be known for years to come. There are victories whose glory lies only in the fact that they are known to those who win them. This is particularly true of prison, where one must find consolation in being true to one's ideals, even if no one else knows of it.

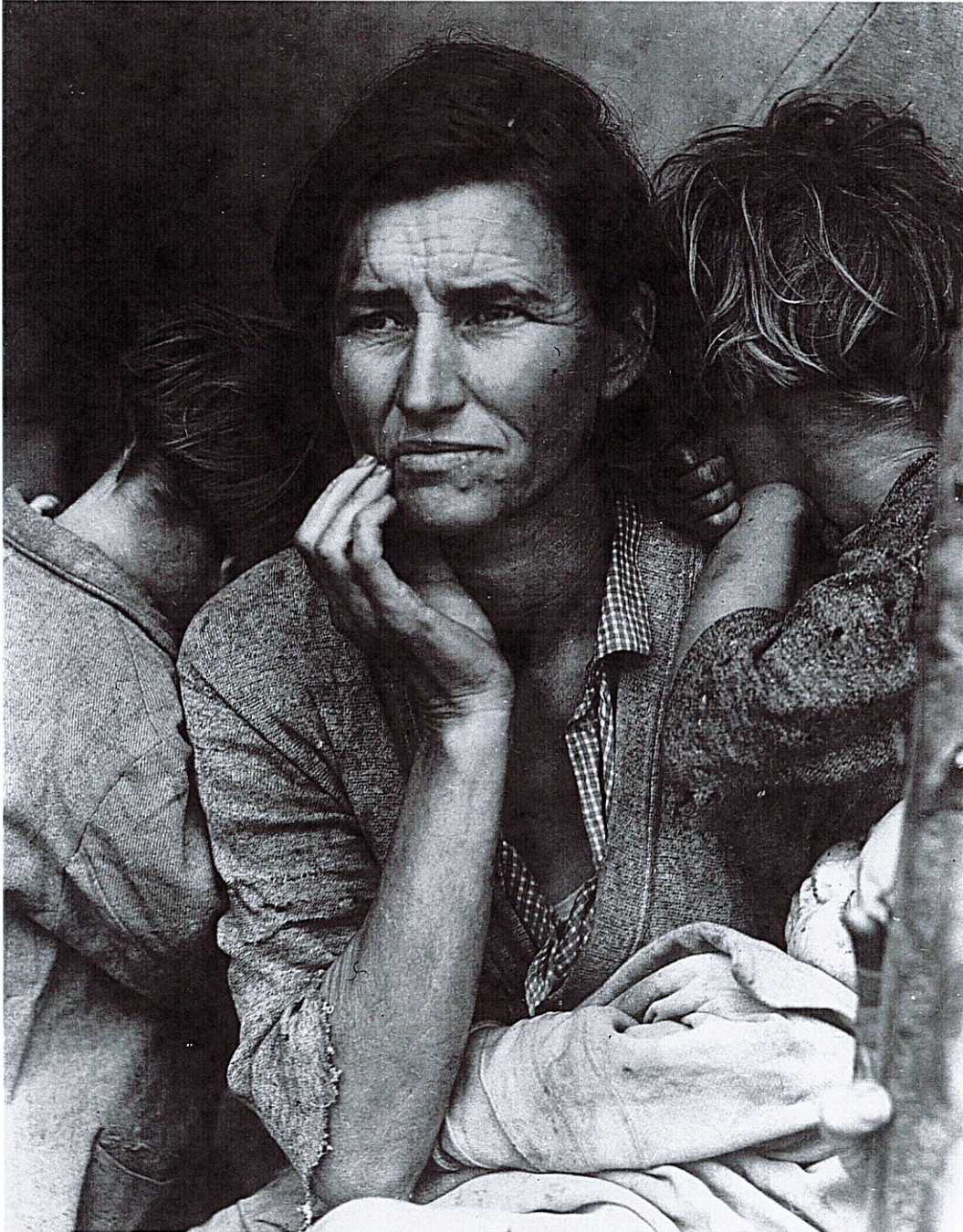
I was now on the sidelines, but I also knew that I would not give up the fight. I was in a different and smaller arena, an arena for whom the only audience was ourselves and our oppressors. We regarded the struggle in prison as a microcosm of the struggle as a whole. We would fight inside as we had fought outside. The racism and repression were the same; I would simply have to fight on different terms.

Prison and the authorities conspire to rob each man of his dignity. In and of itself, that assured that I would survive, for any man or institution that tries to rob me of my dignity will lose because I will not part with it at any price or under any pressure. I never seriously considered the possibility that I would not emerge from prison one day. I never thought that a life sentence truly meant life and that I would die behind bars. Perhaps I was denying this prospect because it was too unpleasant to contemplate. But I always knew that someday I would once again feel the grass under my feet and walk in the sunshine as a free man.

I am fundamentally an optimist. Whether that comes from nature or nurture, I cannot say. Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lay defeat and death.

# Migrant Mother

By Dorothea Lange



Lange, Dorothea, photographer. Destitute pea pickers in California. Mother of seven children. Age thirty-two. Nipomo, California. United States Nipomo San Luis Obispo County California, 1936. March. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017762891/>



## In their Own Words: Resilience among Haitian Survivors of the 2010 Earthquake

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*Abstract:* Social sciences literature highlights the importance of resilience in relation to risk and trauma. The 2010 Haitian earthquake compounded trauma for a nation that has endured slavery/despotic leadership, structural violence and poverty. Since 2010, various sources broadly describe Haitian survivors as resilient. We reviewed definitions of resilience published between 1990 and 2013, comparing them with perspectives of earthquake survivors from economically diverse communities in Haiti who, participated in semi-structured interviews (n=38) and in six focus groups (n=63) between 2010–2011. Haitian resilience accords with some definitions from the literature. It also comprises independent, discrete, and isolated contextual resignation and intentional choice to survive and function—when there is no alternative course of action. Understanding Haitian resilience, can inform health/mental health and policy interventions, if these are taken as cultural resources. Intervention efforts should incorporate survivors' input as key informants on what constitute resilience and reconstruction goals for them.

*Key words:* Haitian mental health and resilience, resilience and Haiti earthquake, Haitian earthquake survivors, trauma and Haitians.

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The January 12th, 2010 Haiti earthquake measured over seven points on the Richter scale and thrust Haiti into the international spotlight. Thus far, it is Haiti's most visible shock in the 21st century.<sup>1</sup> The distress experienced by survivors of the earthquake was evident to witnesses globally, through continued coverage by the media. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, media sources referenced the "resilience" of the Haitian people.<sup>2,23</sup> We reviewed social science literature on resilience to enhance our understanding of the functioning and prognosis of Haitian survivors of the 2010 earthquake within months of the event, and to consider how our findings might influence the development of culturally relevant interventions and policies.

Understanding Haitian survivors' perceptions of resilience and the traits that influence one's resilience increases the ability of clinicians, researchers, and policymakers to implement resilience-based interventions for them and for similar populations who have endured centuries of cumulative personal, political, and biopsychosocial trauma. If the literature on resilience of Haitians from the Haitian perspective and within the historical context of Haiti is scarce, we would make an important contribution to the literature; we would also discover if definitions of resilience in the literature capture the span of the experience of Haitians post-earthquake, and if extant definitions can help us understand the ability of Haitians to emerge from a trauma as severe as the earthquake as they initially were (or stronger).

In the immediate aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, a journalist, Montas, reported that since the day after the earthquake, youth from even the most disadvantaged areas demonstrated Haitian resilience in that they returned to places where they expected to find survivors (e.g., the universities), to help recover survivors or remains of the deceased. Montas indicated that their behavior was characterized by the discipline and resilience which characterized that of their ancestors over the previous two centuries.<sup>2</sup>

Montas' description of Haitian resilience is helpful. It describes resilience as "acceptance of conditions," as solidarity demonstrated by "Haitians helping Haitians," and as resumption of normal activities despite the devastation levied by the earthquake. Indeed, the American Heritage Dictionary defines resilience as "The power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc., after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity; the ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like."<sup>3</sup>[pp.1051-1052] Elsewhere, resilience is defined as "a range of processes that bring together quite diverse mechanisms operating before, during, and after the encounter with the stress experience or adversity."<sup>4</sup>[p.135] Still, Montas' observation might blur the focus on individual, community-level, and infrastructure trauma and their long-term biopsychosocial impact.

Trauma comes from the Greek word for "wound." Trauma refers either to physical or to psychological, life-threatening injury resulting from catastrophic personal, familial, or disaster experiences, from which the individual or community cannot escape, but to which the reaction is one of terror, helplessness, and a sense of being overwhelmed.<sup>5</sup> Consistent with the latter definition, the 2010 Haiti earthquake was unexpected (in contrast to familiar seasonal hurricanes); the earthquake evoked terror and helplessness in response to inescapable forces that were beyond the ability of its victims to manage or resist (Heart-rending images of traumatized survivors were viewed on television

sets, on the Internet, and in newspapers around the globe). The earthquake also led to the death of an estimated 230,000 people, as well as displacement and severe injuries to tens of thousands more.<sup>6</sup>

The intensity of a person's response to sudden traumatic events is, in part, based on prior exposures to trauma. Trauma may cause adverse physiological changes such as the release of stress hormones that can actually weaken health and resilience.<sup>7</sup> However, the outcomes of trauma, regardless of its source, are not limited to adverse, irreversible health or social outcomes. Rutter notes that cumulative trauma and adverse responses to traumatic events can result in adaptive recovery/resilience.<sup>4</sup> Given Rutter's contribution, post-earthquake Haiti provides an ideal context in which to study resilience because as a nation, it has experienced cumulative trauma, beginning with slavery, followed by centuries of social and political turbulence, and culminating in centuries of structural violence that facilitate the perpetuation of inequities such as poverty, illiteracy, and preventable disease.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Haitians have endured geographical disasters, such as annual cyclones and flooding. In the aftermath of the earthquake, Haiti was further ravaged with a cholera epidemic that killed thousands of earthquake survivors and that severely taxed the country's health and economic infrastructure.<sup>9</sup>

In the present work, we first explore the meaning of resilience and its application to Haitians as resilient through a review of the literature on resilience published between 1990 and 2013. We then examine the extent to which resilience as defined in the literature applies to Haitian earthquake survivors who took part in a larger study conducted in Haiti between 2010 and 2011 (In that study, we investigated the role of social capital in post-earthquake shelter recovery, and explored personal functioning and neighborhood characteristics before and after the earthquake).<sup>10-11</sup> In accomplishing our objectives, we enhance understanding of resilience among Haitians by presenting an intellectual and culturally contextualized framework for the ability of Haitians to continue "business as usual." We begin with a description of the methods from the larger Social Capital Study,<sup>10-11</sup> following this with a description of the methods for exploring the literature on Haitians and resilience. Then, we present the results of the literature review first, using it as a context within which to understand the present study participants' responses. We proceed with the findings from the Haiti-based Social Capital study, followed by a discussion of our findings from the present study and concluding with the implications of our findings for clinical practice with Haitian survivors of the earthquake and for policy more broadly.

## Methods

**Methods of Social Capital Study in Haiti.**<sup>10-11</sup> *Population studied.* We traveled to Haiti in May 2010, to examine the role of social capital on post-disaster shelter recovery processes across three neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, the nation's capital: Delmas, Canapé Vert and Pétion Ville. Delmas comprises Haut Delmas (High Delmas), a middle-income area, and Bas Delmas, (Lower Delmas) a lower-income neighborhood. Canapé Vert remains a high-income area where intellectuals and wealthy people reside, in spite of multiple squatter homes that now populate its hillsides. Pétion Ville, a suburb in the Port-au-Prince mountains, is socioeconomically similar to Canapé Vert.

The main focus of the social capital study was not on resilience per se, but we asked community leaders and members who survived the earthquake to compare their lives, their functioning, and their neighborhoods'/neighbors' characteristics pre and post-earthquake, and to offer their perspectives on the speed of housing recovery.<sup>10-11</sup> That study was funded by the National Science Foundation.

**Ethical considerations.** The social capital study was approved by the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB), by the Florida International University IRB, and by the Haitian National Bioethics Committee.

**Recruitment.** Building on established collaborations with Haiti-based scholars and community leaders, we employed targeted purposive sampling and snowball sampling to recruit participants for semi-structured interviews and focus groups. We reached saturation<sup>12-13</sup> after interviewing 38 community leaders and conducting 6 focus groups across the three communities.

**Setting.** The interviews and focus groups were held in different but convenient locations across the targeted communities, maximizing comfort and privacy for the participants. These sites included the Haitian Institute of Community Health (Institut Haitien de Santé Communautaire [INHSAC]) of Pétion Ville, local churches in Canapé Vert and Delmas, and a tent school in Canapé Vert.

**Data collection process.** We used a semi-structured interview guide and a semi-structured focus group guide to collect data in three phases: (1) baseline data collection and analysis (May–September 2010); (2) follow-up data collection and analysis (October–May 2011); and (3) validation/participant verification research (June 2011). Our data collection methods varied across the three phases of research.

During the first and second phases, we conducted focus groups (n=6), in-depth, semi-structured interviews (n=36), participant observation in the targeted neighborhoods, and review of secondary sources. During the first and second phases, we also conducted a total of 38 in-depth interviews.

In the first phase, we conducted six focus groups as baseline data on the role of social capital in post-disaster shelter recovery, on neighborhood and family dynamics before and after the earthquake, and on accessing food and other basic resources in the aftermath of the earthquake. (Two focus groups were conducted in each of the three communities, and within each community, one focus group targeted female participants and the second targeted male participants.) Across the three communities, we recruited 47 focus group participants. In the second phase, we conducted six follow-up focus groups in the same communities, equally divided across the communities, for a total of 45 participants. Focus group participants from our first phase made up 62% of focus group participants in our second phase; and we recruited additional participants to arrive at 45 focus group participants in the second phase. Our semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted in Haitian Kreyòl, the language that is understood by members of all social classes in Haiti.

We also used close-ended questions to collect demographic data and additional data on social capital and solidarity within and across the neighborhoods during and after the earthquake (Copies of research instruments are available upon request).

During our third and last research phase, Assessment (Validation/Participant Verification) Research, we facilitated two Town Hall Meetings at INHSAC, using a semi-

structured guide. These town hall meetings, like the focus groups, were segregated by gender to allow participants from across the three communities to express their views freely. There were approximately 25–30 participants in each town hall meeting. The town hall meeting format allowed us to present, discuss and corroborate or correct our findings from the previous research stages with the study participants, helping us to enhance the trustworthiness of our findings. Additionally, the town hall meetings gave the project participants the opportunity to hear what members of other communities had experienced, to explore others' perceptions on the impact of the earthquake on members of other communities, and to begin networking across communities.

We audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews and the focus groups with the informed consent of participants, translating them into English as we transcribed, as this method increases efficiency.<sup>14</sup>

**Data analysis.** In the social capital study, we used ATLAS.ti\*, supportive software for textual data analysis to conduct a thematic analysis of our interview and focus group transcripts.<sup>15</sup> We analyzed the close-ended sociodemographic data from the focus groups via SPSS 16.0,<sup>16</sup> thus, obtaining findings from univariate and bivariate analysis of characteristics of the Haiti-based study participants.

**Summary of findings from the Social Capital Study.** The study highlighted that social capital in the Haitian context is a culturally-based connection between a structural aspect of social capital that participants described as *moun pa* (literally, “person of mine”, figuratively, “person who is part of my inner circle”), and an attitudinal/trust component of social capital called *konfyans* (literally, “trust”). Haitians reportedly engage in *pati pri* with their *moun pas*, literally, “take sides” with their close and trusted associates. Social capital study participants also reported that those who have access to resources will often intentionally block individuals who are not their *moun pas* from important shelter and food resources. A startling example of Haitian social capital was offered by study participants who told of one woman who had so many *moun pas* that she had amassed an overabundance of rice and tents, which she then sold to others who did not have *moun pas* who possessed the needed resources. Thus, social capital in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake sometimes resulting in negative consequences, i.e., violence towards those who were denied access to resources.<sup>10–11</sup>

The definition of social capital in the post-earthquake Haiti context was particularly salient when we considered the question of resilience among post-earthquake Haitians.

The research prompts that are the focus of the present work permitted us to consider resilience among survivors of the Haiti earthquake across the three phases of research. These prompts included the following: 1) discuss your neighborhood before the earthquake; 2) discuss your family before the earthquake; 3) discuss your neighborhood since the earthquake; 4) discuss your family since the earthquake; 5) discuss your opinion of the speed of shelter recovery in Haiti and in your neighborhood.

**Methods of literature review.** We conducted a literature review using pre-established selection criteria to analyze studies conducted on resilience between 1990 and 2013. (This timeframe is important in that there had been a great deal of political and geographical turmoil in Haiti during that period; therefore, it could be expected that the resilience of Haitians would appear in the literature during that time frame in conjunction with risk and the physical, psychological, and emotional trauma). However, recognizing that no

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single review of the research literature can be comprehensive, we employed a strategy that explicitly operationalized how articles are chosen for review.<sup>16</sup>

We established the following criteria for inclusion in our final sample of relevant articles: (a) English language articles published from 1990 through 2013 in peer-reviewed journal articles in the fields of social work, sociology, public health and/ or psychology (these fields are relevant to social work practice, policy and research, and to the biological, neurological, and psychological correlates of trauma and to policy); (b) articles published in Canada or in the United States (U.S.) (Canada was included because Montreal and Quebec are home to large Haitian enclaves); (c) articles on resilience that examined resilience specifically in relation to Haitians; (d) peer-reviewed publications for which abstracts and the actual articles were accessible via searches conducted in PsycInfo, Social Work Abstracts and Social Services Research; e) works that were cited as seminal studies, even if their dates of publication were prior to our 1990-2013 selection criteria. We excluded dissertations, books, and book reviews; but we remained open to including book chapters in cases where the author was an expert on content concerning Haitians and mental health.

ATLAS.ti<sup>®</sup> also permitted us to view the findings from the literature search and the findings from the social capital study as one corpus of data. Thus, we got a clear sense of which conceptualization (s) of resilience was most applicable to the experiences of the earthquake survivors we studied.

## Results

**Results of literature review.** Table 1 lists the keywords, databases and process used in our search for literature on resilience.

As is evident in Table 1, above, we received the fewest hits across the three databases when we specifically sought for “resilience and Haitians and trauma.” Box 1 presents specific works that emerged from our search for “resilience and Haitians.” Of those, only three actually advanced knowledge on resilience and Haitians, and that too in a

**Table 1.**

### KEYWORDS AND DATABASES USED IN SEARCH FOR ARTICLES ON HAITIANS AND RESILIENCE

Keywords	Psych INFO	Social Work Abstracts	Social Services Research Abstracts
What is resilience	198	6	87
Review of resilience	327	13	185
Resilience and disasters	430	7	62
Resilience and Haitians	7	1	0
Resilience and trauma	1,383	28	181
Resilience and Haitians and trauma	3	1	0

**Box 1.**

**RESULT OF LITERATURE SEARCH USING KEYWORDS “RESILIENCE AND HAITIANS”  
“1990–2013”**

Year	Author (s)	Title	Specific to Haitians?	Enhances K on R +H	How K on R+H is expanded	Publication Type
2013	Roysircar, G. (sp)	Disaster Counseling: A Haitian family post January 12, 2010 earthquake.	Yes	Yes	Discusses disaster mental health and available resources on the community and individual level in Haiti.	Book
2011	Asante, M. K.	Haiti: Three analytical narratives of crisis and recovery.	Yes	Yes	Discusses how Haiti dealt with natural and man-made disasters using class, religion and culture.	Journal of Black Studies
2011	Belizaire, L. S. & Fuertes, J. N.	Attachment, coping, acculturative stress, and quality of life among Haitian immigrants.	Yes	No	Resilience as coping	Journal of Counseling and Development
2011	Bellegarde-Smith, P.	A man-made disaster: The earthquake of Jan. 12, 2010- A Haitian perspective.	Yes	No	Discusses the potential bounds of Haitian resilience in the light of the multiple challenges Haitians face.	Journal of Black Studies
2011	Lundy, G.	Transnationalism in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake: Reinforcing ties and second-generation identity.	Yes	Yes	Discusses identity among second generation Haitians as resilient and how the earthquake has affected that.	Journal of Black Studies
2011	Rahill, G., Jean-Gilles, M., Thomlison, B., & Pinto-Lopez, E.	Metaphors as contextual evidence for engaging Haitian clients in practice: A case study.	Yes	No	Discusses how metaphors focus on cultural strength and resilience among Haitians.	American Journal of Psychotherapy

*(Continued on p. 587)*

**Box 1. (continued)**

Year	Author (s)	Title	Specific to Haitians?	Enhances K on R +H	How K on R+H is expanded	Publication Type
2010	Nicolas, G., Schwartz, B. & Pierre, E.	Weathering the storms like bamboo: The strengths and Haitians in coping with natural disasters.	Yes	Yes	Resilience as flexibility and grounded in traditional rituals	Book
2009	Stewart, M. R.	Autobiographical narratives of Haitian adolescents separated from their parents by immigration: Resilience in the face of difficulty.	Yes	No	Discusses Haitian youth who were separated from their families during immigration and how their resiliency can play a role in their lives.	Dissertation
2004	Yarvis, J., Sabin, M., Nackerud, L. & Pandit, K.	Haitian Immigrants in the United States: Intergenerational Trauma Transmission, Adaptation and Ethnic Identity.	Yes	No	Resilience as adaptation	Caribbean Journal of Social Work

Notes:  
K= Knowledge  
R= Resilience  
H= Haitians



limited fashion, suggesting that a great deal more remains to be discovered about resilience and Haitians.

Scientific research on resilience is extensive and spans several decades, including but not limited to those referred to here.<sup>4,17-26</sup> Box 2 contains findings on resilience in general, including scholarly works published between 1990 and 2013, which contributed to our understanding of resilience among Haitians.

Throughout the literature searches, we compiled a list of recurrent concepts related to resilience that were readily relevant to survivors of trauma such as the recent earthquake in Haiti. These included: *determinants of resilience*, *variability of resilience*, *characteristics of resilient people*, *consequences of resilience*, *resilience in life adaptations*, *resilience in cumulative trauma*, *resilience and spirituality*, *predictors of resilience*, *models of resilience*, and *scales of resilience*.

**Summary of findings on resilience from literature search.** *Resilience in general.* We found varied aspects to resilience. In addition to definitions provided above, some sources define resilience as the ability to return to a previous and healthy level of functioning in the aftermath of a stressful situation.<sup>20,23</sup>

Luthar and colleagues distinguish resilience, a changing process of adapting to traumatic events, from resiliency, which is defined as a personal trait possessed by those who survive traumatic experiences with little observable effects on their biopsychosocial functioning.<sup>20</sup> Linley identifies wisdom as an essential component of resilience, offering “three dimensions of wisdom as crucial to an understanding of the role it can play in posttraumatic positive adaptation. These dimensions are the recognition and management of uncertainty; the integration of affect and cognition; and the recognition and acceptance of human limitation.”<sup>19[p.601]</sup> Linley further asserts that wisdom is “consistently implicated in the development of post-traumatic positive adaptation.”<sup>19[p.602]</sup>

Masten<sup>21</sup> notes that resilience and resiliency can be developed and strengthened, and can contribute to personal growth. These assertions point to necessary life adaptations that must occur if a person is to emerge as resilient: more specifically they suggest that resilience includes recognition, management, and acceptance of uncertainty and human limitation, as well as integration of cognition and emotions.

Werner and Smith further expanded our knowledge of resiliency. Their pioneering work on resilience consisted of a longitudinal study that tracked high-risk children from birth through age 32.<sup>25-26</sup> They found that those who grew up to be productive and successful possessed similar traits including the ability to solve problems, the capacity to initiate and retain friendships, a belief that they have control over what happens to them, a sense of hope and purpose, an affectionate bond with a significant other, and a spiritual stance that includes faith and prayer.<sup>25-26</sup> Later, Flach added that resilience includes peoples’ ability to tolerate stress and to be open-minded and disciplined while having a low tolerance for unacceptable behavior in others.<sup>18</sup> Flach also indicated that a strong sense of humor, creativity, courage, and insight are present in people described as resilient. Moreover, he found resilience to include a disposition to dream and make plans that inspire hope and a sense of integrity. Flach further noted that the most successful survivors of trauma are those who not only possess insight into the psychological effect of their experience, but also possess the ability to verbalize it to others. Furthermore, Flach also noted that the emphasis in resilience research should

**Box 2.****SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON RESILIENCE IN GENERAL  
(1990–2013)**

Scholar (s)	Definition of Resilience
Flach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to be open-minded and disciplined while having a low tolerance for unacceptable behavior in others;</li> <li>• strong sense of humor, creativity, courage, and insight;</li> <li>• disposition to dream and make plans that inspire hope and a sense of integrity;</li> <li>• not only possess insight into the psychological effect of their experience, but also possess the ability to verbalize it to others;</li> </ul>
Werner & Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to solve problems;</li> <li>• capacity to initiate and retain friendships;</li> <li>• a belief that they have control over what happens to them;</li> <li>• a sense of hope and purpose;</li> <li>• an affectionate bond with a significant other;</li> <li>• and a spiritual stance that includes faith and prayer;</li> </ul>
Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to return to a previous and healthy level of functioning in the aftermath of a stressful situation;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ distinguishes resilience, a changing process of adapting to traumatic events, from resiliency, a personal trait possessed by those who survive traumatic experiences with apparently little observable effects on their biopsychosocial functioning;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Masten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• positive adjustment following conditions experienced as challenging</li> <li>• a set of behaviors, attitudes and skills that can be learned</li> </ul>
Linley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wisdom as an essential component of resilience               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ “three dimensions of wisdom as crucial to an understanding of the role it can play in posttraumatic positive adaptation:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ recognition and management of uncertainty;</li> <li>▪ integration of affect and cognition; and</li> <li>▪ recognition and acceptance of human limitation”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
National Center for Victims of Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• resilient persons emerge from stressful situations feeling normal and sometimes stronger for having experienced the situation</li> </ul>
Nicolas, Schwartz, & Pierre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility; (similar to bamboo);</li> <li>• cultural factors (PROVERBS) such as the family, the traditional foods and spiritual factors as contributing factors to Haitian ability to continue to “cope”</li> </ul>
American Heritage Dictionary online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc., after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity;</li> <li>• ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like;</li> </ul>

be placed on traits that mitigate the occurrence of severe physical and psychological distress among survivors of trauma (i.e., resiliency), rather than on factors that result in disruptive health outcomes. Others have included independence, initiative, and morality as traits of resilient people<sup>27</sup> as well as a positive history with one's father, coupled with an innate desire to help one's fellow man.<sup>28</sup>

**Resilience and Haitians** With respect to resilience and Haitians, we found early in the literature that N'zengou-Tayo, speaking of historical injustices that rural Haitian women have endured, noted that Haitian women had “not given up hope of improving their circumstances” and that “their traditional resilience is now strengthened by a fighting spirit.”<sup>29</sup>[pp.125–6] That is the only reference to resilience in N'zengou-Tayo's work, and it is consistent with the definition of resilience in as persistent hope and struggle despite adversity.

In post-earthquake literature addressing resilience and Haitians, Nicolas and colleagues acknowledge that Haitians are as flexible as “bamboo;” they document that cultural factors such as the family, traditional food, and spiritual factors contribute to the ability of Haitians to continue to “cope” with traumatic events, including disasters.<sup>22</sup> The reference to bamboo as a metaphor elucidates the ability of Haitians to be flexible as bamboo trees, which can withstand strong elemental forces without being destroyed. To substantiate their metaphor, Nicolas and colleagues herald a popular Haitian Kreyòl saying, “*Pliye, pliye, pa kase.*” In English, the words translate as “Bend (Fold), bend, don't break.” Such a perspective is consistent with the definition from the American Heritage Dictionary.<sup>3</sup> However, the latter source suggests that the person “bent [or] folded” as a result of trauma would return to his or her “original” form. We currently have no scientific evidence that Haitian survivors of the 2010 earthquake and of adverse contextual events return to their original form, as there is little to indicate what that original form was. Lacking also has been knowledge that contributes to our understanding of Haitian resilience from the emic or insider perspective of those who survived a traumatic disaster such as the 2010 earthquake.

Having summarized the literature obtained through our search on resilience, we tried to ascertain if patterns of resilience from the literature are related to the experiences of survivors of the Haitian earthquake. Thus, we applied what is known about resilience in the literature to data obtained in the social capital study. For additional related work, see the last seven works cited in this paper.<sup>31–37</sup>

**Application of literature on resilience to Haiti-based Social Capital Study.** Using the conceptualizations of resilience found in the literature, we analyzed transcriptions of data obtained from semi-structured interviews of 38 community leaders and six focus groups (n=36) conducted with community residents to see if their reported experiences and activities reflected what the academic sources define as resilience. Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics of our community leaders' sample by neighborhood. It is followed by Table 3, which reflects the sociodemographic characteristics of our focus group members.

All (100%) of the community leaders and focus group members who participated in our social capital study confirmed and spoke about the experience of trauma, as defined earlier, as a consequence of the earthquake.

**Flach's conceptualization of resilience.**<sup>18</sup> Consistent with Flach, our study participants demonstrated open-mindedness and discipline in their willingness to participate

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**Table 2.**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS—COMMUNITY LEADERS—PHASE I AND PHASE II (N=38)**

Demographic Characteristics	Pétionville (% and count)	Delmas (% and count)	Canapé Vert (% and count)	Total (% and Count) across communities
<b>Age Group</b>				
18–25	10.0 (1)	0.0 (0)	11.1 (1)	5.3 (2)
26–30	30.0 (3)	10.5 (2)	33.3 (3)	21.1 (8)
31–35	40.0 (4)	15.8 (3)	33.3 (3)	26.3 (10)
36–40	20.0 (2)	5.3 (1)	22.2 (2)	13.2 (5)
41–45	0.0 (0)	26.3 (5)	0.0 (0)	13.2 (5)
46–65	0.0 (0)	31.7 (6)	0.0 (0)	15.7 (6)
Over 65	0.0 (0)	10.5 (2)	0.0 (0)	5.3 (2)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	80.0 (8)	94.7 (18)	66.7 (6)	84.2 (32)
Female	20.0 (2)	5.3 (1)	33.3 (3)	15.8 (6)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Education</b>				
Less than high school	0.0 (0)	10.5 (2)	0.0 (0)	5.3 (2)
Equivalent to high school	10.0 (1)	36.8 (7)	11.1 (1)	23.7 (9)
Some College/No degree	50.0 (5)	21.1 (4)	55.6 (5)	36.8 (14)
College/ BA Equivalent/ Credentialed	30.0 (3)	21.1 (4)	33.3 (3)	26.3 (10)
Graduate Degree	0.0 (0)	5.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	2.6 (1)
Unknown or Trade School	5.3 (1)	5.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	5.3 (2)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Birthplace</b>				
Port-au-Prince	20.0 (2)	21.1 (4)	22.2 (2)	21.1 (8)
Other/ Rural	80.0 (8)	73.7 (14)	77.8 (7)	76.3 (29)
Unknown/Missing Data	0.0 (0)	5.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	2.6 (1)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Employed</b>				
Yes	50.0 (5)	15.8 (3)	44.4 (4)	31.6 (12)
No	50.0 (5)	78.9 (15)	55.6 (5)	65.8 (25)
Unknown/ Missing Data	0.0 (0)	5.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	2.6 (1)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	90.0 (9)	10.5 (2)	66.7 (6)	44.8 (17)
Married	0.0 (0)	78.9 (15)	22.2 (2)	44.8 (17)
Cohabiting/ Plase	10.0 (1)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	2.6 (1)
Separated/Widowed/ Divorced	0.0 (0)	10.6 (2)	11.1 (1)	7.8 (3)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)
<b>Religion</b>				
Catholic	0.0 (0)	10.5 (2)	44.4 5(4)	15.8 (6)
Protestant	90.0 (9)	79.0 (15)	44.45(4)	73.7 (28)
None	10.0 (1)	10.5 (2)	11.1 (1)	10.5 (4)
Total	100.0 (10)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (38)

**Table 3.**

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS INTERVIEWED DURING PHASE I AND PHASE II (N=63)**

Demographic Characteristics	Pétion Ville (% and count)	Delmas (% and count)	Canapé Vert (% and count)	Total (% and Count) across communities
<b>Age Group</b>				
18–25	40.9 (9)	46.6 (7)	26.9 (7)	36.5 (23)
26–30	4.5 (1)	40.0 (6)	26.9 (7)	22.2 (14)
31–35	18.2 (4)	6.7 (1)	19.2 (5)	15.9 (10)
36–40	13.6 (3)	0.0 (0)	3.8 (1)	6.3 (4)
41–45	4.5 (1)	6.7 (1)	11.6 (3)	7.9 (5)
46–65	18.2 (4)	0.0 (0)	11.6 (3)	11.2 (7)
Total	100.0 (22)	100.0 (15)	100.0 (26)	100.0 (63)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	54.5 (12)	60.0 (9)	50.0 (13)	54.0 (34)
Female	45.5 (10)	40.0 (6)	50.0 (13)	46.0 (29)
Total	100.0 (22)	100.0 (15)	100.0 (26)	100.0 (63)
<b>Education</b>				
Less than high school	36.5 (8)	33.3 (5)	34.6 (9)	34.9 (22)
Equivalent to high school	54.5 (12)	40.0 (6)	46.2 (12)	47.6 (30)
Some College/No degree	0.0 (0)	6.7 (1)	11.5 (3)	6.3 (4)
College/ BA Equivalent/ Credentialed	4.5 (1)	6.7 (1)	7.7 (2)	6.3 (4)
Unknown or Trade School	4.5 (1)	13.4 (2)	0.0 (0)	4.8 (3)
Total	100.0 (22)	100.0 (15)	100.0 (26)	100.0 (63)
<b>Birthplace</b>				
Port-a-Prince	50.0 (11)	46.7 (7)	53.8 (14)	50.8 (32)
Other	50.0 (11)	53.3 (8)	46.2 (12)	49.2 (31)
Total	100.0 (22)	100.0 (15)	100.0 (26)	100.0 (63)

in the study, to arrive on time for the interviews and other events we scheduled, to patiently wait their turns, and to provide excellent interviews. However, the majority of participants did not demonstrate a disposition to take matters in their own hands so as to dream or make plans that inspire hope. Rather, a recurrent theme from males and females across the neighborhoods reflected Flach's ability to be disciplined while having a low tolerance for unacceptable behavior in others. Some emphasized their integrity as an impetus for perceiving their voting power, rather than violence, as a mechanism of change, while others called for violent change in the nation, whatever the cost:

I am *Angwase, nève!* (Bitter; anxiety-filled). I feel like I must force the change. I am not afraid to die! We were *La Perle des Antilles* (The Pearl of the Antilles). Now, we can't even find food to eat. There must be a revolution even if 500,000 people die—better that than for us to spend the rest of our lives suffering together.

Characteristics of resilience as defined by Flach were further evident among our participants. For example, we observed many community members who were creating beautiful works of art from the rubble under which the remains of loved ones decayed; others painted exquisite scenery of people in the earthquake. Moreover, courage was evident in the testimonies of community leaders, focus group members, and town hall participants who persistently engaged in creative measures to obtain scarce resources that were being offered and to meet with government officials that they felt should help. A female community leader from Delmas described creativity, persistence, and insight, as she asserted: “I went to his [government official’s] office and they told me he was not there again. So, [laughing] I sat outside and waited until 5 o’clock and saw him quickly jump in his car and drive off!”

All participants across focus groups and interviews spoke of their hope of possible change as they awaited an election that was imminent during the first phase of the study. They described anticipating support from foreign governments and international aid organizations. A community member from Canapé Vert stated, “We believe in our president, and as long as the American government gives him support, everything will be resolved.” Others had hopes that the country would be rebuilt and would be better in the long run, even while anticipating that socioeconomic inequity would persist and bracing for the effect of cholera as a new, unanticipated threat. During the town hall meeting, a young male Delmas resident stated,

*Kote-k te mal ap toujou pi mal.* [Places that were badly off will always be the worst.] Those areas which were not too badly off before the earthquake will be not only para-seismic but even more beautiful. The lowest class is the one that sustains and carries all the problems, including this cholera that we are now facing.

While hope was evident, the final conclusion from the male town hall meeting, was “Seeing is believing; we don’t know. There is hope, but we have to see. Here at home, it is always like this- there is always beautiful, grand hope and then no result.” Likewise, a sense of hopelessness stemming from “hearing” that things will improve without “seeing” evidence on which to base hope was a theme in the female town hall meeting. A female participant from Canapé Vert confirmed a subjective sense of void with hopelessness, adding:

If we complain, we are speaking in the void. Nothing is going to be resolved, even when we make organized protests. We don’t know what the government might do for us. We hear that they are going to buy houses . . . that they give out food, but we only hear. We don’t see because nobody comes to us. . . .

**Werner and Smith’s conceptualization of resilience.**<sup>25</sup> Consistent with Werner and Smith, participants of both town hall meetings strongly affirmed that their hope was directed outside of themselves or their loved ones and that this external locus of control may have hindered individual or corporate action: “Well, we don’t know. Our hope is in God’s hands; we are waiting on God!” But even though the participants did not assert an intrinsic hope in their personal ability to effect change, the hope born of

their faith in God seemed to mitigate abject despair; however, in the men's town hall meeting, hope outside oneself and in God occasioned a lively debate concerning true faith as something that endures, compared with something that many sought after the shock of earthquake. A male community leader from Delmas acknowledged that faith of the Haitian people may have been a result of the earthquake, rather than their survival being the result of their faith:

Faith—it is part of the rubric—that is an answer some people had given in response to your question about hope; but each person conceives of faith in a certain way. This earthquake—the way it was—the magnitude—we don't have that tradition/historical experience. Today's generation does not have a framework within which to understand it. It's normal that when the earthquake came—since from time to time, they were instructing them they were telling them that the return of Jesus Christ is the end of the world—and that they had never personally witnessed the death of such a great quantity of people—it's normal to interpret the earthquake as something to do with the way they had been taught. Faith by its definition is something that is durable and firm. It is not something that—when you have it, when it animates you—you will not despair for what happens. The earthquake led every Haitian to scramble and look for where their faith had been and where they'd hidden it—well, then there is no Haitian who has faith—if that was it; if that is how it is. That means there is no Haitian who has faith.

Werner and Smith's view of resilience as including a spiritual stance of faith and prayer was most evident in the initial phase of the study, which took place in the months subsequent to the earthquake. During that time, members from all three communities had expressed a great deal of "faith" in "God," and had stressed the importance of faith and spirituality in their ability to continue to live day by day, even with recurrent aftershocks, six months after the earthquake, "because we did not die in the earthquake." These attributed the cause of the earthquake to the sins of the Haitian people and ascribed their survival directly to their faith in God or in God's ability to deliver them for a higher purpose. Substantiating this belief, several study participants firmly quoted a verse from Psalms 118:17:

*Je ne mourrai pas, je vivrai, et je raconterai les œuvres de l'Éternel ; l'Éternel m'a châtié, mais il ne m'a pas livré à la mort. [I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD; the Lord has chastised me, but He has not given me over to death].*

Others, including a male community leader from Delmas struggled with a faith that encouraged endurance through suffering, asserting that his faith inspires hope, but acknowledging that suffering is "not sweet" and can challenge one's sense of worth, leaving one with a sense of resignation and helplessness:

It makes a difference that I trust in God because there is hope; there is a song that they used to sing [about] accept suffering. Whenever they are singing it in church now, I can't sing along because suffering is not something that a person can accept as if it is something that is sweet. Sometimes we find ourselves in a situation that we have to accept, because we don't have the option of doing the contrary. We come to the conclusion that maybe it is we ourselves who are not valuable.

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With respect to the aspect of Werner and Smith's conceptualization of resilience as involving relationships and a sense of purpose: Throughout the study, we were introduced to mothers, brothers, children, and neighbors, and we observed a great deal of affection among family members and friends. During Phases 1 and 2, we also were introduced to "new" friends that participants had made as a result of the earthquake—people who had offered help during or after the earthquake or people they had met in the displacement camps. However, by the third phase, a recurrent theme was the loss of the "new" friends, which compounded the loss of former friends who perished in the earthquake. As an example, during both town hall meetings, participants who no longer resided in the tents continuously reported that a friend or family member would allow them to spend one or two days in a home from time to time; however, they asserted that these were relationships that were forged prior to the earthquake. In fact, all agreed that in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, "rich and poor, light- and dark-skinned men and women drank from the same cup," as all pitched in to help each other. However, new "friendships" did not endure after the initial aftershocks, as the wealthy scrambled to regain their resources and to re-draw social and class boundaries.

In addition to acknowledging that new friends and social contacts did not endure past the aftershocks, the most study participants also voiced an increasingly lower sense of expectations of the country's leadership. A male Canapé Vert focus group member described a vicious circle of frustration, protest, and return to status quo, and others agreed via strong spoken assent:

I'm *bouke* [tired to the point of weariness; at my end point/limit]. I am 49 years old. Since my childhood, even if they [politicians] seem like good people, you come to realize that they are what's not good. You vote for change, but you observe that things become even worse! We have been waiting too long. Our expectations have been lowered. We went to school and put something in our brains for nothing. How much time are we expected to wait? NOW! We are *BOUKE*! When people can't handle it anymore, they go and protest; when they protest, they beat them and right there we return to the same thing again.

The sense of being stretched beyond the limit may have prevented us from finding evidence that people would return to a previous and healthy level of functioning as indicated by Luthar and colleagues. Study participants perceived that societal or institutional structures actually hindered Haitian individuals' and communities' ability to recover. By the town hall meetings, Haiti had elected a new president, and participants had observed the aftermath of an earthquake in Chile. They compared their own leaders' responses with those of Chilean leaders:

Well, then we will spend a five-year period sitting in tents, and then another administration will come into power and we'll still be in the same thing; it is in the interest of the government to help us but they pretend not to understand so as not to help. Since the president just assumed power, when they have done taking note of our situation, they would see that the people no longer can handle the situation as it is—the way that the terrains are not clean, the humiliation we are suffering, the water in the area, hurricane season being here again; but we have asked, we have asked! We have



asked already, isn't that right? We have asked but we have not received a result! We have made requests already; when you had come before, we had sent that message with you; I see improvements in Chile. Here, there is no leadership. *Se kòm si se yon savann; yon ekip kabrit kap mache ladann san mèt.* [It's like a wilderness/wasteland; a team of goats roaming about in it without a master.]

The above quotation contradicts Flach as well as Werner and Smith's inclusion of hope as part of resilience, and challenged their notions of resilient people as possessing the belief that they have control over what happens to them. Indeed, few male participants in our study endorsed hope and purpose that was related to their own ability to have control over what happened to them. For example, male town hall participants echoed, "Nothing can be done to have made us more able to handle our affairs and to keep ourselves safe," although prior to the election of the new President, there had been renewed hope that their shelter and food needs would be met. In contrast, 100% of the female town hall participants study reported that the new government and its leadership provided renewed hope for them that their needs would be met.

**Luthar, Chichetti, and Becker's conceptualization of resilience.** With respect to resilience as the ability to return to a previous and healthy level of functioning in the aftermath of a stressful situation,<sup>20</sup> throughout the three phases of research, participants across the three neighborhoods and across genders asserted that they and their lives and quality of life had been completely changed by the earthquake. For example, during the second phase of the research, both male and female focus group members repeatedly re-emphasized the impact of losing family members, friends, associates and neighbors, adults, elders, and children. Along with these losses, many experienced a tremendous concern regarding the length of time that people spent under the debris and the apparent inability of the Haitian government to enable speedy recovery of their deceased loved ones, their belongings, and their residences.

A young female community member from Canapé Vert reflected Luthar's criterion of resilience as ability to return to previous level of functioning. However, in this case the resilience seemed not to achieve a healthy level, as resources had dwindled so greatly and the impact on people was so far-reaching. Her assertions, drawn from Haitian popular wisdom, also partially illustrated Masten's resilience as adjustment under challenging conditions:

There are people from Mòn Rosa whose homes were not destroyed. If the person's home is not destroyed, even if it's hard for the person to find food to eat, s/he is not too bad; there is now no financing for their efforts, but they manage to live anyway. From my viewpoint, the person spends as much as s/he knows s/he has. How does the Haitian proverb go again? *Mezi lajan ou mezi wanga-ou* [Your magic/Voodoo is only as big as your money].

Although this quotation does not indicate how positive the adjustment is, it does support Nicolas and colleagues' definition of Haitian resilience as flexibility, and of cultural factors, in this case traditional proverbs, as featuring in resilience among Haitians. Her statements regarding the ability of others to resume normal activities also reflect resilience as defined by Flach in his positing of courage, plan-setting, and integrity as

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features of resilience, and Werner and Smith's definition of resilience as an ability to solve problems. Yet, although her statement, like others', indicates that hopelessness was inevitable (given long-standing financial inequities and rulers' apathy), it still asserts the capacity of individuals or communities to be either more or less resilient. Particularly telling is her remark that people "manage to live anyway."

**National Center for Victims of Crime's conceptualization of resilience.**<sup>30</sup> Consistent with the National Center for Victims of Crime's definition, some acknowledged that the experience of the earthquake had made them stronger, while others maintained that people continued as before the earthquake, but with a diminished capacity. Although he is the only one from the study who maintained that he was stronger for the experience, a young male from Pétion Ville asserted,

Before the earthquake, I used to be afraid of blood; but I found myself lifting people from under the debris who were covered in blood. I will never be afraid again. Nothing worse could happen than what I have seen and experienced with this earthquake.

Among factors that affected Haitian earthquake survivors' ability to emerge as normal and stronger was a shift in the traditional communal response to death, in which friends and relatives would gather to demonstrate emotional and social support to families of the deceased. A female focus group member from Delmas expressed her despondency that Haitians had become *dekonsantré* (desensitized). She explained that in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, she sought others to comfort her because she had lost a one-year old daughter, her father, and her mother in the earthquake; but no one comforted her because others had lost five or more family members. For her (and others assented) life would forever be an individual and detached experience. In fact, the loss of community that characterizes Haiti after the earthquake was summarized by a woman from one of the town hall meetings, using a Haitian proverb—to which all (100%) of those present assented loudly and in unison:

*Se chak koukou kap klere pou je pa yo* [It's each firefly that is lighting the path for its own eyes]. It's not that one would not want to help a neighbor, but now, everybody's head is spinning, because everybody has problems, and so that's what has happened. You come to not have a mind anymore; problems have ravaged us—you can even forget your own children in those moments. ...

Further evidence against the survivors' ability to emerge normal or stronger was that all (100%) of our focus group members and community leaders reported mental health and behavioral symptoms stemming from the earthquake and the resulting trauma. A female focus group member from Canapé Vert stated, "I feel like there is something running through my head. I'm close to simply taking off and running. I just feel like I want to escape—even by boat, just to not be in this environment anymore." In fact,

many individuals, males as well as females, described their personal experiences after the earthquake as existing in a “void” or in “emptiness,” and this void pertained to their living conditions, the living conditions of their neighbors, the impact of the earthquake on their children, the loss of possessions and infrastructure, and a sense of helplessness as they wondered if things would ever return to normal. A male community leader from the Delmas neighborhood stated:

I feel as if I now exist in a void; now you are living in mud; when it rains, there is a woman who puts her baby inside a drawer in the dresser to keep her dry. This makes me cry. We cannot end without touching on children who are being lost in their puberty period. Young men are heads of themselves; of 120 students who were at our school, 20 returned from rural areas [where they had sought shelter]; not even a bell or chalk; no seats to receive parents or professors; all scholastic equipment, notebooks—all gone. I ask myself if things will ever return to the way they were.

**Linley’s conceptualization of resilience.**<sup>19</sup> All (100%) of participants, regardless of gender or neighborhood of residence, accepted that they were limited as human beings, recognized and managed uncertainty, and integrated their emotions with their cognitions. All noted that there was nothing to do but “wait,” but not all were content to wait placidly and many disagreed on what they were waiting for. Some, in the first phase, were waiting for the election and new government, others in subsequent phases of the study, were waiting for more aid from international aid organizations, and still others, by the town hall meeting, were waiting for God to answer prayers. There was strong dissent to the latter with a few asserting such things as, “If we’re putting our hope in faith, and we’re waiting for manna from heaven, the manna will never fall down.”

Although some expressed frustration of waiting helplessly, many highlighted the need for positive emotions, stressing the importance of laughter, jokes, and sports events for the children as valuable “distractions” in helping them to deal with the day to day stresses and aftershocks.

## Discussion

Haitians have faced numerous traumas historically. In the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, academic and media sources described Haitian survivors as resilient.<sup>2,23</sup> We addressed the questions of whether the patterns of resilience based on the literature can be used to explain the experiences of Haitian survivors of the earthquake, providing testimonials of Haitians interviewed in three phases of research between 2010 and 2011.

Our findings indicate that definitions of resilience in the literature do partially describe Haitian resilience. Specifically, we found evidence that support Haitians’ open-mindedness, discipline, low tolerance for unacceptable behavior in others, and hope. We also found support for definitions of resilience as creativity, courage, and insight. Moreover, the psychological effect of Haitians’ traumatic experiences and the ability to describe them to others (another characteristic of resilience) were also evident. Consistent with Werner and Smith’s definition of resilience, we found evidence in our study sample of Haitian resilience as the ability to solve problems, and the capacity to initiate and retain friendships (albeit primarily retention of friendships forged before

the earthquake). We further found support for Haitian resilience in a spiritual stance of faith and prayer or spirituality, although the relative importance of faith and spirituality in relation to independence, courage, and personal integrity as an impetus for action varied among study participants.

As important, there was a recurrent theme throughout the study of “reziye/resignation.” Resignation appears to be a contextual resignation to survive as a matter of choice—when there is no apparent action that the individual can take to mitigate the occurrence or consequence of an adverse event. The 2010 earthquake was such an adverse event. Resilience as resignation underscores that we did not find evidence of Werner and Smith’s definition of resilience as a belief that they have control over what happens to them. This is not to discount the allusions to faith and prayer that were resonant throughout the three phases of our study.

Thus, although the testimonials of survivors in our sample indicate that the above definitions as well as the American Heritage definition of resilience can all be used when referring to Haitians as resilient, the individual definitions may not suffice to encompass their myriad experiences since the earthquake.

Adding to concerns about difficulty finding specific support in our study sample for resilience as the belief that they have control over what happens to them was that we also could not find evidence for Masten’s definition of resilience as involving positive adjustment under challenging conditions.<sup>21</sup> Reasons for that may be our failure to define “positive” clearly prior to our analysis of our data and our not having more time to observe those studied. Most evident from our findings were testimonials in support of resilience as wisdom (recognition and management of uncertainty, integration of emotions and cognition, and recognition and acceptance of human limitation).<sup>19</sup> This was evident in the Haitian proverbs used by our study participants to reinforce their statements, cultural factors, and flexibility, which Nicolas and colleagues indicate are essential to Haitians’ coping.

We discovered that being resilient does not mean that individuals are unaffected by difficulties, but that they have the ability to draw maximally on personal beliefs, behaviors, skills, and attitudes to recover from trauma rather than succumbing to its consequences. Many resilient people have the ability to emerge from stressful situations feeling normal and sometimes stronger for having experienced a traumatic event, but that is not always the case; resilience is variable as some individuals can appear less resilient than they were prior to a traumatic event, especially when the individual experiences the traumatic event at a young age.<sup>30</sup>

**Limitations.** Our study has some limitations. First, it does not address resilience among Haitians in the Diaspora. In the aftermath of the earthquake, hundreds of Haitians were transported to the U.S. and other nations for humanitarian reasons. The additional challenges and traumas experienced by those remain to be studied. Second, despite the contributions of the present work, the factors that promote and sustain resilience among Haitians, especially in post-traumatic situations such as the 2010 earthquake remain elusive. Third, we did not conduct a longitudinal study, which would have enabled us to document the long-term effects of the earthquake on survivors and on their families in relation to resilience; a longitudinal study would also facilitate findings on the extent to which offspring of the earthquake survivors might

learn traits and attitudes of resilience from their parents. Fourth, our study does not provide knowledge on how resilience develops and is strengthened among Haitians or on how resilience develops among Haitians.

We caution that flippantly referring to Haitian survivors as resilient because they are observed to return to “business as usual” is a potential detraction from focusing on individual, community-level, and covert long-term infrastructure disorders that must be addressed. Future studies should explore the manner in which resignation interacts with the other facets of resilience discussed here (hope, creativity, insight, faith/ spirituality, wisdom). Future studies can also investigate gender differences, developmental differences and class differences in resilience among Haitians.

The Haitians interviewed in this study have determined that while they hope in their government, centuries of the same thing result in their losing faith and becoming “bouke/tired to the point of weariness; at one’s endpoint/limit.” The international aid agencies were timely and consistent in providing relief in the forms of food, water, and other basic necessities. The question remains of where to begin in order to achieve sustainable change that will equip the survivors to go beyond coping to thriving emotionally. Future studies could also use Masten’s contribution that resilience involves positive adjustment under challenging conditions and explore how resilience develops, is strengthened and contributes to personal growth among Haitians. Moreover, future studies can examine traits that mitigate the occurrence of severe physical and psychological distress among survivors of trauma in relation to the prognoses and functioning of disaster survivors in Haiti. As important, such efforts should incorporate the use of Haitian proverbs, which are a “natural” resource of popular wisdom and a framework for making sense of their experiences, as evidenced by the fact that the majority of those interviewed used a proverb to summarize the points they made. The use of metaphors that are part of Haitian proverbs as contextual evidence for engaging Haitian clients has been suggested.<sup>31</sup> This would enable people to contribute to their own contextually grounded interventions.

The understanding of resilience among Haitians can strengthen resilience where it exists and provide key factors that are important in health and reconstruction. Hence, the understanding of resilience in that context can inform health practitioners, policymakers and international aid organizations on how to use their input as key informants on what constitutes resilience and reconstruction for them.

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# The Dark Side of Resilience

By Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic and Derek Lusk

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Resilience, defined as the psychological capacity to adapt to stressful circumstances and to bounce back from adverse events, is a highly sought-after personality trait in the modern workplace. As Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant argue in their recent book, we can think of resilience as a sort of muscle that contracts during good times and expands during bad times.

In that sense, the best way to develop resilience is through hardship, which various philosophers have pointed out through the years: Seneca noted that “difficulties strengthen the mind, as labor does the body” and Nietzsche famously stated “that which does not kill us, makes us stronger.” In a similar vein, the United States Marine Corps uses the “pain is just weakness leaving the body” mantra as part of their hardcore training program.

But could too much resilience be a bad thing, just like too much muscle mass can be a bad thing — i.e., putting a strain on the heart? Large-scale scientific studies suggest that even adaptive competencies become maladaptive if taken to the extreme. As Rob Kaiser’s research on leadership versatility indicates, overused strengths become weaknesses. In line, it is easy to conceive of situations in which individuals could be too resilient for their own sake.

For example, extreme resilience could drive people to become overly persistent with unattainable goals. Although we tend to celebrate individuals who aim high or dream big, it is usually more effective to adjust one’s goals to more achievable levels, which means giving up on others. Indeed, scientific reviews show that most people waste an enormous amount of time persisting with unrealistic goals, a phenomenon called the “false hope syndrome.” Even when past behaviors clearly suggest that goals are unlikely to be attained, overconfidence and an unfounded degree of optimism can lead to people wasting energy on pointless tasks.

Along the same line, too much resilience could make people overly tolerant of adversity. At work, this can translate into putting up with boring or demoralizing jobs — and particularly bad bosses — for longer than needed. In America, 75% of employees consider their direct line manager the worst part of their job, and 65% would take a pay cut if they could replace their boss with someone else. Yet there is no indication that people actually act on these attitudes, with job tenure remaining stable over the years despite ubiquitous access to career opportunities and the rise of passive recruitment introduced by the digital revolution. Whereas in the realm of dating, technology has made it easier for people to meet someone and begin a new relationship, in the world of work people seemed resigned to their bleak state of affairs. Perhaps if they were less resilient, they would be more likely to improve their job circumstances, as many individuals do when they decide to ditch traditional employment to work for themselves. However, people are much more willing to put up with a bad job (and boss) than a bad relationship.

In addition, too much resilience can get in the way of leadership effectiveness and, by extension, team and organizational effectiveness. In a recent study, Adrian Furnham and colleagues showed that there are dramatic differences in people’s ability to adapt to stressful jobs and workplace environments. In the face of seemingly hopeless circumstances, some people resemble a superhero cartoon character that runs through a brick wall: unemotional, fearless, and hyper-phlegmatic. To protect against psychological harm, they deploy quite aggressive coping mechanisms that artificially inflate their egos. Meanwhile, others have a set of underlying propensities that make them act a little differently when under stress and pressure.

They become emotionally volatile and scared of rejection. And consequently, they move away from groups, put up walls to avoid being criticized, and openly admit faults as a way to guard against public shaming.

Even though the resilient superhero is usually perceived as better, there is a hidden dark side to it: it comes with the exact same traits that inhibit self-awareness and, in turn, the ability to maintain a realistic self-concept, which is pivotal for developing one's career potential and leadership talent. For instance, multiple studies suggest that bold leaders are unaware of their limitations and overestimate their leadership capabilities and current performance, which leads to not being able to adjust one's interpersonal approach to fit the context. They are, in effect, rigidly and delusionally resilient and closed off to information that could be imperative in fixing — or at least improving — behavioral weaknesses. In short, when resilience is driven by self-enhancement, success comes at a high price: denial.

Along with blinding leaders to improvement opportunities and detaching them from reality, leadership pipelines are corroded with resilient leaders who were nominated as high-potentials but have no genuine talent for leadership. To explain this phenomenon, sociobiologists David Sloan Wilson and E.O. Wilson argue that within any group of people — whether a work team or presidential candidates — the person who wins, and is therefore named the group's leader, is generally very resilient or “gritty.”

However, there is something more important going on in human affairs than internal politics, and competition within groups is less important than *between* groups — such as Apple going head to head with Microsoft on technological innovations, Coca-Cola trying to outmaneuver Pepsi's marketing campaigns, or, in evolutionary terms, how our ancestors fought for territory against rival teams 10,000 years ago. As Robert Hogan notes, to get ahead of other groups, individuals must be able to get along with each other within their own group in order to form a team. This always requires leadership, but the *right* leaders must be chosen. When it comes to deciding which leaders are going to rally the troops in the long-term, the most psychologically resilient individuals have a miscellany of characteristics that come much closer to political savvy and an authoritarian leadership style than those needed to influence a team to work in harmony and focus its attention on outperforming rivals. In other words, choosing resilient leaders is not enough: they must also have integrity and care more about the welfare of their teams than their own personal success.

In sum, there is no doubt that resilience is a useful and highly adaptive trait, especially in the face of traumatic events. However, when taken too far, it may focus individuals on impossible goals and make them unnecessarily tolerant of unpleasant or counterproductive circumstances. ...

Finally, while it may be reassuring for teams, organizations, and countries to select leaders on the basis of their resilience — who doesn't want to be protected by a tough and strong leader? — such leaders are not necessarily good for the group, much like bacteria or parasites are much more problematic when they are more resistant.