"CHILDREN ARE THE WEALTH OF THE POOR:" HIGH FERTILITY AND THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOR IN THE RURAL ECONOMY OF JEAN RABEL, HAITI

By

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Fertility among Jean Rabel farmers is high, perhaps the highest biologically possible given the prevalence of infectious diseases, low calorie diets, high rates of female malnutrition, high female labor demands, and high rates of male absenteeism. High fertility is reinforced by what is here called the pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex, which includes the aversion to the use of contraceptives and abortion, acceptable forms of conjugal union including consensual union and polygyny, patterns of sexual behavior and beliefs that promote high fertility. The reason offered for high fertility and the associated social behavior and institutions is the harsh natural environment and prevailing livelihood strategies, factors that make young children indispensable as providers of productive labor. The labor utility of children is reflected in mystical beliefs regarding conception and in childrearing practices and customs such as god parentage, the loaning of children, whipping, and ultimately, in conjugal union

itself, the foundation of the household. The establishment of a household depends on a man building the house and planting gardens and there is a shortage of men with the means to accomplish these prerequisites. Thus, many women are faced with a choice of postponing childbearing, beginning to bear children without entering union, or entering into union with a man who already has a wife or wives; most single women opt for the later categories--single motherhood and union with 'married' men. The entire exploration of contemporary social patterns and demographic trends is put into perspective with a review of Jean Rabel history and an extensive look at the impact of development activities, particularly food-aid. The research was based on a series of surveys, including a 1,586 (8.33%) systematic, random sample of all households in the commune of Jean Rabel.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the logic underlying what can be called a 'pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex' in rural Haiti. At 5.9 births per mother the rural Haitian Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is the highest in the Western hemisphere and has not changed significantly in 30 years (see Table 1-1 below). Despite a foreign sponsored national family planning program begun in 1971, only 9.5% of rural reproductive-age Haitian women currently use contraceptives (ibid). High fertility and the rejection of contraceptives by rural Haitians is associated with a variety of radically pronatal attitudes, customs, laws, and beliefs. In this investigation, conducted over a period of four years, the evidence strongly suggests that the observed high fertility and radical pronatalism are best explained by a high labor utility of children in a system where production and the satisfaction of the most basic subsistence needs are accomplished within the socio-organizational framework of the household.

Table1-1: Rural Total Fertility Rates in Haiti (TFR)

Year	Source	Rural TFR
1971	Census	6.26
1971-1975	Demo Survey	5.56
1977	HFS	6.10
1994	EMMUS	5.90

(see Allman 1982b; EMMUS-II 1994/95)

Jean Rabel

The research was carried out in Jean Rabel, a commune, or what in the United States is known as a county. This commune consists of 647 km.^{2} of one of the most

geographically remote and underdeveloped areas of Haiti and it is peopled by 130,320 men, women, and children who are primarily engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, and to a much lesser degree fishing. Generally called "peasants," presumably because of their tenuous and limited participation in the world market, I refer to rural Jean Rabel men and women throughout this text as farmers.[1]

The Socio-Cultural Fertility Complex in Jean Rabel

Surveys carried out in the context of this research reveal that fertility among Jean Rabel farmers is perhaps the highest rate biologically possible given the prevalence of infectious diseases, low calorie diets, high rates of female malnutrition, high female labor demands, and high rates of male absenteeism. At 7.1 births per woman the TFR in Jean Rabel is, despite all these limiting factors, equivalent to the second highest country birth rate in the world and almost as high as 19th and early 20th century Hutterites who had the highest sustained fertility levels ever documented. This high fertility rate is reinforced by a general rejection of modern contraceptives, something that exists despite more than a decade of internationally funded educational campaigns and contraceptive giveaways. Recent surveys show that only 4.5% of the reproductive age female population use contraceptives, ranking the commune of Jean Rabel, if it were a country, among the four lowest contraceptive-use rates in the world.

High fertility in Jean Rabel, indeed all over rural Haiti, is part of a definitively pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex involving attitudes, customs, laws, and beliefs:[1]

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[1] The reason I use the term farmer rather than peasant is because 'peasant' strikes me as too thoroughly imbued with a historic association to the disparaging, semi-slavery status of the medieval European serf. A difference in terms also seems to suggest that the impoverished Jean Rabel cultivator as somehow intrinsically different than the developed world 'farmer.' I prefer to use the same, less-disparaging term, 'farmer,' and emphasize the environment as the source of causation.

Rural Haitians are radically pronatal. Children are a blessing, they signify adulthood and respect. Childless men are teased as *masisi* (homosexual) and barren women are derided as *millet* (mules), and even suspected of selling their children in pacts with demons. There are few social impediments to childbirth. A woman suffers no shame for being pregnant, no matter what her marital status or how she got that way, and female virginity is not preserved by immutable ideals of pre-marital sexual abstinence. Young men are encouraged to be sexually aggressive. An assortment of mystical rationalizations bearing on sexual behavior and reproduction provide rationales for what would otherwise be considered evidence of illicit sexual encounters. Included in these rationales are belief in love potions, magical blood tests, and a condition called *perdisyon* that provides for the possibility that a woman may be pregnant for a husband she has not seen for as long as five years. Sexual relationships with young women and older men are not censured, and under the watchful eyes of their parents, particularly mothers, many young women enter into polygynous unions with men who already have wives.

I attempt to understand the preceding, what is here being called the 'pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex,' as an adaptation to prevailing environmental, technological, and economic conditions. Survival for most rural Haitians hinges on membership in a household. Rural Haitians do not enjoy the benefits of electricity, mechanized labor saving devices, running water and affordable modern transportation. Tasks necessary to household livelihood must be accomplished with raw human labor. A major source of this labor is children, considered by Jean Rabeliens to be an indispensable element for the proper functioning of the rural Haitian household. For

example, in an institution of fosterage known as *restavek* (stay-with), children are loaned to adults not fortunate enough to have their children of their own or to households with greater access to resources and therefore in need of more children to manage those resources. This "loaning" of children exists throughout Haiti. It not only transfers child labor from poorer to better-off rural households but also serves as an important mechanism of migration and social mobility for rural children who often go to village and urban households.

History and Poverty

But in order to fully understand the continuing economic utility of children it is necessary to know something about historic and contemporary processes operating in Jean Rabel. Measured by the usual international standards of economic development, Jean Rabel, Haiti, is among the most poverty-stricken regions in the world. First described by Columbus, Jean Rabel eventually became a bountiful part of the flourishing French colony of Saint Domingue and was the scene of important military events during and shortly after the Haitian War of Independence. Since the colonial era, however, Jean Rabel has slipped into historic obscurity and become a region of economic insignificance to the outside world.

In the surveys discussed below, it was found that 99.99% of contemporary Jean Rabeliens do not possess televisions, telephones, cars or motorcycles. Only about 15% of households have a radio and only 5% have a bicycle. Eighty-seven percent of people in the area inhabit houses that have dirt floors and 82% of houses have a thatch roof. The planting of gardens and livestock raising are the principal livelihoods but only 2% of farmers report using any fertilizers and pesticides are used with even less frequency.

Farmers do not select seed stock, they do not plant their own fruit trees, they make only feeble attempts to irrigate, and they do not have access to plows or automated farm equipment. Only hoes and machetes are used in planting and harvesting crops. Animals are not corralled but tethered. Most people do not bother to vaccinate their animals and, except for occasional vitamin and protein supplements for pigs, industrial products or processed animal feeds are not used. Fishing is carried out exclusively with bamboo traps, hand lines, and hand-woven nets. Boats are built entirely from local materials and are propelled by wooden oars and by sails patched together from used clothing. For medical care, people in the area overwhelmingly depend on 'leaf-doctors' and shamans, and only about 50% of pregnant women visit the 15 foreign-sponsored rural health clinics in the region.

Foreign Intervention Specialists [2]

The apparent absence of modern technology and intensive farming techniques is not a consequence of an unavailability of knowledge, or technical assistance. For over fifty years Jean Rabel has been the target of significant and costly, largely non-governmental, foreign-sponsored interventions aimed at changing traditional farming and healthcare practices and at catalyzing the formation of supra-household community action groups. International intervention agencies first began coming to the area after World War II. Since the early 1970s there have been no fewer than 22 large international organizations operating in the commune at different periods; 17 of these

[2] In this dissertation I supplant the term "intervention" for "development" in an effort to avoid the growing controversy surrounding the notion that internationally sponsored 'development' has succeeded in "developing" remote rural areas in "Third World" countries. Indeed, there are those who argue that the opposite is the case, i.e. development has led to an unraveling of remote rural economic and social life (Escobar 1995, Hobart 1993) .

were present during the 1990s and 12 currently have projects in the region.[2] On January 1st 1999, in the commune of Jean Rabel, there were, all together, 18 doctors, dentists, nutritionists, lab technicians, and nurses, 30 auxiliary nurses and 180 trained healthcare field agents; over 40 University educated agronomists, administrators and secretaries; over 25 drivers; and over 200 field representatives and trained agricultural auxiliary agents. Ten percent of all German overseas nutritional aid is currently being sent to the commune of Jean Rabel and during the 1990s CARE International annually distributed over 4 million kilograms of food there. As will be seen, these assistance efforts have had little if any enduring impact on the status of local technologies, healthcare practices, and in stimulating the formation of supra-household political and economic community help organizations. Despite all the well-intended expenditures and efforts by foreign interventions specialists, the State, and international religious organizations, farmers in the region have remained indifferent, passively or actively rejecting and resisting projects intended to promote their well-being.

No one seems to know why rural Jean Rabeliens have shrugged off the past 50 years of foreign and State efforts to promote the use of modern technologies. Intervention specialists are generally perplexed by the persistent aversion to contraceptives, the insistence on giving supplements to infants within days of birth, the wholesale refusal to make any additional investments in cropping strategies or livestock, the apparent prevalence of sexually promiscuous patterns of behavior, the polygynous unions, the high rates of illegitimate births, the sky-high fertility levels, and the intellectual tenacity with which Jean Rabeliens cling to folk medicine, beliefs in sorcery, and other mystical phenomena. In an effort to understand the behavior of the people

they are trying to help and to explain the shortfalls of foreign intervention, visiting agricultural and nutritional experts tend to provide an eclectic array of explanations: Resistance to technology is usually ascribed to laziness. Promiscuity is ascribed to the lack of economic opportunity open to women. The resistance to contraceptives and belief in supernatural phenomena are ascribed to tradition and an inferior educational system. A former director of the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) mission in Haiti, L. E. Harrison, typified these often repeated arguments when he wrote, "To repeat, the principal obstacles to progress in Haiti are cultural: a set of traditional attitudes and values...The solutions must focus on obstacles in the Haitian mind..." (Harrison 1991).

The Argument

This dissertation does not purport to explain all of Haiti or all of Haitian behavior. But it does offer an alternative explanation for some hitherto perplexing behaviors found in rural Jean Rabel, most importantly, high fertility. Rather than resorting to the immeasurable inner workings of the Haitian mind or some progress-obstructing aspect of Haitian culture, the present analysis focuses on external, observable environmental and economic conditions. It begins with the assumption, based on ten years of research in the area, that Jean Rabeliens resist externally induced change in large part because their behavior is adaptively linked to material conditions that have remained largely unchanged. Specifically, Jean Rabeliens live in an extremely harsh environment, they depend heavily on manual labor to accomplish daily subsistence tasks, and children are a primary source of that labor. High fertility, the

resistance to adapting birth control, and cultural expressions that promote childbearing are adaptive responses to the need for this labor, critical to household survival.

Literature Review

The hypothesis that labor demands are a principal cause of high fertility is not new. Writing of fertility decline in the early 1960s, for example, Freeman stated:

> Most sociologists and demographers would probably agree...the basic causes of the general decline are (a) a major shift in functions from the family to other specialized institutions, so that there was a decrease in the number of children required to achieve socially valued goals... [1961-1962:53]

Mamdani did research an Indian village during the early 1970s and referring to child labor contributions he wrote his now famous conclusion that, "People are not poor because they have large families. Quite the contrary: They have large families because they are poor" (1973:14). At about the same time, White (1973; 1976) and Nag et. al. (1978) in Indonesia, and Cain (1977) in Bangladesh made similar observations.

But, in the past two decades there has been a shift away from explanations for high fertility that focus on labor demands. It seems that the less economic utility children have in the developed world and the lower the fertility in developed countries, the greater the inclination among developed world scholars to explain high fertility with non-labor causal factors. John Caldwell, is currently among the most prominent demographers dealing with fertility decline and in his 1982 book Theory of Fertility Decline he emphasized economic relations within the family, not least of all the role of child labor contributions, as the primary determinants of stable high fertility levels. But he later explained in a 1987 study that,

> Sub-Saharan Africa may well offer greater resistance to fertility decline than any other world region. The reasons are cultural and have much to do with a religious belief system that operates directly to sustain high fertility but that also has molded a society in such a way as to bring rewards to high fertility. [Caldwell and Caldwell 1987: 409]

Regarding the Caribbean, contemporary explanations for high birth levels rarely consider the significance of direct economic contributions made by children within the household, emphasizing instead the role children play for women in securing economic ties and assistance from men. Penn Handwerker, for instance, referring to the islands of St. Lucia, Barbados, and Antigua, explained that the economic value of children for women consisted in the fact that "childbearing was a singularly effective way to secure their future material welfare [a reference to old age] and to establish the relatively permanent ties to men that improved their immediate material welfare" (1993: 45).[3] Similarly, in her summation of findings from the Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP), Oliver Senior concluded that:

> Women ... perceive male assistance as the most important means of making ends meet and, in the process of searching for a reliable, dependable mate, might end up with several 'baby fathers'...
>
> The economic motivation behind child rearing is further highlighted in the words of one woman who had 10 children with six different partners: 'sometimes I ask [myself] why I had so many. But having them and having no money -- the little bit I had myself couldn't keep them--I had to look for somebody. I wanted children from one man but getting something for one [child] I got the others.'
>
> [Senior 1991:138]

Ann Brittain (1990) who made the counter-intuitive and demographically startling observation that fertility rates on the island of St. Barthelemy increase with male migration--less men but more babies—does not deny the value of child labor to the household but emphasized the preeminence of contributions from adult children,

> The most likely explanation for the connection between the crude rate of emigration five years earlier seems to be that parents were not acting directly in response to the loss of children through death or migration, but anticipating the emigration of some of their offspring when they reached adulthood by adopting a strategy that Trusswell and Olsen (1983) call "hoarding". Children provide valuable labour in farming families but the presence of adult offspring may be even more important as a support of old age.
>
> [Brittain 1990: 57]

The point is not that the preceding scholars are necessarily wrong or that they deny that child labor contributions influence fertility levels. Rather, the issue is the emphasis on child labor contributions as a determinant of high fertility, something that

was once taken as a demographic given, but is increasingly pushed to the background in more recent scholarly work. And it is done without any systematic investigations into the nature or degree to which children contribute, or contributed, to survival among people practicing household livelihood strategies.

The same trend is evident among scholars focusing on Haiti. Early in the annals of ethnographies on Haiti, George Eaton Simpson, who did research during the 1930s in northern Haiti, emphasized the importance of children in household livelihood strategies and the relation this importance has to high fertility,

> In the villages and towns there is almost no knowledge of contraceptive devices. The peasant couple wishes to have children, and to have the largest number possible because a large family is a powerful "force." Children cost these people little or nothing, but their labor is of great assistance to the family. They say that "children are the fortune of the poor," and "If it is necessary to choose between a large fortune without children and a large family without money, one must not hesitate to choose the large family without money." On this question the attitude of the peasants has not changed for centuries. [1942; 670]

But, Simpson aside, Western scholars working in rural Haiti generally point out the prominent role of child labor contributions in the lives of farmers and then attribute high fertility, based primarily on qualitative non-systematic observations, to something entirely different. The first anthropologist to write a full-length ethnography on life in rural Haiti was Melville Herskovits who on the one hand notes quite plainly that, "At about the age of seven or eight the children's play-life is invaded by the serious work which they must assume." (1937: 101). But when it comes to high fertility, Herskovits never mentions child contributions, preferring instead to explain the desire for children with factors such as 'love' and 'prestige,' 'absence of contraceptives,' and 'tradition,'

> The love of children, and the prestige which a man gains as head of a large family are factors that go far to explain the desire for numerous progeny. In this not only is he aided by his own sophistication in matters of sex…but his desire is furthered as well by the absence of contraceptives, and the emphasis laid by Church, State, and African traditions on the desirability of many offspring.
> [Herskovits 1937: 89]

Gerald Murray (1977), who in fact did systematically investigate farmer's opinions on child labor, spent twenty-one months living in a low altitude, plains community in central Haiti and he carried out what is perhaps the most exhaustive survey yet conducted in a rural Haitian community. One of the questions Murray asked his sample of 227 farmers was, "why they liked to have children/didn't like to remain childless." When interpreting his data Murray concluded that, "the data strongly suggest that the current utility of children in the ongoing domestic economy has come to play a secondary role..." (1977; 273). But, as can be seen in Murray's table on "utility of children" (Table I-2 below), 30% of farmers specified that they wanted children because children were useful in accomplishing agricultural and domestic tasks and 32% of farmers said that children were "unspecified" useful. In the investigations presented in later chapters, Haitian informants invariably used the term "useful" (*itil*) to refer to their role in the accomplishment of chores. If the same were true for informants in Murray's research area, then the "current utility" of children was not "playing a secondary role" but rather, with a total of 62% respondents, it was playing the primary role.

Table 1-2: Perceptions as to the Utility of Children*

	% of 277	N
Agricultural and domestic	30%	67
Unspecified "useful"	32%	72
Old age and sickness	48%	108
Burial	54%	123

(Murray 1977:273)

*respondents cold choose more than a single category

Ira Lowenthal, who spent four years living in a village in the southern peninsula of Haiti unequivocally reports that, "children's multifaceted labor *contributions* to the household, from a relatively early age through early adulthood, cannot be gainsaid" (1987: 303 emphasis in the original). But Lowenthal does not believe these

contributions can be used as a rationale for high fertility, saying, despite "the absence of hard data on the topic," that, "peasants ... definitely see children as a financial burden, not an economic asset" (1987:394). Lowenthal concludes that "progeneration" among the people at his research site was the means by which people fulfilled, "the desire to live with reason, and to die with dignity" (1987: 305)

More recently Jennie Smith, who spent more than 3 years living in a rural mountain hamlet in northern Haiti, explained that,

> The tasks to be done are never-ending, and without several children it seems impossible for a family to function well. When speaking of a couple without children, or with only one or two, neighbors often lament their predicament. The adults must gather the firewood, graze the animals, sweep the yard and house, fetch the water, wash the clothes, tend to the gardens and the harvests... all on their own. Many resort to "borrowing" a child or two from relatives to live with them and do chores. "when you don't have children," the saying goes, " you are a dog."
>
> [1998: 7, all punctuation in the original]

When explaining why farmers in her research area have rejected western contraceptives, Smith builds on the obvious economic utility of children saying,

> I would suggest, in fact, that one of the primary reasons family planning programs have been so unsuccessful in Haiti ...is because they are simply proposing the preposterous! Rather than respecting and trying to understand this deep-level resistance and the reasons behind it, program planners instead tend to see it as yet another sign of the "underdevelopment" of "traditional" ideas and practices.
>
> [1998: 11; all punctuation in the original]

But Smith seems to disregard her own insights when she subsequently attributes low contraceptive use principally to shortcomings in the local health system. In her concluding statement, however, she provides a self-reflective comment that very neatly sums up the essence and scholarly status of investigations into Haitian fertility,

> Most scholars asking questions about why family planning (and other public health) initiatives have not been accepted by the people of Haiti seems to reflect crucial (though often tacit) preconceptions. Not only do these scholars tend to assume that if people were more educated about the issue and more aware of their options, and if these options were more accessible to them, then they would choose to accept family planning. They also tend to imply that this compliance would be good for them. (Looking back over the pages above, I find that I myself, however unwittingly, also seem to hold that underlying assumption.) ...
>
> [1998: 24, all punctuation in the original]

In conclusion, recent scholars have tended to emphasize non-material, and particularly non-labor related explanations for persistent high fertility and the failure of family planning initiatives. This tendency to eschew explanations related to child labor contributions may well stem from the anthropologists' reluctance to bring attention to cultural values that may be regarded as disparaging to Westerners. Typically from the ranks of middle and upper class USA, where the child has been elevated nearly to the status of worship and wanting children for purposes of labor borders on the criminal, the US anthropologist who reveals "his" or "her 'people'" as thinking of their offspring first and foremost in terms of labor has done a historic disservice to his former hosts. He has forever portrayed them in the annals of the ethnographic literature as calloused and selfish. This may not be a fair judgment--of the farmers or the anthropologists. But for the sake of intellectual honesty and hopefully for the sake of the benefits that might ultimately accrue to people of Jean Rabel, and Haiti, from an accurate image of their lives and their opinions, in the pages that follow I have attempted to let the voices of Jean Rabel farming men and women be heard. I have done this, not by relying on my own anthropologically enlightened insight into what Haitian farmers want, but by relying on, among other things, a statistically representative cross-section of their opinions (see endnote for discussion of Glen Smucker, 1983, and economic utility of children).[4]

The Research Strategy and Analytic Framework

The investigation and analysis were carried out within the framework of the Cultural Materialist paradigm. Cultural Materialism is both a research strategy and a model for describing and explaining cultural change. As a research strategy, Cultural

Materialism recognizes a distinction between operationalized categories, descriptions, and explanations for cultural features and events employed by scientists—called etics—and the cultural specific systems of categorization, description, and explanation that members of a particular group share regarding their own behavior, the behavior of others, and the materials and events occurring in the world around them—called emics. The importance of the distinction between what is emic and what is etic is analogous to the distinction between, on the one hand, what people say they do and the culturally appropriate reasons they give for doing them and, on the other hand, objective measures of what people do and the specific context in which they do them. This does not, however, preclude the use of self-reports to reveal etic behavior. People are regarded as the most important source of information concerning their own actions and interviewing subjects is a necessary first step in developing profiles of their behavior. But the objective of obtaining scientifically categorizable data and the need to discuss and analyze aggregate socio-behavioral tendencies demands rigorous and systematic quantification of self-reports across the population in question (for a more elaborate and precise explanation of emics and etics see Harris 1979).

As a model for explaining socio-cultural change, Cultural Materialism divides cultural systems into a three-tiered system of infrastructure, structure, and superstructure. The Cultural Materialist model assumes the causal priority of material conditions, which, in their totality, are referred to as the infrastructure. Included in the infrastructure are eco-systems, the cultural and environmentally specific technologies of subsistence, demographic conditions and processes, and fertility control technologies such as contraceptives and abortion. Structure includes family organization, legal,

economic, and political systems and organizations, all of which are conditioned by circumstances in the infrastructure. The superstructure reflects and reinforces the structure and it includes ideational aspects of culture such as art, music, dance, ceremonies, games, literature, mythology, cosmology, theology, ideology, sorcery, and beliefs related to spiritual healing.

Table 1-3: Cultural Materialist Model and Direction of Causation

SUPER STRUCTURE
• Art, music, dance, literature, advertising • Rituals, mythology, theology, ideology… • Sports, games, hobbies • Science

▲Causation▲ STRUCTURE ▲Causation▲	
Domestic economy	Political economy
• Family structure • Domestic division of labor • Domestic, socialization, enculturation, education • Age and sex roles • Domestic discipline. hierarchies, sanctions	• Political organization, factions, clubs, associations, corporations • Division of labor, taxation and tribute • Class, caste, urban, rural hierarchies • Discipline, police/military control • War

▲Causation▲ INFRASTRUCTURE ▲Causation▲	
Mode of production	Mode of reproduction
• Subsistence technology • Techno-environmental relationships • Eco-systems • Work patterns	• Demography • Mating patterns • Fertility and mortality • Nurturance of infants • Contraceptives, abortion technologies, and infanticide

(see Harris 1979, p 52 - 53)

Not unlike the theorized processes of Darwinian evolution, Cultural Materialists explain adaptive changes in social structure as brought about by the differential consequences of behavior experienced by individual members of a particular group or culture. That is to say that processes of change are thought to occur at the individual rather than the group level. Change is initiated when an individual is selectively reinforced for a particular productive behavior or pattern of behavior; the reinforcement

comes in the form of improved living standards or the avoidance of aversive conditions such as sickness, death, and declining access to foods; the reinforcement invites repetition of the new behaviors, change, and the change spreads throughout a society and is further reinforced and amplified by the superstructural feedback mechanisms defined above.

In explaining the causal primacy of the infrastructure, Marvin Harris (1979), the scholar who has become most closely associated with the Cultural Materialist paradigm, emphasizes the rationality of what he sums up as infrastructural determinism,

> Unlike ideas, patterns of production and reproduction cannot be made to appear and disappear by a mere act of will. Since they are grounded in nature they can only be changed by altering the balance between culture and nature, and this can only be done by the expenditure of energy.... It seems reasonable, therefore, to search for the beginnings of the causal chains affecting socio-cultural evolution in the complex of energy expending body activities that affect the balance between the size of each human population, the amount of energy devoted to production, and the supply of life-sustaining resources. Cultural materialists contend that this balance is so vital to the survival and well-being of the individuals and groups who are its beneficiaries that all other culturally patterned thoughts and activities in which these individuals and groups engage are probably directly or indirectly determined by its specific character.
>
> [Harris 1979: 58]

The Research Methodology

Most of the research relied on in this text was carried out in rural Jean Rabel, Haiti (pop 130,320) and surrounding areas.[5] Conclusions are based on a total of 10 years of intermittent research in the area, four years of which was of essentially uninterrupted residence, five large surveys conducted by the author and local assistants, a series of smaller reports and interviews with local development and healthcare workers, State employees, and missionaries, and a review of reports produced by international development organizations working in the area. A brief discussion of participatory research and the major surveys are described in more detail below.

Participatory Research

Participatory observation continued throughout the time I spent in Haiti and continued throughout the drafting of this manuscript. During the surveys I lived with the interviewers and in between research tasks and employment opportunities taken with international interventions agencies I resided in Jean Rabel households or in the city of Port-de-Paix with people from Jean Rabel. The closeness of the relationships I maintained with Jean Rabeliens gave me the ability to spontaneously investigate issues and corroborate insights in ways that would not otherwise have been possible.

The Baseline Survey

The Baseline Survey had the primary objective of building a demographic profile of the Commune of Jean Rabel. Three data bases were generated from the information gathered in the survey: 1) a data base for general demographic variables, 2) a data base for general household, socio-economic, agricultural and animal husbandry variables and 3) a data base for nutritional and health status of young mothers and children under six years of age (see Table I-4).

The design for the baseline survey was a one in fourteen systematic random sample of households in the Commune of Jean Rabel (1,586 households). The household head or spouse of the household head was the required respondent. In 4% of cases no household respondent was located.[6] A household was defined as a building in which people sleep; household members were defined as people who reportedly sleep in the house more than they sleep elsewhere. All households in the commune were counted and marked with a number. From the resulting lists, 1 in every 14 households was systematically chosen using a random starting point. Longitudinal and latitudinal

coordinates of the selected households were subsequently recorded using Global Positioning System (GPS) devices. Loading the information into SPSS spreadsheets involved some 1.5 million observations. The original data entry was accomplished in the first two weeks of December 1997 by the survey staff and secretaries working for the sponsoring NGOs. Data was subsequently entered a second time by the researcher and hired assistants during the period January to May 1998 (more detailed explanations of the survey are provided in the appendices).

Table 1-4: Summary of Baseline Survey Data

Demographic and Household Data	General Household, Socio-Economic Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Data			Nutritional and Health Data
Location *katie* *locality* *habitation* *lat & lon coords* Age Religion Birth place Education Occupation Marital status Maternal status Number of children born Number of children deceased Number of paternal partners Migration Mortality *maternal* *Infant* *Child*	Months of *hunger* *buying* *selling* Sources of income Alternative income Source and distance to water House type and tenure Disposal of waste Technology Fishing Contact w/ NGOs Opinions on development Opinions on government	Gardens *quantity* *soil type* *location, distance, tenure* *title* *crops* *labor source* *amount planted* *amount harvested* *amount sold* *seed origin* *fertilizer and pesticide use* *storage* *fallow cycles* *problems*	Animals *quantity* *tenure* *feed* *supplement use* *medicine use* *quantity sold* *seasons* *reasons* *quantity killed* *seasons* *reasons* *ranked problems*	Frequency of illness Treatments Clinic use Breast feeding Weaning Supplements Mothers (children<6) *name* *weight* *age* *brachial circum* *number children <6* Children <6 *name* *height* *weight* *age* *brachial circum* *illnesses* *vaccinations* *food (24 hrs)*

The Opinion Survey

The goal of the Opinion Survey was to obtain a representative profile of adult attitudes and opinions regarding childbearing, the utility of children, and conjugal

relations with respect to household labor requirements. Opinion data was also gathered on issues relating to the relative importance of commerce, livestock, and agriculture.

The survey involved revisiting 136, or approximately 9%, of the households in the Baseline Survey. Jean Rabel was divided into 12 geographical zones, five zones were selected randomly and an approximately equal number of households were randomly chosen from each of the geographical clusters (~28 households per cluster). The sample was stratified by gender. In 68 cases the female household head or the spouse of the male head was interviewed and in 68 cases the male head or her spouse was interviewed.

There were two male interviewers and two female interviewers, all locally born and raised, hired because of competency demonstrated during the Baseline Survey. Male interviewers visited male respondents and female interviewers visited female respondents. Only one respondent was chosen per household. A total of 9 days were spent in the field. Interviewers recorded responses to key questions on cassette tapes. The researcher traveled and stayed with the interviewers and, using the cassette recordings, monitored interviewer performance daily. Transcription of the interviews began in the field and continued for several weeks after the survey ended. Fifty percent of the recorded interviews were reviewed; approximately 30% were transcribed (see Appendix I).

Household Labor Demands Survey

In an effort to develop ethnographically dependable profiles of household labor demands and needs, approximately 12 visits were made to each of five Jean Rabel *lokalites* (rural neighborhoods). The *lokalites* were chosen for ecological variability: 1)

dry foothill, 2) dry mountain, 3) humid mountain, 4) humid plain, and 5) dry coastal zone. One to three days were spent per visit in each *lokalite*. Information was gathered by the old fashioned anthropological technique of hanging out, tagging along, watching and 'whying' people to the point of annoyance.

Livestock and Garden Survey

The Livestock and Garden Survey was carried out in two communities, one in semi-humid mountainous community (n = 50) and another in a humid plain community (n = 56). The goal was to measure the strength of the relationship between the number of children and the number of animals and gardens per household. This survey was necessary because: 1) it is important to the thesis to provide a concrete measure of the role of children in household livelihood strategies (the relationship between the number of children present in particular households and the number of livestock and gardens tended by household members); 2) in the Baseline Survey and the Opinion Survey farmers gave obviously misleading reports regarding livestock and crop yields;[7] and 3) it was discovered that respondents in the Baseline Survey were including in their enumeration of household members children who were away at school in the village or in the city -- the inclusion of these children misrepresented the actual number of available child laborers. In order to obtain dependable data, two communities were chosen not at random but because they were the home communities of a Baseline Survey supervisor's parents. The supervisor and his family knew everyone in these two communities and was able to independently verify details relating to livestock, gardens, and the number of children present in the house. Expected crop yields were also measured during this survey.

Polygyny Survey

Because it is known that *de facto* polygyny is widespread in the Jean Rabel, it was hypothsized that past and present polygynous behavior of men is somehow related to the value of children and therefore an important issue in the research. But inquiry into trends in polygyny were inadequately addressed in both the Baseline and the Opinion Surveys. In the Baseline Survey, a question regarding current polygyny was included but there was no question regarding past polygyny. Past and present polygyny were measured during the Opinion Survey but only men were asked about past polygyny—wives were not asked about their husbands past polygynous behavior—and the sample was too small to give a statistically reliable image of polygyny over the course of a Jean Rabel man's lifetime. Thus, a 300 respondent polygyny survey was carried out using the same supervisor and in the same two communities as the Animal and Garden Survey.

Two other small polygyny surveys were carried out, one focusing on 41 skilled craftsmen and another among 16 male shaman (known as *bokors* or alternatively *hougans*). The areas for these surveys were chosen as a matter of convenience; because the researcher was familiar with people in the area, he was able to confidently substantiate reports by consulting with more than one local informant.

Clinics and NGO Reports

Data on inter-birth intervals, contraceptive use and health status were also garnered from local clinics, hospitals, churches and NGOs working in the area. The most notable resource for regional health data was Faith Medical Clinic in Mare Rouge, physically outside the commune of Jean Rabel but with some 50% of its clientele coming from within the commune boundaries. Healthcare workers with the French

NGO Initiative Developpment (ID) also provided health information and made reports available, as did the directors of PISANO (Projet Integre de Securité Alimentaire Nord-Ouest) and AAA (Agro Action Allemande). Staff at CARE International also provided access to reports and information on food-aid and ongoing projects.

There were three survey reports that were especially important for comparison and validation of the data collected in the field. CARE International has performed 2 large surveys in the region. The first, conducted in 1994, was a 1,400 household, 26 cluster random survey covering the entire Northwest Department of Haiti (which includes Jean Rabel). The second CARE survey, in 1996, was a follow-up to the earlier survey. PISANO also implemented a 1,300 household, five-cluster random survey in 1990, which included in its sample the commune of Jean Rabel. The references for the respective survey reports are listed in the bibliography.

Overview of the Dissertation

The study is comprised of 6 Sections and 17 Chapters. Section I sets the stage by introducing Haiti, and more importantly Jean Rabel, its people, the local history, and present conditions, including the environment and the importance of the role of State and foreign sponsored institutions in the commune. Section II introduces the central topic of the dissertation, what I am calling 'the pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex.' The section includes a discussion of high fertility in Jean Rabel, the aversion to the use of contraceptives and abortion and pronatal laws, customs and patterns of sexual behavior and beliefs that promote high fertility in the face of scarce resources and male wage migration. Section III is an effort to achieve a holistic understanding of the underlying causes of high fertility and pronatal belief systems and behaviors, I describe

and analyze local livelihood survival strategies, and the importance of the household as the organizational framework within which most productive and survival activities are carried out

In Section IV, I return to the issue of high fertility and pronatalism with a discussion of what I argue are its major underlying causes: Household labor demands and the tasks that must be accomplished to sustain a household and its members. I also examine the sexual division of labor and show how labor demands and the lack of alternative energy sources such as electricity and mechanized labor saving devices mean that child contributions to the household labor pool are indispensable. Chapter 11 presents statistical correlations between household prosperity and number of children, but it is acknowledged that this is not sufficient in itself to show a causal relationship between fertility and labor demands. To resolve this issue, Chapter 12 includes a statistically representative analysis of the opinions of Jean Rabel men and women that demonstrates that children not only appear to be important to household security, but that farming men and women conceive of children as an absolute necessity for reasons that support the hypotheses of this study, i.e. to work

Section V covers the Mode of Reproduction, which here includes an examination of child raising practices and reproductive unions. The analysis is carried out in light of the necessity of children established in Section IV. The labor utility of children is shown to be reflected in childrearing practices, paternity, god parentage, the loaning of children, whipping, and ultimately, in the practice of conjugal unions. Conjugal union is the means by which the household comes into being, and customary and official law both recognize and are set in motion by two events that relate directly to conjugal union:

The physical building of a house and the production of children. But men and women cannot simply enter union and set up a household when they find someone they love or when they feel the time is right. The establishment of a household depends on access to material resources--a man building a house and planting gardens--and there is a shortage of men with the means to provide these prerequisites. Thus, faced with a choice, women can either 1) postpone childbearing until they can find a financially suitable man with whom to enter union, 2) begin bearing children without entering union, or 3) they can enter into a polygynous relationship with men who already have one or more wives and households. In the often occurring event a timely and eligible suitor does not present himself, most single Jean Rabel women wind up opting for the later categories, single motherhood and/or union with 'married' men.

In the final section, Section VI, I address the question why, despite all the efforts by outside agencies, Jean Rabel has not changed. An understanding of the persistence of high fertility and the failure of interventions to persuade Jean Rabeliens to alter their reproductive patterns serves as a lens through which we can understand the failure of other "development" interventions: apathy toward the adoption of new farming techniques, soil conservation controls, and new community organizational structures.

Conclusion and Importance of the Research

Understanding the impact that infrastructural conditions have on social organization, and particularly their influence on fertility in Jean Rabel, Haiti is an important challenge. As seen, Jean Rabel has been the site of considerable foreign sponsored intervention efforts, most of which have met with indifference. But tenacious poverty and high fertility are not consequences of Jean Rabel inhabitants' nostalgically

clinging to a rustic way of life. Jean Rabel farmers conceptualize farming as the lowliest of occupations, virtually all rural Jean Rabeliens would prefer to migrate out of Jean Rabel and preferably out of Haiti, and many women stated quite frankly that they would prefer not to have many children but that they must because children are necessary as workers. Thus, the majority of Jean Rabeliens who cannot escape by migrating are trapped in a system of spiraling population growth, declining soil conditions, and stagnant technology. It is a system beyond their control. There is currently no contributing State presence in the area and local community organizational structures are functionally non-existent above the level of the household. The system, however, is not beyond the control of foreign sponsored international intervention agencies working in the area and it is in fact these agencies that have currently assumed, de facto, the role of the Haitian State. This dissertation is intended as a contribution to their efforts.

Notes

[1] For information regarding conjugal union and sexual behavior in other regions of rural Haiti see Herskovits 1937, Simpson 1939, Metraux 1951, Bastien 1961 (who seems prone to accept disparaging rumor for fact and makes observations that are so out of line with what other researchers have found), Murray (1979), Smucker (1982), Lowenthal (1987), Smith (1998).

[2] Post 1970 Internationally sponsored organizations no longer in the region include InterAID, Fonds Agricol, FONDEV, Inter American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), UNICEF (in the form of PIRNO—Programme Integrée de Réhabilitation du Nord-Ouest), Haitian Red Cross, International Federation of the Red Cross, the Haitian American Community Health/Help Organization (HACHO)—which was really supposed to be a spin off of CARE but never got spun off-- Bureau of Nutrition and Development (BND), WFP (World Food Program), UNOPS.

Organizations still operating in Jean Rabel include Initiative Developpment (ID), PISANO, Agro Action Allemande (AAA), CARE International, Compassion, World Vision, Tear Fund, Caritas, Catholic Relief Services (CRS),.American Mission to Greeks (AMG), Unevangelized Field Missions (UFM), and the Haiti Baptist Mission. Also included in the count is Child Care, which operates on the fringes of Jean Rabel but draws many residents from within the Commune. Not included is GRAF which is also based in Marc Rouge along the boundary of Jean Rabel but which tends to operate more in the Commune of Mole St Nicolas than Jean Rabel.

The largest current presence is US in the form of CARE; German in the form of AAA and PISANO, and French in the form of ID. CARE International has been in the region since 1959 and currently spends 15 million US dollars a year promoting development in Northwest Haiti, an area of

which Jean Rabel comprises 13% of the population. The German government has funded NGOs in Jean Rabel at least since the early 1970s and currently spends several million US dollars a year in the area while sending 10% of all German overseas food relief to the commune of Jean Rabel. Since the mid 1980s the French government has also spent considerable sums and made considerable efforts to help promote health and living standards in Jean Rabel.

[3] Handwerker (1986) also provides the most successful model available for fertility decline. His model explains over 95% of the variance in a very large sample of country data, demonstrating that fertility decline is a consequence of increasing economic opportunities. However, explaining why fertility declined does not resolve the issue of why it is high in the first place and like many contemporary scholars, Handwerker prefers not to emphasize the labor value of children when they are young.

[4] For editorial reasons I have omitted reference to Glen Smucker's (1983) excellent ethnography on peasants/farmers in the north of Haiti. Smucker does not attempt to address the underlying cause of fertility and thus, he did not fit into the short literature review provided in the main text. Smucker's work is, however, among the most thorough and instructive resources ever written on rural life in Haiti and he does make frequent mention of the economic utility of children.

> After children learn to walk, they are expected to help with domestic tasks, carrying water, gathering wood and running errands. When they are old enough, boys go to the fields with their father, and girls take greater responsibility for household domestic tasks and marketing. As they approach adolescence, boys are assigned their own gardens and livestock. [19983; 232- 233]

[5] A Commune is a politico-administrative division similar to a county in the USA.

[6] The survey design originally involved a 1 in 12 systematic random sampling design but was modified to 1 in 14 households due to budget shortfalls. In total, 235 of a sample population of 1,823 households should have been surveyed but were not. Originally the survey was meant to visit 1,667 households, but this number was reduced to 1,586 households. Further the actual population of the Commune of Jean Rabel turned out to be larger than anticipated. The larger population size meant that another 155 houses should have been surveyed. The total sample size ended up as 1,586 households; of this figure only 46 households were either vacant or interviewers where never able to locate the necessary respondents for at least one of the questionnaires.

[7] Having been exposed to over 50 years of international development, farmers in the area have learned that surveys related to livestock and crops are sometimes followed by aid to individuals reporting they have none of either.

SECTION I:

HAITI, JEAN RABEL, ITS HISTORY, AND CONTEMPORARY CONDITIONS

CHAPTER 2

GETTING TO JEAN RABEL

Introduction

Before launching into an investigation of fertility and pronatalism, it is necessary to begin at the beginning, with an introduction to Haiti, my research site, the people there and a review of history and how Jean Rabel came to be the way it is today. Jean Rabel has had a sometimes glorious and prosperous past. It was home to the most socio-culturally complex Indians in the Caribbean, the Classic Taino. Christopher Columbus visited the area, it became the refuge of pirates and buccaneers, it was a prosperous quarter of the French colony of Saint Domingue, it played a strategically important role during the Haitian wars for independence, and it produced and exported significant quantities of rum and plantains during the mid 1900s. But in recent decades Jean Rabel has experienced deteriorating environmental, economic and social conditions. The presence of the State is feeble at best, and no local community organizations exist capable of confronting the devastating social problems that affect the area. Internationally sponsored intervention agencies have been operating in the commune for fifty years and are presently the only effective supra-household community help organizations and the only real providers of institutional healthcare, agricultural, and social security services to the 130,320 residents of the region. But infrastructural conditions nevertheless remain in deteriorated condition and most intervention projects have ended in failure, largely due to the lack of interest on the part of locals.

Getting to Jean Rabel

Port-au-Prince is a primate city, meaning that it is more than twice as large--and in this case five times large--as the next largest Haitian city, Cape Haitian, and it is the capital in every sense of the word. It is in Port-au-Prince that the president and ministers reside, from where flow all political decisions, the commandments and revolutions that have shaped modern Haitian history. Sixty percent of all secondary schools and virtually all State universities and colleges are in Port-au-Prince. More than 90% of public employees work there and 87% of all government expenditures are made there. Virtually all foreign NGOs are based in Port-au-Prince and it is from this capital that the cadres of agronomists, nutritionists and other intervention experts are dispatched into the rural areas to attempt to address the overwhelming combination of factors that have combined to make Haiti the poorest country in the Western hemisphere (Greenfield 1994).

The capital is a sprawling metropolis that stretches along the rim of a vast bay and up the slope of a six thousand foot high mountainside. Above, in the cool recesses of the mountain heights, smooth patched concrete and asphalt roads wind through spacious neighborhoods. Big houses with tree shaded flower gardens stand behind stonewalls that are crested with embedded shards of broken glass. Satellite dishes and amateur radio antennas poke up through the tropical canopy. Mercedes and Jaguars sit parked in cobblestone driveways. It is to these heights that the gentry long ago began retreating from the rising tide of rural immigrants below.

Descending from the heights, the road begins to break up. One passes unfinished concrete buildings, auto shops, gas stations and pharmacies. Occasionally, behind rusty wrought-iron fences and rising out of a weed choked yard, one spies an aged, paint-

chipped and termite infested ginger bread house, complete with steeped tile roof, intricate wooden fringes, tall double doors, remnants of another time, a more prosperous era. Now the city begins to get cluttered. Naked houses constructed of cinderblock butt haphazardly up against one another and crowd in on the street. Small slits, barely wide enough for a person to squeeze through, allow pedestrians to penetrate past the house-fronts, into neighborhoods, along narrow footpaths that wind between walled-off compounds and follow ditches filled with a percolating sludge of human waste and mosquito larvae. The neighborhoods, each one dominated by people from the same rural sector of the country, sticking together in the city, searching one another out just as do immigrants in a strange, foreign land. They band together under the protection and the comfort of familiarity. They are neighborhoods where unsuccessful thiefs frequently meet swift and horrible deaths, stoned and beaten by a crowd.

Back in the streets, the people of the city are black-skinned, African descendants and they are everywhere, teeming. People in suits, people in satin jogging pants, people sit on the ground, on sidewalks, poor wretches lean back against store fronts. Sinewy-muscled men in ragged sweat soaked clothes push wheelbarrows. Women and girls sell chewing gum and cigarettes out of washbasins or peddle their wares off painted wooden tables. Men selling cases of liquor line one part of a street. Market women walk along with loaded baskets and plastic tubs balanced on their heads. Heavy-set *madames* sit at corners and on roadsides behind huge, cauldrons of rice and steaming sauce, fried bread and sizzling morsels of pork. Groups of children walk by carrying gallon jugs, they prod and shove one another and poke sticks through fences at snarling dogs. A teenage girl with a five-gallon bucket expertly perched on her head strolls past like a young fashion

model. People wait on the corner to cram into a *tap tap*, buses painted in wild tropical colors. Roaring, smoke-spewing trucks and muffler-less, teeth-grinding motorbikes shriek past. Several times a day, schools release a flood of black uniformed youth, girls in smartly creased skirts and boys in trousers and button-up shirts, they flow through the streets, taking over taxis and buses and pour into snack shops.

The stench of rotting produce, sweaty people and sewage takes over. The air is choked with exhaust fumes. The streets are crammed with traffic. The main thoroughfares are pot-holed and dangerous. The traffic lights do not function. Policemen stand in the streets, waving people on, trying to enforce some order on the gnarled honking traffic. Cracked and broken sidewalks and open sewers wait to sabotage the distracted driver or careless pedestrian. Everywhere there are piles of garbage. Vendors have taken over entire streets and vacant lots. Clusters of market women sit in plain wooden stalls or on the ground in the open behind piles of fruit, bunches of dried tobacco leaf, open sacks of rice, beans, sugar, flour, stacked cans of condensed milk, chickens, dismembered goats with their body parts neatly packed into small wash basins, piles of used clothing, purses, and shoes. There are *boutiks* on every corner, small stores filled with the acrid smell of imported smoked herring and stocked with sodas, crackers, candies, razors, laundry soaps, pens, pencils, notebooks, sandals, barrettes and hair ties, and spiced concoctions of local rum. Lottery vendors attract customers to their colorful booths, enticing passersby with the prospect of luck and changing fortune.

To the unaccustomed foreigner Port-au-Prince is a sprawling slum that seems to promise nothing but filth, poverty and disease. But to the people of the provinces, the capital is a wondrous place, beautiful and bountiful, full of hope and possibilities. It is

where the fortunate go and where every Haitian sends their children as soon as they have enough money.

In the heart of the city one finds the secret to the life of the capital. As one approaches the very center of the city, the presence of street vendors becomes more frequent until stores and residential houses suddenly give way entirely to a thronging sea of buyers and sellers, teaming masses of black-skinned people, women in bright multi-colored dresses, slick men in sunglasses, groups of young women, country folks, city slickers, mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and uncles, all milling along, picking through the merchandise. People who are out shopping for the day, hunting for a special item, other people, visitors who are only in the city for a few days, search for a present to take a husband or a wife or children. Thieves and hustlers look for angles, watching, hunting for suckers. Buyers haggle with the sellers. They mull over items, scrutinizing, choosing carefully. There are tables of new panties and brassieres, displays of inexpensive shampoos and perfumes, tooth pastes and soaps, skin creams, hair relaxers, barrettes, ribbons, and combs. Jugs of marbles for boys. Piles of used toys. Racks of new baseball caps, scarves, and fancy new tennis shoes dangling below the awnings of wooden booths. There are men selling antibiotics and aspirins and pills that cure impotency and cancer. Crumbling early 20th century buildings, three and four stories high, border the bustling streets and up under the storefront awnings, sidewalks are crowded with tables of old used schoolbooks, jewelers work intently at makeshift little booths. Money-changers lean back behind dark sunglasses, their big wooden chairs resting against the pillars, they fan wads of bills at passersby.

If a person leaves this place and goes back up the hill and stands at the higher end of one of these streets, in the center of the city, he can follow with his eyes the vast sea of human life below, down the sloping avenues that throb with people, to the waterfront where huge freight ships rise up against concrete wharfs. But down in the trenches, where with every rain the refuse is flushed from the streets and the neighborhoods, down past the last markets, away from the wharf and out to the hazy fringes of the city, by the seaside, where the visitor is afraid even to breath the putrid air, live the poorest of the poor. There, at any hour of any day, people can be seen wondering out into the middle the ubiquitous garbage heaps and defecating while others walk nonchalantly past. The trash spreads out onto a cove. Houses are built in the trash and made of it, scrap pieces of wood, cardboard and plastic bags. When it floods, these people, the wretched of one of the most wretched cities on earth, must crawl from their hovels and seek refuge on the highest mounds of garbage. Sick people, too weak to pull themselves to safety, sometimes drown while lying ill in makeshift beds of cartons and rags.

Beyond this sprawling fifth-world metropolis, outside of Port-au-Prince, in the provinces, beyond the filth and beyond the bustling commerce, the thronging masses and the hope of foreign countries and foreign dollars, past the denuded mountains that surround the city, up the rocky coast and out along the distant shores of the gulf on whose edge the city is built, there are hundreds of smaller cities, ports, towns, and villages, shrinking replicas of the primate city with iron-framed markets packed with *madanm saras* (women sellers).

Donkeys, mules and horses become common, cars and trucks more rare. The little tin-covered stores, the *boutiks* with their candies, sodas, cigarettes and spiced

concoctions of rum, and the acrid smell of imported smoked herring. Gardens and brush and little thatch-roof shacks takeover. The paved roads dissolve into washed out dirt thoroughfares. Electric lines disappear. The terrain gets arid. Women sit scrubbing cloths in drying-out riverbeds and around concrete faucets seemingly built in the middle of nowhere. Farther and farther into the hinterland, the markets become smaller and less and less stocked with the used clothes and radios imported from *Ozetzuni* (The United States). More and more one finds only garden produce, cassava bread and peanut butter, freshly slaughtered goat meat, live chickens and dried fish. In the smallest markets one no longer finds more expensive goods like livestock and lumber, for these items are produced in the country to be sold to people in the larger villages, towns and in the city. Big sacks of charcoal are stacked high at crossroads, waiting to be hauled away to the city by creaking second-hand school buses and freight trucks. The rural people themselves burn wood for cooking and when they need lumber they buy living trees that they pay professional sawyers to cut, sawyers who have never seen a chain saw or a saw mill but who complete their task using long broad hand saws.

Eventually scrub bushes and cacti begin to dominate the landscape and the road shrivels away altogether, fizzling out into footpaths that trail their way up barren mountains and down to the rocky coast, past disorderly little garden plots and through dry steam beds. Down one of these paths, through cactus and poisonous thorn bushes that sting as smartly as a wasp and plants that itch like hives, the brush gives way onto a clearing. Below, there is a sandy spit of beach that juts out from the foot of the rocky desert hills and into a deep blue-green harbor. There, on this sandy little outcropping, is a community of forty-three thatch-roofed huts, some neatly bordering the waterline and

others retreating haphazardly back toward the brush. This is the fishing hamlet called Makab where on October 5, 1995 the participatory observation upon which much of this research is based began.

I spent 10 of 15 months in Makab, located in the extreme northwest of Haiti. I participated in the daily subsistence routines of the people who live there, attending their occasional funeral and religious ceremonies and I tried to become as fluent as possible in the Francophone language known as Haitian *kreol*.[1]

My first residence was in a house with a 28 year old conch-diver who I met while visiting a friend at a nearby village. I ate meals and slept in the house with the conch diver, his wife, their four children, and what was often two or three visiting cousins who had come to see the '*blan*' --me (a *blan* means a 'white' but can be used to refer to any foreigner). But after two months I left the conch diver's house, for a series of reasons. First was the mosquitoes. Makab had been chosen as a research site because it was a small and relatively isolated community, attributes I believed would make it easy for me to become familiar with the people and to document their genealogies. But it was also chosen because there was no source of standing water and hence no mosquitoes. This latter attribute was soon remedied by the International Federation of the Red Cross which sponsored a latrine project in the hamlet (1995 - 1996). Several dozen latrines were dug and cemented into place. But the holes extended below the waterline and in a matter of weeks a mosquito infestation changed sleeping conditions from pleasant to intolerable. Several young men and myself adapted to these new conditions by sleeping in rowboats moored in the bay.

Eventually I moved out of the conch-diver's house entirely and the reason was not mosquitoes but jealousies and conflict. When I first came to the hamlet I had been worried about ingratiating myself to the people. Perhaps not unjustifiably I felt I had to make some kind of community contribution to account for my presence and their cooperation. I brought toys and clothes back from trips to the US and I made small financial contributions to family meals, bouts of *kleren* (rum) drinking and the household fishing tool-kit— spear guns, masks and flippers. The gifts had an unanticipated impact on the living standards of my host and others in the hamlet. What I thought were small and harmless contributions to the happiness of children (toys), to the happiness of adults (clothes) and to the upkeep of the house (money and fishing gear) created strife in the community and launched my conch-diving host into the wealthy ranks of men who have more than one wife, something which, although the new wife lived elsewhere, created considerable strife in the house. I moved out. My host who to that point had maintained an almost irritatingly timid and meek demeanor toward me reacted by screaming, cursing, and threatening to split my head open with a club.

My troubles, however, did not end at the gate of that particular household. After leaving the conch-diver's house I, and presumably my wealth, were up for grabs. Accusations of magic and community quarrels, with me as the source of contention, became common. People were constantly pulling me aside under awnings or into dimly lit huts to explain in hushed voices that an unspecified person was doing magic to sway my opinion of someone else, telling me not to eat food cooked by a certain person, warning me that I could fall under magic spells. Life for me in the hamlet became unbearable.

The hamlet covered an area not much larger than a football field. There was a total population of only 253 people, but 79 of them were under the age of ten. And this population of little people would not allow me to walk from one house to another without mobbing me. Whenever I emerged from the hut where I was staying, the children would come running from every quarter of the hamlet. Naked and usually covered with the dirt in which they had been playing, the kids would plead for *sinkant kob* (about 3 US cents) to buy a piece of bread or a small pouch of sugar. How do you say no to a hungry, naked, and usually very cute five-year-old? Giving only made the begging worse. Scrawny underfed mothers, infant at the breast would pull me to their houses, whispering desperately, pointing to sick children.

Despite their wanting me to give them money and gifts, my hosts, especially the children, showed little respect for me. The attitude toward me during the early phases of my research was summed up neatly by an 8-year-old girl. I was sitting on the ground in a thatch-roofed kitchen and the girl's mother reprimanded her for poking and pulling on me, *fe respè a gran moun*, "don't treat an adult like that." "But mom," the child responded, "he is not an adult. He's a *blan*."

My poor knowledge of the language, my not knowing how to tactfully thwart unwanted intrusions on my person, and my status as a *blan*, the most benevolent creature known to Haitians—a consequence of 50 years of charity-- earned me the respect deserving of a half-wit. I was an especially easy target for bored young men who wanted to amuse themselves hazing me. There were instances, too many and too embarrassing to recall, when I tried to discern at the spur of a moment and in a state of blinding anger if I was expected to fight or if fighting would get me killed. I never decided to fight and it

happily turned out that fighting was not expected--and yes, at the time it may have got me killed. But as I learned later, if I was to get any respect at all I sometimes had to act like I would fight.

After four months in the small village, I became fed up with the begging, jealousies, accusations of magic, affronts to my dignity, and of course, the mosquitoes. I had evolved a strategy of occasionally going inland to stay in a farming community for several days at a time but, while generally more respectful, the farmers presented me with a similar set of perplexing, annoying, and manipulative behaviors. In April 1996, I left the hamlet—and the farming community--and I went to live not far away in a tent by a coconut grove on a sandy white beach where to the astonishment and horror of many locals I slept alone. I spent the days diving for lobster and conch, working fishing nets with other men and generally neglected my research duties. When I returned to Makab two months later, in June 1996, I took up residence in the local *bokor's* (shaman) house, a place, I had discovered, my agitators feared to go. The *bokor's* house also had the interesting and inexplicable quality of not harboring mosquitoes.

For the rest of 1996, I fished, participated in community life and gathered data in Makab. In addition to having a relatively comfortable refuge, I took on a new demeanor. My linguistic skills were better and I began to learn the appropriate responses to people annoying me. Perhaps the most symbolic moment came when I realized that for certain severe offenses I could whip the children, something I did only once and for which I cringe with US liberalism to think about, but something that had miraculous results.[2] To overcome the irresistible urge to give, I simply went broke, trying to live off the sea and, with my own stomach growling, my sensitivity towards hungry children and

scrawny mothers declined. I even managed to turn the tables on my hosts, becoming in many instances the beggar. People in the hamlet would never have been able to forget that I was a rich *blan* from *lot bo dlo* (the other side of the water), but they nevertheless began to treat me more like a human being, more like one of them. They spontaneously began to extend small kindnesses like sharing a bowl of food or drags on a cigarette, and happily, some of them began to ignore me.[3]

Conclusion

From the cool lofty heights of Port-au-Prince, with shaded avenues, canopied lawns and big stones houses, down the broken and cracked routes that descend into the decaying metropolis below where tens of thousands bustle about their daily business, to the remote rural villages and the tiny fishing hamlet of Makab, this is contemporary Haiti. The images that generally come to mind when the word Haiti is mentioned, the poverty, voodoo, the peasants, sugarcane fields, and missionaries and development workers, are the consequence of historical processes that reach back in time hundreds of years. Haiti is a living record of the past: from the mixture of cultural and genetic features inherited from African and European descendents, the characteristic rural subsistence strategies and economy that emerged after the Haitian revolution from the plantation ruins, to the overwhelming concentration of population and resources in its capital city. The presence of Haiti's past is especially pronounced in the rural areas, where survival is becoming increasingly difficult, where trees are disappearing, the land is drying, where opportunities to make a living are limited to what can be squeezed out of the already overtaxed natural resource base with hoes and machetes. In these areas, unexplained natural phenomenon are still attributed to a syncretic mixture of God, and spirits and

demons that the people believe they can control through sorcery. The people carefully watch for rain, wondering and praying, planning their lives around the seasons. Fisherman spend days gazing into the sea through glass bottom boxes, looking for a sign of the coming of the migratory fish, sending offerings out to sea on little rafts so that the spirit of the oceans might be contented and allow the fish to come. At the same time, strangers bring tons of food and gifts from far-away places, clothes, toys and money. Gifts that have a lasting impression on the rural Haitian conceptualization of the foreigner, gifts that impact the economy and even subsistence strategies and the ways in which the farmer and the market woman go about their daily routines and gifts that, ultimately, sway decisions regarding fertility and the complementary patterns of reproductive behavior. Thus, in order to understand contemporary Haiti it is necessary to have an understanding of Haiti's past, the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

[1] Makab is a pseudonym for the hamlet and throughout this manuscript I have substituted false names for the real names of people. I have done this because some revelations, such as particular acts of violence, marriage arrangements, or abortions, may be embarrassing to migrant relatives living in the United States—now or in the future--some of whom may read this manuscript. It should also be noted that Makab is actually several kilometers outside of the limits of the Commune of Jean Rabel

[2] To justify what some readers might object to as unnecessarily violent behavior on my part, here is what happened. While my hands were otherwise occupied holding a heavy load over my head, three thirteen year old pranksters thought it amusing to take turns squeezing my groin. My cursing only made them squeeze more and laugh harder at what they seemed to think was a hysterically funny thing to be doing—and in retrospect it may have been funny but not, at the time, to me. In any case, after hunting down and soundly switching the boys in front of the entire community—who found the prangsters' howling as hilarious as the pranksters had found my cursing--I became a new persona. It was as if I had just had my community membership approved.

[3] I finished the year in Makab. I had become functional in the language and had gained insight into family life and local livelihood strategies. But in January 1997, I went to the nearby village of Jean Rabel where I had been invited by the French NGO Initiative Developpment (ID) to do a comprehensive social survey of the Commune (The role as leading sponsor of the survey was subsequently taken over by GOPA consultants). The survey opportunity caused me to change my initial focus of doing a small, in-depth community study on the people of Makab, to doing a large study of the entire Commune of Jean Rabel. After six months of design and redesign, review and negotiations with other NGOs in the region and with the German consulting group GOPA, the survey began on June 30th 1997.

CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORY OF JEAN RABEL

Columbus and the Tainos[1]

On the morning of December 7th 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed past the spit of beach that 297 years later would be become my research site, the village of Makab, Jean Rabel, Haiti. Columbus remarked in his Captain's log,

> This entire country is high and does not have large trees, only evergreens, oaks, and arbutus, the same as in Castile. Before Cape Cinquin [known today as the Point of Jean Rabel] … I discovered a small opening, like a cut in the mountain, through which I discovered a very large valley [the valley is all that Columbus could see of the Plain of Jean Rabel and the cut in the mountain is where Bord d'Mer would be built]. It was sown with something resembling barley [corn], and I thought there must be a large population. The valley is surrounded by large high mountains [approximately 3,000 ft above sea level]…
>
> … At a distance of 18 miles [past the Point of Jean Rabel] I saw a large bay and beyond it extensive valleys and planted fields and mountains [Columbus was looking into the heart of what would become the Parish of Jean Rabel and on this bay is the current Port-a-l'Acu, today a tiny, remote, and wind-swept village]. [Columbus's log, Translated by Fuson 1987:130][2]

Columbus soon came to know the people who cultivated the fields he saw. Today they are classified by anthropologists as 'Classic Taino' and are believed to have had the most complex social organization in the Caribbean. They lived in villages typically of one to two thousand people. The villages were organized into agglomerates of local chiefdoms, headed by one of the village chiefs, and local chiefdoms were organized into larger regional chiefdoms. The chiefs sat on throne-like stools, traveled around in litters, and resided in specially built houses. They had the power of life and death over their subjects and they requisitioned villagers for military service. They organized work

activities, controlled communal storage buildings, and redistributed stored food as needed. The chiefs undoubtedly controlled trade networks as well and the Tainos in the Jean Rabel area had canoes that could carry as many as 150 people. They are believed to have traveled regularly across the 90 miles of open water to eastern tip of Cuba, where they had trading outposts.

The Tainos planted cassava, sweet potatoes, corn, beans, peanuts, squash, peppers, and arrowroot, plants that also became the staples of the modern Haitian diet. They planted the crops in outlying gardens where they made beds of dirt, called *conucos*, mounded two feet high and some 3 feet in diameter. Around their houses they planted pineapple, cotton and tobacco, which they rolled into cigars. They foraged for wild plants, nuts and berries. They rounded up *hutias* (a large rodent) with dogs and they consumed both. They captured iguanas and birds with traps and they may have had bow and arrows. They fished with nets, spears, and lines. In addition to fish they took manatees and turtles.

The Tainos that remained on the island of Hispaniola did not survive Spanish conquest. In 50 short years after the arrival of Columbus, the Tainos had all fled to other islands, interbred with the Spaniards, or died off from the ravages of European diseases, military depredations, and slavery.

The Buccaneers

The Spaniards subsequently retired to the far eastern side of the island of Hispaniola and for the next 150 years Jean Rabel was foraging ground for wild hogs and cattle and hunting grounds for the buccaneers who shot the animals and sold the smoked meat and dried skins to passing ships (Heinl and Heinl 1979).[3] Exactly who the

buccaneers were, where they came from, and how they lived remains unclear. Buccaneer communities first emerged in the early part of the 17th century, a scant 30 miles from modern Jean Rabel, on the island of La Tortue (210 km^2) off the Northwest coast of Hispaniola. From there, buccaneer activities spread throughout the northwestern Hispaniola. Most were French or English and they appear to have been adventurers, outcasts, wayward voyagers, colonists, and criminals who were attracted and perhaps in many instances sent to the area to hunt wild hogs and cattle.

In the middle of the 17th century the French and English governments began an earnest campaign of encouraging the buccaneers to harass and plunder Spanish vessels and settlements. French and English officials financed, supplied, and sometimes led the buccaneers on raids and ventures of pillage in which the volunteers were assured a cut of the loot and even given insurance against lost limbs or crippling wounds. There was no shortage of targets and the buccaneers were soon joined by filibusters, who appear to have been professional pirates, and together the two groups became astoundingly proficient at plundering the Spanish.

The infamy of the buccaneers spread throughout the Caribbean and made the coast that includes modern day Jean Rabel a feared area. But when not acting in the capacity of pirates, the buccaneers appeared more like 19th century North American mountain men. In 1665, the governor and founder of the French colony, M. d'Ogeron, described them in a letter to Colbert, the French Minister of Finance,

> Seven or eight hundred Frenchman are living along the shores of this Spanish island in inaccessible places surrounded by mountains, or huge rocks, or the sea and go abroad everywhere in little canoes. They live three or four or six or ten together, more or less separated one group from the other by distances of two or three or six or eight leagues wherever they find suitable places, and live like savages without recognizing any authority, without a leader of their own, and they commit a thousand robberies. They have stolen several Dutch and English ships which has caused us much trouble; they live on the meat of wild boars and cattle, and grow a little tobacco which they trade for arms, munitions and supplies. Thus it will be necessary for His Majesty to give an order which would

> compel these men to leave the Spanish Island. They should be ordered under the pain of death to settle in Tortuga which they would do without doubt if it were fortified.
>
> [quoted in Vaissière 1909 18-19]

There is little documentation regarding buccaneer families. It is not clear whether d'Ogeron and others simply omitted references to women and children or if the men who called themselves the "brothers of the coast" were truly sister-less. The latter situation does not seem likely. There must certainly have been a minority of men with wives and children. There was ample opportunity to barter for or woo Indian and slave women from other islands or simply kidnap Spanish women from plundered ships and settlements.[4] It is clear, however, that while there may have been some women there were not many. In the late 1600s, when d'Ogeron first began trying to settle the buccaneers so that he could have a manageable and relatively peaceful colony, the first thing he did was request women from France. He was sent only a single shipment of some fifty, but they appear to have been well received (Vaissière 1909; Crouse 1940; Camus 1993).

It is during the buccaneer period that Jean Rabel became recognized as a geographically distinct region. "Rabel" is a typical surname of Normandy where many of the buccaneers originated. There was in fact a mariner named Jean Rabel who in 1550 lived in Quilleboeuf, near the Seine River, and who according to Demeaux (1951: 39) founded a dynasty of pioneers (*ce marin a pu faire souche de pionniers*). Presumably one of these pioneers hunted cattle and hogs in far Northwest Hispaniola and the name of his sponsor became attached to the area. Moreau (1797) wrote that the first official reference to "Jean Rabel" was in 1685 when the Spanish--who then still retained legal possession of the area-- sent troops to destroy a corral as part of a campaign to undermine growing French presence. In 1702, five years after Spain ceded the western third of

Hispaniola to the French Crown, a corral was again destroyed in Jean Rabel, but this time by the French colonial government officials (who apparently were trying to get the buccaneers to settle down and end what was a threat to the peace, stability and prosperity of the emerging plantation order).

The French Colonial Era

With the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, the French obtained uncontested control over the western third of Hispaniola and colonization began in earnest. By 1704 Jean Rabel had been designated as a parish (Chevalier 1940: 39), and by 1713 a Catholic Church had been built on the site of the future village (Verschueren 1984). In 1743 the village of Jean Rabel was officially incorporated as the administrative seat of the parish. By the early 1770s there were 100 inhabitants in the village and when Moreau St Mery visited in 1780 the population had grown to 160 people "*de toutes les couleurs*" (of all colors). Moreau (1797) described the village as, "composed of houses of little consequence forming two streets" (*composé de maisons de peu d'importance formant deux rues*).[5]

The Jean Rabel parish changed dramatically during the period from 1728 to 1780. At the beginning of this period there were 38 plantation owners and 141 black workers in the parish.[6] Most people lived on the plains and within several miles of the river where the village was built, and everyone was reportedly engaged in the production of indigo (Moreau 1797). In1771, census records list the population of the parish of Jean Rabel at 3,011: 323 *blancs*, 47 *affranchis* (free blacks and *mulâtres*/mulattos), and 2,641 slaves. By 1780, only nine years later, there were 12,000 people living in Jean Rabel: 800 *blancs*, 400 *affranchis* and 9,000 slaves. Thus, the population had increased 400 percent over a period of 10 years. The population of *affranchis* grew considerably in number,

increasing 10 fold, while the slave population trebled in number and the population of *blancs* doubled. There were also, at this point, more than 300 plantations in the commune (see Colonial Gov 1771 and Chevalier 1939).[7,8]

Table 3-1: Population of Jean Rabel in the Years 1728 - 1789

Year	Blancs	Affranchis	Slaves	Total
1728[a]	38[d]	-	141	179
1771[b]	323	47	2,641	3,011
1780[c]	800	400	9,000	12,000

a = Moreau (1797) b = Colonial Gov (1771) c = Chevalier (1939) d = may include some *affranchis*

Conditions were not perfect. There were periodic dry spells, particularly on the plain, and Moreau notes that local farmers "knew long and distressing dry spells" (*mais on y connaissait aussi de longues et affligeantes sécheresses*: ibid: p 724). Debien cites these dry spells as the cause for the late development of the parish (1962:93). Nevertheless, production in the region appears to have been impressive. Early on in 1728 Jean Rabeliens were selling indigo that was " already being extolled" (*faire venir de l'indigo que l'on vantait déjà*; Moreau 1797: 724). In the 1770s and 1780s Jean Rabel coffee was considered among the finest in the Caribbean (see Geggus 1982: 109). Moreau (1797) was as impressed with Jean Rabel in 1780 as Columbus had been 297 years earlier,

Table 3-2: Population of Jean Rabel Mountains vs Plains, 1780 (Moreau 1797)

	Colonists and Affranchis	Slaves	Total
Plain	680	2,800	3,480
Mountain	520	6,200	6,720

> Jean Rabel is composed of one part plain and one part mountain. The first, which is shallow, stretches the entire length of the parish and it is almost entirely consecrated to the culture of indigo. There are few places in the Colony where the harvest is as great and of such beautiful quality, and the reputation of the place is not misleading. This success has produced great fortunes and considerable population on the plains... Its soil is a marbled clay-lime without rocks. Everywhere and deep, so fertile that only industry and perseverance are necessary in order to succeed and dry spells can not harm crops that would otherwise perish in a clay soil
>
> ...The nature of these mountains, principally in the upper part of the parish, is the same quality of Upper-Moustique of Port-de-Paix. The soil of the two places also resemble one another, and

their production of vegetable and minerals shows this. Jean Rabel has always yielded excellent native crops, beautiful vegetables and its artichokes are superb

Despite the ancient production of indigo and more recently of coffee, Jean Rabel still has enough of an abundance of trees for the establishment of sugar plantations.[9]

[723-724, 726]

With the creation of the Foäche sugar plantation in the early 1770s, organization and technology in Jean Rabel reached its zenith. On the plantation alone there were five large buildings on the order of several thousand square feet each and a hospital. A canal was built that ran a 3.5 mile course down from the mountains, contoured around steep hillsides, and crossed the plain in a fantastic 20 foot high aqueduct. Irrigation chutes watered fields along the way. The aqueduct emptied into an enormous 26-foot high cane mill that was complemented by a 38,158 gallon syrup reservoir and five enormous cauldrons for boiling the syrup down into crystals. Another equally spectacular canal flowed from the hills above the village of Jean Rabel through 524 feet of tunnel located 6 to 20 feet underground, and then across the plains through aqueducts as high as 30 feet (Veschuren 1955).[10]

Table 3-3: Slaves on Foäche Plantation 1779[a]

Age group	Male	Female
Under 17	55	46
17 to 30	219	151
31 to 40	42	21
Over 40	21	29
Total	337	247

a = Debien (1962)

In 1779 there were over 584 slaves on the Foäche sugar plantation: 282 men, 201 women and 101 children (see Table 1.3). Men outnumbered women but not to the degree reportedly found on coffee plantations. To feed the slaves, Foäche instructed them to plant large tracks of plantains, sweet potatoes, corn, and beans. He put special emphasis on the need to have cassava, yams and stores of sorghum in the event of drought. He also provided the slaves with "provision grounds" of considerable size to plant their own gardens. They were permitted to sell the produce from this land in the local market.[11] [12]

Little is known about sexual relations and family life in colonial Jean Rabel, especially among the *affranchis* and the slaves who would soon possess the colony. But some insight can be garnered from conditions elsewhere in the colony and from instructions written by Foäche regarding the affairs of his Jean Rabel sugar plantation. The slaves and the *affranchis*-- as well as the colonists-- appear not to have been very conservative in their sexual behavior. The commonality of sexual relations between slaves and their overseers and owners is manifest in the rapidly growing population of *mulatres* in the colony (see Geggus 1982: 19-21). *Mulâtre* women were known mostly as prostitutes and mistresses of wealthy whites (ibid; and James 1963: 32). Among the slaves Foäche reported that,

> Venereal diseases are so common among the Negroes and they are so disposed to catch them that it is necessary to take special precautions to discover them, without which they will make terrible ravages among all the work teams...[13] [Quoted in Debien1962: 128]

A glimpse of conditions regarding family and children is evident in the frustration expressed by Foäche, who owned and oversaw numerous plantations not just in Jean Rabel but throughout the colony. Foäche seems exasperated,

> ...One is always surprised at how few births there are among the negroes... The unbridled bachelorhood of the slaves that the *blancs* encourage by their example, far from containing them, is one of the principal causes. To what could be attributed the atrocious and so frequent crime of induced abortion or the destruction of their infants in the first days of life. These unfortunate wretches fear that in becoming mothers they will be restrained in their pleasures. It is the owners who are indifferent to these revolting horrors. They claim a Creole negro costs too much to nourish and clothe before he is able to work and that they lose the labor of the mother while she is nursing.[14] [ibid; 128 – 129]

Despite his critique of other slave owners, Foäche appears to have had little success in raising the fertility levels of his own slaves. As seen in Table 1.3, 172 of the 201 women on the Foäche Plantation in 1779 were under 40 years of age, yet there were only 101 children reported, or only 0.58 children per woman.[15] Low fertility was perhaps related to plantation policies. On the one hand, incentives were put in place to encourage

pregnancy. Foäche ordered that 15 *livres* be paid to the midwife and a measure of cloth given to the mother as soon as the infant was safely out of range of an early death. A mother with four living children was given one day per week to work in her own gardens and a mother with at least four working children, the youngest of whom was at least 15 years of age, was given double the amount of garden land and relieved of work duties altogether.[16] A pregnant or nursing woman was also supposed to be relieved of heavy work duties and given food supplements.

But the incentives were probably offset by punishments associated with pregnancy. If a woman miscarried and could not demonstrate a clear and natural cause, she was whipped and put in a neck iron until she was pregnant again. The mother and the midwife received a similar punishment in the event an infant died prematurely. Children were generally taken from their parents at 7 or 8 years of age, when they began to work. The girls lived together in their own house and the boys in another house until reaching fifteen years of age. Both boys and girls were under the discipline of the same special "commander." The good master Foäche, wishing to promote childbirths and unions, magnanimously allowed children to visit with their parents on Sundays.[17] It is difficult to resist the observation that, with the whippings, punishments, and women being deprived even of rearing their children, female slaves probably found it preferable not to get pregnant in the first place (It should be noted that the Foäche plantation had the reputation of being lenient).[18,19]

The Revolution

Disorder came more slowly to Jean Rabel than many other areas. Elsewhere in the colony *gran blancs, pitit blancs, and mulatres* began squabbling, intriguing,

protesting, and rioting against the colonial government as early as 1788. In 1790, the *mulatre* Ogé launched his ill-fated rebellion and on August 22nd 1791 the slave insurrection on the rich Plaine du Nord exploded.

The situation in Jean Rabel began deteriorating in mid 1792. According to Debien (1962) it began with racial conflicts between the *petits blancs* and the *mulâtres*. By July, *noir* insurgents from Port-de-Paix had sacked and burned many of the plantations in the region. The great generals of the revolution-- Delair, Larose, Tousaint, Collart, Bellegard, Christophe, Maurepas, Lamarre-- came and went, often billeting themselves in the village and on the Foäche plantation. The village of Jean Rabel was repeatedly sacked and in 1803 it was burned to the ground. And all the while the former slaves steadily slipped into their own way of life. [20,21]

While the plantation owners and former administrators waged war and made history, a more subtle revolution was transforming Jean Rabel. In the first years of invasions, uprisings and general chaos, the majority of the former slaves in Jean Rabel appear to have remained near their plantations, undoubtedly bewildered and waiting to see what would come out of the conflict. Under their care the plantations underwent a metamorphosis. The vast fields of cane and indigo were transformed into a multitude of little gardens planted in food stuffs. The simplest and easiest cropping strategies were employed and the former slaves bought and sold surplus produce from one another in regional markets. In 1796 the overseer of the Foäche sugar plantation sent word that: *Les nègres songent aux vivres et très peu aux denrées.* (The blacks think of their staple crops and very little of the harvest [sugarcane]; Debien 1962:144).[22]

Post Revolution

During the post revolution era Jean Rabel received much attention as a crossroads in the war between Henri Christophe, soon to be king of Northern Haiti, and the Generals of the southern Republic of Haiti who opposed him. The two sides fought for control of the strategic port of Môle Saint Nicolas located on the extreme western end of the northwest peninsula of Hispaniola. Soldiers were billeted in the village of Jean Rabel and Christophe himself made several visits. But in September 1810 Christophe defeated Lamarre, the Republican General, the war ended, and Jean Rabel quickly faded into historical obscurity.

For the next century Jean Rabel had only flashes of historical recognition. In 1865 a notoriously immoral Catholic priest named Jules Fougas—who's last name still survives in contemporary Jean Rabel-- was implicated in an uprising and subsequently arrested and shipped back to France. From 1879 to 1889, when the French first tried to cut a canal across the isthmus that was to become Panama, some Jean Rabeliens were surely there as migrant laborers. And when in 1904 – 1914, after Panama had become a country and the United States took up the task of canal building, it is equally sure that people from Jean Rabel were there, working. Beginning in the 1890s Jean Rabeliens began crossing the 90-mile wide Windward Passage to work on Cuban sugar plantations and old people in Jean Rabel can still remember the droves of men who traveled to Cuba during the US military occupation of Haiti that began in 1915. Migration to Cuba was curtailed in 1937 when Batista, the Cuban head of state, had his militia round up and deport an estimated 30,000 Haitians (see Willentz 1990; Lundahl 1983; Perusek 1984; Williams 1970). (That same year, the Dominican Dictator Rafael L. Trujillo ordered the

slaughter of some 15,000 - 30,000 Haitians migrants along the Dominican-Haitian border).[23,24]

Despite their international experience as grunt laborers on the Panama Canal and in the international sugar industry, Jean Rabeliens remained among the most remote and isolated people in Haiti. Writing on behalf of the Catholic Church, J. Verschuren observed that in the early 20th century, "Jean-Rabel was very much behind many other areas. First communions, marriages ... were less numerous there than in most other places."[25] Verschueren (1984:55), who worked and did research in the region from 1911 to 1928, went on to explain,

> The backwardness of Jean-Rabel is explained by the fact that the parish is vast, and also that there is ordinarily only one Priest there, and that the mentality of the population is less good. It is also important to understand that idolatry and voodoo are in great vogue and that Jean Rabel has always had renown Priests-of-false-gods, that Haitians—even the President—come to consult from all parts, and they [the priests-of-false-gods] exercise a powerful influence on the population.[26]

Veschueren points out that out of an estimated 35,000 inhabitants in the commune--served by four Chapels--there were only 800 who had taken first Communion and only 100 of them were from outside the village.

The Post Occupation Period

As the US military occupation came to a close in 1935, Jean Rabel entered a period of involvement in the world economy unrivaled since the colonial era. In the very year that US forces left Haiti, the US Standard Fruit Company was granted a monopoly on Haitian bananas and began giving contracts and technical assistance to local growers. Tobacco became a major export commodity and Haiti's largest agro-business, a Haitian-American enterprise called Plantation Dauphin launched a 7,500-acre sisal project in Jean Rabel. A rum distillery fed with local sugarcane functioned only a few hundred yards

from where Foäche had milled his own cane in the 1700s. Commercial ships once again plied the Bord d'Mer harbor, loading overseas-bound bananas, coffee and castor beans.[27] Trucks and luxury cars raced up and down the main road to the province capital, Port-de-Paix. There was a functioning telephone service and a local radio station. According to local informants, times were good. One man, the son of the largest plantation owner in Jean Rabel at the time, reports his father earned profits of US$10,000 to US$12,000 per week. For the rich, there were outings to the beach, frolicking and basking in the sun, wine and dancing in the evenings. Big houses went up and the children of the wealthiest families went overseas to the finest European schools.

All of this changed when in September 1947, the Haitian Government refused to renew the Standard Fruit Company's monopoly on bananas. Instead, concessions were given to seven Haitian entities that lacked the access to refrigerated shipping, capital, and technological resources necessary for crop management on a massive scale. In 1948, the Government did the same thing with tobacco production and by the early 1950s both banana and tobacco exports were washed up (Heinl and Heinl 1978). On the 12th of October 1954, as if sounding a death knell, Hurricane Hazel began three long days of meteorological mayhem. Sisal production in the region was wiped out and economic obscurity again swept over Jean Rabel.[28,29,30]

Conclusion: Contemporary Jean Rabel

In Jean Rabel today there is little trace of the colonial period. Plantation houses were long ago destroyed to make way for gardens. Only one short stretch remains of the spectacular aqueducts, like a crumbling vestige of an ancient civilization it stands hidden among banana trees and tangled vines. Farmers working in the surrounding gardens

explain it was a wall built by Tainos. Others say Christopher Columbus erected it. Only row boats and crude kayaks now ply the Bord d'Mer harbor where once grand colonial ships loaded raw sugar and indigo and where in the 1940s steel freighters rented by the US Standard Fruit Company loaded bananas. Nearby Môle St Nicolas, once called the Gibraltar of the New World, is today little more than deteriorating old stone forts invested with thatch roofed shacks, half naked fisher folks, and goats. And despite the fact that missionaries and development organizations take credit for having blazed new roads in the 1960s and 1970s, colonial maps reveal these roads to regional market centers—the villages and towns of Môle St Nicolas, Bombardopolis, Port-de-Paix and Anse Rouge--traverse the same course as colonial roads and there is little doubt they were in better condition in colonial times than today. The road to the regional urban center of Port-de-Paix, for example, once easily traversed by luxury cars and trucks is today passable only in off-road vehicles and at a slow and careful pace. The plains that were once blanketed with fields of indigo and sugar cane and the tree shaded mountain slopes that yielded some of the world's finest coffee are today mostly sun-bleached scrub bushes and small garden plots coursed through with spectacularly deep gullies.[31] In the following Chapter, I will discuss in greater detail the current state of infrastructure and the role of contemporary international "development" organizations in Jean Rabel.

Notes

[1] What follows is a fuller description of the Tainos based on Rouse (1992) and it includes information that was in the main text: Before Columbus arrived, Jean Rabel was part of an area inhabited by people classified by anthropologists as 'Classic Taino.' The Classic Taino are considered to have had the most complex social organization in the Caribbean. They lived in villages typically of one to two thousand people, twenty to fifty large houses per village. The houses were inhabited by multiple nuclear families related to one another by kinship and the population was divided into two classes, similar to the nobility and commoner classes familiar in Europe at the time.

Each village was headed by a chief, called a *cacique*. Villages were organized into agglomerates of local chiefdoms headed by one of the village chiefs and local chiefdoms were organized into larger regional chiefdoms. Both men and women were eligible to become chiefs. The chiefs sat on throne like

stools, went around in litters, and had specially built houses. They had the power of life and death over their subjects and they requisitioned villagers for military service. Village chiefs organized work activities, controlled communal storage buildings, and redistributed stored food as needed. The chiefs undoubtedly controlled trade networks as well, and the Tainos in the Jean Rabel area are believed to have had trading outposts on the eastern tip of Cuba and they traveled across the 90 miles of open water in canoes that could carry as many as 150 people.

The Tainos planted cassava, sweet potatoes, corn, beans, peanuts, squash, peppers, and arrow root. They planted the crops in outlying gardens where they made beds of dirt mounded two feet high and some 3 feet in diameter. Around their houses they planted pineapple, cotton and tobacco, which they smoked as cigars. They foraged for wild plants, nuts and berries. They rounded up *hutias* (a large rodent) with dogs and they ate the dogs as well as the *hutias*. They captured iguanas and birds with traps and they may have had bow and arrows. They fished with nets, spears, and lines. In addition to fish they took manatees and turtles.

They used dried calabash gourds to carry and store water. They had pottery that they decorated and which served as storage, cooking, and eating containers. They made fire with sticks. They did not ferment alcohol but did take a hallucinogenic drug, derived from a local plant, by snorting it into their sinuses. They played an elaborate game with a rubber ball. They made drums. They painted their bodies for ceremonies and warfare. There were Taino artisans who made elaborate artwork and individuals distinguished themselves and their rank with headdresses and jewelry of bone, wood, gold and shell. Men wore loincloths and women wore skirts.

Only the wealthiest of men, presumably the chiefs, could afford to have multiple wives. Inheritance and kinship reckoning was matrilineal, meaning that individuals traced descent and inherited wealth and status through their mothers. Residence was matrilocal--or perhaps avunculocal--and men who took a wife or wives from another village brought her back to live in the village of his mother. It is not clear if wives who shared a husband also resided in the same house with one another and their children. (Rouse 1992).

[2] No more than three miles outside the contemporary boundary of the commune of Jean Rabel, Columbus and his crew moored their ships in the Bay of Moustique, where today sits another neglected seaside village, called *la-be*. Columbus took the time to reflect,

> The island is very large ... It is all well cultivated. I believe the villages lie inland, some distance from the sea, and that the villagers can see me approaching. The people light signal fires, take all of their possessions and flee before I land.
>
> The harbor ... is 1,000 paces wide at the mouth...At the head of the harbor the mouths of two rivers discharge a small quantity of water. Opposite there are some of the most beautiful plains in the world. Almost like the lands of Castile, only better. Because of this I have named this island *La Isla Espaniola* [Hispaniola]. ...I have seen no village except one very beautiful house in the Port of Môle St Nicolas. It was constructed better than those I have seen in other places.
>
> [ibid 131]

[3] A hotelier from Cap Haitian who in 1992 – 1994 cleaned the beach at Môle St Nicolas in preparation for a tourist venture reported excavating several French Huguenot and Spanish burials. The hotelier claims the Huguenot burials appeared to be earlier than those of the Spanish. There were Huguenots in the islands during the early 1600s and La Tortue island was in fact governed from 1642 to 1652 by a Hueguenot. How the hotelier was able to identify the burials as Huguenot is unclear. It is possible they were buccaneers—Huguenot or otherwise.

[4] To give an idea of the extent of buccaneer activity Crouse (1940) cites data from a third source that in the 16 years 1655 to 1671 all West Indian buccaneers together --and the literature leaves one with the impression that most came from Northwest Haiti and La Tortue—sacked 18 cities, 4 towns, and more than 35 villages along the Spanish main.

[5] The village was incorporated in 1743 at the bequest of local inhabitants the colonial administrators officially founded the village, designating it as the administrative center of the parish and setting aside a *place-d'armes* where the local militia could parade and exercise.

On the 5th of November 1771, the colonial administrators decided to move the village some three miles to what is today Bord d'Mer Jean Rabel. The decision was based on the strategic military importance of nearby Môle St. Nicolas, an eminently defensible harbor called the Gibraltar of the New World by Moreau. There was a small inlet at Bord d'Mer where ships could weigh anchor and exports were loaded. The spot was thought to be a good diversion for attacks on the Môle and would be important as a communication link between "the Môle" and the city of Port-de-Paix--which was by that time already the provincial capital of the Northwest. The sight chosen for the new village bordered the only road going from the Môle to Port-de-Paix, a road that still exists today--almost certainly in worse condition--and continues to be the principal route between the Môle and Port-de-Paix. But the new site was short-lived as the parish seat. Residents complained that the water was not good, the availability of produce and garden plots too scarce, the harbor too windy, and church too far. In 1776 the former landlocked village of Jean Rabel once again became the official administrative center of the parish. A church was nevertheless built at Bord d'Mer and the seaside settlement continued, and continues to the present day, to function as the local port and it is thought of by people in the area as a kind of coastal extension of the village.

[6] Moreau does not specify these "black workers" were slaves nor does he specify the color of the owners who he called *habitants*.

[7] The estimate for plantations is based on the average plantation size in 1771, which is 31, and allotting for the fact that 6% of the population lived on the new sugar plantation. In 1771 there were no sugar plantations, 51 indigo plantations, 30 coffee plantations, and 16 plantations producing stables. Based on population figures in 1780 (cited in the main text), if the average plantation size had remained the same then there were 364 plantations in 1780. I have kept the estimate conservative and simply said more than 300 (see census summaries).

[8] Early population growth appears to have been the result of increasing numbers of indigo plantations on the plain and later growth appears to be a consequence of coffee plantations in the mountains for as seen, Moreau noted that in 1728 indigo was the principal occupation and that most people lived within several kilometers of the village. Drawing on deeds from property sales, Debien (1962) observed that plantations originating in 1753-1757 were mostly indigo and those originating in 1765 – 1770 were mostly coffee plantations. In 1780, Moreau recorded that there were 680 *blancs* and *affranchis*, and 2,800 slaves living on the plain on the indigo plantations and the single sugar plantation--built during the 1770s. In the mountains where coffee plantations prevailed there were 520 *blancs* and *affranchis* and 6,200 slaves (the population figures for the mountains were obtained by deduction from the total population given by Moreau less the population for the plain). Debien (1962; 95) writes that the *affranchis* prevailed in the mountains.

[9] *Jean-Rabel est composé d'une partie plane et d'une partie montagneuse. La première, qui est peu profonde, a toute la longeur de la paroisse et elle est presqu'entièrement consacrée à la culture de l'indigo, Il est peu d'endroit de la Colonie où l'on en récolte autant et d'une aussi belle qualité, et la reputation du lieu ne s'est pas encore dementia. Ce success a produit de grandes fortunes et une population considerable dans cette plaine... Son sol, presque marneux partout et profound, est si fertile, qu'il ne faut que de industrie et de la persévérance pour y réussir, et qu'une temperature sèche n'y peut pas nuire à des plantes qu'elle ferait périr dans un terrain argileux...*

...La nature de ces montagnes, principalement dans la partie supérieure de la paroise, est la même que celle du Haute-Moustique du Port-de-Paix. La sol des deux lieux est semblable aussi, et leurs productions végétales et minerals le démontrent. Jean Rabel a toujours donné d'excellens vivres du pays, de beaux legumes et ses artichaux sont superbe.

Malgré la culture ancienne de l'indigo et celle plus récente du cafier, Jean-Rabel a encore avec assez d'abondance les bois necessaries à l'establissement des sucreries.

[10] To carry out the work, there were, in addition to the slaves, 33 oxen, 92 mules, and 15 draft horses (non-working animals included 17 mares, 7 foals and a herd of 67 cows and calves, plus 87 sheep).

[11] R. Veschuren, page 25.

[12] In one instance Debien notes that he Foâche divided 40 carreaux of land among the slaves (127.6 acres).

[13] *Les maladies vénériennes sont si communes parmi les nègres et ils sont si enclins à les cacher qu'il faut prendre des precautions particulières pour les découvrir, sans quoi elles font des ravages terrible dans tout l'atterlier.*

[14] *...On est toujours surpris si peu d'enfants qui naissent chez les negres.... Le libertinage effréné des esclaves que les blancs augmentent par leur exemple, loin de les contenir, est une des principales causes. A quoi pourrait-on attribuer le crime atroce si frequent de faire de fausse-couches forcées ou de detruire leurs enfants dans le premiers jours de leur naissance. Ces malheureuses craignent en devenant mères d'être gênées dans leur jouissances. Il est des habitants qui sont indifférents à ces horreurs révoltantes. Il prétendent qu'un nègre créole leur coûte trop cher pour la nourriture et l'habillement qu'ils sont obligés de lui fournir avant qu'il poisse travailler et par la perte du travail de la mere pendant qu'elle nourrit*

[15] Debien (1962:130), who is perhaps the most prolific historian for the colonial epoch calls the number 'rather elevated,' obviously in comparison to other plantations because even more obvious is the fact that this is a very low number of children by standards in non slave agricultural societies.

In 1797 conditions had changed little: although the strictness of plantation life had slackened considerably, there were nevertheless only 0.6 children per woman on the plantation.

Table 3-4: Slaves on Foâche Plantation 1779 - 1797

Years	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
1779	282	201	55	46	584
1787	-	-	-	-	512
1792	-	-	-	-	507
1797	166	153	53	46	418

It should be pointed out as well that in the time since 1779 to 1797, some six years into the revolution, 41% of the men and 25% of the women had either died or abandoned the plantation--some to join the revolution and others perhaps to go into the mountains and plant gardens. What effect this had on the number of children left on the plantation, whether children were more or less inclined to leave, is open to speculation. Debien seems to think children would likely have remained on the plantation. I see no reason why this should be true, why they would not have left with parents to the mountains or even joined, on their own volition, with armies that came through where they could have served as messengers, cooks, and apprentices. Today, Haitian children along the Dominican border leave home on their own volition and migrate into the Dominican Republic as early as seven years of age. The children on the Foâche plantation already lived independently of their mothers and probably felt less attachment than otherwise might have been the case.

[16] If however, a child died and the mother consequently had less than the required four children, she lost her privileges.

[17] According to David Geggus, personal communication, the practice of separating mothers and children was rare in the colony.

[18] Foâche tried to promote conjugal unions among his slaves. He gave couples personal property and assigned garden plots to them. But in general he does not appear to have been very successful. Even those few unions that resulted in children appear to have been temporary, as evidenced by the observation

that the first commander on the Foâche plantation, a slave named Jean-Baptiste, had more than 60 offspring (Debien 1962). Foâche's hopes and frustrations also seem to indicate a general failure to promote reprodution among his property. Foâche lamented the nocturnal activities of the slaves who he said were too active at night and did not sleep enough. Relationships with slaves on neighboring plantations were strictly forbidden and violators, if caught, received 20 lashes and 30 nights under the bar. Such were the conditions in Jean Rabel on the eve of the revolution.

[19] There were status differences among the slaves. Creole slaves--those who had been born and raised in the colony-- were more respected and had better living standards than the African born slaves. Creoles were usually domestics and specialists such as carpenters, masons, bakers, coachmen, commanders, and various specialties in the sugar milling process and the preparation of indigo. Foâche gave the Creoles fine cloth, handkerchiefs, and hats indicating their rank and service. To the Africans and the low field hands he gave royal palm thatch for the weaving of hats and mats and he encouraged the building of earthen beds rather than having them sleep directly on the floor.

[20] In the first attack, the commander on the Foâche sugar plantation, Jean-Baptise—a slave who had fathered 60 children--saved the whites of the village by entertaining the insurgents at the Foâche plantation house while the *blancs* escaped.

[21] By July 1793 Jean Rabel was controlled by a *mulatre* named Jean Delaire who first surrendered the parish to the Spanish but when the Spanish failed to arrive surrendered it instead to the British who had landed at Môle St Nicolas. The British subsequently refused to recognize Delaire as the commander of Jean Rabel and in April 1794 he turned the parish over to Laveaux and the French, who with Delaire's help subsequently put the revolting white colonists in line by killing 16 of them and sending 109 to Port-de-Paix as prisoners. The *mulatres* subsequently had complete control over the parish and by August 1795 there were reportedly only 13 *blancs* in the village. By July 1796 there were only four in all of Jean Rabel—"exposed to the whims of the *mulatres* and *noirs*" (*exposés aux caprices des mulatres et des nègres*: ibid 145).

Delaire's carreer was soon ended when he refused to recognize Toussaint, who had been appointed by Laveaux as second Governor of Saint Domingue. In early August of the same year Delaire was lured to Cape Haitian, arrested, and sent to France where he was presumably imprisoned. At about the same time that Delair was making his last mistakes, a new Jean Rabel star was rising. A former slave named Larose, from the Foâche plantation, gathered together 23 men and went to Bombardopolis where he reportedly massacred 26 men, women, and children—ostensibly the beginning of the end of the German settlement in Bombard. Upon his return to Jean Rabel, Delair arrested Larose and his men and led them to the village where, instead of locking them up, he made Larose a captain. Before the month was out, Larose was at the head of an army of Jean Rabel 'Congos' refusing to recognize Toussaint and laying siege to Port-de-Paix.

The year 1797 was marked by a devastating drought, famine and a just as devastating visitation by Toussaint Louverture and his troops. But then things settled down for a spell. The plantations were rented to former overseers and slaves, including the Foâche plantation rented to Larose, several other former slaves on the plantation and a *mulatre* named Salomon. But by 1799 chaos and war prevailed again. In July 1799 Toussaint was at war with Rigaud and the *mulatres*. The *noirs* of Jean Rabel, perhaps because of the military primacy of local *mulatres*, picked the side of Rigaud. The commanders in the Jean Rabel area—a *mulatre* named Bellegard at the Môle and a *noir* named Collart in Jean Rabel—seized the Môle, ran Toussaint supporters out of the forts and marched on Jean Rabel and then the Port-de-Paix region. Toussaint returned, defeated the insurgents and, while there, shot Larose and his business partners on the Foâche planation.

[22] In 1793 Sothonax, the French civil commissioner liberated the slaves making them "the agricultural workers of France." They had to remain on the plantations but could be mobilized to fight. And they were to be organized under administrators, typically military officers. But in Jean Rabel control appears to have been lax, overseers rare and many plantations had been destroyed. There was a movement in the later 1790s to rent the plantations and land to the former slaves and the effort enjoyed short-lived success. Jean Rabel *noir* and *mulatre* leaders were staunchly against Toussiant and there inclination to declare

themselves in rebellion led to at least two destructive visits from the General and many of the leading figures in the area were executed.

[23] Regarding the Trujillo massacre, Lundahl (1983) puts the figure at between 15,000-30,000. Other authors say: Lemoine (1981; cited by Latortue, 1981) 30,000, Perusek (1984) 25,000, Saint-Louis (1988) 25,000, Plummer (1985) 20,000, Willentz (1990) 20,000.

[24] All totaled, between 1917 and 1929 over 450,000 trips were made by Haitians going to work in Cuban sugar cane fields (Lundahl, 1983; Balch, 1927; Montague, 1966; Saint-Louis, 1988:98-99; Perusek, 1984; Williams, 1970; many of the preceding authors rely heavily on see Castor, 1971). From 1916 to 1925, 145,000 to 155,000 Haitian cane cutters legally entered the Dominican Republic. Given the historical data and the ease of border crossing, experts agree that the number of Haitians entering the Dominican Republic illegally must have been even larger than for Cuba (see Lundahl, 1983; Perusek, 1984).

[25] *Jean-Rabel était bien en retard sur maintes autres localités. Les premières communions, les mariages et par suite les enfants légitimes y étaient moins nombreus que dans la plupart des autres endroits.*

[26] *Le retard de Jean-Rabel s'explique par le fait que la paroisse est très étendue, qu'autrefois il n'y avait là d'ordinaire qu'un seul prêtre, et que la mentalité de la population est moins bonne. Puis il faut savoir que le culte idolâtrique du Vadau y est en grande vogue, et que Jean Rabel a toujours eu des prêtres renommés des faux dieux, que les Haitiens—même le Président—vienent consulter de toutes parts, et qui excercent une puissante influence sur la population*

[27] It is actually not clear when the rum distillery began. It was apparently modified in 1967—an unconfirmed fact reported by a former employee. In any case, what remains of the distillery equipment in 1999, indicates that it was far superior to most of the contemporary distilleries in the Cape Haitian area. An equal investment in contemporary US dollars would be very high, perhaps over 100 thousands of dollars—this is an uneducated guess but there are huge 5,000 gallon copper vats, and pipes, and other equipment that appear costly but about which I know nothing.

[28] The Hurricane struck on the 12th of October 1954, and remained over the region for 3 days. Known in the United States as Hurricane Hazel, people in Jean Rabel call it *Douz Octob* (the twelfth of October), a significant milestone in the reckoning of time for locals.

[29] According to State land rosters provided by INARA, in 1955-56 Plantation Dauphin paid rent in Jean Rabel for the last time--Plantation Dauphin closed completely in Haiti in the mid 1980s. In 1965-66 The Standard Fruit company, which had held on with faint hope, paid its last year rent.

[30] The last remaining industry, the rum distillery, managed to hang on until 1986, when the cane fields where burnt in the wake of the coup d'etat that ousted the long incumbent Haitian president for life Jean Claude Duvalier.

[31] Today, the village continues to be the administrative seat of the commune but it is like a place forgotten by time and progress. Streets are dirt with muddy drainage ditches running down both sides. Vehicles have to ford a shallow river to arrive. As late as 1992, a spiked colonial canon still lay discarded by the roadside. Some of the older single story houses at the center of town have been all but swallowed by a slow lava-like flow of mud that moves with each rain down the eroding hillsides.

The center of the village is a clustering of several hundred rusty tin roofs, rickety wooden two story houses built in the 1930s and 1940s and new cement ones built in the past 8 years, a result of the latest boom in NGO development activity. The streets are laid out in a grid, but they fizzle their way out from the center of the village and quickly become winding, rural, rock strewn and gully ridden roads and footpaths.

In recent years people have been migrating into the village from the surrounding countryside and they have been doing so at a rate even faster than people from the village have been going to the capital city

of Port-au-Prince and overseas (see Chapter 16). As mentioned elsewhere, long time village residents estimate that in the past 15 years more than 90% of the former village population has left while the total number of people has more than doubled from 3,294 to the current estimate of 8,000, making the village the largest concentration of people in what is together with the four surrounding Communes collectively known as the "Far-West" (pop 200,000; 1,056 sq km).

CHAPTER 4

CONTEMPORARY JEAN RABEL

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, THE STATE, AND INTERVENTION

Introduction: The Environment

The residents of Jean Rabel survive in the face of extremely harsh environmental conditions, exacerbated by the rapid and progressive degradation of the natural resource base of the region and the periodic occurrence of devastating natural disasters including hurricanes, droughts, and floods. The commune of Jean Rabel is half mountain, half plain and includes approximately 35 kilometers of Atlantic Ocean coastline. Beginning in the humid 3,000 foot inland mountains and moving north toward the sea, the landscape transforms in a quick seven to eight kilometers into foothills and then fertile plain. The plain runs the entire length of the Jean Rabel coast but is separated from the ocean by low-slung, wind-sheared desert mountains. Rainfall varies from 1,000 mm in the high inland altitudes to 400 mm along the coast (PISANO 1998; see Figure 4-2, p. 66 below). Rainfall on the plains occurs most often in the autumn and winter months and rain in the mountains falls most heavily in the spring (see Chapter 10, Figure 10-1, p. 188). The plains both benefit and suffer from the mountain runoff which provides both temporary irrigation and, at times, crop-devastating floods.

Deforestation and Erosion

All of Jean Rabel is largely deforested. In the mountains there are pockets of mature trees such as avocados, and colonial introductions such as mangos and bread fruit.[i] The plains contain mostly scrub bushes and stubby, native acacia trees. The low, coastal mountains are covered with thorny xerophytic vegetation and cacti. Scenes of erosion are one of the most spectacular features of the landscape. At higher altitudes one occasionally finds single bodies of earth, some encompassing hectares of land, slipping down mountainsides. But it is gully erosion that residents and local intervention workers consider to be the primary soil control problem in Jean Rabel. At lower altitudes gullies can appear in several weeks and sometimes overnight. Some of the gullies are a spectacular ten and fifteen meters deep. They cut roads and footpaths forcing people to take new routes and in a few short years they can even divide neighborhoods into separate communities.

Droughts and Hurricanes

Jean Rabeliens are, as will be seen, primarily farmers, and the greatest danger to their livelihood is droughts and hurricanes—both called *siklons* by locals. Hurricanes are not as severe because tuber crops such as manioc, sweet potatoes, and arrowroot survive and even benefit from the abundant rainfall. Prolonged droughts are more devastating. Only the hardiest crops and livestock survive. People who are old or sick are more likely to die at these times. Stricken families begin moving, going from house to house begging for morsels of food. People typically ridicule and humiliate them, but some give. Banditry increases. Desperate people hide themselves in the brush by trails and charge

unsuspecting voyagers, hurling rocks and screaming, driving the traveler away from her donkey and seizing her merchandise.

The prudent farmers, those who have saved money and those who have planted sufficient security crops like cassava, yams, and sugarcane, may come through these crises relatively unscathed. During the most severe dry spells people traditionally purchased manioc and *rapadou* (a gummy crudely refined brown sugar wrapped in banana leaf) on the nearby island of La Tortue, an area with three times the average annual rainfall of Jean Rabel. People also resort to eating boiled green mangos, and a variety of wild plants including a yam and several types of seedpods.

Locals give the *siklons* names like *dekore* (unleashed) and *twa ribon* (three ribbons—a reference to the strips of cloth that hungry people tie around their stomachs to squelch the pangs of starvation). Since 1921 there have been at least 3 major hurricanes that devastated the region and severe drought has struck at least 9 times during that same period.

Table 4-1: Major Natural Disasters in Jean Rabel since 1921

1921: drought (name forgotten)
1931: unnamed hurricane devastated crops and killed livestock
1938 – 1939: severe drought called *twa ribon*. Elders remember banditry, gangs of people watching roads and paths to steal whatever supplies a traveler might be carrying
1950: drought (no details)
1954 (October 12): Hurricane Hazel wrecked crops and killed livestock. Locals called it *douz oktob* (October Twelfth), and it is a major milestone in temporal reckoning for people in Jean Rabel and all over Haiti.

Table 4-1 continued...

1956-57: it is not clear if this was really a crisis year. Several old-timers in Jean Rabel remember the year as a drought period and report going to the nearby island of La Tortue to buy manioc for relief. An earthquake occurred in 1956, but reportedly had little to no effect on the gardens. Pastor Brown of UFM (Unevangelized Field Missions) gave tents to displaced villagers and the Red Cross came into evaluate the situation.
1965: drought that is poorly remembered because of the severity of the ensuing drought in 1967-68.
1967 – 68: drought called *dechouke* (Uproot) and *plan dijans* (Emergency Plan). The latter name stuck because food aid was distributed in the form of a road project that opened a direct route to capital city of Port-au-Prince. The food some report was *rapadou*, a crude sugar that comes wrapped in banana leaves.
1975: drought called *goldrin* after a *blan* named Gorden who was reportedly responsible for regional food relief under HACHO.
1979: Hurricane David devastated crops, tore roofs off houses, and caused flooding in low-lying areas. The incident is not recollected by most farmers
1991 – 1993: a drought called *dekore* (Let Loose) and *twa zorey* (Three Ears). Some people at the time called it the *dèziem imbago* (the second embargo--the first embargo being imposed by the United Nations in 1992, this second embargo was imposed by God). Reportedly much banditry occurred. USAID/CARE relief effort begun in earnest towards the end of the drought.
1997: Drought – no name

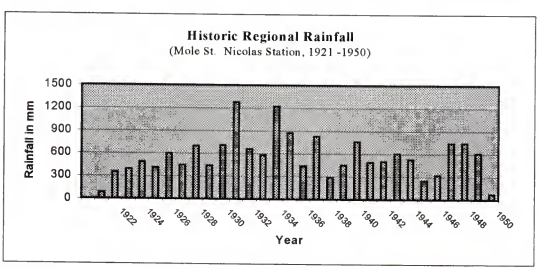


Figure 4-1

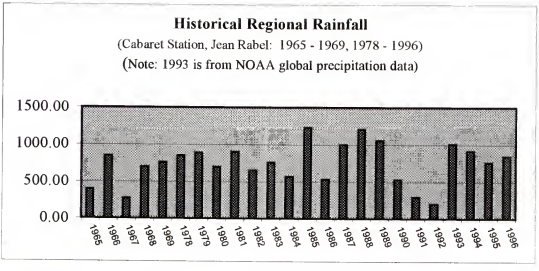


Figure 4-2

Infrastructure and the State

Jean Rabel is one of the poorest Communes in Haiti. Approximately 20 pick-up trucks, 16 larger trucks and two school buses, all privately owned, provide the only public transportation service for the 130,320 people of the commune. There are also only three privately owned non-commercial vehicles in the commune. For whatever reason--lack of funds, corruption or apathy--the Haitian State has only a marginal presence and provides few public services for the people in the region. There is no electricity, no indoor plumbing, and no sewers. The State sponsors a small hospital staffed by four Haitian doctors and two visiting Cuban doctors, but the facilities permit only minor surgery. For the better part of the 1990s this hospital was financed and

Table 4.2: Jean Rabel State Employees

State Employees	Workers
Health	33
Education	187
Agriculture	13
Police	18
Justice	5
State phone service	5
Water service	2
Total	**261**

managed almost entirely by the French NGO Initiative Developpement. The police force consists of 18 national police officers who are usually absent from their posts. Even when they are present, however, they do little more than sit huddled around their two room headquarters in the village playing cards and dominoes (albeit it is difficult for them to do anything else as they have no vehicles--no truck, no motorcycle, not even a mule). There are no State irrigation works and no State supported maintenance services. In the past forty years the State has built only 100 yards of drainage canal and no new roads. Older roads in the region are maintained by intervention agencies.

The State makes its presence felt most as the only enduring employer in the region. Combined, the State Health, Educational, and Justice Departments employ 261 people in the commune. These State employees report not being paid at times for periods lasting as long as nine months. The State also employs seven agricultural agents and technicians in the commune, but few farmers are aware of their existence. There is not even a viable system for collecting State taxes in Jean Rabel. The only real functioning State service in the commune is the State run water service (SNEP), which is and always has been financed and sustained by visiting intervention agencies. The new Canadian-installed State-run telephone service, on the rare occasions it is functioning, gauges its impoverished clientele with charges to the United States of US$8.00 dollars for the first 3 minutes–comparable calls from the US to Jean Rabel cost about US$1.00 per minute.[1,2,3]

Intervention Agencies

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, as the era of agricultural prosperity was flickering to a close, the era of international intervention specialists was dawning.[4] The first development-type projects in the area were launched by US missionary Ed Brown of

the Philadelphia based Unevangelized Field Missions (UFM). Over the next 50 years, Pastor Brown was followed by another 16 UFM missionaries. Churches, clinics and schools were built, wells were drilled, and springs were capped. Not far behind Pastor Brown and UFM was Wallace Turnbull with the Haiti Baptist Mission and Pastor Shreve with the American Mission to the Greeks (AMG). Both of these organizations founded dozens of churches and schools over the years. In October 1954, CARE came in with emergency food relief after *douz oktob*—hurricane Hazel--and returned to stay in 1959, providing food to government schools and emergency relief during droughts. CARE eventually launched large-scale reforestation and agriculture assistance programs. The International Federation of the Red Cross showed up in 1956 in response to an innocuous earthquake and has been in and out of the region ever since, most recently implementing a latrine building project. The Catholic Church, Haiti's official religion, joined the intervention frenzy in 1963-1964, when Priest Marel Cornet installed a water system in the village. At some point the Church also built the village hospital, and in 1975, the newly formed interventionist arm of the Catholic Church, Caritas, began building health clinics. About the same time, the Haitian American Community Help/Health Organization (HACHO), backed by USAID, came to the area with irrigation, reforestation, road, credit, crafts, health, and nutrition projects. HACHO enlarged the village water system and extended it into surrounding areas—UNICEF, in the form of PIRNO (Programme Integrée de Réhabilitation du Nord-Ouest) renovated the same water system in 1985 – 1987. Also beginning in the 1970s, the German organizations FONDEV (Haitian German Development Fund) and Fonds Agricole -- later reincarnated in the form of PISANO--assisted in agriculture and education. During the early 1980s, in

one area, Fonds Agricole installed a diesel irrigation pump so large and powerful it would reportedly blow the five gallon buckets right out of the hands of people trying to obtain water for their households. Also during the 1980a, a series of US Peace Corp workers provided technical advice to fisherman and founded tree nurseries while the French NGO InterAid capped dozens of springs in the region.

One of the most infamous development-type projects carried out in the region occurred in 1983, when Jean Rabel farmers stood by aghast as teams of interventionists led by *blans* (foreign whites) searched out and slaughtered their pigs--a mostly USAID (United States Agency for International Development) sponsored solution to a African swine fever epidemic on the island of Hispaniola. Some farmers hid their pigs in the bush and prayed to God and the ancestral spirits that the pigs would not be found, but by most accounts all of the pigs in Jean Rabel were killed. Following the pig eradication, the Organization of American States--embodied in IICA (Interamerican Institute for the Cooperation for Agriculture)--spearheaded a massive pig re-population project in which they unsuccessfully attempted to replace the exterminated Haitian breed -- small, hardy, self-sufficient and ideally adapted to the harsh Haitian environment-- with a breed brought from Iowa, USA, requiring expensive feed and other special treatment. (Witt and local sarcasm continue to make much of the fact that *blan* had exterminated the small black Haitian pig and tried to replace it with a big white American one).[5]

This intervention activity reached a climax in 1987 with the massacre of over 100 farmers. It was an event that captured international media attention and encapsulated past and present political, development, and religious struggles in the region. Events leading up to the massacre began in the early 1980s, when a young Catholic priest came to Jean

Rabel village. His name was Jean MarieVincent, a liberation theologist and close associate of Jean Bertrand Aristide who was to become Haiti's President in 1991.[6] The priest gained control of Caritas development funds—control that had first been shared with a western trained medical doctor who happened to one of the sons of a family with large Jean Rabel landholdings--and while using the money to build schools, clinics and irrigation works, he also educated farmers on the merits of land reform and revolution. Father Vincent also promoted the formation agro-political action groups called *gwoupman* which soon began pressing for access to irrigated land controlled by a few powerful and wealthy local families. Tensions increased. The *gwoupman* began intimidating non-*gwoupman* into joining the movement and in some instances simply seized irrigated land. In many areas, non- *gwoupman* farmers reacted by forming organizations that locals called *antigwoupman* (literally anti-*gwoupman*) and the big landowners reacted by throwing people off land and destroying houses. There were beatings, house burnings and the killing of livestock.

The massacre occurred on July 23, 1987 as *gwoupman* and an *anti-gwoupman* clashed, farmer against farmer. The triggering incident began when a donkey belonging to a carvan of *gwoupman* a strayed into a yard of an *anti-gwoupman*. The *gwoupman* members were from another sub-section of the commune and were passing through the region in route to a *gwoupman* gathering. The donkey was loaded with rice and when *gwoupman* members finally realized the donkey had strayed and went to retrieve the animal, they found half of their rice missing. An argument broke out and several *groupman* members beat the woman they alleged was responsible. From there, hostilities escalated rapidly. At least one person was arrested, for which there was retaliation,

including the burning of a house. By the end of the week both sides were preparing for a battle.

Reports on the actual battle vary widely, even from people who were involved in the conflict. But the basic facts are clear. There were no guns involved. It was predominantly a *gwoupman* from one communal sub-section, Lacoma, marching against an *antigwoupman* from another section, La Montage. And the *antigwoupman* was prepared for them. Hundreds of men battled with machetes. The *gwoupman* farmers from Lacoma were decimated. Most of those who died were killed on the field. Others however, were bound and led to the village where they were slaughtered in the streets. Throats were slit. Several victims were decapitated. One survivor had both hands chopped off. Soldiers stationed in the village, reputedly sympathetic to the big landowners and the *antigwoupman*, simply watched. The official number of dead was 139 but some claim as many as one thousand were killed.[7]

Catholic development activities all but ceased after the slaughter. Only the clinics remained open. The works erected by Father Vincent--schools, irrigation projects and churches--were either destroyed or abandoned. Some can still be found in the countryside, large well-built block buildings standing eerily vacant amidst thatched roof shacks and small garden plots. Whether because of events associated with the massacre or coincidence, other intervention activity cooled off as well. By 1990 the last UFM missionaries left in the village. The German organization Fonds Agicole faded away as well. The Peace Corps pulled its people out of Northwest Haiti in 1990, reportedly not as a result of the massacre but because two of its members were raped elsewhere in the region. Then, in September 1991, a military coup that exiled then President Jean

Bertrand Aristide brought most development activity to a screeching halt. Many foreign missionaries fled. The newly arrived German ministry in the form of the consultant group GOPA (the project is called PISANO) and the German NGO Agro-Action Allemande (AAA) left the region. Only CARE and the French ID remained: ID capping springs and launching a series of ill-fated agricultural projects; CARE providing "food aid" and technical assistance to farmers. Some individuals also weathered the political fallout. A German priest named Fernand hung on until the later 1990s when he reportedly lost his better senses and began giving away church property, including cars and bags of money, to poor farmers.

Intervention agencies began returning to Jean Rabel after the October 1994 restoration of exiled President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Today their presence dwarfs that of the State. There are at least 11 foreign NGOs or government agencies currently working in the Commune. The largest are CARE, AAA, PISANO and ID. To give the reader an idea of the relative importance of development- oriented intervention agencies vis-à-vis the Haitian State, PISANO and AAA combined have 25 four-wheel drive vehicles, three large trucks, and 30 motorcycles. Initiative Developpment (ID) has another nine four-wheel drive vehicles and four motorcycles. By comparison, the State's Bureau of Health, the Bureau of Education, the Bureau of Justice, the police, and the Bureau of Agriculture together possess only seven motorcycles and

Table 4-3: Population of Jean Rabel in the Years 1728 - 1982

Year	Population	Source
1728	179	Moreau
1771	3,011	Census
1780	12,000	Moreau
1919	14,802	Census
1950	33,372	Census
1971	46,378	Census
1982	67,925	Census

three jeeps, and four of the motorcycles and two of the jeeps were gifts from NGOs. Thus, without even including CARE International, the largest NGO currently operating in the region, the number of vehicles owned by intervention companies out-number those of the State by a factor of 10 to one. CARE, (for which the Jean Rabel population comprises 1/8 of its total Northwest Haiti operations), has another 60 four-wheel drive vehicles, 158 motorcycles, 25 large trucks, two dump trucks and a backhoe.

Intervention agencies provide maintenance services that normally would fall under the scope of State responsibilities. For example, in 1998 and early 1999, while the Haitian State was employing nobody on road, irrigation, or erosion control projects, the 107 staff members of PISANO and AAA each employed 21,137 local people for a period of ten days, while renovating 206.5 kilometers of roads, building over 3,000 meters of irrigation canals, and installing over 3,800 cubic meters of anti-erosion walls. CARE does a comparable or greater amount of road work, gully filling, and anti-erosion wall construction. CARE has 700 full time employees in the Northwest region of Haiti, some forty of whom work in Jean Rabel. Between 1993 and 1998, Initiative Developpment (ID) capped 67 water sources in Jean Rabel compared to no water sources capped by the State during the same period. In 1994, the formerly Catholic village hospital which was in State hands--and had earned the nickname "the morgue" (*nan mòg*)--was taken over financially and administratively by ID which, until March 1999, was doing an admirable job of administrating the hospital, financially supporting 25 of the 54 State hospital employees while also maintaining a support network of over 115 regional health auxiliaries.[8]

The Failure of Intervention

If the activity of intervention agencies seems impressive, exactly what enduring impact they have is questionable.[9] With the exception of gully plugs, erosion walls and ditches—which provide at least a band-aid on the erosion problem--the majority of the infrastructure erected by the intervention agencies appears to have little long-lasting value. Only PISANO has erected irrigation works and these are few and often short-lived. Some of these irrigation projects have ended in disaster, like the dam PISANO built in 1998 that was washed away by a flood before it was completed. Other similar projects only exist on paper or miserably fail to meet objectives. For example, PISANO directors expected that after 3 years of struggle and considerable financial outlays for the implementation of an irrigation project in Kademe, Jean Rabel, the result would be the irrigation of a 90 hectare extension of land. Upon investigation, the project turned out to be only providing irrigation for 30 hectares.

The most conspicuous infrastructural activity carried out by the intervention agencies in Jean Rabel is road construction and repair. Again, despite considerable investment, the roads typically wash out in a matter of months (like CARE's Gombo to Barbe Panyol road that washed out in 1999 before workers had even finished their job). The construction of some roads, because they are invariably dirt, have a counter-productive effect, providing convenient conduits for water and the beginning stages of what eventually becomes massive gully erosion. While happy to receive payment for working on the roads, the directors of the intervention agencies report that farmers complain about the roads and that they do not see their, insisting that they only benefit

those who have vehicles—namely local big shots, buses, and the intervention workers themselves.

Intervention agencies also assist farmers with crops, reforestation, and livestock, but these projects have also met with little success. Since the early 1980s agronomists working for CARE International have been using their extensive system of local agricultural auxiliaries to promote kitchen gardens, called BIGs (Bio Intensive Gardens), which are small, highly productive vegetable gardens planted near the household. The simple strategy involves the use of compost and good old-fashioned bucket irrigation. But CARE's two decade long effort appears to have produced little results. But none of the households in the 1,586 household Baseline Survey reported having a BIG and in four years of traveling around Jean Rabel by foot, bicycle, and motorcycle the author has seen only one BIG and this was a demonstration plot set up by a CARE employee.

The agency that has had the greatest success in the implementation of agricultural projects is clearly AAA, which has focused on the building of retention ponds and hillside erosion-control walls and ditches. AAA is wildly popular among many farmers. In one case, in 1996, farmers in Lacoma, Jean Rabel, were enjoying the presence of both PISANO and AAA projects when they got wind of a rumor that AAA was going to allow PISANO to take exclusive control of interventionist activities in that particular area. The farmers promptly smashed and burned PISANO signs and demanded that PISANO withdraw its project from the area.

But the source of AAA's popularity amongst Jean Rabel farmers might have less to do with the success and appropriateness of the projects and more to do with the direct material rewards AAA uses as incentives for farmers to participate in their projects. Up

until 1999, AAAs most prominent activity had involved the distribution of food and cash to farmers, given away as payment to farmers for work done around their own homes (the retention ponds), and in their own fields (the erosion-control walls and ditches). On at least two occasions in 1997, politicized farmer groups benefiting from AAA food-for-work projects threatened to run AAA out of Jean Rabel for trying to disassociate project interventions from food payments. In the most dramatic of these incidents, when AAA reduced its emergency food relief after the 1997 drought, a group of farmers went on public radio and broadcasted a death threat aimed at the AAA director. AAA initially opted for a short-term solution by leaving the food-for-work program in place, but then in 1999 announced that the practice of paying farmers to work on their own fields was being stopped. What impact this new approach ultimately has on the popularity of AAA's anti-erosion and agricultural programs remains to be seen. Preliminary reports were positive at first. But, on a Sunday in January 2000 a group of farmers again marched on AAA's rural Jean Rabel headquarters. This time it looked as if the farmers would become violent. The intervention specialists barricaded themselves inside the building and radioed for the police (who arrived in PISANO vehicles and quelled the uprising).

Reforestation efforts have also faired poorly. While referring to CARE tree projects during the 1980s, the current director of CARE reforestation in Jean Rabel (zone II) explained, "You know the problem with the peasants, it is not easy. You want to help, but things just fall apart." Nevertheless, the director says that CARE's reforestation programs have improved considerably in the past 5 years. CARE now oversees the planting of an average of 420,000 trees annually with a 12-month survival rate of 60 percent. If the information is accurate then this CARE reforestation project is perhaps the

single greatest Jean Rabel intervention success story in the past 50 years. Unfortunately, the Jean Rabel landscape continues to be largely deforested and other agencies do not report the success that CARE has had recently with tree planting initiatives. In 1997-1998, the AAA staff enlisted thirty volunteer teams of farmers to participate in a sapling production project. The teams began with a total of 33,000 seedlings. But after eight weeks, 12 of the teams quit the project. The total number of trees planted was only 17,000 and the AAA staff have no idea of the survival rate as the tree growth was not monitored. ID also tried their hand in the implementation of tree planting projects. In 1993, ID planted 82,029 trees. After 6 months, ID found a 45% survival rate. In 1994, ID planted another 82,029 trees and after 6 months found that 50% of these were still living. ID directors were apparently not encouraged and they subsequently abandoned reforestation projects all together. PISANO's experiences were even less heartening. Between 1995 and 1998, PISANO paid farmers to plant some 350,000 saplings. In the summer of 1999, PISANO employees counted no more than 35,000 surviving trees. [10,11,12,13]

Attempts to help farmers with livestock have met with even less success than reforestation efforts. In the mid 1980s, in the wake of the internationally funded pig eradication project described in a previous chapter, IICA came to Jean Rabel with a pig repopulation project which involved providing local agencies with food supplements and US Iowa pigs to breed. The ultimate goal was to redistribute the offspring to local farmers. Members of another local organization, one that was in the process of implementing another pig breeding project with support from the catholic NGO Caritas, began complaining that US pigs were not appropriate for the region and that they cost too

much to feed. They vilified the IICA repopulation centers as part of a US plot to bilk Haitian farmers and they began threatening the IICA centers. According to a US missionary who worked in association with the project, one center was actually attacked, destroyed, and all the imported pigs were slaughtered. The IICA project degenerated to the point where some repopulation center managers closed down their breeding operations but continued to pick up the food supplements. (The Caritas pig project never even opened up.)

Ten years later, in 1995, French ID launched a pig repopulation project targeted to address precisely these earlier grievances—the unsuitability of the US pigs. ID introduced a Creole pig from the island of Martinique, a breed thought more adapted to local conditions and local farming strategies than the earlier US bred pigs given away by IICA. But the project was terminated in 1996 because, according to ID employees, the beneficiaries displayed a lack of interest in participating in the project. Another innovative but ill-fated ID livestock related project was the creation of a network of "bare-foot" veterinarians, locals who were provided training and technical support by a University educated agronomist and material support through an ID owned store that provided feeds, vitamin supplements, medicines, vaccinations, fertilizers and pesticides at a 50% discount. But in 1996 this program too was abandoned for farmers could not be convinced to use the veterinarians or the store. (Some of the trainees subsequently tried to employ themselves treating the dogs and cats belonging to missionaries and intervention workers in the region; see endnotes). In 1997, in response to all of these failed initiatives, ID ended its involvement in farming activities altogether. [14,15,16]

Healthcare

Among the most successful intervention activities in the region are ID's much needed healthcare projects, begun in 1994, which include the rehabilitation of the Jean Rabel hospital, maintenance of Caritas's eleven rural clinics, the creation and training of a network of 115 "barefoot" healthcare auxiliaries, and the establishment of a pharmaceutical depot. ID's work has undoubtedly saved many lives, particularly children, and in doing so is beyond reproach. But disconcerting is the fact that ID's programs never reached the potential dreamed by the dedicated French director and his equally dedicated employees (who work for less than half the pay of typical German and US expatriate intervention experts). The hospital and clinics have yet to become financially self-sufficient, as intended. The clinics are underused and they are staffed by nurses of borderline and in some instances dangerous competency levels.[17] In August 1999, Dr. Partick Delorme, the assistant director of the Haitian Health Department in the Northwest province, and a former ID healthcare director, summed up IDs most acclaimed activity--the volunteer healthcare workers--as *pa bon ditou* (no good at all), not because ID had done a poor job training them but because the healthcare agents were simply apathetic. Today, after more than a decade of earnest efforts by ID to reform health, hygiene, feeding and infant care practices—to say nothing of similar efforts by CARE, HACHO and CARITAS that dates back to at least 1966--the use of spiritual healers, leaf doctors and charlatans continues to prevail and local women continue to perplex foreign and urban nutritionists by paying lip service to ideals of six month exclusive breastfeeding while giving teas and solid foods to infants within days of birth. In 1999, ID resolved its administrative troubles with healthcare by notifying beneficiaries that it

will end sponsorship of all healthcare-related activities by the end of the year 2000.[18,19,20,21]

Healthcare and Contraceptives

ID was not the only foreign sponsored health intervention agency operating in Jean Rabel during the 1990s. Nor is it presently the only agency involved in healthcare projects. As mentioned above, CARE has participated periodically in regional healthcare initiatives since at least 1966 when it launched HACHO. For almost a decade BND and CARE International, along with ID, have operated Mother/Child Health Nutrition (MCHN) programs and their associated promotion of contraceptives—often guised in the lofty sounding phrase, 'female reproductive health.' From 1992 through 1997, the Bureau of Nutrition and Development (a Dutch NGO) sponsored bi-monthly nutritional supplement programs for women with malnourished infants. At the same time, and in some of the same clinics, CARE International also had a nutritional supplement program for malnourished mothers and infants and operated massive food distribution programs during the 1990s that at one point included almost the entire Jean Rabel population (see Chapter 16). The CARE program extended beyond 1997 and is still being implemented in at least one local clinic.

The only longitudinal data available for the evaluation of the impact of these healthcare interventions comes from Faith Medical Clinic (FMC) in nearby Mare Rouge, which participated in all the abovementioned programs. Data from the FMC clinic reveals startling and counter intuitive correlations regarding health status and contraceptives in the area. FMC began providing modern contraceptives to reproductive age females in its service area in 1983, when the clinic first opened. The timing of these

programs and precise data kept by the clinic's US educated missionary director allows for an evaluation of changes in the use of contraceptives, fertility patterns and child and maternal health status over a period stretching back to a time before the supplement programs began and when there were no other comparable programs operating in the region. A comparison of 1989 data with current data reveals a 20% decrease in contraceptive use, from 6.9% to 5.5% of reproductive aged women.[22] Comparing the years 1985 – 1992 with the period 1993 – 1999 shows an apparent 2- year decline in the average of the mother's age at first birth, from 22 to 20 years of age and there has been a 5.9 month decline in the average length of a woman's first inter-birth interval, from 29.5 to 23.6 months.[23] Comparing female parity from the 1980s with the 1990s, there has been a nearly 300% increase in premature births, from 3.4% to 10.0 percent.[24]

Table 4-4: Changes in Ferility Patterns Coincident with Nutritional Health Programs

	Before nutrition programs began	After nutritional programs had begun
Contraceptive use (% of reproductive age females)	6.9%	5.5%
Age at first birth (in years)	20.0%	22.0%
First Inter-birth Interval (in months between births)	29.5%	23.6%
Premature births (percent of all clinic births)	3.4%	10.0%

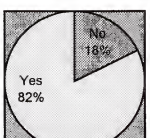
* See end notes for explanation of samples and sample population

The data leads to inescapable and quizzical conclusion that while BND and CARE were feeding malnourished mothers and infants and contraceptives were being given away gratuitously, mother and child nutritional status was declining. And so was contraceptive use. Indeed, while ID's 115 regional healthcare auxiliaries, were holding weekly seminars on the advantages of contraceptive use and delayed childbirth, women

were bearing children at younger ages and bearing them in increasingly more rapid succession.

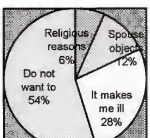
Contraceptives

As mentioned above, in an effort to offset spiraling population growth and to promote maternal and infant health, international development organizations have been promoting contraceptive use in the area at least since the mid 1980s.[25] Currently the French, US, and German governments along with the European Union and the United Nations all promote family planning through the fifteen health facilities and three NGO programs in the region. Condoms are given away and other contraceptives are sold for nominal service fees.[26,27] But efforts to get woman in Jean Rabel to use contraceptives can be summed up as a failure. In the Baseine Survey, it was found that only 18.5% of women had ever used an artificial contraceptive method but that 82.2% of women were aware of contraceptives and where to get them.[28] Of these 82.2% (1,131) of women, 6.3% reported not using contraceptives for religious reasons; 11.5% reported their husband objected; 27.6% reported a belief that contraceptives would make them ill; and 54.6% explained they did not use contraceptives simply because they did not want to. (see Charts 4-3 and 4-4, right, and Table 5-7, following page).



Women, Family Planning Methods, Where to Get Them (n =1,376).

Figure 4-3



Reasons Women Give for not Using Contraceptives (n = 1,131)

Figure 4-4

Table 4-5 Contraceptive Knowledge and Use

Knowledge and Use		No	Yes	Total
Women who have ever heard of Family planning and correctly know here to get it	Count	245	1,131	1,375
	Percent	17.8%	82.2%	100%
Women who have ever used Family Planning	Count	922	209	1,131
	Percent	81.5%	18.5%	100%

Currently, only one clinic in the region reports artificial contraceptive methods being used by more than 5% of reproductive age women in its service area. This figure is skewed by the fact that over 50% of the patients listed are actually tubal ligation patients who visited the clinic over a period of 14 years. (Twenty percent of the tubal ligations were performed because of medical complications that made pregnancy a dangerous or life threatening condition for the woman. Many of the patients reported as having received tubal ligations actually came from outside the clinic service area as this particular clinic was one of the few institutions in Far-West, Haiti that offered this operation.[29])

Table 5-6: Women Using Contraceptives in Far-West Area 1998 - 1999 (15 to 49 yrs)[30]

Region[a]	Number of reproductive age women	Injections, implants and pills	Surgical Sterilized	Total contrcpt. and sterilization	Chemical contracptvs only
Mare Rouge[b]	12,000	660	422	9.1%	5.5%
Jean Rabel[c]	26,200	1,125	60	4.5%	4.3%
Zone 3 [d]	7,000	281	0	4.0%	4.0%

The figures cited in the body of this proposal have been adjusted to account for skewing by the fact that over 50% of the patients listed are actually tubal ligation patients--the number of which accrued over a period of 14 years, 20% of which were performed because of medical complications that made pregnancy a dangerous or life threatening condition for the woman, and many of the patients actually came from outside the clinic service region as this particular clinic was one of the few institutions offering ligations[31]

[a]Regions are based on clinic zones and do not coincide with Commune boundaries

[b]Population estimate based on census by missionaries responsible for the Faith Medical clinic, Mare Rouge Medical Clinic and Kote d'Fer Medical Clinic.

[c] Population estimate based on 1997 Baseline Survey; represents 70% of population in the Commune of Jean Rabel

[d] Mole St. Nicolas, Temps Perdu, Kot d'Fer and La Montagne; only La Montagne (population of reproductive age women = 2,910) is within Commune of Far-West.

Overall, reproductive aged women in the Jean Rabel commune have a 4.5% rate of contraceptive use, which is one-fourth the rate for Haiti as a whole (18%), one seventh that of the lowest country rate in the Caribbean (Guatemala at 31%), and one thirteenth the level of contraceptive use for Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole (59 percent). The contraceptive use rate in Jean Rabel is compatible with the four lowest country rates in the world—Mozamibique at 2%, Ethiopia and Niger at 4%, and Eritrea at 5% (see the UN 2000).

Table 4-7: Rates of Contraceptive Use Compared (UN 2000)

	Jean Rabel	Haiti	GuatGuatemala	Latin America and Caribbean
Use of Contraceptive	4.5%	18.0%	29.0%	59.0%

High Fertility and Population Growth

Despite the millions of dollars spent of intervention funds, the hundreds of specialists, consultants and directors, the widespread distribution of cost-free contraceptives, the educational campaigns, and the dwindling natural resource base, population size and growth in Jean Rabel in the past few decades has reached juggernaut proportions. In the first century following Haitian Independence, the Jean Rabel population grew at an inexplicably slow rate of 0.36% per year. From 1919 to 1971 the population growth rate averaged 1.6%; and between 1971 and 1997, the rate was 3.65 percent. The current estimated Jean Rabel population is almost three times what it was in 1971, the year the Haitian national fertility program was enacted (Allman 1982). Today the Jean Rabel commune is inhabited by 130,320 residents, an average of 279 people per km^2 (or 107 people per $mile^2$). Forty-six percent of Jean Rabeliens are children under 15 years of age and 57% of residents are under 20 years of age (see Figure 3.1). If the

current fertility rate continues, the population of Jean Rabel will double in the next 20 years (see endnote 29, this chapter, and endnote 10 in the following chapter for mortality data and discussion of death rates). [32,33]

Table 4-8. Population of Jean Rabel in the Years 1728 – 1997*

Year	Population	Number of years	Population increment	Mid-point population	Rate of Increase	Population density (km^2)	Source
1780	12,000	--	--	--	--	26	Moreau
1919	14,802	139	2,802	13,401	0.15%	43	Census
1950	33,372	31	18,570	24,087	2.49%	71	Census
1971	46,378	21	13,006	39,875	1.55%	99	Census
1982	67,925	11	21,547	57,152	3.43%	145	Census
1997	130,320	15	62,395	99,123	4.20%	279	NHADS

*Rates calculated from previous population estimates

*Rate of population increase estimate = midpoint population/ (total population increment/number of years)

Conclusion

All in all, the past decade of efforts by Jean Rabel's big four intervention companies appears as fruitless as the forty years of intervention activity that preceded it. As seen, ID has completely abandoned a series of failed projects in farming and it is even abandoning its mixed bag of successes and failures in health. It is currently shifting focus almost entirely into the arena of education. AAA remains with its popular agricultural programs but it is not clear if the project can survive disassociating its interventions from its gifts of food and cash. CARE International is continuing with health programs but is shifting its focus to its DAP-Educational program, an integrated intervention effort aimed at school children and their parents. It is a program that CARE has devoted tremendous resources and efforts to establishing and, although few CARE personnel seem to be aware of it, DAP appears to be an exact replica of the long defunct program that it began in Far-West Haiti in 1959. PISANO, after five years and millions of US dollars spent cooperating with local farmers, is now being shut down by the German Government. A

year before being informed of the closure, a PISANO Agronomist who has spent a decade working in Africa and three years in Jean Rabel threw his hands up saying,

> It's unbelievable. Every year we start from zero. You cannot count the broken water sources and other infrastructure in need of repairs. Even when you do, they bring you another story ....The people only want to work for daily wages. They are not interested in infrastructure. They will do nothing.... It is give me, give me. It is always give me. They will do nothing. They will not work for themselves [with the intervention agencies]. Ahh, it is always give me. There is nothing that you can do.
>
> **German intervention specialist stationed in Jean Rabel**

The high fertility rates in Jean Rabel have often been cited by development-type intervention experts as one of the primary causes of perpetuation of poverty in the region. Considerable financial resources have been invested in promoting contraceptive use and behaviors to reduce fertility. As shown above, the statistics reveal that these projects have not been successful. The resistance by Haitian farmers in Jean Rabel to control their fertility may provide a lens through which we can begin to understand the failure of development-type interventionist activities in the region in general. This lens depends on a broader understanding of survival in Jean Rabel and existing incentives for high fertility. In the following section, I begin an attempt to achieve such an understanding by introducing the topics of fertility and reproductive customs and behaviors among the peasants of Jean Rabel.

Notes

[1] The price of a telephone call is 126 *gdes* for the first three minutes and 27 *gdes* for every minute after that

[2] The presence of the State in contemporary Jean Rabel is primarily manifest in law enforcement. In the village there is the tribunal staffed by two civil judges and a criminal judge, and there are 18 national police. In cases more serious than small land disputes or domestic conflicts, the effectiveness of both the tribunal and the police is dubious. People in positions of power sometimes successfully refuse to be judged by local court--the current mayor has been summoned to court on at least one occasion and never appeared. In 1996 the national police were forced by outraged locals to abandon the village for three months after a man jailed for stealing was found dead in his cell from severe contusions. The police claimed—an even told the researcher—that the man had "beaten himself to death." The man's family and friends were not convinced. Angry crowds gathered in front of the police station demanding the officer responsible be turned over to them. The wanted policeman first hid out in the headquarters of a local NGO.

Employees of the agency then secreted the officer out of the village by covering him with a sheet and sitting on him as their car passed through road blocks of angry vigilantes. The entire Jean Rabel police force subsequently evacuated the village.

The constitutionally defined role of the *kaseks* and *aseks* is administrative but in practice there is virtually nothing to administrate. The *kazeks* –of which there are 11 in the commune of Jean Rabel-- and their assistants (*ed kasek*) have taken over the role of the former *chef seksyons,* mediating disputes, levying fines and when necessary, arresting people (see Appendix A for a description of the political system). This is not their job. Their constitutionally defined role is political administration not law enforcement. Nevertheless, it appears to be the trend throughout rural Haiti. When a person has committed a crime, the *kazek* or one of his/her aids is notified and the person is summoned for judgement. If it is a serious crime or if the person refuses to cooperate, and it is not an urgent situation, the *kasek* may first seek the approval of a judge. Just as often it is the other way around, the judge seeks the assistance of the *kasek* in apprehending an individual. In any case, if necessary, a group of men is assembled and the person is caught, tied up and led to the nearest tribunal for judgement. In the case of serious crimes, people in Jean Rabel—as elsewhere in Haiti-- have no faith in the State legal system, complaining that all too often criminals are simply set free. Vigilante justice is often the rule and people thought guilty of heinous crimes, usually get hacked or stoned to death by a crowd. Three examples occurred in the area during the research.

In the first instance a thief, Jean-Robert, who was suspected of robbing at least 12 stores and several houses—including the author's tent—was apprehended in Mole St Nicholas. A group of 'polis nasyonal' saved Jean-Robert from a mob. He was put in jail but escaped the first night by bending back the ancient bars in his cell window. Two months later Jean-Robert was caught again, this time breaking into a house with his brother in nearby Bombardopolis. The people of 'Bombard,' already having been the victim of Jean-Robert deprivations on 4 separate occasions, had no intention of repeating the mistake made by their neighbors in Mole St Nicholas. A crowd hacked, beat and stoned the men to death, and then doused them in gasoline and set the corpses afire.

The second instance occurred late in a mid April night 1998, in the Jean Rabel Habitation of Famadou. For reasons that are not clear a man, Ti Mango, macheted to death a woman, her husband and their daughter. A son escaped to report the crime. The kazek assembled a posse and located Ti Mango in the distant house of a *bokor* (spiritual healer/witch doctor). They bound his hands and began marching him the six hour trek back to the crime scene. People along the route turned out by the thousands. Ti Mango was beaten and stoned. By the time he passed the authors house in Ma Wouj, some five hours into the trek, Ti Mango's blood drenched face was unrecognizable. He never reached Famadou, but died from his wounds shortly after passing Ma Wouj.

The third instance concerns a man named Briol. Briol was a driver for UNOPS. He was 36 years old when he was killed. He was a good employee, cooperative and polite, always eager to do his job. But there was another side to Briol. He grew up in Ma Wouj, a red-clay, mountain top plateau that does not even get billing as a village, but rather a denser than usual clustering of houses, the last bus stop in the rocky washed out roads of the Far-West, where there is a Catholic Church and a Tuesday market. People in Ma Wouj say that as a child Briol was a bully and frequently got into fights. His mother was very poor but she managed to get to the Bahamas and work. With the money she made she invested in retailing and began to lift the family out of poverty. She sent Briol to high school in Port-au-Prince--where he expanded his reputation for fighting and also became known as a gambler. Eventually Briol himself got to the Bahamas. He spent several years there working but he had to flee after he killed a man, something that everyone in Ma Wouj knows of and even his mother reportedly attests to. Briol was not a nice guy. He carried a gun and he had a special hate for poor country people from among whose ranks he had emerged. There were many stories of Briol intimidating people, pistol wiping farmers, and chasing children.

In any case, Briol some how managed to land a job as a driver for UNOPS where he worked for at least three years. In late 1998 UNOPS launched a project to build a road outside Ma Wouj. So here came Briol, back home, as a big shot. He took advantage of his position and connections. He sold a parcel of land to UNOPS. The land had lime rock needed to build the road. But it apparently did not belong to Briol, Another guy contested saying he was the owner, something that most people in Ma Wouj agreed with. Briol reportedly produced a deed for the land, the problem, however, was that the deed was dated a year after the signer's death and Briol was 14 years old at the time. Briol also monopolized access to jobs on the road. Anyone in Ma Wouj who wanted to work on the project had to give him a 25% kick back

every payday. Briol also forcibly bypassed the local committee responsible for the road project, taking control of the cement and other materials needed for the road. For several months Briol seemed to the king of Ma Wouj. The road work slowed down. The concrete road began crumbling days after it was poured. The tractor operators were selling dirt to people who had family in Miami and who were building big new houses-- Briol undoubtedly was brokering the deals.

Briol began to do peculiar things too. In the week before he was killed people said he would wonder around in the middle of the night, walking aimlessly in the bush and through gardens. Whether that is true or not is difficult to verify, but two days before he died, Briol gave me a ride. It was about 3 in the afternoon. It was pouring rain. All of Ma Wouj was muddy and I was walking out of a dead-end road with a friend. Here came Briol, driving up from the dead part of the dead-end. At first we could not understand where he had come from, how he had arrived in the closed end of a cul-de-sac. Later we found out he had calmly driven through a yard and several gardens, plowing over fences and crushing beans, corn and cassava plants along the way, and he was so drunk he could not speak properly.

OK, so two days later several men sat playing dominoes by a little country store, just as men played there every day for years. But this day was different. There was an argument. One man, the loser in a game, refused to pay the other the 5 *gdes* wager (US$0.30). The unpaid man stormed off to find his friend Briol who he promised would settle the issue. Briol was sleeping in his dank little room where he boarded at a friend's house. Roused, he got up, shoved his gun in his ankle holster and headed out to put the matter in order.

Barely looking up from his game of dominos, the offender shrugged Briole off, saying he was not going to pay. Briol pulled his gun. The men scuffled. Three shots were fired, and all three hit a bystander, a man in his fifties. One bullet in the eye, one in the throat, and one in the heart. The man never made a peep. He just fell stone dead. The fight stopped. Silence. Briol got up and walked to his car. Stopped. Turned around. Came back to the dead man and leaning over picked him half way up. He made as if listening to his heart and then, looking up, he announced the man was not dead. He then went back to his vehicle and drove to a cousins house. There he found a young relative who he sent to his mother's house to get his sachel—which was loaded with money and two bank books.

Word spread immediately and people came in droves to the scene. One of the people who came was the dead man's son, Jean, a driver for another agency. Jean came to see what all the commotion was about and there he found his father, dead on the ground. He tried to pick his father up but people in the crowd stopped him. No they said, not until the perpetrator was dead too. Jean left without his father. He went to his house where he dropped off all the supplies he had hauled in from Port-de-Prince and then he headed for Mole St Nicolas where the police are stationed. At the Mole he picked up the only five policeman and the only judge and he headed back for Ma Wouj. Along the narrow dirt road, they met another vehicle. It was Briol. Everyone got out of their vehicles. Briol was very sorry. He told Jean he would pay for the funeral. He offered money, pulling wads of cash from his sachel and he said he wanted to return to Ma Wouj. The police said no, that Briol had to go to the Mole to be processed and put in jail and wait for trial. So two of the policeman took Briol and returned with Jean to the Mole. The other.three police and the judge then took Briol's vehicle and headed for Ma Wouj—big mistake.

When the three policemen and the judge arrived in Ma Wouj they were confronted by several hundred very angry people. A mob had gathered at his mother's house. His mother, a large, aging, gray-haired woman, sat on the porch in her rocker. She had locked the house and refused to let the crowd look to see if Briol was inside. She said she would rather die with her son. Representatives of the crowd spoke with her. They told her they had no quarrel with her but that justice had to be done. She refused and someone shouted, *zak ap fet* (let the act begin). The crowd began throwing rocks at the wooden shuddered windows and then, while not harming the old women, they beat the doors down, stole everything, and set fire to the house. They then burnt a UNOPS vehicle parked next door—one that resembled the jeep that Briol drove--and they burnt the depot UNOPS/Briol used to store cement and other material. That is when the judge and police arrived.

The judge and police tried to calm the situation by talking to the people. They said that Briol had been arrested and that he would be dealt with. That was their second mistake. The crowd seized the judge and the police and put them in a house and told them that if Briol was not turned over vary soon, they would die in his place. At some point in the night the judge agreed the mob could have Briol. He wrote and signed a note telling the Mol police to turn Briol over and the crowd set off for the Mole. The judge and three police, now on foot, snuck away in the other direction.

Mole St Nicolas, four o'clock in the morning: a policeman was roused from his bed by someone banging on the gate. A pleasant, good looking young man, a local athlete, the only policeman who is actually from Mole St Nicolas and who is affectionately known by everyone as Little-Rony (*ti-wony*), got himself out of bed and went outside to find 80 men armed with clubs and machetes standing in the street. One of them was holding a note sent by the judge. They needed Briol and they needed him fast, the other corpse would be rotting soon. While Rony talked to the crowd his little brother slipped out the back of the house and rounded up the only other two national police left at the Mole. Rony stalled, talking and negotiating. Eventually he led the crowd to the police station which by that point was solidly locked up with Briol inside. Rony and the other three police stood on the steps talking to the crowd. They explained the principles of democracy, the judicial system, and their jobs as policemen. They explained their roles as protectors of justice, how things should work the right way, the descent way, the legal way. Eventually the crowd was convinced, and they left.

At 1:46 p.m., the same day, everyone in Mole St Nicolas stopped whatever it was they were doing. A low grumbling roar came from above the village. A force of 500 people from Ma Wouj appeared on the crest of the small hill overlooking the houses. The mob descended, jogging and chanting in unison, "I will eat you, I will devour you" (*ma manje ou, ma devoro*). Each of the men held in his hands a machete or club and behind them came dozens of children, mostly boys, and several women. And there was no negotiation. When the mob reached the police station they immediately began hurling stones and molotov cocktails. The three policemen stood on the steps ducking and dodging rocks. They shot their guns over the heads of the mob until all the bullets were gone. A Molotov cocktail exploded against the door, setting it afire. The mob pelted the policemen with rocks and the policemen, having locked themselves out of the building, hunkered down helplessly on the steps.

A large crowd from of Mole citizens stood by watching. They had come to see the people from Ma Wouj kill Briol. But unpon seeing the the assault on the policemen, Little-Rony's mother and his wife both began shrieking, Ti Rony is dead! Ti Rony is dead! (*ti –wony mouri, ti-wony mouri*). The Mole crowd exploded into action, charging the crowd from Ma Wouj. The police then picked up rocks and through themselves into the foray and an enormous rock fight ensued. In the confusion, Little-Rony snuck around to the back of the building, unlocked the door, pulled Briol—and his sack of money--from his cell, and in the mayhem, they managed to get over the back wall and up the rocky bay-shore.

Little-Rony and Briol descended seaside ledge, and hid out in a cave that was just at waterline. It was a perfect place to hide from a mob of farmers because only people from the Mole knew about the cave and none of the farmers from Ma Wouj could swim. If they wanted to discover Briol they had to climb down a ten-foot cliff and into the bay. Little-Rony and Briol hung out in the cave for over two hours while local fisherman from the Mole, confused and misled their Ma Wouj farming cousins, leading them all around the bay shore, looking for Briol in different hideouts

That is when Briol's past came back to haunt him. It just so happens that one of the people who knew that Briol had descended down into the cave was a man from the Mole called *sigaret* (cigarette), a man Briol had pistol whipped several weeks prior. Eventually *sigaret* could resist no longer and he settled the score by tipping off a crowd of Ma Wouj men. Not knowing that people were waiting above, Little-Rony emerged first. Seeing the crowd he dove into the bay and swam for a rowboat that had been waiting in deeper water for just such an emergency. Briol swam after Rony. Still in his pants and wearing shoes, scared and disoriented, Briol winded and stood up on a reef. The people from Ma Wouj showered him with rocks. One rock to the head and one to the face, and Briol fell into the water and drowned.

[3] Intervention agencys operating in Jean Rabel have left local government representatives out of their decision making process citing corruption and a failure of the politicians to understand or cooperate with development efforts (*aseks, kaseks, majistras and depiti*). A typical example of the bumbling incompetence, corruption and failings of governmental activity in the area is the Jean Rabel mayor. As recounted by foreign staff in local intervention agencys: With high hopes the UN had sent the mayor to Peru and Washington DC in 1996-1997 for seminars in political administration. The mayor returned in the middle of a severe regional drought and announced at a meeting with representatives of the intervention agencys that what the Commune needed was a multi-storied public administrative building, to house the mayor, and a public swimming pool, to teach the children of the region to swim. The mayor apparently had few insights on how to deal with the drought and the money entrusted to the mayor for building drainage canals, roads, and meeting payrolls disappeared at about the same time. The mayor did a disappearing act

as well and in the fall of 1998 a group of protestors closed city hall (which is not much more than a small house). As of January 2000, Jean Rabel still had no mayor.

[4] This 'start' of development is somewhat arbitrary in the sense that the US occupation could be viewed as one big intervention project. But there are fundamental differences between pre-war and post war approaches, i.e. colonialism and neo-colonialism.

[5] Supervision of the actual eradication was also supervised by IICA.

[6] In August 1994 Jean Marie Vincent was killed and subsequently became the most famous martyr of the currently powerful Lavalas Political Party.

[7] Based solely on experience in the region and the number of people I know who were personally involved in the incident or who lost relatives in the battle, it is unlikely the death toll was much higher than 139.

[8] In the summer of 1997, a United Nations construction team came to the village with a dazzling array of heavy equipment, including air support from helicopters, to renovate the local high school. In 1997, the Voice of America donated equipment that made the founding of a village radio station possible.

[9] In addition to the fact that projects appear ineffective, the economic impact of the interventions industry itself while not insignificant, is minimal. Particularly with regard keeping highly skilled Jean Rabeliens—of which there are many—home. Virtually all upper-level intervention specialists come from overseas or the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Overall, less than 20% of full-time intervention employees are local residents and 90% of these are maids, guardians or low-level field staff. The many jobs intervention agencies provide on road projects are temporary and wages are often paid in imported food stuffs (see food-aid Chapter 16).

Table 4-9: Hospital Employees (twenty-five for ID and 29 employed by the State)

		Male	Female	Local
Hospital (ID)	Assistant Administrator	1	0	0
	Doctor	1	0	0
	Dentist	1	0	0
	Dentist Assistant	1	0	1
	Head Medical Technician	1	0	0
	Lab Technician	0	1	1
	Sterilization Lab Techs	0	2	2
	Pharmacy	2	0	2
	Radio Technician	2	0	2
	Archivist	1	0	1
	Dentist Auxiliary	1	0	1
	Medical Auxiliary	0	5	5
	Chauffeur	2	0	2
	Maid/cook	0	2	2
	Guardian	4	0	4
		17	10	23
		0	0	0
Hospital (State)	Administrator	1	0	0
	Doctor (who do they wrk for?)	2	0	0
	Resident Doctor	2	0	0
	Resident Dentist	0	1	0
	Secretary	0	1	1
	Nurse	0	2	0
	Resident Nurse	0	2	0
	Lab Technician	0	1	1
	Lab Technician	0	1	1

Table 4-5--continued

		Male	Female	Local
	Assistant Pharmacist	0	1	1
	Chemist	1	0	1
	Attendant	0	1	1
	Medical Auxiliary	0	6	6
	Chauffeur	1	0	1
	Maid/cook	0	6	6
	Guardian	4	0	4
		27	30	47

Table 4-10: PISANO Employees

	Male	Female	Local
Administrator	1	0	0
Engineer	1	0	0
Sociologist	1	0	0
Nutritionist	0	2	0
Agronomist	1	0	0
Secretary	0	1	0
Animater/ice	5	3	2
Chauffeur/Mechanics	6	0	3
Guardian	3	0	3
Cook	0	1	1
Maid	0	1	1
Total	18	8	10

Table 4-11: AAA Employees

	Total	Male	Female	Local
Coordinator	1	1	0	0
Sub-Coordinators	3	3	0	0
Engineers/Mangers	3	3	0	0
Ag. Technicians	6	5	1	0
Civil Engineer	1	1	0	0
Secretary	1	0	1	0
Facilitator	6	5	1	0
Depot Clerks	4	4	0	4
Drivers	8	8	0	0
Material Technician	1	1	0	1
Office Aid	1	1	0	1
Watchmen	7	7	0	7
Total	42	39	3	13

[10] Care has a tree farm near Barbe Pagnol and one in Guinaudee. Seedlings are reportedly produced and given away in small plastic bags. On November 2, 1999 the head of CARE's zone II reforestation efforts explained to the researcher that 1/10th of the trees 420,000 trees are followed at 1 month, 6 month and 12 month intervals to verify survival rates.

[11] CARE competitors, AAA staff who work in the same area are incredulous, reporting that on at least one occasion CARE employees parked across from AAA headquarters and gave trees away off the back of a truck. They gave the trees to anyone who wanted them--AAA staff took some themselves--but local farmers appeared more interested in the bags the saplings came in than the saplings. Farmers were seen pulling the saplings out of the bags, discarding the saplings, and sticking the bags in their pockets.

[12] *Ou konnen pwoblem paysan yo, se pa fasil, ou vle ede men ... bagay tonbe.* October 22, a Tuesday, 1999 Agrononm Dufrène Vian.

[13] AAA directors hired professional Haitian actors to animate the population with theatrical skits about reforestation. Farmers reportedly enjoyed the skits—PISANO and ID subsequently used the actors as well.

[14]Initiative Developpment launched the pig project in 1992. Health auxiliaries working for the agency were remunerated with piglets. The auxiliaries were supposed to raise the pigs, supplement them with high protein imported feeds, and then transport the fattened animals to the urban market in St Marc where they would fetch a high price. In part to assure success of the project, ID opened a feed store where supplements were sold at 50% of cost. The pig project was terminated in 1996, by all accounts a failure because of apathy on the side of the participants. The store with the subsidized feeds—and subsidized fertilizers--closed in 1997.

[15] Some 20% of people in the survey reported consulting veterinary specialists but many of these people are shaman—a fact not captured in the data—and others are the quickly fading aftermath of the failed veterinary program attempted by the French NGO Initiative Developpment (see following endnote).

[16] Veterinary programs attempted in the area have run into problems. Farmers are simply not disposed to pay for veterinary services and NGOs have not had much luck recruiting competent trainees A story reported by a Mennonite missionary living just outside the Commune of Jean Rabel illustrates the point. Tired of listening to his dog's squealing nocturnal encounters with the neighbor's dog and tired of puppies under his feet, the missionary employed one of IDs veterinary graduates to neuter his dog. But farmers in the area do not fix female animals and ID staff had apparently given no instruction to trainees on the matter. Nevertheless, happy to have the job and not wanting to admit ignorance, the man apparently extended his knowledge of castration to that of tubal ligation. He tied the dog up and sliced off her labia majora. The first complication came when dog's vaginal canal healed shut, blocking its urethra and causing the animal to swell with urine. The vet was called back in and declaring this to be a most mysterious case (*sa dwol*), he again tied up the dog and took a knife to her vulva. The Mennonite missionary reports urine squirting some 30 feet. Eventually the dog was taken to Port-au-Prince where a real veterinarian spayed her and sewed the traumatized labia major back into their original and proper form.

[17] Few if any of the local nurses have more than a 10th grade education, they are almost entirely unsupervised and more than one story can be gathered from visiting doctors, foreigners and locals of misdiagnosis and prescription of the wrong medicine—there is no concept of malpractice in Jean Rabel and no one, in the memory of anyone I ever spoke to about it, can remember a doctor, *bkor*, charlatan, nurse or anyone else ever having been arrested, sued, or fined for dispensing an inappropriate or dealy medication.

[18] Delorme explained that the healthcare workers are indifferent. Most are impoverished, much is demanded of them, and they are currently not remunerated for their services. Thus, there is little incentive for them to participate honestly in charitable programs while the needs of their own families go unmet—i.e. corruption and non-performance are problems.

[19] The heads of virtually all the programs utilizing local Healthcare workers—called Agent Santes-- admit the system is plagued with problems.

[20] PISANO who has a network of 54 healthcare workers in Jean Rabel could not even get the volunteers to participate in a 1999 credit program--the healthcare workers insisted they be given first dibs on the credit.

[21] The remark that women in Jean Rabel give supplements 'sometimes within days of birth' is based on observation. Most women in the region begin giving sugar water and tea on the 12th day after birth. The notion that it should be done on the 12th day is quite consistent. However, I do not believe this occurs in practice. I believe that liquids are given at an earlier age. Within days of birth and reports from mothers in NHADS survey below suggests this is true.

I am only providing this table to be suggestive and I do not encourage the use of the data to make hard conclusions about weaning practices in Jean Rabel. I have to admit to not knowing much about this issue because it is not a subject I systematically investigated over a lengthy period of time.

Solid foods are usually given within the first month and while this is also not something I systematically investigated over a long period of time, I have sat amazed on at least three occasions and watched a mother force food into the sputtering mouth an infant no older than 2 weeks.

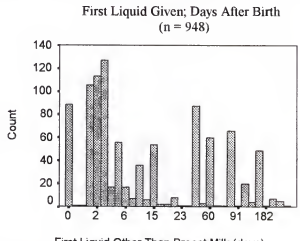


Figure 4-5

[22] In 1989 FMC was the only clinic providing contraceptive services in the immediate region and had 581 women using contraceptive pills and Depropravera. The population rose from 45,000 to its current level of about 60,000 and there are now three clinics providing chemical contraceptives. The total number of users for all three clinic is 660 women. Thus while the overall population has increased by almost 50% the number of contraceptive users has increased by only 20%, a net decline in users from 6.5% to 5.5% overall.

[23] The difference in mean age at first birth is statistically significant (c.i. = .95). The difference in birth intervals is not significant and a larger sample size is necessary to clarify the importance of these changes. However, this should not distract the reviewer from the fact that if these changes are approximately correct--and the overwhelming statistic probability is that they are— they indicate an alarming increase in fertility among a group of young women who already had alarmingly high fertility levels. And at the very least, the data indicates no decrease in the length of birth intervals and no increase in the age at first birth, observations that suggest minimal receptivity to reproductive health educational efforts sponsored over the past decade by international intervention agencies.

Table 4-12: Changes in Age of Mother at First Birth and Length of First Birth Interval

Report

		IBI between 1st and 2nd childbirth	Age of mother at first birth
Before programs	Mean	29.52	22.32
	N	46	60
	Std. Error of Mean	1.92	.43
Since programs	Mean	23.62	20.62
	N	29	29
	Std. Error of Mean	1.66	.41

[24] The data is 20 out of 581 women to 21 out of 210 (sample is from parity of women on family planning lists).

[25] Promotion of contraceptives began with the opening of the protestant funded Nan Sentren clinic and accelerated in the later 1980s when the French NGO InterAid began taking over formerly Catholic operated clinics in the region

[26] The organizations that actually do the promoting funding and/or supplying of contraceptives are Profamil, PROMESS, EEU, USAID, CARE , PISANO, ID, and MSPP. AAA plans to join the effort in 2000.

[27] The fees for contraceptives are 25 *gdes* (US$1.50) to place Norplant, 25 *gdes* (US$1.50) to remove Norplant, 5 *gdes* (US$0.30) consultation fee for all other chemical contraceptives (depropravera, Noristat, and pills). Condoms are given away at clinics and sold in rural stores 3 condoms for 2 *gdes* (US$0.12). Tubal ligation is 50 *gdes* (US$3.00). Charges account for the cost of service and not the cost of contraceptives, which are considered gratuitous.

[28]

Table 4-13 Knowledge of Contraceptive Methods (N = 1,132)

Contraceptive Methods	No	Yes	Total
Deprovera	99 (8.7%)	1033 (91.3%)	1,332 (100%)
Pill	149 (13.2%)	983 (86.8%)	1,332 (100%)
Norplant	862 (76.1%)	270 (23.9%)	1,332 (100%)
Surgery	924 (81.6%)	208 (19.4%)	1,332 (100%)
Condom*	916 (80.9%)	216 (19.1%)	1,332 (100%)
Other	1088 (96.1%)	44 (3.9%)	1,332 (100%)

* Condoms are not generally thought by Jean Rabeliens as a contraceptive method but rather as a means of avoiding sexually transmitted disease.

[29] The average age of the women was 34.5; the average number of children ever born was 6.0; and the average number of living children was 5.15.

[30]There were 24 vasectomies in the region, all in Nan Sentren.

[31] The average age of the women was 34.5; the average number of children ever born was 6.0; and the average number of living children was 5.15.

[32] From the time of the revolution to the time of the end of US military occupation, the population in Jean Rabel grew very little. Ostensibly this was because of high death rates that began declining in 1915 with the occupation of Haiti by the US marines. As seen, just prior to the wars in 1789, Moreau had recorded a population of 12,000 in the commune; 9,000 of these people were slaves who would likely have stayed in the region after independence had been won. In 1919 a Priest named Marcel Simonneau visited Jean Rabel and reported there were 20,000 people in the commune. But it is not clear where Simonneau got this estimation and I have deferred to the 1919 US Marine Corps census which placed the population at 14,802. Simmoneau did report that there were1,000 baptisms a year—something the priest should well know—which translates to a gross fertility rate of about 67 births per 1,000 people. This is too high. It is 22 births higher than Hutterites and 18 births higher than the highest crude birth rate recorded during the 1990s. Thus, perhaps Simonneau was correct in estimating a population of 20,000. Verschuren reports that in 1936 there were 35,000 inhabitants and this looks like an estimation based on the 1919 figure and would fit well with a population growth of about 4% --derived from the gross fertility rate of 50. But, again, it is not stated where this data came from and the census of 1950, 14 years later—when the population should have

increased by at least another 50%-- found only 33,372 people living in the Commune—less than Veschueren estimated in 1936. The most prudent course of action seems to be to eliminate the 1936 estimate and go with the 1950 census if fro no other reason than they are censuses. That is what I have done here. Nevertheless, the important point is that, whichever population estimates are used, population growth has been much higher since 1919 and it has steadily increased throughout the century.

[33] The population growth rate estimate appears and probably is slightly too high and this could very well be caused by undercounts in early censuses. However, with the youthful population structure of current Jean Rabel—something that typically results in a low death rate—and, as will be seen in a later chapter, with a Total Fertility Rate of more than 7 children per woman and completed fertility rates of about 8 children per woman, population growth rates above 3% are not simply possible but likely.

SECTION II

THE PRONATAL SOCIO-CULTURAL FERTILITY COMPLEX

CHAPTER 5

FERTILITY IN JEAN RABEL

Introduction

Jean Rabel has one of the highest fertility levels in the world. The achievement of this high rate of fertility is startling when taking into account that Haitian women face an extremely hostile environment for successful reproduction, including high rates of infectious diseases, low-fat and low calorie diets, high rates of female malnutrition, demanding exercise regimes, and a high rate of male absenteeism. All of these factors are known to diminish the probability of pregnancies and weigh heavily against the likelihood of high birth rates among Jean Rabel women. Nevertheless, despite these biological and social limitations on fertility, it will be shown in this chapter that fertility in Jean Rabel measures up impressively with that of the early 20th century Hutterites, who had the highest sustained fertility levels ever recorded.

High fertility in Jean Rabel is related to what can be called a pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex. Jean Rabeliens want children for themselves, for family, friends, and neighbors. The merits of having numerous children is a commonly discussed topic, even with newly met strangers (especially childless ones). The farmers generally regard childless people with suspicion and derision.

Table 5-1: Jean Rabel Population, Area, Density, and Household Size

Population	130,320
Area in km^2	467
Households	22,455
Population per km^2	279

Contraceptives are thought to make women sick, even to cause death, and women who use them, particularly young women, are thought of as immoral. Abortion is abhorred as a grievous crime and sin and women revealed to have had an abortion are publicly humiliated, their families are fined, and the woman may face imprisonment. A pronatal cultural complex of customs, rules, expectations, and supernatural beliefs maximize the possibility of pregnancy while preserving, often fictively, the social and economic expediency of unchallenged paternity.

Fertility

If Jean Rabel were a country then at 7.1 births per mother it would have the second highest Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in the world. Thirty-two percent of Jean Rabel women equal or exceed the median 10 births attained by early to mid 20th century Hutterite women--the healthy, well fed, and fecund world champions of high fertility.[1] If one considers physiological and social factors that suppress fertility then, compared to the Hutterites, Jean Rabel women are at a considerable disadvantage. High incidence of infectious diseases, low levels of body fat, and reduced exposure to the risk of pregnancy—primarily determined by age at first union, time spent in marriage and the disruption of union via male or female labor migration—are all factors that mitigate against high fertility and all factors that, in direct contrast to Hutterites, weigh heavily against high fertility among Jean Rabel women (for Hutterite fertility see Eaton and Mayer 1953, Larsen and Vaupel 1993; Nonaka et al 1994).[2]

Factors that Dampen Fertility

Data from the Baseline Survey indicates that 5.7% of Jean Rabel women have never succeed in carrying a pregnancy to full term, a percentage that is not excessive in

comparison to the median of 4.2% reported for all developing countries (Vaessen 1984). But clinic records for pregnant women also indicate that, at any given time, 5% to 10% of women in the region suffer from sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia, HIV/AIDS, and syphilis--maladies that interrupt and sometimes prematurely end reproductive careers. Other widespread and debilitating diseases such as malaria, typhoid and hepatitis, annually leave over 10% of women in the region bedridden and temporarily sterile for months and sometimes years.[3,4]

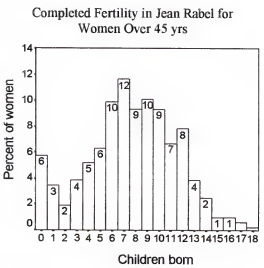


Figure 5-1

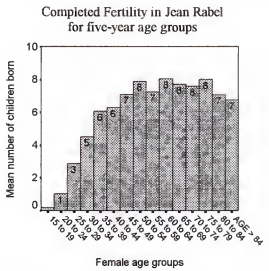


Figure 5-2

high levels of exercise are also factors known to lower fertility by inducing amenorrhea—the suspension of menstrual cycles for three or more months. All three of these factors are conspicuous in the physiological profile of the Jean Rabel women. In the Baseline Survey, the women

Table 5.2 : Malnourished Women in Baseline Survey (1997)

	Number of women	Percent
normal	570	74%
malnourished	200	26%
Total	770	100%

were found to generally consume low-fat, high carbohydrate diets (see Table 2.1) Twenty six percent (26%) of Jean Rabel women were found to be slightly to severely malnourished (see Table 2.4).[5]

Table 5.3: Most Commonly Eaten Foods in Jean Rabel

Most Commonly Eaten Foods (n = 1,483)			
Foods	Every Day	2 to 3 times weekly	Total
Cooking oil	90.2	7.9	**98.1**
Bread	63.9	32.9	**96.8**
Beans/peas	47.6	49.1	**96.7**
Citrus	33.6	50.6	**84.2**
Rice	26.4	71.3	**97.7**
Corn	20.5	76.2	**96.7**
Plantain/banana	15.2	75.0	**90.2**
Mango, papay, avocado	15.0	66.4	**81.4**
Meat	9.6	82.3	**91.9**
Greens	6.1	73.7	**79.8**
Dairy (milk and eggs)	5.3	76.5	**81.8**
Pasta	4.7	77.8	**82.5**
Millet	4.6	72.2	**76.8**
Manioc and sweet potato	2.6	69.0	**71.6**

The average Jean Rabel woman also leads a physically demanding life. Fetching household water requires daily walks to water sources often located more than one half hour from the household with a return trip also generally involving carrying a filled five gallon bucket balanced on top of the head. Women also walk an average of 6 hours per week to make biweekly market purchases and sales for the household. An average of 6 hours per week are also spent picking produce from the gardens, and another 12 to 24 hours weekly walking back and forth from the water to hand scrub clothes. This total exercise regime certainly matches or exceeds the 5 miles of jogging per week that induced amenorrhea in 6% of the US subjects studied by Feight et. al. (1978) and probably is closer to the weekly physical exertion of women in the same study who ran 45 miles per week inducing amenorrehea in 43% of the cases. Extended breastfeeding,

necessary in the absence of high protein baby formulas, is also known to suppress ovulation (WHO 1999); and 63% of women in the Jean Rabel Baseline Survey reported breast feeding their last child for 18 to 27 months after birth (see Figure 2.4).[6]

Reduced exposure to the risk of pregnancy through late entry into union or disrupted union is another factor considered as a determinant of lower fertility (Bongaarts and Potter 1983; Williams et al 1975; Blake 1954; Wyron and Gordon 1971). According to respondents in the Opinion Survey, the average age at first union for Jean Rabel women is 21.7 years and the average age at first childbirth is 22.3 years. These averages for Jean Rabel women are not unusually high or low.[7] But they are accomplished despite high rates of male absenteeism. Male wage migration to larger Haitian cities and overseas to the Bahamas, the United States, and the Dominican Republic is, as will be seen, a significant factor influencing

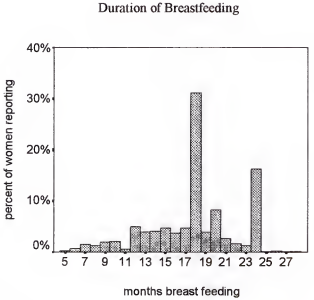


Figure 5-3

Table 5-4: Mean Age Follow-up Survey Respondents (n = 135)

	Male	Female	Male/Female
Mean age at marriage/plasage	26.0 (n=60)	21.7 (n=67)	23.7 (n=127)
Mean age at birth of 1st child	24.1 (n=63)	22.3 (n=66)	23.2 (n=129)

patterns of union and fertility. The result of the migration is lower male to female sex ratios, which, in societies with strongly enforced values regarding monogamy and premarital pregnancy, would force a minority of women to remain out of union and childless. Male migration also disrupts ongoing conjugal unions and, in the Baseline Survey, 10% of Jean Rabel men in the 20 to 49 year-old age groups were reported as being absent and no longer considered as members of the household from which they originated. Furthermore, in the Opinion Survey, 26% of men in union reported having been away from home for at least 30 of the preceding 365 days (see Table 5.4). Congruent with male transience, 52% of Jean Rabel women in the 20 to 24 year-old age group and 26% of women in the 25 to 29 year-old age group were not in union at the time of the interview (see Table 5.6, p. 101), and 26% of women abandon or are abandoned by their first spouse during the course of their reproductive careers (see Table 5.5).

Jean Rabel Women vs Hutterite Women

Comparing Jean Rabel women to their Hutterite counterparts: Jean Rabel women on average eat two and sometimes only one cooked meal per day and meals rarely include meat or dairy foods (see Table 5.2, p. 97). Hutterite women ate three meals per day, every day, and meat, dairy products, or sometimes both are included in virtually

Table 5.5: Temporary Male Migration in Jean Rabel

		Number	Percent
Men who report having worked in the city or overseas for at least 30 of the past 365 days	Yes	17	26%
	No	49	74%
	Total	66	100%

Table 5.6: Are You Still With Your First Spouse

		Gender		
		Men (n = 68)	Women (n = 68)	Total n
Are you still with your first wife?	No	15%	26%	28
	Yes	85%	74%	108
	Total	100%	100%	136

every meal (Hostetler 1974:353). Further, while Jean Rabel women are members of what is probably the most disease ridden population in the Western hemisphere and at any given time upwards of 5% of Jean Rabel women are suffering from an STD—to say nothing of other infectious diseases--the incidence of infectious diseases among Hutterites is currently even lower than their healthy Canadian neighbors, something that Ross and Cheang (1997) attribute to a genetically superior immune system. And there was virtually no deprivation or interruption of Hutterite unions resulting from imbalanced sex ratios, wage-migration and divorce. When Eaton and Mayer (1953) surveyed the Hutterites, they found that during the 1940s there were 106 men for every 100 women in the 20 to 49 year-old age range; and congruently only 33% of Hutterite women in the 20 to 24 year-old range were not in union, only 7% of those Hutterite women in the 25 to 30 year-old age group were not in union (see Table 5.6, following page). Further, Eaton and Mayer (1953) say that,

> Hutterite couples are never separated after marriage. In the history of the group since 1875 there has been only one divorce and only 4 desertions. We know of one other case where husband and wife separated temporarily to live in different colonies. [p 223]

Thus, while reproductive aged Jean Rabel women are faced with a 10% deficit of men, Hutterite women are outnumbered by men. And, as might be expected, there were an average of 13% more reproductive aged Hutterite women in union than there are in contemporary Jean Rabel. [8,9]

Despite all of the potential limiting factors, including the absence of many Jean Rabel men and the physiological factors mitigating against high fertility, 32% of contemporary Jean Rabel women who have completed their child-bearing careers equal or exceed the median 10 children that were born to Hutterite women in the years 1880 to

1950 and, currently, Jean Rabel fertility levels are 13% higher than contemporary Hutterite fertility levels (Eaton and Mayer 1953, Larsen and Vaupel 1993; Nonaka et al 1994). [10,11]

Table 5-7: Hutterites vs Jean Rabeliens: Percent of Women in Union per Five-Year Age Group and Sex Ratios (includes widows)

	Jean Rabel				Hutterites			
Five year age categories	Women in union	Age specific fertility[a]	Female Pop (n)	Sex Ratio mal/fem	Women in union	Age specific fertility	Female Pop[d]	Sex Ratio[e] mal/fem
15 to 19	12%	.02	387	0.96	6%	.06	198	.91
20 to 24	48%	1.01	378	0.91	67%	1.16	176	.98
25 to 29	76%	1.83	285	0.89	93%	1.92	129	.98
30 to 34	85%	1.65	216	0.85	99%	1.95	98	1.00
35 to 39	90%	1.56	214	0.92	99%	1.73	85	.89
40 to 44	89%	.24	170	0.93	97%	1.04	68	1.4
45 to 49	87%	.80	144	0.93	100%	.21	42	1.13
50 +	81%	--	532	1.10	--	--	--	1.08
Total	--	7.11	2,326	0.96	--	8.07	796	1.00

Hutterite data from Eaton and Mayer 1953

a = mean children born for all five years, b = 1940 c = 1946 thru 1950 d = 1940

e = 1950 (different year for union because of Fertility decline among Hutterites; 1950 is only year for sex ratios)

Pronatal Attitudes

High fertility in Jean Rabel is reinforced by attitudes and customs. Jean Rabeliens are radically pronatal. Not to have children is tragic. Childless people, especially women, are pitied, even criticized as *millet* (mules), and sometimes suspected of being *lougawou* (witches) or having sold their unborn children to demons (*li te manje yo*).[12,13] With parenthood comes adulthood and respect. As one man once remarked to the author, "it is children that bring you respect" (se *ti moun tout moun k-ap fe moun respekte ou*) Another man explained, "a woman needs children or her husband will not respect her" (*yon fi bezwenn ti moun paskè san ti moun gason ki rete ave-li l-ap manke respè*). People who have not yet borne children are considered children themselves, no matter what their

age. Not to have children at all is a far greater shame than having children outside of a union or with someone who is considered disreputable.

Not only do Jean Rabeliens want children, but they want everyone else to have children as well. The first question a rural Jean Rabelien asks a stranger is, "how many children do you have?" (*kombyen pitit ou genyen*?). Responses to childlessness almost invariably go as follows; "why don't you have children?" (*pou ki sa ou pa gen pitit*?), "you are supposed to make children" (*ou sipoze fe pitit*), "you are supposed to make lots of children" (*ou sipoze fe anpil pitit*), "you are supposed to make children when you are young " (*ou sipoze fe pitit jen*); "children are a good thing" (*ti moun se yon bon bagay*); "children can help you" (*ti moun ka ede ou*).

Most women are eager to bear children. Childless women in their early twenties who are not in school will lament their barrenness, "I need to have a child" (*m bezwenn fe yon timoun*), and their age "I am beginning to get too ripe" (*m preske mi*). A woman who cannot get pregnant visits leaf doctors and clinics. She also might make costly pilgrimages to distant sacred sites to ask for help from the Virgin Mary or a Catholic Saint.[14] Furthermore, in a commonly occurring phenomenon known as *perdisyon*, discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, the woman may blame *kolegs* (co-wives) and other jealous rivals for magically tying her fetus up, in vitro, arresting the pregnancy (see 123). To overcome the affliction she goes to the spiritual healer (*bokor*) to ask for help, she visits the local mid-wife (*matwon*) who tapes her stomach to hold the imaginary fetus in place, and she goes to massage specialists who arrange (*ranje*) the imaginary fetus in a position to grow.

Contraceptives and Abortion

From an ethnographic perspective, it was found that there is a general suspicion among women in Jean Rabel that contraceptives may cause illness. Even women professing to want to use contraceptives insist they don't because of the risk of illness. As one woman told the author, "it is contraceptives themselves that kill people" (*se plannin menm kap touye moun*). Jean Rabeliens who believe HIV/AIDS exists generally attribute the disease to sorcery while others are convinced it is a fiction contrived by white foreign governments wanting to trick Haitians into using condoms thereby averting pregnancies and limiting the number of black people on the planet. Due to the association of condoms with disease, they are thought of as something dirty and demeaning. Contraceptives in general are also commonly associated with loose women, *bouzen,* and infidelity. A Jean Rabel man explained that contraceptives are useful only, "when a women has a husband, he's not there ... She takes a pill so she won't get pregnant" *(Tankou lè yon fi gen yon mari ki pa la. Li vle al fe bouzen. L-ap pran yon gren pou li pa fe pitit).*[15]

Despite the overwhelming predominance of pronatal attitudes there are still some young Jean Rabel women who are not eager to begin their reproductive careers. In May 1997, a 15 year-old girl in the village of Jean Rabel tried to abort an unwanted pregnancy by popping 14 anti-malaria pills (chloroquin) into her mouth and washing them down with *kleren* (raw rum). An hour later, while she was waiting to fill a water bucket for the household, she fell dead.

There are other girls who steadfastly disavow that they are pregnant right up until the time their bulging stomachs make denial impossible. In another incident that took

place in the summer of 1997, the author rushed a 16 year-old rural girl to the hospital due to a seizure. Unbeknownst to everyone, including her siblings and parents, she was 8 months pregnant, a condition she had concealed by tying torn strips of cloth around her stomach. The French doctor who treated the young woman reported the stomach tying almost killed her. She spent the entire following month being cared for in the hospital until giving birth to a healthy baby boy.

But there are tremendous social pressures that come to bear on young women reluctant to begin childbearing. A 25 year-old woman explained, "my mother said that if she caught us taking birth control pills she would club us to death" *(mama-m di si li jwenn nou pran gren li tap tiye nou anba baton)*. Social pressures against abortion are even stronger. Mothers, grandmothers, sisters and female friends are quick to condemn abortion and older female confidants counsel young girls against abortion by explaining that it will rot their vaginal canals, making them disgusting to men, and that they will burn in hell for having committed the "greatest of all sins" (*pi gwo pech*). Men, too, have something to say about abortion. In an Opinion Survey sub-sample, 40 men were asked what they would do if their wife had an abortion. Over sixty two percent (62.5%) responded that they would abandon their wife and another 25% said they would have her arrested. Only one man said he would do nothing. Of responses falling into the category of "other" one man said, "I would sit down and talk to that woman to see what

Table 5-8: Actions Men Said They Would Take if Wife Aborts a Child

		Percent (n = 40)
If wife or girlfriend had abortion, what would you do?	Leave her	62.5
	Have her arrested	25.0
	Nothing	2.5
	Other	10.0
	Total	100.0

the hell was wrong with her." The three remaining men responding "Other" said they would kill their wives with sorcery. [16]

By law, women are supposed to be imprisoned for aborting pregnancies. In reality imprisonment is rare, but woman are, nevertheless, ridiculed and publicly disgraced. In an instance witnessed by a US missionary working in the Jean Rabel area, a 15 year-old girl who had allegedly aborted a fetus was tied to a post in a busy market while a civil servant spent his day standing nearby announcing her crime over a hand-held loud speaker. In the spring of 1998, in the thatch-roofed, seaside hamlet of Makab, where this research began, fishermen found a fetus floating in the sea. The news spread quickly and literally hundreds of people descended from the hills into the tiny village. The police were summoned. Houses were searched, and eventually the still bleeding 16 year-old mother was discovered hiding under a sheet in the corner of a friend's house. As the police led the humiliated girl away, the crowd chanted her name, "Viki! Viki! Viki!"[17,18,19]

Pregnancy

The typical Jean Rabel woman does not understand the female menstrual cycle in a way that would permit her to avoid pregnancy. Many young women, for whatever reason, mistakenly believe that pregnancy occurs most readily during or just after menstruation and many young women believe they cannot become pregnant as the result of a single sexual encounter. But older women in rural Jean Rabel understand very well that missed menstrual cycles may mean pregnancy and they carefully track the dates of their and their daughter's menstrual cycle so they can act swiftly to defend against sorcery and begin to care for and nourish the gestating fetus.

When a woman knows that she is pregnant she takes up the habit of spitting, something that informs others of her special condition. She is relieved of heavy work and attended to carefully by family and friends. If she is a young woman, she is encouraged not to travel, mount pack animals or ride on the back of motorcycles. She is encouraged to eat nutritious and fatty foods and by custom she should never be refused a food of her choosing. The stingy individual who refuses food to a pregnant woman is menaced by the belief that a boil will erupt on his/her eye.[20]

A new mother remains confined in the house for five days. Instead of the usual two meals a day and rare portion of meat, she is fed three meals a day, all including the luxury of meat, especially goat and chicken.[21] She is given hot ginger tea twice a day, once in the morning and once at night, and each morning of her confinement she is bathed with warm water by an attendant--often the midwife. Each afternoon of her confinement she is given a sweat bath for which she sits on a steaming pot of water with a sheet draped over her head. After five days the mother may leave the house, but for the first two months she must never go out at night for fear the cold (*fredi*) will make her sick, she must bathe only with warm water, and she must not speak loudly or do heavy work.[22,23]

Conclusion

Fertility in Jean Rabel is extraordinarily high, perhaps the highest biologically possible. Congruently, Jean Rabeliens are extraordinarily pronatal. In Jean Rabel fertility is not just a personal affair. Everyone lobbies for fertility. A person who does not have children is pressured and criticized. Men who have not fathered children are accused of being homosexual and barren women are condemned as mules or witches.

The barren woman or childless man laments his condition; the young woman who uses contraceptives is threatened and pressured and the woman who aborts her child is tormented by public ridicule. On the other hand, a pregnant woman and postpartum mother is fed, attended to and pampered.

Besides the blatantly pronatal attitudes displayed by men and women in Jean Rabel, high fertility is further reinforced through local customs and belief systems that remove social, legal, and moral barriers to pregnancy. These will be the topic of the following chapter.

Notes

[1] The highest birth rate in UN year 2000 data is Niger at 7.25 births per mother (see the UN web site).

[2] Jean Rabel's TFR of 7.1 is 48% higher than Haiti's overall country TFR of 4.8 children and 20% higher than the rural Haitian TFR of 5.9 children per woman (EMMUS 1994/95). The Hutterites had a sustained overall TFR of 8.0 to 8.5—the commonly cited Hutterite fertility rates are median completed fertility and the TFR of married women, one of which is discussed in the text.

[3] Infecundity is deduced from the number of women who have completed their childbearing years without bearing children (age > 45) see Vaessen 1984.

[4] There was no clinic data available in Jean Rabel. The record that have been kept at the hospital are sporadic and unreliable. More often than not nurses failed to record the results for STD tests. The observation is generalized from data collected at the Bombardopolis clinic, which is in the Far-West but outside the commune of Jean Rabel, and there little reason to believe there is a difference between the communes. Other epidemiological data is similar.

[5] The determination of malnutrition was based on a brachial measure of less than 18.5 centimeters. The size of the sample was 770 woman. The actual calculation was performed by German nutritionist Claudia Trentmann employed by GOPA consultants.

[6] There might be a way around suppression of ovulation through breastfeeding. The suppression of ovulation is apparently a reflex response to suckling. According to a research review by Larsen and Vaupel, a woman must nurse her infant at least four times a day for a minimum of 20 minutes each time. By conscience design or simply custom, Hutterite woman only allow their babies to nurse for ten minutes or less. Further, supplementary foods are introduced early and by six to seven weeks the infant is fed before it is given the breast. Interestingly, while it is not known how long Jean Rabel women allow infants to nurse, they too introduce foods extremely early, often within days of birth, a practice that healthcare workers have ardently and with little success tried to overcome.

[7] For example, recent research in rural Dominican Republic shows that the average age women in the remote rural Dominican Republic first enter into unions and give birth is significantly lower than the averages cited for Jean Rabel (Matthew McPherson, personal communication).

[8] Eaton and Mayer only found evidence of 10 illegitimate births in the Hutterite population between 1875 and 1950, indicating that few births occur before marriage. The age-specific birth rate in 1950 for women 20 - 24 was 1.4 births.

[9] Hutterite women during the period 1880 to 1950—when their fertility was highest--entered union at 22 years, only .3 years later than among Jean Rabel women, and bore their first child a mean 13 months later, at 23.1 years of age—about 10 months later than Jean Rabel women.

[10] It is not possible to precisely estimate the rate of child mortality but as Table 5-11 and Figure 5-6 below indicate, about 10% to 20% of offspring die before reaching adulthood.

Table 5-9: Number of Children Deceased by the Total Number of Children Born

		Number of children deceased					
		0	1 to 2	3 to 4	5 to 6	7+	Total
Number of children born	1 to 2	87.8%	12.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	3 to 4	72.3%	27.4%	.3%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5 to 6	52.4%	39.9%	7.3%	.3%	.0%	100.0%
	7+	20.6%	44.6%	21.5%	7.8%	5.4%	100.0%
	N =	835	551	167	53	36	1642

Number of Children Deceased by Five-Year Age Groups of Mothers

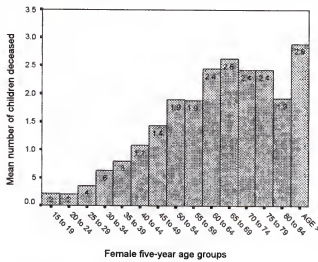


Figure 5-4

[11] Jean Rabel women between the ages of 15 and 45 years-old have an overall average birth interval of 50.5 months—one child every 4.2 years. But in a sample of 89 women who have already begun childbearing the average inter-birth interval was 32 months—one child every 2.7 years

The latter data on interval birth intervals was obtained from Nan Sentren clinic run by missionary Carol Anne Truelove. The clinic has records on female birth histories dating back to 1984 when the clinic was first opened. The clinic serves a population of approximately 60,000, half within the Commune of Jean Rabel and half outside of the Commune boundaries (the population estimate is based on a census by clinic staff carried out in 1991; the extrapolation was base on 3% estimated population growth). Records were chosen based on the presence of information for the first and last child born to the mother—some women had begun their childbearing career elsewhere or had left the region. There were 32 women who

had used contraceptives, with an average interbirth interval of 37.1 months and a standard error of the mean of 2.3 months (95% CI = 32.5 – 41.6 months). There were 57 records for women who had never used contraceptives, with an average interbirth interval of 29.6 months and a standard error of the mean of 1.3 months (95% CI = 28.3 – 30.9 months).

[12] Several women in the survey illustrated this point, one woman for example saying, "If you don't have children, there is a name they call you, they curse you 'mule." (*Si ou pa gen ti moun, gen yon non yo konn di ou, y-ap joure ou millet si ou pat fe ti moun*).

[13] 'Witch' is here meant in the anthropological sense of being the incarnation of anti-society and it is a very widespread if not pan-cultural ideological phenomenon. Mischief caused by witches is usually peculiar to the society. A 'witch' is conceptualized as a threat where the society is most vulnerable. Thus, pastoralists often believe witches suck the milk and blood from their animals at night. Agriculturists often conceptualize witches as destroyers of crops. Haitians fear witches as the eaters of children—usually manifest in the form of disease but also as the causal agent in accidents. The supposed behavior of the Haitian witch, the *lougawou*, is testimony to a strong pronatalist tendency in Haiti and a dependency on children.

[14] There are a series of sacred sites throughout Haiti. Some of these sites are associated with voodoo deities and some with the sighting of the Virgin Mary or the presence of a Saint. There is a sacred rock in Mare Rouge, just on the outskirts of the commune of Jean Rabel. The rock is called Marie Noel and people leave written prayers in the crevices of the rock. The next nearest sacred site to Jean Rabel is Anse-a-Fleur, where people visit once a year for an annual voodoo festival. If my understanding is accurate--and in this instance there is a good chance it is not--several years ago a doll was found and elevated to the status of a manifestation of Saint Anne. The doll is kept in a shrine in the yard of a *mambo* (female spirtual practitioner).

[15] Even many well educated rural Haitians believe that AIDS is caused by sorcery--as when one person goes to a *bokor* ("witch doctor") to kill another person and that venereal diseases are caused by jealous spouses who *ranje* (magically fix) their partners so that other lovers will fall ill.

[16] *M ta chita pale a fi sa pou we sa li genyen*

[17] "Viki" had until only days before the incident been away to school in the village.

[18] Abortion is, according to the only civil judge in Jean Rabel during 1999, the worst crime known (*Sa se pi gwo krim ki ka genyen*). It is considered voluntary homicide. A woman can be given life in prison as can anyone who participated in the abortion. In practice it is not always if ever like this. Police and judges do tend to arrest everyone who might be involved in an abortion and there is usually a grand interrogation. But fines rather than prison tend to be the rule. Although humiliated, neither of the girls whose abortion stories were told in the body of the text spent time in jail. In the village and in the Department seat Port-de-Paix, abortion services are reportedly available for H$50.00 and by western trained medical doctors. During a chance encounter in the city, a judge of a neighboring Jean Rabel commune once told the author that he was in town to help a fifteen year old girl he had impregnated locate a doctor to abort the fetus. Further, in rural areas there are leaf doctors known to specialize in abortificants. Nevertheless, there is a definitive ideological horror associated with abortion and a very public disapproval of it, particularly among the truly rural people of the region.

A couple ethnographic examples to note: In the early summer of 1997 incident where a 14 year old girl in the village died after trying to abort a fetus with a dose of 14 chloroquins washed down with rum, the police commissioner ordered the arrest of the 22 year old man who had prescribed the medicines but he was subsequently released. Between 1996 and 1998, at least two girls in nearby Mole St Nicolas were caught aborting viable fetuses—one of which lived to be adopted by a UN medic in the area with a project to repair the local high school. Neither of the girls served time in prison.

[19] Mention should be made somewhere of *la djablesse*, the Haitian bougie woman. All over Haiti *la djablesse* are believed to live alone in caves. They are giant female, human-like creatures, with breasts sagging to the ankles, extremely long hair, moss and weeds hanging off their bodies. *la djablesse*s are associated with fertility. A *la djablesse* is thought to hunt men and if she gets hold of one she leads the man back to her cave were she forces the man to impregnate her. The sexual appetite of a *la djablesse* is thought to be insatiable. Simpson (1942) explained that in Plaisance in the north of Haiti, *la djablesse*s were thought to be young girls who died before having sex and were caught in the netherworld of spirts. Simpson reports that because of the fear that a deceased virgin could become a *la djablesse* cadavers of young girls were deflowered with a stick before burial. Their were no reports of this practice in Jean Rabel and local farmers explained *la djablesse* as a human-like animal rather than a spirit.

[20] See Harris and Ross (1987; 5, 164 -167) for a cross-cultural discussion of nutritional deprivation of pregnant mothers.

[21] Plantains are also an important element in the postpartum mother's diet. She may eat red and black beans but white beans and rice are considered dangerous as they are cold (*fret*) foods that can make the woman ill. A partial list of other dangerous versus not dangerous foods follow:

Healthy	**Dangerous**
Corn	Sweet potato
Tayo	White beans
Fig	
Farin	
Corn	
Goat	
Chicken	

[22] All is applicable even if the baby dies. If the child is a boy restrictions may apply for as long as three months and if the baby is a girl restrictions may be lifted as early as 2 months—boys are thought of as harder to bear and thus it takes longer to get over the birth).

[23] During confinement only those people who were present during the actual birth may enter the house.

CHAPTER 6

SEX, CUSTOMS, BEHAVIORS AND BELIEFS

Introduction

Whether a consequence of cultural evolutionary processes, conscious human agency, or as some may argue, poverty ignorance, and tradition , Jean Rabel farmers display a socio-cultural complex regarding sexuality that encourages reproduction, and a makes pregnancy not simply possible but highly likely even in the absence of union.

But first it is important to understand that in many respects sexual behavior and norms in Jean Rabel are not very different than those in developed Western countries. Incest taboos and the absence of arranged marriages are features of life that resemble those in most developed societies. Sexual relationships with full or half siblings, uncles, and aunts are taboo. Relationships with first cousins are supposed to be taboo as well, people saying such behavior is fit for *ras kabrit* (a family of goats), but as in developed countries, it nevertheless occurs. There is no institution of levirate or sororate and a sister or brother who married his or siblings surviving spouse would be criticized. The ideal man in Jean Rabel is a *neg serìe,* literally, a serious man, who does not consort with loose women or prostitutes, nor does he make false promises to women to seduce them. On the other hand, it is permitted for him to have children with several women and, as seen in a later chapter, to have more than one wife at the same time. But a serious man

unfalteringly plants gardens and tends livestock for the benefit of all of his children and wives.

The ideal of the good woman is very much the counterpart of the *neg serìè*. Before marriage or *plasaj* (consensual union) the ideal woman should not easily accept advances from men, nor should she wander excessively about the neighborhood visiting people, especially not visiting men at their homes. Instead, she is expected to stay around her own family's homestead doing chores for her parents such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, and going to the market. After marriage or *plasaj,* a woman is expected to do these same tasks for her husband. She is expected to respect her husband, and, unlike the serious man, maintain absolute sexual fidelity to him.

The opposite of the good woman is the *bouzen*, the unfaithful woman or a promiscuous woman who engages in sex purely for pleasure without bearing in mind the practical economic considerations involved in establishing relationships with men. The opposite of the serious man is a *vakabon* (no good bum, or more exactly, a dead beat father), a man who *mache grosse fi* (wanders around impregnating women) without providing financial support for his offspring. But while sexual restraint, respect for women, and monogamy are ideal behaviors, the over-riding reality in rural Jean Rabel is that men and women are encouraged to produce children regardless of the kind or presence of a marital-type union.

Girls Theater[1]

The story of sexuality in Jean Rabel is told in songs sung by girls' theater groups. When school is out for the summer, girls in rural neighborhoods form dance troops called *te-at* (theater). The girls, generally aged from 12 to about 20 years, practice daily. They

sing and dance to songs they improvise from bits of other songs spiced up with their own creative additions. The dominant theme is sex, for example:

A place, I need a place
To spin my self around
Underneath my house (dress)
I have an adult
Who is shaking me [2]

(Girl's *te-at* song # 12)

I went to buy a little wooden club
Little club, if it falls, I will make it rise again
I have a place, I have a place in my body no one knows
Where is it?
Below my mound, Below my mound[3]

(Girl's *te-at* song # 5)

The girls dress in short skirts and they sing the songs while doing erotic dances like the *buterfli* (butterfly), a dance in which the girls gyrate, opening their legs wide and rocking their abdomens out toward the audience as they descend lower and lower toward the ground. After several weeks of practice a show is held in which the girls perform for a paying audience and then host a community ball.

Virginity[4] and Seduction

Look here, it is mango season
Look here, the mangos are sweet and beautiful
Good day young lady, I say to you good day
It is a plantain that has come to make things sweet[5]

(Girl's *te-at* song # 17)

A Jean Rabel girl is fair game for seduction as soon as she begins to form breasts and pubic hair. Although the average age at which Jean Rabel women enter into a union with a man is 21.7 years, there are cases where rural men enter into a union and set up a household with girls as young as 13. And while the average age of menarche is 16, more than 40% of women have at least one living child before 21 years of age (see Figure 6.1).[6]

Even local judges have a hard time pretending there is wrongdoing associated with seducing pubescent aged girls (although there are reportedly Haitian laws that prohibit it). One local judge, after repeatedly being badgered on the issue, finally tried to be accommodating by saying, "oh yea, yea, that is a bad crime, having sex with young girls, it is called 'bi-ga-mi'"—the judge could not cite a single instance where a man was convicted of so called 'bi-ga-mi.'[7] There are occasional instances, however, where a married man impregnates an adolescent girl and with the threat of being embarrassed by an accusation of rape is forced to pay compensation. But in almost all cases it is the girl who is held responsible for her sexual actions and if she has sexual relations with a man, she is considered by everyone to have consented. Only in cases where she was heard screaming or bears obvious bruises can the girl legitimately claim rape--in which case it is not uncommon for the rapist to be legally ordered to marry the girl.[8]

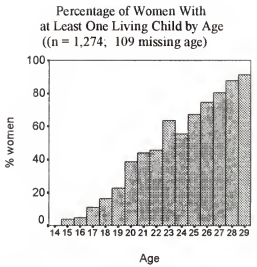


Figure 6-1

Male Sexual Demeanor

> Young men, they are not working, they do not have just one girl friend
> Young women, they do not know the men have no money
> The men, they offer engagement and the girls give their whole body to them
> Then the men ignore them, they turn their backs and go [9]
> (Girl's *te-at* song # 56)

A common expression used by women in Jean Rabel is "men are dogs" (*gason se chyen*). They are thought of as needing sex, "men can not get by without having sex" (*gason pa ka rete san fi*). Men who do not express overt interest in sex by propositioning

young women are thought of as handicapped or deficit, they are teased by people of both sexes and all ages, even children, and taunted with names like *jay-jay* (retarded) and *masisi* (homosexual)—the latter being considered an abomination that qualifies a person among the ranks of the insane (there are no publicly known homosexuals in Jean Rabel).

A man who gives a woman gifts or money and does not get sexual favors in return is regarded as *egare* (stupid). Men in their teens and early twenties are especially encouraged by elders and friends to be sexually aggressive and flirtatious. They are called *jen-jan* (playboy) and slapped on the back. Even older women will sometimes goad young men into pursuing girls with comments that sound to the Westerner like admonitions to rape: "you must bother them, don't let them get away, grab them" (*fo ou jennen yo, pa kite yo ale, fo ou kenbe yo*). Men are considered sexually eligible not based on age but on health and ability to work. Men in their fifties, sixties, and even men in their seventies are not uncommonly referred to, with regards to their sexuality, as *jenn gason* (young men).

And so unattached young women are badgered and cajoled by a relatively large pool of socially eligible and sexually active men. The most common seduction tactic is for a man to catch a woman on a footpath or while she is alone in the kitchen. He will hold the woman's arm so she cannot get away, playfully trying to pull her nearer, proclaiming his desire for her and pleading for her sexual affection while whispering promises of money. Young women learn that some men lie, they talk of love and lifetime commitment when they have no intention of fulfilling these promises. Young women also learn that some men really do give money in return for sexual affection.

The Commercialization of Female Sexuality

I need a couple dollars
Why do I need couple dollars?
To buy a ribbon, to tie around my waste, to make my hips shake
Just throw it in my alley, two dollars
Just throw it in my alley, two dollars
Just throw it in my alley, two dollars[10]

(Girl's *te-at* song # 43)

While women in Jean Rabel may sometimes flaunt their sexuality, they do not generally dispose of sexual favors gratuitously and to do so would render a Jean Rabel woman, in the eyes of her peers, the lowliest, most despicable kind of female. Women refer to their genitalia in exchange terms, *byen-pa-m* (assets/goods), and as long as a woman is not in a union with another man who is supporting her, she is excused for engaging in an affair with a man who offers pecuniary rewards: "She is a woman isn't she? Isn't it her right?" (*se pa fi li ye? se pa dwa pa l?*); "Getting by is not a sin" (*degaje se pa pech*). Men are acutely aware of the rules, and they commonly say, "in order to have a woman you must have money" (*pou gen fi, fo gen lajan*), and "women eat/devore men--meaning they take all a man's money" (*fi konn manje gason*). If parents know that a financially independent man has deflowered their naïve young daughter they will invariably try to force him to become financially responsible for her (*reskonsab*), or to pay a large indemnity. As shown below, there is an institution of fictive pregnancy called *perdisyon* around which an entire sub-economy of maternal specialists has evolved to lend credibility and verify the existence of biologically false pregnancies, something that creates the grounds for demanding support from the alleged father.

But even though women in Jean Rabel conceptualize and represent sex as a commercial activity, there are no prostitutes in the village or the region. Rather than

soliciting money for sex, women, in contrast to men, are expected to maintain an attitude of indifference. People in Jean Rabel say, "girls do not flirt with boys" (*fi pa konn koze a gason*), it is the boy's job to flirt. Most Jean Rabel women insist they can live without sex and women are thought of as *sipòtan* (able to tolerate abstinence). Women who are sexually aggressive, or who engage in sex for pleasure are gossiped about and criticized: "she is such slut" (*tann li bouzen*), or "nymphomaniac" (*piten*).

Most Jean Rabel women will not engage in sex with just any man, even if the man promises to provide her with a considerable financial reward. Suitors, no matter how temporary, must fall into a socially defined range of acceptable male candidates, meaning that a man must have an educational level and a moral reputation that complements or at least does not demean the woman's own status. And very importantly, to engage in a socially acceptable sexual encounter a woman must not be financed, *plased*, or married to another man who is meeting his financial obligations to her. After these qualifications, however, female sexuality in Jean Rabel is negotiable. And if the negotiations prove to be favorable to the woman, her success wins the respect and admiration of other women who will recount her story with an enthusiasm directly proportional to her material gains.[11]

Conjugal Union and Sex

I'm like corn chaff, I'm like corn chaff
Everyone knows I am like corn chaff (the kind that gets stuck in your teeth)
Wherever I *plase*, I don't *de-plase*
Everyone knows I am like corn chaff[12]

(Girl's *te-at* song # 29)

It is considered to be a Jean Rabel woman's God-given right to use her sexuality to acquire material support. If a man wants to claim exclusive sexual access to a woman, he must purchase that right with gifts and promises (or lies). In the event it is a young

woman still living in her parent's home, the man must first *fianse* the girl (become engaged), which requires the giving a gold chain and gold earrings to the girl. And, as discussed in a later chapter, if the man wants to maintain his right to his wife's sexual fidelity, he must plant gardens and tend livestock for her. A man who fails to provide continued assistance to his partner can be legitimately cuckolded. A woman, however, who is in a union with a man who steadfastly plants gardens and tends livestock to support the household must be unfalteringly faithful even if her partner or husband decides to enter into union with one or a series of other women. Any sign of a woman's infidelity sets neighbors, family and friends buzzing with gossip and can damage a her reputation in the community for life. With an act of infidelity a woman risks destroying her existing union and diminishes the probability of entrance into a subsequent union with a respectable, or at least a financially able, man. (The exception is if, when her spouse enters into a union with another woman, the first wife immediately severs the relationship. She then has a right to shamelessly enter into union with another man, but she has sacrificed the house built by the first husband; see Chapter 14 - 15).

Pregnancy, Paternity, Sex and Sorcery

First pregnancies, almost without exception, occur outside of a conjugal union and, while many women enter union before the child is born, many also do not. Forty percent of 20 year-old women have born at least one child (see table Figure 6-1 below) but only 12% of these women are in a conjugal union (see table 6-2 in endnotes).[13] In the absence of a conjugal union, however,

Table 6.1: Parental Partners (age > 40)

Number of Partners	Female (n=714)	Male (n=758)
1	71.3%	65.3%
2	20.0%	23.9%
3	6.7%	7.5
4	1.0%	2.0%
More than 4	.9%	1.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

no shame is attached to the fact of pregnancy in and of itself, no matter what the circumstances are. Problems do, however, arise with respect to paternity, infidelity, jealousy, and child support. Twenty nine percent (29%) of women and 35% of men over forty years of age report having borne children with more than one partner (Table 2.3). Also, as will be shown in Chapter 13 (p.233), 13% of men in one of the research communities reported having been 'clobbered -with-a-baby' (*kout pitit*), an expression meaning that they had at least one child who friends and neighbors reported was actually the child of another man.

There are a series of universally accepted beliefs that can be invoked to clarify or explain doubted paternity or controversial sexual encounters. Women and men can purchase magic spells, from *bokors* ('witch doctors')-- spells that make people fall in love, that stupefy women, that give men the power to take an unwilling girl's breath away so she can not scream, and that make a married man irresistibly attracted to another woman (*kout maji*). A vicious, recalcitrant man who stubbornly denies paternity of an infant has recourse to a blood test; he pricks his own finger and puts a drop of blood on the newborn's tongue As everyone in Jean Rabel knows, if the man is not the biological father the baby will die instantly.

Whether magic charms, spells, or 'blood tests' are really effective is unimportant. What is important is that accusations of sorcery and magic provide convenient excuses for lustful or financially inspired sexual escapades or infidelity that result in childbirths and hence cannot be hidden away or dismissed-- as often is the case in the Western version of the extra-marital affair. Belief among the population in the supernatural phenomenon described above is unanimous. As a French doctor who lived in Jean Rabel

for three years once remarked to the researcher, "these are not things that farmers in Jean Rabel 'think' occur, they 'know' they occur." [14]

Perdisyon

A belief that deserves special attention is *perdisyon*, the state of suspended gestation mentioned above, in which fetal development is thought to have begun but been arrested. The farmers believe that a woman suffering from *perdisyon* can carry a fetus for as long as five years. In Makab, 8 of 26 women interviewed claimed to have experienced at least one gestational period of longer than 9 months, citing times ranging from 18 to 57 months.

Perdisyon is diagnosed when a sexually active woman, who would otherwise expect herself to be pregnant, begins to have an erratic menstrual cycle (probably due either to an actual pregnancy ending in spontaneous abortion or some other amenorrheaic condition). In search of an explanation, she visits leaf doctors and other specialists who are usually quick to tell her what she wants to hear-- she has a baby inside of her. The explanation provided for the failure of gestation to proceed is invariably that a rival or a jealous lover of her spouse--or boyfriend--is using sorcery to prevent the fetus from growing. The phrase *mare nan vant* is used to describe the condition and it literally means "tied up in the stomach."

Perdisyon provides a convenient rationale for the swelling stomach of a woman who has not seen her emigrant husband for more than the preceding 9 months. As mentioned earlier, it also provides the woman and her parents grounds to pressure a man into beginning to *swenyen* (care for) her and the imaginary fetus. Only 2 of 26 women interviewed in Makab had any doubt regarding the veracity of *perdisyon* and even men

typically responded to the question: 'has your wife ever carried a fetus longer than nine months?,' with replies such as: "Thank God no, we haven't had that problem yet." [15,16]

Conclusion

In this Section, it has been shown that fertility rates in Jean Rabel compare favorably with some of the highest rates ever recorded. High fertility is achieved in spite of the presence of factors that theoretically should suppress fertility, including the absenteeism of men, the active promotion of birth control and free distribution of contraceptives by both government and private, non-profit agencies, and common physiological factors among Jean Rabel women such as STDs, the practice of prolonged lactation, malnutrition, and male absenteeism. Both women and men in Jean Rabel reject family planning, exalt the blessings of having numerous children, and ridicule the childless. It was also shown that there are customs and belief systems in Jean Rabel that appear as if they were uniquely designed to maintain unequivocal paternity and reduce conflict over children while at the same time removing social, legal, and moral barriers to pregnancy. These beliefs and practices reinforce behaviors leading to the extremely high fertility in Jean Rabel that was discussed in the preceding Chapter.

For the above-mentioned reasons, Jean Rabeliens can be legitimately described as radically pronatal. But the persistent question that remains to be answered is the following: Why, despite the obviously deteriorating economic and environmental conditions and the readily available alternative of using birth control, do Jean Rabeliens continue to avidly favor high fertility and display behaviors and beliefs that promote early and frequent pregnancies among young women? Is it as intervention experts generally suggest, that they are tradition bound, ignorant, unable to let go of deeply

embedded values regarding large families? Or is there another, more basic explanation? Shedding light on this question first requires a closer examination and analysis of the material struggle for every day existence that confront farming men and women living in Jean Rabel.

Notes

[1] *Te-at* is the most salient if not the only female group recreational activity. Most young girls are involved in a troop at some point during their adolescence. In neighborhoods of no more than 100 houses one can find several *te-ats* operating at the same time. It appears a spontaneous cultural institution. The troop organizers are older girls or young women. Practice, the finale, and the ensuing dance are held in schoolhouses.

[2] The full songs in Creole and translated into English are provided below. Many of *te-at* songs are sexually suggestive and the meaning is obvious to native speakers. Nevertheless, to control for what might be my own prurient tendency to translate a song sexually, I relied on local assistants to explain most songs to me and I tried to play as dumb as possible to find out if maybe there might be some other meaning I was missing. When asked to explain a song there is usually laughter and shy evasive reactions. It takes a while to get a serious response. But kidding and modesty aside, informants are unequivocal regarding the songs below. The songs are non-sensical in terms other than sex and it does not take a great imagination to understand the references.

Kote, m bezwenn yon kote	A place, I need a place
Pou-m liete ko-m	To spin my self around (get wild)
Anba lakay-um	Underneath my house (underneath my dress)
Mwen gen yon gran moun	I have an adult (my genitals are mature)
Kap sakaje-m	Who is shaking me (making me so I can hardly stand myself)

Explanation: This song has been sufficiently explained in the parenthetical remarks in the English translation above.

[3]

M ale Pò-de-Pe	I went to Port-de-Paix
M-al achte yon ti baton	I went to buy a little wooden club
Ti baton si-l tonbe m-a leve-l	Little club, if it falls I will make it rise again
Dè pye mare, dè bra-m kwaze	Two feet tied, two arms crossed
Mwen g'on kote	I have a place
Mwen g'on kote nan ko-m pèsòn pa konnen	I have a place on my body no one knows
Ki kote li yè?	Where is it?
Anba ti vant mwen	Below my mound
Anba ti vant mwen	Below my mound

Explanation: The little wooden club is an obvious phallic symbol (clubs are not something that everyone in Jean Rabel is walking around with and while old infirm people might use a cane, purchasing one is almost nonsensical). The line, "if the club falls," appears to signify the loss of an erection and this image is re-enforced by the next line that uses the term *leve* (rise) and *anko* (again)—"as in I will make it rise again"-- rather than *ranmase* (pick up)-- as in "I will pick up the club." The remaining lines are a blatant proclamation of virginity termed in euphemistic words that one might use with a child: *Ti vant* means "little stomach" and designates abdomen. To say *anba ti vant* means under my abdomen and can refers to the female genitalia.

[4] As in many societies, virginity in Jean Rabel is considered a mark of purity and morality. Women typically insist that deflowering a girl is an act for which the man can never finish repaying her in gifts and money. Pre-maternal adolescent girls will seldom if ever admit they are not virgins--no matter what circumstances reveal otherwise. A common response young women give to do you have children is, "Me! a child like me?" (*mwen! Ti moun tankou mwen?*). The emphasis regarding virginity is not, however, on preserving a young girl's innocence but rather on, a) finding a man who does not abandon the girl, and b) the man giving financial support in exchange for the girl's subsequent sexual fidelity.

Sitting in a smoky, thatch covered kitchen in rural Jean Rabel, a petit, handsome, aging woman once explained virginity and the act of deflowering a girl like this, "It is the worst crime a man can commit against a girl." Squinting in the smoke she stands up, walks across the kitchen and lifts a plastic sugar jar from the top of a wooden crate. "A young girl is like a jar of sugar," she says, "a jar that has never been opened." She tightens the sugar lid down and holds the jar up. "Now", she continues, "a man comes along and tries to open the jar to get at the sugar." She holds the container against her stomach and bears down on it with both hands, her face creasing with effort as she pretends to strain to open the jar. She pauses, "You see. At first it is difficult to open. But then..." She makes one great effort, the lid gives, and the tiny woman twists the top off. "Voila! It is open." Smiling triumphantly, she holds out the open jar of sugar. "Now, for the man to leave her?" The smile disappears. The little woman throws the lid on the floor and thumps the container down on the table, "The box of sugar is open for any bum to come by and help himself."

[5]

Vwasi lè mango,	Look here, it is mango season
Vwasi lè mango, yo dous e yo koket	Look here, the mangos are sweet and beautiful
Bon swa madamwazel mwen di ou bon swa	Good day young lady, I say to you good day
Se yon banan ki vini pou-l sikre	It is a plantain that has come to make things sweet
Se pepsi kola m bwe, se koka kola m bwe	It's Pepsi Cola I drink. It is Coca Cola I drink
Se pepsi kola m bwe, se koka kola m bwe	It's Pepsi Cola I drink. It is Coca Cola I drink

Explanation: Mangos are ubiquitous in Haiti and are the all-time rural favorite fruit. The eroticism of fruit and particularly a mango with its soft juicy flesh should not be a surprise. The 'good day young lady' is an obvious introduction to our main characters one of who is a young woman—the imagined speaker is a man--and the fact that the next line reveals the speaker as another fruit, a plantain, which is not sweet but has nevertheless come to add sugar (*sikre*)--and just happens to be the most phallic shaped fruit in Haiti--leaves little doubt for analysis (any remaining doubts are erased by snickering Haitian informants). I have to confess to not knowing who is responsible for saying the references to Pepsi and Coca Cola; The young lady or the man, but whoever it is, the allusion is obviously to high costs or value as they are the most expensive locally available beverages aside from beer--which is not thought of as a feminine drink—and they have correspondingly high prestige value. Thus if it is the young woman who is speaking, she is saying she costs a lot of money as in 'I don't drink just any cheap stuff.' If it is the man who is speaking, he is saying I don't drink anything but the best, meaning he has money (although, as indicated, if it is indeed the man speaking he would more appropriately be drinking a beer).

[6] The age at menarche is based on observations by Carol Ann Truelove, a US certified nurse midwife who has practiced in the region for over 30 years and who, for the past 17 years, has operated a local clinic specializing in female reproductive health.

[7] *Ah, ah wi ... wi, sa se yon gwo krim. Yo rele sa, 'bi-ga-mi'* The judge went on to talk about punishments of forced labor and other things that do not happen in Haiti. And again, the judge had never seen a case of this crime called, '*bi-ga-mi.*'

[8] In the rare cases were outright rape does occur and can be demonstrated, marriage engagement between victim and assailant is a possible penalty, particularly if the parties are young and particularly if the man is

of higher socio-economic status. If the man is already married, a financial indemnity is the usual outcome. If the man is not married but has little to offer financially, the girl's parents may not agree with marriage, but they take what they can get. In a recent instance in nearby Mole St Nicolas a 25 year old man was convicted of raping a 14 year old girl. His punishment: To buy the girl a gold chain, earrings and to promise marriage. The parents took the chain and earrings but citing the man's poverty, *sansave sa pa ka regle anyen pou pitit pa nou* (that good for nothing can not provide anything for our child), they insultingly sent the man a female dog in their daughter's stead.[8] If the woman is married or in a consensual union with another man, the situation is different—and rare. The rapist is considered to have threatened the continuation of the marriage as the husband may leave his wife. Severity is the rule and the assailant will be going to prison, perhaps for life, and he will have to pay the woman and her husband a sum that according to local judges may include the loss of all or most of his property.

In summary, the legal emphasis regarding seduction and rape is only on punishing the perpetrator in case where he has irrevocably damaged an ongoing conjugal union. In all other case, the emphasis is on, 1) protecting or financially redeeming a woman's right to negotiate her sexuality, i.e. the man is forced to pay for what he 'took,' 2) promoting the continuation of potential reproductive unions, i.e. forcing the man to marry, and 3) providing money to cover the cost of *chaping* a child that might result from a rape or seduction , i.e. forcing the married men who can not legally recognize outside children to compensate in advance the costs of *chaping* the child of a young woman with whom he has had sex.

9

Jen gason yo pap travay, yo pa kondi yon sel menaj	Young men, they are not working, they do not have just one girl friend
Jen gason yo pap travay, yo pa kondi yon sel menaj	Young men, they are not working, they do not have just one girl friend
Jen fi yo pa panse si yo pa gen lajan	Young women think they have money
Lè yo we yo finanse, yo lage tout ko bay yo	The men offer engagement and the girls give their whole body to them
Lè yo we yo finanse, yo lage tout ko bay yo	The men offer engagement and the girls give their whole body to them
Lè sa yo meprize, yo vire do yo ale	Then they ignore them, turn their backs and go
Lè sa yo meprize, yo vire do yo ale	Then they ignore them, turn their backs and go
Si ou we m pote yon kado se pou fe marenn kado	If you see I am carrying a gift it is for my godmother
Si ou we m pote yon kado se pou fe marenn kado	If you see I am carrying a gift it is for my godmother
Akompani a yon lòt, se pou parenn mwen li ye	Accompanied by another for my godfather
Parenn mwen w-ap vin pran, w-ap vin pran nan butterfli	Godfather come and get it, you must come and get it in the *butterfli*
Si ou pa pran nan butterfli, ou pa ka vin pran nan min	If you can not come get it in the *butterfli*, you can not have it

Explanation: This song is for the most part self-explanatory. The girls are complaining, and warning, that many young men dress smartly and act as if they have money when in fact they do not. They bluff young women, promising marriage and girls who fall for it are subsequently abandoned. There is then a refrain about godmothers, which is not unusual. Godmothers are, like mothers, very special and should not be forgotten. The next line, the mention of a gift for the godfather, is baffling. The girl says the godfather "must come and get it in the *butterfli*" which I can only interpret as a sexual allusion to taking it from the girl's crotch. I am at a loss to explain this although I can speculate there may sometimes be sexual tension between godfathers and goddaughters. I know of at least one instance where a man *plased* with his goddaughter--such relationships are frowned on.

10

Mwen bezwen dè dola	I need a couple dollars
Sa pou-m fe dè dola?	Why do I need couple dollars?
Pou achte yon ribon pou fe lamayet mache	To buy a ribbon, to tie around my waste, to make my hips shake
Lage li nan riyèl la, dè dola	Just throw it in my alley, two dollars
Lage li nan riyèl la, dè dola,	Just throw it in my alley, two dollars
Lage li nan riyèl la, dè dola	Just throw it in my alley, two dollars

Explanation: This song is special and not just for being very sexy. It humorously summarizes the attitudes with which women imbue sexuality. As with the other songs, it is a play on words, but words already very sexual. The term *lamayet* designates a sexy dance movement and some assistants explained it is combined with the word *mache* (to function, operate, work) to form the implied verb 'to hump'—make the *lamayet* function (*fe lamayet mache*) or less suggestively, to enable the girl to better shake her hips. *Lage* literally means 'to let go' and a Haitian male 'come on' is, *lage-m nan reyal la*, which means, "let me loose in your alley." But in terms of money a very common colloquialism is, *lage 5 goud nan min mwen*, (" let a dollar go in my hand"). Thus, *lage li nan reyal la* is a play on these two expressions and it means, 'just throw the money in my vaginal canal.' The Jean Rabeliens I reviewed these songs with could hear this particular song ten times in a row and would laugh every time.

[11] For a similar description of female attitudes toward sex elsewhere in rural Haiti see Ira Lowenthal (1987; 75).

12

Se pay mayi, se pay mayi	I'm like corn chaff, I'm like corn chaff
Tout moun konnen m se pay mayi	Everyone knows I am like corn chaff
Kote m plase, m pa deplase	Wherever I *plase*, I don't *de-plase*
Tout moun konnen me se pay mayi	Everyone know I am like corn straw
Lè Cedras te la,	When Cedras was president (the last military dictator)
ti moun pat reme bonè	Children did not make love young
Kounie-a se fre Preval, Ti Moun reme sou 1 an	Now Brother Preval is President and children make love at a year old
Ala me te gen yon menaj se yon fubolè li te ye	I had a boyfriend, a football player was he
Konn fe sa li tinkon balon tout medanm yo pran danse	When he kicked the ball all the girls would start dancing

Explanation: The reference to corn chaf and its clinging effects and it is a humorous allusion to bits of corn that tend to get stuck in your teeth. The phrase 'wherever I am *plased* I don't *deplase*' is a play on the word *plase* as in consensual union and *plase* and *deplase* which mean placed and displaced. The girl is saying that she is like corn that gets stuck in your teeth, she will not let go easily, meaning once she enters union with a man she will stay, i.e. is loyal. The reference to relationships at an early age is clear enough: When Cedras the mean dictator was in power children could not engage in relationships at an earlier age. Now that the nice 'brother Preval' is running the country, children can engage in relationships at the ridiculously early age of 1 year old.

[13] Table 6-2: People With Children But Not Yet In a Consummated Union (i e. no house) Age > 14

Number of children	Gender		Total
	Men	Women	
0	722	616	1338
1	50	75	125
2	40	66	106
3	17	44	61
4	8	27	35
5	9	20	29
6	5	10	15
7	6	5	11
8 and over	15	21	36
Total	872	884	1,756

[14] Accusations of magic go both ways. Both men and women can go to the bokor for a magic spell or charm. A woman can *jayjay*--tame/brainwash/stupefy--a man with food cooked in water with which she has bathed her genitals or food that has been covered with an unwashed genital rag.

[15] Credit for first officially identifying *perdisyon* goes to Gerald Murray (1976), who convincingly explains the phenomenon as the only theologically appropriate approach to treating fertility because in Haiti the actual act of conception is entirely a matter for God (*bon dieu*) and, therefore, folk healers must first diagnosis a pregnancy before they can begin to treat the childless woman. When first reading Murray's article as an undergraduate I was strongly tempted to extend his observation to explain *perdisyon* as a belief maintained and reinforced by women in union to justify pregnancy in the absence of their husbands, an especially appealing explanation as Haiti has a history of over 100 years of male wage migration. And I do not argue with the notion that this may well be one function that perpetuates the acceptance of the belief in *perdisyon*. Nor does Murray doubt this occurs (personal communication). In a personnel discussion of the issue, anthropologist Ira Lowenthal affirms that he knows at least six Haitian women, all in union with men who claim to have experienced *perdisyon* and all convoked the belief in the context of conception in their husband's absence. I too have seen *perdisyon* used this way in at least one instance. In my own research, however, the primary function of *perdisyon* appears, as explained in the text, not to be a rationale for pregnancy but for barrenness. Women typically decide they are experiencing *perdisyon* before they are really pregnant and it is recognition of the condition at this stage that makes it authentic in the eyes of the woman's family, friends, and lovers. The condition is from that point on used to tag the next child born to the woman as belonging to that particular man who she was with when *perdisyon* began.

[16] In six of the eight cases of *perdisyon* reported in Makab, it was the woman's first pregnancy, her husband had at least one other *madam* (wife), and she explained her *perdisyon* as being induced magically by one of her husband's other wives. Treatment can get costly. It is understood that Western trained medical doctors generally do not recognize or believe in the affliction, but there are *medsin* (herb doctors), *matwons* (midwives), *manyè* (massage specialists), and *mambos* and *bokors* (shaman) who specialize in helping women to overcome *perdisyon* and get the fetus growing again.

SECTION III

MODE OF PRODUCTION

AND

MEETING BASIC SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

CHAPTER 7

HOUSES, TECHNOLOGIES, TRANSPORTATION, AND MARKETS

Introduction

Despite decades of efforts and tens of millions of dollars in development funds, contemporary Jean Rabel functions largely as an autonomous regional economy with little involvement in the global market. The State provides no significant public services to the population of the region. Houses are simple constructions of thatch, sticks, and mud. The principal income generating and subsistence activities are agriculture, livestock raising, petty commerce and charcoal production. Also, approximately 5% of the population depends directly on fishing to make a living.

This does not mean, however, that Jean Rabeliens do not seek alternative sources of income outside the household. A dazzling degree of specialization exists in both the production of local material goods and provision of services. A minority of men earn relatively high incomes as skilled craftsmen. Another alternative is seasonal agricultural work and most men at some point in their lives migrate temporarily to urban areas, overseas, or to the Dominican Republic where they work as menial wage laborers. Some women also go to the city and work as maids or cooks, but local and migrant wage opportunities are fewer for women. The primary feminine opportunity is marketing, something that all rural women eventually engage in and something that has the potential to put women on economically equal footing with men.

But despite the few, albeit important, extra-household income earning opportunities, the amount of money generated by these activities is usually negligible and rural Jean Rabeliens have no choice but to remain highly dependent on autonomous household livelihood strategies. The material technologies used in these activities are no more complex than picks, hoes, machetes, rowboats, bamboo fishing traps and string nets. The availability of irrigation, and the use of chemical or processed fertilizers and intensive soil preparation techniques is currently lesson more complex than at any time since the before the buccaneer era. Farming strategies remain adapted principally to minimizing risk in the face of drought and radically unpredictable market conditions. Most of the major crops have no export value and all corn and haricot are highly drought resistant and soil tolerant varieties that yield over long periods of time.

Low income levels and the need to maintain a degree of self-sufficiency in the face of impending drought and uncertain market opportunities means that Jean Rabeliens have no choice but to live in simple houses constructed of inexpensive local materials, to employ inexpensive domestic and transport technologies, and to reserve alternative strategies for obtaining material necessities. In order to satisfy subsistence needs and provide for the most basic comforts and conveniences, such as furniture, tin gas-lamps, and labor saving devices such as graters and coffee strainers, Jean Rabeliens turn to a flourishing regional marketing system. (Unless otherwise indicated, percentages assigned to technologies defined below are based on findings from the Baseline Survey.)

Houses

Most houses in Jean Rabel are constructed from local materials. The walls are made of interlaced sticks and are plastered inside and outside with clay or lime (83%).[1]

Floors are generally dirt (87%) and roofs are thatch (82%) derived from one of several types of palm or one of several types of local grasses.[2] A local vine is used to lash the poles of the house together. On average, the houses contain two rooms (75%), one to six doors (85%), and one to four wooden-shuddered window openings (64%).

It is a man's task to build a house and there are several alternative housing styles and construction methods. A rural house can cost from less than H$100 to several thousand Haitian dollars. On the expensive extreme, a man can purchase the land and all necessary construction materials and contract labor for every task involved in building the house. Cement, if used, is the most expensive item, but only the best houses are constructed using cement. On the other extreme, a man with no property and little money is at liberty to build a house on state land and can build the house almost entirely from foraged materials.[3]

House Contents and the Yard

The average house in Jean Rabel was constructed 19 years ago, and was not purchased but built by its owner with varying degrees of paid assistance from local craftsman. The house is typically 20 feet long and 12 feet wide and as described above has two rooms.[4] The room at the front of the house is the dining room (salon) which is generally furnished with a locally hand crafted wooden dinner table and wooden chairs. Standing against one wall of the more affluent thatch roof salons is a large glass-faced cupboard full of utensils, plates, coffee cups with saucers, and juice glasses. Against another wall is an iron frame single bed used for guests. In the corner of most houses sits a large ceramic water jar. The rooms are lit with small oil lamps crafted from discarded cans of condensed milk.

The rear room of the house is used exclusively for sleeping and storage. The room is usually furnished with a double bed (70%). Banana thatch sleeping mats are spread on the floor at night for children and are rolled up and stowed in a corner during the day. The only evidence of 20th century mass-produced goods is Goodwill clothing hanging neatly from the rafters. Also, in more cosmopolitan households, torn-out magazine advertisements featuring new cars, radios, vacation spots and cigarette models adorn the mud walls.

Fifty-two percent of households are built within *lakous* (compounds) in which a yard is shared with at least one other household. Almost all houses have an outside kitchen (80%), which, like the house itself, is constructed of local wood and thatch. The hearth where the family cooking pot sits is made of three rocks—or often two rocks and a canon ball, the canon ball being there to help the food cook faster. Fifty percent of all houses have some type of latrine, 75% of which are simply holes in the ground without any type of enclosure or roof and located some 15 to 30 meters from the back door. Living fences are used and invariably contain one or more of a variety of fast growing and malicious vegetation such a dagger-like sisal, cacti, and poison oak (*katoch, kandelab, pit, pigwen* and *bawonet*).

Technologies and Transportation

On average, Jean Rabel houses contain few if any modern devices or appliances. Only 15% of households report having a radio (a definitively male item) and no household reported having a television. Less than 1% of households have access to any form of electricity (i.e. car battery, solar panel or generator). Five percent of households report bicycle ownership. Less than one percent of households have a member that owns a

motorcycle and none of the 1,519 respondents reported owning a car or pick-up truck.

Animal and foot traffic remain the primary modes of transportation: 89% of households own at least one donkey, 19% own at least one horse and 10% own at least one mule (data on transport animals is taken from the Polygyny survey; see Table, 7-1). When traveling to the distant urban centers of Gonaives and Port-au-Prince, people in Jean Rabel pay H$10 to H$20 (US$3 -$US6) to use public transportation, consisting either of small and overloaded 4-wheel drive Toyota pickup trucks or second hand US surplus school buses, brightly painted in colorful designs and bedecked with lights and ornamentation. Bleating goats and squawking chickens are invariably strapped to the roofs and bumpers. They inch their way down rocky and washed out roads with 7 adult passengers scrunched into each row, and it takes them about 10 to 12 hours to reach the capital.[5]

Table 7-1: Communication, Power Supply, and Appliances

Appliance	Households % (n = 1,519)
Radio	9.8%
Television	0%
Generator	0%
Solar Panel	0%
Car Battery	0.5%

Table 7-2: Transport Vehicles

Vehicle	Households % (n = 1,509)
Bicycle	4.7v
Motorcycle	0.8
Car	0.0
Pack Animals	**Polygyny (n = 300)**
Donkey	89%
Horse	19%
Mule	10%

The All Purpose Yard and Useful Refuse

Many of the items used in and around Jean Rabel households are procured or manufactured by household members from useful plants, trees and shrubs found in the yard, growing up around the garden, along paths, or in the *kadas* (arid State land). Limes are used as an all-purpose disinfectant and aloe as a hair oil and shampoo. *Galata* and *gayak* leaves, and seeds from the *bawonet* plant serve as soaps. Rope is woven from sisal and palm thatch. Sacks and saddlebags are fashioned out of thatch and grasses. Baskets

are made of grasses and splintered bamboo. Sleeping mats are made from dried plantain stalks. Gourdes from the *kalbas* tree provide a range of different sized storage and drinking vessels. Sticks are collected for use as cooking fuel. Coconut husks and dried orange peelings are used to start fires.

Often households do not even own a pack of matches, but must send a child when necessary to borrow a burning ember from a neighbor. Uses are also found for imported industrial refuse: Flammable plastic bottles or packaging serve as fire-starter. Mattresses are fashioned from worn out Goodwill clothing and sheets. Pigeon houses are made from discarded cans of cooking oil. A scraped bucket-lid makes a wheel for a boy's go-cart, a nail is the axle, a stick is the drive shaft and a sprinting boy is the motor.

Jean Rabeliens regularly consume at least 13 varieties of wild leaves; a wild olive, which before the recent advent of imports and food-aid was an important source of cooking oil; and at least one wild bean. During times of crisis people eat boiled green mangos, unripe fruit from the corosol tree, at least five types of undomesticated seed pods, two wild yams, and the fruit of a cactus. People in the region also opportunistically eat feral cats, iguanas, most types of birds-- including eagles, hawks and woodpeckers. They also consume land crabs, fresh water crabs and crayfish. [6]

Local Markets and Local Goods

Markets in Jean Rabel are part of a rotating system that provides inhabitants of any particular area walking-distance access to at least two major markets a week. The items sold in the markets are household necessities and are part of a thriving local economy that could, and to a large extent does, exist independently of the global market.

Table 7-3: Regional Distribution of Market Days in and Around Jean Rabel

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Jean Rabel Village				++++++			++++++
Lacoma			++++++				
Bab Panyol					++++++		
Beauchaun						++++++	
La Reserve			++++++		++++++		
Paskadebwa		++++++			++++++		
Ma Wouj	++++++		++++++		++++++		
Kot de Fer						++++++	

Market Villages

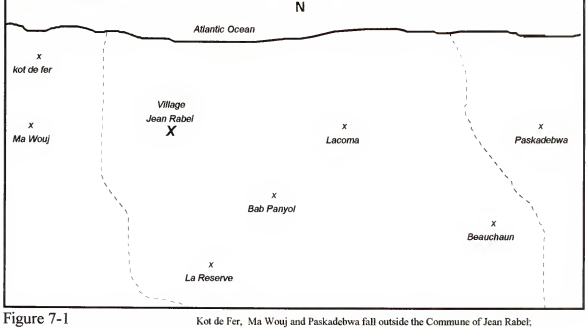


Figure 7-1

Kot de Fer, Ma Wouj and Paskadebwa fall outside the Commune of Jean Rabel;
[- - - - - - - -] = Commune boundaries
[_____] = 10 km.

In the Jean Rabel market place one finds not only piles of fruits and garden produce, but locally made beeswax candles, lamps, brooms, ropes, graters, funnels, coffee and juice strainers, mortars and pestles, saddles, saddle blankets, saddlebags, bridles, ropes, baskets, grass sacks, sleeping mats, scrap-iron bed frames, and wooden furniture. Locally produced castor oil is sold as a body lotion and hair relaxer. Bundles

of wood are sold as cooking fuel and tiny packets of split pitch pine are sold as kindling. Domestic tobacco is sold in powder and leaf forms. Other locally produced items found include clay pipes, domestic rum concocted with aromatic leaves, roots, and spices, sweets made from peanuts, sesame seeds, melted brown sugar and manioc flour, and rolls made with cane syrup and ginger.[7,8]

This is not to say that Jean Rabel markets are stocked entirely with local products. There are also imported staples and necessities that people are able to purchase with their meager earnings: Pinto beans, flour, rice, hair ties, used clothing, shoes, wash basins, pots and pans, dishes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, fragrant soaps, machetes, hoes, and kerosene. But whether imported or produced locally, there are very few items sold in the rural Jean Rabel market places that do not relate directly to subsistence. One finds, for example, no bicycles, sporting goods, toys, labor saving appliances, art, radios, videos, music cassettes, sunglasses, or imported gourmet foods. Nor does one find Hostess Twinkies or Lays Potato Chips or items considered necessities by people elsewhere such as toilet paper, tissues, and Maxipads. There are no cosmetics and even shampoo and deodorant are rarities. In summary, the Jean Rabel economy should not be visualized as some remote subsistence trade economy such as a time traveler might encounter among the Classic Taino, but it very much resembles what a time traveler might encounter in frontier North America during the 1800s and it is very much oriented toward provisioning subsistence needs.

Conclusion

The Jean Rabel economy is relatively autonomous from dependency on outside goods and services and this autonomy occurs at two levels: the regional level and the

household level. At the regional level there is a thriving system of exchange, monetarily based, and characterized by the production of local goods and a rotating market system. At the household level, people do not depend on any public service. Every material item and every service that can be purchased also has a cost free substitute. Soap can be replaced by special leaves, and a sleeping mat can be purchased in the market or made using locally gathered materials. Even houses, the single greatest lifetime expense for most Jean Rabeliens, can be constructed almost completely independent of hired labor or purchased materials. But none of this means that Jean Rabeliens live in a system completely shut off from the outside world. Imported staples can be found in all regional market places, most notably imported rice, beans, and flour, which Jean Rabeliens are purchasing and consuming in growing quantities. In summary, Jean Rabeliens have the option of a remarkable degree of autonomy and even self-sufficiency at the level of the household but they are also eager participants in an equally remarkable local economy that can be conceptualized as a regional subsistence market system.

Notes

[1] Waddle and daub simply means sticks woven together and plastered with mud, lime or cement. Most kitchens are also constructed in this way but without being plastered.

[2] Local names for types of thatch: *kokoye, latanye,* and *pay la preskil*. Local names for Grasses: *zeb gini, zeb kos, zeb able,* and *zeb kanna*

Roofs have to patched frequently but not uncommonly endure upward of four decades and in at least one instance a grass roof was reported to be 70 years old, albeit it had been added to over the years.

[3] The process of building a house usually goes as follows: Branches for house supports and the I-beam that holds the house together are cut from living trees that belong to the man, begged off a friend, or purchased from in the market. For the walls, a man gathers rocks or, if the house is going to be waddle and daub, sticks (*galata* is a common source of sticks; see below). For plaster, he makes his own lime by cooking lime rocks, or if he cannot find lime rocks, he uses clay which is abundant in the area (preferably a white clay). His wife or future wife, mother, grandmother, sisters, and other female relatives, neighbors and friends will likely carry dirt and sand as needed. The dirt and sand is mixed with lime or clay to make a weak cement. In some areas like La Presque'Ile near Mole St Nicolas, the man may harvest his own roof thatch or he can use Guinea grass found on State lands. In most areas thatch from the Royal Palm is sold for 2-3 *gdes* per bundle and a typical house can be covered with about 400 bundles. The vines that lash the

house poles together can be gathered in the bush and the poles that form the roof platform are usually from *galata*, a very straight branch derived from a kind of sisal plant that is ubiquitous on the dry State lands (*kadas*). Of course, all the materials can be purchased, but the only materials that typically can not, if necessary, be foraged are the locally hewn boards used to make window shudders and doors.

To build the house: Neighbors and family, enticed by free rum, are assembled to help erect the frame. The main poles are planted several feet in the ground. Other framing poles are nailed to these. At this point the structure is a standard rectangular house skeleton with a simple A- frame roof. (Friends and neighbors typically fade away at this time, returning to help when the roof is put on.). The doors and windows are then framed, most often by a paid *boss*. The *galata* branches are laid across the roof and lashed with vine to the house frame and then the thatch, strung on lengths of vine, three leaves to a length, is fastened to the house. Then the walls go up. If the walls are rock, the rocks are cemented together with lime or clay mixed with sand and dirt; if the walls are what is locally called *klisay*, then sticks are horizontally interlaced between vertical poles. Doors and windows are then framed and the structure is plastered inside and out with pure clay or lime. The jobs for which bosses are typically employed are framing the house and framing the doors and windows; masonry, if the house is stone; and as mentioned, hanging the doors and windows.

Three examples are given below taken from friends of the author. The first man built a small 9.5 x 15 (ft) house. A typical 2 room structure. The man hired both a carpenter and a mason. He was nevertheless able to realize a considerable savings by digging his own clay/mud/plaster, cooking his own lime and gathering vines himself. The man also gathered poles, *galata*, and thatch from trees growing on his property. He felled a tree for boards and his father, a professional sawyer, sawed the boards free of charge.

Table 7-4: House Building Costs 1 (prices in gourds)

Item/service	Items	Quantity	Cost	Total Cost
Carpenter	labor		350	
	Food		200	
	Rum	3 ka	60	610
Mason	Labor	16 ke	700	
	Food		250	
	Rum		80	1030
Work party				
(fouyc/foule)	food		100	
	Rum		70	170
Work party			100	
(kouvri)	food			
	Rum		65*	165
Poles			Foraged	
Galata			Foraged	
Thatch			Foraged	
Vines			Foraged	
Lime			Foraged	
Mud			Foraged	
Boards		21	Foraged	
Nails		6 lbs	60	
hinges		6	60	
latches		5	40	
cement		4	500	660
Total				2,635

* price dropped

The second man also built his house almost entirely by himself spending 2,115 *gdes*. He obtained boards by giving a tree to a sawyer friend of his in exchange for half the boards produced. The house was two rooms and a small 10 x 12.5 feet.

Table 7-5: House Building Costs 2 (prices in gourds)

Item/service	Items	Quantity	Cost	Total Cost
Nails	Pounds	4	80	
Boards	dozen	1	500	
Carpenter	Labor	-	600	
Mason	Labor	-	600	
	Rum & food		240	2,020
Poles			Foraged	
Galata			Foraged	
Thatch			100	
Vines			Foraged	
Lime			Foraged	
Mud (*tif*)			Foraged	
Boards		21	Foraged	
Nails		4 lbs	40	
hinges		4	40	
latches		2	15	95
Total				2,115

The house listed below is the other extreme of the rural houses. It is not the grand cement houses as seen in small villages but it is the upper scale of the rural houses and almost all the material and many of the services were purchased. It was built by a woman whose husband was away working in Port-de-Paix but who sent her money to construct the house. It is 10 x 22 feet:

Table 7-6: House Building Costs 3 (prices in gourds)

Item/service	Items	Quantity	Cost	Total Cost
Wood poles		Old house	750	
Tin roofing	Sheets	14	1,400	
Nails	Pounds	12	240	
Hinges etc			150	
Cement	Sacks	16	1,840	
Boards	dozen	2	1,250	5,630
Carpenter	Labor	-	1,700	
Mason	Labor	-	1,650	
	Rum & food		160	3,510
Work party (digging sand, dirt and rocks)	Rum & food		300	300
Total				**9,140**

[4] All data, where not otherwise specified, is taken from the baseline survey of 1,586 households; 1,521 actual respondents.

[5] During the Baseline Survey 35% of household respondents told interviewers they own at least one donkey, 8% report owning a horse and 7% percent of houscholds own a mule. But this later data was skewed by the drought which was occurring and so I have used data from the Polygyny Survey carried out two years later and in which questions regarding pack animals were included. Intuitively, I believe the Polygyny Survey results reflect general conditions in Jean Rabel but it focused on only two communities, one in the mountains and one on the plain, and therefore must be interpreted with this in mind.

Table 7-7: Pack Animals Baseline Survey

Pack Animals	Baseline (n =1,509)
Donkey	35%
Horse	8%
Mule	7%

[6] The significance of wild plants in the region was partially captured by CARE's 1994 baseline study in which 58% of households in CARE's 1,400 household Northwest sample reported eating them. It should be emphasized that many plants, and particularly fruit trees, that are considered domesticates, are not deliberately planted by Jean Rabeliens but rather selectively permitted to grow. The seeds propagate easily near houscholds because it is there that people most often throw the seeds. If the people in the household like the tree where it is, they do not pull it up. The types of edible wild plants together with some that are more often thought of as domestic are listed below, some are given in Kreol only:

Wild yams: Dala (manje siklon, grate li kom manioc ame), chat, galata

Wild beans, greens and stalks: piyant (used as a kind of coffee), karaibe, doliv, laman, epina wouj , lyann panye, kou pye, lalo, chou mantad, chou kore, kresan, konkonm, zeb egwi, bondye bay

Wild cabbage

Fruits that grow on vines: Militon, Grenadia

Tree seed pods that are eaten from trees during crisis: bwa fè (grenn), bwa dom (grenn nan kos), bwa blan (grenn nan kos—tankou pistach), tamarin (kouvre grenn nan kos), and brizie (grenn)

Fruit trees: Unripened corosol and and green mangos are also eaten during times of crisis, guayav chou palmis, zamond, kenep, papay, korosol zombi, kachima, kayimit (2) pye bwa, manje fri seriz/cherries, siwal

Wild animals: Liza (iguana), chat (feral cat), pentad (guinea fowl), toutril (turtle dove), and any other bird they can catch except those listed below:

Birds not eaten:
kwak blanch (cow egret)
karanklou (buzzard)
serpante
kone –gen gwo, gen pitit (unknown)

[7] Tobacco was grown abundantly in the region until the last decade when a disease reportedly made planting tobacco unprofitable. One still finds small plots of tobacco but it is not the industry it reportedly used to be. Much tobacco in the region, and in much of Haiti, comes from the Kass market place on the Central Plateau. The Kass market is only 3 kilometers from the border with the Dominican Republic and it is possible that low grade tobacco is purchased from the Dominicans and sold in Kass and it also possible that some tobacco grown in Kass in sold on the Dominican side of

the border. But most people report very little cross border trade in tobacco. The people in the region of Kass explain that Dominican Tobacco is not the same kind as Haitians prefer and vice versa. Further, there is a tremendous amount of tobacco grown nearby on the some 15,000 hectares of mud flat that used to be the upper reaches of lake Peligre–formed by the Peligre hydroelectric dam on the Artibonite river.

[8] Up until 1986, rum was distilled locally. Today, raw rum is imported from Leogone. There is little trade with Cape Haitian, the alternative source (another large rum producing area).

CHAPTER 8

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

Introduction

Estimates of annual income in Jean Rabel range from US$100.00 (UNOPS, 1997) to US$350.00 per household (CARE, 1996; see also CARE 1997). With an average of just under six people per household, even CARE's more liberal estimate translates to an annual per capita income of US$60, giving Jean Rabel an income level 1/6th of that of Haitians overall (US$398) and only slightly higher than the two lowest per capita GDPs in the world—the Democratic Republic of the Congo at US$52 and Sudan at US$59 (Stepick 1982a; CARE 1996; United Nations 2000).

But the accuracy of these income estimates is questionable. The United Nations estimate of US$100 per year translates to per capita US$17 and is simply unrealistically low. Nor is it clear how the UN investigators came up with these estimates. They cite no source for the data, and they discuss no systematic study of household income in the region. CARE, on the other hand, devoted a great deal of resources to compute the cited household estimate of US$350 per annum. The calculation came from a study of Northwest Haiti, and involved a sophisticated, 1,400 household cluster sample in which 26 communities were visited by teams of university educated Haitian interviewers. Focus groups were held in each community and a large number of local households were subsequently visited to interview the breadwinners and obtain precise details regarding

household expenses and income. Nevertheless, the final averages appear to have been vitiated by an inclination for respondents to conceal their wealth. In the fishing hamlet where the present research began, for example, CARE interviewers reported that less than 20% of households owned any livestock. But when the researcher arrived a year later there were in fact only two of a total of 43 houses that did not own at least one goat or sheep. One member of the community, who villagers report was included in the survey, had upwards of 100 goats, a detail that was not reflected in the CARE report.[1] Thus, if these findings can be generalized to other communities studied by CARE, then the image of Jean Rabel households spending a daily average of US$0.96 is probably an underestimate. The question then is: How much of an underestimate?

In this chapter I address the issue of household income levels. I also try to do something else: While statistical presentation of my research has thus far focused largely on citing averages, the emphasis on the quintessential, statistically average household might do more to obscure socio-structural inter-relationships and their underlying causes than it does to reveal them. The thousands of households that exist in Jean Rabel are, at any given moment, each engaged in a particular formulation of locally available subsistence and income generating strategies that are achieved with differential levels of success. It is in these differences in production of wealth, not just between households but also across gender and age groups, that social life in Jean Rabel ultimately begins to make analytic sense. Thus, in this chapter, I present average household income earning opportunities, but I also try to peel back the veneer of averages and typicality by describing the range of possibilities and stressing inequalities between men and women,

and the young and the mature. These are inequalities that, as will be seen in a later chapter, determine particular familial features of social life in Jean Rabel.

Sources of Income

When asked to report the three most significant sources of household income, over 90% of Jean Rabel respondents reported agriculture, 50% mentioned livestock, 45% mentioned commerce, 20% mentioned charcoal production, 15% mentioned manual labor, and 12% mentioned 'professional' which here includes both skilled labor and teaching. Below I discuss the principal non-farming income opportunities. Farming strategies and income opportunities are explored in the following chapter.

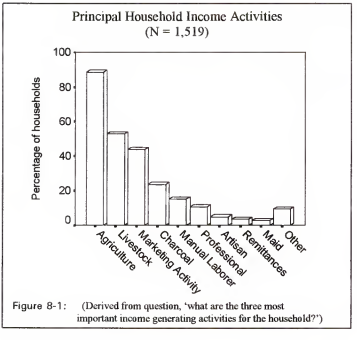


Figure 8-1: (Derived from question, 'what are the three most important income generating activities for the household?')

Table 8-1: Household Income Generating Activities

Income Activity	Count (n=1,519)	Percent
Agriculture	1,320	87%
Livestock	784	52%
Marketing	652	43%
Charcoal	348	23%
Manual labor	211	14%
School teacher	159	10%
Artisan	70	5%
Remittances	48	3%
Maid	35	2%
Other	146	10%

Specialization and the Flourishing Subsistence Economy

As seen in the preceding chapter, rural Jean Rabeliens are highly independent with regard to providing for their daily subsistence. Farmers have recourse to hundreds

of natural and homemade substitutes for items like soaps, shampoos, hair laxatives, water containers, lamps, ropes, beds, fasteners, shoes. Virtually anything regarded as a necessity has its homemade and cost free substitute. As shown with regard to the market place, there also exists a range of specialization that takes on almost extreme dimensions. For example, specialists exist for each of the following activities: making tin lamps from discarded condensed-milk containers; crafting graters and funnels from tin vegetable-oil containers; making candles from local beeswax or tree resins with wicks woven from locally grown cotton; fashioning brooms from a long stick with palm thatch lashed to the end; fashioning coffee makers from a sock of cloth and a loop of wire; producing juice strainers from screen scraps; making mortars and pestles of all sizes out of local woods, making switches to whip animals—and children--from the skin of bull testicles; and many others.[2]

These items are all made by part-time farmer-specialists. Lumber for houses and furniture is hewn by the local specialists who fell trees with axes and saw them into boards using hand saws. Furniture is made with hand tools. Chairs are made of sticks and palm thatch, sisal, or vine. Nails, hinges, latches, iron bed frames and the bits on horse bridles are produced locally by smiths working with nothing more than a hammer, burin and pliers.[3] There are also specialists who make nets, weirs, boats, caulk the boats, go into the hills find *monben* tree seed pods for nets, and poles for oars. There are specialists who make bread, sweet rolls, and coffee. Specialists exist who sew shoes, and who go into the bush to find vines and *galata* poles for roofs. There are specialists who climb coconut and palm trees, who gather rocks, and who make lime and charcoal. There are specialists for fixing doors and roofs and there are children who specialize in fixing

bicycle tires. Digging holes in gardens is another specialist activity, as is the castration of livestock. There are even specialists who castrate particular kinds livestock. Other specialists hunt cats or mongoose using trained dogs. There are specialist tomb builders, grave diggers, casket makers, and specialists who wash and prepare bodies for burial. There are healthcare specialists, herb specialists called leaf doctors who know hundreds remedies made from local plants and trees to treat everything from colds to AIDS (not all of them are effective). There are masseuses, mid-wives, spiritual healers, magic practitioners, and card readers. There are prayer-saying specialists even those who specialize in saying particular prayers said on particular occasions.

Most specialists, men and women, work for the smallest pittance. For example, it costs 2 *gdes* (US 12 cents) for the sewing up of a pair of sandals, one *gde* (US 6 cents) for a sweet roll, 1 *gde* for a cup of coffee, 7.5 *gdes* (US 45 cents) for a session of sorcery, 6 *gdes* for a 20 foot rope, 5 *gdes* for a lamp, and 25 *gdes* (US$1.50) for a chair. Basket and hat makers earn no more than 10 to 15 *gdes* per day (US$0.60 to US$0.89). Successful shaman are often the wealthiest individuals in an area, but most herb doctors and mid-wives earn respect but little money. A midwife for example makes 50 *gdes* (US$3.00) per birth and is lucky to get 1 birth a month. A *manyè* (type of masseuse) makes two or three *gdes* a consultation (12 to 18 US cents) and is lucky to have one consultation per day—and it will probably require a walk of several miles. One compensation for the low fees is that service specialists generally must be fed and men are given rum while they work. But the actual labor cost are usually very low and all specialists invariably also have their own home, livestock and gardens, the economic foundation of Jean Rabel.

Male Employment Opportunities

At the top of the Jean Rabel income ladder are tree sawyers, masons, and carpenters. The common opinion in the rural areas is that these particular *bosses* (craftsmen) earn 100 *gdes* per day (US$5.95) and that their workers earn 50 *gdes* per day (US$2.97).[1] But this assumes ideal conditions. Tree sawing, for example, is one of the most lucrative if arduous tasks in rural Jean Rabel. A tree sawyer can earn anywhere from 100 *gdes* – 300 *gdes* per day (US$5.95 – US$29.75). The pay is by the job and not the hour and depends on unforeseable conditions--saws get dull, sharpeners break and some trees have almost impenetrable knots in them, knots that can be discovered only after a pay scale has been agreed on and the sawing begins. Thus, wjem all things are considered, a tree sawyer prabably averages less than 100 *gdes* per day. Masons also make about 75 *gdes* (US$4.46) per day and a carpenter makes the same.

Table 8-2: Estimated Wages for Male Workers

Type of Work	Estimated Income in Haitian Dollars
Boss	$15.00
General laborer	$8.50
Charcoal maker	$7.00
Porters	$6.00 - $18.00
Ag laborer	$2.00 - $10.00
Hat and basket maker	$2.00 - $3.00
Rural school teacher	$2.00

Table 8-3: Reported Wages for Male Workers

Type of Work	Estimated Income per Working Day in *Gdes*
Sawyer	40 to 300
Mason	40 to 100
Carpenter	40 to 100
Iron Smith	35 – 250
Charcoal maker	35 – 150
General laborer	10 – 50
Ag laborer and porters	30 - 100

The principal benefit to being a *boss* is that the individual will find at least some work some of the time, occassionally much work, and the 75 *gdes* per day earned will be surplus beyond the subsistence earnings from farming livelihood strategies. Assuming work can be found 200 days a year—accounting for weather, funerals, festivals,

[1] The exchange rate used is 16.8 Haitian *gdes* = one US dollar. Five *gdes* = one Haitian dollar.

marriages, family reunions (called *gombos*), sickness, and Sundays off-- the total possible annual income for skilled labor is probably no more than 15,000 *gdes* or approximately US$893 dollars per year. At an average of 42.5 *gdes* per day (US$2.52), an unskilled laborer can make 8,500 *gdes* per year (approximately US$505.95). These are sums that significantly exceed the mean family income estimated by CARE International (US$350.00). Furthermore, *bosses* generally have the same number of livestock and gardens, if not more, than other farmers, they are often involved in charcoal production, and their wives engage in marketing.

For the majority of men however, wage opportunities are scarce. Porters who transport loads on their heads for money or who unload trucks in the village may make from 30 *gdes* (US$1.78) per day to a rare and strenuously earned 100 *gdes* per day (US$5.95).[4] Full-time charcoal makers can also earn as much as *bosses* but the work is hard and the prestige low. If they can find enough wood to cut, a charcoal specialist makes 2 sacks of charcoal per day for a daily income of about 70 *gdes* (US$4.17) but they still have to haul the charcoal to the market or to a place where it can be shipped on boat or truck, something that can take another day per two sacks reducing earnings to 35 *gdes* (US$5.95) per day. [1] When hoeing fields men are paid 10 *gdes* per *bout* (there are about 30 *bout* to an acre). An average worker typically hoes three *bout* per day but actual production may range anywhere from 1 to 5 *bout* per day, depending on environmental conditions and the abilities of the worker, resulting in maximal possible earnings of approximately 50 *gdes* (US$2.97) for a day's work. Rural schoolteachers, of which there are over 600 in Jean Rabel, make 250 to 300 *gdes* per month (US$14.88 to US$17.86)—but they often get fringe benefits, such as easy access to CARE food-aid.

To put employment into perspective, most men in Jean Rabel would consider themselves very lucky to land a full-time job for 750 *gdes* a month (US$44) as a watchman for a local development organization. Women are very happy if they can earn the equivalent or somewhat lower wages (500 – 750 *gdes*) working six days a week cooking and washing cloths by hand. Rural men and woman scramble to secure a spot on road projects at the State minimum wage of 30 *gdes* per day (US$1.78). But it is also important to understand that this 'scrambling' and interest in extra-domestic jobs rests on the expectation that employment will not impede the carrying out of farming activities. Development workers in the area are often mystified by Jean Rabeliens who, feeling overtaxed by a demanding employer, simply quit their jobs in favor of tending to their gardens.

Female Employment Opportunities

There are no female *bosses*. Women do not work in jobs that require heavy lifting, and while many women, even young girls, might pick up a hoe (*manye wou*) a woman rarely performs heavy garden work, such as swinging a pick (*voye pikwa*) and digging holes (*fouye tou*). Woman can sometimes make H$3.00 per day picking beans but usually a woman doing an agricultural job is lucky to earn anything more than a meal and a return favor owed for her efforts.

Women have a low representation in high prestige fields. None of the 21 *kaseks* or 65 *aseks* (rural political representatives) are women. Of the 53 out of 3,925 individuals over 18 years of age who were identified during the Baseline Survey as professional schoolteachers, only 10 were female (19%). There are successful female shaman, called *mambos*, and they are not uncommonly among the wealthier people in

the region. Nevertheless, female shaman are typically outnumbered 10 to 1 by male shaman (*bokors*).

In summary, there are many artisan and other local specialty opportunities available for men and women but they pay meager wages. However, two non-farming income opportunities, one primarily open to women and one primarily open to men, overshadow all others: Male wage migration and female marketing.[5]

Men and Wage Migration

In Haitian cities, the most menial income opportunities are comparably high paying in comparison to opportunities men find in Jean Rabel. A man pushing a wheelbarrow in the not too distant city of Port-de-Paix, for example, can earn an average of H$20 a day (US$5.95). In Nassau the lowliest male laborer can reportedly earn H$70.00 per day (US$20)—a fortune by Jean Rabel standards. Women also migrate to the city and overseas but the opportunities are fewer. In Nassau the principal job open to Haitian women is reportedly prostitution. A few women have access to upper scale urban neighborhoods within Haiti where they work as maids earning as much as H$250.00 per

Table 8-4: Urban Blue Collar Pay Scales, Port-de-Paix
(adjusted for rental fees)

Male Earnings (in Haitian dollars per month[1])		Female Earnings (in Haitian dollars per month)	
Drivers	800 to 2,000	Domestic	40 - 150
collector on bus/taxi	300 to 800	Seamstress	300
loader on truck	200 to 600	Prostitute	5 per customer
Mason	30 per day		
Carpenter	1,500		
Welder	1,000		
Tailor	800		
Merchant marine	600		
Rowing boat at wharf	40 per day		
Tire man	50 per day		
Taxi driver (moped)	25 per day		
Wheel barrow operator	30 per day		
Laborer	10 per day		

500-800 per voyage USA or Nassau Bahamas

month (US$75), but domestic service far more commonly pays wages of H$30.00 to H$100.00 per month (US$9 – US$30).

The upshot is that men have considerably more experience and opportunities for traveling overseas and to the capital city of Port-au-Prince. As seen in Chapter 5, 17 of the 66 men (missing = 2) interviewed for the Opinion Survey reported having worked in a city or overseas for at least 30 of the 365 days preceding the interview (Table 5-4, p.99). Similarly, in a community sample of 41 male household heads in Famadou, a typical Jean Rabel farming community, 21 of the respondents had gone to the city to work before they entered into a consensual union-and only 7 had been away since entering into a union (See Table 8-5).[67] Further, 11 of the 66 Jean Rabel men interviewed in the baseline survey reported having been overseas, whereas no women reported having ever been abroad. Also, 26 men versus 17 women reported having visited the capital in their lifetimes (see Table 8-6).[8]

Table 8-5: Male Urban Wage Migration Before Union

n = 41		Male hshld hds
Worked as urban laborer	Before union	21
	After union	7
	Never	20

Table 8-6: The Most Distant Place Farmers Have Visited

		Men	Women	Total
The most distant place the respondent has visited	USA, Bahamas, DR	11	0	11
	Port-au-Prince (capital)	26	17	43
	Secondary City	7	9	16
	Port-de-Paix	17	30	47
	Regional market center	5	11	16
	Total	66	67	133

Women and Marketing

While men travel farther and stay away from home longer than women, intense female marketing activity means that women travel more frequently than men (see Table 8-7). Marketing is, after agriculture and livestock, the most important source of

household income in Jean Rabel. Every woman who has her own household and who is not sick or crippled visits a regional market center at least once a week where she makes household subsistence purchases and sells the agricultural and animal products produced by the household. In the Opinion Survey, 72% (97 of 135) of women household heads or the wives of male household heads reported also being involved in buying and selling products other than those produced in the family homestead. Women may specialize in selling anything from staples to used clothes to brewed coffee to machetes and schoolbooks. Even butchery is a female buying and selling enterprise. The women slaughter the animals in the market, skillfully chop them into quarters with a machete, and then sell the fresh meat right there on the spot. The only marketing enterprises in which men participate are the selling of live animals (still an activity in which women are more prominent than men, see Table 11-1 p. 202), and itinerant pharmaceutical and pesticide sales. An illustration of the near absolute domination of the retail market place by women was garnered through a count of 612 non-livestock marketers that was realized in Lacoma, Jean Rabel on October 22, 1998. This count revealed that 609 of the sellers were women and only 3 were men (a pesticide salesman, and two pharmaceutical salesman; see Appendix G).

Table 8-7: People Who Travel At least Once per Month

		Gender		
		women	men	Total
Does this person travel at least once per month?	No	30	47	62
	Yes	37	17	54
	Total	67	64	116

Female market activity is so important to household livelihood that few people would dare save money by stashing it away. A person who has money will invariably "put the money to work" by giving it to a female relative or friend who will roll the

money over in the market, for as they say in Jean Rabel, *lajan sere pa fe pitit* (stashed money bears no children). Of 52 husbands interviewed on the topic during the Opinion Survey, 39 reported that their wives were actively engaged in itinerant marketing and 31 of the men reported that their wives traveled to urban centers at least once a month. The remaining 8 wives confined their marketing activities exclusively to rural areas. Many of the women specialize in the sale of one or several commodities, such as chickens, goats or straw hand bags, which they spend several weeks purchasing from neighbors, friends, or in rural markets to sell in the urban markets. Others focus on seasonal produce and staple commodities.[9]

Table 8-8: Report on the 31 of 52 wives who Travel to Urban Markets

	Count	Percent
Port-de-Paix	20	65%
Port-au-Prince	7	23%
Other cities	4	12%
Total	31	100%

Discrepancy between number of women traveling and this above Table is due to an omission of women who do over-night trading in regional markets

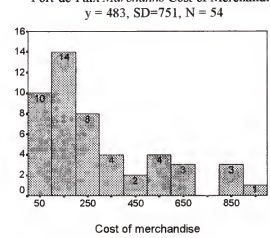


Figure 8-2: [note that 6 observations exceed the 1,000 *gdes* limit visible in the graph]

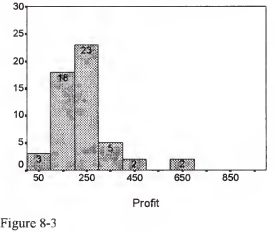


Figure 8-3

The most common ventures to urban markets are made to Port-de-Paix and 38% of husbands reported that their

wives make the trip to this city at least once a month. The voyage is invariably made on donkey or mule, since the cost of public transportation would consume too much of the profits, and the women usually go to market in groups with other market women. They set out for Port-de-Paix in the late afternoon and walk behind their loaded animals all night, fording streams and winding their way down worn trails some of which probably have not changed course since the Taino Indians used them 500 years ago. On a straight, flat stretch of road flanked by lush banana trees, the women come at last to their final obstacle, Trois Rivie (the Three Rivers). Normally a meandering, crystal clear, knee-deep lowland stream, rainfall in the mountains can quickly turn this rivulet into a muddy, life threatening torrent that woman and animal must wade across to reach the city. Once on the other side of the river, the women find themselves on the windswept dirt streets of Port-de-Paix. They sell their produce among decaying vegetable heaps in a bustling, tin-roofed, seaside market. After making their sales, many turn around and head home that very same day, without ever having slept and without having purchasing anything to sell back home, because the Port-de-Paix market has little to offer that can not be bought more cheaply in Jean Rabel from the handlers of imported food-aid or the *gran marchanns,* who ply their trade with Port-au-Prince.

The money that an active market woman can earn sometimes compares favorably to male income earnings. In a sample of 54 women interviewed while they were on route from Jean Rabel to Port-de-Paix, the average woman was found to be carrying 483 *gdes* (US$28.75) worth of merchandise to be sold for 717 *gdes* (US$42.68), yielding an average profit on their merchandise of 234 *gdes* (US$13.93)[10,11] The norm, or modal value of merchandise a woman was carrying was between 100 to 200 *gdes* (US$5.95 to

US$11.90), with a modal profit of 200 to 300 *gdes* (US$11.90 to US$17.85). There are no other incidental costs involved that reduce profit because the women carry their own food, water, and they cut grass along the way or carry fodder from home for their animals. They do not stop to buy cokes or ice cream, and their donkeys burn no gasoline and eat no store bought feeds or supplements. The women simply take their profits and return home.

The average number of voyages per woman per month is two (1.9 to be exact) and so an average market woman makes about 468 *gdes* (US$27.85) per month as a result of her excursions to Port-de-Paix. The enterprise requires a total time investment of between 4 and 6 days. These same women also trade in rural markets and sell goods out of their homes. An investigation of the 24 major commodities being sold revealed that the average profit margin for retail sales within the commune of Jean Rabel was 20% (standard error of the mean at 2.4%) with a of 15.6 day average turnover rate for the major commodities. Thus, using an estimated working capital of 430 *gdes*-- the average value of what women were carrying to Port-de-Paix --market women are probably earning another 172 *gdes* per month. Totaling what an average *marchann* makes in her Port-au-Prince ventures with profits on the home front, a woman's average monthly income from her marketing activities is about 640 *gdes* per month (US$38.00). This is more than 2.5 times the salary of the typical rural school teacher, and the estimated annual total earnings of US$456 is 29% greater than the regional income for a family of six as estimated in 1994 by CARE International (1996; 1997).[12,13,14,15]

These are modal and average income levels. It needs to be understood that as with *bosses*, some market women are more successful than others, some have access to

greater amounts of capital, and some are simply shrewder. Six of the women (11%) are not even reflected in Figures 8-2 and 8-3 because they were carrying more than 1,000 *gdes* worth of merchandise. One woman was leading 4,410 *gdes* worth of livestock to market and she was going to make a profit of 1,040 *gdes* (US$61)—four times the average rate of profit for all marketing women interviewed. Furthermore, as shown earlier, 11 of 31 urban-venturing *marchanns* (35%) travel to the larger cities of Gonaives and Port-au-Prince where the most successful women sometimes build their trade revenue up to several thousand Haitian dollars per month. There are a special few rural women who, by virtue of their marketing savvy have migrated to the village of Jean Rabel and led their entire families into the higher ranks of the village commercial elite. They buy land for their husbands to farm, they pay other men to work gardens for them, and they send their children away to urban schools and overseas universities.

Conclusion

A flourishing sub-economy of artisans and specialists exists in Jean Rabel, but the pittance paid for services and local products are meaningful only within the narrow bounds of the regional subsistence economy. Skilled craftsman, particularly tree-sawyers, masons, and carpenters, are the one group of men who have an exceptional local income earning opportunity outside of the household means of production. Nevertheless, only a small percentage of men are able to take advantage of those income earning opportunities and even those men who successfully do so ultimately depend on household productive activities to assure survival. For women, the most substantial non-farm income opportunity is marketing, it is the third most important source of household income in the region, and it is an activity in which most women are involved for most of

there lives. But whatever the occupation, it presupposes the fact that a person is already a member of a household, the true foundation of livelihood and survival in Jean Rabel, and the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

[1] It was also not clear if CARE analysts were aware of the fact that fully 65% of male household heads in the community had more than one wife with whom they had born children, who they continued to help support, and who they considered as a spouse, i.e. they had more than one family. The wives resided in multiple households, some within the fishing hamlet but most in other fishing villages and in isolated hillside homesteads. If CARE researchers were aware of this fact they did not reveal it nor, of course, did they specify how they dealt with it in their analysis.

[2] Saddles and saddle blankets are made from banana and plantain stalks, saddle bags and sacks ranging from quart size to a hundred gallons are woven from palm thatch, baskets are made from slithers of bamboo, bridles are made from sisal and palm thatch rope and goat skin with scrap iron used to make the bit, hats are woven from grasses

[3] The scrap iron is heated over a fire of dry coconut shells, a fuel that burns hotter than regular woods.

[4] Examples of porter opportunities: Carrying fish weirs from the village to Mole St Nicolas a, 4 hour walk (8 hours round trip). Depending on physical endurance, a person can carry 1 - 3 large weirs at H$6.00 each or three to four small weirs at H$3.00 to H$4.00 each for a toal of H$6.00 to $18.00 per day. Porters in the village get 1 to 2 *gdes* for carrying and unloading one 110 lb sack of rice or flour-- wheel barrows are rare. These same porters report making about 100 *gdes* a day but abundant work is not often available-- usually on the two village market days, Wednesday and Saturday.

[5] For the same wages as men, women fill some 33% of the places on road projects. But female involvement in roadwork is somewhat misleading because control of the lists are reputably dominated by a few individuals and these people favor friends and family members. The outcome is that lists are stuffed with people, some of who never show up for work—a respectable man or woman of means would never actually work on a road project, although they might send a younger or less fortunate famiuly member to work for them. When gardens are being planted, for example, one can expect to find only women working, no matter how many men are on the lists. In any case, for Nov 98 to Feb 99, 33% (3,289) of the 10,000 participants in a random 1 in 3 systematic sample of the AAA food for work lists were women. On lists made available by PISANO, 21% (234) of the 1,121 of PISANO road workers were female although the proportion of females varied widely per *habitasyon*—between 4% and 67% female.

[6] The higher rates of males in older age groups is possibly due to women with grown children going to live with the children in urban areas.

[7] It makes no sense to a Jean Rabel woman to go live with a man in a house he gives her if the man has no gardens or livestock; nor does it make sense to go live with the man's mother when the girl can more comfortably stay with her own mother who will be happy to have the services of grandchild. In the absence of a supportive husband, a Jean Rabel woman can begin bearing children while still living with her parents without suffering shame or ridicule.

[8] The chief advantage of domestic employment is that meals and sleeping quarters are usually provided by the employer. Some women go to the city for a year or two to earn the money to pay debts, buy land or enter into marketing activities.

[9] The most successful women are intermediaries in urban/rural exchange of staples between Jean Rabel and Port-au-Prince—the staples flow both ways depending on the season. These women develop extensive networks of local female clientele who depend on them for supplies that are often provided on credit. Some of them become wealthy by local standards—many subsequently emigrate. Seven of the 52 women reported on in the follow-up survey regularly make the trip to Port-au-Prince.

[10] The method of selecting women was not highly regimented or the sampling design sophisticated. Every morning for 5 days in January 2000, between the hours of sunrise and about 8:00 a.m., I sat by the roadside coming into Port-de-Paix, in a place called La Saline, before one arrives at Trois Rivie. All market women were stopped, explained the purpose and nature of the research and then interviewed regarding the type and quantity of merchandise they were carrying. Most women were friendly and cooperative. There were six refusals or rather six women who gave obviously false or who simply ignored me. To obtain sales prices in Port-de-Paix and purchase prices in rural areas, I personally visited the markets, haggled over prices, and consulted with market woman I know as friends.

[11] Concerning investments in pack animals: 23 of the women had only one donkey, 17 had two donkeys, one woman had three donkeys, one had four donkeys, five women were on mules, and two were walking. A adult donkey costs about H$250.00 to $H350.00, a young donkey can be purchased for H$100.00 to H$250.00. A mule goes for H$800.00 to H$2,000.00 with H$1,200.00 being the most typical price.

[12] I have not discussed credit in the main body of the text because I did not think it necessary. The analysis has to stop somewhere and the issue is how much women have invested and how much they can make--not how much they owe. Nevertheless, it may interest the reader to know that there is a well established if indirect system of money lending. It works as follows: *Gran marchanns* (big vendors) and store owners sell sacks of staple foods—most often flour, rice, corn, and sugar--on credit to small vendors. Many of the small vendors then turn around and sell the sack or sacks of food for less than cost, using the money to buy and sell more profitable merchandise. The sellers give women a fixed amount of time to pay for the merchandise, usually 22 days (3 market weeks). Some large vendors charge more money per sack but give as much as a two month repayment period.

The reason large vendors prefer to give merchandise rather than simply loan money is not clear. The interest that can be demanded for money is reportedly as high as 100% per month. The interest charged through this 'euphemistic' system of credit works out to be about 15% for 22 days (and this takes into consideration the lose to borrower of selling the merchandise below cost).

[13]

Table 8-9: Retail and Wholesale Market Prices
[N = 24, avg = .20, .0247, .175 - .225] [all prices are in Haitian *gdes*]

	Item	Unit of measure*	Purchase price	Sale price	Profit margin
Exports: Items bought in Jean Rabel by market women and sold in other rural markets or urban centers	Straw bags	Sacks	25	30	0.20
	Eggs	Egg	1	1.5	0.33
	Bananas	Rejim	50	56	0.12
	Castor Bean	Mamit	17	20	0.18
	Peanuts	Mamit	10	13	0.30
	Corn	Mamit	9	10	0.11
	Black Bean	Mamit	42	53	0.24
	Charcoal	Sack	45	53	0.18

Table 8-9--continued

	Item	Unit of measure*	Purchase price	Sale price	Profit margin
Exports....	Fish A (*Karung Fin*)	Cord	50	60	0.20
	Fish B (*Karung Jon*)	Cord	100	110	0.10
	Fish C (*Bare*)	Cord	1,500	1,800	0.20
	Fish D (*Bonit*)	Cord	50	55	0.10
	Fish E (*Pilot*)	Cord	25	30	0.20
	Fish F (*Makabe*)	Cord	100	110	0.10
	Fish G (*Kola*)	Cord	100	110	0.10
Imports: Items bought in urban centers by market women and sold in Jean Rabel	Flour	Sack	320	380	0.19
	Sugar (brown)	Sack	365	440	0.21
	Laundry soap	Case	150	165	0.10
	Bouillon Cube	Bucket	-	-	0.17
	Cigarettes	Pack	12	20	0.66
	Rum	Gallon	75	100	0.33
	Kerosene	Gallon	20	25	0.25
	Cooking oil	Case	80	87	0.09

- a mamit is about the size of a big coffee can and holds approximately 2.54 kilograms of beans
- a cord is a string of dried fish the number of fish to a cord varying according to the size of the fish. The bigger the fish the fewer fish per cord. For fish weighing about a pound when just caught there are five fish to a cord.

[14] Animals are the most profitable business in which a *marchann* can engage. The actual margin of profit might be lower than less expensive commodities but the value of stock is not easily limited by what a person can carry. A person can lead a large quantity of goats or carry a large quantity of poultry, but the trade requires relatively large amounts of capital. Those who have the money can make upwards of H$100.00 (see 8-10 below).

Table 8-10: Poultry Prices (price in *gdes*)

	Purchase	Sale	Profit %
Chicken	60	75	0.25
Turkey	175	225	

The other principal commodities are not capital intensive, but limited more by how much a *marchann's* donkeys can carry (mules can carry more than a donkey but are sufficiently rare to omit them in this analysis; see Table 8-11 below). The load on a donkey is measured locally in various mutually divisible ways: *Chay* literally means "load" but in this case it means a full saddle bag, called a *makout,* and one *makout* has two pockets, each called a *poch,*

1 *chay* = 1 *makoute* = 2 *poch*

How many *chay* a a donkey can carry depends on the weight of the merchandise. A donkey can carry two *chay* of fresh un-snapped beans and the same for charcoal, but less than two full saddle bags of salt. The money a *marcahnn* can make and how the market changes is expounded below.

In November 1999 pigeon peas were selling for H$25.00 a *chay* in rural areas where they were being harvested and reselling in Port-de-Paix for $H35.00; a donkey could carry 2 *chay* which translates to a profit margin of $H20.00 per donkey which was good news to most women. It is a very good year for crops and as the bean harvest increased, prices dropped in early December to $H15.00 in rural areas and H$25.00 in Port-de-Paix, and then stabilized through mid January at H$10.00 in rural area and H$15.00 - H$20.00 in Port-de-Paix. This meant that *marchanns* were making about H$7.50 per *chay* and H$15.00 per donkey

fully loaded with beans—not all *marchanns* will load their donkey with 2 *chay*. In summary, a *marchann* can make about $H15.00 – H$20.00 per donkey load of beans.

At the same time that bean prices were falling in mid December, charcoal became good business. In early December, just prior to when this survey was carried out, there was a period of heavy rain. Charcoal became scarce because people could not cross Trois Rivière and charcoal that came by sea was usually wet. Prices in Port-de-Paix rose. A donkey can carry 1 + 1/3 *sak* of charcoal (2 chay) and a *sak* sells for H$10.00 in rural areas. A donkey can carry H$13.33 worth of charcoal which usually sells in Port-de-Paix for about $H30.00 but was going for H$40.00 at the time of the survey. Many *marchanns* were taking advantage of the increased prices and because this was unusual, Port-de-Paix charcoal prices were reduced in the following calculations from H$40.00 (200 *gdes*) to H$35.00 (175 *gdes*) for a donkey load--a price closer to the usual H$30.00 (150 *gdes*) per donkey load. In any cse, the typical profit on a donkey fully loaded with charcoal is $H16.66.

Salt represents the low end of the trade scale. It is cheap, meaning low investment, and heavy, meaning a donkey can not carry much. The overall profits are low. Jean Rabel marchanns who work the market in Anse Rouge, near where they make salt, pay 2 *gdes* for a mamit of salt and sell it in Port-de-Paix for 3.5 to 4.0 *gdes* (if they retail the salt themselves they can make 5 – 6 *gdes* but this is not considered here because the *marchann* may have to spend one to two extra days selling in Port-de-Paix). A donkey can carry 15 to 18 mamits of salt, so they invest 30.0 – 36.0 *gdes* (H$6.00- H$7.20), grossing 52.5 – 72.0 *gdes* (H$10.50 – H$14.40) for a profit of 22.5 – 36.0 *gdes* (H$4.50 – H$6.20 or US$1.33 – US$2.15).

Regarding the possibility of a market woman making more than two trips a month to Port-de-Paix: Some make three trips but the *marchanns* can not make the trip more often if for no other reason than it is exhausting and because they generally do not sleep during the two day voyage. Most *marchanns*, however, sell out of the home and also work at least 2 rural markets in the interim (see main text).

Table 8-11: Port-de-Paix Market Women and Itemized Merchandise (in Haitian *gdes*)

	Merchandise Carried	Cost	Total Cost	Sale	Total Sale	Profit	Percent Profit
1	1 chay congo beans	75		125			
	1 sack oranges (sweet)	24	99	42	167	68	69%
2	6 chay charcoal	200	200	525	525	325	163%
3	6 chay charcoal	200	200	525	525	325	163%
4	4 chay charcoal	133		350			
	4 turkeys	700	833	900	1250	417	50%
5	3 chay charcoal	100		262			
	1 chay salt	30	130	53	315	185	142%
6	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
7	4 chay charcoal	133		350			
	3 chickens	180	313	225	575	262	84%
8	11 chickens	660		825			
	2 turkeys	350		450			
	1 chay congo beans	75	1085	125	1400	315	29%
9	2 chay charcoal	100		175			
	2 chickens	120	220	150	325	105	48%
10	9 turkeys	1575		2025			
	15 chickens	900	2475	1125	3150	675	27%
11	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
12	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
13	8 chay charcoal	266	266	700	700	434	163%
14	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
15	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
16	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
17	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%

Table 8-11—continued

	Merchandise Carried	Cost	Total Cost	Sale	Total Sale	Profit	Percent Profit
18	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
19	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
20	2 chay charcoal	67		175			
	5 chickens	300		375			
	1 turkey	175	542	225	775	233	43%
21	1 chay charcoal	33		87			
	3 chickens	180		225			
	1 guinea fowl	60	273	75	387	114	42%
22	3 chay charcoal	100		262			
	1 goat	450	550	550	812	262	48%
23	4 turkeys	700		900			
	2 chickens	120	820	150	1050	230	28%
24	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
25	4 sheep	1200		1500			
	5 goats	2250		2750			
	16 chickens	960	4410	1200	5450	1040	24%
26	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
27	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
28	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%
29	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
30	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
31	1 chay charcoal	33		87			
	10 chickens	600		750			
	1 turkey	175	808	225	1062	254	31%
32	2.5 chay charcoal	83		219			
	1 sack oranges	12	95	21	240	145	152%
33	2 chay salt	60		220			
	2 chay congo beans	150	210	250	470	260	124%
34	4 chay charcoal	133		350			
	1 chay corn	153		216			
	2 chay peanuts	396	682	504	1070	388	57%
35	1 chay corn	153		216			
	2 chay peanuts	396	549	504	720	171	31%
36	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
37	2 chay charcoal	67	67	175	175	108	163%
38	2 chay charcoal	67		175			
	5 chickens	300	367	375	550	183	50%
39	1 chay corn	153		216			
	5 goats	2250		2750			
	1 sheep	300	2703	375	3341	638	24%
40	4 chay beans kongo	300	300	500	500	200	67%
41	4 chay congo beans	300		500			
	3 chickens	180	480	225	725	245	51%
42	10 chickens	600	600	750	750	150	25%
43	4 chay charcoal	133	133	350	350	217	163%

Table 8-11--continued

	Merchandise Carried	Cost	Total Cost	Sale	Total Sale	Profit	Percent Profit
44	1 chay charcoal	33		87			
	3 turkeys	525	558	675	762	204	36%
45	Roofing thatch	10		35			
	5 chairs	50	60	125	160	100	167%
46	2 chay charcoal	67		175			
	2 sack peanuts	198	265	252	427	162	61%
47	1 chay plantains	240	240	360	360	120	50%
48	1 poch charcoal	17		44			
	1 goat	450	467	550	594	127	27%
49	1 poch corn	76		108			
	1 chicken	60	136	65	173	37	27%
50	1 poch corn	76		108			
	6 chickens	240	316	450	558	242	77%
51	10 chickens	600	600	750	750	150	25%
52	1 chay charcoal	33	33	87	87	54	161%
53	20 chickens	1200	1200	1500	1500	300	25%
54	15 chickens	900		1125			
	1 chay congo beans	75	975	125	1250	275	28%

[15] The average turnover rates for four of the most common staples in Jean Rabel--sugar, flour, corn meal and rice—is listed in Table 8-12 and gives additional insight into woman selling staples out of the house and twice weekly at local markets.

Table 8-12: Retail Commodity Turnover Rates in Days

	N	Avg days	Std Error	C.I. 95%
Flour	30	13.7	4.8	8.9 – 18.5
Brown sugar	30	17.9	5.4	12.5 – 23.2
corn meal	30	16.1	7.0	9.1 – 23.1
Rice	30	14.8	5.0	9.8 – 19.8
Total	**120**	**15.6**	**5.6**	**10.0 – 21.2**

CHAPTER 9

FARMING AND HOUSEHOLD BASED PRODUCTION

Introduction

No matter what other skills a person has or what other income earning activities he or she engages in, everyone in Jean Rabel, except for very few full time fishermen, is a farmer. Every household head owns or has access to at least some garden land and every household has at least a few animals. The farming technologies practiced are generalized, low risk and low investment strategies that provide for household consumption and subsistence expenses and little more. But farming is, nevertheless, the backbone of the Jean Rabel economy.

Agriculture

Agriculture is low risk and low input. Only two percent of farmers in the baseline survey report using chemical pesticides, and less than one percent report using chemical fertilizers. The only tools used by famers are hoes and machetes. No tractors, wagons, or even animal drawn plows are available for use. Currently, not a single irrigation pump exists in the entire commune of Jean Rabel, and only 40 out of 3,723 (0 .01%) of the plots reported on in the baseline survey were irrigated by a gravity driven system.[1]

The crops planted in Jean Rabel are those that are best adapted to the harsh environment. Relatively high yields of these crops can be produced with minimal effort in a wide range of soil ph conditions, and they tend to be resilient in the face of unpredicatable rainfall patterns, and most importantly, periodic drought. The five

principal crops planted by Jean Rabel farmers are corn, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, and peanuts are the very same five crops most important to the Taino Indians who inhabited the area in pre-Columbian times. To this basket of Taino domesticates early colonists added three of the most drought resistant crops on the planet: sorghum, millet,

Table 9-1: The Most Commonly Plant Crops

Crops Planted	Origin	Percent Farmers	Crops Planted	Origin	Percent Farmers
Corn	Taino/Americas	87.9	Yam	Africa, Asia	2.6
Beans*	Taino/Americas	70.8	Okra	Africa	2.5
Sweet Potato	Taino/Americas	59.1	Taro & A. Root	Taino/Americas	2.0
Cassava	Taino/Americas	44.9	Castor Bean	Africa	1.8
Peanuts	Taino/Americas	39.1	Egg Plant	Asia	0.9
Millet and Sorghum	Africa, asia	32.1	Carrot	Brittish Isles	0.5
Pumpkin	Taino/Americas	20.6	Tomato	Taino/Americas	0.4
Plantain	Phillipines	8.7	Echalot		0.3
Sugar Cane	Asia	7.2	Squash	Taino/Americas	0.3
Water Melon	Africa	6.0	Other		5.6
Sesame	Africa, Asia	3.4			

Total n = 1,539

Table illustrates the percentage of Jean Rabel respondents mentioning a crop when asked to report the five crops they most commonly plant.

*All beans and peas were lumped into a single category during the baseline survey (clarify when baseline is used), This was a mistake and the distinction between beans *rache*—beans harvested at one time which are known in French as Haricot—and pigeon peas, cow peas and lima beans is made elsewhere)

and pigeon peas, crops that continue to be of great importance to Jean Rabeliens. The lima bean is a quick growing, high yielding legume that has also become popular among farmers in the region (Newsom 1993; Rouse 1992; Moreau 1797).

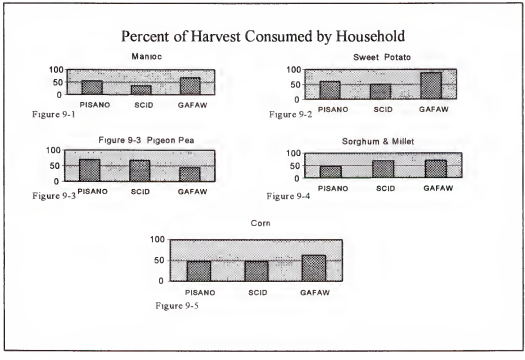
Most of the crops planted by Jean Rabel farmers do not require simultaneous harvesting but rather are crops that yield slowly over a period of several months, even year round. The cropping strategy adopted ensures that several staples will be available in the garden in every month of the year (see Table 9-2; See Appendix E for description of crops and suitability to drought).

Table 9-2: Regional Planting Cycles on the Plain Jean Rabel (p = plant, h = harvest)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beans		H	H	H								
Cow peas	H	H	H	H	H	H	H					
Lima beans	H	H	H	H	H	H	H					
Pigeon peas	H	H	H	H	H	H	H					
Corn		H	H	H								
Peanuts			H	H						H		
Millet		H	H									
Manioc	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Sweet potato	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Plantains	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Squash	H	H	H	H	H	H					H	H
Sugarcane	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Yam	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Consumption vs The Market

Comparison of results from the Baseline Survey (labled GAFAW) with results from two other large Jean Rabel surveys (PISANO 1990 and SCID 1993) shows farmers report consuming more than they sell of at least four of the six most commonly planted crops. Pigeon peas, which harvest slowly over a seven month period are also consumed more than sold.



But the fact that Jean Rabeliens consume much of what they produce should not obscure their dependency on the regional market system. The market system looms large in local household livelihood strategies. If, for example, a Jean Rabelien is given a bag of rice, he/she will not stash it in a dark recess of the house for the woman of the house to dole out bit by bit over a period of weeks or months. Rather, the rice is sent straight to the market where the woman, her mother, or a younger female household member sells it, converting the rice to cash. The cash obtained is then used to engage in other marketing activities and to purchase other foods and provision the household as needs arise. As shown in the previous chapter, virtually all households are involved in the market system and while about one half of most crops are consumed by household members, the other half gets sold and the profits eventually spent on food staples. In the Opinion Survey, 86.3% of all respondents reported getting more of the household food supply from the market than from gardens. And in the spring of 1998, Dr. Thomas Hartmanshenn (Ph.D.) of the German NGO Agro Action Allemande captured the importance of the market to Jean Rabeliens in a survey in which 128

Table 9-3: Reports on Source of Household Foods: Gardens vs Markets

	Market	Garden	50/50
Plantain	61%	2%	23%
Greens and fruit	16%	41%	34%
Corn	56%	5%	36%
Sorghum	68%	5%	16%
Manioc, sweet potato, yam	31%	11%	44%
Haricot*	37%	7%	43%
Rice*	70%	1%	0%
Meat and fish	96%	4%	0%

(AAA 1998)

* 4% of Haricot and 25% of rice were reported as coming from development organization

Table 9-4: The Gardens vs the Market

	Frequency	Percent
Garden	19	13.7
Market	119	86.3
Total	138	100.0

(AAA Thomas Hartmanship)

randomly selected farmers in Jean Rabel were asked, "where do you most commonly get the produce consumed in your household?" Only in the case of greens and fruits did respondents cite the garden as a more important source of foodstuffs than the markets (see Table 9-4 above). In effect, Jean Rabeliens use the market like a storage system, selling half or more of their harvest, rolling the money over in the market, and using the proceeds to purchase staples for household consumption.

Fruit Trees

Crop harvesting cycles are complemented by the availability of produce from at least 19 types of fruit and nut trees, most of which are not planted deliberately but rather selectively permitted to grow and the harvests of which conveniently fall during the

Table 9-5: Regional Tree Cycles

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avocado							H	H	H	H	H	
Mango				H	H	H	H	H	H			
Bread nuts	H	H	H			H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Bread fruit	H	H	H				H	H	H	H		
Kenep							H	H	H	H		
Oranges (sweet)	H	H	H	H				H	H	H	H	H
Grapefruit	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Limes	H	H			H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Oranges (sour)	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Coconut	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Papaya	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Corosol	H				H	H	H				H	H
Grenadia			H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

some of the leanest months for garden produce. Fruits are sold in the markets for local consumption, they are given away freely among friends and neighbors, and are consumed in abundance by everyone, especially by children, and especially mangos, the unrivaled favorite fruit in Jean Rabel.[2]

Livestock

Animal raising is as important a feature of household economic livlihood as agriculture. At any given moment one may encounter households that have no livestock because animals have been sold, stolen, died off from disease, or been killed by dogs (see endnotes). But there are no rural households in Jean Rabel that never raise animals. The most important animals in order of prevalence are chickens, followed by goats, sheep, hogs, cattle, and then turkey and guinea fowl. Ducks are numerous in the *bouk* of Jean Rabel but rare in rural areas. Pigeons are also common everywhere in Jean Rabel, a fact that was not investigated in the survey. Table 9-6 below lists the mean number of animals per household as determined by the Baseline Survey. The table is illustrative of the relevant frequencies of the presence of one animal versus another at the time of the survey. Nevertheless, because the survey was conducted during a period of ongoing drought, and the fact that many animals had perished as a result, the data is not representative of the typical number of animals people own during a normal period. Figure 9-6 (below) was derived from data obtained during the 300 household Polygyny Survey and illustrates the number of households possessing at least one of the larger livestock animals listed in Table 9-6.

Table 9-6: Livestock per Household, Baseline Survey (N = 1,539; see Chapter 7, p.133, for pack-animals)

	Animals per Household		
Species	Mean	Std. Dv.	
Chickens	2.27	3.90	**Note: there were two factors that effected reports on livestock: 1) the drought during which the survey took place caused many animals to perish and 2) people often misrepresented the number of livestock they owned in hopes the survey was part of a livestock giveaway project, as ID, AAA and PISANO have done in the past. Information regarding donkeys, horses, and mules.**
Goats	.94	1.87	
Sheep	.78	1.83	
Hogs	.45	1.47	
Cattle	.23	.73	

Strategies for raising livestock are similar to those employed in agriculture; minimize costs, minimize risks. People plant clusters of a drought resistant native grass called *zeb gine* (guinea grass) in their gardens and around their houses to be used as animal fodder. Sugarcane, banana leaves and pigeon pea foliage also provide high protein fodder superior to most grasses. Corn, millet, and bean leaves and stalks are stored on roof tops. When drought strikes this stored fodder is moistenend with salt water and fed to the animals. Surplus garden produce, particularly sweet potatoes, mangos and bread fruit, are often fed to livestock rather than sold when market prices are low. Animals are grazed in gardens after harvests or tethered in fallow fields. With the exception of pigs, the one animal sometimes fattened on purchased supplements, farmers only purchase feeds during prolonged crises, and these are invariably grasses or garden refuse found in neighboring ecological zones. The greatest livestock expense most farmers incur, besides actually purchasing the animals, are the cords used to tether them. If the farmer decides to purchase rather than make the cords, they cost 3 gourdes per animal (about US$0.15).[3,4,5]

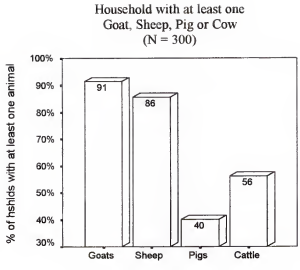


Figure 9-6

Livestock serves primarily as a cash reserve for the household. When an animal is slaughtered, much of the meat gets sold, primarily to provide for other subsistence needs.

Table 9-7: Reasons for Selling Livestock[1]

Reasons	Count (n=)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
To buy food or feed hshld	1,558	40.5	40.5
School (pay costs)	1,045	27.1	67.6
Death (pay for funeral costs)	372	9.7	77.3
Birth (pay costs and feed mother)	342	8.9	86.2
Make Room for New Stock	68	1.8	88.0
Marriage, Baptism...	47	1.2	89.2
Over Population	9	.2	89.4
Other[2]	412	10.6	100.0
Total	3,853	100.0	100.0

1 Respondents were allowed 3 primary reasons.

2 The category "other" was almost entirely because the animal was sick or the need to buy seeds for planting.

Table 9-8: Reasons for Killing Livestock[1]

Reason	Count (n=)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
To buy food or feed hshld	879	40.9	40.9
Birth (to feed the mother)	480	22.3	63.2
Death (to feed visitors)	318	14.8	78.0
Marriage, Baptism	209	9.7	87.7
Sell	156	7.3	95.0
Over Population	12	.6	95.6
Other[2]	95	4.4	100.0
Total	2,149	100.0	100.0

1 Respondents were allowed 3 primary reasons.

2 The category "other" was almost entirely because the animal was sick or the need to buy seeds for planting

In the Baseline Survey, the single most frequently cited reason for both killing and selling animals was for household consumption of the meat and so that other food could be purchased with the proceeds from the sale of the surplus meat.[6]

The months most commonly cited as times of animal slaughter and sale are precisely those months householders identify as the hardest/leanest of the year, the same months that crop harvests are at a minimum. The relationship between hard times, animal slaughter, and animal sales only deviates slightly when schools open in September and October and tuition payments come due (see Figure 9-7 below).

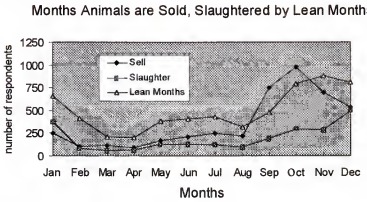


Figure 9-7

Fishing

There are two permanent fishing villages on the coast of Jean Rabel (Bord Mer and Port-al-Acu). Two small fishing outposts are also used on a seasonal basis by fishermen from inland farming homesteads and are permanently inhabited by a few dozen fishermen. Along the semi-arid coastal region stretching from Bord Mer west for approximately 7 kilometers, there is a series of dispersed communities of farmers who fish part-time using rudely fashioned one man kayaks called *topye*. In all of Jean Rabel there are some seventy *kanots* (row boats that average 11.5 feet in length) and perhaps 350 *topye* (small kayaks that are approximately 8 feet in length). The number of fishing-dependent families represents 4.4% of the Jean Rabel population or about 5,800 men, women and children, (roughly 1,000 households), most of whom are also dependent on their gardens and livestock raising to varying degrees.

Fishing in Jean Rabel involves a relatively high investment in local materials and craftmanship services. Most equipment used by fisherman are made from local products or scrapped industrial material. Many of the materials needed must be purchased but some may be procured cost free by resourceful individuals. Fisherman do not have access to outboard motors, fiberglass hulls, or refrigerated storage. Instead, sails, paddles, and wooden hulls prevail and fish are salted, dried, and sold in local markets or hauled by boat or pack animal to markets in the provinical city of Port-de-Paix. Nevertheless, based on local standards, fishing is a significant source of income. As seen in Table 9-9, a fisherman who owns his own boat, a net and fishing weirs, is on a financial level equivalent with or greater than that of the *bosses* seen above (a detailed description of fishing practices and the revenue that can be generated is provided in Appendix F).

Table 9-9: Fishing Income

	Type of fishing	Quantity	Months	Income (gdes)	Income (US$)
Owner (must have *kanot*)	Seine	1	Sept – Nov	1,344	80.00
	Net	1	Sept – Nov	1,250	74.40
	Net	1	Jan - May*	9,000	535.71
	Weir	20	Sept – Nov	9,720	578.57
	Total	-	-	**21,314**	**1,268.68**
Marin (worker/assistant)	Seine	-	Sept – Nov	833	49.58
	Net	-	Sept – Nov	400	23.80
	Net	-	Jan - May*	3,000	178.57
	Weir	-	Sept – Nov	206	12.26
	Total	-	-	**4,439**	**264.21**

* migration to La Tortue

Income from Farming

Agriculture

If, for the sake of calculation and trying to get a general idea of the income that Jean Rabel farmers can earn, we were to begin by counting only the principal crop cycle (meaning only one planting), putting all other crops aside, and simply assuming that Jean Rabel farmers plant only one of the reported average 2.3 garden-hectares (including share-cropped property) per household of the cash-crops beans, corn, or peanuts (which are also 3 of the top five crops farmers most commonly report planting) and then we calculate from the prices cited in chapter 8 (endnote 13, p. 159-160), then in a good year, one where there has been sufficient rain, the typical household should harvest 13,885 *gdes* worth of these crops every year (US$826). If we then assume, as shown, that the household consumes half of the harvest, then US$413 remains. And again, this does not account for sweet potatoes, pigeon peas, sugar cane, cassava and the various other crops that are also planted and sold.

Table 9-10: Estimated Average Annual Garden Income

Yield and income per hectare*						Average income per hectare for major cash crops
Corn (plain)		Beans (plain)		Peanuts (nts)		
yield	Income	yield	Income	Yield	Income	
1,116	6,696	558	22,230	1,273	12,730	13,885

* Based on yields per *ka* (1/4 *kawo*) in *mammits* (~ 2.55 kg of corn) and 1997 prices per mammit as recorded by PISANO: corn = 6 *gdes*, beans (cowpeas) = 40 *gdes*, peanuts = 10 *gdes*

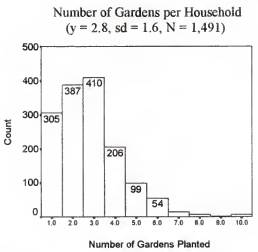


Figure 9-8

This calculation also does not account for differential amounts of land owned, the total amount of land worked

through sharecropping and other arrangements, and the quality and productive capacity of particular parcels of land. All of these factors translate into significant annual differences in the amount of income a particular household or individual earns. Table 9-11 below sums up land types. While it is clear that the vast majority of land is classified as dry, there is also, nevertheless, another 4.7% of garden land considered 'fertile' and 'irrigated.' On these plots farmers can naturally expect higher and more dependable yields. Table 9-12 below sums up the types of land tenure--i.e. how farmers obtained access to their garden plots. The chart indicates clearly that in Jean Rabel there are basically three ways to access a garden plot: own it (67.1%), sharecrop it (19.1%) or rent it (11.0%). Less important means of accessing land are borrowing land and being employed by the landowner (working as a farm hand).

Table 9.11: Size of Gardens by Soil Type (units of analysis = gardens)

Land in *kawo*	Type of Land (%)			
	Irrigated	Fertile	Dry	Total
.01 to .50	62.5%	76.7%	75.6%	75.5%
.51 to 1.0	10.0%	15.8%	18.6%	18.4%
1.1 to 1.5	5.0%	3.0%	1.8%	1.9%
1.51 to 2.0	10.0%	.8%	2.3%	2.4%
2.1 to 2.5	2.5%	0%	.2%	.2%
Over 2.5	10.0%	3.8%	1.4%	1.5%
N =	40	133	3550	3723
Percent	1.1%	3.6%	95.3%	100

Table 9-12: All Types of Land Tenure (units of analysis = gardens)

Types of Land Tenure	Count (n=)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Owned	2,485	67.1%	67.1%
Sharecropped	710	19.1%	86.2%
Rented	410	11.0%	97.2%
On Loan	81	2.2%	99.4%
Employed by Owner/Farm Hand	5	.1%	99.5%
Other	20	.5%	100.0%
Total	3,711	100.0	100.0%

The mean garden size in Jean Rabel is .82 hectares and at any one time the average household works 2.8 gardens on a total of 2.3 hectares of land. On the other hand, the average amount of land reportedly owned per household is 1.13 *kawo* or 1.46 hectares (1 *kawo* =1.29 hectares)—the difference being attributable to sharecropping and under-reporting of landownership. Almost one third of respondents, 413 households, reported owning no land; 87.7 percent of households own 2 *kawo* or less; and a mere 1.1 percent of households claimed to own more than 5 *kawo* of land. The large number of landless farmers is suspect and probably a consequence of deceptive reporting. Furthermore, the data should not be interpreted to mean that land is concentrated. The largest landholder in the sample owned only 12 *kawo*, and there are no plantations or vast tracks of private land in Jean Rabel. The data nevertheless provides as indication of the widespread agricultural income earning opportunities in the region, opportunities available to households with the labor capacity to work the land and that allow individuals to avoid dependency on low wage employment in the service of larger landholders (for more information on land owned see Agriculture).

Table 9-13: Average Amount Of Land Owned By Household

Total households	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
1,392	.00	12.00	1.13	3.2

Table 9-14: Total Land Owned By Household

Land in *kawo*	Households		
	Count (n =)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	413	29.7%	29.7%
0 to 1	1,007	42.0%	71.7%
1 to 2	223	16.6%	87.7%
2 to 3	135	7.4%	95.1%
3 to 4	52	2.3%	97.4%
4 to 5	20	1.5%	98.9%
over 5	16	1.1%	100.0%
Total	1,392	100.0%	100.0%

(1 *kawo* = 1.29 Hectares = 3.19 acres; see Agriculture for Land Owned by Section)

Livestock

Similar calculations can be made to provide income estimates generated from the raising of animals. Again, the objective of this exercise is only to present a general understanding of income possibilities associated with farming and again the analysis begins with averages. The calculations do not include chickens, which are the most common household animal, or pigs, horses, and mules, three of the most expensive animals. Included are only the most common larger livestock: goats, sheep, cows, and donkeys.

From the polygyny survey, which included questions on Livestock not adequately addressed in other surveys, it is known that, counting only adult animals, the average farming household typically possesses 3.1 goats, 2.5 sheep, .8 cows, and 1.1 donkeys. Assuming that goat and sheep can yield a mean 3 offspring per year (the average is 3 litters of 2 kids per litter, every 2 years) and that a cow or donkey has approximately .8 calves per year, then the typical household earns about 4,465 *gdes* annually on its weaned livestock (US$266). Again this figure does not include the most prominent animal in Jean Rabel, poultry, nor the most expensive, horses, mules and pigs (see endnote vii, this Chapter).

Table 9-15: Estimated Average Annual Income from Livestock

	Hshlds with at least one animal[a]	Average adult animals per hshld[b]	Percentage of females[c]	Average adult female animals per hshld	Offspring per female per year[d]	Livestock produced annually per hshld	Average price per weanling[e]	Est. hshld livestock income per year
Goats	91%	3.1	81% (591/728)	2.5	3	7.5	250	1,875
Mules	89%	1.1	63% (393/620)	.7	.8	.6	750	450
Sheep	86%	2.5	78% (464/597)	1.9	3	5.7	200	1,140
Cattle	56%	0.8	77% (203/262)	.6	.8	.5	2000	1,000
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,465

Similar to agriculture, livestock provides a broad spectrum of income earning opportunity among different household. Household earnings from livestock are based on the number of animals a household unit can successfully tend. For the sake of demonstrating these differences, at the bottom of Figure 9-16 is the tabulated total annual revenue for a household that has one of each animal listed—i.e. one goat, one sheep, one cow and one hog, The same estimates can be used to calculated projected income from livestock for a hypothetical household with two of each animal, or three, and so on. The calculations are not meant to reflect actual conditions—there is, for example, no particular reason why a household would own two goats, two sheep, two pigs, and two cows—but they do demonstrate the economic differences that could result from one household having the capacity to care for more livestock than another.

Special mention is required regarding pigs, an animal which has tremendous but seldom-realized income-earning potential (see page 170 above). Piglets sell for 250 *gdes* (US$14.88), meaning that a litter of 10 can yield the owner(s) a respectable 2,500 *gdes* (US$148.80), and a single well-fed pig can fetch as much as 6,000 *gdes* (US$357.14) in the Port-de-Paix market. But most farmers do not have the capital available to invest in feeding pigs nutritionally sufficient quantities of food to breed or to grow to a significant size, and so most pigs are bought, raised, and then sold as stunted adults for approximately

Table 9-16: Variation in the Number of Animals per Household

		Number of animals					
		0	1	2	3	4	5+
Goats		8.6%	12.4%	27.6%	20.0%	11.4%	20.2%
Sheep		14.3%	19.0%	23.8%	17.1%	19.0%	6.9%
Cattle		39.3%	36.3%	18.0%	4.7%	1.0%	.6%
Hogs		31.0%	18.0%	28.3%	20.0%	1.7%	.6%
Revenue per year	*Gdes*	G0	G3,700	G7,400	G14,800	G29,600	G59,200+
	US$	$0	$220	$440	$880	$1,760	$3,520+

750 *gdes* (US$50.68). (For the latter reason, I have limited the income in Table 9-16 calculated for pigs to 750 *gdes* per animal.)[7]

Total Farming Income

Thus, combining agriculture and livestock activities, an average Jean Rabel farming household should be able to generate about US$679 per year, about twice the household income estimated by CARE in 1994. This is still not much revenue—an annual US$116 per capita—and it does not take into consideration losses incurred as a result of thievery, disease, storms, blight, and drought. Nor does it take into account the costs of seed, ropes, tools, and the purchase of new livestock. Furthermore, although farming is the principal source of income in Jean Rabel for over 90% of all households, as can be inferred from the previous chapter, most households have members simultaneously engaged in several other revenue generating strategies.[8]

Conclusion

This chapter has described Jean Rabel farming strategies, the most important productive activities in Jean Rabel and the primary means by which most households obtain income. It was shown that some households are able to derive greater income from these activities than other households. But although the emphasis thus far has been on the potential economic differences between households, an equally remarkable feature is the general narrowness of these differences. No household for which data was gathered had planted more than 11 gardens and no household owned more than 12 *kawo* of land. The maximum number of head of cattle belonging to any of the households visited during the Polygyny

Table 9-17 Maximum Number of Animals per Household

Goats	14
Sheep	12
Cattle	6
Hogs	8
Donkeys	4
Horses	2
Mule	2

Survey was six; the maximum number of goats was 14; the maximum number of sheep was 12; and the maximum number of hogs was eight. No household owned more than four donkeys, two horses or two mules (see Table 9-17 above). The explanation for the relatively equal distribution of wealth among households is simply that, in rural Jean Rabel, despite soil exhaustion and the declining availability of new land, the balance between the three primary elements of production--land, labor, and capital—is skewed most heavily by a scarcity of labor, the subject of the following chapter. The scarcity of labor also serves as a point of return to the discussion of the causes of high fertility in Jean Rabel.

Notes

[1] Table 9-18: Crops by Use of Chemical Pesticides and Fertilizers

	Pesticide Use		Fertilizer Use (%)	
Crops	Yes (%)	(n=)	Yes (%)	(n=)
Plantain	1.5%	134	2.2%	134
Okra	0.0%	35	0.0%	35
Sesame	0.0%	48	0.0%	50
Squash	0.0%	313	0.3%	313
Sugar Cane	0.0%	100	0.0%	101
Manioc	1.2%	684	0.0%	687
Corn	3.7%	1,356	1.0%	1,367
Melon	1.2%	85	0.0%	85
Sweet Potato	0.7%	900	0.1%	902
Peanuts	0.7%	549	0.4%	550
Millet	5.4%	514	1.4%	514
Beans	1.4%	1,079	0.4%	1,081
Taro	0.0%	30	0.0%	30
Yam	2.5%	40	2.5%	40
Total	**2.0%**	**5,867**	**0.6%**	**5,889**

(units of analysis = crops)

[2] Mangos originated in India and were introduced sometime during the colonial period. Breadfruit as well as sisal came from the South Pacific and is believed to have been first brought to the Caribbean in 1792 by the infamous Captain Bligh--three years after his fabled 'mutiny on the Bounty' voyage. Avocados originated in the Mexican highlands but by colonial times there was a West Indian variety (see Encyclopedia Britannica).

[3] Chickens and other poultry are fed grains by owners not to fatten them up but as a means of keeping them near the house (*pou yo pa al lwenn*)--most of what chickens eat is what they find on their own, i.e. insects, grass seeds, and vegetal refuse.

[4] Pigs are the one special case of an animal requiring high investments, such as vitamin and feed supplements, to be profitable. This makes pigs a problem for people disinclined to make monetary investments in their livestock. As one man told the author; *kochon gen plis kob pase tout bet min yo reme mouri twop* (pigs yield more money than all animals but they like to die too much), which makes them a losing investment for most Jean Rabel farmers. Evidence for the lack of interest and the failing success of pig raising in the Jean Rabel comes from recent projects promoting investment in hogs (See Chapter 4)

[5] Table 9-19: Use of Veterinary Service and Medicines

Animal Species (units of analysis = animals)	% Using of Veterinary Service or Medicines (n=2,789)	Animal Species (units of analysis = animals)	% Using of Veterinary Service or Medicines (n=2,789)
Donkey	21.4	Goat	11.9
Horse	19.5	Chicken	11.8
Mule	19.2	Turkey	2.9
Hog	27.5	Guinea Fowl	0
Bovine	13.7	Duck	0
Sheep	12.7	Total	15.6

[6] People in Jean Rabel do not make cheeses or other products from goat milk, but 36.1% of people reported milking goats for home consumption--something the author has never seen and is somewhat skeptical about:

Table 9-19: Milking of Goats

Animals		No	Yes
Goats	n = 1,433	63.9	36.1

Note: while not all households had goats during the survey, most people do own and care for goats at some point.

Cow owners do not make cheese, butter or yogurt from cow's milk--presumably because of low milk fat production related to the lack of high protein feeds and deteriorating quality of grazing land. But, people possessing cows reported milking for home consumption and local sale--something the author has seen often and is not skeptical about. The milk is boiled with cinnamon sticks and salt added.

Table 9-20: Milking of Cows

Animals		No	Yes
Cows	n = 1,407	578	829

Note: while not all households had cows during the survey, most people have owned or cared for a cow at some point in their lives.

[7] Chickens are raised for consumption and sale; secondarily for eggs which are eaten and sold. Depending on its size, a chicken sells for 15 to 100 *gdes* (US$0.89 to 5.95). Goats and sheep are raised primarily for sale. Kids and lambs sell for 200 to 250 *gdes* (US$11.90 to 14.88); an adult goat or sheep sells for 300 to 1,000 *gdes* (US$17.86 to 58.52). Both animals are also slaughtered for consumption, especially goats and especially when a woman has given birth. The meat often being dried for short-term storage or resale. After chickens, goats are the animal most commonly slaughtered in association with religious ritual. Pigs fetch the highest price of any livestock raised for sale. Piglets sell for 200 to 500 *gdes* (US$ 11.90 to 29.76); and an adult pig can sell for as much as 6,000 *gdes* (US$ 357.14). Pigs are almost always sold rather than slaughtered for consumption in association with religious rituals. To be profitable, pigs demand large investments in feed and veterinary services: 27.5% of all pig owners reported using veterinary services and medicines, the highest use of veterinary services for any animal. Cattle sell for 2,500 to 4,500 *gdes* (US$148.80 to 267.86); a calf sells for 1,000 to 1,500 *gdes* (US$ 58.52

to 89.29). Depending on size, strength and age, the price of a donkey ranges from 500 to 2,500 *gdes* (US$29.76 to 148.81). The price of a horse ranges from 1,000 to 4,000 *gdes* (US$58.52 to 238.10). And a price of a mule, the most prized pack animal, ranges from 1,750 to 7,500 *gdes* (US$ 104.17 to 446.43. Horses, donkeys and mules are the prime means of transportation and are reportedly never eaten or slaughtered. Even a sick or injured donkey, horse, or mule is simply left to die rather than euthanized.

[8] Goats and sheep have a gestation period of 148 - 150 days they bear about 3 litters every two years = 6 kids. They browse on almost anything but sheep are reportedly more finicky and less hardy than goats. At 10 months either a sheep or a goat can be bred. They have 21 day menstrual cycles. Cattle have a gestation period of 280 – 283 days.

SECTION IV

THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY

CHAPTER 10

LABOR DEMANDS

Introduction

In this section we return to the issue of children and why Jean Rabeliens are so radically pronatal. The autonomous orientation of rural Jean Rabeliens, a consequence of a harsh natural and economic environment, occurs both regionally and at the level of the household. But these are actually two levels of the same macro-economic system. Household rather than individual production is the basis of the regional market system. Women who sell in the markets and people who purchase there are usually operating on behalf of a household. The produce, livestock, cooked foods and artisanal goods that are sold locally are the fruits of the combined efforts of household members, and the vast bulk of the proceeds from the sale of these products will be returned to the household in the form of food purchases and items needed to continue household production-- such as saddles, ropes for livestock and tools for the garden.

There is nothing secure in Jean Rabel beyond the limits of households. There is no dependable State to provide aid, job security, or unemployment insurance. Foreign intervention agencies, who have come to help, are not there to provide welfare services and often arrive with emergency relief when it is no longer needed (see Chapter 16). Individual security, food, and shelter, all depend on being a member of a household. The only people who are not members of a household are a few typically mentally disturbed

individuals called *pov* (poor), easily spotted in their shabby straw hats and scraggly, matted hair, a bowl in hand for begging coins, they wander from market to market, and they sleep on the tiny front porches of nicer houses and in churches.

The household in Jean Rabel is security, it is around the household that productive labor is organized, and the associated labor demands are enormous. The distance to water sources and gardens means that the satisfaction of the most basic needs, such as washing and cooking, require abundant investments of time and labor. In satisfying household labor demands there is a sexual and age division of labor. Men perform tasks associated with gardening and livestock and women tend to focus on household chores such as cooking, carrying water, and marketing. Women are the focal point of households, they are thought of as the managers of the household, and they are more likely than men to cross the gender lines and perform tasks that are thought of as male, particularly gardening. Children are major contributors to household labor demands, particularly with regard to retrieving water and cooking fuel, and Jean Rabeliens recognize and emphasize the role that children play in assuring the survival of the household. Indeed, children and their contributions are so important to survival that, as will be seen, the drive to produce large numbers of offspring in order to meet domestic labor demands appears to determine the structural organization of the Jean Rabel family, patterns of conjugal union, and the socio-cultural fertility complex discussed earlier.

The Organization of Labor and the Prominence of the Household

Members of Jean Rabel households resolve simple subsistence tasks with raw human labor and abundant amounts of time. A tremendous amount of small time-consuming household chores must be accomplished daily, tasks such as traveling several

miles to fetch water, purchasing food in rural markets, and collecting firewood. The simplest message must be entrusted to and sent via a living human being and clothes must be carried miles to the nearest river or spring where they are washed and wrung out by hand. These tasks, necessary and basic to a sanitary and healthy subsistence, are accomplished within the socio-structural organization of the household, meaning they are carried out by a cooperating group of people who identify themselves as members of a particular household. Furthermore, it is through the labor-allocating organizational structure of the household that the overwhelming majority of people in Jean Rabel are able to succeed at making a meager living given the available opportunities: principally agriculture and livestock raising.

Household Tasks

A minimum number of time-consuming tasks must be performed in every household on a daily basis. The house and yard must be swept (the yard is literally swept with a broom), beds must be made, sleeping mats must be rolled up and put away and the house must be dusted, tasks that typically take an average of one to two hours to accomplish. Food preparation and cooking involve starting and tending a fire, snapping beans, peeling plantains and sweet potatoes, and pounding beans and spices. If the fire is good—i.e. the wood is seasoned and hard--rice or sweet potatoes can be boiled in about one hour. Beans are a daily staple in virtually all Jean Rabel households. If fresh, they take only 20 minutes to prepare, but if they are dry they must be boiled for more than two hours. Under optimal conditions, therefore, a meal can be prepared in about 2 hours, but it can and usually does take considerably longer. If the fire is not hot because the wood is too green or of a poor quality, cooking a simple meal without meat can take more

than four hours. If meat is cooked it must be washed with sour oranges or limes, boiled and then fried, adding another hour to the time it takes to prepare a meal.

Gathering firewood is a task that requires at least one hour per day and where or when wood is scarce, it takes as much as three man-hours per day. Tri-weekly picking of beans and digging sweet potatoes are also time consuming endeavors, the average distance from the homestead to a garden being a 46 minute walk but with 45% of gardens located more than 90 minutes from the house. The actual harvesting takes one to two hours. Water is necessary in the house for drinking, cooking, and washing dishes and to accomplish these tasks the typical household uses ten gallons per day, although small households with very young children may get by on as little as 5 gallons per day. In effect, someone must make at least one and typically two or three daily trips to fetch water, at an average of 70 minutes per round trip. For bathing and washing clothes, people usually go to the water sources rather than carry water back to the house, but this also involves another time consuming trek. Clothes are washed by hand. Women consistently report they wash clothes on one in every three days, a task that, depending

Table 10-1: Average Daily Labor Requirements for Principal Household Tasks

Task	Frequency per day	Days per week	Avg number Hours per performance	Avg. Time per week (in Hours of Adult labor)	
				Minimum	Maximum
Morning house cleaning	1	6	1 – 2	6.0	12.0
Weekly house cleaning	1	1	3 – 6	3.0	6.0
Water carrying[1]	1-4	7	1.2	8.4	33.6
Morning meal	1	7	1 – 2	7.0	14.0
Afternoon meal	1	7	2 – 4	14.0	28.0
Gathering fire wood	1	7	1 – 3	7.0	21.0
Laundry	1	2	6 – 12	12.0	24.0
Walk to garden + harvesting…	1	3.5	2.5	8.8	8.8
Trip to market and purchasing	1	2	4	8.0	8.0
Total	-	-	-	**74.2**	**155.4**

on the number of people in the household and the distance to the water, may consume from a half to one full day's labor (6 –12 hours). Someone in the household must go to the market at least twice a week, an average round-trip walking time of three hours per voyage to traverse 12 mountainous kilometers. Totaled, the minimum labor demands for a Jean Rabel household is an average of 74.2 adult labor hours per week, or 10.6 hours per day. Depending on where the house is located in relation to water, sources of firewood and markets, and how many people live in the house, labor demands can exceed 155.4 adult labor hours per week, or 22.3 per day (see Table 10-1).[1,2,3]

In reality, a task by task tabulation of labor demands does not accurately depict time spent doing subsistence chores because some household tasks can be integrated in such a way to facilitate the realization of others. For example, one may fetch the water on on the way back from the market or clean the house while the breakfast is boiling. But, the primary objective of the previous analysis was to begin to illustrate the tremendous time demands required to accomplish simple subsistence tasks in rural Jean Rabel. A myriad of other routine household tasks not included in Table 10-1 must also be accomplished. Goods and messages must be hand carried to other people and young children must be fed, washed and supervised. Adults insist on ironing cloths, a task that, using a charcoal heated steam iron, takes about half again as much time as washing them. Coffee beans must be roasted and pounded into a powder, a task that may be done once a week but that takes up an entire morning. Just making coffee, when one considers starting the fire, boiling the water, and straining the grounds, takes an hour. Dishes are always washed after meals and in many households they are washed again every morning as a sanitary measure—an activity that is virtually a Jean Rabel custom.

On Saturdays everything is hauled out of the house, dusted and scrubbed, another Jean Rabel custom. Other occasional time-consuming chores not included in the calculations in Table 10-1, include weaving rope and sleeping mats, and repairing thatch roofs and mud walls.

Agriculture Labor Demands

There are two planting seasons per year in Jean Rabel, one in October and November and another in April and May. Even before the seasonal rains arrive, farmers scramble to begin working before daybreak (5:00 a.m.) and if there is a bright moon, some farmers may begin working as early as 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. They hoe the soil (*tchake*) until about 10:00 a.m. and take a break, returning to their fields at around 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, when the sun is no longer directly over head and the temperature begins to cool, to hoe again until dark (approximately 6:00 p.m.). After the soil is turned, and providing the rains have begun, planting begins. One to two months later, the garden is weeded (*sakle*), and after three months the harvests begin (*rekolt*).[4]

Table 10-2: Estimated Labor Inputs for Average 5.7 Acres of Garden: One 3 to 4 Month Planting Cycle (8-hour work day) (See Endnote V)

{A} Type of activity	{B} Total number of bouts	{C} Mean bout per day	{D} Number of adults	{E}[1] Days needed per task	{F}[2] Total days needed per task
Hoeing	171	3.5	1	48.9	48.9
Planting	171	11	3	15.5	46.5
Weeding	171	2.5	1	68.4	68.4
Harvesting	171	8	3	21.4	64.2
Processing	171	24	5	7.1	35.6
Total		--	--	--	**265.6**

[1] E = [B / C], [2] F = [D * E]

Virtually all rural Jean Rabel households are involved in agriculture. Only 2.5% of the Baseline Survey respondents claimed not to have any gardens. According to the survey, the mean amount of land farmed is approximately 5.7 acres per household per year.[5] What this means to

farmers in practical work terms is that if the gardens are to be planted and harvested, the average farmer will need 319 adult/days of labor per cycle to do it. Due to the fact that the seasonal rains do not wait for people to finish planting and that hungry birds do not wait for people to finish harvesting, the farmer will need access to all of these labor hours concentrated into a few weeks time (see Figure 10-1 below).[6]

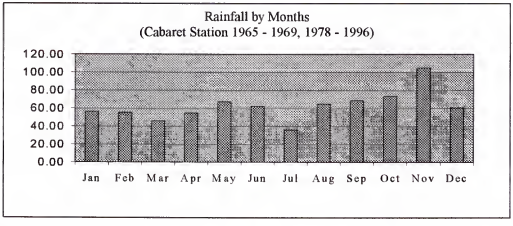


Figure 10-1

Complicating matters for farmers is the regional labor shortage discussed earlier. Farmers in Jean Rabel may be poor, but 67.1% report owning some land and even this is probably a large underestimate resulting from the tendency for some Jean Rabel farmers to portray themselves as totally impoverished in anticipation of assistance. Furthermore, the 32.9% percent who reportedly do not own land enter into fifty/fifty sharecropping arrangements or employ

Table 10-3: All Types of Land Tenure
(units of analysis = gardens)

Types of Land Tenure	Percent (n=3,711)	Cumulative Percent
Owned	67.1	67.1%
Sharecropped	19.1	86.2%
Rented	11.0	97.2%
On Loan	2.2	99.4%
Employed	.1	99.5%
Other	.5	100.0%
Total	100.0	100.0%

Table 10-4: Paid vs Unpaid Laborers

Labor	Percent (n = 1,381)
Unpaid labor only	12.4%
Paid labor only	23.0%
Both	64.6%

some other strategy to attain access to a plot of land.[7] The consequence is a labor squeeze. Everybody is working on their garden plots at the same time--hoeing at the same time, weeding at the same time and harvesting at the same time. Adults and even boys as young as 9 and 10 years of age form reciprocal work groups called *kwadi* in the rush to get their gardens hoed lest they miss out on a good season. People with the money to pay local wages frequently complain they cannot find workers.

Fifty-one percent of household respondents reported that reciprocal volunteer work groups as the principal source of garden labor, 25.7% reported family as the principal source, and 22.7% reported paid labor as the principal source. A time consuming feature of planting not accounted for in Table 10-5 on labor commitments is getting to the gardens. As farmers say, "there is mountain and there is plain" *(gen monn, gen plenn)*, meaning that in Jean Rabel, in the endeavor to avoid crop failure, the farming of multiple garden plots geographically distant from one another is, in the face of highly variable soil types, altitudes and rainfall patterns, a practical and adaptive strategy. The average farmer has 2.8 gardens and, as mentioned earlier, the average garden is a 46minute walk from the house with 45% of gardens more than 90 minutes from the house. Some men and women migrate to gardens and stay there during planting and harvests, sleeping in a small tent shaped thatch hut called a *joupa*, but most make the daily commute, a round trip average walking time of 90 minutes.[8]

Table 10-5:
Principal Source of Garden Labor

Type of Labor	Total n = 1,381
Work Group	51.6%
Family	25.7%
Paid labor	22.7%
Total	100.0%

Animals

Virtually everyone in Jean Rabel owns livestock and as with land, there is a livestock tenure system. People with many animals, and especially people who live in the village, will give animals to other farmers to raise and look after. The farmer turns the first offspring over to the owner and then takes the second for himself, and so on. Any profits from sales are split fifty/fifty. [9]

Labor demands associated with livestock are more constant and greater than those associated with agriculture, because tasks related to livestock raising must be performed several times daily without failure. In most areas, livestock are tethered. In some areas, goats and sheep are free ranged but this is risky as other farmers have a right to kill the animals should they venture into a garden. Nevertheless, even free ranged goats and sheep require a daily checkup and owners need to take water to the animals to prevent them from straying into garden areas.[10] Animals that are particularly vulnerable to attack by dogs (mainly sheep), and animals popular with thieves (mainly cows and mules), are often brought back to the homestead in the evening. Goats are left tethered in the brush because they will bleat when approached by dogs, usually attracting the attention of people from nearby homesteads.

Animals are led to open pasture or checked before dawn. Before noon they generally are moved to shady areas. The animals are moved again at least once and sometimes twice during the day to areas with shade and fresh fodder. These times also serve to assure that the animals are not strangling on their cords, that dogs are not in the process of killing them, or that thieves are not in process of stealing them. Small animals such as goats and sheep do not need to be watered when there is abundant rainfall. But

when there is not sufficient rainfall, as is common in Jean Rabel, the animals must be watered at least every three days and generally every day during the hot summer months. Large livestock such as cows and pack animals must always be watered daily.

The amount of time invested in livestock obviously depends on the number of animals a household owns and the distance from the household to water sources and foraging areas. Animals are often tethered on the same land or in the vicinity of the garden and the average distance in time from the homestead to these grazing areas is thus a 46-minute walk. In cases where people use the *kadas* (the arid State lands) to free range, or more commonly to tether animals, the walk is considerably farther. When traveling through the *kadas* it is not uncommon to encounter boys two hours from home en route to or coming from checking livestock.

It is difficult and probably impractical to try to estimate the amount of time necessary to tend animals. To begin with, there is wide spectrum of intensity with which members of a household can care for their animals. On the one hand, animals can be turned lose in the *kadas* and not checked for days, or tethered somewhere and moved only once a day. But these are risky practices that increase the chances of animals being lost, stolen, or killed by dogs. At the other extreme, a household head can see to it that animals are checked and moved at least twice during the day and brought into the yard at night, practices that increase the probability the animals will survive to reproduce and to be sold in the market.

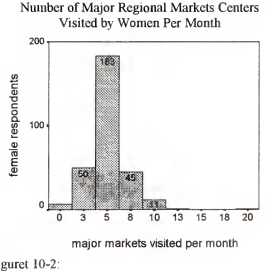
Another factor that complicates the estimation of livestock labor inputs is the difficulty of determining how many animals can be moved or led to the water at the same time. A lone man or woman, for instance, can handle as many as 6 goats and an

unlimited number of sheep. Only one sheep needs to be guided and the rest will follow. Goats will also follow but they are less cooperative. In summary, regarding the time and labor inputs required by a household for livestock raising, the general rule is that the more time and the more labor that is invested, the better. [11,12,13,14,15]

Commercial Activity

In every household someone must sell garden produce and animals. Trying to maximize the meager profits that can be made often requires traveling several hours to a distant livestock market and standing around for the better part of a day waiting for a buyer. Produce, too, must be taken to market and if the seller wishes to obtain the best possible price she must sit in the market for hours, sometimes going to several markets over a period of days or even weeks.

As shown in the previous chapter, female marketing activities are the 3rd most important source of household income. In the Livestock and Garden Survey women reported visiting major markets a median of five times per month (see Figure 10-2 below). The trip to the market commonly involves a thirty to fifty mile round-trip trek usually beginning early in the morning when the woman saddles and loads the animals and finishing late in the afternoon when she returns home. Sometimes, as in the case of trips to Port-de-Paix discussed in chapter eight.



Figuret 10-2:

Hard Times

In a previous chapter it was shown that a severe regional drought occurs on average one in every eight years. When a drought strikes, demands on household labor increase precipitously. The principal feature that determines the success with which a household can cope with and survive the drought is not how few mouths it has to feed but how many able bodies it can put to work. Crop failure turns many households to charcoal production and, as a consequence, local wood supplies dwindle and household members must travel farther and farther to find wood for fuel.[16] But most problematic is the water supply. Water sources dry up and people have to travel farther to fill their buckets. In the follow-up survey respondents reported that the temporal distance to and from the nearest secondary water source is 120 minutes. During droughts, springs are packed with crowds of pushing, shoving and cursing women and children. People get up at midnight so they can arrive at a distant spring before it becomes too crowded and they spend hours waiting to fill a single water jug. Some people, particularly young children, return to the house teary eyed, trodden and bruised, having failed to procure any water at all. During a drought washing clothes becomes problematic as well. Women must travel great distances to find clean water and a vacant place to sit and scrub. Animals have to be watered more frequently since the desiccated fodder dehydrates them. Fodder itself becomes scarce. So farmers are traveling farther and farther into remote areas to graze their animals or to cut grass for them, and then they

Table 10-6: Distance to and from water

	N	Round Trip Distance in minutes			
		Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
When there is rain	124	1.00	240	67	58
When there is no rain	124	1.00	360	120	80

must lead the animals more frequently in the other direction, into more peopled areas where adequate water sources are more common and tend not to dry up.

All of this additional effort translates into more labor and the need for more workers, because rain or no rain, people must eat and they must drink. Food still must be cooked, water found, clothes washed, and at least some animals must be kept alive so that when the drought finally ends there will be something with which to start producing again.[17]

Conclusion

In Jean Rabel, the household is the principal and, for the most part, only enduring organizational structure in the commune. Being a member of a household is a prerequisite for survival in Jean Rabel. Virtually all tasks necessary for production and participation in the regional economy are accomplished within the organizational structure of the household, and the actual time needed to accomplish these tasks is tremendous. There is also a feature inherent to the household economy that may not be readily visible to the casual observer. No matter how few members there are in a household, there is a minimum level of labor that must be accomplished. Water must be retrieved, beans and other staples must be cooked and markets must be visited. And the distance to the water and markets does not change if there are two or ten people living in the house; nor does the time required to cook beans change as a result of the number of people eating them. The fundamental point is that the fewer people in a household, the more work there is to do for each member. On the other hand, with increasing numbers of household members, there is a relative decline in the workload required of each member. This is assuming of course that the size of the household is within reasonable

limits, meaning that too many people concentrated in a single household would exhaust local resources. What exactly is the happy medium between two few and two many household members will be dealt with shortly.

Labor tasks are divided clearly according to sex and age. A woman is usually the focus of the household and the manager of domestic tasks while men concentrate their energies on animal and garden activities. Children are a significant labor supply and while they participate in agriculture, they more often can be found carrying out easily accomplished but tedious, time-consuming chores such as retrieving water, gathering firewood, cooking, and tending livestock. The following Chapter provides a more detailed discussion of gender and age-based division of labor within households in Jean Rabel.

Notes

[1] A common mistake for development workers in the region is to assume that the limiting factor on meals is food availability when in fact it is time needed to cook meals.

[2] This was true for both the baseline survey of 1,586 households and the follow-up sub-survey of 138 households in which the exact average was 67.19 minutes.

[3] This estimate is based on the average cartographic midpoint distance of 8 kilometers between markets. Four kilometers were added for altitude change and the fact are never the shortest distance between the household and the market.

[4] The fall season is more important in at low altitudes while the spring planting season is more important in the mountains.

[5] This is a reference to total land farmed--not necessarily owned--and includes sharecropped property (see endnote vii below). Seventy-six percent of all garden plots are .5 *kawo* (1.6 acres) or smaller indicating the data is skewed by a few relatively large gardens.

[6] The information is based on inputs per ¼ *kawo*, called a *ka* and measured in Jean Rabel as *sink kout chen* (5 lengths of a standardized surveyor's chain; which is about 28 feet per chain length). The table below assumes 24 *bout* per *ka* (16 square *gol* per *bout*; 1 gol ~ 9 ft; or another measure is *bras* which is about 5.5 five feet; 1 *bout* = 7 – 10 *bras*) . In the conclusion here and in the main text, the measure has been translated to acres for convenience (30 *bout* to an acre). Planting here includes all crops but harvesting only includes bean, corn and millet, crops that are harvested all at once. Farmers—and it is usually women farmers who do this task—harvest sweet potatoes, beans and other crops almost the entire year round, making these difficult tasks to estimate and they have been included in household tasks. Thus, in this particular calculation harvesting involves uprooting beans and millet or picking corn. Drying time is not

included in processing; only threshing. Total time may be slightly over estimated because some gardens are not planted in grain or beans but rather in crops for which little processing is necessary (such as plantains). On the other hand, time devoted to plants subsequently inter-cropped is not included. Many tasks should have been measured in hours, such as processing crops, because people perform them until they are tired and then go do something else, thus distributing the task over a longer period of time. The appropriate adjustments were made based on the 8 hour working day typical during hoeing. The total labor input per garden acre is 56 adult/days—the estimate below is in units of *ka* ¼ kawo and there are 3.19 acres per *kawo*, .80 acres per *ka*.

Table 10-7: Estimated Labor Inputs for Average 1/4 Kawo Garden (Harvests refers to grains only): One 3 to 4 Month Planting Cycle (8- hour work day)

{A} Type of activity	{B} Total number of bouts	{C} Mean bout per day	{D} Number of adults	{E}[1] Days needed per task	{F}[2] Total adult days needed Per task
Hoeing	24	3	1	8	8
Planting	24	14	7	2	14
Weeding	24	6	1	4	4
Harvesting	24	-	2	2	10
Processing	24	--	5	1	10
Total	--	--	--	--	**46**

[1] {E} = {B} / {C}, [2] {F} = {D} * {E}

[7] Almost one third of respondents, 413 households, reported owning no land; 87.7% of households own 2 *kawo* or less; and a mere 1.1 percent of households claimed to own more than 5 *kawo* of land. This should not, however, be interpreted to mean that ownership of land is concentrated. The largest landholder in the sample owned only 12 *kawo* and the now infamous *gran dons* (big landowners) of Jean Rabel--who have been alleged by the Haitian State as having played a role in the 1987 massacre and who controlled much of the local irrigated State land--long ago gave this land in sharecropping arrangements to local peasants and more recently have disappeared from the scene (at least two are in prison for accusations relating to the massacre). There are people who control and collect rent for this land in the name of the families, but their influence is fading and with the recent presence of INARA—the agricultural reform arm of the new Haitian Government—the days of the *gran dons* appear to be drawing shut.

[8] Some development workers in the region explain the fragmentation of garden land in the region as a consequence of inheritance, i.e. families dividing land into ever smaller parcels for the inheritors. That land is fragmented through inheritance is undeniable. But land could also be aggregated through sales and trades. Over fifty percent of gardens in the baseline survey were reportedly purchased, and even though much of this land was purchased from family—meaning that it was still a type of inheritance—it nevertheless indicates the opportunity to aggrandize land. But there appears to be practical reasons why Jean Rabel farmers prefer instead to hold onto a multiplicity of small fragmented holdings rather than aggregating them into a single large garden: In the opinion survey not one of the 68 male farmers interviewed explained land fragmentation as a result of inheritance; virtually all the farmers explained the multiplicity of garden plots as an adaptation to variable ecological zones, i.e. soil and rainfall patterns (which in Jean Rabel change dramatically over distances of only a few kilometers). None mentioned heredity or lack of market access; 38 respondents (56%%) mentioned the importance of different soil types or the position of the garden plot—such as bottom land versus plateau--and 30 respondents (44%) emphasized rainfall patterns.

It is also interesting to note that the number of gardens per household in Jean Rabel is identical to the national average (Ronco 1987), and the size of gardens as well as the number of gardens planted per household does not appear to have changed in at least the past fifty years (see the 1950 census). With all technological factors being equal, therefore, there appears to be a limitation on the amount of land and

number of gardens that an average household can work. The mean garden size is .59 *kawo* (see Table 27); about 50% larger than the national average of .5 hectares (1 *kawo* = 1.29 hectare). However, 75.5 percent of all gardens are .5 *kawo* or smaller.

[9] With regard to tenured livestock, the Baseline Survey turned up many more people looking after animals for others (tenured in) versus people giving animals to other people to look after (tenured out). A logical explanation for the 'missing' animal owners might be that people who tenure animals out are fewer but wealthier—meaning a few tenure to many. However, a look only at the most highly tenured animals—cows (26.1% vs 3.8%), hogs (14.2% vs 1.1%), sheep (11.8% vs .7%), and goats (10.3 vs. 1.1%)—suggests this is not the case: Assessing only households that have tenured animals, Tables 8.75 and 8.76 below reveal the mean number of animals tenured in (1.58) is actually greater than the mean number of animals tenured out (1.11).

Table 10-8: Animals Tenured-In

	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Animals	220	1.58	.076	1.1220	1.00	7.00

Table 10-9: Animals Tenured-Out

	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Animals	20	1.10	.069	.3078	1.00	2.00

This is probably a result of the way in which livestock tenure was measured: tenure was not recorded for every animal but rather the primary means of tenure by which households came into possession of each species of livestock. For example, if a household head reported being responsible for six donkeys, the question on tenure was 'what is the primary means by which you have these donkeys?' Another reason for the disparity between people who 'tenure out' versus 'tenure in' animals with the ethnographically supported observation that many town-dwellers tenure animals out to people living in the countryside. The survey did not sample the village of Jean Rabel, which would have helped to clarify this point.

[10] Damage done to gardens by roaming livestock is a principal source of conflict among farmers. Farmers who find goats or sheep foraging in their gardens sometimes exercise the right to kill the animal. The head is kept by the gardener, but the rest of the carcass is strung up in the nearest tree for the animal owner to come collect. Pigs found foraging in the neighbor's gardens are usually not killed for their crime, but owners must pay for damages. Pigs suffer, however, in cases where the owner refuses to indemnify the victim--a pig belonging to the author was once macheted to death by a woman fed up with the procine's repeated and uncompensated invasions of her kitchen (the pig had been 'tenured out' to another neighbor). Roving cattle are never killed. However, owners must pay indemnities for damages to gardens. Failure to compensate for persistent intrusions into a neighbor's garden sometimes results in a machete wound across the rump of the animal or the severing of its tail. Roving donkeys, horses or mules are, compared to other animals, a rare sight, and seldom are the animals intentionally injured for their depredations. Owners must pay for damages to gardens. .

[11] In Jean Rabel, there is system of rights regarding browsing livestock that is in various stages of evolution. In decades past livestock in most areas was free ranged. In some areas today, particularly in the dry coastal region, farmers continue to free range goats and sheep on communal grazing lands owned by the State. Pigs are allowed to forage freely in seaside settlements and in large villages where there are no gardens to destroy. In other areas people are not allowed to free range livestock, but by consensus tether animals on any land not planted with crops. In still other areas landowners appear to be in the process of rebelling against free-tethering and are asserting their property rights by cutting loose livestock they find tied on their land. In more than 50% of communities—an educated guess-- farmers now exclusively use private property to browse livestock.

[12] Jean Rabel dogs are the most despised of animals. They are called *volè* (thieves). The smallest child amuses himself by abusing the family dog and a passing adult, rather than correcting the child, is more likely to add to the child's amusement by kicking the pathetic, usually skeletal like creature, sending it bowling over and yelping for cover. Even strangers can get away with kicking someone's dog. Many farmers develop a bond with their dogs and sometimes people make a weak defense for a dog–'you are the one who left the food out' or 'keep kicking him and you are going to make him a lousy guard.' But few defenses are firm and I have never heard of anyone getting in a fight over a dog. The principal reason for cruelty to dogs seems to be related to their killing of livestock, particularly goats. The best dogs, meaning the most spirited and aggressive dogs, usually wind up killed in traps made of back-crushing rocks or stoned to death when they are overcome with hunger and find themselves at an importune moment—such as when someone is within earshot--sinking their teeth into the succulent neck of a tethered and bleating goat. Dogs are so hated and so much of a problem for livestock raising that one has to ask why farmers do not simply exterminate all of them. The role of dogs as guards against thieves is probably not the answer. The protection of poultry, especially chickens, seems to be the best explanation. Chickens consistently come up in discussion as the most important animal in household livelihood security. But wild and domestic cats, mongooses, and rats take a heavy toll on the birds. Dogs are the best defense against the latter two. (Cats are probably not exterminated because of their role in defending against rats and mice).

[13] Pack animals are tethered in foraging areas during the night. Sheep are brought into the yard at night because they make no sound when attacked by sometimes wild but more often half starved house dogs that develop the habit of packing and killing animals at night. More risk is taken with goats. They are often tethered wherever it is convenient to the owner because they will bleat if threatened by dogs, something that often attracts people from nearby households. Cows can be tethered anywhere as they are too big to be attacked by small Haitian dogs.

[14] The lives of Jean Rabelien fisher folk are also labor intensive. Many fishing villages are located remote areas meaning that household labor demands like retrieving water, cooking and going to market are intensified. Fisherman and woman often spend several days or weeks working even more remote fishing camps. In some areas men migrate to better fishing grounds for as much as six months a year leaving wives and children behind to look after gardens and livestock.

The act of fishing is also time consuming and labor intensive: The most common types of fishing is with traps/weirs, nets, seines and line. Traps should be checked every couple days and preferably daily because moray eels will destroy the traps to get at the fish inside and fish die quickly in the traps. The traps are often kept several hours in boat from the house. Winds make it dangerous and nearly impossible for a single man to row a boat by himself and so two or as many as four men participate in checking them. Four mariners are necessary to set and raise nets and seines require an average of twenty men (see Appendix F). Line fishing is an all night activity but is not as important as other fishing strategies. Fishermen and some women spend much of their time mending nets. Weirs are purchased from mountain people, most of whom have never even seen a live fish, but must be assembled by the fisherman

Aside from a small daily catch of reef fish, most fishermen depend on the annual cycle of migratory fish. When migratory fish pass through in the months July through November, it is called a *rekolt* (harvest). Fish are caught in abundance and over short periods of time. Women and children work all night to scale, gut and salt the fish lest they rot (see Appendix F). But an important point regarding fisherman is that while they are dependent on women to process and sell fish, this does not mean they are dependent on their wives to do it. Any woman can process the fish and there is no shortage of seaside *marchanns* eager for the opportunity. Thus, fisherman can procure income independently of their wives, something that gives them a high degree of autonomy, and hence the freedom to engage in conjugal union simultaneously with more than one woman (see Chapter 15).

[15] But a farmer would not invest all his resources in sheep because, a) they are not suited for every region, b) some farmers report sheep are more susceptible to disease, and c) they are less valuable, indeed few people in the region admit to eating sheep—once slaughtered, they are always passed off for goat meat.

[16] Charcoal is bagged and sold to intermediaries who ship the product on trucks or by boat to urban centers, most notably Port-au-Prince. Rural Jean Rabeliens generally do not use charcoal themselves—they use wood. In almost any region one finds an on going production of charcoal with a handful of specialists and intermediaries engaged in the industry and they are considered among the poorest, lowliest people in an area, although the money earned at charcoal production can compare favorably to other occupations (see Chapter 8). But for most individuals charcoal production is something that occurs when a special need arises, as when someone wants to build a house or finance a new garden and charcoal production is most conspicuously bound with times of drought and crop failure. Makab, for example, is a shipping point for charcoal and there are usually several dozen sacks stacked on the beach. But during the 1996-97 drought, the entire beach was covered with thousands of sacks of charcoal stacked as high as the houses.

[17] The same increased labor demand associated with crises is true of marginal regions. The poorest people usually live in the most marginal areas, which in Jean Rabel are by definition those areas farthest from water and markets, thus increasing household labor requirements.

CHAPTER 11

THE GENDER AND AGE-BASED DIVISIONS OF LABOR

Introduction

In order to carry out basic livelihood activities, tending gardens and livestock, and to perform household survival tasks, Jean Rabeliens require labor. Labor can be acquired in three ways: 1) it can be purchased, as in hiring local or immigrant labor, 2) it can be traded, as in reciprocal work groups, and 3) it can be produced, as in pregnancy, childbirth, childrearing and child labor (or as will be seen later, a child can also be "borrowed").

Jean Rabeliens are at a decided disadvantage when it comes to purchasing labor. As shown previously, Jean Rabel ranks among the poorest areas in Haiti and the pay the cash-poor farmers can offer laborers is too low to attract migrant wage labor. Local wage laborers are scarce because most households in the area have access to land and animals through the tenure arrangements described in the previous chapter. The result is that even the few Jean Rabeliens who have money available to pay agricultural laborers frequently complain that labor cannot be found. Jean Rabeliens consider performing household chores for another household to be humiliating, and no household head would ever consider paying anyone to perform household chores.

Labor can also be obtained through the use of reciprocal labor groups, the only functional supra-household organizations in rural Jean Rabel. Farmers often depend on membership in such organizations, called *kwadi*, to prepare fields for planting.[1] But as shown previously, agriculture is only one of the labor demands that must be satisfied to maintain a productive household and reciprocal labor groups will not drop by the house to assist in the completion of the daunting number of chores that must be accomplished daily in every rural Jean Rabel household. For most labor needs, Jean Rabeliens must depend on themselves, their spouses, and children.

Gender-based Division of Labor

Most tasks in Jean Rabel are accomplished within the organizational framework of the household. Labor within the household is divided in such a way that the members of one gender depend on the member of the other gender in a type of socially constructed symbiosis that makes life difficult for the lone woman and nearly impossible for the lone man. For example, when asked if they could live without a spouse 119 of 136 respondents (87.5%) replied 'no' with comments such as:

> No. We need each other. The man plants gardens and the woman, it is she who must harvest what the man plants. It is the woman who must sell the harvest too. It is the woman too who must wash clothes.[2] (37 year old father of three)

> I can't do it because if I need a garden, it is my husband who must get to work. If I build a house, it is my husband who does it for me. You see, we need each other.[3] (40 year old mother of five)

> I can not live without a woman. There are several circumstances, problems that women resolve. I can not enter into some affairs. I cannot whip up a meal. I cannot wash clothes.[4] (38 year old father of seven)

> No. One enters into the other. Water enters into the sugar. Sugar enters into the water. You cannot throw out just the water. They are a single mixture.[5] (38 year old father of 17)

Women take care of the house, clean, wash clothes, make meals, carry water, and

purchase basic foods and necessities at the market. As shown earlier, women also sell garden produce, they sell staples out of the house, and they often work as itinerant traders who extend the buying power of household revenues by rolling cash reserves over in retail marketing ventures. A woman who has a husband who is present will typically not participate in preparing fields or weeding, but women are considered indispensable in planting, and more importantly, for the daily picking of produce and seasonal harvests. Indeed, harvesting is considered to be the exclusive domain of women and is typically coordinated by the ranking woman of the house. Men who do not have a wife will rely on their mother, sister, or a daughter to harvest and sell produce.

Men work in the gardens, care for livestock, make charcoal and gather firewood. The heaviest tasks, like hoeing (*voye wou*) and digging holes for plantain trees (*voye pikwa/fouye twou*) are considered to be men's work while light garden work such as covering holes and collecting the debris from a weeded garden are thought of as woman's work. Men help process the food, such as flaying millet, beans and corn. Men build houses and all jobs involved in the building of a house, such as carpentry and masonry, are male jobs. Women repair the houses and plaster them with white mud or lime—if the mud is not white then plastering house walls is men's work. As seen earlier, men, and to a far lesser extent women, migrate to the city in pursuit of temporary wage opportunities.

Table 11-1: Adult Sexual Division of Labor (n = 1,482)

Task	Male	Female	Both	Male, Femal and Both	Neither	Total
Housework	5.4%	86.0%	6.7%	98.1%	1.8%	100.0%
Cooking	5.6%	87.6%	4.6%	97.8%	2.4%	100.0%
Childcare	5.3%	77.1%	7.4%	89.8%	10.3%	100.0%
Carry water	6.7%	79.1%	7.8%	93.6%	6.4%	100.0%
Sell produce	6.1%	75.2%	4.6%	85.9%	14.2%	100.0%
Sell livestock	24.4%	34.6%	22.3%	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
Tend Livestock	58.4%	11.7%	16.4%	86.5%	13.5%	100.0%
Garden work	58.7%	13.8%	20.9%	93.4%	6.6%	100.0%
Wage labor	24.4%	5.8%	3.0%	33.2%	66.9%	100.0%

*Neither means no children in the household perform the task

Perhaps the most significant and telling feature of the gender division of labor, and a point that will also be important later in understanding marriage patterns, is that men rarely engage in female chores while women can and sometimes do perform the full range of male activities. Men do not wash clothes, make meals, clean the house, or go to the market. Men seldom carry water. Women on the other hand can and often do tend livestock, weed gardens, and search for firewood. Some women, particularly older, economically independent women, hoe the soil and, in a few rare instances, dig holes for plantain trees. This versatility in job performance reflects the fact that women are more important than men in the day to day functioning of homesteads. Indeed, households are thought of as belonging to women and as discussed in a later chapter, Jean Rabeliens are fond of saying, 'men don't have houses' (*gason pa gen kay*). People will typically refer to the homestead, even when a productive male is present, as 'Ma Benita's place' or 'Madanm Kreantel's.'

Age-Based Division of Labor

While men and women clearly report needing each other to survive, they report needing children even more. In the Opinion Survey, for example, there were 10.8% more respondents who said they could not live without children than those who said they could not live without a spouse (97.0% vs 86.2%). Typical comments included:

> Oh, you must have children. If you don't have any you are in bad shape. You have too much to do.[6] (54 year of mother of 6)

> That is the biggest illness. I can't do it. I just can't live without children.[7] (62 year-old father of 11)

> No. I can't live without children... It's them that work, that give me water, fetch wood, make food.[8] (62 year-old father of 15)

> No. You can't do it. You need children. You need children. You understand? You need children to help you.[9] (54 year-old father of 10)

No. Children are everything in a household.[10] (26 year-old mother of 3)

Children of both sexes participate in every type of labor activity (see Table 11-2).[11] In over 70% of households visited—including households with only toddlers or infants—children--primarily girls--carry water, cook, and perform housework. In over 50% of households children—primarily boys-- reportedly help in the garden and with livestock; in some 32% of households girls, boys, or both, market produce; and in over 30% of households, children—mostly girls-- sell livestock.

Table 11-2. Child Sexual Division of Labor (n = 1,482)*

Task	Male	Female	Both	Male, Femal and Both	Neither	Total
Housework	11.7%	49.2%	14.8%	75.7%	24.3%	100.0%
Cooking	12.4%	46.9%	13.5%	72.8%	27.2%	100.0%
Childcare	9.8%	40.4%	12.3%	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Carry water	13.4%	28.7%	31.5%	73.6%	26.4%	100.0%
Sell produce	10.9%	10.6%	10.1%	31.6%	68.4%	100.0%
Sell livestock	5.1%	22.1%	5.7%	32.9%	67.1%	100.0%
Tend Livestock	40.7%	5.6%	10.2%	56.5%	43.5%	100.0%
Garden work	39.1%	4.4%	9.2%	52.7%	47.3%	100.0%
Wage labor	5.6%	1.2%	1.5%	8.3%	91.7%	100.0%

*Neither means no children in the household perform the task
*Includes households with no children and only toddlers

Who Cares for the Animals

Relationship between Number of Children and Household Prosperity

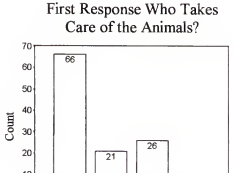


Figure 11-1:

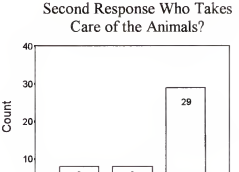


Figure 11-2.

Who Carries the Water

Figure 11-3: First Response
Who Carries Water?

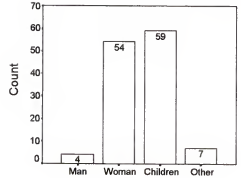
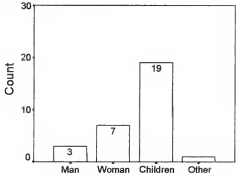


Figure 11-4: Second Response
Who Carries Water?



As discussed previously, all people in the region, regardless of their poverty, have access to gardens plots and animals through sharecrop and other tenure arrangements, something that makes the capacity to tend animals and gardens a significant factor in determining the actual number of each managed by a household. And the capacity of a household is determined by the availability of domestic labor, which to a large degree means children. The extent to which children contribute to household productivity is evident in the relationships between the number of children living in a house and the number of gardens and animals belonging to households.[12] The Livestock and Gardens Survey, discussed in Chapter 1, was designed to measure the relationship between the actual number of children sleeping fulltime in the household and the number of animals and gardens that belong to the household.[13]

Excluding the heads of households and their spouses, the number of 7 to 25 year-olds present in the household was found to explain fully 32.6% of the variance in ownership of animals and 33.1% of the variance in the number of gardens planted (see Figures 11-5 and 11-6). This relationship was expected to be a byproduct of the age of

the household head. But when age of the household head is statistically controlled by adding it to the regression equation, the model still explained 32 .0 % of the variance number of household gardens and 20.0% of the variance in number of household animals (see Tables 11-4 – 11-11). The number of children present in a house is also a major factor in determining the likelihood that the principal woman of the household will be engaged in marketing activities. As seen in Table 11-3, controlling for age, a woman with more than four children is three to eight times more likely to be engaged in commercial activity than a woman with zero to 3 children.

Figure 11-5: Animals by Children per Household
(children = 106; 7 to 25 years of age)

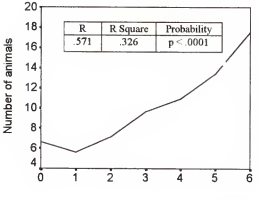


Figure 11-6: Gardens by Children per Household
(n = 106; children 7 to 25 years of age)

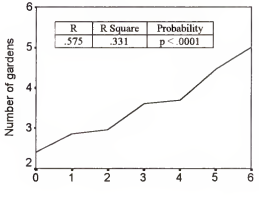


Table 11-3: Number of Children Resident in House by Whether or Not Woman is Engaged in Marketing (n = 132, children 7 to 25 years of age)

				Does Woman Market		
				No	Yes	Total
Age Categories	20 – 34	Children resident in the house	0 – 3	8	8	16
			4 – 6	4	12	16
			7+	0	2	2
			Total	12	22	34
	35 – 49	Children resident in the house	0 – 3	5	6	11
			4 – 6	4	18	22
			7+	0	13	13
			Total	9	38	47
	50+	Children resident in the house	0 – 3	8	11	19
			4 – 6	3	17	20
			7+	4	7	11
			Total	15	36	51

Statistical Results for Test of the Number of Household Gardens by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household

Table 11-4: Gardens by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: R-Square

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.577[a]	.333	.320	1.06

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age of household head, Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house

Table 11-5: Gardens by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: ANOVA

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	57.028	2	28.514	25.423	.000[a]
	Residual	114.400	102	1.122		
	Total	171.429	104			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age of household head, Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house

b. Dependent Variable: Gardens

Table 11-6: Gardens by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: Coefficients

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.169	.375		5.788	.000
	Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house	.388	.064	.553	6.039	.000
	Age of household head	4.8E-03	.009	.048	.527	.599

a. Dependent Variable: Gardens

Statistical Results for Test of the Number of Household Animals by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household

Table 11-7: Animals by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: R-Square

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.466[a]	.217	.202	4.63

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age of household head, Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house

Table 11-8: Animals by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: ANOVA

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	607.125	2	303.562	14.157	.000[a]
	Residual	2187.104	102	21.442		
	Total	2794.229	104			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age of household head, Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house

b. Dependent Variable: ANIMALS

Table 11-9 Animals by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds Controlling for Age of the Head of the Household: Coefficients

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.792	1.639		2.924	.004
	Children 7 to 25 yrs-old in the house	1.262	.281	.445	4.487	.000
	Age of household head	1.695E-02	.039	.043	.430	.668

a. Dependent Variable: ANIMALS

Table 11-10: Gardens by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds
For Household-Head Age Categories

				Number of gardens			
				1 to 2	3 to 4	5 plus	Total
Age of household head	15 to 29	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	4	3	0	7
			1 to 2	1	2	0	3
			3 to 4	0	1	0	1
		Total		5	6	0	11
	30 to 44	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	6	4	1	11
			1 to 2	11	13	0	24
			3 to 4	2	3	2	7
		Total		19	20	3	42
	45 plus	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	2	0	0	2
			1 to 2	4	8	1	13
			3 to 4	3	11	6	20
			5 to 6	0	7	8	15
			7 plus	0	1	1	2
		Total		9	27	16	52

Table 11-11: Animals by the Number of 7 to 25 Year-Olds
For Household-Head Age Categories

				Number of animals/livestock					
				0	1 to 4	5 to 8	9 to 12	Over 13	Total
Age of household head	15 to 29	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	1	3	3	0	0	7
			1 to 2	0	2	0	1	0	3
			3 to 4	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Total		1	5	4	1	0	11
	30 to 44	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	0	1	6	3	1	11
			1 to 2	1	7	12	4	0	24
			3 to 4	0	1	3	1	2	7
		Total		1	9	21	8	3	42
	45 plus	Household members 7 to 25 yrs old	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
			1 to 2	0	4	6	2	1	13
			3 to 4	0	1	7	5	7	20
			5 to 6	0	0	2	4	9	15
			7 plus	0	0	1	1	0	2
		Total			7	16	12	17	52

Conclusion

The value of child labor is evident in the correlations between the quantity of household livestock and gardens and the number of children resident in a particular household. Although, as shown, children participate in virtually all household and productive activities, the increased number of livestock and gardens may not be so much a result of direct participation by children, as much as the result of contributions children make by carrying out small, time-consuming tasks such as fetching water, cooking, cleaning, and tending animals, contributions that free adults to focus on productive income generating activities such as gardening and commerce.

But none of this unequivocally demonstrates that children are a net asset to household livelihood. It is unlikely given the data, that households with greater numbers of children are more impoverished than households with fewer children. The argument could just as easily be made, however, that more children simply increases the demand for food and additional income, which means that more gardens must be planted, more animals tended, and more wage-labor and market ventures pursued. Thus, the question is, do children increase household prosperity? And very importantly, are those contributions related to pronatalism? These issues are the subject of the following chapter.

Notes

[1] While reciprocal labor groups are important, they are probably less important in Jean Rabel than in regions where farmers heavily depend on a few crops harvested over a very short period of time. The primary agricultural labor pinch in Jean Rabel comes during planting season and the significant advantage of reciprocal labor is that it resolves the need to accomplish particular tasks quickly, such as clearly a field that is grown over with small trees and brush, or turning the soil in a field so that it can be planted before weeds start growing. But in reality, there are few agricultural labor tasks that must involve reciprocal labor groups. Most crops in Jean Rabel are not harvested all at once, but rather over a long period of time and the few crops that do become ripe all at once, namely beans and corn, are easily harvested by a few people, typically women, who can manage the task alone. Furthermore, reciprocal labor groups are ultimately a

zero-sum strategy of capturing labor because households get no more from participating in work teams than they contribute as members--i.e. one day of work in a neighbor's field begets one day of work on the farmer's own field.

[2] *Non. Nou toudè bezwenn lòt. Si gason ap travay, fi a menm se li pou ranmase rekolt ki gason ap fet. Rekolt ki fet la tou, se fi a menm ki pou al van ni. Se fi a tou pou al lave.*

[3] *M pa kapab paskè si m bezwenn nan jaden an, se mari-m pou al travay. Si m-ap monte yon kay la , se mari mwen pou fe pou mwen. Ou we yon bezwenn lòt.*
[4] *M pa ka viv san fi. Sa-k pase m pa ka viv san fi, gen yon seri de sikonstans, pwoblem se fi pou fe, paskè se pa tout bagay m ka antre andan. Ma pa ka nan fe ti manje rapid, m pa ka lave...*

[5] *Non. Yon antre nan lòt. Dlo antre nan sik la. Sik antre nan dlo a. Sa di, ou pa ka jete dlo a. Sa di, se yon dosaj fet.*

[6] *O, fo ou gen ti moun. Si ou pa genyen ou pa bon. Ou anbarase twop. Kounye-la m vin pran dlo la, oswa m sot nan jaden lè m rive se mwen pou mete ponyet atè, se mwen pou al nan dlo. Lè m vini, pou al nan bwa.*

[7] *Pi gwo maladi, m pa kapab. .... Telman m pa ka viv san ti moun.*

[8] *Non. M pa ka viv san ti moun. Bondieu ba-m pitit la, se li ki bay ou travay, ki ba-m ti dlo, chèche ti bwa, vin fe manje.*

[9] *Non. Ou pa kapab. Paske ou bezwenn ti moun, ou bezwenn ti moun, ou konprann. Ou bezwenn pou ti moun yo ed-o.*

[10] *Non. Ti moun se tout eleman andedan kay.*

[11] Only 5.4% of households (85 of the 1,523 reporting) had no children–compared to 12% of households with no adult woman present full time and 23% of households with no adult male present full time Fifty-seven percent of these childless households (47 of 83 for which the data is available) were in yards with other houses that do have children indicating that only 36 of 1,523 houses (2.4% of the total) are actually homesteads having no children. Only 7 of these latter households had a woman as household head.

[12] There are obviously other factors that also determine the number of gardens and animals a household may own, specifically wealth. Differential access to land and capital and other sources of revenue such as remittances and money earned through skilled craftsmanship and marketing are clearly determinant of the number of animals and gardens a person can purchase. The periodic sale of animals and garden land to cover medical expenses and costs associated with funeral and wedding ceremonies are also prominent factors determining the number of animals and gardens a household might have at any given time. But the point regarding children and prevailing social and economic conditions in Jean Rabel is that they provide the next most important ingredient, the labor to manage gardens and animals.

[13] The Baseline Survey included the same data needed to test the relationship between the number of children present in the household and the number of animals and gardens the household tended. The relationship is significant, even when controlling for age of the household head—which has no statistical influence--but as described in Chapter 1, it was discovered too late that respondents in the Baseline Survey were tending to include in their enumeration of household members children who were away at school in the village or in the city. Because of drought conditions, there was also a problem with reporting on the number of animals. To address these shortcomings, the smaller survey used here was carried out in two Jean Rabel communities. This survey, called the Livestock and Gardens Survey, was conducted by a supervisor from the Baseline Survey (see Introduction).

Below is data from the Baseline Survey regarding the number of children reported as present in the household versus number of gardens and controlling for age of the household head. (The ages 5 to 19 years was used in this test rather than the 7 to 25 year-old range used in the other test. The decision was arbitrary).

Table 11-12: Child Present in House by Number of Gardens, Model Summary (Baseline Survey)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.141[a]	.020	.018	1.57

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Number of 5 to 19 years-olds in hshld

Table 11-13: Child Present in House by Number of Gardens, ANOVA (Baseline Survey)

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	71.944	2	35.972	14.646	.000[a]
	Residual	3551.589	1446	2.456		
	Total	3623.533	1448			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Number of 5 to 19 years-olds in hshld

b. Dependent Variable: Number of Gardens Planted

Table 11-14: Child Present in House by Number of Gardens, Coefficients (Baseline Survey)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.589	.128		20.262	.000
	Number of 5 to 19 years-olds in hshld	.115	.022	.139	5.312	.000
	Age	-1.51E-03	.002	-.018	-.676	.499

a. Dependent Variable: Number of Gardens Planted

CHAPTER 12

WHAT PARENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE ECONOMIC UTILITY OF CHILDREN

Introduction

In the previous chapter it was shown that Jean Rabel children are important contributors to household livelihood and production. Children do household chores, they cook, they clean, they go to the water and to market, they work in the garden, and they tend livestock. More children appears to translate into greater economic security and relatively greater household prosperity, i.e. more animals and more gardens. The statistics may or may not convince the skeptical reader. Jean Rabel farmers, however, need no convincing. In this chapter it is shown that during the Opinion Survey farmers overwhelmingly emphasized the fact that children are not just helpful, they are necessary; and they are necessary because they work.

What Farmers Have to Say About Children

The matter of fact explanation farming men and women in the Opinion Survey (n = 136) gave for producing children is simply because children are the single most important source of household labor. When asked, "Why did you have children?" 76% of respondents made comments similar to the following examples:[1]

[1] In 68% of the households the ranking male household member was interviewed and in 68% of the households the ranking woman was interviewed. Unintelligible responses were omitted.

> Why does a person have children? To help. Right now for example, I would have to go get water. But I don't have to. It is here. I would have to go get wood. But I don't have to. It's right here.[1]
> (40 year-old mother of 5)

> If I did not have them, things would be worse for me. You need a little water, they go to the water. You need a little fire wood, they go get wood. The boys work in the garden for you. They look after the animals.[2]
> (33 year-old mother of 8)

> Children are the biggest necessity. If you need something you tell a child. Like right now, I can say, 'go look for some fire wood,' or 'some embers from the neighbors house.' 'Go to the market.'[3]
> (27 year-old father of 3)[2]

> Why did I have children? I don't understand what you are saying. Children are there to help you. Your children do your work. I don't know who takes care of things at your house.[4]
> (60 year-old father of 13)

The need for children is conceptualized first and foremost not in terms of love, companionship, or the security that grown children can provide to aging parents; but in terms of labor. When asked if they could live without children, only four of the 136 respondents (3%), two women and two men, replied 'yes.' Yet 14% of respondents said they could live without a spouse. Almost without exception and without hesitating 97% of men and women replied to the question in the manners exhibited in the following examples:

> If you don't have children, dogs will eat you. If you have no children to fetch a little water and get some fire for you. If you hurt something or you are sick, you're finished.[5]
> (55 year-old father of 17)

> No. Children are protection. You need children to help you work. It is children who save the household[6]
> (32 year-old mother of 5)

> Oh, a big never. Children don't tire. Children are animals. Children are never worn out. They do all the work. They go to the water. They do all the work.[7]
> (40 year-old mother of 4)

> No. I cannot live without children... If I need one to go to the village, I send him. If I need one to go for wood, I send him. They can't tell me no... Not one of them can stand in front of me and say no. We pull together.[8]
> (39 year- old father of 6)

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[2] References are to living children.

> Me! Times the way they are? Me! If I didn't have children I wouldn't stick around here for a minute. I would leave. I would go play a different lottery. I would go look for another type of work. The type of work where they would pay me money.[9]
>
> (40 year-old mother of 5)

Only 7% of respondents indicated they wanted children for reasons of affection and only 14% indicated children were valuable foremost as adults (i.e. when the children are grown) to provide support during old age. This should not be interpreted to mean people in rural Jean Rabel do not love their children nor should it be interpreted to mean that when their parents become aged children are not at some level considered valuable sources of security. Farmers emphasized that children's support should be reciprocated; children "do" for adults and adults have a responsibility to "do" for the children.[10] Interviewers regularly received comments like, *Yo itilite o. Ou pran reskonsab yo* (They make themselves useful to you and you feed and care for them) and, *Ti moun ka ede-m. M ka ede ti moun yo.* (Children can help me. I can help children). The most important thing adults can do for children is put them in school. School is the single greatest non-subsistence expense for Jean Rabel households and the second biggest reason for selling livestock (see p. 171). Also, to some extent, school is thought of as an investment in the future security of parents. Twenty-five percent (25%) of parents said they sent their children to school primarily so the child could better help care for them in the future.[11-12]

But the point that farmers made more emphatically than any other is that it is the work children perform in their youth rather than after they are grown that is foremost in importance. Thus, children are important to their parents as they age but not for the reasons outsiders tend to anticipate—that they will provide for their parents—but rather for the contributions they will make to the household labor pool in their youth and for the grandchildren they will provide as they mature, grandchildren who will run errands and do

the time consuming and labor intensive chores necessary for survival in Jean Rabel. This fact came through most clearly in the question, "If you had not yet borne children, and someone came along and promised you $500 per month, every month, for your entire life, with the single condition that you do not bear/father children, would you agree?" Respondents had no problem understanding the question, nor did they have a problem answering. Only five women and eight men said yes they would take $500 a month for life rather than bear children. The other 123 respondents (90%) responded with an emphatic "no." The variety of responses revealed the appreciation with which people in Jean Rabel regard their children, especially young children, and the logic underlying this appreciation. In the following comments, take particular note of the importance of children with respect to being ill and note that references are not to grown children but to young children who can be sent on errands:

> They give you $500 a month. OK. You are in the house by yourself. Fever takes you. And while you are sick, who is going to look after you?[13] (40 year-old father of 3)

> No. I would not agree. That couldn't help you at all. If I am getting $500 a month and I do not have a child to say, go there, take this gallon, go get some water for me. Look at me, I'd be making $500 dollars a month and all the time things would be getting worse. Not better. No. Not better. Worse. Things would be getting worse.[14] (51 year-old father of 2)

> No. Children are worth more than money.[15] (40 year-old mother of 3)

> No. Because it doesn't make sense....I would rather have children. As the old people say, children are the wealth of the poor.[16] (38 year-old mother of 7)

> No. Because I need children. I can tell you, you have money in your hand and you can't send it to do a single errand. Sometimes you have money with you and you lose it.[17] (50 year-old father of 6)

> Why don't I agree? Something happens. I get to the house. I lie there. I'm sick. Money? I can't send it to do anything for me. I can die lying there on it. It's something that can't do anything for me. It is a person you need to take the money, go with it, buy what I need and bring it to me. And if I don't have any children to give the money to?[18] (56 year-old father of 1)

No. If I need a little water, money can't give it to me. I can not send money on an errand.[19]
(34 year-old mother of 5)

No. Because I know that if I had no child, tomorrow, by God, I am sick, I would not find a child to help me.[20] (28 year-old mother of 2)

Ah, you can have money in the house but if you do not have children to do for you? A person can have money and you can lie down and die. If you do not have a child to stand there and do things for you that money can not do. Money! You can sleep on a pile of money. It can not work for you. It is people who stand up and work for you.[21] (65 year-old mother of 9)

Oh. Children are wealth. If you don't have children, a dog is better than you. No. I would rather have children. Children are help. This morning, if you send one out there, he does his job, its you who benefits.[22] (54 year-old mother of 6)

I would not agree. Ahh, children. Money can't do anything for me. If I am sick, I need to take care of something, the children, if they are there, they will take care of it. If I am sick, I can't send money to do errands.[23] (45 year-old mother of 5)

No. Why. Because children are the wealth of the poor. Children are wealth.[24]
(50 year-old mother of 4)

Oh no. Children are wealth. It is children who are, who are the wealth of the poor. Money is not wealth.[25] (42 year-old mother of 3)

No. Because let's say you have money. You go find someone to do something for you. He doesn't do it. But children. As soon as I am sick, look at my child making food for me, washing clothes for me, doing things for me. And if it was money, it wouldn't be doing anything for me.[26]
(30 year-old father of 4)

I would ask for the chance to have one child. I find children necessary ... [27]
(40 year-old mother of 3)

Number of Children Desired

Exactly how many children do Jean Rabeliens want? This is not an easy question to answer. Of the 1,361 women reporting in the nutritional part of the Baseline Survey the average number of children desired was 3.5 children

Table 12-1: Number of Children Desired

Averages for Baseline Survey			Averages for Opinion Survey		
Number of children desired	Std error	Actual number of children	Number of children desired	Std error	Actual number of children
3.5	.04	5.0	3.9	.18	5.7

(missing = 183). Of the 124 men and women who were willing to respond in the Opinion Survey (missing = 12) the average number was 3.9 children. These figures are consistent similar results reported by farmers all over Haiti (Stycos 1954, Murray 1972, Allman 1982b, Smith 1998). But perhaps the question as asked was not specific enough to truly provide a clear understanding of the decision making process involved in determining the number of children desired. For example, farmers clearly distinguish between how many children they wanted to be responsible for and how many they felt they needed, or would be useful to them. Some individuals expressed a preference for few or no children but then added that they had no choice, that they must have children, that children were necessary to assure a minimal standard of living (see final quote at end of chapter). Elsewhere in Haiti there is evidence that five children—two adults and three children—is considered an ideal sized household (Murray 1972, Smith 1998). But this implies that the ideal number of 'working' children is three, and it does not consider that children grow-up and leave the house and must then be replaced by other children. Furthermore, when respondents in the Opinion Survey were asked how many children they would want if they had a paying job, the average went from 3.9 to 4.2 children. And when the question was asked, 'Which couple is better off, a husband and wife with three children or a husband and wife with six children?," forty-six percent of the men and 72% of the women (together representing 59% of total

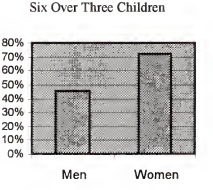

Figure 12-1

respondents) favored the couple with 6 children as being better off (see Figure 12-1 above). Furthermore, the data indicated that a preference for the larger family is significantly influenced by the sex and age of the respondent. Thirteen (13) of 23 women (57%) in the age range 20 thru 34 years preferred six children, whereas 20 of the 23 women (87%) over the age of 50 preferred six children. Similarly, while only three of 13 men (13%) in the 20 to 23 year age group favored the family with six children, 14 of 27 men (52%) in the over 50 age group favored the larger family (see Table 12-2).

Table 12-2: Preferred Number Of Children By Age And Sex Of Respondent

			Age categories			
			20 – 34	35 - 49	50 +	Total
A couple with three children versus a couple with six, who is better off?	Men	Three	10	11	14	35
		Six	3	13	13	29
		Total	13	24	27	64
	Women	Three	10	6	3	19
		Six	13	16	20	49
		Total	23	22	23	68

Missing = 4

There are other good reasons to remain skeptical regarding the statements made by farmers about preferred numbers of children. When asked, "How many children do you want?" farmers everywhere in rural Haiti are typically reluctant to reply and responses are usually evasive (Stycos, 1954; Murray 1972, 1979; Smith 1998). In the Opinion Survey, respondents commonly first replied with a curt, "However many God gives me" (*mezi sa bon dieu bay mwen*). Others responded, "All children, all children. Both girls and boys. They are all good." (*tout ti moun, yo tout bon, ni fi ni gason. Tout bon*). One 34 year-old father of six said, ""two, three or thirty" (*dè, twa obyen trant*). A 45 year-old mother of five said, "well, fifty is good, six is good" (*en ben, sinkant t-ap bon, sis la t-ap bon*). One man who did not want to respond at all explained that he

knew a guy who asked God to give him five children; so God gave him ten and then killed five. After considerable prompting, one woman said she wanted 6 children. An appalled bystander was caught on cassette saying, "now you won't get anymore at all" (*kounie-a ou pap fe menm anko*).[28]

Another problem with the question involved the high school educated surveyors who thought they knew what was best for the mostly illiterate and semi-literate farmers. No matter how often surveyors were counseled against leading respondents during questioning they remained convinced that large numbers of children were not in the best interest of the farmers and they seemed determined to convince the farmers. The farmers, on the other hand, often had their own ideas about what was in their best interests. In several instances the difference in opinions between the interviewer and respondent produced nonsensical, even comical, results, as in the following exchange between a 24 year-old male interviewer and a 35 year-old father of 6 children:

Interviewer: What quantity of children is best to have?

Respondent: OK. Quantity of children that is best? Ah, there, eh .... There are no children better than other children.

Interviewer: No. What quantity. As in number. I could say three, four children, five, six children. What quantity do you see as best?

Respondent: The biggest child. That's the one for me.

Interviewer: It is not the biggest or the smallest! Quantity! That means if you have a quantity of children, four children, five children. Which is best?

Respondent: It is best you have two, three, or six. If God gives them to you, it is best you take them.

Interviewer: OK. Why do you say three children? [29]

To get around the problem of directly asking 'how many children do you want,' the previously mentioned question regarding a husband and wife with three children versus a husband and wife with six children was included in the survey. Respondents were

clearly less reluctant about replying to the '3 or 6 children' question-- only three men refused to respond, insisting that the matter was up to God. Nevertheless, the responses to the question continued to be obfuscated by interviewer bias and farmers remained somewhat apprehensive about choosing a quantity of children. The following interview involved a 26 year-old female interviewer questioning a 34 year-old mother of 5 children,

Interviewer: Who is better off, a couple with three children or the couple with six children?

Respondent: All children are good.

Interviewer: No. I am asking you, respond three or respond six.

Respondent: Eh, if, eh. OK. Normally, concerning children, if God gives you three children, he doesn't give you anymore, you just have to live with what God gave you.

Interviewer: Yes. You have to live with what he gave you. But it is a question that I am asking you.

Respondent: I am following you Madanmwazel. Honestly.

Interviewer: Yes. I understand. "Honestly." But I am asking you, concerning this question, three or six, which is better? You must decide if it is three or six.

Respondent: (Silence) Six.

Interviewer: Why?

Respondent: They are there. They will help you.

Interviewer: Three can help you too. But six?

Respondent: Yes, six. Six can help you more. Some will go to the garden. Some to the water. Some will do laundry.

Interviewer: (Silence).

Respondent: OK. Three.[30]

In contrast to the somewhat amusing arguments with the interviewers over the merits of family size, the majority of farmer responses were clear and adamant declarations in favor of six children,

When you have six it is better for you. More people, more work, more things getting done. The work gets done faster.[31] (40 year-old mother of 3)

> Six. Because if for example you are going out this morning, you are going to work in the garden or the market, you take three with you and you leave three to do the work at the house.[32]
> (43 year-old father of 3)

> When you have six children it is better for you. Why? Because this morning, you are all by yourself, you send each child somewhere to do a job for you. Each job gets done at the same time.[33]
> (35 year-old father of 6)

> All six are important. All six. You send one to the left, one to the right, and the rest in all four cardinal directions.[34]
> (47 year-old father of 7)

There were some farmers who voluntarily chose three rather than six children as more desirable and who did so without any apparent convincing on the part of the interviewers. But the choice was usually made with some reflection. Invariably the biggest issue in having fewer rather than more children was school costs. Forty-three (43) of 51 respondents (84%) who chose three children explained that the cost of school was the principal reason for not wanting a greater number of children,

> Three would be better. Because things are hard nowadays. Education. Things are hard. It was not a long time ago you could have children....Now, if you have ten children, you have to put all ten in school.[35]
> (50 year-old mother of 4)

> Three. If I had six, put all six in school, I would spend more money. But if I have three, I spend less. It is there you find the advantage. But if God gives you six, you are obliged to put all six in school. It is not in your interest. But if God takes care of you, it can be in your interest. There are people who have ten children. They are no help at all because their parents have nothing to stand on, they don't have any way to get by. And then there are those who have 50 children and they are better for it.[36]
> (29 year-old father of 9)

> Three would be better. Because sometimes you have all these children, the times are so bad you can not keep them in school.[37]
> (35 year-old father of 5)

> Better you have six children. But you cannot educate all of them.[38]
> (34 year-old father of 6)

Conclusions

The bottom line is that despite a few concerns about school costs, farmers in Jean Rabel want children. They see children as a valuable economic asset and more children

are better than fewer children. Furthermore, while concerns that may be associated with old age, such as illness, are important. The farmers are not referring to adult offspring. When a 65 year-old Jean Rabel woman says she can not live without children, that she needs someone to do errands for her, especially when she is sick, someone to fetch water and run to the market, she is not referring to her adult children. Rather, she is talking about her grandchildren, nieces, godchildren, or the children of neighbors, something that, as will be discussed shortly, is critical to understanding high birth rates in Jean Rabel. Thus, statements like "children are the wealth of the poor" (*pitit se byen malere*) and "it is children who save the homestead" (*se ti moun ki sove kay la*) are direct references to the tasks that young children perform. These are burdensome tasks that are typically thought of as humiliating for an adult, but tasks that, nevertheless, must be accomplished to maintain a viable and productive household. Giving the last word on the issue to a 32 year-old Jean Rabel mother of five,

> You really would not want to have children. No. But you must. It is children who raise you up off the ground.[39]

The following section examines the ways in which adults divide up and govern access to children and the contractual unions in which households are formed and children are produced.

Notes

[1] *Pou kisa yon moun fe ti moun, se pou li ka ed-o. Kounye-a la lè ou we-m pati se mwen k-ap al nan dlo-a, min lè ou we-m vini, mwen jwen dlo-a. Se mwen t-ap al nan bwa, lè m vini ke mwen jwenn bwa-a.*

[2] *Bon dieu, Bon Dieu. Se pa mwen te vle fe yo, Bon Dieu. Tout ou jwenn sa, Bon Dieu fe yo. (Wi men gen anpil moun ki bezwenn fe ti moun). Wi. (Kouman ou ta santi si ou pa ta genyen). Si m pat genyen li t-ap pi mal pou mwen. (Men pou ki rezon ou we ou gen yo?) Ou bezwenn ti dlo, yo al nan dlo. Ou bezwenn ti bwa, yo al nan bwa. Ti gason yo al travay nan jaden pou ou. Yo fe bet pou ou, y-al lonje yo, al mare yo nan jaden.*

[3]*Ti moun nan se yon bagay ki nesesè. Pase ou bezwenn voye ou ka di, ' pitit, koulye-a, pou mwen, al chèche yon ti difè pou mwen,' 'al chèche yon ti bwa,' 'al nan mache'.*

[4]*Pou ki sa m fe ti moun? Mwen pa konprann. Ti moun la pou sevi ... Tout kondi sevis pa-ou. Pa-ou, kondi sevis pa ou. M pa ka konprann sa-k mennen lakay ou....*

[5] *Si ou pa gen ti moun, chyen k-ap manje ou. Si ou pa gen ti moun yon kote pou bay ou yon ti dlo, pou ba ou yon ti dife. Si ou fe sa obyen ou gen yon bagay k-ap fe ou mal, moun fin ou ye.*

[6]*Non, paske se yon pwotejman ti moun yo ye. Paske ti moun yo bezwenn ede o nan travay. Se ti moun ki sove kay la.*

[7]*O gran janme. Ti moun an pa janm bouke. Ti moun se bet. Ti moun an pa janm fatigue. Y-ap fe tout travay. Yo t-al nan dlo. Y-ap fe tout travay.*

[8]*Non, m pa ka viv san ti moun. Ou pa ka viv nan kay ou sel... Ti moun pa-m mwen. Yon m bezwenn nan bouk, m voye li. M bezwenn nan dlo, m voye li. M bezwenn nan bwa, m voye yo. Li pa ka di-m non. Alo, yè egzakmwen, ki zanimo mare la m voye al chanje, si m gon pitit yo chanje li. Yon pa ka kanpe devan mwen pou di-m non. En sel lavi grandi.*

[9]*Mwen menm? Pou vi tann sa a? Mwen? Si m pa ta gen ti moun menm, m pa ta fe isit menm. M t-ap pati, m tap al deyè lòt boulet, ke m tap al chèche lot travay ke m fe pou yo peye-m kob.*

[10] Actually, farmers expressed favoritism for girls (see Chapter 15).

[11] Adults expressed this debt to children, owed in the form of education,

> Me? I need children all the time because it is all the time that children are working for me ... [But] What I am going to tell you is no lie. In the month of October I send all five of these children to school. Then, lunch pail in hand, I take the hoe, and I set to weeding all by myself. I go the whole day without decent food. I weed the garden. It's the truth. No lie. Because these days children can't make it without school. (44 year-old mother of 5)
>
> (*Mwen menm, m bezwenn ti moun tout tann paskè mwen menm se tout tann ti moun yo fe travay pou mwen ... Sa m di ou se pa manti. Nan mwa oktob m voye tou le sink ti moun sa lekol. Kounye-a manje nan min um, m pran wou a, met sakle, kounye-a m oblije pase jounen san manje net, m-ap sakle. Vreman, se pa manti. Kounye-a la, pliskè ti moun an pa ka leve san li pa lekol...)*
>
> School is the number one thing a parent can do for a child. [But] It was not a long time ago it was livestock that was best to give your child. (31 year-old father of five)
>
> (*Lekol se premiè byen ke yon paran ka fe pou yon ti moun. Se pa lontan se yon bet ou te bay ti moun ke fe yo byen.*)

[12] This was actually a subsample of 84 Opinion Survey respondents. The question was added after the survey had already begun. Twenty-five of the 84 respondents (30%) said they sent children to school only to help the child when he or she was grown and 38 respondents (45%) indicated that educating children was in the interest of both parents and children.

[13]*Y-ap bay ou 500 dola pa mwa, OK, ou nan kay ou sel o e lè lafyev pran ou e lè maladi pran ou, sa ka okipe ou?*

[14]*Non. M pa ka dako, sa pa ka itil ou anyen. Wi, eskè m-ap touche 500 dola le mwa, epi m pa gen yon moun pou m di ale la, al pran ti gallon, al pran empè dlo pou mwen. Ala m-ap touche 500 dola le mwa, ala se pa desann m-ap desann, se pa grandi m-ap grandi. Tout tann,, m pap desann? ...Premiè byen yon moun se pitit-o. Chyen ap manje o.*

[15] *Non. Pitit gen valè pase lajan.*

[16]*Non. Pase, li pa fe sans ... M tap pito pitit, paske gran moun kon di, pitit se byen pou malere.*

[17]*Non. Pase m bezwenn ti moun nan. M ka d-ou, ou gen lajan min ou pa ka voye lajan. Ou gen kob la, pa fwa, epi lajan asanm av-ou ou pedi yo.*

[18]*Pou ki rezon m pa t-ap dako? Gen yon mwayen, m rive, m kouche la, m malad. Kob la m pa ka voye li, m-ap mouri sou li. Bagay ki pa ka fe anyen pou mwen. Se moun pou pran kob la, ki prale, achte avek, e pran sa m merite. E m pa gen ti moun pou met nan kob la.*

[19]*Non. Si m bezwenn yon ti dlo la, kob la pa ka ba-m mwen. Mwen pa ka voye lajan*

[20]*Non. Paske mwen si m pa fe ti moun, demen si dieu vle, lè m malad m pa ta jwenn moun pou ede-m.*

[21]*Ah, ou met gen lajan nan kay la min si ou pat gen moun pou fe pou ou. Ou met gen lajan. Kounie-a ou met kouche mouri, si se pa pou yon moun kanpe fe yon bagay pou ou, lajan pa ke fè. Lajan, ou met domi sou lajan, pa ka fe pou ou, se moun ki pou kanpe fe pou ou.*

[22]*O, pitit-la se byen o li ye. Si ou pa fe pitit, chyen pi miyo pas-o. Non. M pito pitit la. Pitit la se yon ed pou ou. Maten a si voye pitit la la, li jwenn lavi se ou menm ki jwenn lavi.*

[23]*M pa t-ap dako. E pitit la, kob la pa fe anyen pou mwen, non. Si m malad, m-ap regle yon bagay, ti moun nan si li la l-ap fe yo. E si m malad m pa ka voye lajan.*

[24]*Non. Sa-k fe sa? Paskè pitit se byen pou malere. Pitit se byen.*

[25]*O, non. (PKS). Lajan pa byen, se pitit ki ye, ki byen pou malere. Lajan pa byen.*

[26]*Non. Paskè ou gen lajan la, si ou al jwenn yon moun pou fe yon bagay pou ou, li rete la. Min ti moun an, depi m malad la, gade pitit um ap bouye pou mwen, ap lave pou mwen, ap bagay pou mwen. E te lajan li te ye li pa tap fe anyen pou mwen.*

[27]*M ta mande yon chans pou fe yon ti moun, m jwenn ti moun nesesè. M pa ta dako. Ti moun itil.*

[28] There was also some reluctance to respond to any questions about children. Some respondents refused to give children's names and some refused to divulge how many children they have or gave false information. Some responded easily to questions about adult activities and then clamed up when the issue of children was introduced. The most widespread fear among farmers is that the identities of their children may be recorded and the children sacrificed in rituals of black magic, sold to demons, or put in a *jakout* (grass storage sack) and subsequently eaten. There is even a widely recounted myth of a white boogie man called 'three buckets' (*twa ti bokit*) who goes around gathering children up, cutting them into pieces, and then carries them back to the city to eat with his white friends.

[29] *En ben, kantite ti moun ki bon, la.. se.. eh... pa gen ti moun ki pi bon pase ti moun, non. (Non, ki kantite, komsi yon chiff, m ka di twa, kat ti moun, sink, sis ti moun. Ki kantite ou we konsa ka pi bon?) Sa-k pi fo, se li menm pou mwen. (Se pa pou pi fo, pou pi piti, non. Kantite. Sa vle di si ou gen kantite ti moun, kat ti moun, sink ti moun. Kies ou we t-ap pi bon? Dapre mizè lavi-a?) Pito ou gen dè o twa ti moun oswa ou gen sis. Si bon dieu ba ou, pito ou pran yo. (Pou ki sa ou di se twa ti moun ou ta genyen?)*

[30]*Tout bon! (M d-ou twa m d-ou sis, fok ou di-m sa-k pi bon nan yo). Eh, si, eh. Bon. Nòmal. Sou afe ti moun nan, si bon dieu ba ou twa ti moun, li pa bay ou anko, w-ap rete sou sa bondieu ba ou-a. (Wi w-ap rete sou sa li ba ou, min se yon kesyon m-ap poz-o) Mwen la tou bon madanmmwazel. (Wi, m konprann, 'tout bon'. Min m t-ap mand-o, sou kesyon, twa sis, sak pi bon nan yo? Fok ou we si se twa obyen sis la). [Silans] Sis la. (pou ki sa). Li la, l-ap ba-m yon ed. (Min twa ka bay ou ed tou, min sis la?) Sis la, sis la ap ba ou ed. Gen sa-k kap al nan jaden., y-ap al nan dlo, y-ap al lave. (Silans). En ben, twa.*

[31]*Lè ou gen sis la li pi bon pou ou.. (Pou ki sa?) Plis moun, plis sevis, plis okipasyon. Travay la mache pi vit.*

[32] *Sis. Paske si petet maten an w-wap pati, ou al nan travay, ou pat a twa, lòt twa rete lakay la ap ede lakay la.*

[33] *Lè ou gen sis ti moun nan li pi bon pou ou . (Pou ki sa?) Pou ki sa? Kounie-a maten-a, ou sel la, kounye-a ou voye chak ti moun yon kote, fe yon sevis pou ou, kounye-a tout sevis regle ansanm.*

[34]*Tou le sis toujou impotan (Non, si ou ta gen twa o di mwen sis, kies nan yo ki tap plis impotan?). Tou le sis. (Eskè se sis k-ap impotan obyen eske se twa k ap impotan). Tou le sis ap impotan w-ap voye yon adwat yon agoch, tou le kat fasad.*

[35]*Twa ta pi bon. Paskè bagay la di kounye-a. Preparasyon. Bagay la di. Se pa lontan, lè lontan ou te ka fe ti moun... Kounye-a si ou gen dis pitit, pou ou met tout lekol.*

[36]*Twa. En ben, si m gen sis, mete tou le sis lekol, m ta depanse plis kob. Min si m gen twa, m depanse mwens kob. Se la avantay li ka genyen. Min si bon dieu bay ou sis la, ou oblije mete tou le sis lekol, li pa nan avantay ou. Min si bon dieu pran swenn ou, yo ka nan avantay. Gen moun ki fe dis, yo pa itil yo menm paskè pye yo pa bon, pa gen kote pou pase. Gen ki fe 50 pou yo ede paran.*

[37]*Twa t-ap pi bon. Paskè dè fwa ou gen tout ti moun sa epok sitelman pa bon ou pa jwenn posibilite pou ou ka kontiue ti moun lekol.*

[38]*Pito sis ti moun min ou pa ka fe edikasyon pa yo.*

[39]*Se pou, se pou, ,. , ou pa ta vle fe ti moun, non. Min fo ou fe. Se timoun kap leve ou ate*

SECTION V

RAISING CHILDREN IN JEAN RABEL: THE MODE OF REPRODUCTION

CHAPTER 13

RAISING CHILDREN AND CONTROL OVER CHILD LABOR ACTIVITIES IN JEAN RABEL

Introduction

In the previous chapters, the all-important role of the household, livelihood strategies, the division of labor, the economic utility of children, and how children are produced was examined. Through the examination of all of these factors, the attempt was made to begin to provide a holistic appreciation for the causes of the pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex. Dependency on the household mode of production, the sexual division of labor, and the significance of contributions children make in the accomplishment of basic subsistence tasks have been shown to be reflected in the State and local laws and customs that govern childrearing and conjugal unions. This section expands on the previous sections, first through a discussion of how children are raised, the costs of childrearing, who assumes these costs, and how control over children and their labor is apportioned among parents, friends, and relatives. Further evidence is also provided regarding the way that child labor contributes to the prosperity of the household.

After examining child rearing, I discuss the role of conjugal union in Jean Rabel. Despite the fact that the vast majority of couples in Jean Rabel never legally marry, the ideal nevertheless involves having one lifetime sexual partner, honoring and respecting that partner, and the raising of children who adopt principles of honesty and hard work. Women will talk with pride of the trouble they have faced with their husband—or a

hypothetical husband-- and how they will remain with him no matter what kind of hard times may befall them. Men also often emphasize the importance of their wife and the value of both female and male sexual fidelity. Men owe their wives support in the form of tending livestock and planting gardens. Women, who are thought of as the owners of the home, owe their husbands absolute sexual fidelity. The presence of children cements the contract between men and women and formalizes it into a familial contract that enjoys the full weight of customary and legal sanction.

Seventy percent (70%) of women report attaining the ideal of a single lifetime parental partner described above. But the poverty and transience of males means that a significant minority of women are not able to live up to ideals of conjugal union and also begin timely reproductive careers. The scarcity of eligible fathers is compensated for by the social fact that men do not owe their wives sexual allegiance. A man who is meeting his financial obligations to his first wife is free to establish a second and even third and fourth households with other women. While a man having multiple wives might appear to be a manifestation of the subjugation of women, it is better understood as a manifestation of economic inequality among men. Women need support from men in the form of labor and especially in the form of cash to raise children, and some men, particularly older men, have more of these resources to offer than others. Furthermore, women derive greater benefit from child productivity than do men. Therefore, the more working children a woman has, the more economically independent she becomes and the more she will think of herself as not needing men at all.

The Definition of a Child

When a child is born in rural Jean Rabel the umbilical cord is tied off and cut. The child is wiped with a damp cloth, and the breast is given almost immediately. Purgatives are not given to the child, as they are in some other regions of Haiti. The child stays completely confined in the house with its mother for the first five days of its life. Jean Rabeliens are extreme in their encouragement of the use of supplements to nourish the newborn. By 12 to 15 days after birth the baby is being given supplements in the form of tea and sugar-water and some women even begin feeding a kind of home made baby food, usually a paste made from a type of dried plantain called *kiyez*. Jean Rabeliens believe that girls develop physically faster than boys and so at 2 months a girl is encouraged to sit up, *kase*, while a boy is not encouraged to do this until 3 months of age.

The Costs of Rearing Children

In rural Jean Rabel, there are few direct costs involved in caring for an infant. Parents do not use cribs or disposable diapers, nor do they provide children with a plethora of toys or baby clothes. They do not feed children with expensive baby formulas or pay for daycare services. The infant sleeps in bed with its mother, is changed with a couple of homemade and reusable diapers, wrapped in a Goodwill towel that costs about 15 *gdes* (US$0.90), and dressed in Goodwill shoes and clothes that together may cost 50 *gdes* (US$3.00). The infant is fed breast milk and homemade baby formulas, and is surrounded by a never ending throng of aunts, sisters, cousins, grandmothers, and male relatives that provide the kind of cost free attention and care that only family members

can provide.[1] The approximately 50% of mothers and infants who visit local clinics can expect to pay a total of 41 *gdes* (US$2.50) for a checkup, vaccinations, and vitamins, during and after pregnancy. Another 5 *gdes* (US$0.30) are paid for a birthing packet (included are a razor blade, a string for tying the umbilical cord, and sterile gloves).[2] Most women employ mid-wives at an expense of 50 *gdes* (US$3.00). All totaled, the maximum direct costs of pregnancy, birth, and the first six months of infancy are approximately 161 *gdes* (less than US$10.00). After the first six months, a child eats what his/her parents eat and wears cheap *pepe* (Goodwill clothing).

Paternity

The primary expenses associated with childbirth and child-rearing come with caring for the mother. A man is typically expected to assume responsibility for these costs. When a woman becomes pregnant, and if she is not in union, she is expected to name a father. If a woman does in fact name a father, (which she sometimes does not), and if the man accepts paternity, (which he almost always does; see Chapter 6, 122-124), then that man must help support the mother and child. In cases where a man denies paternity, it is difficult or impossible to force him to support the child. But in such a case the man loses the right to govern the child's labor activities, something few Jean Rabel men are inclined to forego. If, when the child is older, a man who has denied paternity should change his mind and decide that he wants to declare the child as his own, he must *dedomaje* (repay) the costs to *chape* (raising the child to the age where he becomes more of a benefit than a cost) the child—something many rural Jean Rabeliens say the mother will make so expensive that it is impossible to do. In the event a named father does not support the child, the woman may accept support from another man during her pregnancy

and the nursing period --this 'father' is known as the *papa adoptif* (the adoptive father), or *papa nouriti* (the nourishing father), and it is then him who has paternal control over the child's labor and it is him who must be repaid if the biological father wishes to gain control over his child.

The man is expected to begin helping to provide for the mother as soon as her pregnancy becomes apparent. When the baby is born, the father's (or surrogate father's) mother brings ginger, plantains, and chickens or a goat to be slaughtered and fed to the postpartum mother. When mother and infant emerge from the customary five days of postpartum confinement, the mother-in-law again brings plantains and meat (a goat is brought and killed if none was slaughtered at the occasion of the birth). For the next two to three months the woman remains in semi-confinement and does little work. During this period, the man is expected to provide extra amounts of meat, and other nourishing foods.[3] The father must also plant a garden for the mother and child and allocate animals to them--animals that he cares for and the proceeds from which will go to help the mother *chape* the child (see below). When a child begins primary school it is also the father who is expected to pay the 345 *gdes* a year (US$20.53) needed for tuition and the obligatory school uniform.[4]

If a woman's family does not approve of a particular father they sometimes try to deny the man paternity and make this denial legal by registering the mother's father (the child's grandfather), or another male relative as the child's natural father. But people in Jean Rabel typically dismiss this tactic of maternal monopoly over a child by saying that as soon as the child is competent (*gen lespri),* other people from the community will tell the child who his real father is. Because his biological father did not originally refuse to

care for him, the child will go to the father and recognize him. However, more common than fathers denying paternity, or mothers denying paternity to fathers, is mothers assigning paternity to multiple fathers, one publicly and one in secrecy. The man who is not the real father is said to have been given a *kout pitit*, best translated as having been clobbered over the head with a child. Judges in the area report that this practice occurs commonly. In a farming community where the author lived, 13% of men (7 of 52) had at least one child who friends and neighbors reported was also secretly recognized by another man as his own.[5]

The Working Child

The working child is, as seen, an important and necessary factor in household livelihood security. The most important stage in child development is that point when he or she becomes more of a benefit than a cost, a point denoted by the term *chape*. A child is considered to *chape* when, "when he can do for himself" (*li ka fe pou kont li*), "when he can wash his own cloths" (*lè li ka lave rad pa li*), when he can 'get by' (*lè li ka boukannen*),[6] when he can go to the water by himself (*lè li ka al nan dlo pou kont li*).[7] The word is also inverted to apply to the actual act and cost of bringing a child to the point where he can take care of his own needs and make contributions to the survival of the household. The notion of *chape* was mentioned recurrently during the follow up survey as in the examples given below:

> Oh, why does a person have children? You have children. You struggle to *chape* them...You raise them. They *chape*. Tomorrow God willing, if you need a little water, the child can get it for you. If you need a little firewood, he can carry it for you.[8] (55 year old father of 17 children)

> I had children, now I have a problem, now the children can solve the problem. Tomorrow God willing I can not help myself, it is on the children I will depend. Today I *chape* them. Tomorrow God willing we struggle with life together.[9] (41 year old mother of 4 children)

In rural Jean Rabel children as young as two and three years of age do small chores like fetching utensils and carrying messages to the neighbors. At three to four years of age they are going to the water with other children and returning with a gallon jug awkwardly balanced on their head. At five to eight years of age the child will *chape*, for it is at these ages that he/she begins to go by himself to the water, start a fire, wash clothes, tend animals, find food in the garden, and go alone to make small purchases in the market. By the age of 7 , boys are typically trusted to tend goats and sheep without supervision by an adult or older child. By the age of 11 a boy can hoe a garden and may even participate in reciprocal work groups composed of other pre-pubescent and teenage boys. Similarly, by 8 or 9 years of age a girl can sell goods during short absences of her mother, both in the market or the home and, except for large bulky items like pants, which require considerable strength to wring, she can wash most clothes. By 10 or 11 years of age most girls have already had the experience of taking the family donkey on a 20 to 30 mile trek to and from a market to make purchases for the household. At this age, the girl does not go alone but in groups with other young girls or with a neighbor. However, by the age of 12 or 13 Jean Rabel country girls can do everything their mother can: Clean, cook, take care of younger children, and sell in the market. Indeed, when arriving at homesteads in Jean Rabel one often does not find the mother, but a young teenage girl left in charge.

The Parental Contract

In Jean Rabel households, there is a kind of *de facto* contract that exists between children and parents. In other words, there is a very clearly defined system of mutual rights, duties, obligations and benefits that are exchanged between parents and children

and that continue from a child's youth into adulthood. The "contract" begins at the time of the mother's pregnancy and when she originally cedes the right of co-parentage to the father by acknowledging his paternity. As shown , the father must earn his paternal rights by helping to care for the mother and helping to *chape* (raise) the child. The parents' most immediate reward for raising children is the access to needed labor. It is an inalienable parental right to govern the labor activities of their children. Other people also exercise control over children by virtue of their relationship to the parents and a child owes obedience to family members and older friends.

In turn, parents in Jean Rabel, like parents everywhere, have an obligation to feed, provide clothes, and generally care for their young children. Parents also increasingly have an obligation to educate their children, an obligation enforced informally by family, friends and neighbors who will criticize a parent for not sending children to school. Children themselves will also pressure their parents, saying at very young ages things like, "my father does not like us, he does not want to pay for school." (*papa-m pa reme nou. Li pa vle peye lekol*). Parents begin giving their children animals when they are as young as four or five years of age, and an attempt is made to increase the child's stock as she or he grows. Parents are expected to give land, even if only a small amount, to both sons and daughters as soon as they are capable of farming or soliciting someone else to farm for them. Also, as they come of age and begin to start their own families, children have the right to claim a portion of their parent's property. Education has increasingly begun to supplant gifts of land and animals to children. Nevertheless, children who do not migrate pressure parents to begin ceding property as soon as they begin bearing children of their own and enter into a conjugal union. Children cannot be deprived of

these rights on the whim of their parents or other relatives and all legitimate children claim an equal share of the parental property. Should a man have several 'wives'—which was found during the Baseline Survey to be true of approximately 10% of male household heads-- the children of one woman generally have no rights to property purchased by their father for another woman (see following two chapters). All of a woman's children have the same rights over her personal estate.

In return, children are socially and legally obligated to care for their parents in their old age. A parent or grandparent can never be refused food or care. Children bathe, feed, wash clothes and clean up after their infirm parents and grandparents. Not caring for an elder is considered shameful and community members will criticize and humiliate the irresponsible younger kin of the elderly individual. Should one family member take care of an elder and other family members refuse to assist, the considerate member has a right to call her negligent brothers, sisters and/or cousins into court and force them to pay an indemnity.[10]

Godparents and their Rights and Duties

It is inconceivable that a child in Jean Rabel should be without godparents. The parents select godparents almost immediately after the birth of a child. The godparents sometimes are asked to name the child and their own names are written on the back of birth certificates. Generally, a Catholic priest ceremonially consecrates the relationship of the godparents to the child during baptism although if the parents are Protestant, the godparents and parents simply present the child to the pastor. In both cases, the formalization of ties between godparents and their new godchild is a happy and symbolically important event. A small *fet* (celebration) is held in honor of the occasion at

the parent's or mother's house, complete with *kolas* (Haitian sodas), *gato* (cake), and *kremass* (a liquor made with condensed milk, rum and sugar).

The naming of godparents initiates important fictive kinship relations. A godchild addresses his godfather and godmother by the terms *parenn* (godfather) and *marenn* (godmother) and these take on the roles of surrogate parents. The biological children and all the other godchildren of the *marenn* and *parenn* become fictive brothers and sisters and are referred to by the terms *sè* (sister) and *frè* (brother). The spouses of both godfather and godmother also take on the status of *marenn* and *parenn*, meaning that a child usually has two *godmothers* and two *godfathers*. The biological parents as well as all the godparents assume the relationship of *kompere* and *kommere* (co-father and co-mother), meaning they are co-parents, and they all refer to one another and address one another with titles of *makompere* and *makommere* (my co-father and my co-mother). They also assume an incest taboo *vis a vis* one another—albeit the taboo is weak and easily violated.

The selection of a godparent is strategic, it is meant to benefit both the child and the parents of the child often by reinforcing and expanding social ties. In large, economically secure families that have good land holdings, godparents are often chosen from among immediate relatives such as a brother, sister, uncle or aunt, a selection that maintains control over the child and his labor within the family. Among the less fortunate majority, however, godparents typically have no kinship relation to the biological parents and are invariably of higher socio-economic status than the biological parents.

Godparents have obligations to godchildren that at first glance make godparentage appear to be a burden. They should, and usually do, contribute to the upbringing of their godchildren. They have a tacit obligation to help pay for the child's education. Godparents should also contribute to the child's marriage or any other major and costly life event. But despite the appearance, godparentage is considered to be a privilege and honor that is more often accepted than declined. One of the fundamental reasons for this is that there is a very tangible benefit to being a godparent. Godparents gain access to their godchild's labor (a fact not generally emphasized in studies that have examined god parentage in Haiti and elsewhere in the Caribbean and Latin America: see Foster, 1969, 1953; Nutini and Bell 1980; Lowenthal 1987:164; Mintz and Wolf 1950; Simpson 1942; and for an exception see Glen Smucker, 1983: 197 - 200).

A godchild, called a *fiyel,* should never refuse service to a godparent. Godchildren are obliged to visit godparents, they sleep over at their houses, and they sometimes spend school vacations with godparents. If a godparent should need assistance, he or she has the right to summon the child and even has the right to whip the child should he or she disobey. As one Jean Rabel man jokingly explained, "you can whip a godchild all you want, only thing is you can not kill them--they will put you in prison for that."[11] At least one person in the opinion survey responded to the question, "what would you do if you had no children" by saying,

> I would ask my co-mother or my co-father if I could get a child. That means, I would ask if I could take the child as mine because a godchild is the same thing as a child.[12]
>
> (31 year old father of 5 children)

Friends, Relatives, and *Restaveks*

Twenty percent of Jean Rabel children live in households headed by grandparents or other relatives—either with or without their parents present. Furthermore, 25% of households in the Opinion Survey reported having at least one resident child who is not the offspring or grandchild of the household head and, restricting analysis only to households in which the head is under the age of 35, 25.7% of respondents reported having at least one child who resided elsewhere (see Table 13-1 and Table 13-2)

Role switching is not uncommon in these households. A female household head, no matter what her relationship to

Table 13-1: Child Residence Patterns: Relationship of Child Household Members to Head of Household (Missing = 86; Children under 19 years of age)

	Freq	Percent
Child	4,866	79.74
Grand Child	609	9.98
Niece/Nephew	180	2.95
Sibling	137	2.25
Cousin	69	1.13
Restavek	66	1.08
Step Child	50	0.83
God Child	18	0.29
Sibling In-Law	18	0.29
Friend	16	0.26
Total	6,029	100.00

(Baseline Survey)

Table 13-2: Unrelated Children are in the House

Number of unrelated children in the house	Number of households	Percent of all households
0	102	75.0%
1	19	14.0%
2	9	6.6%
3	3	2.2%
4	1	0.7%
5	1	0.7%
6	1	0.7%
Total	136	100.0%

(Opinion Survey)

children, may be addressed as *momi* (a mother-like term) and where the grandmother is present young children sometimes refer to her as *manman* (mother) while calling the mother by her real name, as if she were a sister.

In some instances parents leave children with relatives because they can not care for the children themselves. But children are welcome and in many cases it is not so much a matter of the child being left with relatives as it is a case of the child being requested by a relative. People who no longer have children of their own remaining in the house—because, for example, their own children are grown and have established independent households or have gone to school in the city--may ask a relative or friend for a child. Grandparents are especially likely to raise grandchildren, but uncles, aunts, siblings, cousins and others take in children as well. Old people who live alone are almost always "given" a grandchild, niece, or nephew to sleep with them and to perform tasks around the house. There is also an institution that exists called *restavek* (literally translated as stay-with), through which a child is given to an unrelated person for the primary purpose of performing domestic chores (referred to elsewhere as the institution *ti moun*, see Herskovits 1937; Simpson 1942; Metraux 1951; Smucker 1983).

The possibility of upward social mobility generally plays an important role in all of these arrangements, especially the *restavek*. People who take the children are invariably either of higher socioeconomic status or, because they have no or few other children, they can offer the child better care, better clothes, and better schooling. Indeed, there is an expectation if not an explicit verbal contract that the child will be educated when turned over to another household. For example, a man in the Opinion Survey explained,

> I went and took two kids from some people I know. I put both of them in school. Why? Why? It is so hard for me to live without children.... I need water. Right now I had one with me, he went to the house to get me some water. Tomorrow, God willing, he goes to school, I do all I can to give him shoes and clothes to put on. Food too.[13] (62 year old father of 11)

The practice of giving children away to family, friends, or acquaintances who are better off financially and the fact that people need children to help with daily subsistence tasks sometimes produces strange results. Households exist in which the natural offspring of the household head have all gone to live with a better off relatives in the village or in a distant urban center. These have then been replaced in the household by nieces, nephews, cousins, or the children of unrelated acquaintances who come from less economically fortunate and usually more rurally located households.

Children, Work, and the Whip

In the Follow-up Survey it was not asked if parents and guardians whip their children, but why parents and guardians whip their children. None of the respondents replied, "I don't whip my children." Almost invariably the reason cited by respondents for whipping a child was work related. Twenty percent of respondents said that they primarily whipped their children for failing to perform chores. Another 26% responded that they whipped children principally for negligence, generally meaning things like the child did not properly tether an animal or allowed a pig to raid the kitchen when left in charge of the household. Another 29% of the respondents cited fell within

Table 13-4: The Main Reason Parents Report Whipping Children (often asked as 'why did you last whip your child?) (n = 84 because question added to a sub-sample of Opinion Survey)

		Percent (n = 84)
What is the principal reason you switch your children?	Negligence	26%
	Disrespect	25%
	Not performing chores	24%
	Fighting	18%
	Gossiping	3%
	Other	4%
	Total	100.0%

the category of 'disrespect.' When children themselves were asked what disrespect meant, their answer also invariably turned out to be related to work performance. For example, children explained to the researcher that they show 'disrespect' by not obeying, *lè yo fe ou fe yon bagay* (when they make you do something), and *tankou lè yo voye ou* (like when they send you on an errand).

Whipping children is thought of as necessary and important in making children perform chores. A proud mother of a well-behaved *restavek* explained, "you know what makes that child work so hard? She is scared of the whip." The head supervisor in the Baseline Survey, himself the offspring of a rural Jean Rabel couple, explained the relationship between whippings and work as follows,

> When they say a child is afraid of the switch it does not mean that when the child sees the switch he starts crying. No. It means the child is always thinking about the switch in everything he does. This is what makes a child walk straight. [14]

People sometimes jokingly say, *Kale, kale, kale. Ti moun fet pou kale* (Whip! Whip!, Whip! Children are born to be whipped!). But the whipping a child receives is generally no joke. The child is usually held by the hand and whipped about the bare legs with a *raso* (braided rope whip), a *rigwaz* (a strip of dried bull testicles also used on mules and horses) or a *fret* (a thin, flexible branch taken from a bush or tree). By Western standards the whipping is often brutal. The child typically does much screaming and begs for mercy. Blood is sometimes drawn and many children bear scars on their legs. Children" as old as their late teens and even into their early twenties are whipped across the palms by schoolteachers or made to kneel for hours at a time as punishment for not turning in homework or for speaking disrespectfully. Young women are sometimes switched severely for consorting with men of whom their parents disapprove (see Murray 1977: 172; and Metraux 1951 for descriptions of severity with children).[15]

Conclusion

Maternity, the paternal obligations to support a pregnant woman or mother with a child who has yet to *chape*, the earned paternal rights, and god-parentage define who controls the labor activities of a child. These are reciprocal relationships in that everyone involved must also contribute to the child's growth and education. But the most significant feature of the relationships, and the one that bears precedence above all else, is that the child must work, he must do as he is told by those who have a right to control his activities and the switch assures that he will, in fact, cooperate. In the following chapter this salient role of child labor is revealed as one of the two indispensable ingredients in the formation of a household.

Notes

[1] The most common baby formula is made with a banana like plantain called a *kiyez*. Milk may be added as well as smashed crackers.

[2] Even in the very worst case scenario when antibiotics, anti-fungal agents, anit-malaria pills and antiacid are called for, clinicians report that costs should not exceed 58 *gdes* (US$3.50). A Caesarean can cost as much as 1,000 *gdes* (US$60.00).

[3] The duration of semi-confinement is the only custom discovered that bears on the difference between boys versus girls. If a woman has given birth to a boy she will not begin to do significant chores again and she will take extraordinary care not to immerse her body in cold water or expose herself to the cold for approximately three months. If the child is a girl, the time is usually two months. The explanation is that carrying and birthing a boy is harder on a woman. Similarly, girls will be encouraged to sit up (*kase*) at a younger age than boys—the same two versus three months.

[4] The typical cost for primary school in rural Jean Rabel for the 1999-2000 school year was 35 *gdes* first payment, 25 *gdes* per month, and 75 to 100 *gdes* to make a school uniform. A school year total of 345 *gdes* (US$20.53)

[5] Mentioned elsewhere, in a review of the May 1999, Jean Rabel birth registry, only 5 of 469 (1%) of registered births were fatherless (called a *deklarasyon mere*).

[6] *'Lè li ka boukannen'* (when he can barbeque) is an expression that derives from children digging up and cooking sweet potatos, something young children, especially boys, often do, and it signifies a child's ability to look after himself.

[7] The term *chape* literally means to escape and in this literal sense of the word a person can *chape* a danger on their own or someone can *chape* them— save them. Similarly the term *chape* can be used to describe that point at which a child 'escapes' the dangers of infant and childhood disease and in this way people in Jean Rabel sometimes use *chape* as a synonym for weaned. *Chape* can also be used to describe a child who

has managed to finish school and find a well paying job; such a person has *chaped* the 'small' life an impoverished farmer. By the same token a mother may go barefoot to *chape,* in this instance to educate, her older children. But the most common connotation of the term *chape* and one that all adults interviewed were in agreement with denotes that point when a child is more of a benefit than a cost. In addition to the quotes already given in the body of the text, others include, *Lè ou ka pran ti moun an e mete li kinpot kote epi l-ap viv* (when you can put a child anywhere and he will survive), *Lè li konnen kouman pou mande pou manje* (when he knows how to ask for food), *lè li gen lespri* (when a child achieves common sense), *lè li ka rete nan kay la pou kont li*, (when he can get by without constant adult supervision), *lè li ka retire min ni nan difè* (when he will take his hand out of the fire).

[8] *... O, pou ki yon moun fe ti moun? Ke vle di, ou fe ti moun nan. W-ap bat pou chape yo... L-ap grandi yo. L-ap chape. Demen si dieu vle, si ou bezwen ti dlo li ka ba ou. Si ou bezwenn ti bout bwa li ka pote li pou ou. Ou bezwenn ni konn ed.*

[9] *Mwen fe ti moun, kounye-a m vin gen yon pwoblem, kounye-a ti moun ka redi pwoblem. Demen si dieu vle, m vin pa kapab, se sou kont ti moun m-ap vini. Kounye-a map chape yo. Demen si dieu vle yo ka bat ave-m.*

[10] The second question a person in Jean Rabel asks, right after "Do you have any children?," is "Are your parents alive?" (*Mama ou la? Papa ou la?*). Then, "Where are they?" (*Kote yo ye?*) "Do they miss you?" (*Yo pa sonje ou?*) and finally, "Are you going to visit them*?" (Lè ou al lòt bo eskè ou pral vizite yo?*) Whoa to those who reply that they do not visit their mother or send her money, "You should go see her. She misses you. She is the one who made you. You seem to be a bad person" (*Fo ou al we mam'o. L'ap sonj'o. Se li ki fe ou. Ou gen lè pa bon moun.*)

[11] *Ou met kale li jan ou vle sof ou pa ka touye li—pou sa y-ap mete ou prizon.*

[12] *Pa fwa ou we ou pa gen ti moun konsa, m te kapab fe deman a makomè oswa makompè epi pou m te ka jwenn ti moun sa. Ke vle di, pou li ka sevi-m. Paskè yon fiyel se yon pitit.*

[13] *M ale nan min moun, m pran dè ti moun. M mete yo tou dè lekol anko. Pou ki, pou ki? Telman m pa ka viv san ti moun. ... M bezwenn dlo-a, kounye-a m te gen yon isit ave-m, li al lakay pou yo voye dlo pou mwen. Demen si dieu vle li al lekol la, m toujou bat pou li gen sandal li avek rad pou mete, ni pou li manje.*

[14] *Lè yo di yon ti moun krent fret se pa lè yo we fret yo krie, non, se lè yo toujou panse sou fret nan tout bagay yap fe. Se sa ki fe ti moun yo mache dwat.*

[15] In contrast to whipping a child about the bare legs, slapping is considered brutal and there was an incident in the village in 1998 when a French nurse, scurrying two children out of an area where they were not supposed to be playing, slapped the child of a school supervisor on the side of the head. Within the hour an outraged crowd of upper level Jean Rabel school administrators, including the boys father who had been in an nearby meeting, had gathered outside where the nurse was working. When the nurse tried to leave they blocked her, harangued her, and ultimately convinced her to allow a settling of the issue by permitting the child to slap her in the face. One of the nurse's Haitan co-workers, a man who was also a Jean Rabelien, arrived just in time to witness the nurse beign slapped and he entered into what nearly became a badly outnumbered brawl between himself and the crowd of school authorities. The incident continued on the radio with the school supervisor using the nurse's behavior as an example of how offensive foreigners sometimes behave toward Haitians. The French NGO directors were equally outraged by what they saw as a forced and public humiliation of the nurse. There were calls to ministers and much complaining. In the end, the incident passed, nobody lost their jobs, there were no official public reprimands, nor did any apologies come from either side.

CHAPTER 14

CONJUGAL UNION AND THE FORMATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Introduction

This chapter begins an examination of the practice of conjugal union in Jean Rabel, including a discussion of how a household comes into being and the rights and duties that spouses have to one another. In addition to survey data, information was drawn from interviews with judges, farmers, and actual cases. In many instances decisions made by judges in the Jean Rabel courthouse differ from official Haitian civil law and in some instances decisions handed down in the village courthouse differs from the expectations and actual behavior of locals. Child support, for example, is a paternal statutory duty whether the mother and father are married, living together, or not in union at all. Jean Rabel judges recognize this legally recognized duty and even insist that they enforce it. But in practice a Jean Rabel woman rarely summons a man to court for child support and, if she does, the court probably can not enforce a decision ordering a man to pay child support. Thus, where official civil law and local legal procedure differ, I have emphasized the local procedure; where local legal procedure and practice differ, I have emphasized the practice.

Setting up a Household

People in Jean Rabel enjoy telling visitors—particularly childless visitors--that an individual remains a child, whatever his age, as long as he has no children himself. But this definition of a child is actually a corollary to another more overarching definition.

When pressed on the issue, farmers explain that a person becomes a *gran moun* (an adult) not when the person becomes a parent but when he or she has ascended to the head of an autonomous homestead by building a house and starting a family. Thus, the status of being an adult is directly related to control over the primary unit of production—the household--and a household comes into being in association with conjugal union.

The Conjugal Contract

There are two forms of conjugal union in Jean Rabel, legal marriage and what is called *plasaj,* referred to in anthropological terminology as consensual union and in colloquial terminology as common law marriage. Approximately 50 percent of couples in the Jean Rabel Baseline Survey reported being engaged in *plasaj* unions, with the remaining 50% reported being legally married.[1] But whether consecrated by ceremony or an unconsecrated consensual union, there are two indispensable ingredients involved in legitimizing a conjugal union, a house and children. Absence of either one means that, while the couple may refer to themselves as in union, a full blown contractual union does not exist, and neither customary nor legal sanctions apply.

Table 14-1: Marriage vs Consensual Union (age >15 n=4,927)

Conjugal Unions	Male	Female	Both
Consensual Union	40.4	43.8	42.1
Married	41.8	37.0	39.3
Single	14.6	10.6	12.6
Widowed	2.9	8.5	5.8
Divorced	.1	.1	.1
Total	100	100	100

Legal Marriage vs Plasaj

> Married women and women with children have the same strength to fight [2]
> (Jean Rabel Proverb).

The first woman with whom a man bears children and enters into a *plasaj* union is known as his *met* (owner). She generally takes priority over any other woman with whom the man may subsequently enter into a union. Should a man who has already entered into

a *plasaj* union and fathered children wish to marry another woman, he must first obtain permission from his other wife, or wives, with whom he has already fathered children. He must also formally cede over the property purchased or worked for the earlier wife or wives although his and no other children will inherit the property). After a formal marriage, however, the legally recognized wife becomes the man's unchallenged *met*, no matter what her prior status, and she is addressed by the term *madanm* (as in Mrs). Only she and her children are entitled to use or inherit property purchased in the husband's name. Should a man purchase land or a house in his own name and allow another woman to reside on that property, the wife has the right to put the other woman out and to have the husband arrested and judged in court. Should a legally married man bear children with another woman, according to Haitian law only the legal wife can make the children legitimate by adopting them as her own. This statute is meant to protect the property of the man, his legal wife and their children against the proprietary claims of outside women and their children.[3]

But despite the enthusiasm with which legal wives often describe the dignity of their status as a *madanm marie*, marriage does not offer the Jean Rabel woman a great deal more security or even prestige than *plasaj*. No single word clearly distinguishes a married woman from a woman who is in a *plasaj* union. Both are referred to as *madanms* (wives). As explained previously, people are expected to address the married woman by the term *madanm*—as in Madanm Francois--but the same title is also used for a *plasaj* woman of high status. A married man can be sued by his legal wife for adultery, but only if he has sexual relations with another woman on property his wife is accustomed to visiting. Marriage also confers rights to the wife such as exclusive access

to her husbands's earnings and possessions, but these rights can be and often are circumvented by married men who decide to take a *madanm deyo* (outside wife).

Case # 1

Francois Bon-Homme, a farmer, lived just outside the village of Jean Rabel. His wife had gone to work in Port-au-Prince with Francois's knowledge and consent, and had been away for over six months. In her absence, Francois entered into a *plasaj* union with another woman, Venucia, and rented a house for her near the village. The wife heard from a cousin that her husband had put Venucia in a house and so while Francois was away to Cape Haitian, Madanm Francois came back from Port-au-Prince to Jean Rabel, waited for Venucia to leave the house, and then took the door off the hinges and claimed possession of the house. Venucia sought out the local judge who said he could do nothing if the house was not in Venucia's name and that she would have to wait for the return of Francois. When Francois returned, the judge counseled him to make a new receipt putting the house in Venucia's name. That done, the judge subsequently ordered the wife out of the house.

House Building

Whether marriage or *plasaj*, the building of a house is the single most important event that occurs in the legitimization of a conjugal union. A woman not legally married to a man who builds a house for her has nevertheless become the man's *madanm* (wife) and by moving into the house she has accepted him as her *mari* (husband). In contrast, a legal marriage or *plasaj* union in which the husband has not provided a house for the woman is not considered a consummated union. Even marriage while is technically a union and respected by the legal system and by citizens of Jean Rabel as soon as the ceremonial requisites have been performed is, a) not likely to occur in the absence of children, and b) likely to be quickly laughed at, and dismissed if the man has not provided a house for his wife. The woman may even have produced several children

with the man, but so long as the man and woman do not reside in a house together their union does not get the full respect of friends and neighbors, particularly if it is a *plasaj* union (nor, according to local judges, does the union get respect from the local judiciary system--irrespective of whether or not this is actually codified civil Haitian law).[4]

Case # 2

Ti Frè, a fisherman, lived in a small seaside hamlet. In 1996 he was 28 years old, married, and had a child. He was also sexually involved with his 21 year old first cousin and childhood sweetheart, Lizanne, who lived 3 km from his own home. The mother of Lizanne gave her a small house in the yard where Ti Frè could comfortably sleep over. Lizanne became pregnant and in January 1997 bore a son. Ti Frè financially supported her and the child and he began to spend as much time sleeping with Lizanne in the house her mother gave to her as he did sleeping in his own house with his legal wife. In December 1997, Lizanne bore another child fathered by Ti Frè, a daughter. Ti Frè continued to support her and the children but in October 1998 he and Lizanne had an argument. Ti Frè spent several weeks avoiding Lizanne and in the meantime Lizanne began to receive frequent visits from another cousin, Pijon—who also had a wife. Ti Frè became jealous, but did nothing against Pijon or Lizanne. People in the village explained he had no right to intervene as Lizanne lived in her mother's house and could do as she pleased. In a subsequent event, Pijon's wife came to Lizanne mother's house and cursed Lizanne publically, standing just outside the fence and screaming accusations that Lizanne was having an affair with Pijon. Lizanne swore it was not true and a year later she continued to insist that she never had an affair with Pijon,. She explained confidentially that she had only tolerated Pijon's short visits in order to make Ti Frè jealous (she in fact suspected him of seeing a third woman). Ti Frè, however, refused to believe Lizanne. He quit supporting their two children and moved back to his wife's house fulltime. Lizanne subsequently left the children with her mother—Ti Fre came and took the son--and migrated to Port-au-Prince where she went to work as a domestic servant.

Once a house has been built, there are inviolable rights and duties associated with the union and they carry the weight of both custom and law. For his part, the man must plant gardens and raise livestock for the household.[5] He may come and go as he pleases. He may even take other wives. But under no circumstances may he lead another wife or lover into the yard or share products of the homestead with another woman. Should a man fail to provide for his spouse and children, or at least fail to demonstrate that he is making a serious effort to plant gardens and raise livestock, the woman has the right to cuckold him without being expelled from the house.

Case # 3

Marco, 32 years old, and Selest, 26 years old, were in a *plasaj* union together. They had two children, a seven-year-old girl and a two-year-old boy. Marco took a second wife and began to financially neglect Selest. He allocated to the new wife a garden plot that was previously for Selest. When Selest objected, he beat her. Marco's brothers and even his father tried to intervene, talking to him, trying to get him to return the garden to Selest, but Marco ignored the advice and became increasingly abusive toward Selest, cursing her often and occasionally beating her. Selest subsequently began to have an affair with another man, Anel, and in June 1998, after a fight with Marco, Selest took the two children and went to live in a second unfinished house that Marco had been building for his new wife. In a rage, Marco beat Selest and destroyed the unfinished house, justifiying his actions with the accusation of Selest's affair with Anel. Selest went to stay with her mother and, with her family's support, she had Marco summoned to court. In the courtroom, Marco countered that Selest's affair with Anel sacrificed her right to the house. Selest did not deny her affair with Anel. Instead, she pointed to Marco's financial neglect of her as a justification for adultery. Citing the importance of customary law, the judge agreed with Selest, ordered Marco to behave kindly toward his wife, to restore her gardens, to begin supporting her and the children, and he assured Selest that she had a right to live in her original house unmolested by Marco. The judge then sent the couple home to work out their differences.

Marco quit beating Selest but he continued to speak abusively to her and so one day Selest's uncle summoned her and sent her away to Port-de-Paix to stay with a sister. Several days after Selest's departure, Marco was coming home from the market when he was met by Selest's younger brother, the brother's wife, and one of Selest's sisters. The brother greeted Marco and then struck him over the head with a club. The sisters joined in, and together they severely beat Marco with clubs. Marco's skull was split and his collarbone and several ribs were broken. They then tied up their near comatose brother-in-law and sent for the acting local law enforcement official (the *kasek*) and Marco's family. In a clear acknowledgement of Marco's guilt, only Marco's father came and he made no defense for his son other than to say they should not have beaten him so badly. The brother and sisters then dropped Marco off at the local clinic. After several weeks of convalescence, Marco filed charges against his three assailants. Everyone involved in the incident was summoned to court. The judge, however, was unsympathetic. Citing Marco's abuse and the lack of support from even his own family, the judge ordered the brother-in-law to pay the cost of Marco's medical care and the case was dismissed. In the interim, Marco's second 'wife' had taken up residence with another man and Marco returned to his house where Selest was again living with their children. In the 15 months since the incident took place, Marco has reportedly behaved nicely toward his wife.

People in Jean Rabel say, *gason dwe fe kay, min gason pa gen kay* (men have a duty to build houses but they do not own houses). For a woman who has born children with a man, all the property inside the house, all that is in the yard and all the gardens that men plant for the house belong to the woman. As seen, custom and law reinforce the preeminence of the woman's right to the household. Should a man and woman argue it is the man who must leave and he takes only his clothes with him—and his radio if he has one.

The woman is thought of as the owner of the house but in return she owes her husband absolute sexual fidelity—an obligation men are not required to reciprocate. She

can justifiably violate this rule only if, as in the case of Marco and Selest, her husband is negligent in providing for her and their children. Should a woman whose husband is adequately supporting her have sexual relations with another man, especially on property belonging to her and her husband, she can be legally expelled from the homestead and deprived of her children. On the other hand, if a man is caught in *flagrante delecto* on property shared by the couple then, in theory, he can be beaten without fear of legal judgement and he can even made to pay an indemnity. In practice, however, violence between men over women is rare.[6,7]

Case # 4

In 1994, Selikè, a mason, was 26 years old. His girlfriend, Marlene, was 20 years old, and she was pregnant with their child. For several years Selikè had been going away for a month at a time to work in Port-au-Prince and he managed to save some money, so he built Marlene a house on property his father had given him and he and Marlene entered into a *plasaj* union together. The child, a girl, was born in June 1995. For the next four years Selikè continued to migrate to Port-au-Prince for one to several months at a time, working different jobs and supporting his small family. But in September of 1998 while Selikè was away in Port-au-Prince his father discovered that another man had been sleeping in the house with Marlene. The father sent a message to Port-au-Prince summoning Selikè, who arrived several days later to find Marlene was still on the premises and apparently not intending to leave. Selikè locked himself in the house with his 'wife' and beat her. He then sent her back to her parents and entrusted the now 3 year old daughter to his mother. Marlene did not contest Selikè's actions, nor did any of her family members defend her or attempt to claim the daughter. People in the area explained the lack of action on the part of Marlene and her parents as shame and an admission of guilt. Marlene subsequently entered into a public union with her alleged lover.

The Familial Contract

It is children that solidify a conjugal union and turn the conjugal contract into a familial contract involving not just the husband and wife, but the children as well. Co-habitation before a woman has conceived is rare—as is marriage. In the Polygyny Sample, for example, only five of 300 women reported moving into a house with a man before becoming either pregnant for the man or bearing a chid with him. In the event a man and woman do enter into union and then separate before any children are born the woman must renounce rights to the house–provided it is on the man's property, as is usually the case (see Table 14-2). All other property is divided equally or according to the original purchaser. After the birth of a child the rules change. Even if a man and woman no longer wish to have sexual relations and separate, everything in and around the house remains with the household. The woman is *sou dwa pitit li* (literally, on the rights of her children), and she has a right to remain in the house undisturbed by her husband or his family so long as she continues to care for the children and so long as she does not openly engage in a relationship with another man. As already mentioned, the man must continue to provide for the household by raising livestock and planting gardens that the wife will harvest, selling the produce in the local market to pay for household subsistence needs and to engage in further marketing activities. If the man fails to plant a garden, the woman may take over this role using his land.

Table 14-2: Residence Patterns

		Number of households	Percentage of households
On whose land is the house built*	Husband's family	100	73.5%
	Wife's family	27	19.9%
	Neither	9	6.6%
	Total	136	100.0%

*This land is often purchased from one or the other's family

Case # 5

Renaud, 32 years old, married a 24 year old woman named Yoland who was pregnant with his child and who had no previous children nor a previous husband. Renaud already had three children by two other women with whom he continued to have relationships but for whom he had not built houses. Renaud built a house for Yoland on property adjoining his mother's house and adjoining another residence belonging to a sister. He also brought three acres of irrigated land into the marriage. Yoland subsequently bore three children with Renaud, two sons followed by a girl. But in 1980, when the oldest son was only 6 years old, Renaud boarded a *kantè* (illegal immigrant boat) and successfully emigrated to the United States. Friends of Yoland saw and visited with Renaud in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, but Renaud himself never responded to messages sent by Yoland. Nor did he send money, and he reportedly took up residence with yet another woman. Yoland, in the meantime, had begun farming the three acres of land by herself. Together with marketing activities and the help of her children she was able to get by financially without the assistance of her husband.

Then, in 1988, eight years after Renaud had left on the *kantè*, Yoland began having an open relationship with another man, Toma (who also had another wife and family). Yoland's mother-in-law and sister-in-law reacted angrily. They summoned Yoland to court in an attempt to have her expelled from the property. The judge decided in Yoland's favor, citing Renaud's abandonment of Yoland as just cause for her sexual freedom, the presence of Renaud's children as just cause for her to remain on the property, and the absence of children by any other man as lack of cause to expel her from the property. In 1990, however, Yoland became pregnant with Toma's child. For whatever reason, she subsequently ended the relationship with Toma. But, at the same time, growing antagonism from her mother-in-law and sister-in-law and the recognition that her new child would cause her to lose the right, in the eyes of the community, to remain in the house compelled Yoland to leave. She built another house several kilometers away and continued to farm the three acres that are the inalienable property of her children.

Conclusion

The man and the woman aside, there are two ingredients for the formation of a *de facto* contractually complete conjugal union: A house---which is built by the husband--and children--produced by the woman but recognized by the husband. The presence of children does little to cement a conjugal union so long as a couple does not have a house, and a house means little so long as a couple does not have children. Men subsequently must plant gardens and tend livestock. Women must subsequently manage the household and sell the garden produce and livestock, the proceeds from which are used to meet household subsistence expenses and to raise the children to the point where they become contributing members of the household. Women are bound to absolute sexual fidelity when their husbands are complying with their customary obligations. On the other hand, a man may engage in union with other women and father "outside" children without losing his rights in the original homestead--so long as he continues to provide financial support. What follows is a typical discussion between an interviewer and a male farmer who was asked whether or not a woman should leave her husband in the event he takes another wife. The discussion is typical and it highlights the expectations, rights, and duties associated with conjugal union in rural Jean Rabel.

Interviewer:	A man and a woman are in union, they have children, and the man sets up another household with another wife, what should the first wife do?
Farmer:	The woman should stay in the house and look after the children.
Interviewer:	But why?
Farmer:	Because you put her in her own house. The house is for her. You will help her with the children.
Interviewer:	But I am telling you, the woman has children with the man, they live together, and now the guy goes and takes another woman. And you are telling me the woman should stay in the house and look after the kids. It's not true! Why should she stay and care for the kids?

Farmer: Because we have a harmony together. We have not separated or divorced.

Interviewer: Does the woman have a right to have an affair with another man?

Farmer: No. The right for her to take another spouse, that's if you leave her[8]

(35 year old father of five)

Typical female responses to questions regarding men taking second and third spouses underscores the same values emphasized by men:

Situation: A woman is *plase/married* with a man and the man takes another wife?

Q: What should the woman do?	Q: Can she take another man?
You do not curse him, the way others curse. You talk even more sweetly, so that he comes to you, so he leaves the girl. If you curse him, he can leave you completely.[9]	A woman is not a man. Even when a man goes off and takes another wife, a woman should respect herself, sit at home and mind her business.[10]
(42 year old mother of seven)	
For me, I don't like it. No matter what, I'm gonna say "no." But if he is stubborn, if he does not want to listen, I can not say anything.[11]	No. I mean, I see that she is only one woman, she can only have one man. Woman and men are not the same.[12]
(27 years old mother of five)	
If he had already done it, I can not do anything.[13]	No, because I already have a husband.[14]
(38 year old mother of seven)	
A man's umbilical cord is not cut for one woman. (proverb).[15]	If she already has one, she has no right to another. She can not have two.[16]
(25 year old woman with no living children)	

Notes

[1] In a review of the Commune of Jean Rabel's birth registry for May 1999, only 27% of 469 births were to legally married parents (*enfant legitime*) and 337 (72%) were born to unmarried parents (*enfant natiral*). Only five (1%) of the 469 children born did not have a man attesting to having fathered the child (*deklarasyon mè*).

[2] *Madanm marie ak fi ki gen ti moun gen menm fòs pou goume*

[3] *Fi ki gen pitit ak fi marie se menm bagay: Tou dè gen menm kouray pou goumen*

[4] A man who has not built a house for a woman has no recourse to complain should the woman entertain other suitors—her response would likely be, "well build me a house."

[5] Harvesting in Jean Rabel is thought of as a woman's right and most women will claim in the name of her children any garden not being planted in the name of another woman, so that even if a man were to attempt to plant a garden independent of his wife--married or *plase*—he must do so secretly for if she gets wind of it she is likely to show up for harvest time and there may be much cursing if he tries to stand in her way.

[6] Although it is rare for a man to actually succeed in depriving his wife of her children, farmers and local judges are unanimous in insisting that a man has this right in the event of the woman's sexual infidelity

[7] Also in theory, if a women should leave the house in anger, she must go stay with her mother-in-law or her husband's otherwise closest relative and if she fails to do so, even if she goes to the house of her own mother, she has, according to local judges, legally committed adultery.

[8] *Fi a dwe rete nan kay la jere ti moun yo. (Min, pou ki sa?). Paskè ou mete li nan kay li personel. Kay li pou li. Tankou, w-ap ede li avek ti moun. (Mwen di-ou, sipoze yon fi gen pitit ak yon myseu, yo plase ansanm, e myseu al pran yon lòt fi. E ou menm ou di-m konsa, fi-a dwe rete okipe, se pa vre. Min pou ki sa li dwe rete okipe ti moun yo?) Paskè nou gen yon armoni ansanm se pa kite nou kite. (Eskè fi-a gen dwa pran lòt neg?) Non. Si pou dwe gen lòt neg, e se si ou kite ave li.*

[9] *Ou pa joure li, tank yo joure, ou ba li plis bouch dous. Pou li ka vini, pou li ka kite fi-a. Si ou joure, li ka ale net.*

[10] *Fi pa gason. Menm lè gason mache plase, yon fi menm te dwe fe respè tet ou, pou chita lakay ou pou okipe afè-o.*

[11] *Pou mwen m we li pa bon. M-ap di 'non' kamenm, 'm pa dako.' Min si moun an gen tet di, komsi li pa vle koute, m pa ka fe anyen.... Ou ka di, men gason an, 'non.' Kounye-a li di se sa fok li fe.*

[12] *Non . Komsi, m we se en sel fi fok li en sel mari pou li ta genyen. Fi gason pa menm.*

[13] *Si li gentan fe, m pa ka fe anyen.*

[14] *Non . Paskè m gentan gen yon mari deja*

[15] *Lambrit gason pa koupe pou en sel fi. M-ap oblije rete.*

[16] *Si li gen yon deja, li pa ka dwe gen lòt. Li pa ka gen dè la.*

CHAPTER 15

POLYGYNY, PROGENY, AND PRODUCTION

Introduction: Polygyny

Polygyny in Jean Rabel is not legal but it is different from the "extramarital affair" in that: (1) it is public, (2) efforts are made to produce children in all of the unions, (3) the man continues to perform his role as provider, planting gardens and tending livestock for all of the women, and (4) the women are expected to remain sexually faithful to the man.[1]

All Jean Rabeliens recognize the institution of polygyny and all the women engaged in union with a particular man are referred to as his wives (*madanm*). There are, in fact, two interchangeable terms for women who share a husband--*matlot* and *koleg*--meaning co-wives or co-wife. Co-wives usually live in separate homesteads, or in a minority of cases one will remain in her parent's home, and the houses of the different wives are usually at least several kilometers one from the other. Among fisherman however, it is not unusual for wives to live in the same small hamlet. In Makab, for example, three fishermen had two or more of their wives living in the hamlet itself. Also an anomaly among polygynous men are *bokors* (shaman), who are notorious for having multiple wives living in the same compound and sometimes even in the same household and being able to maintain peace among all of them. The ability of shaman to manage this

type of situation is something that fisherman do not accomplish and that never ceases to amaze other Jean Rabeliens.[2]

At any given time, 11% of male Jean Rabel household heads are engaged in a conjugal union with more than one woman. This may not seem like a large number of men, but looking at it in another way, at least twice as many woman are engaged in a conjugal union with men who have another wife. Furthermore, most polygynous unions are temporary, although they are generally maintained for years and sometimes decades, not months. For that reason, as a man ages the likelihood that he has been engaged in a polygynous union at some point in his life increases. Forty percent (40%) of men over the age of 50 have been polygynous at least once in their lives (see Table 15-2).[3]

Table 15-1: Polygyny: Opinion Survey

		Percent of men who are polygynous		
		No	Yes	Total
Survey	Baseline	806 (96%)	92 (10%)	898 (100%)
	Opinion	107 (88%)	16 (12%)	136 (100%)
	Polygyny	266 (89%)	34 (11%)	300 (100%)
	Total	1,179 (89%)	140 (11%)	1,319 (100%)

Table 15-2: Male Age Groups by Ever Been Polygynous

		Ever been polygynous		Total
		No	Yes	(missing = 2)
Male age groups	20 - 34	43 (90%)	5 (10%)	48 (100%)
	35 - 49	100 (78%)	28 (22%)	128 (100%)
	50 +	73 (60%)	49 (40%)	122 (100%)
	Total	216 (72%)	82 (28%)	298 (100%)

The Economic Underpinnings of Polygyny

There can be no doubt that polygyny in Jean Rabel is somehow related to wealth. The vast majority of polygynous men in Jean Rabel also have a relatively high level of material resources in comparison to most other men in the commune. As shown previously, 11% of male household heads in Jean Rabel are polygynous. A random sample of ten polygynous males taken from the Baseline Survey revealed that seven of

the polygynous men were skilled workers in addition to being farmers. Another man from the sample turned out to be a *bokor* and only two depended exclusively on farming for subsistence and income (see Table 15-3).

Table 15-3: Occupations of 10 Polygynous Men

Profession	
Skilled worker	7
Spiritual healer	1
Farmer only	2

Similarly, in another survey conducted in two different communities, one located in a mountainous area and the other in a lowland area, 14 of 41of skilled workers reported having more than one wife (33%). A sample of 16 *bokors* in the same regions showed that nine of these (56%) were polygynous and 4 of 15 male school teachers, (27%) were polygynous. Fisherman, who as discussed earlier earn as great or greater income than *bosses*, appear to display the highest rates of polygyny: Fifteen (15) of 24 fishermen in Makab (62%) reported having more than one wife. Farmers with relatively large landholdings also display a tendency to have multiple wives. When informants in three separate communities, two lowland communities and one mountain community, were asked to list the ten most productive local farmers who were engaged exclusively in farming without practicing any other income generating activity, 6 out of a total of 30 (or 20%) of these men were found to be polygynous (see Table 15-4).[4,5]

Table 15-4: Polygyny and Economic Status

	Non-polygynous	Polygynous	Total
Skilled workers	27 (66%)	14 (34%)	41 (100%)
Spiritual healers	9 (56%)	7 (44%)	16 (100%)
School Teachers	11 (73%)	4 (27%)	15 (100%)
Fisherman	9 (38%)	15 (62%)	24 (100%)
Big farmers	24 (80%)	6 (20%)	30 (100%)
Population as a whole	1,179 (89%)	140 (11%)	1,319 (100%)

However, while wealth appears to facilitate polygyny, the most important determinant of polygyny is not wealth, per se, but rather whether or not a man has a source of income beyond the control of his first wife. All the occupations cited above

provide men with such a source of income. Skilled workers, for example, build houses and collect their pay with no participation from their wives. *Bokors* do not depend on their wives to help serve their clientele. Schoolteachers instruct students and collect their pay independently and fishermen are not dependent on their wives for fishing or even for the sale of fish in the market.[6]

As shown, the most productive male farmers were also found to have a tendency to maintain multiple families. This phenomenon is observed elsewhere in Haiti and the common explanation is that farmers use the multiple wives to harvest and sell their produce (Bastien 1961: 142; Courlander 1960:112; Herskovits 1937; Leyburn 1966: 195; Moral 1961; 175-176; Simpson 1942: 656). This may indeed be the case. But a competing hypothesis has to do with the extent of control his first wife has over the properties and the harvest. A large landowner typically cannot and does not plant all of his land. More often, the man rents and sharecrops parcels of the land to less fortunate individuals, something that allows him to move beyond the influence of, and dependency on, a single wife. The average farmer, however, does not have multiple wives. Even men who reported owning irrigated and 'fat' land--high yield garden plots the ownership of even a small parcel of which unquestionably places a household in the category of economically elite farmers--were not found to be unusually polygynous until the amount of their reported landholdings reached levels beyond the control of a single household. As shown in in chapter VIII, only 5% of all gardens in Jean Rabel are planted on lands considered to be "fat" or on irrigated lands (see Table15-5 below).

Table 15-5: Polygynous Males by the Amount of 'Fat' and Irrigated Land Owned

		One wife	Polygynous	Total
Amount of irrigated and 'fat' land owned (in hectares)	.15 - .49	44 (88%)	6 (12%)	50 (100%)
	.50 - .99	29 (91%)	3 (09%)	32 (100%)
	1.00 – 1.99	12 (80%)	3 (20%)	15 (100%)
	2.00 +	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
	Total	86 (86%)	15 (15%)	101 (100%)

Male Attitudes Toward Polygyny

Only a minority of Jean Rabel men has more than one wife at any one time although a very high percentage of men will have more than one wife, at least once, at some point in their lives. But when asked, men did not clearly condone the practice of polygyny. Jean Rabel men commonly say that having more than one wife is immoral and wrong, that polygyny is cruel to the first wife, it causes her to starve herself (*bouch li p'ap gou*), to become emaciated (*l'ap chèch*), and sad (*l'ap kalkile*). When asked what a woman should do in the case that her husband takes another wife, 71% of men said the women should leave him. Furthermore, while men were shown in an earlier chapter as saying they cannot live without a wife, this does not mean that men advocate having several wives. Ninety-one percent of men interviewed in the Opinion Survey reported that having

Table 15-6: A Man Takes A Second Wife, What Should The First Wife Do (missing male = 17)

		Men (n = 49)
What should the first wife do?	Leave	71%
	Stay	22%
	Other	6%
	Total	100%

Table 15-7: Male Opinion on Value of Polygyny

		Percent (n = 68)
Are multiple wives more burdensome than helpful?	No	9%
	Yes	91%
	Total	100%

Table 15-8: Male Opinion on Value of Polygyny

		Men (n = 68)
What are the advantages of having multiple wives?	No advantage	95%
	Other	5%
	Total	100%

multiple wives is a burden. Also, when questioned about the advantages of polygyny, most men were hard pressed to think of any at all, with 95% responding that there are no advantages. Typical responses include the following examples:

> Ahh, there is no advantage. Men don't understand, it brings you down financially. It's just one little wife who truly pushes you ahead.[7]
>
> (50 year-old father of twelve)

> When you have several wives it is a bunch of work…Right now this morning, if you work this wife's garden, you have to go work the other garden for the other wife.[8]
>
> (75 year-old father of seven)

> There are no advantages. It is a disadvantage [9] (31 year-old father of five)

> Yes, there are advantages, because there are people who have several wives. But if it is food, or whatever, I don't know.[10] (40 year-old father of five)

> No there are no advantages. Because you must plant gardens for both of them so you can send them both to the market. There is no advantage.[11] (53 year-old father of nine)

In the sub-sample taken of ten polygynous men, nine of the men explained that having more than one wife serves either to compensate for the absence of the first wife, such as when she is away on marketing trips, or to provide an alternative to spending time with an argumentative first wife, stating, for example: [12]

> When your wife is not getting along with you…you have somewhere else you can go eat and drink.[13]
>
> (55 year-old father of seventeen)

> If the first one is not good, you have to look for another…[14] (29 year-old father of nine)

> If one wife is not there, the man he goes, he goes to the head of the other house who left a little food for him … he goes and eats it. It is this, and after this it is a drain…[15]
>
> (45 years old father of five)

In summary, it is not clear why some Jean Rabel men take second and even third or fourth wives. Perhaps the best explanation is because they can. But a more illuminating issue is that of why women put up with the behavior in the first place.

Female Attitudes Toward Polygyny

Ironically, women appear to be more tolerant of polygyny than men. For example, when asked what a woman should do in the event her husband enters into a union with a second wife, 62% of women said that a wife should stay with the man; in comparison, only 22% of men said that she should stay. Only three percent of women said the wife had a right to subsequently engage in an affair with another man; in comparison, 34% of men said she had a right to do so (see Table15-9).

But what seems to be an attitude of passive toleration might be something else. There are not many choices open to a woman who refuses to accept her husband's taking of another wife. She can leave her husband and return to her parent's house, but she sacrifices her own house and her right to claim support from her husband. If the woman engages in an affair with another man she may be required to give up considerably more than the house and support. For example, during the Opinion Survey, one of the male researchers became confused when asking the follow-up 'what if' polygyny question. In 15 of his interviews he inverted the question, which resulted in his asking the men not if the woman had a right to enter into an affair, but what the husband should do if she did. Twelve of the

Table 15-9: A Man Takes A Second Wife, What Should The First Wife Do (missing male responses = 15—see text)

		Gender		Men and Women
		Men (n = 51)	Women n = 68)	(n = 117)
What should the first wife do?	Leave	71%	32%	49%
	Stay	22%	62%	36%
	Other	6%	22%	15%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

Table 15-10: A Man Takes A Second Wife, Does the First Wife Have a Right to Be Unfaithful (missing male responses = 15—see text)

		Gender		Men and Women
		Men (n = 51)	Women n = 68)	(n = 118)
Does the woman have a right to take another man?	No	66%	97%	84%
	Yes	34%	3%	16%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

fifteen men responded he should throw her off the property and keep the children. As seen in an earlier chapter, the woman's infidelity would give the husband the customary and legal right to take this action.

Fighting for a Spouse

No matter how tolerant of polygyny women say they are, the ethnographic reality is that a Jean Rabel woman is likely and even expected to react to her husband taking another spouse with behavior that can only be described as ritualized fury. If the woman is an even-tempered person, this fury usually goes no further than harsh words. But, with a woman who is *bandi* (a scrapper)--and many Jean Rabel women pride themselves on being *bandi*-- violence is not uncommon. While displaying little or no aggression towards the husband, even wooing and sweet-talking him in private, a Jean Rabel wife will make violent statements of intent to physically attack the other woman. She will curse her in the street and in the market. It is not unusual for a wife to go to the other woman's house and stand outside screaming insults at her. She may stalk her. She may wait at crossroads and on paths to ambush and beat her. She may throw rocks at her, scratch her, or try to bite the other woman's lip to disfigure her face.

The first wife's biggest objection is usually financial. This point is abundantly clear in violent quarrels between *kolegs* over material support from their husband and it is evident in responses elicited during the follow-up survey when women were asked to explain why they do not agree with the prospect of having a *koleg*. Typical responses were as follows,

> I am gonna be angry because I will lose some of what he gives me. [16]
> (35 year-old mother of four)

> I will start stashing my money because he is going to be carrying it away [17]
> (30 year-old mother of two)

I am not going to be comfortable because he is going to be giving the other woman money.[18]
(33 year-old mother of eight)

I am gonna cuss him because he is going to make me lose money[19]
(27 year-old mother of three)

But once a man has taken a *dèziem madanm* (second wife) or a *fanm deyo* (an outside woman), rather than abandon her husband, the first wife typically resigns herself to the situation. Only one of the seven polygynous men in the Opinion Survey was no longer with his first wife (see Table 15-11).

Table 15-11: Men Who Have Ever Been Polygynous by Men Who Have Left Their First Wife (Missing = 16, see p. 266 for explanation)

		Have you ever had more than one wife at the same time?		
		No	Yes	Total
Are you still with your first spouse?	No	6	1	7
	Yes	39	6	45
	Total	45	7	52

It would be a mistake to think that Jean Rabel men control women with the threat of violence. Jean Rabel women are not often passive about taking guff and physical abuse from men. Indeed, there may be as many instances of men being beaten by women, or beaten because they beat a woman, as there are cases of women being beaten by men. In over four years of following life in Makab, 17 violent conflicts were documented. In only three of the conflicts did a woman suffer blows from a man and in an equal number of cases a man was beaten by a single woman or a group of women. The most brutal beatings that occurred involved women beating men or women and men beating a man because he had struck a woman.[20] Carol Anne Truelove, a missionary nurse with 30 years experience in the region, reports having treated three men versus one woman for severed lips, the ultimate punishment a local woman can deliver an adversary—by biting him or her on the mouth.[21,22]

In contrast to women, Jean Rabel men rarely fight or even argue over lovers or potential spouses, and it is not because they do not want a wife. A Jean Rabel man

needs a woman. It is a woman who will wash his clothes, make his meals, sell garden produce and livestock extend the budget by rolling the family savings over in the market, and it is a wife who will bear and raise the children whose labor will bring prosperity and respect to the household. When asked 'does a husband need his wife more or is a wife in greater need of her husband?' Only 3% of men reported a woman needs her husband more, but 28% reported that a husband is in greater need of his wife—the remaining individuals said that both needed the other equally (see Table 15-12).

Table 15-12: Who Needs the Other More, Husband or Wife?

	Respondents		
	Men (n = 69)	Women (n = 69)	Men & Women (n = 138)
Husband needs wife more	28%	23%	26%
Wife needs husband more	3%	13%	8%
They both need the other equally	70%	63%	68%
Total Responses	100%	100%	100%

Entering union with a woman means a man becomes a *gran moun*, an adult, an economically autonomous individual worthy of respect, the head of a household, no longer a dependent, and no longer a child who can be ordered around by older family members. Thus, to vulgarize the analysis, as, in fact, a Jean Rabelien might do, the simple truths are, 1) getting a wife is the most materially rewarding alliance a Jean Rabel man can form with another person, and 2) men do not fight over women because they know that what stands between them and a wife is not other men, but their own ability to

Table 15-13: Why Men versus Women Chose Their Spouse? (missing = 4)

		Gender		
		Men	Women	Total
Why did you choose your spouse?	Love	45	27	72
	Good worker	1	26	27
	Only one I could find	13	4	17
	Good family	1	0	1
	Other	4	11	15
	Total	64	68	132

provide (see Table 15-13 above). Women understand the need men have for a wife and like men they too think that a husband is in greater need of his wife than vice versa. Only 13% of women reported that a wife needs her husband more, but 23% of women reported that a husband is in greater need of his wife (Table 15-12). When asked, 'could you live without your spouse?' 96% of men interviewed said 'no' in comparison to 77% of Jean Rabel women who responded 'no.' (Table 15-14 below).

Table 15-14 : Could You Live Without Your Spouse?

		Respondents		
		Men (n = 69)	Women (n = 69)	Men & Women (n = 138)
Could You Live Without a Spouse?	No	96%	77%	86%
	Yes	4%	23%	14%
	Total	100.0%	100%	100.0%

To return to the topic of polygyny, for the average farmer polygyny is something he may enter into at some point in his life, when or if he has a windfall such as a job or a good harvest, but it is not something that endures. The average farmer needs his first wife and cannot afford to upset her. It is this wife who manages the household and helps him plant his crops, and it is this wife who harvests and sells the products of the household, land and animals, in the market. In the average homestead all the money produced by the household passes through the hands of the wife and in many cases the wife brings in as much income from marketing activities as the man contributes by planting gardens and tending livestock.

So while perhaps not fond of the thought of her husband entering into a union with another woman, the average wife of the average husband is not especially worried about it either. The common response women gave to, "does your husband have another or other wives?,' was not a simple, 'No,' but rather, 'No, he is too poor' (*Non, pase li malere*). The average farmer's wife knows her husband cannot afford another wife, and

perhaps more importantly, she knows he needs her and the children, and this was evident in responses many women gave when asked what they would do in the event their husband took another woman:

> I would talk to him. I would not curse him because if the guy had something, if he had a good paying job, I would raise hell, I would have a serious little chat with him. But the guy has no job, he has no education, he has nothing. [23] (32 year-old mother of 5)

> Ah well, I would not do anything, it is not me who made him do it ... He'll be back, he'll be sick and to the house he'll be coming. There is not anyone before me. It is me who is first.[24] (50 year-old mother of seven)

> If he finds a woman who is brave, he goes and spends a couple days with her, let him go with the girl because he is not a child, you can't beat him. [25] (34 year-old mother of three)

> If it is strength he feels, if he feels strong, I won't stop his strength.[26] (65 year-old mother of nine)

> I would not do anything. If he listens to me, if I tell him 'No, times are not good, you can not have two wives. For example, like today, it is only a single two dollars you have there, and if there are two of us, you can not give us each only a dollar.' Ah, he can't do it.[27] (27 year-old mother of five)

> He can not abandon me completely. He has to come sit there and help me *chape* [raise] the children.[28] (40 year-old mother of four)

> Just so long as I have a path to go down I would not pay any attention. I would look after my children. Especially with him, I can't leave him. We are married, I can not leave him. It is an engagement we have together. I have a bunch of children with him.[29] (65 year-old mother of nine)

The Econo-Demographic Underpinnings of Polygyny

In earlier chapters it was shown that children are highly valued and that most farmers would prefer to have six rather than three children. But, the simple demographic fact is that if conditions in Jean Rabel really compelled farmers to maximize birth rates then the best way for a woman to achieve high fertility is within the socio-economic comfort of an enduring conjugal union with a man who has no other wife and who provides the material support necessary to care for her during pregnancy and while she is breastfeeding infants. Unfortunately, this is not possible. It is not possible because there

is a scarcity of eligible bachelors in Jean Rabel, a scarcity that is financially induced and that has both a physical and an artificial dimension. The 'physical' scarcity is a direct consequence of men going to the city, usually in search of money so they can find a wife and start a homestead. As discussed earlier, male wage migration causes the proportion of males to females in Jean Rabel to drop by 7% - 10% for the 20 to 39 year age group (See Table 15-5).[30,31] An 'artificial' scarcity of men is caused by the fact that many of the young men who remain in Jean Rabel do not have the money necessary to enter into a union. Thus, a typical Jean Rabel man would very much like to have a wife, but for the majority of young men the associated financial demands make entry into a union impossible. And so rather than delay the onset of childbearing while waiting for male age cohorts to come back from the city or to become financially mature at home, many Jean Rabel women enter into union and begin bearing children with men several years older than themselves, a trend that is evidenced by the fact that 49% of Jean Rabel men do not enter into unions until their thirties, while 48% of women are already in union by the age of 25 (see Table 15-5). At least 15% of women's first unions are with men who already have a wife. But, as discussed below, entrance into a polygynous relationship is not something that women necessarily decide on their own.[32]

Table 15-15: Percent of Women vs Men in Union per Five-Year Age Group (includes widows)

Five year age categories	Males In Union	Total Male Pop	Women in Union	Total Female Pop	Sex Ratio (Mal/Fem)
15 to 19	2%	373	12%	387	0.96%
20 to 24	18%	343	48%	378	0.91%
25 to 29	51%	253	76%	285	0.89%
30 to 34	81%	183	85%	216	0.85%
35 to 39	90%	196	90%	214	0.92%
40 to 44	92%	158	89%	170	0.93%
45 to 49	88%	134	87%	144	0.93%
50 to 54	89%	143	81%	132	1.08%
55 to 59	88%	103	80%	89	1.16%
60 to 64	90%	118	74%	91	1.30%
Over 64	80%	222	55%	220	0.96%
Total	--	2,226	--	2,326	0.96%

Parents, Permissiveness, and Polygyny

According to one key informant regarding entrance into conjugal unions:

> A lot of the time it is the parents themselves who *plase* girls. Sometimes the parents, they are so interested in money, their daughter loves a young man who is the same age as her, they could marry, but the parents don't accept it. They see that at that time in the young man's life he can not do anything. He can not give money. Then the parents see by the way the girl is acting that she is going to *plase* with a married man. But the fact that the married man can give money causes them to close their eyes so the daughter can take the money from him. It is like this. Adults are behind it. [33]
>
> Civil Judge in Jean Rabel

Young women are not the only people with a stake in the institution of polygyny. Parents express a moderate preference for daughters over sons. While the principal reason given by parents for this preference is that girls do more work, 20% of fathers also stated clearly that "girls are cooked food" (*fi se manje kwit*), a Jean Rabel expression that unequivocally means that daughters are good to have because they obtain financial contributions and favors from men.

Table 15-16: Reasons Girls are Preferred

n = 62 (missing = 4)		% Responses
Why do you prefer girls/boys?	Girls help more	21%
	No preference	32%
	Boys help more	18%
	Girls are cooked food	21%
	Boys cost less	3%
	Girls are more faithful	2%
	Boys are more faithful	3%
	Total	100.0%

> The girls are better. Why? I could fall for one, this guy could fall for another. You yourself could fall for another. You understand? Prepared food. Women have more luck than men.[34]
> (38 year-old father of three)

> When a daughter lands in a good situation, she's likely to come gather you up. You can be pale and all washed up. In three days you're another color… Girls are cooked food.[35]
> (32 year-old father of three)

> Cooked food…If you have a daughter and she takes a man, she takes the man and she goes and lives with him. She lives with the man, and that man regards you better than he regards his own father.[36] (62 year-old father of eleven)

> A guy who has daughters, he lives better. Because girls are prepared food… If a jitney is coming down the road, the driver will put him in the front seat.[37] (75 year-old father of five)

Mothers tended to remain mute regarding the issue of *manje kwit,* but mothers favor daughters over sons at a rate almost twice as high as fathers (see 15-17 above) and it is clearly mothers, not fathers, who benefit most from their daughters' financial success.[38] Of the 78 parents identified as living in a household headed by one of their children, 59 of them were mothers, and in 46 of these cases the host was a daughter (see Table 15-18 below).[39]

Table 15-17: Male and Female A man with 5 daughters vs a man with 5 sons, which is better?

		Respondent		
		Male	Female	Total
Which is better, 5 daughters or 5 sons?	Five daughters	26	44	70
	Five sons	17	8	25
	No difference	23	13	36
	Mixture	2	3	5
	Total	68	68	136

Table 15-18: Sex of Child Who is Hosting Resident Parent (n = 1,521)

		Sex of Host		
		Son	Daughter	Total
Sex of resident parent	Father	17	2	19
	Mother	13	46	59
	Total	29	48	78

Parents, especially mothers, take a keen interest in the sex lives of their daughters. Prenuptial girls are carefully watched, not with an antagonism toward suitors, something that might thwart the approach of gift-bearing men and potential sires of grandchildren, but with intent to maintain a grip on the girl's flirtations. For instance, 'good girls' do not flirt with men while away from the homestead. Many prenuptial daughters who are not in school do not leave the homestead at all, not for any reason, not even to go to the water. Some mothers physically probe their daughters' genitals to see if the hymen has been perforated so that they can identify the man responsible, make the relationship public and induce the man to begin making contributions to the girl's welfare. Girls who see men in secret may suffer severe whippings at the hands of their parents. On the other hand, suitors who

parents find acceptable are promoted. The daughter, of course, has to consent, but if with the encouragement of her parents she does consent, the man is welcomed. He is invited to the house and cussed out in good humor for not stopping by more frequently. When he does visit the house he is joked with, fed, given a place to relax, and he is deliberately left alone with the daughter for increasingly lengthy intervals. If all goes well, he may eventually begin sleeping over at the girl's house. The girl is then watched carefully for signs of pregnancy. At the smallest indication that she is pregnant the *matwon* (mid-wife) or another specialist in these matters, is summoned to the house to make a diagnosis, a diagnosis that, as seen in an earlier chapter, often comes up positive even when the girl is not pregnant, i.e. *perdisyon*. This is also a diagnosis, it should be emphasized, that for several years tags the next child born to the woman as the offspring of that particular man, whether or not she is still in union with the man, and whether or not she continues to have sexual relations with him. It is also worth emphasizing however, that the man, his parents, and other family members will spend more time thinking about the joy and benefits of acquiring a new family member than they will dwelling on the question of whether the child is really a biological relative.[40]

The concern parents display regarding the sexual activities of their daughters should not be interpreted as bizarre. Like parents elsewhere in the world, parents in Jean Rabel want their daughters to make practical decisions regarding mates and they encourage them to bear children with men who can support the young woman economically and who will help pay for the cost of *chaping* offspring. Twenty-four percent of young women under the age of 30 who were reported during the baseline as being in the formative phase of a conjugal union (237 of 969)—meaning they identified themselves as being in union with a man but had not yet acquired an independent

homestead--are in fact still living in the homes of their mothers, father, or another relative (see Figure 15-1 and Table 15-19). And in the event a daughter becomes pregnant by a *vakabon* (dead-beat dad) it is the parents who must absorb the costs of *chaping* the child, something they would probably prefer to avoid. But the most important point of all is the need for children and it is this need that prevails. Everybody in Jean Rabel wants children, but this is most true of older people and especially older women. As shown in Chapter 12, compared to fathers under 35 years of age, four times as many men over 50 years of age preferred six over three children (13% versus 52%); and for women this age-related preference was 57% to 87%. And so while angry at the girl for conducting an affair in secret, especially if the lover possesses no economic assets of any value, nobody, especially the girl's parents, will chastise her for the fact she is pregnant.

Children Under 30 Years Old (but over 14) and Still living in parents household (n = 2,135)

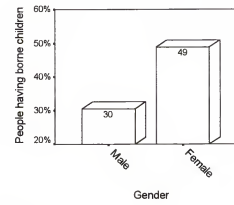

Figure 15-1

Table 15-19: Union Type by Household Residents Under 30 Years Old (but over 14) Who are not The Head or Spouse of Head

	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Plasaj	107	237	344
Separation	59	70	129
Single	876	738	1,614
Widowed	11	30	41
Divorced	3	3	6
Other	1	0	1
Total	1,057	1,078	2,135

* Reference is to children-in-law and sibling in-laws. Parental in-laws are included in "Other."

The tension between the desire to have a contributing 'son-in-law' and the need for grandchildren is manifest in rare but ideologically prominent and widely talked about incidences where impatient parents surprise eligible men copulating with their daughter.

When encountering such a situation the parents do not run the man off their property with shotgun blasts of rock salt to his disappearing backside as a stereotypical US farming father might be expected to do. That type of violence or even aggressive behavior against male suitors is rare. Instead, the ideal Jean Rabel farmer will barricade the man into the house with his daughter, locking the doors and sending for the young man's parents and a pastor. With threats of violence and sorcery the farmer tries to force the man to marry his daughter.[41]

Women, Children, and Fertility

Although parental persuasion and pressures from men may increase the likelihood that a young woman will have a first or second birth, it is ultimately the woman who makes the final decision regarding how many births she has in her lifetime. It is through assessing the advantages that accrue to women for bearing children that high birth rates, liberal sexuality, and the acceptance of the practice of polygyny ultimately become logical. Early on in their reproductive careers, women are dependent on financial contributions from men. The man builds the house, plants gardens and provides the working capital for the household. Furthermore men, rather than women, overwhelmingly pay for child educational expenses (see Table 15-20 below). Young women sometimes responded to the question, "Can you live without a husband?" saying things similar to what one 27 year-old woman said: "No, I cannot live without my husband. I am still a child" (*Non, m pa ka viv san*

Table 15-20: Father vs Mother Financial Contributions

		Respondents		
		Male n = 68	Female n = 68	Total n = 136
Who gives the most money to raise the children?	Myself	84%	25%	55%
	Spouse	11%	69%	40%
	Other	4%	6%	5%

mari-m. M timoun toujou.).

But the key point is that a woman needs a man to establish a household and begin raising children. Nevertheless, and the more children a woman gets, the less she needs a man.

In the Opinion Survey, no woman with three children or fewer responded that she could live without a man. In contrast, 27% of women with more than three children said they could (see Table 15-21).[42] Thus, all the while a woman is gaining more children—and becoming more pronatal-- she is also becoming more economically independent-- and less concerned about her husband's support.[43] As the children grow it is they and not men who increasingly perform the chores that would otherwise fall to the woman, freeing her to engage in gardening and especially in commerce. As seen in an earlier chapter a woman with four to eight children is four times more likely to be engaged in commercial activity than a woman with zero to 3 children (see Table11-3 p. 207). As seen in Chapter 8, the profits gained from commerce can put women on economically equal footing with most Jean Rabel men. And so children eventually free a woman from dependency on men altogether. As several Jean Rabel women explained,[44]

Table 15-21: Women Who Say They Can Live Without a Husband by Number of Children

Women who say they can live without a spouse	Number of Children	
	0 – 2 (n = 10)	3 – 5 (n = 58)
Yes	00.0%	27.0%
No	100.0%	73.0%

What makes me say I can live without a man? What I need to do to come up with a sack of food I can accomplish with my four children.[45] (30 year-old mother of 4)

If I have children, I don't need my husband at all. Children, hey! hey! I would like to have ten children. I don't need my husband.[46] (41 year-old mother of 7)

Why can I live without a man? I arrive at an age like this. All my affairs are in order. I don't need my husband anymore.[47] (56 year-old mother of 8)

Conclusion

In summary, clear evidence suggests that not only polygyny but the entire pronatal socio-cultural fertility complex in Jean Rabel is driven by four principal factors: 1) the importance of child labor to the household, 2) a woman's need for material support from a partner in order to establish an independent homestead, receive care during pregnancy, and *chape* children, 3) a deficit of young men with the money and resources to fulfill those needs, and 4) the presence of a minority of men with relatively substantial income earned independently of their first wife. With these underlying causes in mind, regarding high fertility, Jean Rabel women are best viewed not as bearing and rearing children primarily to secure economic support from men, but rather as securing economic support from men primarily so they can bear and raise children. Were Jean Rabel women to do otherwise, were they to universally abide by ideals of chastity and monogamous Western marriage, many would be deprived of their only avenue to economic autonomy, managing a household.

Jean Rabel women, as typical of people who live so close to the margin of survival, make no pretensions about the raw material logic of conjugal unions and raising children:

> What I am telling you is when you are young, you need a husband. What I mean is, if you haven't had children yet. So you can make a child.[48] (42 year-old mother of 3)

> He gives me money for the children, that is what makes me prefer having him around[49] (27 year-old mother of five)

> If a person marries, why does she marry? She does not marry to be a big shot or anything like that. It is so she can have children… Why does a person want children? It is to help…to go to the water…to go get wood.[50] (40 year-old mother of five)

And so it all comes back to the simple prosaic fact that, in Jean Rabel, children are extremely useful and for that reason women have many children. The poignant words of one older woman echoes what so many other farming women were heard saying while being interviewed during the realization of this study:

> The whole country can be full of money for women. But money is useless, because they will eat it all and take it. One little thing someone does for you because he knows you have no children, it can cost 100 dollars...In order for money to work you must have children. If you have no one, money can't work for you. Ahh, you can pay people to work. But if it ain't your child they will take all you have. They will load you up with lies. They will load you up with a bunch of things that are no good. But when it's your child, you always succeed.[51]
>
> (53 year-old mother of 9)

Notes

[1] This description of the defining features of polygyny in Haiti was inspired by Gerald Murray (1998)

[2] There was a *bokor* in Makab with two wives in separate compounds, they both lived in the hamlet, and the *bokor* had also borne children with a mentally unstable sister of one of the wives. The sister lived in the same compound with the *bokor* and the wife, and they unashamedly explained the situation as necessary because the sister could not find a spouse with whom to bear children.

[3]

Table 15-22: Ever-Polygynous Men in Kinanbwa Haiti

		Has the man ever been polygynous?		
		No	Yes	Total
Age	Under 35	77% (26)	23% (06)	100%
	35 – 49	70% (40)	30% (17)	100%
	50+	56% (35)	44% (27)	100%
	Total	67% (101)	33% (50)	100%

(Gerald Murray, 1977;263)

[4] Data was gathered on all skilled workers, *bosses,* in both regions. There were 41 in all.

[5] The argument that fisherman enjoy a higher income level is based on my own experiences and corroborated by data from CARE's 1994 baseline study in the Northwest region which found that fisherman enjoy on average ten times the income of local farmer (1996; p 99). This latter observation does not reflect the fact that fisherman also spend much more on equipment, but the point nevertheless stands. Fisherman are relatively wealthier than farmers.

[6] Fisherman are typically beset with marketing women whenever they reach shore with a fresh catch, which they sell immediately.

[7] *Eh, li pa gen avantay. Desann gason pa konprann li desann ou, wi. Se en sel ti madanm ki vreman pouse ou monte.*

[8] *Ah, lè ou gen plizyè madanm, se yon paket afè... Kounye-a maten-a, si ou travay jaden sa pou madanm sa, fo ou travay lòt jaden pou lòt madanm.*

[9] *Li pa gen avantay. Se yon desanvantay.*

[10] *Wi gen avantay paskè gen moun ki gen plizyè madanm. Si se pou manje bagay sa yo m pa konnen.*

[11] *Non, li pa gen avantay. Pasè fo ou ka fe jaden pou tou le dè, fo ou ka voye tou le dè nan mache. Li pa nan avantay.*

[12] Only one polygynous man gave the expected and long favored anthropological explanation for polygyny in rural Haiti: That a man can benefit from multiple wives because wives help him with the harvest and sale of garden produce. The man explained,

> The advantage is, if you have the means, you work this little garden really hard, if it yields, you are working at the other woman's house on 2 or 4 *kawo* of land. If this harvest is good too, you have a money advantage. There is an advantage when days are good. But when days are not good, now you don't have jack and you have to give to both of them.
>
> (*Avantay li gen ladan, si mwayen pèmet ou, ou travay telman travay ti kawo tè, si li bon, ou travay kay lòt fi-a dè o yon kat kawo tè. Si rekolt la repete, ou gen avantay kob la. Li gen avantay lè jou bagay yo bon. Lè jou pa bon, kounye-a ou sou jak. Bay fo ou bay tou le dè.*)

[13] *Lè moun pa vin alez ave ou ... ou gen kote ou ka al manje bwe.*

[14] *Si premiè ba ou yon defo, ou oblije chache yon, min se pa avantay li ye.*

[15] *Si gen yon madanm pa te la. Li ale, li ale kay lòt la, li al tet lòt la ki te kite yon ti mòso manje pou li, li al jwenn ni, li al manje li. Se sa, apre de sa se dekouraj. Apre de sa, pa gen avantay.*

[16] *M-ap fache paskè w-ap pedi nan sa l-ap ba ou.*

[17] *Map sere kob mwen paskè lap pran ladan pote li ale*

[18] *M pap alez paskè lap bay lot fi kob*

[19] *M-ap joure mari-m paske lap fe-m fe defisi*

[20] Four of the seventeen conflicts involved men only, and five of the conflicts involved only women. In the eight remaining conflicts the principal combatants were a man and a woman. In three instances the woman was slightly injured. In one instance the fight turned into a small war. In another instance a woman kicked and slapped her drunken ex-lover and physically threw him out of her house. Another incident involved a relatively weak cuckolded man who tried to beat his wife but was hit by a large stick wielded by a neighbor woman who subsequently marched the man off to the police station. In another instance, a man was severely beaten and stabbed by his wife and four sister-in-laws In another incident a man allegedly struck a woman and was immediately clubbed and kicked nearly to death by about a quarter of the village population.

Here are the most interesting cases, beginning with the oddest: A very aggressive and physically ugly woman aged 32 had stripped naked and flaunted herself before her mother-in-law who she was angry with for having taken a fish given to her by her son—the angry woman's husband. Cursing and parading herself back and forth in front of her mother-in-law, the angry wife stopped, bent over, and slapping her naked buttocks showed her anus to her offended mother-in-law. The wife's brother-in-law—another son of the now indignant mother-in-law--had been standing by looking on and he attacked his naked, buttock slapping sister-in-law, knocking her to the ground. (The son-in-law/husband was present and also took offense to his wife's behavior but he did not enter into the

conflict, maintaining neutrality which is probably all that kept the incident from becoming a brawl between his and his wife's family.)

In five of the cases of physical conflict in the village, several women together, or several women and men, engaged in some configuration of combat. The most severe case occurred in the house in which I had recently been staying. The man's name was Rimmie (not his real name), undisputedly the strongest swimmer and deepest diver in the village. The conflict began over a bicycle. Rimmie had arrived in the village riding the bicycle, which belonged to his other wife—one that did not live in *Makab*. Two of his daughters, aged 7 and 11, borrowed the bicycle and went for a joy ride which ended with the 7 year screaming and crying with a banged knee. An aunt came along --Rimmie's sister-in-law--spanked both the girls and then punctured the front tire of the bicycle with a thorn, making sure there were to be no more joy rides and undoubtedly also intending to make a statement about her feelings toward her brother-in-law's other wife. When Rimmie discovered what had been done, a screaming and shoving match erupted between him and his tire-poking sister-in-law. Being the stronger, Rimmie pushed his sister-in-law down and jumped on top of her. Unfortunately for Rimmie, his estranged wife and three other sister-in-laws had been standing by watching. The first sister-in-law to strike was the youngest, a fourteen year-old girl, who with both hands, lifted a small boulder over her head and hurled it into Rimmie's back. The other two sister-in-laws and the wife followed, slamming rocks into Rimmie's back. Rimmie's children, also witnesses to the unfolding events, danced around spastically in circles, little arms flailing, shrieking hysterically while their aunts and mother stoned their father. The sister-in-law who had originally been attacked managed to stab Rimmie in the cheek with a fork she had been holding, causing blood to pour down his face. My unfortunate friend was eventually saved by a neighbor who entered the fight and shielded Rimmie from his sister-in-laws while other neighbors pulled him to safety.

Another instance occured on a brisk Sunday morning and it involved Pol, 30ish, strong but a heavy drinker and a reputed cat burglar (on at least two occasions while I was in the village people awoke to find Pol tiptoeing across the floor of their thatch roofed huts and each time Pol got away by fleeing into the bush). Pol was in a dispute with a women in her 60s, Maximine, to whom he owed money for rum he had bought from her. Maximine cursed Pol as he walked past her kitchen. Pol replied. More words were exchanged and Pol, who had been drinking *kleren* (rum), stepped into the kitchen and according to his subsequent assailants, slapped the older women. It is questionable whether Pol really slapped Maximine because if he did, it was a very stupid thing to do. Pol has only one sister--and she is cross eyed-- his mother has mental problems, , no one is sure who his father is, and Pol, by virtue of his thievery, is a near out-cast in the village, albeit a tough one. In contrast, Maximine is a near matriarch. She is a mother of eight, and she lives in the middle of a cluster of houses in which also reside one of her sons and his 6 children, a brother in-law and his four children, a sister and her nine children, a daughter and her three children. Maximine also has a husband and two grown children living with her in her own house. And most unfortunately for Pol, one of these children, an Amazon sized 23 year-old daughter, was standing in the kitchen with her mother when Pol entered. She was pounding coffee with a pestal as big as a baseball bat and the first thing to hit Pol was reportedly that pestal. In moments, sons, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and in-laws were kicking, pummeling, and clobbering Pol with whatever object they could find. I was not physically present and have not seen Pol since the incident, but people report he was almost killed.

The male versus female incident mentioned earlier in the main text, the one that became a small war, began when twenty-year-old man slapped a thirteen year-old girl thus instigating a battle between two *lakous* (family compounds). The thirteen-year-old girl, Little-Bridget (*Ti-Brijet*), was filling her water bucket at the village spicket. Hot and thirsty from a just finished soccer game, Little-Demon (*Ti-Djab*), the obnoxious and insolent younger brother of the buttock-slapper mentioned above, came to get a drink of water. He rudely told Little-Bridget to get out of his way, and Little-Bridget, equally infamous for being insolent, just as rudely told him, 'no.' Little-Demon slapped her, knocking her to the ground. Standing only a few feet away was Little-Bridget's comparatively weak 18 year-old brother who leapt on Little-Demon whereupon several other young men entered the fray. The fight might have passed had Little-Bridget's mother not launched a rock into the crowd hitting yet another young man in the face. Very coincidentally—or perhaps not so coincidentally--the young man who was hit was the deadbeat father of another of the woman's daughters--Little-Bridget's sister. The man had not only neglected to care for the child but shortly after its birth had brought another woman, an outsider from the

island of La Tortue, into the village. The new woman was also pregnant and she died giving birth to the child. Virtually everyone who was not immediately related to or good friends with Little-Bridget's mother agreed that she had killed her daughters rival with sorcery. And now, after years of hushed accusations and seething hatred, Little-Bridget's mother had hit her estranged 'son-in-law' in the face with a rock. As the people in the village said, *guere pete* -- war exploded. The son-in-law's family, led by three sisters—three of the same four sisters who had stoned and stabbed Rimmie above—and accompanied by four brothers, bombarded Little-Bridget, her mother and her two brothers with rocks. Little-Bridget's family did what they could to hold the attackers off, returning fire with stones and hurling threats of sorcery and retribution. But they eventually had to take refuge inside their house. The bombardment went on for some twenty minutes. The doors and shudders of the house were splintered by stones. The family stayed in doors that night. The next morning Little-Bridget's mother tried to pretend as if nothing had happened, coming out of the house, sweeping the yard, and then heading over to the water spigot. No such luck. The oldest sister in the opposing family had assembled a pile of rocks and was waiting. Seeing Little-Bridget's mother, she launched another all-out assault, hitting the older woman several times with rocks. Her sisters and brothers joined her in the attack and together they drove the entire family out of the village. Little-Bridget's mother subsequently secured a police mandate ordering the other family to allow her and her children to live peacefully in the village, but up to this day, three years later, the family has not been able to return.

[21] In Haitian urban areas domestic violence against women is widespread. I believe this is a consequence of the large difference in male versus female economic opportunies and the relative absence of family—parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, and cousins—who can protect or even seek revenge for the woman. I do not believe, nor does my personal experiences suggest, that violence against women occurs in rural areas to anywhere near the same degree. (Indeed, as seen, woman appear more violent than men). I believe this lower occurrence of domestic violence against women is a consequence of the exact opposite conditions found in the city: 1) rural women have higher economic status vis a vis men than their urban counterparts, and 2) family members are present and they often respond to violence against their daughters, sisters, mothers and cousins.

Two community focus group studies revealed that men who beat their wives—and get away with it—are not your average male farmer but overwhelmingly men who have a source of income outside of the household mode of production and are wealthy compared to those around them. In one community two of the four men who reportedly beat their wives were successful *bokors,* one was an employee for an international development organization and one of the wife beaters was the owner of a US$18,000.00 dump-truck—making him one the richest rural inhabitants in all of Jean Rabel. Carol Ann Truelove, mentioned elsewhere, identified 5 men in her area who beat their wives. Two are *bosses* (skilled workers), one is a schoolteacher, one is mentally ill, and only one is a farmer. In short, three of five have income derived from a source completely independent of the household--and one is crazy.

I have spent the past five years living in the region, intermittently in fishing and farming areas, in the village of Jean Rabel, and in the provincial capital city of Port-de-Paix, and the only other stories I have to relate of domestic violence in rural farming areas are: The story of Marco and Selest (given on page 251) in which Marco was eventually beaten severely by his wife's sister, her brother, and her brother's wife. A Mare Rouge woman who was beaten by her husband and subsequently repaid the abuse by feigning submission, feeding her husband dinner and then, while he was eating, throwing a pot of scalding water on him. Nobody defended the husband and he reportedly did not beat his wife again—or, at least, not yet. (For a similar discussion of the aggressiveness of rural Haitian women versus men see Murray 1977: 173)

[22] Something that deserves mention is the practice in rural Haiti of woman eating apart from men. Women typically eat in the kitchen, which is built apart from the house, and men eat at a table in the dining room of the house. Simpson (1942) took this as an indication of repression and surely many contemporary observers make the same assumption—I did. But this is probably a classic case of seeing an alien custom through ones own cultural lens. In developed Western countries eating meals, particularly dinner, seated at a table in the company of others has great symbolic value. We 'break bread together' and 'enjoy the family meal together' and the idea of eating in the kitchen while others are eating in the dinning room smacks of discrimination. But in rural Haiti there is little value assigned

to sitting around the table. Women make the food and they simply eat it in the kitchen. Why not? Why wait? In a country where most people do not get enough to eat, alone in the kitchen seems like a good place to be.

[23] *M-ap pale ave li. M pap joure ave li pase si neg la gen yon bagay, gen yon djob nan min ni, m ka fe yon tenten, m ta ka fe ti dialog ave li. Min neg la pa gen djob nan min, li pa nan fe klas, li pa ka fe anyen*

[24] *En ben, m pa ka fe anyen, se pa mwen ki fe sa... L-ap vin,, l-ap malad, se andedan kay la l-ap vini. Se pa lòt la ki devan. Se mwen k-ap devan.*

[25] *Si li jwenn yon fi ki brav, li al fe 2 jou a li, kite li al a fi akoz se pa ti moun li ye .Ou pa ka kale li.*

[26] *M pa ta di anyen. Si se kouray li santi, si li santi kouray-a, m pap rete lakouraj li la.*

[27] *M pap fe anyen. Si li koute-m, si m di non, moman pa bon li pa ka gen 2 fi. Tank si se jodi-a, se yon sel di goud li jwenn, e si se nou dè, li pa ka ba nou chak sink goud. E li pa kapab*

[28] *M-ap swiv neg la, paskè m gentan gen pitit ave-li. Li pa ka abandone ni net. Fo-k li vin chita la pou ede-m chape ti moun yo.*

[29] *Depi m gen wout pou pase, m pa okipe-ou. M-ap okipe pitit. Sitel li menm, m pa ka lag-o. Nou marie ansanm, m pa ka lag-o. Se yon angajman nou gen ansanm. M gen han pitit.*

[30] The higher rates of males in older age groups is possibly due to women with grown children going to live with the children in urban areas.

[31] It makes no sense to a Jean Rabel woman to go live with a man in a house he gives her if the man has no gardens or livestock; nor does it make sense to go live with the man's mother when the girl can more comfortably stay with her own mother who will be happy to have the services of grandchildren. Furthermore, as seen, in the absence of a supportive husband, a Jean Rabel woman can begin bearing children while still living with her parents without suffering shame or ridicule.

[32] This is an inference drawn from the gender differences in age at entry into union, the differential rates at which women versus men separate from their first spouse, and the imbalance in the sex ratios (see Chapter 5).

[33] *Gen anpil fwa se parann menm ki plase ti moun yo, ki plase yo. Gen dè fwa parann menm, telman se lajan ki interese-l, pitit fi konn reme avek yon gason ki gen menm laj ave li. Yo te ka marie. Li pa asepte. Pase lè gason sa li we li pa ka fe anyen, li pa ka bay lajan, etsetera. Pi devan li we ajè li pou plase a yon mouchè marie. Min de fe li konn mouchè marie sa ka bay lajan, gen lajan, li femen je-l pou pitit la ka pran lajan nan min zom sa pote ba li. An Ayiti se sa ki genyen kounie-a. Se granmoun kap minnin.*

[34] *Fi yo pi bon. Pou ki rezon? Sa vle di, mwen menm m gen dwa we nan yon pitit fi nan yo. Myseu sa gen dwa we yon nan yo. Ou menm ou gen dwa we nan yon nan yo. Ou konprann. Manje pare. Fi gen plis chans pase gason.*

[35] *Lè ou we pitit fi-a tonbe yon kote, li ka ranmase ou. L-ap ranmase ou. Ou te met blanch konsa, nan dè twa jou la-p vin yon lòt koulè... Fi se manje kwit.*

[36] *Manje kwit...Si ou gon pitit fi li pran gason, li pran myseu li rete ave. Lè li rete a myseu, myseu a regade papa pi mal pase bopè*

[37] *Neg ki gen sink ti fi viv pi byen. (Pou ki sa?) Pou ki sa? Paskè, fi se manje tou pare...Si se yon machinn ki sou wout, chofè ap monte-m mete-m devan.*

[38] Indeed, looking at residence patterns in Table 15-18, in which it is seen that only two fathers are hosted by daughters, it is difficult to understand why fathers favor daughters and not sons.

[39] As mentioned earlier, 12% of *te-at* songs put together by female dance troops included refrains praising their mother and designating gifts and money meant for the mother, the most common of which has the girl returning home after going away, "If you see me carrying a gift, it is for my mother, Manman come it" (*Si ou we m pote yon kado se pou fe manman-m kado, Manman vin pran nan min*). Fidelity to mothers in this respect is one of the most conspicuous principles of a good daughter

[40] Forty-six men versus 26 women were found living in their parent in-law's household.

[41] Two incidences of young men being locked in houses were recorded from reliable informants and I believe these incidences really do occur. But more salient is the ideology or the commonality with which people talk about such incidences. The image of rural parents eagerly waiting to trap a man in their house and force him to marry their daughter is very much a part of Jean Rabel ideology. People will say things such as, 'yea those people in La Montagne will call the preacher and marry you right there in your shorts' *(Y-ap rele pastor epi marie ou nan bout chòt*). In an interview with the Jean Rabel judge he spontaneously began talking about marriages where men in rural areas were forced to marry at midnight and then challenged the legitimacy of the marriages in court. According to the judge, the marriages are not binding (but I have to add, midnight marriages probably never occur, people in the area would consider such behavior fit for demons).

[42] In every instance where a woman said she could live without a husband the woman's oldest child was at least 13 years of age

[43] For the nine women is this category for whom data on the age of their children was available, the oldest child in every instance was at least 13 years old.

[44] This is a play on Ira Lowenthal's statement in his Ph.D. dissertation (1987; p 61) . Lowenthal tells us that in Duverger, 'a woman enables a man to work.' As demonstrated earlier, women enable men to work in Jean Rabel as well, but the point being made here is that children enable both men and women to work.

[45] *En ben, ki fe-m ka viv san gason? Sa-m bezwenn m ka leve yon sak manje, se a kat ti moun um m ka rive.*

[46] *Si m gen ti moun m pa bezwenn mari-m menm. Ti moun, hoy, hoy. M ta reme dis pitit, m pa bezwenn mari.*

[47] *Pou ki rezon fe-m ka viv san gason. Ko-m rive nan laj konsa. Tout afe-m mache. M pa bezwenn mari-m anko.*

[48] *Non. Lè yon moun jenn, bagay sa m-ap di, ou bezwenn yon mari, komsi m di, si ou poko enfante, ou ka enfante yon ti moun.*

[49] *L-ap ba-m di goude pou ti moun, se sa k fe m ta reme sa*

[50] *Si yon moun marie, pou ki sa li marie? Li pa marie ni pou chef ni pou anyen. Se pou li ka fe dè ti moun ... Èn ben, pou kisa yon moun fe ti moun? Se pou li ka ed-o... al nan dlo-a ... al nan bwa ...*

[51] *Ou met gen tout peyi se lajan pou danm, lajan se unitil, paskè y-ap manje tout pran ni. Yon ti bagay moun t-ap fe pou ou konsa paskè li konnen ou pa gen pitit, bagay la ka koute ou 100 dola ... Pou lajan travay fok se pitit pou ou gen pou travay. Si ou pa gen moun lajan pap travay. AH, ou ka gen moun lajan ap travay, min depi se pa pitit ou y-ap pran tout. Y-ap vin chaje ou ak manti. Y-ap chaje ou anpil bagay ki pa bon. Min lè se pitit ou, ou toujou ap reyisi*

SECTION VI

CONCLUSIONS: FERTILITY, FOOD AID, AND THE FAILURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN JEAN RABEL

CHAPTER 16

OVERSEAS AND LOCAL MARKETS, FOOD-AID AND MIGRATION

I am a farmer and I have been a farmer all my life. I would never invest here. First there are the dry spells. When you do get a good harvest you cannot get a good price because of the food aid. Then everyone else is also getting a good harvest and that drives the price down even farther. The only thing you can do is animals and for that there are too many people. There is not enough pasture. There is simply nothing you can do... Except leave.

German development worker stationed in Jean Rabel

Introduction

If the objectives of intervention specialists have been to improve living standards and reduce population growth then despite the costly and extensive efforts described in Chapter 4, efforts at inducing socio-cultural change in Jean Rabel through development-interventions, have proved to be an unequivocal failure. It is safe to say that not a single Jean Rabel intervention project executed in the past fifty years has had a lasting and measurable impact. Overall living standards in Jean Rabel are as low as ever. Virtually all productive and storage technologies and all endemic organizations beyond the level of the household remain as simple and rudimentary, if not simpler and more rudimentary, than ever before. The degradation of the natural environment continues to progress at an alarming rate. The spread of disease remains rampant. Rates of malnutrition continue to rise. The basic infrastructure in Jean Rabel--roads, bridges and water conduits--is far

and away inferior to conditions in the region during the late colonial period. Few public services exist and those present can at best be described as inadequate.

The same failure is true of "reproductive healthcare." Again, considerable investments have been made in educational programs, the construction and provisioning of health care clinics and the widespread distribution of contraceptives. Nevertheless, women continue to eschew the use of birth control and, against the recommendation of doctors and health extension agents, they begin the weaning process weeks and sometimes even days after the birth of a child. Furthermore, despite the presence of an adequate number of healthcare clinics, half of adult women do not use them, preferring instead to use the services of traditional midwives, leaf doctors, and shaman. And, of course, fertility rates remain extremely high.

This does not mean, however, that the inhabitants of Jean Rabel are ignorant of the precarious and deteriorating conditions in which they live. On the contrary, not a single Jean Rabelien would argue that environmental conditions or farming prospects are not deteriorating. Nor would a single Jean Rabelien contend that conditions are not going to continue degenerating into the future. But while a ballooning population may not be good for the region as a whole, facing the challenges of sustaining a household in Jean Rabel requires economic contributions from children and the contributions made by children extend beyond the nuclear family and the child's own household, to other households, to all people fortunate enough to share control over a child's labor—such as godparents, friends and neighbors.

In Jean Rabel, the household provides the first and the last guarantee against starvation and the primary protection from drought or market fluctuations. Thus, the

most secure investment a person can make is in the means of production that sustains a household. These include the house, the land and animals, and most importantly of all, the children who will do many of the basic yet critical household and agricultural chores freeing up adults, especially women, to spend more time generating income through trading in the markets. Thus, the generalized and radical degree of pronatalism manifest in attitudes, childrearing practices, high fertility, conjugal unions, seemingly promiscuous sexual mores, and polygyny are all related to two principal factors: 1) the economic security individuals derive from membership in households; and 2) the associated economic utility of children.

And an understanding of high fertility and the failure of efforts to change reproductive practices in Jean Rabel provides a base for postulating answers to other important questions that continue to befuddle well-intentioned development-type intervention experts. Why have conditions not changed in Jean Rabel despite so many investments? Why do women continue to have to make choices between polygyny and "delayed adulthood"? Why do farmers not increase production, make more money and change their lifestyles? Why have farmers not enthusiastically adopted new technologies, invested in fertilizers, pesticides, feed supplements, the planting of fruit and coffee trees, all practices that, in theory, would increase the yields and revenues that Jean Rabel men and women so earnestly pursue in farming, trade, artisanships, and in long distance labor migration? Why, with the availability of so many internationally funded experts in technology, management, and the formation of community help organizations, have Jean Rabel farmers not jumped on the band-wagon with the rest of the 'developing' world and improved their living standards?

The answer is not because Jean Rabel farmers have a special affinity for the difficult and precarious conditions in which they live and the strenuous labor required to survive in the region. Nor is there any special prestige attached to being a farmer. As discussed in this final section, Jean Rabel farmers and fisherman think of themselves as engaged in the lowliest of occupations, and so do their children. The offspring of farmers who are fortunate enough to have a relative overseas or a well positioned *patwon* (sponsor) to buy their books and pay their school tuition, quickly begin distancing themselves from the status of being a farmer. Boys grow their pinky fingernails long to show they do not perform manual labor and they disdain and denigrate their farming parents and cousins as "mangled feet" (*pye pete*), "hill billy" (*neg monn*), "hick" (*abitan*), "extreme hick" (*kongo*), "ignorant" (*inoran*), "uncivilized" (*pa sivilize*), "animal" (*bet*), "red teeth" (*dan wouj*) . Even the daughters of farmers would rather not marry a farmer," What can he give me? It is not all the time we get harvests" (*Sa li ka bay mwen? Se pa tout tann l-ap rekolte*).

Considerable efforts have also been made to show that the answer to why livelihood strategies and fertility levels have not changed in rural Jean Rabel does not rest in the irrational behavior of Jean Rabeliens or in some cultural construct in the mind of the Haitian farmer—as former USAID director Harrison was cited as saying in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. The answers to the questions are best found in an examination of the most conspicuous macro-economic and demographic factors that impinge on the decision making processes of the rural Jean Rabel farmer: 1) local and overseas market opportunities, 2) the behavior of foreign-funded intervention specialists (like Harrison), 3) alternative investment strategies, namely migration, and 4) the socio-

demographic and economic consequences of this migration. As discussed in this section, perhaps the failure of interventionist efforts rests in the continued lack of understanding of how these macroeconomic factors play a role in shaping the logic behind the decisions made by the men and women of Jean Rabel to survive from day to day. The daily decisions Jean Rabeliens make for survival must be understood within a more politico-economic perspective by focusing on factors such as local market opportunities, international economic policies, demand for exports, access to export markets, and migratory patterns.

The Local Markets and Storage

Opportunities for taking maximum advantage of the local markets are complicated by storage problems. For example, the lack of affordable local storage technologies and facilities does not allow Jean Rabel farmers the luxury of withholding their produce until market prices are favorable. Sacks woven from palm thatch are the principal storage containers that most farmers can afford. As a result, corn and beans , when stored for longer than three or four months, become infested with insects and molds and infiltrated by rats and mice. These problems are reflected in the fact that rather than conserving seed from the previous harvest to be used in future plantings, 94% of Jean Rabel farmers purchase seed for each planting from *marchanns*, specialists in seed storage (see Table 16-1). The lack of storage, preservatives, and pesticides means that

Table 16.1: Source for All Seed and Cuttings
(units of analysis = crops)

Source	Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Purchased	3,362	92.4	92.4
Last harvest	150	4.1	96.5
NGO	68	1.9	98.4
Gift	55	1.5	99.9
Other	3	.1	100.0
Total	3,638	100.0	100.0

farmers must sell their produce within a few months of the harvest, causing cyclical gluts in the market and a fluctuation in crop prices by factors as high as 300 percent during a single year (see Figure 16-1 above).

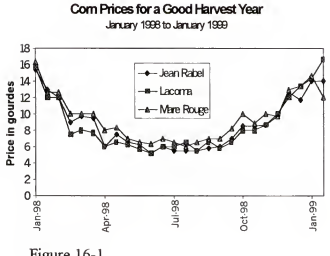

Figure 16-1

Table 16-2: General Price Ranges
Estimated by Jean Rabel Merchants 1993

Crop	Measure	Price Low	Price High
Corn	mamit	3.6	15.0
Millet	mamit	4.0	15.0
Beans (*rache*)	mamit	16.0	33.0
Pigeon Peas	mamit	8.0	25.0
Plantains	regime	17.0	27.0
Sweet Potatoes	sack	8.0	25.0
Peanuts	mamit	5.0	15.0
Cow Peas	mamit	10.0	32.0
Coffee	mamit	12.5	25.0
Tomatoes	each	.7	1.0
Cabbage	each	1.3	2.0

SCID and Auburn University 1993

The Domestic Market and Food Aid

Local and urban market prices are also affected by the distribution of foreign-sponsored food aid, the single greatest contemporary intervention activity in Jean Rabel, indeed in Haiti. No one seems to know exactly how long food aid programs have been present or how much food has been distributed in Jean Rabel over the past four decades. None of the organizations participating in Jean Rabel food relief were able to offer data extending back farther than eight years. CARE International, for example, which is one of the largest NGOs in the world, reports not having any data on food aid programs in Jean Rabel prior to 1992.[1] It is known, however, that food aid has been delivered to the region at least since CARE began supplying food to government primary schools during the early 1960s. During the 1970s HACHO (the Haitian American Community Help

Organization)[2] established warehouses in the region and regularly distributed an unknown quantity food on behalf of USAID. Furthermore, according to the 1975 to 1983 program administrator, Caritas received an average of 20 tons of flour, 30 tons of powdered milk and 4,800 pounds of butter per week from the European Community and redistributed it in and around the commune of Jean Rabel. Since 1970 no fewer than 12 international organizations have been involved in the Jean Rabel food relief effort (see endnote).[3]

Food-aid has an obvious impact on the market price of local produce. In the spring of 1993, during what was a relatively good harvest season, the founder and director of ID documented the impact that a relatively small amount of this "relief" can have on local corn prices. ID, an organization that depends heavily on the monetization[1] of food-aid, released a total of 225 metric tons of corn into the market at different dates between mid-April and mid-June.[4] With the first delivery the market price for local maize fell by 50 percent. The price stayed low throughout the distribution period, fluctuating only twice, once in mid-May, when the price dropped another 20% concomitant to a corn delivery, and once again in June when the price dropped yet another 10% with the distribution of yet another corn delivery (Table 16-3 below).

Table 16-3: Corn Price Variation by ID Imported Corn Deliveries (in *gdes*)

Date of Delivery	Comments [made by ID director]	Local price* 1993
15 Apr 1993	Before introduction of French corn	13.0
7 May 1993	First introduction of French corn	6.0
14 May 1993	Additional delivery.	5.0
21 May 1993		5.0
28 May 1993		5.0
4 June 1993		5.0
11 June 1993	Two more trucks of French Corn arrive.	4.5
18 June 1993		5.0

*per mamit; price in Haitian gourdes. Unpublished ID Report, 1993

[1] "Monetization" is the technical term for the sale of food-aid in the region or country where the seller intends to launch an intervention. The process is apparently governed by stipulations of the donor.

The relationship between food-aid and fluctuating market prices are not a secret. The directors of intervention projects in the area are aware of the problem and they invariably report not wanting to harm farmers by crashing local market prices. And so nutritional intervention specialists try to time food deliveries to avoid the local harvest season. But for some unknown reason timing deliveries proves to be difficult. In 1999, for example, ID had 350 metric tons of surplus French corn that it wanted to sell locally in order to fund its health and education programs. Not wanting to repeat the mistake it made in 1993 (and 1996), ID staff targeted its 1999 Jean Rabel deliveries for January, February, and March, a time field directors hoped would be in advance of the local harvests, so that the imported corn would not compete with local corn. But there were two problems with ID's approach. First, despite a decade of experience in the region and a very thorough knowledge of local conditions, ID intervention specialists were wrong about the harvest season. February and March are in fact the first two harvest months of the year (see endnote for seasons).[5] And secondly, routine logistical complications—customs clearance, transport, and storage—resulted in a series of delays. The outcome was that ID succeeded in making its first deliveries of surplus French corn in March, after farmers had already begun harvesting their own corn, and ID once again continued making deliveries and selling corn at below market prices right up through June, the entire time that farmers were trying to sell their corn.

But ID is not alone in poorly timing food deliveries. Emergency food-relief efforts are another case in point. In every instance over the past seven years emergency food aid has either completely missed the mark, coming after the crisis was past, or the amount of food aid provided during the crisis was less than what the same organization

distributed during bumper crop years. During the summer drought of 1997, for example, the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) allocated fifty tons of emergency flour to the Commune of Jean Rabel. But the food did not arrive until a full year later, in the middle of the bumper crop of July 1998. In September 1998 the WFP again issued emergency food aid. This time the aid was related to Hurricane George. The food arrived in May 1999, again almost a full year after the crisis had passed and, again, right in the middle of a good harvest. The German Ministry of Agriculture embodied in the form of PISANO distributed no food during the 1997 drought—a crisis severe enough to warrant international media attention and a visit from a team of US congressmen. Nevertheless, PISANO saw fit to distribute 250 tons of rice and beans during the spring of 1999, an excellent harvest year. In the 13 month period from September 1996 through October 1997,

Table 16-4 : Distribution in Jean Rabel 13 months September 1996 to October 1997: Crisis

	Date	Srgh	Corn	Rice	Bean	Oil[1]	Total
AAA	09/96-10/97	4.2	9.1	1,050.0	499.8	170.5	1,733.6
ID	09/96-10/97	0	350.0	0	0	0	350.0
PISANO	09/96-10/97	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total wt	09/96-10/97	4.2	359.1	1,050.0	499.8	170.5	2,083.6
Per month	09/96-10/97	0.3	27.6	80.8	38.5	13.1	160.3

Table 16-5 Distribution in Jean Rabel for 4 Months, December 1998 – March 1999: No Crisis

	Date	Srgh	Corn	Rice	Bean	Oil[1]	Total
AAA	12/98 -02/99	0	0	115.5	29.4	18.5	163.4
ID[a]	02/99 -03/99	0	350.0	0	0	0	350.0
PISANO	01/99 -03/99	0	00.0	150.0	75.0	0	225.0
Total wt	11/99-03/99	0	350.0	265.5	104.4	18.5	738.4
Per month	11/99-03/99	0.0	87.5	66.38	26.1	4.63	184.6

[a] ID food aid was delivered but not completely distributed until June

during the drought mentioned above, ID and AAA gave away enough food to meet the caloric needs of every one of the 130,320 men, women, and children in the commune for 68 days, or approximately 1 of every 6 days (see Tables 16-4 and 16-5 below).[6,7,89] The food served its purpose during this crisis, staving off considerable hardship and suffering.[10] But in the six months from November 1998 through April 1999-- a period

that, according to many farmers, included the most bountiful harvest in 30 years--AAA, PISANO and ID distributed an average of 15% more food per month than was disbursed during the 1997 drought (see Table 16-4).

None of the preceding statistics include the food given away by CARE International, the largest food relief distributor in the region.[11] Indeed, CARE remains the champion of poorly timed food deliveries. In 1993, all of Haiti was suffering from an embargo that the international community had imposed against Haiti's military junta. The region in and around Jean Rabel was experiencing the additional hardship of a prolonged drought. Ostensibly to relieve suffering related to these conditions, CARE expanded its school and emergency feeding programs in the Northwest region of Haiti that includes Jean Rabel. The number of beneficiaries in May of that year grew from 164,000 to 186,333 individuals. And then from July 1993 to June 1994, CARE gradually increased the total number of beneficiaries from 186,333 to a staggering 708,200 (out of a total population 860,972 people).[12] The CARE action was clearly a well-intended gesture. But the drought ended in 1993 and harvests once again became bountiful. Yet CARE continued to swamp the region with food-aid for the next two years. Indeed, when CARE-distributed aid is examined over a six-year period (the only six years for which the data is available) there appears to be no relationship at all between regional drought, the embargo, and the quantity of CARE food relief. In fact, CARE consistently distributed the most aid not during the embargo and droughts, when it was needed, but after the embargo had been lifted and during the best harvest years, when it may not have been needed at (see Figure 16-2 below).[13,14]

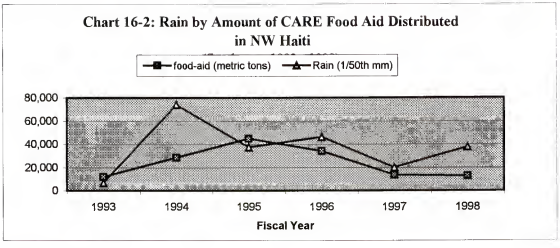

Figure 16-2

There is little question that food aid can serve to prevent suffering and unnecessary deaths during droughts and other crises. The problem, however, is that more food is distributed during good seasons than during droughts, when it is needed. Much of this food gets resold in local markets and as much or more gets shipped back to the capital city of Port-au-Prince for resale in the urban market. Rations provided as pay in food-for-work projects, for example, almost invariably are sold by the recipients. Perhaps as much as half of the food distributed by CARE International to primary school feeding programs is also diverted into local and urban markets by corrupt workers and school directors. A former director of regional food aid for CARE estimated that more than 50% of CARE food aid to primary schools is, rather than being fed to hungry children, embezzled and sold in the domestic market. On the condition of anonymity, a CARE monitor also confessed that 90% of the school directors under his supervision embezzle food aid.

The upshot of all of these food aid programs is a crashed agricultural market and in an area such as Jean Rabel, where the market is the primary mechanism by which people transform money into storable cash that is then used for food purchases and to meet other subsistence needs, household expenses, and school costs, crashed market prices can be as or even more devastating than drought. In 1994-1996, for example, when CARE swamped the Northwest Haiti market with enough US subsidized surplus grain to meet more than 20% of the population's food needs, researchers for CARE discovered that rates of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age increased dramatically. The number of nutritionally normal children fell from 69.7% in 1994 to 50.8% in 1996, the number of both chronically and acutely malnourished children increased by more than 20 percent (1994 – 1996, see Table 16-6 and Figure 16-3). In short, children were better nourished at the end of the 1992-1993 drought than they were after two years of unprecedented 'relief' from CARE.

Table 16-6: Percent Of Child Population Malnourished In CARE Activity Area (CARE 1997; CARE et al. 1996)

Indicator of Malnutrition	Year	
	1994	1996
General (WAZ)[1]	16.7	21.6
Stunting (HAZ)[2]	19.8	23.9
Wasting (WHZ)[3]	3.8	4.7
Normal	69.7	50.8

[1] Weight for Age [2] Height for Age [3] Weight for height

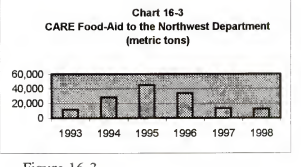

Figure 16-3

The economic logic for why inundating the local economy with unnecessary food aid harms health status, particularly child health status, has already been discussed. Jean Rabel farmers are heavily dependent on the sale of produce for access to cash. This is

especially true because Jean Rabeliens have no long-term storage technologies. Farmers use cash like a storage medium, buying subsistence foods when needed and in the meantime rolling the money over in female marketing activities. But cash is important for more than food purchases. If food was the only expense made by Jean Rabel farmers, then a logical conclusion would be that food-aid could not harm nutritional status' because lower prices for crops sold would be offset by the lower prices for food caused by the introduction of voluminous quantities of imported nutritional assistance.

But food is not the farmers only cash need. There are, on the one hand, the myriad of imported goods seen in an earlier chapter, such as soaps and water vessels, that can, in the event farming income collapses, can be supplanted by locally procured substitutes. But there are some items for which prices do not decline—such as cooking vessels, the seeds needed for planting, garden tools, and clothing (inexpensive second hand clothing, charity, imported from developed countries, long ago supplanted local clothing industry)--and there are some services and items that farmers are loath to forego and for which prices also do not change—such as school tuition, the cost of school supplies, and the cost of medical care. So when the prices for corn and other staples are depressed by well-intended food aid, it has counter-intuitive consequences. Food sent with the purpose of giving nourishment to hungry children gets embezzled and sold on the local market, driving prices down, and in doing so depriving farmers of the cash needed to meet non-nutritional expenses. Farmers must make up for the loss. As seen. they retreat into the local economy and into household subsistence strategies. But however inadvertently, young children who make the least contributions to the household labor pool also pay the price.

One of the ethnographic facets of Jean Rabel life most striking to the visitor from a developed country is that young children are always hungry. In more than four years of living in the area I do not remember ever seeing a child turn down food. Children are expected to wait nearby quietly for an adult to finish eating, and then they scarf down the leftovers passed to them. Children will literally step off alone and lick the plate an adult hands him to wash. There is a rigid expectation that children share food with other children who are present--brothers, sisters, cousins and neighbors—and it is an invariable practice. Give a child in Jean Rabel the smallest piece of bread and he or she will immediately break it into even smaller pieces and distribute it among younger cohorts. Failure to share brings howls from the other children and scorn from adults. But give a child a piece of bread out of sight of other children and he typically conceals it and goes off to eat it alone. This is not to say that young children are not fed their own plate of food, they are, and they are often the first to be fed because they are usually on hand in the kitchen helping. But it is clear from the pervasive hunger that as the household members least able to assert themselves, negotiate, complain, or retaliate, they often suffer most in the event of hardship, particularly children of pre-*chape* age who have not learned the art of digging sweet potatoes and roasting them on their own.

The most definitive trend in rates of malnutrition among young children is associated with age: The greater the age of a child, the greater the likelihood of malnutrition. This trend is evident both in the NHADS survey carried out in 1997 (see Table 16-7 below) and a survey carried out by PISANO in 1990 (Table 16-8). With regard to the 1997 chronic malnutrition rate (HAZ, which means Height for Age Z-Score—see endnote 15), only 13.8% of infants in the youngest age group, 0 thru 6

months, were malnourished while 75.8% of children in the oldest age group, 48 thru 72 months, were malnourished. For the 1990 PISANO data, a mere 3.1% of infants in the youngest age group, 0 thru 6 months, fell in the malnourished range while only 37.7% of children in the oldest age group, 48 thru 72 months, registered as malnourished. Thus, general nutritional data from Jean Rabel show that it is indeed precisely those children in the post weaning/pre-*chape* age range who have the highest rates of malnutrition.[15,16,17]

Table 16-7: Chronic (HAZ) Nutritional Status by Age: NHADS Survey c. 1997

	Nutritional Status (n= 474)		
Age in Months	normal	malnourished	Total
0 thru 6	86.2%	13.8%	100.0%
6 thru 12	87.8%	12.1%	100.0%
12 thru 24	56.5%	43.5%	100.0%
24 thru 36	65.5%	34.5%	100.0%
36 thru 48	59.3%	41.5%	100.0%
48 thru 72	24.2%	75.8%	100.0%
Total	54.5%	45.9%	100.0%

Table 16-8: Chronic (HAZ) Nutritional Status by Age: PISANO Survey c. 1990

	Nutritional Status (n= 348)		
Age in Months	Normal	Malnourished	Total
0 thru 6	98.9%	3.1%	102.0%
6 thru 12	79.9%	20.0%	99.9%
12 thru 24	65.1%	34.9%	100.0%
24 thru 36	65.7%	34.3%	100.0%
36 thru 48	73.0%	27.2%	100.2%
48 thru 72	62.2%	37.7%	99.9%
Total	70.0%	29.9%	99.9%

To summarize, the argument is that children in the period of weaning ages to about 5 to 6 years are the most nutritionally vulnerable, that they are the members of the household who make the least contributions, who are the least able to fend for themselves and to negotiate for an adequate share of the family meal. Thus, it is these children who, whether intentionally or not, suffer the most in the event of economic hardship. This is

not to say that food-aid is, in theory, harmful. If the food distributed by intervention specialists went straight into the hungry stomachs of nutritionally deprived children, then it would, theoretically, be filling a deficit and have no impact on the local economy. But as seen, much of the food intended to be given away is embezzled and sold on the market or simply toted directly to the market by the recipient and, thus, the ironic consequences of massive food relief targeting the market-oriented and heavily agriculturally dependent Jean Rabel farmers has sometimes been the sharp decline in child nutritional levels such as that found by CARE International in 1995-1996. (It should be clarified that rather than getting purchased by other Jean Rabeliens for consumption much of the food aid sold on the local market makes its way to the urban market, but in doing so it depresses the prices that local farmers get for their crops).

Is Food Aid Necessary?

The first question that should have been asked is whether or not Jean Rabel was suffering a deficit in agricultural production at the time of the distribution of food. This is an important issue because if internationally sponsored intervention agencies are distributing subsidized food gratuitously and at below market prices, and the food is not really needed, then it unnecessarily depresses market prices for local foods and lowers incentives for production. However, the question of surplus in Jean Rabel is difficult to answer because none of the agencies involved in food relief or in the effort to improve agricultural production in the region report knowing how much food the average Jean Rabel farmer grows every year. Representatives for virtually all the overseas sponsored nutritional intervention firms operating in the Jean Rabel region, including USAID representatives, reported not knowing how much surplus food, if any, is grown by the

average Jean Rabel farmer in a typical year.[18] This is an important point because it lays bare the fact that improving agricultural production is not a priority of internationally financed intervention agencies operating in Jean Rabel. If it were a priority, then the first thing they would do is determine regional farm production.

When asked, farmers seemed confident that they know the production yields they can expect in a normal year. Production figures reported in the Livestock and Gardens Survey (n = 104) appear low at first glance. Yields on the plain of Jean Rabel are about 1/5th the world average for corn, 5/6ths the world average for beans, and about 1/2 the world average for sorghum and millet (see Table 16-7). But this image of production is obscured by the fact that farmers in Jean Rabel intercrop. This means that the same low-altitude hectare that yields 1,116 kilograms of corn is simultaneously planted in pigeon peas, lima beans, pumpkin, manioc, sweet potatoes, and okra (see Appendix E). Corn and beans do not grow well in the mountains and farmers there reported expecting yields lower than the lowest country average in the world. But mountain farmers only marginally depend on corn and beans. Instead peanuts are the premier income-generating crop in the mountains and farmers enjoy yields respectably close to the world average (1,273 kilograms per hectare, see Table 16-7 above). Furthermore, peanuts are also intercropped with a variety of other plants, including tobacco, castor beans, sorghum, melons, squash, okra, pigeon peas,

Table 16-9: Yields in Kilograms per Hectare (FAO, 1997)

Region		Corn	Beans	Sorghum and millet	Peanuts
Jean Rabel	Mountains	172	201	--	1,273
	Plain	1,116	558	372	--
World Average		4,130	662	758	1,336
Africa		1,621	688	756	--
Lowest Country Average		333[1]	236[2]	210[3]	--

[1]Cape Verde [2]Ruwanda [3]Botswana

sweet potatoes, and sesame. Thus, if Jean Rabel farmers can be believed, it would appear their gardens are not so unproductive. Furthermore, agriculture intervention specialists--foreign agronomists working in Jean Rabel--unanimously report that local farmers could increase garden crop yields, and some estimate by as much as 300 percent, if only the farmers would use fertilizers and pesticides.

State Sponsored Seed Sales

The Haitian State currently plays no role in the distribution of food in Jean Rabel. But the State has participated in another way. In 1997, 1998, and 1999, while teams of foreign sponsored nutrition and logistic specialists were busy orchestrating extensive food distribution campaigns, the Haitian Department of Agriculture (MARNDR) was distributing pesticide-soaked bean and corn seed. The seed distribution was ostensibly part of a program designed to bolster agriculture yields in the region (why else distribute seed?). Unfortunately the seed did not increase production but sabotaged the efforts of the poorest farmers.

When the seed distribution program began in 1997, farmers needed the seed because the drought described earlier had depleted local seed stock and seeds were very expensive. The State sold its seed at 70% of market value and at a 30% discount, many of the most impoverished farmers jumped at the chance to buy the seeds and save money. But the farmers who bought and planted the government seeds suffered bean and corn yields that were as low as those of the preceding drought year. Unbeknownst to the farmers, the seed stock was a long season cultivar adapted to regions where, unlike Jean Rabel, there are extended periods of high rainfall. The crop never bore fruit.

When interviewed in January 2000, German and French agricultural intervention specialists who participated in the seed distributions corroborated the farmers complaints that the seeds were unsuited for the region. The agronomists added that they were not sure where the seeds came from, explaining that they come in unmarked boxes and that even the State agronomists responsible for delivering the seeds knew nothing about them. No one connected to the project could even report how many kilograms of these seeds are sent to the commune every year. The mystery seeds were distributed to farmers again in 1998 and in 1999 but most farmers had learned their lesson and no longer planted the seed. The opportunity to take advantage of a bargain, however, was not lost. Many farmers bought the seeds, soaked them overnight to remove the pesticide, and then ate them.[20]

Sinister Plot or Benevolent Intervention?

It is difficult to avoid observing that the distribution of food-aid and its complementary interventions seem almost like a sinister, internationally sponsored plot hatched by some high level, mad intervention specialist bent on destroying the Jean Rabel economy. Take into account that at least 95% of all production in Jean Rabel comes from agriculture and livestock and that the local market is flooded with imported staple foods that depress prices and farmer income, lowering incentives for production, increasing rates of child malnutrition, and that the only effort the Haitian State has made to help Jean Rabel farmers is the provision of discount seeds that function like a 'Trojan Horse,' luring the expectant farmer with the false belief that he has been received a benevolent gift and then surprising him with failure.[21] Furthermore, very few if any successful efforts have been made to improve and diversify local production and increase farmer

profits and the internationally sponsored intervention specialists make no efforts to help farmers store crops. Nor do they implement any programs that involve the purchase of surplus crops from local farmers during good years for distribution during times of scarcity, something that would stimulate local production and profits for farmers. Nor are there any programs focusing on production for export, such as help with planting or marketing coffee, mango, or avocados.[23]

The World Bank's Plan

The fact is that it is true, there is a high level plan behind the catastrophic behavior of international intervention agencies in Jean Rabel, albeit a well intentioned plan. High-level World Bank policy makers, the people who approve the funding for particular types of intervention activities, had a definite plan to undermine the traditional Jean Rabel economy. Josh DeWind and David Kinley of Columbia University's Center for the Social Sciences, argue that the undermining of the Jean Rabel economy was the cornerstone of a very deliberate and public plan established by the World Bank.[24] In the early 1980s, the Bank adopted a policy of trying to drive down the prices of staple foods in Haiti. The policy makers' noble plan was to force Haitian farmers away from the planting of hillside staples, annual grain crops and beans, practices that cause considerable erosion, and toward the planting of export crops, perennials, coffee, mangos, and avocados, tree crops that, if planted in large enough numbers, would check erosion at the same time as providing farmers with increased income.

DeWind and Kinley demonstrate that reduction in the prices for domestic staples was accomplished in two ways: 1) the Haitian government was persuaded to remove trade barriers (tariffs, quotas, and prohibitions) on staple food imports; and 2) the

domestic market was flooded with gratuitous surplus grains (food aid) from developed countries, particularly the United States. Consequently, in the early 1980s US food assistance to Haiti more than tripled, reaching an annual average of over US$50 million in surplus food, enough to feed over 15% of the population of Haiti.[25,26] The Haitian market was so thoroughly inundated with US surplus food during the 1980s that Port-au-Prince merchants were soon re-exporting US wheat to Miami retailers (DeWind and Kinley 1988; p 69 - 70). The practice continued into the 1990s and in the five years from 1994-1998, developed countries, principally the United States, provided a total of 618,000 metric tons of food aid to Haiti, an annual average of 123,600 metric tons (enough to feed all 7 million men, women, children, and infants in Haiti about 2,200 calories for 27 days a year during the period).[27]

All in all, the promotion of a shift to export production may not, originally, have been a bad idea. Avocados that were selling in the early 1980s for US$1.00 in Florida supermarkets were fetching about US$0.05 in Jean Rabel. There were, however, going to be drawbacks in the transition. World Bank staff knew and that anticipated initial hardship, increasing malnutrition and a "massive" human migration out of the rural areas. But in the long run, migration was going to be absorbed by the growth of an urban offshore assembly industry. So in three sentences, the flooding of the rural Haitian economy was: 1) the key to a plan that would result in "an historic change toward deeper market interdependence with the United States" (AID, 1982, quoted in DeWind and Kinley 1988; 61); 2) something that would release the "latent Haitian agro-industrial potential waiting to explode" (USAID 1982; Quoted in DeWind and Kinley 1988); and 3) something that USAID Administrator Peter McPherson testified before the United

States Congress that would ultimately "make the prospects for Haiti as the 'Taiwan of the Caribbean' real indeed" (quoted in DeWind and Kinley 1988 :61). But somewhere in the political turmoil of the 1980s and 1990s, or perhaps in the bureaucratic chaos that sometimes prevails in the application of high-level policy, the original objectives were lost. And so while Jean Rabel was being flooded with food aid and cheap imported staples, the channels that were to open up export markets for tree crops never materialized (see DeWind and Kinley 1988 for full discussion and for description of how aid was distributed to large business interests while small farmers were neglected).

Overseas and Urban Markets

Today an avocado in a Florida grocery stores sell for US$2.00 to US$3.00, two to three times the price in 1980. In Jean Rabel they still sell for about 5 US cents. The poor road system and the lack of refrigerated shipping—indeed, lack of any vessels at all except sail and row boats-- means that perishable and easily bruised fruits can not be profitably exported to the US or other Caribbean islands and not even to Haitian urban centers.[28] The only seafood exported out of Jean Rabel is lobster and even this is a recent and intermittent opportunity. Buyers are not always available and the catch is miniscule, by anybody's standard (according to the only current buyer who comes to Jean Rabel 2 tons of lobster a year would be a liberal estimate). Aside from a few animals, charcoal-- the 4th most important source of income in Jean Rabel—and petty quantities of seasonal corn and beans, the only goods currently exported to the capital city of Port-au-Prince or overseas are coffee, castor beans, and goat hides.[29] But the export of these crops has plummeted since the World Bank began its initiative. Coffee is an example. The four biggest Jean Rabel coffee speculators report that as recently as the past decade wholesale

buyers purchased 50,000 - 60,000 pounds of coffee a year. In 1997 - 1998, they purchased no more than 20,000 pounds. This year, 1998 - 1999, they purchased no more than 5,000 pounds of coffee. And it is not because there are no coffee beans. One buyer explained that the beans are there for the purchasing; the problem is that she cannot resell them. All in all, in the 18 years since the World Bank began its program of trying to push Jean Rabel farmers out of the staple crop market and into the planting of export crops, real per capita income for local farmers has free-fallen from a 1977 index of US$54 to a mid-1990s level of US$22 (using 1977 as the index year)--about 1/3rd of what it was before the program started.[30,31,32]

Farming, Prestige, Investment, and Migration

The unleashing of the "latent Haitian agro-industrial potential waiting to explode" never came about. The World Bank plan did succeed, however, in contributing to a diminishing interest in farming. Contemporary Jean Rabel farmers are not simply uninterested in planting staples, they do not want to be farmers at all, nor do they want to be fisherman who suffer similar problems with seasonally flooded markets, cheap fish imports, fish food-aid, and inadequate storage technology. In the Opinion Survey, when asked, "what would you do with $1,000 if you found it?," 69% of

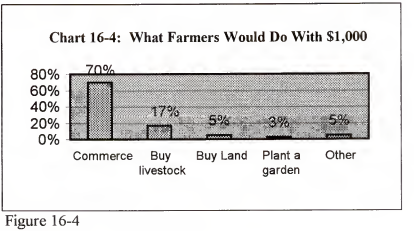

Figure 16-4

respondents said they would invest in commerce, 19% said they would invest in livestock and only 9% said they would invest in land or gardens. When asked, "what do you want your children to do for a living?" not a single respondent said they wanted their children to be farmers or fishermen; 58% wanted their children to be blue collar workers such as a driver, auxiliary nurse, or mechanic; 28% were bold enough mention white collar jobs such as doctor, nurse, engineer or agronomist; and the remaining 14% chose commerce, evangelism, or emigration. Indeed, the farmers themselves would like to leave. When asked if they would like to go to Miami, not a single of the 136 men and women in the Opinion Survey said 'no.'

The World Bank policies also appear to have succeeded fomenting emigration. The number of migrants to the United States doubled during the 1980s[33] and the percent of the Haitian population living in urban areas went from 24.5% in 1980 to 38.1% in 1999 (CELADE 1999). But Jean Rabel migrants have not typically come from the ranks of the impoverished rural hillside farmers as anticipated by the World Bank. On the contrary, the most conspicuous aspect of out-migration in Jean Rabel is the preponderance of migrants with higher than average

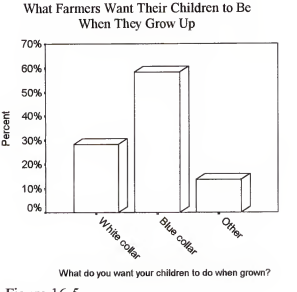

Figure 16-5

income, skills and education. In a 1992 random sample of two rural areas near Jean Rabel, tin roofed households (a sign of higher income) were compared to thatch-roofed houses (a sign of lower income).[34] None of the 69 heads of thatch-roofed households had any children in the United States and only three had a sibling in the United States. In contrast, 7 of the 27 tin-roofed household heads had siblings living in the Untied States and four had children living there (Schwartz 1992). And it is not that migrant families have more money because of the migrants. As one moves from the poorest rural areas into those zones where there is a relative concentration of wealth, migration becomes the dominant theme. In one of the only irrigated zones in the region it was found that 74% of all the children of the largest landowners had left the region. Thirty one percent (31%) were reported as being in the United States, and this percentage did not take into consideration the age of the children and the fact that some were still very young and hence had not yet emigrated (see Table 16-8 above).

Table 16-10: Migration of the Offspring of Owners of Irrigated Land (Schwartz 1992)

		Location of Children			
		US	Urban	Local	Total
Amount of land (1 *kawo* = 1.29 hectares)	3 or more	23	32	19	74
	1 to 3	14	11	17	42
	Less than 1	3	34	5	42

The migration of the village elite, from whose ranks come political leaders and people in positions of public trust and power is even more alarming. Since the early 1980s the number of village residents has grown from 3,294 to the current estimate of 8,000 people. But longtime Jean Rabel residents explain that more that 80% of the villagers who were present in the early 1980s are gone. In an attempt to corroborate these reports and to measure the extent of migration out of the village, a list of village

residents was taken from a 1960 open letter to then President Francois Duvalier. The letter, published in a Port-au-Prince newspaper (Nouvelliste 1960), and it was a plea for aid after a storm had washed out the local cemetery, uncovering graves and sending coffins and cadavers floating through the streets. There were 178 signatures on the letter. Using local key informants, the 82 most prestigious individuals listed in the letter were identified and their current whereabouts or place of death determined. Also, for 69 of the individuals information was obtained on the number of children they had and the current whereabouts of these children. It was found that 31 (or 38%) of the original signors had left Jean Rabel, and 21 of these had emigrated to Miami. Of the 287 offspring identified, 76% had left Jean Rabel and 57% had emigrated to the United States.[35]

Table 16-11: Current Location of Circa 1960 Villagers and their Offspring

	Jean Rabel	Elsewhere [a]	Miami
Signors (n=82)	51	31	21
Offspring (287)	69	218	165

a = total number of individuals in category who have left Jean Rabel

Conclusion: The Retreat into the Local Economy and High Fertility

During the past 50 years the commune of Jean Rabel has quite possibly experienced as great an intensity of internationally funded technical and nutritional interventions as any place on the globe. But the efforts appear to have had no positive, measurable impact on the development of agricultural production or in bringing Jean Rabel into the world economy. Indeed, income has declined to 1/3rd what it was 23 years ago and child malnutrition appears to have increased. The Jean Rabel economy has been inundated with food aid, something that has driven the farmer from participation

in even the national economy and has precipitated unprecedented rates of out-migration among the Jean Rabel elite.

By the select nature of the people who leave Jean Rabel and the financial investment in human capital that goes with them, migration probably has an independent impact on the community. The accumulation of local capital and the emergence of community organizations are short-circuited by the migration of the people who would otherwise assume leadership roles or who assume these roles and then use public and charitable funds to finance their own or their children's migration.[36] Remaining behind are the poor and the illiterate and they have responded to deteriorating ecological conditions not by abandoning the production of hillside staples or lowering fertility—as hoped for by the World Bank-- but by retreating into the local economy, maintaining their dependency on staple food production and, most importantly of all, maintaining their dependence on the production of children for domestic labor.

Thus, the World Bank plan has not simply failed, it has backfired. The little data that is available show poor Jean Rabeliens responding to recent programs with pronatal vigor. As shown in Chapter 4, mother/child nutrition programs (MCHN) enthusiastically applied by international intervention specialists appear to have resulted in higher and not lower birth rates. Following the onset of nutrition programs came a 20% decrease in contraceptive use, a 2 year decline in the average of the mother's age at first birth, and 20% decline in the average length of a woman's first inter-birth interval. Since the World Bank began its program in 1982, the estimated population growth in Jean Rabel has increased from 3.43% to 4.20% percent. The population has doubled from 67,925 to 130,320 people.

Table 16-12: Jean Rabel Population Growth 1971 to 1997

Year	Population	Number of years	Population increment	Mid-point population	Rate of Increase	Population density (km²)	Source
1971	46,378	21	13,006	39,875	1.55%	99	Census
1982	67,925	11	21,547	57,152	3.43%	145	Census
1997	130,320	15	62,395	99,123	4.20%	279	NHADS

*Rates calculated from previous population estimates
*Rate of population increase estimate = midpoint population/ (total population increment/number of years)

Notes

[1] The fact that CARE International, one of the largest charitable NGOs in the world has no record of its activities going back before 1992 is so unbelievable from a researcher's point of view that, I am providing the request for information and CARE's response below:

From: Tim Schwartz
[SMTP:schwartz833@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:37 PM
To: CARE International
Subject: Haiti research

To whom it may concern,

I have spent the past 4 years working and doing PhD research in rural Haiti. CARE has a strong presence in the area where I did my research, the Commune of Jean Rabel (a county in the Northwest Department) and has been in the area since 1959, but unfortunately I was not able to uncover any information regarding projects dating back before 1992. No one at CARE, Port-au-Prince, was able to help me in this regard and none of the reports I found in Port-au-Prince document anything more than the fact that CARE has been there for 41 years.

I am specifically interested in food aid and I know that CARE has been donating food to primary schools and food-for-work projects in the region at least since the 1980s and maybe since the 1960s. I would like to include documentation of CARE activities in my dissertation that is due to be submitted in the next several weeks.

Any information you can offer me will be greatly appreciated.

Tim Schwartz

From: Info <info@carc.org> | Block address
To: "'schwartz833@yahoo.com'"
<schwartz833@yahoo.com>
Subject: FW: Haiti research
Date: Fri, 17 Mar 2000 09:21:35 -0500

Thank you for contacting CARE. I apologize for not getting back to you sooner concerning your information request. I passed your e-mail around in an attempt to find an answer. Unfortunately, I could not find the information you are looking for; we too do not have files that date back that far. I'm sorry we could not be of better assistance to you.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Baric
Donor Response Manager
CARE USA

[2] HACHO was, in fact, a corporate child of CARE International. The plan however was to spin HACHO off as a Haitian organization and eventually a viable development branch of the Haitian Government.

[3] It is almost impossible to reconstruct past food aid programs and their impact but a cursory attempt follows: CARE International, for example, has been feeding people in Northwest Haiti since 1959, but directors at the Port-au-Prince, Haiti, headquarters for CARE report having no institutional record available for any period prior to 1992 and no reports with the needed information could be located at CARE (see endnote I above). As seen in the main text, HACHO distributed food on behalf of USAID Caritas distributed considerable quantities of food on behalf of the European Community. UFM had a food program in 1985, supplying lunches to over 1,000 school children. The American Mission to the Greeks (AMG) had a multi-school feeding program that endured for several years during the 1980s. Christian Aid Ministries currently, and for the past 5 years, supplies several schools in the region with nutritional aid. BND had food programs during the 1980 and 1990s. ID has been active in food since at least 1994 and its predecessor InterAid, reportedly sold food in the region since the 1980s The Haitian Baptist mission is also involved in food with the some 3 dozen schools it has in Jean Rabel, but how much is not known. It is also unclear whether Fonds Agricole distributed food but, as shown in the main text, its successors AAA and PISANO distribute large quantities of food aid. Again, the activities of these programs are difficult to reconstruct and nobody knows the full extent of gratuitous feeding in the region. There is, however, little reason to believe that past food aid was delivered any more responsibly than in the present.

[4] At the time ID was operating under the umbrella of another French NGO, InterAid.

[5] Table 16-13: Principal Planting and Harvest Months on the Plain Jean Rabel (p = plant, H = harvest)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beans		H	H	H							p	P
Cow peas	H	H	H	H	H	H	H				p	
Lima beans	H	H	H	H	H	H	H				p	
Pigeon peas	H	H	H	H	H	H	H				p	
Corn		H	H	H							p	p
Peanuts			H	H						p	p	
Millet		H	H								p	
Manioc	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	p H	p H	H	H
Sweet potato	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	p H	H
Plantains	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H	p H
Squash	H	H	H	H	H	H					p	p

[6]

Table 16-14: AAA Food Distribution 1995 - 1997

		Seeds (metric tons)			Food (metric ton and liters)			Cost (Dutch
Project	Period	Corn	Beans	Sorghum	Rice	Beans	Oil	Marks)
Hai 69-96/NH	9/96 – 9/97		100	6	500	200	80,000	1,000,000
Hai 65-95/NH	10/96 - 10/97	13	55		1,000	200	95,000	1,300,000
Hai 71-97/NH	5/97 - 8/97					99	58,000	200,000
Hai 70-96/NH	11/96 - 2/98					83	33,000	2,000,000
		13	155	6	1,500	582	266,000	4,500,000

To calculate the total food distributed in Jean Rabel:

-The total food distributed was multiplied by .70 because only 70% of AAA project falls within the confines of the commune of Jean Rabel. **Note:** 4/15ths of food distributed for project Hai 70-96/NH

(22.1 metric tons of beans and 8,800 liters of oil) was subtracted from the total because 4 of the fifteen months of this project fell estimated fell outside time frame estimated)

Table 16-15: AAA Food Distribution Within Jean Rabel

	Total (metric tons)	Recipient population in Jean Rabel (70%)	Total Distribution in Jean Rabel (metric tons & liters)
Corn	13	.70	9.1
Beans	714	.70	499.8
Rice	1,500	.70	1,050
Sorhum	6	.70	4.2
Oil	257,200	.70	180,040

[7] CARE was providing food supplements to an additional 5,000 families (32,436 people) and school lunches to 22,000 Jean Rabel children

[8] For the population estimate I have approximated the number of people living in Jean Rabel at 115,000 people, roughly half way between the official estimate for the population (104,000 people) and NHADS for local population (130,132 people).

[9] ID actually sold the food at 'competitive market prices.'

[10] This particular drought received considerable media attention in the US and Port-au-Prince. Urban radio stations were reporting Jean Rabeliens eating dogs. A team of US congressman came to see the crisis first hand. But despite the meteorological reality of the drought, it is not clear whether an unusually large number of people in the region did or would have suffered a nutritional crisis. I was present in the area throughout the drought and the NHADS survey began at the height of the drought and took myself and the interviewers through virtually the entire commune. We encountered people forced to resort to traditional crisis foods like boiled green mangos, animals were sold off in large numbers and charcoal—the principal buffer against crop and livestock loss—was being produced in abundant quantity. But few people had reached the point of true desperation and the drought never even earned a name. Development employees and doctors working in the region found nutritional declines difficult to detect: There was no increase at the Jean Rabel hospital in deaths related to malnutrition and none of the programs carried out during the drought, including the baseline survey described above, revealed any increase in indicators of acute malnutrition—chronic nutrition was, however, way up. One exception is the Nan Sentren clinic just outside of Jean Rabel where Carol Anne Truelove reported 13 cases of Kwashiorkor. Nevertheless, it was indeed a drought and there were some poor families beginning to move, begging for food, and food aid did come in, much of it arriving after the drought had finished and new crops were being harvested.

[11] During the 1996 –1997 period CARE gave food supplements to 5,000 families --32,436 people--and school lunches to 22,000 Jean Rabel children; during the 1998 – 1999 period CARE distribution included 22,000 children and several Food-for-Work projects for which distribution is unknown

[12] The CARE activity zone includes the Northwest Department and the Northern portions of the Department of the Artibonite--two of Haiti's nine Departments.

Table 16-16: CARE Activity Zone Population Size (January 1999)

Department	Commune	Population
Northwest	PdP	105,767
	St Louis	52,062
	Bassin Bleu	36,411
	Anse a Foleur	27,617
	Chansolme	12,528
	Jean Rabel	112,429
	Mole	27,935
	Bombard	28,461
	Baie de Henne	14,706
Artibonite	Gonaives	132,747
	Anse Rouge	32,982
	Terre-nueve	25,062
	Ennery	35,650
	Gros Morne	94,232
	St Michel	122,383
Total		860,972

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Table 16-17: CARE Distribution in Northwest and and Northern Artibonite for FY 1993 - 1997

Date	SFB	WSB	Peas	Beans	Fish	Veg oil	Total	Rain (mm)
7/92-6/93	1,784	5,380	1,679	645	1,062	1,306	11,856	133.60
7/93-6/94	16,045	4,901	0	3,779	1,225	2,346	28,296	1,477.00
7/94-6/95	26,904	3,233	0	10,550	440	3,570	44,697	562.40
7/95-6/96	19,971	2,189	0	9,373	346	2,189	34,068	868.70
7/96-6/97	10,135	24	0	2,036	0	1,453	13,648	399.40
7/97-6/98	9,419	0	23.3	1,857	0	1,425	12,724	752.80
							145,289	770.40

Table 16-18: CARE Centers and Recipients in Northwest and Northern Artibonite for FY 1993 - 1997

Fiscal		Schools		Canteens		Dry Distribution		Total	
Year	Date	Centers	Recipient	Centers	Recipients	Centers	Recipients	Centers	Recipients
FY 1993	7/92-6/93	560	111,960	394	74,373	---	---	954	186,333
FY 1994	7/93-6/94	552	105,610	867	137,540	92	465,050	1,511	708,200
FY 1995	7/94-6/95	580	112,048	907	193,955	92	465,050	1,579	771,053
FY 1996	7/95-6/96	609	119,850	0	0	36	130,100	645	249,950
FY 1997	7/96-6/97	1,215	198,659	0	0	48	228,181	1,248	426,840
FY 1998	7/97-6/98	1,287	210,476	0	0	68	256,685	1,319	467,161

Note: Food for work and Mother/Child nutrition programs for fy 1997 and 1998 are included in "Dry Distribution."

[14] In the spring of 1999, the director of AAAs Jean Rabel program explained to the researcher that AAA staff had carefully followed the impact of their own food distribution and was convinced that food aid pushes market prices down, something the director felt was detrimental to the local economy. The director called for a halt to the food program in 1999, but it turns out this was not new to the direction of AAA. In fact, the director explained that the 1998-1999 project had originally been designed to buy local produce for redistribution in food for work projects. But the director had decided against buying and storing local produce because it was feared prices would climb making it more expensive for the poorest people to buy food.

Regarding attentiveness to the problems of the farmers, this particular director is perhaps the most insightful intervention specialist I have yet had the pleasure of knowing, however, to be critical: The refusal

to buy surplus from local farmers overlooks the fact that the poorest people in Jean Rabel are precisely those who stand to gain from higher prices for local produce, the farmers. Further, buried in this philosophy of keeping prices low is the problem with contemporary food relief programs: They are charity and not production oriented. Paying farmers for being good at farming--i.e. assuring them a good price for their crops--and punishing those who are not good--i.e. not stepping in and saving the non-productive farmer--is exactly the economic principle underlying most industrial economic policies of contemporary successful states, particularly Germany and the US.

[15] In the survey, nutritional interviewers evaluated nutritional status of children by weighing them, determining their height, and then creating nutritional indicators with these measures by calibrating them according to sex and age. The indicators used were ratios of Height for Age (HA), Weight for Height (WH) and Weight for Age (WA). The statistical software package Epi6 was used to generate the indicators. In order to interpret the meaning of values, the statistical distributions for the indicators are compared to distributions found among US children: Low HA evinces growth 'stunting,' an indicator of chronic malnutrition; low H is evidence of 'wasting,' acute malnutrition; and low WA is a general indicator of both chronic and acute malnutrition.

Table 16.19: Nutritional Indicators

Measure	Indicates	Type of Malnutrition
Height for Age (HA)	stunting	chronic
Weight for Height (WH)	wasting	acute
Weight for Age (WA)	general	chronic and acute

The determination of a "low" measure is based on the distance in standard deviations from the means for US children. Standard deviations are evaluated in Z-scores—a statistical measure based on normal distributions. Z-score distances of 6.00 to -1.99 are considered within normal range; from -2.00 to -6.00 are considered malnourished.

Table 16.20 Z-Score Interpretation.

Z-Score	Interpretation
6.00 to -1.99	normal
-2.00 to -6.00	malnourished

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Table 16.21: Mean Nutritional Indicators by Age: 1997 NHADS and 1990 PISANO

Age in Months	Survey	Sample Size	Nutritional Indicators		
			Chronic (HAZ)	Acute (WHZ)	General (WAZ)
0 thru 6	NHADS	29	0.21	0.99	1.04
	PISANO	32	0.34	.48	0.27
6 thru 12	NHADS	34	-0.25	-0.24	-0.51
	PISANO	30	-0.62	0.04	-0.55
12 thru 24	NHADS	49	-1.19	-0.51	-1.13
	PISANO	66	-1.33	-0.57	-1.21
24 thru 36	NHADS	112	-1.47	-0.53	-1.36
	PISANO	67	-1.24	-0.53	-1.27
36 thru 48	NHADS	118	-1.96	-0.44	-1.51
	PISANO	63	-1.21	-0.30	-1.01
48 thru 72	NHADS	132	-2.91	-0.43	-2.02
	PISANO	90	-1.61	-0.71	-1.47
Total	NHADS	474	-1.77	-0.37	-1.35
	PISANO	348	-1.51	-0.40	-1.06

[17] Chi-Square = 115.471 sig < .000; Lamda = .162 sig < .000 Kruskal-Wallis not available.

[18] This point warrants elaborating: After 50 years of development activity not one of the four international intervention agencies currently working in Jean Rabel has a statistically reliable estimation of average yield for any of the major regional crops. To rephrase the problem: No one knows to what degree Jean Rabel farmers fall short of producing for local needs or if they fall short at all. And to be even more specific about this neglect to estimate crop yields: Initiative Developpment has no data regarding crop yields and they are the least likely organization working in the region to have such data because, although they participate in food distribution, they do not have programs targeted specifically at helping farmers in their fields. Agro Action Allemande (AAA), who does specialize in agriculture and has been doing so at least since 1994, never measured crop yields and it is not clear if they believe the task is important. AAA directors, three of whom I have befriended over the years, responded to my requests for data with a stone 'no, we do not have that information.' CARE after 50 years of being the biggest NGO in the region should be more embarrassed than any organization about not knowing crop yields and when I visited with USAID, the two directors then responsible for food distribution said that they too did not know how much farmers in the region produced—one director cited CARE. PISANO, which has been around since the 1980s in the form of Fonds Agricol and is in fact the German government as represented by GOPA consultants, is the only development organization that could come up with data on yields and they would have done better not to. Below are PISANO's data for crop yields that are, PISANO agronomists sheepishly assured me, the best they have been able to come up with after 5 years of effort. At the risk of talking down to the reader, I will remark on two things about the data that stand out most, 1) there is very little of it, and 2) the range of estimates, even within the same geographical and ecological zones are so extreme that one has to wonder whether the data is reliable. In the *habitasyon* of Fond Ramadou (referred to elsewhere as 'Famadou'), for example, the range of 5 reports on corn yields, all from the same year (1998) and from the same mountainous zone, is 349 – 1,395 kg/ha; the 3 reports on corn yields for Fond Ramadou bottom land vary from 744 to 1,860 kg/ha. To the credit of PISANO agronomists, they do not think the data is reliable either.

Table 16-22: PISANO Crop Yield Data

Township	Crop	Type of Soil	kg/ha
Fond Ramadou	corn	Mountain	930
Fond Ramadou	corn	Mountain	695
Fond Ramadou	corn	Mountain	1395
Fond Ramadou	corn	Mountain	349
Fond Ramadou	corn	Mountain	744
Fond Ramadou	corn	Bottom land	744
Fond Ramadou	corn	Bottom land	1860
Fond Ramadou	corn	Bottom land	930
Fond Ramadou	corn	Ravine	1302
Fond Ramadou	corn	Ravine	1395
Lacoma	corn	Ravine	698
Lacoma	corn	Ravine	485
Lacoma	corn	Ravine	698
Lacoma	corn	Bottom land	651
Lacoma	corn	Bottom land	1395
Lacoma	sorghum	Ravine	558
Lacoma	cow peas	Bottom land	2093
Lacoma	arachide	Ravine	898
Lacoma	arachide	Mountain	1395
Lacoma	arachide	Mountain	248

[19] Another interesting point regarding assumed underproduction of Jean Rabel farmers is that

[20] When asked about the inappropriate seeds, PISANO agronomists explained the problem is with the Haitian agricultural department who annually sends so many boxes of seeds to be distributed in the region. It is a service they provide ostensibly to promote production. Up until the present year, PISANO had been distributing these seeds in compliance with the wishes of the government. But the seed containers were not marked and neither PISANO nor the local government officials had any idea what seed varieties were contained inside. The seeds were distributed anyway, they were no good for the regional climate and soil conditions, but the seeds still come, in unmarked boxes, it is anybody's guess where the seeds originate, and as mentioned, no one connected with the project could even report how many kilograms of seeds are sent annually. (One PISANO agronomist claims the seeds are produced in the south of Haiti and in a place called the Artibonite, both areas that, unlike Jean Rabel, enjoy heavy rainfall. The German agronomist, however, doubts the seeds are produced in Haiti, saying he knows of no farm in the country where they can produce that amount of seed crop. He says it takes at least 100 hectares and he suspects the seeds are imported from Venezuela or somewhere else in South America.) Seeds were distributed again in 1998 and 1999 but most farmers had learned their lesson and no longer planted the mystery seeds. The opportunity to take advantage of a bargain, however, did not elude them. Many farmers bought the seeds, soaked them overnight to remove the pesticide, and then ate them

[21] Most of the so called "aid" comes from subsidized surpluses derived from price support programs in the home countries of the principal donors (the US, German and French Governments). To be more specific: The food-aid brought in by the US and French organizations is in fact subsidized surplus from industrial farmers in these developed countries. The German's, however, report buying food on the international market—something that might be good for the international market but does nothing for the Haitian farmer. The same Germans, however, report that 10% of all emergency food sent abroad by the German government goes to Far-West, Haiti and 80% of this gets distributed in Jean Rabel by the German NGO Agro Action Allemande (AAA) and the German government organization PISANO—it is not clear if the discrepancy in these reports means that the German overseas aid is sent in cash. The French NGO Initiative Developpment meets some of its budget by the local sale (called monetization) of surplus French corn. Approximately 1/3 of CARE International's budget comes through in-country monetization of US surplus food but this food is—I believe—sold in Port-au-Prince and has nothing to do with the quantities of food distributed in Jean Rabel (these figures come from the organization directors themselves or reports printed by the organizations).

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[23] There are other tidbits that could be added to this seemingly Machiavellian scheme, such as the fact that the only internationally sponsored credit programs are directed toward female commerce rather than toward augmenting production in agriculture and livestock-- how and why middle management market intervention specialists believe they can stimulate the local economy by increasing supply while demand is being undermined by food-aid is anyone's guess.

[24] It is probably relevant to point out that the three big Jean Rabel food distributors, US, Germany and France, area also three of the five largest shareholders in the World Bank.

[25] The food/person estimates are approximate and they are conservative, and to estimate the amount of food/ person days, 1) I am using wheat as a base nutritional and cost indicator, 2) I am using the average cost of US wheat flour, in bulk, during the period 1979 through 1983 (US$0.13 per lb, see Kite and Pryor 1983: 8d), 3) I am using the standard value of 1,545 kcal per lb, 4) I am using a nutritional need of 2,200 kcal per person per day, 5) I am applying this 2,200 kcal/day across the population, which means infants, children, adolescents adults, and the aged are all assumed to have the same caloric intake (which contributes to the conservative nature of the estimate) because the aged, infant and young children have lower needs), and 6) I am using a base population rate of 6 million, approximately the population estimated for the year 1982.

[26] Food-aid is something that has been distributed, not just in Jean Rabel, but all over Haiti since the 1950s. There is little data on the 1960s but in the years 1973 to 1981 it is known that food-aid escalated considerably. Alone, the US gave 104 million dollars in food, roughly 866 million pounds of food, enough feed about 4% of the Haitian population (based on the 2,200 calories per day for every man women and child, and infant cited earlier). But it was, as seen in the text, after 1980 that food-aid reached the extraordinary proportions seen today. It is interesting to note in this regard that, despite the rampant corruption and many problems in Haiti, many people were also talking about eh remarkable achievements of the 1970s.

[27] Currently the amount of food-aid distributed in Jean Rabel is enough to account for at least 11% of local calorific needs and at most times, probably considerably more. In the 3 years September 1996 to April 1999, the largest four development firms in Jean Rabel, AAA, ID and PISANO, distributed enough food to feed every Jean Rabel man, woman, child, and infant 2,200 kilocalories a day for four months—more than 11 percent of the total regional calorific needs:

Table 16-23: Food Relief in Jean Rabel by ID, PISANO, AAA and CARE, Sept 1996 to April 1999

	Wheat	Sorgh	Corn	Rice	Peas	Beans	Oil[1]	Total
Total wt	2,958	4	709	1,316	346	1,671	659	7,663
Kcal per kilo	3,400	3,500	3,400	3,350	3,200	3,200	8,000	24,850
Total kcal (in 000s)[3]	10,058,560	14,700	2,410,940	4,406,925	1,105,920	5,348,480	5,273,600	28,619,125
Person Food/days (based on 2,200 kcal per day)	4,572,072	6,682	1,095,882	2,003,148	502,690	2,431,127	2,397,091	13,008,692

I have approximated the Jean Rabel population at 115,000 people, roughly half way between the official estimate for the population (104,000 people) and NHADS for local population (130,132 people).

[28] A French agronomist working for the German project PISANO explained that in order to meet the qualifications of the export market, banana growers must be organized to overcome three problems:

1) Quotas: overseas buyers give quotas that can be met by manipulating the size and timing of the harvest. Obviously the way not to overproduce is by simply not planting too many bananas or destroying those that are extra. When a quota shortfall is anticipated plants can be to trimmed to encourage ripening.
2) Pestilence and Disease: this involves wide spread spraying, usually implying aerial crop dusting,
3) Transport: this mean good roads, trains or boats and refrigeration.

All the preceding calls for infrastructure, capital and an overarching administrative organization that can coordinate growers. Since1947 when the Haitian government refused to renew Standard Fruit Company's monopoly on bananas, the Haitian State has not been able to organize to meet any of these demands and there are no plantations or companies big enough in the region to underwrite such an operation.

Avocados and mangos are another issue. Avocados ripen very fast and because of cross-pollination must be controlled in order to assure a uniform crop—overseas buyers do not like motley shipments of fruit.

Most mangos have the same quality control problem seen with avocados, but the *Fransic* mango is an exception. This variety of mango is widely distributed throughout Haiti, is self pollinating and resistant to cross-fertilization. The asexually fertilized fruits actually suffocate late blooming sexually pollinated competitors. The consequence is a uniform, high quality fruit that can be and is exported. The problem remains, however, of getting the crop to market. The poor roads to Jean Rabel prohibit shipping mangos out to Port-au-Prince and exporters in Port-de-Paix report they can not carry the fruit because of stringent USDA regulations.

[29]Farmers report getting 5 *gdes* a skin in 1997 and 10 *gdes* in January 2000.

[30]The reason buyers are not buying is not because there is no supply but because they can not make a profit: Exporters are reportedly demanding high grade coffee for the overseas gourmet coffee market and will not pay a profitable price for inferior and poorly tended beans from Jean Rabel.

[31] The same shriveling demand has occurred for the few other export products. Overseas prices for castor beans are too low to be profitable for wholesale exporters. Goatskins are bought by rural marketers, usually women, and sold in urban centers directly to wholesale exporters but prices are low and the quantity sold is small. Plantains are reportedly very risky as deteriorating road conditions make shipment costly and when the produce arrives it often must be sold on credit.

[32] This is calculation is based on the US consumer price index, which went from 62.1 in 1977 to 168.3 in 1999 (Global Financial Data 2000). The data for 1977 comes from USAID (1977) and more recent estimates from CARE (see Chapter 8). I do not believe that either of these estimates can be considered as accurate. A seen in an earlier chapter, I think that perhaps as much as 50% more income goes unaccounted for. But I have no reason to doubt the consistency in these estimates, meaning that both estimates are probably equally wrong, a quality that would make them a dependable as indicators of changing income levels.

[33] In the early 1970s the number of Haitians in the United States appears to have been between 197,000 - 282,000 immigrants. Summing "immigrants" and "non-immigrant" Haitians for the 1982-90 period, the total amounts to slightly more than 487,000. This may be considered a high estimate by some researchers, but I base it on the current Haitian population in the United States minus those who entered before 1982. Stepick (1982a) gives the obviously low figure of 100-200,000 for 1980, Allman (1982) says 450,000 for 1980, and Boswell (1982) records 400,000 for 1982, as does Gugliotta (1982). Based on more recent estimates given in this paper 450-500,000 for 1982 is probably closest to the mark (see the INS Year books).

[34] These samples were chosen from lists made in two neighborhoods. Beginning at a random starting point, every fifth household was chosen from the lists.

[35] The identification of 'prestigious' is simply those individuals who were most easily recognized, about which informants had no questions, and were double checked without complication.

[36] This migration and its destructiveness are evident to everyone who lives in Jean Rabel. In 1996 the funds to put culverts in the streets disappeared, and so did the Mayor and his family. Virtually all pastors of the largest churches have moved their families to the city or overseas. Of the six wealthiest families in the area, there are a total of 39 children. Only two of these children are still in Jean Rabel, and both returned to retire after extended stays overseas.

CHAPTER 17

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to demonstrate that there is a logical explanation for high fertility in Jean Rabel, an explanation not based on local farmer's stubborn adherence to now maladaptive traditional and cultural values or ignorance. Through an examination of the infrastructural (material) conditions of survival in Jean Rabel, evidence clearly indicates that child labor is critical to the survival and prosperity of Jean Rabel households. Despite all of the well-intended efforts by outside agencies, the most important daily challenge confronting rural Jean Rabel households continues to be retrieving the daily water supply from springs. The most important seasonal challenge confronting rural Jean Rabel households continues to be surviving the severe droughts that strike the region on an average of every 8 years. The harsh natural environment and paucity of other locally available, gainful economic opportunities mean that rural Jean Rabeliens must focus their subsistence efforts on participation in a petty subsistence-market economy built around semi-autonomous household production strategies.

Virtually all labor tasks necessary to daily survival, such as retrieving water, cooking, and processing garden produce are organized around the household and over 90% of all rural Jean Rabel households depend primarily on gardening and livestock, occupations that require much time and much labor. Thus, it was shown that a corollary

to the harsh environmental conditions prevailing in Jean Rabel is the high economic utility of children. Children are instrumental in the accomplishment of household chores. And even when not directly involved in productive activities such as gardening and livestock raising, children fulfill the crucial role of freeing adults of time-consuming labor tasks such as water retrieval and cooking, tasks that would otherwise impede adult participation in productive income generating endeavors.

Jean Rabeliens, particularly woman who are thought of as the managers and ultimately the owners of households, regard children as their single greatest source of wealth. This esteem for children reverberates through the local belief systems , customs and values, and translates into high birth rates sustained by the tacit encouragement of promiscuous sexual behaviors and different types of conjugal unions. Children are a 'good thing,' they bring the individual respect and for new parents they mark the onset of adulthood. Not to have children is tragic. Women understand their menstrual cycle only in so much as they can determine when they are pregnant-- something most Jean Rabel women eagerly anticipate. Contraceptives and abortion are abhorred.

The need for children and the consequent high birth rates are also evident in the sexual customs, beliefs, and behaviors that make high fertility possible in the face of male poverty, the scarcity of income needed to raise children, and the transience of large numbers of males who migrate to urban areas and overseas in pursuit of menial wage opportunities. The few local customs and laws that are brought to bear on reproduction definitively promote it. Girls form dance troops in which they publicly display their budding sexual maturity. There are no legal or customary prohibitions against older men seducing teenage girls. It is culturally acceptable, even laudable, for an unattached

woman to engage in a sexual relationship in blatant exchange for material support. First pregnancies almost always occur outside of a conjugal union and no matter what the circumstances, pregnancy, in and of itself, is never a source of shame.

Mystical excuses exist for illicit sexual encounters. People in Jean Rabel do not challenge the possibility that gestation can be suspended through sorcery thereby causing a pregnancy to go on for years and for Jean Rabeliens, love potions are real. Belief in these supernatural phenomenon provide convenient rationales for extramarital liaisons that result in child births and that would otherwise be disruptive to ongoing conjugal unions-- as, for example, when a woman gives birth to a child in the extended absence of her migrant husband or when a husband needs to explain to his wife why another woman is bearing his child. The need for children and the material support to raise them also determines the expectations, customs, and laws that govern conjugal unions and give way to high rates of polygyny.

Although Jean Rabeliens seem impervious to changes introduced by internationally sponsored and administered interventions, such as contraceptives and agricultural technologies, changes are taking place in the region. Adults in Jean Rabel can still recall a time when education was unnecessary, when reserves of land and livestock were sufficient for children to stay in Jean Rabel and establish their own households and families. But soil exhaustion, erosion, and dwindling land reserves resulting from burgeoning population growth have altered the original equation. Today, demands from children for their right to a portion of diminishing family land pose an increasing threat to parental living standards. Thus, Jean Rabel parents struggle with

balancing the need for young children and grandchildren who will perform domestic and farming tasks with the costs of keeping those children around into adulthood.

The consequence has been an increasing emphasis on education, migration, and urban or overseas employment, a strategy that has replaced farming as the first choice parents make regarding their children's future. This trend toward education and sexual maturity are evident in the fact that while 85% of children in Jean Rabel are currently enrolled in school, more than half of rural Jean Rabel adults have no education at all (see Figure 17-1 above). Indeed, the growth in the importance of education and the selective nature of migration is so strong that the mean educational level for children in the rural areas is higher than that of adults (See Table 17-1 below).

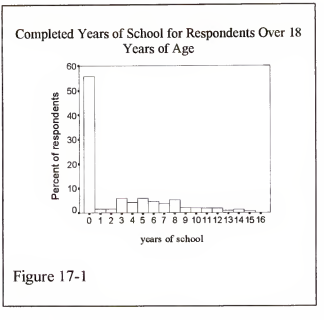


Figure 17-1

Ironically, however, the strategy of promoting education and emigration probably increases rather than decreases the need for young children. Farmers consistently reported that three children is the ideal number of children to have. But they clearly seemed to mean that it was ideal to have three

Table 17-1: Education of Adults Age Over 18 Years

	Sample size	Avg. years in school	Std dev.
Adults over 18	3,895	2.95	4.02
Children 6 – 18	3,263	3.49	2.80

children all the time. In the absence of older children, parents must increasingly rely on an uninterrupted stream of young children to fulfill household labor needs.

As a result, Jean Rabel parents maximize the greatest source of wealth they have access to, children. They bear as many as 'God gives them' and they hope that God gives them many. And if they are indeed fortunate, and they are blessed with many children, they 'farm' the extra children out to wealthier families and to families in the village or the city. This strategy increases contacts and reciprocal relationships with other households and provides greater access to distant cities such as Port-de-Paix and Port-au-Prince. Thus, a couple might have the ideal three children in their own house but they may have one, two, even as many as five living with wealthier families, friends or *patwons* (sponsors), people who are in turn socially indebted for the loan of the child. And so this practice of loaning children out, called *restavek*, also contributes to the maximization of regional fertility levels by removing what might otherwise be the aversive fertility dampening consequences of too many children under the same roof.

The impoverished majority of rural Jean Rabeliens remain on a treadmill of stagnant technology and high fertility. The infrastructural origins of this 'treadmill' begin with the fact that Jean Rabel is one of the most geographically remote areas in Haiti. It is located in the extremity of Haiti's northwest peninsula and separated from urban centers by mountains and washed out roads. There is no refrigeration or other modern storage technologies or facilities, and there is no rapid sea transport or other means to access export markets, all of which means that prices on local markets are seasonally depressed by harvest-related gluts. These are factors that were sustained and even intensified in the early 1980s when well-intentioned foreign governments and high

level international intervention specialists began trying to achieve another effect. The international community, officially expressing itself through World Bank policies, deliberately set out to push Haitian farmers away from destructive, erosion-causing hillside farming of grain and bean staples and into production of tree crops for export. As seen, the 'push' was accomplished by flooding the Haitian market with imported and subsidized staples, thus driving down the prices for domestically grown staples. Extensive efforts are still being made to distribute imported grains throughout Haiti, and especially in Far–West, Haiti, where Jean Rabel is located. But for whatever reason, the promotion of exports never occurred. No campaigns, loans or even technical assistance efforts targeting coffee, mangos or avocado production ever occurred in Jean Rabel. Nor were there efforts to open channels to foreign markets. In fact, since the World Bank initiative began, the meager amount of Jean Rabel tree crops that were previously exported have dwindled away to almost nothing as has the real income earned by local farmers.

The effect of depressed local produce prices and declining access to export markets is the reduction of incentives for the adoption of technological innovations or the intensified use of current inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and furrowing strategies that would result in increased yields. Jean Rabel farmers who can muster the financial means have, as seen, responded by emigrating. But the poor and illiterate majority who cannot muster the means have responded by withdrawing even further into the local economy, into traditional household livelihood strategies, and into relying on the continued high production of children for labor.

APPENDICES

A:
POLITICO-ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE
AND
RECENT POLITICAL HISTORY

Politico-administrative Structure and Recent History

Haitian territory is organized into Departments. The Department is organized into Arrondissements, The Arrondissment is organized into Communes and Quartiers—the latter is essentially a small Commune that does not yet for full Commune status . The Commune has a town center (the *vil* or the *bouk*) with several administrative buildings, including a courtroom. The territory of the Commune outside of the town center is subdivided into Communal Sections. The Communal Section is further divided into formally recognized but incompletely defined/identified Habitations. At a finer level, there are informal but locally recognized areas known as *lokalité* or *katie* which often cut across the boundaries of the larger, official territorial divisions.

Table A-1: Politico Territorial Divisions

Politico Territorial Division	Number	Mean Territorial Size	Mean Population Size
Department	9	3,083 km^2	800,000
Arrondissement	41	677 km^2	175,610
Commune and Quartier	188	148 km^2	38,298
Communal Section	561	49 km^2	12,834
Habitation	unknown	unknown	unknown

At the head of the government is an elected president who appoints a prime minister and cabinet. There are two legislative bodies: a senate and chamber of 'deputies.' Three senators per department are popularly elected for six year terms. Deputies are elected at the level of Commune for four year terms. Each Commune has from one to three deputies depending on the size of the population.

At the head of each Commune is an elected *asemble minisipal* with a *majistra* (mayor) and two assistants. During the reign of the Duvaliers, the mayors were all appointed. The Communal Sections (which were then referred to as Rural Sections) were under the control of a *chef seksyon* (sheriff), who was directly under the control of the army. With the ouster of Duvalier, the role of *chef seksyon* was eliminated, and authority was vested in elected civilians—who are today *kazeks*.

There are two assemblies, that of the *kazeks* (Conseil d'Administration) of which there are 21, and the *aseks* (Assemblee de Section Communale), which convene to make political and administrative decisions regarding the Commune and their respective Commune Sectionals. *Kazeks* and *aseks* are both elected to four year terms. The *kazeks* represent the Commune Sectional and convene to ratify or refuse decisions made by the mayor. The *aseks,* representatives of recognized Habitations, convene to negotiate actions made by the *kazeks*. There are three *kazeks* per Commune Sectional and a greater number of *aseks* depending on the size of the Commune population.

There are four standing judiciary circuits: a high court of appeals, a lower court of appeals, a departmental court and a civil court operating at the level of the Commune. Judges of the lowest court are recommended by the respective *asemble minisipal* with the final selection being made by the president. Members of the higher courts are recommended by the Senate with the final choice again being made by the president. Courts have the right to dissolve legislative assemblies in case of corruption and treason.

Table A-2: Governmental Structure

National	President (popularly elected; 5 year term)
	Prime Minister (appointed by president ratified by senate and chamber of deputies)
	Ministers (appointed by president; minimum 10 ministers)
	Senate Body (popularly elected, see below)
	House of Deputies (minimum 70; popularly elected, see below)
	Special Courts (convened by Senate)
	High Court of Appeals (nominated by Senate ratified by President; 10 year terms)
Department	Senators (3 per Department = 27; 6 year terms)
	First Court of Appeals (nom. by Dep. Assembly, ratified by President; 10 year terms)
	District Court (nom. by Dep. Assembly, ratified by President; 7 year terms)
Commune	Deputies (1 to 3 per Commune; popularly elected; 4 year terms)
	Municipal Assembly (1 mayor and 2 assistants; popularly elected; 4 year terms)
	Assembly of *kazeks* (variable; popularly elected; see below)
	Local Court (nominated by Municipal Assembly, ratified by president; 7 year terms)
Sectional	*Kazeks* (3 per Commune Sectional; popularly elected; 4 year terms)
	Assembly of *aseks* (number depends on pop. size; popularly elected; 4 year terms)

In practice, the contemporary Haitian government barely exists. Eleven different heads of state have presided in the 12 years since the 1986 ouster of the Jean Claude Duvalier administration -- by all accounts a regime that accomplished little beyond repressing the masses and stealing vast sums of foreign aid. There have been no fewer than four coup d'etats; a three year international embargo and a military occupation by the United Nations. When this was written in May 1998, Haiti had no executive administration. The Prime minister and his cabinet resigned in 1997 and no replacement had yet been appointed.

B:

NAMES OF LOCATIONS IN JEAN RABEL

> Commune
>Section
>Habitationi
>Localite

(courtesy of PISANO)

1} Section Communale: LACOMA

Habitation:	**Localités:**					
{001}Lacoma (x)	{001}	Fond Neptune (x)	{005}	Fond du Riz (x)	{009}	Fond Latamier
	{002}	Paul Artrelle (x)	{006}	Dlo Sale	{010}	Bois la Croix
	{003}	Nan Naude	{007}	Nan Boule	{011}	Fond Guépe
	{004}	Nan Piti (x)	{008}	Nan Létan	{012}	Nan Besoin
{002}Cabaret	{013}	Grand Pikan	{017}	Morne Koukoute	{020}	Fond Daniel
	{014}	Nan Remy	{018}	Rivière Colas 2	{021}	Lafonds
	{015}	Nan Saint-Louis	{019}	Fodije	{022}	Morne Ronde
	{016}	Nan Morace				
{003}Gauthier	{023}	Paul Sèche	{025}	Nan Coton	{027}	Ka Bonette2
	{024}	Nan Tante	{026}	Grand Fonds		
{004}Barbe Pagnol	{028}	Belle Rivière	{031}	Kabonette	{034}	Chapy
	{029}	Bassin Bernard	{032}	Digotri	{035}	Grissorte
	{030}	Nan Pitimi	{033}	Nan Joupa	{036}	Dispité
{005}Gombo	{037}	Vidi	{045}	Toisseul	{053}	Mavangou
	{038}	Savanne Pansly	{046}	Terre Rouge	{054}	Nan Belzi
	{039}	Nan Paul	{047}	Nan Source	{055}	Nan Toussaint

i A Habitation is in the process of becoming a politically defined region. In the Commune of Jean Rabel Habitations average 204 households, 5.83 people per household for a mean Habitation population of 1,203 people.

	{040}	Nan Toupette	{048}	Kaferme	{056}	Keslien
	{041}	Kavale	{049}	Lebrun	{057}	Rodrain
	{042}	Albert	{050}	Nan Kocoyer	{058}	Leblan
	{043}	Nan Gomingue	{051}	Nan Vanjany	{059}	Bois Tchacha
	{044}	Jasmin	{052}	Bayaronin		
{006}Pize	{060}	Movan	{063}	Fonds Duclas	{066}	Nan Songe
	{061}	Nan Débat	{064}	Jean Pierre	{067}	Pied Court
	{062}	Nan Paresseux	{065}	Nan Sival		
{007}Derrière	{068}	Morne Mada	{070}	Nan Piti	{071}	Rivière Colas1
	{069}	Nan Depot				
{008}Kaletant	{072}	Roche-mêl	{075}	Nan Déseau	{077}	Kafé Letan
	{073}	Nan Monty	{076}	Nan Citron	{078}	Djandja
	{074}	Tamerin				
{009}Port-à-Alcu	{079}	Terassaneut	{080}	Fosse Salé	{081}	Rat-Bonette
{010}Dubois	{082}	Morne Malade	{086}	Buetrerte	{090}	Pélier
	{083}	Nan Mannoir	{087}	Ortolan	{091}	Tête Glaci
	{084}	Herbe à Flèche	{088}	Vieux Dubois	{092}	Bangin Dinise
	{085}	Décidé	{089}	Ti Figuier		
{011}Vyon	{093}	Beauchan	{095}	Pimaya	{097}	Lamarque
	{094}	Fonds Beauchan	{096}	Morne Kauno		
{012}Laplace	{098}	Andro	{099}	Ravine Sable	{100}	Nan Joseph
{013}Desjardin	{101}	Labone Noire	{102}	Morne Fouko	{103}	Desjardin2
{014}Raymond	{104}	Bellevue	{111}	Raymond	{117}	La Loge
	{105}	Sauvale	{112}	Jean Bois	{118}	Terre Fouillée
	{106}	Malendi	{113}	Gran Kay	{119}	Denise
	{107}	Savoyard	{114}	3 Sables	{120}	Carrefour
	{108}	Sorangé	{115}	Boulanger	{121}	Pitioté
	{109}	Ditiete	{116}	Grand Fond	{122}	Nan Guane
	{110}	Grand Mare				
{015}Artrelle	{123}	Gola	{126}	Nan Yaya	{129}	Décidé
	{124}	Grand Fonds	{127}	Pityotte	{130}	Dityette
	{125}	Savoiya	{128}	Nan Marre	{131}	Zoranger

{2} Section Communale: GUINAUDEE

Habitation:	Localites:					
{016}Fond Latamier	{132}	Digo	{134}	Platon	{136}	Nan Paul
	{133}	Letan	{135}	Bois Blanc		
{017}Cafe Paul	{137}	Herbe à Flèche	{138}	Ka Paul	{139}	Nan Figue
{018}Loubier	{140]	Cadette	{143}	Nan Paul	{146}	Terre Blanche
	{141}	Vieux Louis	{144}	Nan Mak	{147}	Ouvel
	{142}	Catinette	{145}	Mardigra	{148}	Pierre Charles
{019}Sapotelle	{149}	Morne Bambou	{150}	Nan Douze	{151}	Ka Bonette
{020}Sauval	{152}	Morne Bourrique	{154}	Bonflette{156}	Nan Manty	
	{153}	Croix Sauval	{155}	Sapotille		
{021}Ka Philippe	{157}	Vidi	{159}	Ka Philippe	{160}	Nan Bate
	{158}	Lexi				
{022}Boucan Patriot	{161}	Grand Kay	{163}	Kiblan	{165}	Grande Plaine
	{162}	Rivalois	{164}	Thomas	{166}	Pois Congo
{023}Jean Valois	{167}	Source à Paul	{169}	Gouneau	{170}	Labrise
	{168}	Lowet				
{024}Guinaudée	{171}	Dupois	{175}	Jacob	{178}	Bazé
	{172}	Morne Roche	{176}	Kawen	{179}	Batado
	{173}	Marguerite	{177}	Zabriko	{180}	Blain
	{174}	Décidé				
{025}Fond Noir	{181}	Nan Mignonne	{183}	Nan Mangue	{185}	Vieux Place
	{182}	Valois	{184}	Tron Sobo	{186}	Blain
{026}Pechaud	{187}	Gros Bassin	{188}	Mada	{189}	Bonnette
{027}Guillette	{190}	Callebassier	{191}	Lonka	{192}	Vielle Terre
{028}La Plaine	{193}	La Coupe	{194}	Vieux Sentier	{195}	En bas Morne

{029}Mayombé	{196} La Klette {198} Nan Fidji {199} Bois Chandelle {197} Terre Blanche		
{030}Colette	{200} Ravine Pourrie	{201} Bois Blanc	
{031}Daty	{202} Petit Bois	{203} Roseau	{204} Goyâve
{032}Lalande	{205} Trasael	{206} Pini	{207} Djouman

{3} Section Communale: VIELLE HATTE

Habitation	**Localites**		
{033}La Source	{208} Fond Toussaint (x) {209} Nan Vincent	{210} Morne Massacre	{211}Frache
{034}Fond Zombie	{212} Fillette {213} Nan Roger (x) {214} Pied Fort	{215} Batado {216} Fond Morquette {217} Banyen	{218} Vieux Chemin {219} Nan Letan {220} Blain
{035}Mont Panache	{221} Pensik {222} Trasael {223} Nan Thomas	{224} Nan Roche {225} La Klette {226} Longuette	{227} Nan Merite {228} La Source
{036}Bassin Bleu	{229} Terre Blanche {230} Gachina {231} Blain	{232} Boyer {233} Brisiyack {234} Nadeline	{235} Waney {236} Solon
{037}La Reserve	{237} Chalé {238} Goayan {239} Mahotiere	{240} Colette (xxx) {241} Ka Mathieu {242} Au Champs	{243} Ka Leger {244} Ka Doucette
{038}Campledo	{245} Savanne Claire {246} Nan Source	{247} Jalousie {248} Mada	{249} Grand Bourrien {250} Simon
{039}Foubi	{251} Tela {252} Lutin	{253} D'Haiti {254} Colin	{255} Lavarine {256} Bois de Chêne

{040}Vielle Hatte	{257} Herbe a Fleche {258} Sika	{259} Morne Tête {260} Lalanne	{261} Batado
{041}Capin	{262} Nan Massacre	{263} Nan Soyer	{264} Source Agnes
{042}Repos	{265} Germain {266} Jarmitte	{267} Brunette {268} Nan Erma	{269} Savanne
{043}Fond Poux	{270} Ravine Cannotte {271} Mayacongo	{272} Manmouse {273} B. Blanche	{274} Noubin
{044}Grande Falaise	{275} Fond Sinette	{276} Nan Borenne	{277} Bassin Long
{045}Bois Chandelle	{278} Nan Dépense {279} Chat Jacquot 3e	{280} Nan Bouc {281} Rat Jacquot	{282} Nan Fira {283} Route Bassin Radis

{4} Section communale: LA MONTAGNE

Habitation:	**Localités:**		
{046} Kademe	{284} Nan Raphael {285} Salnave {286} Georlus	{287} Decidé {288} Nan Lémas	{289} Bazin {290} Nan Servesse
{047}Lali	{291} Nan Jean {292} Bois Neuf	{293} Belle Ville {294} Pledo	{295} Terre Rouge {296} La Croix
{048}Nan Jules	{297} Nan Route {298} Kalon {299} Bambou	{300} Guillette {301} Gran Gout {302} Kaobo	{303} Terre Blanche {304} Jalousie {305} Grand Fond
{049}Bois au Vent	{306} Grand Jardin {307} Massacre	{308} Joupa {309} Jané	{310} Verni
{050}Plaisir	{311} Nan Manette {312} Bélor	{313} Reproche	{314} Fond Vieux Ma
{051}Jens	{315} Danius {316} Kanpangnol	{317} Tabano	{318} Siguineau
{052}Rido	{319} Justans {320} Calvaire	{321} Fongol {322} Bauvois	{323} Nan Depi {324} Rose

{053}Ka Godette	{325} Derrière Morne {326} Nan Mare Rouge	{327} Fourneau {328} Kanpangnol	{329} Fond Sable
{054}Godette	{330} Grand Lakou {331} Fòsega {332} Fond Gomme	{333} Glacis {334} Resinette {335} Repos	{336} Grand Kay {337} Boumos
{055}Désabé	{338} Petit Mil {339} Nan Gorge {340} Kaderé	{341} La Visite {342} Varine	{343} L_Estère {344} Nan Pierre
{056}Labelle	{345} Kan Fils {346} Toisseau	{347} Yayoute {348} Lait Caillé	{349} Sable
{057}Boulé	{350} Derrière Morne {351} Moubin	{352} Toussaint {353} Nan Dépense	{354} Palmiste

5. Section communale: DESSOURCES

Habitation:	**Localités:**		
{058}Kademe	{355} Kademe {356} Katron (xxx) {357} Seguino {358} La Swoé Pov {359} Nanso	{360} Nan Baptiste {361} Gens {362} Desravines {363} Clotine {364} Les Blancs	{365} Nan Tina {366} Gaiac (x) {367} Nan Dal {368} Bayando
{059}Catron	{369} Bayando {371} Molpo {372} Nan Marie	{370} Nan Baptiste {373} Nan Vesema	{060} Iri {374} Nan Zidor
{061}Leblanc	{375} Nan Boeuf	{376} Bazin	
{062}Galata	{377} Dekan	{378} Nan Tibo	{379} Lòt bó Ravine
{063}Beldorin	{380} Nan Youyou	{381} Nan Bois d'Or	
{064}Cimetière	{382} Cité Jean Marie		
{065}Coicou	{383} Anbaso Bodin		
{066}Liran	{384} Silvina	{385} Fond Volcy	{386} Jean Bête1
{067}Lalande	{387} Grand Lakou {388} Nan Fatale {389} Kay Boulé	{390} Roche Pierre {391} Morne Sentier {392} Nan Twenn	{393} Nan Risqué {394} Sweka
{068}Man Noel	{395} Terre Mais {396} Lòt bó Sous	{397} Fond Mango {398} Batchi	{399} Nan Thomas
{069}Petite Place	{400} Digé {401} Nan Chalo	{402} Vieux Kay {403} En bas Rivière	{404} Nan Belle

{070}Porrier	{405} Nan Saintelaise {406} Jalousie {407} Fond Lala	{408} Nan Leba {409} Degommier {410} Jasmin	{411} Bati Roulé {412} Gola
{071}Casse-Pied	{413} Sous Platon {414} Nan Jumeau	{415} Nan Mórdes {416} Nan Compère	{417} Trou Crabe {418} Nan Cayo
{072}Du Congé	{419} Nan Charles {420} Nan Rachelle	{421} Savanne {422} Gran Platon	{423} Jan Bête2
{073}Mondo	{424} Raisin {425} Nelgon {426} Palmiste	{427} Nan Trou {428} Bois Neuf	{429} Nan Brulé {430} Nan Raque
{074}Guembert	{431} Nan Guembert {432} Nan Acho	{433} Nan Zabète	{434} Nan Luc
{075}Vert de Gris	{435} Nan Platon {436} Coeur Unis	{437} Nan Petit Coin {438} Nan Cayemittes	{439} Nan du Riz
{076}Calalou	{440} Bombel2	{441} Badaine	{442} Petite Source
{077}Yawe	{443} Nan Volcy	{444} Nan Seradète	{445} Terre Maniok

6. Section communal: GRANDE SOURCE

Habitation:	**Localités:**		
{078} Nan Saut	{446} Lemise {447} Nan Zadét {448} Nan Toni {449} Gros Bassin {450} Casse Pied {451} Nan Lois ? {452} Toyé {453} Altidor	{454} Maché Dokté {455} Nan Zapoti {456} Nan Saut {457} Nan Kanal {458} Jasmen {459} Nan Gola {460} Morne Twef {461} Nan Belo	{462} Riviere Cadette {463} La Salomn {464} Nan Plas {465} Nan Resiner {466} Raymond {467} Nan Gran Plas {468} Bois du Congé
{079} Beauvoir	{469} Dieu Donne {470} Pito Mouri	{471} Fond Mango	{472} Gand Lakou
{080} Biron	{473} Espérance {474} Mangue Fénoir	{475} Nan St. Ford	{476} Gran Labou
{081} Grande Source	{477} Vidoma {478} Petit Michel	{479} Jean Francois	{480} Nan Maselin
{082} Digé	{481} Simonet	{482} Résume	{483} La Source
{083} Lemise	{484} Fèyowé		

{084} Fond Madam	{485} Bois Neuf {486} Nan Douci	{487} Dorfeuille	{488} Nan Cherie
{085} Jansome	{489} Osina {490} Morncia	{491} Nan Caché	{492} Nan Fémal
{086} Meteyer	{493} Pito Mouri {494} Nan Paul	{495} Sodo	{496} Samapfé
{087} Nan Richard	{497} Nan Marc {498} Nan Mampenne	{499} Nan Rouka	{500} Nan Michel
{088} Débauche	{501} Petit Jardin	{502} Chérie Bain	{503} Nan Ledé
{089} Du Congé	{504} Nan Sylvestre {505} Sous Jacques	{506} Nan Barrière {507} Nan Batan	{508} Calmadé
{090} Petite Source	{509} Nan St. Fa {510} Dos Rismon	{511} Grande Savanne {512} Nan Montrey	{513} Nan Beris
{091} Nan Baptiste	{514} Marie Saint	{515} Douya	{516} Sous Congo
{092} Pellier	{517} Savanne Pellier	{518} Morne Jacques	{519} Nan Bensé
{093} Bombel	{520} Nan Zoubou	{521} Kamobay	
{094} Dessources	{522} Trou Crabe	{523} Verdegris	
{095} Lasalom	{524} Bellevue {525} Grand Plas	{526} Nan Toni {527} Nan Casse-Pied	{528} Raymond
{096} Nan Sable	{529} Morne Deji	{530} Morne Trèf	
{097} Gros Sable	{531} Gros Sable {532} Arcadien {533} Bénitier {534} Cote de Fer	{535} Callebassier {536} Pallan {537} Désabé {538} Touyac	{539} Gaic Panché {540} Laporte {541} Nan Digo
{098} Nan 18 (x)	{542} Fond Toussaint {543} Nan Lianne	{544} Derrière Bassin {545} Nan Puits	{546} Grillé 2 {547} Nan Coton (xx)
{099} Fond Ramadoux	{548}Bois de Chêne {549} Nan Grier {550} Nan Papaille {551} Nan Villa {552} Nan Police {553} Grillé 1	{554} Vielle Hatte {555} Corosol {556} Batado {557} Grand Caille {558} Cimetière {559} Nan Kouyout	{560} Grand Kay {561} Nan Justin {562} Terre Labouré {563} Bois Long {564} Tamarin {565} Morne Figue
{100} Diondion	{566} La Source {567} Nan Ti Saint {568} Marie Noel {569} Roche Michel	{572} Defoncé {573} Nabou {574} Mogé {575} Source Charles	{578} Savanne Clair {579} Villatte {580} Herbe Boulé (x) {581} Jalousie

	{570} Chemin Corail	{576} Tamarin	{582} Grand Kay
	{571} Polo Bèlette	{577} Grand Fond	{583} La vite
{101} Baguette	{584} Nan Militans	{588} Cafou Moulin	{592} Boucan Paul
	{585} Dlo Sale	{589} Nan Trou	{593} Angel
	{586} Nan Michel	{590} Lexis	{594} Diani
	{587} Cantelés	{591} Vieux Kay	
{102} Bingo	{595} Jean Bête	{598} Palmiste	{601} Nan Gon (x)
	{596} Nan Gaie	{599} Nan Petit Frère	{602} Nan Matte
	{597} Nan Tityan	{600} Nan Fort 2	
{103} Vielle Terre	{603} Nan Lermise	{607} Ka Déchamps	{610} Défonse
	{604} Physéme	{608} Petit Michel	{611} Ti Seau (x)
	{605} Sans Femme	{609} Bassin Mambo	{612} Nan Limenm
	{606} Saintil		
{104} Coraille	{613} Pollo	{617} Nan Guy	{620} Grand Lakou
	{614} Défonce 1	{618} Nan Fort	{621} Tilsaint
	{615} Nan Petit Michel	{619} Nan Ressource	{622} Nan Dou
	{616} Nan Melon		
{105} Leban	{616} La Pas	{616} Nan Digo	{616} Palan1
{106} Coicou	{616} Nan Villa2	{616} Oto	{616} Morne Pasteur
	{616} Bassius		
{107} Biron	{616} Morne Garde	{616} Leboche	{616} Grand Laboure
{108} Grand Source	(geographiically in the 7th Section, administrativement dans la 6th Section)		

Habitations and Localites not yet defined

1e Section:

{801} Port-a-l'Ecu (x)	{808} Boucan Patriot	{815} Riviere Cola (xx)
{802} Morne Bourrique	{809} Barbe Pagnol	{816} Dutiette (xx)
{803} Cabaret	{810} Duclos	{817} Gombo
{804} Pellier (x)	{811} Platon Moustique	{818} Gauthier (x)
{805} Savanne Pouceli	{812} Dubois	{819} Nan Coton (x)
{806} Grand Caille	{813} Beauchamps	
{807} Desjardin (x)	{814} Derriere Morne (x)	

2e Section

{820} Jacob (x)	{824} Ka Philippe (xx)	{828} Boucan Patriot (x)
{821} Ravin Pouri	{825} Vieux Luis Loubier	{829} Mahotiere (x)
{822} Morne Bambou	{826} Liblanc	{830} Kadet Loubier (x)
{823} Ouvel Loubier	{827} Nan Piti (x)	{831} Pierre Charles (x)

{832} Nan Raket (x)
{833} Trasael (x)
{834} Péchaud (x)
{835} Platon Morne Bouriq
{836} Colette
{837} La Plaine
{838} Guillette (x)
{839} Nan Picho
{840} Gros Bassin
{841} Valois
{842} Sauvale (x)
{843} Bouflette (xx)
{844} Magritte (x)
{845} Katinette (x)
{846} Gimbault
{847} Loubier (x)
{848} Daty
{849} Guilseau
{850} Thomas (x)
{851} Te Blanche Loubier
{852} Karvan (x)
{853} Mayombe (xx)
{854} Morne Roche (x)
{855} Fond Latanier (x)
{856} Gauthier (xx)
{857} Troussobo (x)
{858} Decide
{859} Merdi Gras Loubier
{860} Cahotin

3e Section

{861} Fond Toussaint (x)
{862} La Source (xx)
{863} Nan Vincent
{864} Fond Zombi
{865} Nan Filette
{866} Morne Blain
{867} Nalleu
{868} Bassin Bleu (xxx)
{869} La Doucette
{870} Bel Agent
{871} Nan Foubi
{872} Vielle Hatte (x)
{873} Grande Falaise
{874} Bassin Longue
{875} La Reserve (xxxxx)
{876} Nan Konyout (x)
{877} Colette (xxx)
{878} Fond Morquette (xx)
{879} Solon Blain (x)
{880} Sous Blanche (x)
{881} Kolin (x)
{882} Labelle
{883} Campledo (x)
{884} Nan Roger (x)

4e Section

{885} Nan Godette
{886} Siguineau
{887} Tete Bambou
{888} Amadoux
{889} Ka Godette (x)
{890} Nan Jaqueline
{891} Nan Plaisir
{892} Nan Guillette
{893} Bellevue
{894} La Belle
{895} Kagodet
{896} Nan Jules
{897} Bassin Bleu (x)
{898} Boucampol (x)
{899} La Montagne (x)
{900} Desabé (x)

5e Section:

{901} Coicou
{902} Jalousie (x)
{903} Porrier (xx)
{904} Dégonier (x)
{905} Deme
{906} Lalande
{907} Du Congé
{908} Gouimbert (x)
{909} Lalane
{910} Sou Platon (x)
{911} Casse Pied (x)
{912} Moudeau
{913} Verdregri (x)
{914} Laurant
{915} Nan Yaoue
{916} Beldorin (xxx)
{917} Galata (x)

6e Section

{918} Grande Source
{919} Duge
{920} Beauvois
{921} Nan Digé
{922} Métayer (x)
{923} Ossina (x)
{924} Biron (x)
{925} Debauche
{926} Du Congé
{927} Bombelle
{928} Petit Source

C:

DELINEATION OF THE VILLAGE OF JEAN RABEL

In defining the village of Jean Rabel, the survey eliminated all annexes: Cite Jean Marie, Lot Bo Dlo, and Coicou. The village, or *bouk* as it is called locally, was delimited by the coordinates listed below. The following description of the longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates is written in Creole because it will only be relevant for people familiar with the area, i.e. Creole speakers. All coordinates are UTM with NAD27 datum point:

Table C-1: Longitudinal and Latitudinal Boundaries of the Village

longitude	latitude	description
89.522	96.266	Lot bo dlo, devan pon-an
89.750	96.195	Bo dlo nan Ri Fidelya
89.378	95.900	Bo dlo, deye lekol kay pe
89.418	95.558	Deye legliz katolik
89.190	95.910	kafou simetye ak site Jean Marie
89.100	96.890	Pi wo teren-an
89.084	96.123	Mon paste, an wo
89.291	96.378	Mon paste, an ba
89.385	96.611	Kafou Woje ak Fon Ramadou
89.510	96.482	Deye lopital la nan rivie

D:

TEST OF GPS COORDINATE READINGS

To demonstrate the accuracy of latitude and longitudinal coordinates, geographical segments from five Sections were correlated with GPS coordinates recorded during the survey. Only five Sections were chosen and only a single block from each Section because of the difficulty defining political boundaries from topographical maps: There are no maps available with both boundaries and geographical coordinates, and Sections once identified cut unevenly across latitudinal and longitudinal medians.

Coordinates were registered using the UTM system and NAD27 datum point. Overall the correlations are not discouraging, but they are not perfect either: 90 -100 percent fell within the expected bounds. Errors could come from three sources: 1) respondents reporting the wrong Section, 2) interviewers recording the wrong Section or misreading the GPS device, and 3) GPS devices giving the wrong coordinates—something that occasionally occurred but was controlled by giving each GPS reader two devices. The few GPS readings that are erroneous can be overcome in follow-ups surveys of the population by using localities and household head surnames.

Table D-1: Lacoma: longitude: 1.00 to 8.00
latitude: 84.00 to 89.00

Section	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Lacoma	**245**	**99.2**	**99.2**
Guinaudee	1	.4	99.6
Diondion	1	.4	100.0
Total	247	100.0	100.0

Table D-2 Diondion: longitude: 84.00 to 88.00
latitude: 95.00 to 02.00 (can be read as 102.00)

Section	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Vielle Hatte	1	2.2	2.2
Dessources	2	4.3	6.5
Grande Source	1	2.2	8.7
Diondion	**42**	**91.3**	**100.0**
Total	46	100.0	100.0

Table D-3 Vielle Hatte: longitude: 90.00 to 92.00
latitude: 96.00 to 5.00 (can be read as 105.00)

Section	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Vielle Hatte	**11**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total	11	100.0	100.0

Table D-4 La Montagne: longitude: 91.00 to 93.00
latitude: 84.00 to 89.00

Section	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
La Montagne	**47**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total	47	100.0	100.0

Table D-5 Guinaudee: longitude: 96.00 to 98.50
latitude: 91.00 to 00.00 (can be read as 100.00)

Section	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Lacoma	3	4.5	4.5
Guinaudee	**61**	**92.4**	**97.0**
Diondion	2	3.0	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0

E:

JEAN RABEL CROPS

Sweet Potato (***Impomea batatas***)

In calories per square meter, sweet potatoes are the most productive tropical cultivar on earth. They have few natural pests, and from planting to first harvest, they can produce as much as 12 metric tons per acre on as little 4 inches of rainfall. In Jean Rabel there are at least 36 varieties of sweet potatoes, which are recognized for features ranging from the ability to resist drought to the tremendous size of the potato. All varieties begin yielding in from 2 to 6 months. Cuttings must be planted when the ground is moist, but thereafter provide a continuing year round harvest, *yon manje tout tan* (a food at all times). After the initial planting, the vine itself becomes drought resistant; it withers during long dry spells, and its fruit degenerates. But the vines go into a state of dormancy and come back vigorously when it rains and the more it rains the more the vine produces. When harvesting sweet potatoes a farmer need only re-bury the remainder of the vine for it to continue growing. Patches of sweet potatoes endure for several years and would endure indefinitely if hungry children did not help themselves, digging the sweet potatoes up and roasting them whole in small fires (see Bouwkamp 1985; Onwueme 1978).

Cassava (***Manihot utilissima***)**:**

Cassava is a close competitor with sweet potatoes for the most productive tropical food plant in terms of calories produced per square meter. It needs more rain than sweet potatoes to grow but it is more tolerant of drought, easily surviving dry periods longer than 6 months. Further, unlike sweet potatoes cassava has the unique ability to be stored in the ground and it is hurricane proof because it can lose all its leaves and its branches may break but the root, which is where the food is, will not die. After drought or hurricanes the plant draws on carbohydrate reserves in the roots to rejuvenate itself. Cassava is propagated by cutting short lengths of its branches and these sticks can be stored for as long as 5 months.

In Jean Rabel there are least 5 varieties of bitter cassava and 5 varieties of sweet cassava. Cuttings can be planted at any time, even in the dry season, and will remain until the rains come. Depending on the variety of cassava, the type of soil, and the frequency of rainfall, the roots are ready to harvest anywhere from 6 months to 1.5 years but can be left in the ground for up to four years. After the tree has reached maturity (at 1.5 to 2 years), farmers will often trim branches allowing for the planting of other crops and the harvesting of the cassava roots as needed over a period of several years. When harvesting, portions of the roots are commonly left in the ground to grow back (see Toro and Atlee 1980; and Cock 1985).

Pigeon peas (***Cajanus cajan***)

Pigeon pea roots reach six to seven feet beneath the surface, deeper than cassava, making the plant highly drought resistant. When drought does strike, pigeon peas shed all there leaves and go into a state of dormancy just like cassava, coming back to life when the rains return. The peas are a high source of protein (20%) and provide all but two of the 13 amino acids necessary for protein synthesis in humans. The leaves provide animal fodder superior to most grasses and mature stalks are burnt as cooking fuel. There are at least seven varieties of pigeon peas in Jean Rabel. They are planted with corn--good for the corn because pigeon peas are nitrogen fixing-- and after a year the plant provides a continuous yield for 6 - 8 months and can survive for up to five years., yielding for 6-8 months every year (see Nene et al 1990).

Sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*) and Millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*):

Both crops and yield with minimum rainfall. The roots reach more than eight feet beneath the surface, enabling the plant to withstand over 2 months of drought. When the crop is entirely lost to drought or has been harvested, the stalks can be cut back and the plant will begin growing again. The primary strain of sorghum planted in Jean Rabel is called *bout ponyet* (known elsewhere as guinea corn) and yields every three months at a rate higher even than 9 month millet. Millet and Sorghum have a special status as a subsistence grain crop because it has a very hard, pest and mold resistant kernel that can be stored for over two years (see Nzeza 1988).

Corn (*Zea mays*) and Cowpeas (Phaseolus vulgaris)[i]

Farmers reported planting corn and beans more than any other crops, probably a reflection of the fact that they are high status cash crops, particularly on the plains. Corn and beans are not highly drought resistant although the cultivars planted in Jean Rabel have traditionally been short season varieties like those originally planted by the Taino Indians. Beans and corn are among the few plants Jean Rabelliens harvest all at once and even though about 50% of the crop in consumed by the household, they make up one of the most significant sources of income available to farmers. They are planted on the plains and corn is the most productive domesticated non-tropical plant species on earth in terms of calories per square meter (Newsom 1993; Prophete 2000).

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*)

Peanuts are even more drought resistant than sorghum and in Jean Rabel they are planted in sandy soil and in the *kadas* where only cacti and xerophytic plants are found. It is also the premier high yield cash crop in the mountains, taking over the role that corn and beans fill on the plains (see Nzeza 1980).

The other lesser but still important crops all fit into an agricultural strategy that is clearly selected more for eking out a living in the face of an unpredictable market and natural environment than for participating in the world economy. Lima beans which are inter-cropped with corn are nitrogen fixing and begin to yield 2-3 months after harvest and continue to yield for as long as there is sufficient rainfall. Pumpkins and squash also yield continually as long as there is rain. The most popular yam in the mountains of Jean

Rabel (*yam reyal*) can be planted during dry spells and will begin to grow with the first rains. Like manioc, it can be stored in the ground indefinitely serving as an important food during droughts and other crisis. Sugarcane endures for years, propagates itself without human intervention, can be harvested at any time after it is mature, and will grow back after being cut. Perhaps most importantly with regard to sugarcane, the hard fibrous exterior locks in water while the roots extend some 18 feet under ground making it a completely drought resistant source of water and high energy food for both people and animals.

Notes

[1] The relative importance of black, white, and red beans—commonly called cowpeas-- is obscured by having been lumped together with the ubiquitous pigeonpeas (locally called *pwa kongo*).

F:

FISHING

As seen briefly in the body of the text, in Jean Rabel fishing is an enterprise that is based on non-industrial technology and materials. Fish traps are woven from bamboo and vine. Nets while made from imported nylon string are hand woven locally and weighted with rocks or lead from scrapped car batteries brought back from the city. Floats for fishing are made from discarded flip-flops, wood or flotsam scrounged from the surf, and important in nets is the buoyant seed pods from the local *momben* tree. Hooks while often bought are sometimes made from sharpened wire. Spear guns are made of discarded PVC pipe: wire serves to make the trigger, a piece of wood serves to make the handle, strips of used inner tubes serve to make the charging mechanism, and a length of scrap iron rod serves to make the spear.

The most modern material on boats in Jean Rabel are nails: The smallest vessels are the *topye* kayaks, mentioned above, that are made of three logs lashed and nailed together. Row boats are less common but more important: The hulls are made from locally harvested and hewn oak, avocado, or a wood known locally as *sad*. For a water proof sealant fisherman buy a fiberglass type substance called *brè* which is derived from the nut of a local tree. When heated over a fire *brè* becomes a sticky tar like paste but it cools to a hard glass (*brè* is also used as a coating for iron goods such as latches, hinges and to repair leaky water bucket). Strips of worn out clothing are dipped in the *brè* while it is hot and then pounded with a wooden mallet into the spaces between the boards from which the boat is fashioned. The entire hull is then coated with the resin. Oars are made of wooden poles with an oval length of board lashed to the end. A corn cob or piece of wood serves as a drain plug; a discarded plastic bowl or *kalbas* gourd is used to bail the boat. On larger vessels—also simply constructed and of which there are only four in the region-- a manual bilge pump is fashioned from a length of bamboo or PVC, a wooden pole and a goat skin—it looks and works like an inverted plunger. Sails are sewn together from used Good-Will jeans. There is occasionally a boat motor in Jean Rabel fishing communities, usually a gift from some overseas relative, but these motors are invariably a temporary luxury that get sold or stored away the first time they break down. There are three compressors in the region but all belong to the same man, a resident of the Island of La Tortue who supplies Port-au-Prince restaurants with seafood.

Because of strong winds, rough seas, and the rocky coast line, there are only two seines in the region (a sein is a net measuring several hundred meters used to fish from the shore; they are a common means of fishing in nearby Mole St Nicolas and throughout the Caribbean; see endnote ??). Nets are more common, but the principle means of fishing is with traps, of which there are two kind: the *nas fonn* which rests on the bottom of the sea; and the *nas flotè*, the floating *nas*. The floating *nas* is more important because for much of the year in Jean Rabel strong easterly winds make the

unprotected sea rough and fishing difficult. Traps not floated are caught up in currents and smashed against the botom or swept away. The floating trap is buoyed by four one-gallon jugs and anchored to the bottom of the sea by a sack of rocks tied to a cord. Because of the winds the principle fishing season in Jean Rabel is March and June when winds are not strong. But the floating traps come out during the migratory fishing season from July to November. Line fishing and spear fishing are of secondary importance but provide many families in the area with small catches to supplement their diet and income—both are usually accomplished from the small kayak mentioned above called a *topye*.

The fishing season, when the migratory fish come, is called the *rekolt* (harvest), and as mentioned, it typically occurs from July to November. When the fish come in abundance they say they *kase pak* (they broke out of their corral) and many fisherman in fact believe that people *lotbo* (over seas) keep the migratory fish in corrals which the fish seasonally break out of during foul weather or when the fish become too many. The primary migratory fish caught in the region are listed in Table ??, but almost almost everything in the sea is game, including moray eel, conch and beginning at the size of about 2 inches most tropical reef fish. Turtles, blow fish, sharks and rays are also eaten. Local fisherman are not sure what to think of porpoises, although informants in Mole St Nicolas report having once eaten several of the beached animals in 1994. The enormous Humpback whales which are occasionally seen passing the area on their winter migration are regarded with horror.

Table F-1: Migratory Fish

Haitian Creole	Latin
Karung	*Carang-Caranx*
Karung Jonn	*Caranx-Yellow*
Pilot	*Sardinaella*
Kolas	*Ocyeus-Gruyeus*
Makabi	*Albula Sulpes*

Fishing

Almost all fisherman are also involved in the farming activities discussed above and some farmers are involved in the fishing process discussed here. There are two small fishing posts within Jean Rabel and dozens in neighboring communes. The posts are almost entirely inhabited by people from farming communities who learned to fish by visiting their cousins in fishing hamlets and then struck out on their own, spending the fishing season in the most remote and often productive sites where they build small lean-to like houses called *joupas*. Some of the men remain fulltime at the outposts. There is a steady trickle of people, the wives, children and cousins of the fishing-farmers, who come down to the posts to retrieve the fish and carry them back into hillsides to be sold in the market.

Table F-2: Cost of a Large Floating weir

Material	Cost in *Gdes*
Trap	75
Vine	5
Cord (12 sacks = 72 meters)*	108
Wood	4
gallon jugs (4)	20
Sack for anchor (filled with rocks)	5
Portage	30
Total	**247**

*At Bord-de-Mer one sack costs five *gdes*; 4 *gdes* to have it woven into rope; the yield per sack is aproximately 6 meters. The yiled is 72 meters which is more than usually needed

The principle means of catching fish is with weirs, known

locally as *nas*, and fisherman calculate in terms of each weir. The weirs are bamboo, held together with vine and they last for about three months. They cost from 30 *gdes* for the smallest to 85 *gdes* for the largest weirs. Fishermen pay other men to transport the weirs from the market to the fishing hamlets—carrying weirs being considered below the dignity of a respectable fisherman—and for a weir to be carried from the market to most coastal settlements costs a maximum of 30 *gdes* for a large weir and 15 *gdes* for a small weir. The weir does not come pre-assembled but must be woven together with vine (5 *gdes*). A durable waterproof rope is made from the nylon threads of shredded food-aid sacks and is needed to raise and lower the weir (108 *gdes*), and for the floating *nas* four one-gallon jugs are needed (20 *gdes*); four sticks to make a frame so that the weir can be raised and lowered into the sea without collapsing under its own water-logged weight (4 *gdes*); and a sack of rocks for an anchor (5 *gdes*).

The lifetime of a weir is approximately equivalent to the duration of the fishing season, about 4.5 months. But weirs are sometimes swept away by current, stolen by thieves, and destroyed by big fish and moray eels who get to the catch before the fisherman. All this makes it difficult to estimate how much a weir will yield. The poorest fishermen tend to estimate 150 – 400 *gdes*, but the wealthiest and most knowledgeable fisherman—some of who actually keep records—consistently estimate that, lost weirs considered, a large weir yields 1,000 *gdes* over the course of the *rekolt*. This later estimate makes the most sense if you consider the investment in money and in time. Deducting the cost of the weir (247 *gdes*), the lifetime yield is 743 *gdes*. Thus for 3 to 6 months (average 135 days) the average daily yield per weir is 5.1 *gdes*. A fisherman usually needs at least one helper which means he must give him some of the fish—usually a fourth to a third of the catch. So before totaling, 30% of income must be deducted which brings the income down to 3.6 *gdes* per weir per day. Most fisherman will work a couple weirs during the off season, but during the *rekolt*—September thru November—fisherman who own their owns boats typically work 20 weirs, about 72 *gdes* per day (US$4.30).[i] Men without boats, women and even children will have three or four weirs that are checked by husbands, cousin or *kanot*-owning neighbors.

There are two other important means of fishing: Seines (seine), a long net used for shore fishing, and simple nets (*filè*) that are set farther out to sea or along the cliff-lined coasts--both presuppose that a fiherman has his a *kanot*. Owning a *senn* is the economic pinnacle of fishing in the region. Because of the high winds and often violent shore break, there is only three seines within the commune of Jean Rabel, but during the fish *rekolt* some men go to nearby Mole St Nicolas where there is a large protected harbor and fishing is significantly different than along the exposed Jean Rabel coast. At the 'Mol,' there are 17 seines varying in length from 160 to 400 meters, with an average of about 300 meters and a cost of about 50,000 *gdes*.[ii] A seine is deployed using a row boat and it is hauled in by teams of from 10 to 30 men who stand on the beach in two goups, one at each end of the seine, and they pulll the seine in, effectively encircling the fish that are trapped between the position where the seine was originally deployed and the shoreline. Seines are cast during the fishing season when migratory fish pass, and when fish are most abundant the seine is simply left deployed in the water, one end ashore, the other end tied to a boat, a man waits in the boat looking into the water with a mask or a small window-box that enables him to see under the water; if fish enter he

cries *RALE!* (pull) and the *marins* playing cards under nearby trees or ambling along the shore, sprint to position and pull the net in.

Based on books kept for five *seines* at nearby Mole St Nicolas, the average yield per seine in 1998 was 30,000 *gdes* (US$1,786). But 1998 was an off year, and seine owners report an average closer to 40,000 (US$2,381) *gdes* per year . Half of the catch (20,000 *gdes*) goes to the owner of the seine and half goes to the crew. This means that for the approximately 408 men who have a secured place hauling in seines at the Mol every year, their average income from this particular activity is 833 *gdes* (or US$50). For the owners of seines, income is substantially more. With an estimated anuual repair cost of approximately 5,000 *gdes* per year, seine owners earn about 15,000 *gdes* (US$893)—of course they have other expenses as well, specifically boats of which they need at lest one (in Table ?? US$93 has been deducted as an approximate cost of a boat over its 10+ year life time).[iii] [iv]

Nets are less expensive, shorter than seines, more portable, and they do not need a position and hence they are more common, especially among fisherman in the commune of Jean Rabel, who only have a few rarely used seines. Nets are put anywhere that seems opportunistic. They can be left over night or simply left and checked daily like a *nas*. The average net is about 70 meters long and five meters deep and cost about 1,500 *gdes* (US$90). [v] Serious fisherman earn about five thousand gourds a season per net ??. During the winter months when lobster migrate from deeper waters, and provided there are buyers, some net fisherman earn windfalls as high as one thousand Haitian dollars in a single catch. The calculations have been omitted these rather unpredictable windfalls and focused on the more consistent earnings. Specifically, fishermen with nets go on what are called *boukans* (an apparent linguistic survival from the buccaneer era), where they camp out in remote coastal villages. Woman also go along and they salt and dry the fish.

On a *boukan* a boat usually has four *marins* (mariners) and a net. The *marins* set the net up over night and check it in the morning. They sometimes spend the day trying to round fish up by swimming and slapping the water, trying to drive the fish into the net (called *bat dlo*, beating the water, in Creole). As with seines, the catch is split 50/50 between owner and crew--owner gets 50 and the crew gets 50—the difference however, is the owner takes out the costs of damages to the net before the catch is split. On local *boukans* (*Kapafou, Lapreskil, La Grenad, Las Kayo*) a net owner can earn from 250 to 1,000 *gdes*. *Marins* make 75 to 350 *gdes*. Boats usually go on 2 local *boukans* a year, for 5 - 8 days each, in the months of November and December.

Many of the fulltime fisherman in the region go to the island of La Tortue in the months of January to May, after the local fishing season is over. There a *kanot* with a net can reportedly make from 15,000 *gdes* to 25,000 *gdes* in a season. This usually means about 9,000 *gdes* for the owner of the net and *kanot*, 3,000 *gdes* for each *marin* and 2,000 *gdes* for damages to the net (see Table ???).

It is important to understand the significance of owning a boat and nets or a *sein*. In general, *kanots* in the region range from 11 to 16 feet long and the regional average is 13.5 feet (a boat longer than 18 feet is called a *chat* and is used for transport). A *kanots* costs from 3,500 *gdes* to 12,500 *gdes*.[vi] In Makab 3 of 21 boats kept there were owned by women. But it is usually men who own the boats and it is always men who fish. The small kayaks mentioned above are only good for small weirs and line fishing and they

sell for 500 *gdes*.

And a boat is the first and most important ingredient in serious fishing and a significant indicator of wealth and the factors that set one man apart from another. In Makab the only polygyous man who was not a boat owner was a shaman. Most weirs belong to men. Women whose husband or son sometimes have weirs and some weirs will be assigned to a child. But it is always a man who raises and checks weirs.

Notes

[i] In the 1999 fishing season, six men in Makab—men with *kanots*-- had the following number of weirs:

Mirabo 20
Francois 14
Lanyo 35
Albè 20
Joseph 22
Antonio 15

[ii]

Table F-3: Cost of 300 meter seince in Haitian dollars (1 Haitian dollar = *gdes*: 1 US dollar (1999(= 16.8 *gdes*)

	Units	Cost/ unit	Unit/meter	Cost/meter	Total units	Total Cost
String*	1 roll	9	2	18	600	5,400
Weaving	per meter	4	2	8	600	2,400
Trim (liej)	per meter	1	1	1	300	300
Weighting	per meter	1.5	1	1.5	300	450
Floats	Gallon jug	1.5	2	3	600	900
Cord	Meter	1.5	2	3	300	450
Total Cost		**18.5**	**10**	**34.5**		**9,900**

- Most seinees are made with #18 nylon string. They cost H$9 a roll when purchased in bulk. Otherwise fisherman in the spring of 1999 paid H$12 a roll for any size roll of nylon string

[iii] Most financial and catch information on seinees is based on Obreun, the largest seinee owner in the region. Obreun has a university degree in ???? In 1998 he earned 74,900 *gdes* for all five his seinees. Another 74,900 *gdes*—the other half of the catch-- went to the 120 *marins* who hauled in the seinees. He paid 26,860 *gdes* in reparations. He reports, however, that a normal year he grosses between 100,000 and 200,000 *gdes* (an equivalent sum going to the *marins*).

Obreun reports that farming is much more lucrative for him. Irrigated land he inherited being his biggest earner. Note that the seinees do not yield him a great deal; if he makes $20,000 in a year on all five seinees and pays $6,000 for reparations, he is left with 70,000 *gdes* (US$4,167). Furthermore, this is indisputably among the 3 wealthiest men in the region.

[iv] Except in the *gran mer* (the ocean), fisherman at the 'Mol' do not use the floating *nas.*

[v] There are two kinds of *filè: filè twa nap* and *filè sinmp*. A *filè twa nap* is essentially thre layers of netting and the *filè sinmp* is only one layer of netting. The former is made of thicker nylon string (#9 and #36); the latter is made of finer #6 and #9 nylon string:

Table F-4: The Cost of String and Weaving Nets:

String #	cost per roll (H$)	Cost of weaving per meter (H$)	meters net per roll
6	45 - 60	30	4
9	45 - 60	20	1
15	45 - 60	15	2/3
18	45 - 60	20	1/5
36	45 - 60	10	8

Table F-5: The Cost of Weights, Floats and Rope

	Units	Cost *gdes*	Cost /unit	Units/meter	Cost/meter
weights (lead balls)	sack of 50	25	0.5	2.5	1.25
liez (kos monben)	sack of 60	100	1.70	2.5	4.25
Cord	50 dz sacks	1,800	3	1/6	0.50
weave rope	2 gde per sack	0.33 per meter	-	-	0.33
Total	-	-	-	-	6.33

[vi] In Jean Rabel *kanots* are smaller because seines, which require larger boats, are scarce. In Jean Rabel, the average local *kanot* is about 11 feet and the cost is 3,500 to 7,500 *gdes*.

G:
LACOMA MARKET INVENTORY

On 22nd October 1998, all the items and the number of venders selling particular items in the Lacoma market was recorded. Not including livestock sellers, a total of 612 marketers (of which 609 were women). They are listed below:

Table G-1: Lacoma Market Inventory

Imported from Abroad or Port-au-Prince		Locally Produced	
Empty grain sacks	1	Sack (grass)	2
Tarps	1	Kitchen knives	1
Wash basin	5	Strainers (for making juice)	2
Plastic cups	5	Grater (for grating vegetables)	2
Porcelean tea cups, glasses	1	Funnels	1
Pitchers and other vessels	1	Cord	1
Plastic mesh food cover	2	Rope (domestic)	5
Plastic and metal cooked food-carriers	2	Beeswax (for making candles)	1
Pots and pans	3	Brooms	3
Plates	6	Tin-can gas lamps	1
Bowls	1	Cotton (for wicks)	3
Forks, spoons and other utensils	2	Kindling wood	2
Empty glass soda bottles	2	Candles (beeswax)	13
Thermas bottles	1	Castor oil beans	30
Parts for glass kerosene lamps	1	Castor oil	4
Matches	14	Tobacco seed	1
Candles (imported)	2	Tobacco	6
Flash lights	3	Snuff	4
Batteries	22	Tobacco pipes	3
Detergent (white)	12	Juice (homemade)	1
Stain remover	2	Honey	1
Laundry soap (bars, domestic)	37	Peanut, coconut and sugar clusters	6
Hair spray	2	Hard candies ((foreign and local)	10
Hair relaxer	13	Cookies and Crackers (imported)	12
Nail polish remover	1	Cane-syrup bread rolls	5
Hair ties and berets	27	Fried doe	1
Beads for hair decoration	1	Casava bread	9
Perfumes	8	Bread	24
Skin creams	4	Coffee (prepared)	8
Deoderant	1	Coffee beans	1
Shampoos	4	Peanut butter	3
Toothpaste	30	Prepared food (rice, beans, sauce...)	12
Toothbrush	14	Ginger	8
Bathing soap	35	Sesame	3
Toilet articles	2	Cinnamin	5
Razor blades	6	Garlic	9
Combs	3	Chives	2
Mirrors	1	Echalot	2

Table G-1--continued

Imported from Abroad or Port-au-Prince		Locally Produced	
Condoms	1	Cloves	3
Shoe polish	2	Sorghum	13
Socks	16	Peanuts	36
Panties	14	Lima beans and Cow peas	66
Slip	3	Manioc flour	9
Under wear	18	Plaintains	37
Bras	5	Green bananas	23
Scarves	2	Ripe bananas	4
Needle and thread	18	Sweet potatoes	10
Zippers	1	Yanms	3
School books	2	Taro	2
Note books	43	Cassava	21
Chalk	1	Salt	13
Pencil and pens	21	Okra	4
Scissors	2	Cayote	1
Book bags	2	Grenadia	4
Wall clocks	1	Papaya	2
Padlocks	5	Gratefruit	2
Nails	6	Oranges (sweet)	14
Machetes, picks and hoes	5	Oranges (sour)	1
Pharmaceuticals	4	Limes	22
Pesticides	3	Hot peppers	8
Cigarettes (Haitian brands)	19	Mangos	3
Rum (domestic, unrefinded)	10	Avocados	23
Powdered juice mix (imported)	8	Breadfruit	11
Soda pop (Haitian)	11	Coconuts	19
Malt drinks (non-alcoholic)	1	Cabbage	4
Condensed milk	7	Greens	9
Spices	34	Sugar cane	10
Black pepper	9	Melons	16
Bouyon cubes	25	Eggs	4
Msg	21	Live chickens	11
Onion	6	Live guinea fowl	4
Macaroni	12	Live turkeys	2
Spagetti	23	Dried porc	1
Angel hair pasta	5	Dried goat	12
Tomato paste	15	Fish (local, dried and salted)	8
Margerin	6	Saddle (wooden)	15
Lard	3	Saddle blanket (banana stalk)	2
Cooking oil	51	Equestrian tack	2
Green peas	7	Saddle bag (grass)	1
Pinto beans	61	Sleeping mat (banana stalk)	15
Rice (imported)	74	Chairs (wood and wicker)	1
Brown sugar (domestic and DR)	38	Corn and corn meal	87
White sugar (imported)	11	Gini Beans	13
Cracked wheat (CARE food aid)	19		
Flour	50		
Rice chaf (for pig feed)	1		
Rice (domestic)	9		
Salted herring (imported)	36		
Lamp fuel (diesel fuel, kerosene)	12		
Cloth (imported ??)	11		
Pants (new)	1		
Men's shirts (new)	1		

Table G-1--continued

Imported from Abroad or Port-au-Prince		Locally Produced	
Used cloths	28		
Child dresses (new)	2		
Adult voodoo dresses	1		
Belts (new and used)	2		
Hats (woven grass and baseball caps)	2		
Used tennis shoes	25		
Men's shoes (new)	3		
Sandals, flip flops	15		
Used boots	1		
Boots (new)	0		
Ladies shoes	5		
Purses (used)	2		
Total	1136		778

Table G-1: Lacoma Market Inventory (reduced table, i.e. some categories collapsed)

Imported from Abroad or Port-au-Prince		Locally Produced	
Empty grain sacks	1	Book bags	2
Tarps	1	Wall clocks	1
Wash basin	5	Padlocks	5
Plastic cups	5	Nails	6
Porcelean tea cups, glasses	1	Machetes, picks and hoes	5
Pitchers and other vessels	1	Pharmaceuticals	4
Plastic mesh food cover	2	Pesticides	3
Plastic and metal cooked food-carriers	2	Cigarettes (Haitian brands)	19
Pots and pans	3	Rum (domestic, unrefinded)	10
Plates	6	Powdered juice mix (imported)	8
Bowls	1	Soda pop (Haitian)	11
Forks, spoons and other utensils	2	Lamp fuel (diesel fuel, kerosene)	12
Empty glass soda bottles	2	Cloth (imported ??)	11
Thermas bottles	1	Pants (new)	1
Parts for glass kerosene lamps	1	Men's shirts (new)	1
Matches	14	Used cloths	28
Candles (imported)	2	Child dresses (new)	2
Flash lights	3	Adult voodoo dresses	1
Batteries	22	Belts (new and used)	2
Detergent (white)	12	Hats (woven grass and baseball caps)	2
Stain remover	2	Used tennis shoes	25
Laundry soap (bars, domestic)	37	Men's shoes (new)	3
Hair spray	2	Sandals, flip flops	15
Hair relaxer	13	Used boots	1
Nail polish remover	1	Boots (new)	0
Hair ties and berets	27	Ladies shoes	5
Beads for hair decoration	1	Purses (used)	2
Perfumes	8	Sack (grass)	2
Skin creams	4	Kitchen knives	1
Deoderant	1	Strainers (for making juice)	2
Shampoos	4	Grater (for grating vegetables)	2
Toothpaste	30	Funnels	1
Toothbrush	14	Cord	1
Bathing soap	35	Rope (domestic)	5
Toilet articles	2	Beeswax (for making candles)	1

Table G-1--continued

Imported from Abroad or Port-au-Prince		Locally Produced	
Razor blades	6	Brooms	3
Combs	3	Tin-can gas lamps	1
Mirrors	1	Cotton (for wicks)	3
Condoms	1	Kindling wood	2
Shoe polish	2	Candles (beeswax)	13
Socks	16	Castor oil beans	30
Panties	14	Castor oil	4
Slip	3	Tobacco seed	1
Under wear	18	Tobacco	6
Bras	5	Snuff	4
Scarves	2	Tobacco pipes	3
Needle and thread	18	Saddle (wooden)	15
Zippers	1	Saddle blanket (banana stalk)	2
School books	2	Equestrian tack	2
Note books	43	Saddle bag (grass)	1
Chalk	1	Sleeping mat (banana stalk)	15
Pencil and pens	21	Chairs (wood and wicker)	1
Scissors	2		

Not including livestock sellers, a total of 612 marketers (of which 609 were women).

H:
LITERATURE REVIEW
FAMILY ORGANIZATION

Family Organization

Caribbean family organization is odd by standards in most contemporary developed countries. Consensual union is more prevalent than civil or religious marriage and consequently illegitimacy rates on any given island have ranged over the years from 40 to 75 percent of all births (Roberts, 1957; Senior 1991:82); about 50% of women in developing Caribbean countries bear children by two or more partners over the course of their lifetimes (Ebanks and Nobbe 1974; Ebanks 1973; Allman, 1982); and de facto polygyny while not legal is widespread and generally accepted, from 30 to 80 percent of men in impoverished Caribbean areas have more than one female partner simultaneously at some time in their lives (Herskovits 1937:114 -115; Simpson, 1942:656; M.G. Smith 1961; 1962:117-122; 1966:xviii; Hill,1977:281; Murray 1977; Otterbein 1965).

The unusual nature of family patterns in the Caribbean, an area so close in both proximity and historic experience to the United States has invited decades of anthropological debate over the causes underlying these trends. The arguments began in the late 1930s with Melville Herskovits and Franklin Frazier. Herskovits was credited with explaining Caribbean family patterns as survivals of African traditions and Frazier has come to be associated with a slavery origins argument, i.e. that slavery eradicated the African past by the fact that people were ripped people from their home societies and they and their ancestors subsequently deprived of a continuity in cultural heritage.[i] British colonial administrators themselves became caught up in the debate over family patterns when they launched marriage campaigns aimed at remedying what they interpreted as immoral customs--consensual union and polygyny--and the "iniquitous effects" of absentee fathers.[ii] Subsequent scholarly research, much of it funded by the colonial administrators, revealed family patterns in the Caribbean as a consequence of female economic marginalization and male labor migration—a practice related to the economic policies of the colonial and neo-colonial administrators themselves.[iii] Anthony Marino (1970) showed how illegitimacy, polygyny, and multiple lifetime parental partners make high fertility possible in the absence of males who have migrated in pursuit of wage labor.[iv v] In a series of studies addressing what they saw as a neglect of the familial role of women in the Caribbean, feminists showed that the absence of female wage opportunities, and a traditional male inclination to abandon women and children are also factors contributing to 'odd' Caribbean familial patterns.[vi vii]

Notes

[i] The anthropological debate over the etiology of Caribbean family patterns begins with Melville Herskovits and Franklin Frazier. Herskovits (1937;1945;1947) sought to understand African-American social patterns as reinterpretations of African cultural behaviors. The importance that Herskovits placed on cultural transformation was evident in his explanations for sexual unions. For Herskovits (1937:260), "The institution of plural marriage is obviously African." And in explaining serial monogamy:

> A succession of matings entered into by a man or woman implies an acceptance of the monogamic principle, at the same time that it points to the method by which, through reinterpretation, the old polygynous tradition has been retained. [Herskovits 1945:266]

In contrast to Herskovits, E. Franklin Frazier (1939) put less weight on culture, and more weight on political and economic conditions as determinants of family patterns. Frazier emphasized the force with which slavery erased African behavior patterns (360) and he recognized the continued role of material conditions in the post-emancipation evolution of African-American family structure (362). Unfortunately, Frazier was inconsistent, wavering between an infrastructural, determinist perspective, and one which leaned on culture as an independent variable. One moment Frazier emphasized urbanization (363), occupational differentiation (365), and economic opportunity (364) as the forces propelling familial change. The next moment Frazier cited the lack of "cultural moorings" (363) and "the inevitable consequences of the attempt of a preliterate society, stripped of the cultural heritage, to adjust to civilization" (367).

In the following decades, Herskovits came to be associated with explanations for Caribbean family patterns based solely on African survivals and Frazier became unfairly identified with a slavery origins argument—"unfair" because while Frazier may have waffled, he was a much a materialist as he was a cultural determinist. These theoretical positions persist in the literature today. With respect to family patterns, Barrow (1986), and Sutton and Makiesky-Barrow (1977:297) emphasize both approaches, and Abraham (1993) recently argued in favor of slavery as a primary condition for the emergence of modern Caribbean family patterns. For the most part, however, the contentions that Africanisms and slavery are sufficient explanations for contemporary Caribbean behavior patterns were discredited as researchers became aware that recent family patterns simply did not match those found before or during slavery (Mintz and Price 1976; Charbit 1984).

[ii]. Following Herskovits and Frazier the debate over the causes and effects of African-American family patterns became imbued with a concern over the moral principles of under-privileged West Indians. Officially, this preoccupation with morality can be traced to 1938 when the British Parliament created a Royal Commission to investigate social and economic conditions in the Caribbean. At the heart of the colonial government's concern was "promiscuity" and the "disorganization" of family life (M.G. Smith 1966: iv). By promiscuity the administrators meant high illegitimacy rates, polygyny, and serial monogamy; by disorganization the administrators were referring to high frequency of households in which the father was absent and the high degree of marital instability.

In 1944-45 the Jamaican Governor's wife led a "marriage campaign" which was defined by the British Parliament's Royal Commission as "an organized campaign against the social, moral and economic evils of promiscuity" (M.G. Smith iv:1966). Puzzled by the campaign's failure to inspire an onslaught of marriages, the British Colonial Social Science Research Council sought advice from structural-functionalists like Edith Clarke--anthropologist, politician, and herself a Jamaican aristocrat. In a voluminous study Clarke (1957) compared three Jamaican communities and offered the singular causal insight that family patterns were "functionally" related to economic stability.

While Clarke eschewed making statements about causation, M.G. Smith--another English-educated, structural-functionalist born to the Jamaican aristocracy--proceeded with more conviction. M.G. Smith became the most outspoken academic proponent of the disparaging colonial bureaucratic view of lower-class marriage and fertility patterns. In writing the introduction to his compatriot Edith Clarke's landmark book, My Mother Who Fathered Me, M.G. Smith seemed sure that:

> The material difficulties of West Indian economic and social development are ... compounded by instabilities and fluidities in the family organization on which the society depends both for the effective socialization of its young and for the adequate motivation of its adult members to participate vigorously in the social and economic life. These familial conditions affect labour productivity, absenteeism, occupational aspirations, training and performances, attitudes to saving, birth control, and farm development, and to programs of individual and community self-help, housing and child care, education, and the like. [1957:vi-vii].

Less condemning than M.G. Smith and more concerned with causation, was R.T. Smith, another prominent Structural-functionalist of the time. R.T. Smith (1956) argued that "the structure of the domestic group" could best be understood "by regarding the form of each household group as the result of the influence of different forces." R.T. Smith continued, "The strength of kinship ties, and particularly the ties existing between members of the matri-central group, are balanced against the high values set on marriage" [110].

But while voluminous in their writings, neither of the Smiths succeeded in providing clear explanations for the emergence of unusual Caribbean mating patterns. For example, R.T. Smith was vague, saying that "principles" associated with West Indian family life are "modified" by other factors, like out-migration and poverty, but he never defined the degree to which this modification occurred. As for M.G. Smith, his explanations were, at best, even more difficult to follow than R.T. Smith's explanations, and at worst, he seemed to believe that social phenomena might cause themselves:

> Instead of seeking 'explanations' of institutional systems in the remoter conditions of their social context, we must first attend meticulously to the ... degrees and conditions of their closure as ***self-perpetuating bodies of custom*** ... [xix] (Emphasis not in the original).

The obsession with morality aside, the basic theoretical tenets of Structural-functionalism—a school of thought emphasizing utilitarian relationships between social institutions--inhibited an understanding of why particular Caribbean family patterns emerged in the first place and why they were 'perpetuated.' Structural-functionalists neglected the political, economic and demographic conditions undergirdling Caribbean family patterns. The consequence was a failure to explain why particular familial trends were practiced.

[iii]. In contrast to vague causal arguments made by structural-functionalists, a series of other anthropologists during the 1960s attempted to explain Caribbean family patterns with male absenteeism resulting from sex specific (male) migration. The most noted proponents of what is here referred to as the male absenteeism argument were Nancie Solien (later Nancie Gonzalez), Peter Kundstadter, and Keith Otterbein.

Solien (1959) initially explained Caribbean family systems as adaptations to male wage migration. Over the years, however, she proved indecisive. Solien/Gonzalez found herself "trying to incorporate into (her) original explanatory framework new data which do not always fit" (1984:1) and she then opted to split explanatory credit for family patterns between a demographic, financial, psychological, and structural arguments (Gonzalez 1970:242-243). Part of her most recent solution was "to think in terms of transformational theory, or ... variations on a set of common ideational themes" (1984:8).

Kunstadter (1963) picked up on Solien's earlier emphasis on male wage migration and based his inquiry into the causes of Caribbean family patterns on the following logic:

> If there were more females than males available for the formation of families, this might lead to the existence of matrifocal families in the absence of contravening institutions such as polygyny or delayed age of marriage for females. [57]

It is not clear why Kunstadter believed that polygyny would 'contravene' the existence of matrifocal families, especially if the polygynous males were often absent from the household. Nevertheless, Kundstadter was misinformed regarding polygyny in the Caribbean, saying that in this region "it is clear historically that Western intervention has acted directly against polygyny" (1963:62). Contrary to Kundstadter's assertion, it has long been known that de facto polygyny is widely practiced in the Caribbean (Herskovits 1937:114-115; Simpson, 1942:656; M.G. Smith 1961; 1962:117-122).

Unlike his predecessors Solien and Kunstadter, Keith Otterbein picked up on the male migration argument and carried it to a conclusion. Otterbein (1965:68) explained Caribbean mating patterns with an

"economic-demographic approach." This was an attempt to combine "the structural-functional analysis presented by Edith Clarke and R.T. Smith with the male absenteeism hypothesis of Nancie Solien and Peter Kunstadter" (Otterbein 1965:69). Otterbein sought to account for Caribbean mating patterns with male out-migration: In order for Caribbean men to start a family they needed to build a house, and in order to get the money to build a house men migrated in pursuit of wage labor. The consequence of this migration was fewer males than females on home islands, a quandary that was made up for by, "A double standard of sexual behavior, which is characteristic of all Caribbean family systems, (and) dictates that a married man can mate extra-residentially" (71). Otterbein backed this argument with extensive ethnographic data and strong statistical correlations (see Otterbein 1965).

[iv] It is impossible to ignore the importance of male absenteeism caused by migration. In a review of migration in the region, Aaron Segal (1987, p. 44) concluded that the Caribbean has "borne the deepest and most continuous impact from international migration of any region in the world." Most of the current Caribbean population came from over 400 years of immigration originating from most of the major regions on the globe; Western Europe, Africa, India and China have been the major contributors (Willams, 1970). Over one hundred years ago West Indians began reversing the ternd by migrating to European, South and North American mainlands to work as agricultural laborers. During the present century impoverished West Indians moved about the Caribbean in massive numbers as laborers in places like Panama, building a canal (Petras 1988), in Cuba, cutting sugar cane (Plummer 1985: Perusek 1984), in Guyana, working in Bauxite mines (R.T. Smith 1953:93); and in the U.S. and British Virgin Islands, building hotels (McElroy and Albuquerque 1988). In recent decades, literally millions of West Indians have flocked to the United States, Britain, France, and Belgium (Marshall 1985; INS 1991). Women have been a part of this migration, and Caribbean women today increasingly participate in the overseas work force (Gonzalez 1984:4; Senior 1991:77). But, that men comprised the bulk of past Caribbean migrations is evident in imbalanced sex ratios. At times labor migration meant that Caribbean islands experienced male deficits on the order of 50% fewer reproductive age males than females.

Table H-1: Sex Ratios for Commonwealth Caribbean Islands 1881 - 1960

	CENSUS DATE : YEAR					
	[Sex ratio = Males 20-49 / Females 15-44 X 1,000]					
COUNTRY	1881	1891	1911	1921	1946	1960
British Honduras	----	----	---	857	757	835
British Guiana	1,285	1,244	1,059	954	874	844
Trinidad and Tobago	-	1,159	1,040	946	918	855
Antigua	759	763	553	486(a)	745	747
Barbados	-	590	425	430	746	705
Dominica	-	579	647(a)	716(a)	735	714
Grenada	704	733	571	468	533	650
Jamaica	813	742	750	689	817(d)	774
Montserrat	646	583	355(a)	350(a)	615	585
St. Kitts - Nevis	-	678	434	388	732	710
St. Lucia	-	847(b)	722(c)	719(c)	766	708
St. Vincent	-	740(b)	485	451	608	671

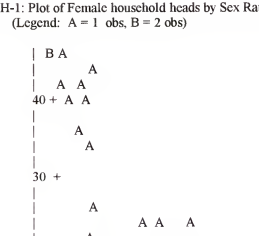
Marino (1970:163)

(a) For the age group 16-45 females, 21-50 males.
(b) For the age group 15-49, both sexes.
(c) For the age group 16-50, both sexes.
(d) For the year 1943.

The impact of male absenteeism is evident in the prevalence of female headed households—the most prominent indicator of what R.T. Smith (1956) termed matrifocality. Most research demonstrates that female headed households are overwhelmingly those in which a man is absent. Male-headed households, on the other hand, almost always have a resident female (Philpott 1973:148,149; M.G. Smith 1961:466,472; Senior 1991:98; R.T. Smith 1953:95; Safa 1986:10). When Yves Charbit (1984:24) took

male absenteeism into consideration and measured the association between female-headed households and sex ratios he got a correlation of 79 percent and an (R sqr. = 63 percent).

Chart H-1: Plot of Female household heads by Sex Ratios.
(Legend: A = 1 obs, B = 2 obs)



[In the above analysis, Charbit used data from 15 islands in the 1970 Common Wealth Caribbean census. Keith Otterbein (1965:75) got an almost identical correlation (.81) for data borrowed from Ethnographies written in the 1950's and 60's.]

Male absenteeism caused by widowhood can also be added to the model. On average Caribbean women marry younger and live longer than men. In 1960 life expectancy in the Caribbean was 66.3 for females versus 62.2 years for males. Average age at marriage was 30.9 for females versus 35.2 for males (Massiah 1983:14). These figures mean that compared to men Caribbean women had an additional 8.4 years of married life. Congruently, Caribbean households headed by widowed females are high, ranging from 11.4% in Guyana to 34.1% in St. Vincent (Massiah 1983:19). When male absenteeism caused by widowhood is combined with sex ratios in a statistical model accounting for the female headed households, the model yields a correlation of 90 percent and an R sqr of 84 percent.

[v] Some readers may object to the generalizations made here regarding the Caribbean. This is particularly so as many Caribbean islands have been radically transformed in the past three decades, some achieving 'developed' status through offshore assembly, some metamophisized by the US tourist industry, and most a combination of the two. The key words here are 'impoverished,' 'developing' and 'underdeveloped;' the point being that impoverished Caribbean peoples of all colonial-historic persuasions—French, Spanish, Dutch and English—exhibit similar demographic profiles and patterns of behavior relating to the organization of the domestic unit—the family

[vi] In the 1970s and 1980s feminist scholars took the lead in the inquiry into the causes of Caribbean family patterns and hatched what can be dubbed the irresponsible male argument. According to Safa (1986:1) Feminists went to the Caribbean, "to correct ideological distortions by documenting and assessing women's economic, social and political roles." Among the principle outcomes of feminist investigations

was to elucidate the scarcity of female economic opportunities and the general failure of impoverished Caribbean fathers to take responsibility for their wives and offspring.

This does not mean that feminists have been narrow in their analyses. Massiah (1983) showed that Caribbean women who head households are beyond a doubt economically disadvantaged. Blumberg (1993) and Dehavenon (1993) both provided models aimed at accounting for material conditions which give way to female headed households. Abraham (1993) showed how illegitimacy and marriage rates in Cariacou correlate with female access to wage employment. As women become involved in a competitive labor market, rates of consensual union go down and rates of marriage go up. Another primary feminist finding is that females heading households assume responsibility by default not only because of male wage migration, but also because of other marginal income opportunities and because of apathy of male providers (Senior 1991:36-37, 170-171; Massiah 1983).

But, a dismaying shortcoming of feminist analyses is that emphasis on women has been taken so far as to effect the same blunder regarding men, i.e. men, rather than women, are all but ignored. A recent example is Where Did All the Men Go: Female-Headed/Female-Supported Households in Cross-Cultural Perspective (1993), edited by Mencher and Okongwu (several contributors are cited above). The book provides a series of insightful analyses into female roles among lower-classes of the Caribbean and elsewhere. But despite the title, nowhere in this anthology do any of the authors investigate where all the men went, what they were doing, and if or how much money they sent back. Moreover, the very title conflates the notion of female-headed households with that of female-supported households, an unnecessary and misleading assumption. In the Caribbean, the typical female-headed household is probably most often not the same thing as a female supported household, especially when male wage migration or female employment is involved. As seen in the following footnote, Philpott (1973) and Cumper (1961) show that most female headed households were supported predominantly by men and Abraham (1993; above) shows that marriage is more likely when a women has the employment to support a household) . Safa (1986) sums up perhaps the central misconception of feminine-Caribbeanists when she makes the unwarranted generalization, "Caribbean low-income women have been fending for themselves and their families for a long time, and have learned not to depend on men for financial or even emotional support (13-14)."

[vii] Another trend of studies that cuts across the decades and the various schools of anthropological thought and that is crucial to understanding Caribbean family patterns can be called the female dependency argument. Caribbean women have long been heavily dependent on financial contributions from men and researchers in general have emphasized that female consent to sex in the impoverished Caribbean hinges on financial overtures from males (see Handwerker, 1993:45; 1989:77,87; Hill, 1977:279-280,282,305; Ashcraft, 1968:67-68; Freilich, 1968:52; Otterbein, 1966:105; Philpott, 1973:120-121; M.G. Smith, 1962:93,110-122, 234-235,226). Barrow (1986:161) found that all her informants "at some stage in their life histories received support from male partners"; and Senior (1991:154) noted that "Husband/partner is cited most frequently as a source of additional income." Even when households are headed by women, men appear to be the primary sponsors. In Montserrat, Stuart Philpott (1973) found that 71 % of female-headed households depended on remittances for 70 to 100 percent of their income; approximately 80 percent of remittances came from men (143). In Barbados, George Cumper (1961) surveyed 1,296 households with 5,364 people (a random sample of 2% of the population). Cumper broke his sample into eight occupational groups and into male versus female-headed households (see table H-3 below). In only two of Cumper's categories of female-headed households (White Collar, and Landless Laborer) did males contribute less than 50 % of all income. In only one category of male headed households (domestic labor) did men contribute less than 75 % of family income. In summary, individual men may be unreliable providers, as some feminists emphasize, but the evidence suggests that men in general are the primary source of support for Caribbean women.

Tables H-3: Percent Of Household Income From Males: Male Vs Female Headed Households

	White Collar	Skill Labor	Self Employ	Non-Farm Labor	Domestic Labor	Peasant	Renter	Landless Labor
Female Headed Hshld	18%	77%	54%	64%	60%	72%	57%	49%
Male Headed Hshld	88%	88%	80%	91%	58%	77%	76%	80%

[The sample is broken down into occupational groups. On the top row is percentage of household income contributed by males to female-headed households. The lower row is male contributions to male-headed households (predominantly couples). In only two of Cumper's categories of female-headed households (White Collar, and Landless Laborer) do males contribute less than 50 percent of all income. In no category of male headed households do men contribute less than 75 percent of family income; Cumper 1961].

The need for financial support from men played a determinant role in Caribbean family patterns. The reason for female dependency is most often said to be a consequence of scarce job opportunities for women (Massiah, 183:34 Sutton and Makiesky-Barrow, 1970; Blumberg, 1993; D'Amico, 1993; Abreham, 1993; Ashcraft, 1968; Barrow, 1986). Penn Handwerker (1992:49) points out, "Antiguan women did not choose a large family over education or a career. The choice could not be made because it did not exist." As economic opportunities became available to women—and hence their bargaining power vis a vis the fathers of their children improved-- marriage rates actually increased and fertility declined (see also Abraham 1993)

I:
THE BASELINE SURVEY

The Sponsors

The survey for Jean Rabel was initiated by three development organizations working in the region. The primary financier of the survey is **PISANO** (Projet Integre de Securite Alimentaire), a German government organization working exclusively in the North West Department of Haiti, and specifically in the Commune of Jean Rabel. PISANO's development activities are targeted to transform the technological and administrative infrastructure in eight Habitations. Projects launched by PISANO include constructing of roads and irrigation works, providing potable drinking water, and alleviating nutritional crises through 'food for work' programs. PISANO also attempted to train local leaders in the administrative skills needed for the implementation and maintenance of concrete and sustainable local infrastructures. PISANO has complemented its efforts with an aggressive educational campaign aimed at improving health and sanitation in the eight Habitations were it works. Measurable success has been elusive (see main text).

The second financier is **AAA** (Agro Action Allemande), a German NGO. AAA has projects primarily in Jean Rabel (about 705 of its manpower and resources) and but also extending beyond the survey boundaries, from the island of La Tortue to the far reaches of the Communes of Jean Rabel, Mole Saint Nicholas and Baie de Henne. "Food for work" road construction and erosion control projects by AAA played a major role in averting famine during the 1996-97 drought. Long-term projects by AAA focus on improving agricultural production.

The third survey partner is a French NGO (Initiative Developpment), with activities also extending beyond the survey boundaries. **ID** is an organization primarily concerned with health care, but also involved in providing drinking water, and assistance in animal husbandry and education. With regard to health care, ID's presence in the Far West is unrivaled. ID maintains the only hospital in the region, a state of the art dental facility, and a network of 19 health care clinics. Associated with ID's clinics is a system of 150 local health care volunteers that penetrates into the most remote areas of the region, providing vaccinations to a much of the population. Unfortunately ID's healthcare activities are in the process of shutting down.

Scope and Objectives

The survey was initiated by the sponsors with three primary objectives in mind:

1) give a demographic overview of the Communes,

2) provide demographic, nutritional, health, socio-economic, and agricultural data which can be used to target development programs to appropriate areas,

3) provide baseline data with which the sponsoring organizations can evaluate the impact of their own development activities (name of household head, name of the community and the longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates of the household were recorded so that the same households can be re-visited in future surveys).

The Data

Three data bases were generated from the information gathered in the survey: 1) a data base for general demographic variables, 2) a data base for general household, socio-economic, agricultural and animal husbandry variables and 3) a data base for nutritional and health status of young mothers and children under six years of age,

The Design

The survey design was a systematic random sample of 8.33% of households in the Commune of Jean Rabel. A household was defined as a building in which people sleep. Household members were defined as people who sleep in the house full-time (*tout tan*).[i] Virtually all households in the region were counted and marked; 1 in every 12 houses were systematically chosen for interviews; longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates of the selected households were subsequently recorded using Global Positioning System (GPS) devices (see Appendix D for a test of coordinate accuracy).

There were two very important results achieved by using the particular sampling design described above:

1) The generation of a representative random sample, distributed throughout the Jean Rabel countryside in direct proportion to population density and

2) A data base with which users can post-stratify sampled households by whatever geographically associated criteria is desired, including ecological, hydrological, topographical and meteorological factors, and proximity to dispensaries, hospitals and villages, availability of public transportation, proximity to markets, and proposed project area.

In summary, the survey data can be used to provide representative random samples for small and previously undefined areas—approximately the size of 1.5 Habitations.[ii]

The Sample Size and Habitations

Originally the survey was meant to visit 1,667 households, but this number was reduced to 1,586 because of unforeseen complications and costs. Further the actual population of the Commune of Jean Rabel turned out to be larger than anticipated. The larger population size meant that another 155 houses should have been surveyed, meaning that in total, 235 of a population of 2,823 households should have been surveyed but were not. These houses and the Sections and Habitations where they are located are listed in

Table I-1 below (see Appendix C for delineation of the village of Jean Rabel). In summary, the total sample size is 1,586 households; of this figure only 46 households were either vacant or interviewers where never able to locate the necessary respondents for at least one of the questionnaires.

Table I-1: Proportion of Sample From Specific Habitations

Section	Habitation	Number of Houses Counted but not Interviewed
1eme Section: Lacoma	Kaletan	228
	Pechaud	215
	Gombo	371
2eme Section: Guinaudee	Loubier	72
3eme Section: Vielle Hatte	Bassin Bleu	77
	La Reserve	127
	Kan Pledo/Repo	51
	Fond Wouj	342
	Vielle Hatte	328
	Grande-Falaise	265
	Kapin	179
	Trasel	22
	Bord Mer	19
5eme Section: Dessource	Dessources	225
	Yawe	87
	Gwenbe	69
6eme Section: Grande Source	Nan Sau	63
7eme Section: Diondion	Gwo Sab	83
Total		2,823

Below is a list of all Jean Rabel Habitations and the Habitation in which the household is located—as indicated by the household respondent. Missing variables caused by elimination of responses identifying Localitie or Section as Habitation. Twenty Habitations identified by PISANO did not appear in the survey.

Table I-2: Habitations Sampled by Section

Habitation	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Tot	Habitation	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Tot
1. Lacoma	48	3						51	45. Ka Gib				20				20
2. Cabaret	50							50	46. Gedette				12				12
3. Gatthier	10	4						14	47. Desabe				7				7
4. Barbe Pan	16	2						18	48. Labelle	1			38				39
5. Gombo	6							6	49. Boule				8				8
6. Derniere	3							3	50. Kadome					10			10
7. Pont-Aleu	14							14	51. Cattron					6			6
8. Dubois	61						1	62	52. Irv					4			4
9. Yvon	3							3	53. Leblanc					10			10
10. Laplace	13							13	54. Galats					1			1
11. Desjardin	2							2	55. Beldorin					12			12
12. Raymond	79							79	56. Cimitiere					13			13
13. Arelle	39							39	57. Coisou					4		5	9
14. Fin Lann	1	3						4	58. Man Noel					15			15
15. Café Paul	2	20						22	59. 1068					9			9
16. Loubier		14						14	60. Pottier					15			15
17. Sapotelle		4						4	61. Kasa-Pie					2			2
18. Sauvil		38	1					39	62. Mondo					6			6

Table I-2--continued

Habitation	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Tot.	Habitation	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Tot.
19. Ka Philip	2	20						22	63. Nan Saut				1		3	2	6
20. Brasan P.	38	14						52	64. Beaubrin						3		3
21. fn. Valois		3						3	65. Biron						7		7
22. Guinaudee		73						73	66. Grnd. Sre.						2		2
23. Fond Noir		16						16	67. Digo						9	6	15
24. Perbaud	1	10						11	68. Fnd. Mirec	1					7		7
25. Guillette		1						1	69. Fantenie						14	2	16
26. La Plaine		9						9	70. Meteyer						5		5
27. Mayumbe		1						1	71. Nan Rchr.						2		2
28. Colette		15	6					21	72. Debauche						6		6
29. Lalande		3						3	73. Du Corge						9		9
30. La Source				11				11	74. Petite Sre.						5		5
31. Fnd Zeab.				13				13	75. Nan Bpst.						2		2
32. Mont Pan.		1		5				6	76. Pellier						7		7
33. Bann Bleu				23	2			25	77. Bombel						3		3
34. La Reserve				40				40	78. Lesalorn						1		1
35. Campledo				12				12	79. Gro Sali							11	11
36. Foubi				7				7	80. Nan 18 (s)							4	4
37. Repos				2				2	81. Fnd. Kem.	1						26	27
38. Kadome					16			16	82. Diondron							17	17
39. Lali					5			5	83. Baguette							23	23
40. Nan Jules					31			31	84. Bingo					1		2	3
41. Bois Ven.					1			1	85. Vie Te						1	24	25
42. Plaisir					12			12	86. Coraille	1						8	10
43. Jens					12	1		13	87. Cocou				1			3	4
44. Ride					5	1		6	88. Grand Sre.						2	11	13
									Total	12	14	10	78	10	7	15	179

Sections 1st =Lacoma ; 2nd = Guinaudee; 3rd = Vielle Hatte; 4th = La Montagne, 5th = Dessources; 6th = Grande Source; 7th = Diondron

Geographical Stratification

In the analysis presented in this text, the Commune of Jean Rabel is stratified only according to the political sub-division Section Communal. No attempt was made to stratify according to ecological zones because a similar survey carried out by CARE in 1994 found little variation between such regions. However, the possibility for post-stratifying is, as mentioned above, limitless. The recording of longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates means that the data can be stratified geographically according to virtually any criteria subsequently deemed interesting.

The Questionnaire

The general questionnaire which focused on demographics, socio-economics, agriculture and animal husbandry was designed by the survey coordinator in collaboration with senior staff from PISANO, AAA and ID. The nutritional questionnaire was designed in collaboration with nutritional specialists from ID and PISANO. Formulation of questions in Haitian Creole was accomplished in collaboration with staff from ID, PISANO, AAA and the survey interviewers. In total, there were over 752 variables. Questionnaires took experienced interviewers an average of 30 minutes to administer

Organization, Selection of Interviewers and Training

All employees except for the coordinator (a US Doctoral candidate in anthropology) were from the Commune of Jean Rabel or surrounding area. General and nutritional interviewers were selected based on written evaluation, interviews, educational level and work experience. Most interviewers had attained the Haitian equivalent of a high school diploma. Training of general interviewers and supervisors was carried out by

the survey coordinator. Nutritional interviewers were trained by a medical doctor and a nutritionist working for PISANO.

Originally a team of 29 supervisors, interviewers, assistants and local guides were employed. A coordinator, a general supervisor, two helpers, three team supervisors, and 12 interviewers made up the permanent survey staff. Ten local guides and advisors were temporarily hired in each Habitation.[iii] Early on, a team of 8 house counters was also formed, trained and incorporated into the survey process.

Interviewers were grouped into six teams of three people; two interviewers per team, one local assistant. Each supervisor coordinated two teams and was responsible for recording the longitude and latitude of selected households. A local guide was assigned to each team supervisor.

Table I-3: Survey Administrative Organization

Coordinator & General Supervisor Two Permanent Helpers [Team of Eight House Counters]					
Team Supervisor 1 Local Assistant		**Team Supervisor 2** Local Assistant		**Team Supervisor 3** Local Assistant	
Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D	Team E	Team G
General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant	General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant	General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant	General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant	General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant	General Interviewer Nutrition Interviewer Local Assistant

The Survey Process

1) The first task in carrying out the survey was to count houses. House counts were originally made by the supervisors and local assistants; three weeks into the survey this task was taken over by an 8 person team of house counters.[iv] House counters marked houses and compiled lists of the houses.

2) From the compiled house-count lists the survey coordinator systematically and randomly selected 1 in every 12 households for interviews.

3) Selected households were then visited by team supervisors. The supervisors notified residents of the impending interviews, explained the purpose of the interviews and recorded longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates of selected households.

4) Households were subsequently visited by interview teams--a general and a nutritional interviewer accompanied by a local assistant. Each interviewer administered the respective questionnaire. [v]

5) Households in which members were absent were revisited--leaving a total of less than 5 percent absenteeism for Jean Rabel.

6) A third of all households were again visited, this time by the coordinator and assistants. The purpose of this fourth visit was to evaluate the performance of the supervisors and interviewers. Longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates where cross-checked for accuracy. Household members were consulted to check the accuracy of selected responses.[vi]

Coding, Transcription and Review of Questionnaires

Data was coded daily in the field by the interviewers. Virtually all the coded questionnaires were then checked and corrected by assistants and the coordinator at the survey headquarters in the village of Jean Rabel.[vii] Virtually all questionnaires where also checked for inconsistencies and misunderstandings with regard to how questions were asked and how responses were recorded, providing an additional means of monitoring and controlling the performance of interviewers.

Data Analysis and Equipment

SPSS software package was used to enter data, generate graphs and charts, and to apply statistical tests. EPI-INFO software was used to calculate the nutritional indicators Weight for Height (WHZ), Height for Age (HAZ) and Weight for Age (WAZ). Word 7 and Microsoft Publisher were used to enter text and format the final version of the report. Global Positioning System (GPS) devices were used to determine longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates of sampled households. SECA body meters were used to measure

Notes

[i] Household members were assigned to three categories during interviews: Those who sleep in the house, 1) full time 2) part time and 3) never.

[ii] Because there are 109 Habitations in Jean Rabel, analysis at this level could not be included in the main body of the report—to do so would multiply the analysis by a factor of 109. However, the formatted data base should be available through the sponsoring organizations.

[iii] Competition among local leaders for control of the appointment of guides created conflicts that threatened the success of the survey. The result was a decision to suspend the practice of paying locals and depend entirely on volunteers.

[iv] This practice was changed three weeks into the survey when it became apparent that, burdened by other duties, supervisors and local assistants alone could not count houses fast enough to maintain the necessary pace. A team of 8 house counters was assembled exclusively for this purpose. House counters marked houses--to avoid double counting--and compiled lists of household heads.

Another change with regard to house counts: The survey area was originally divided into IGAs (Identifiable Geographical Areas)--territories easily recognized in the field by obvious physical boundaries, such as roads, rivers, and mountain ridges. However, this system of identifying regions based on topographical criteria was also abandoned in the early stages of the survey for the more pragmatic approach of simply counting houses in each locality—people living in the areas easily identified the boundaries of what they call "localities," albeit with frequent controversy over whether a particular locality is 'really' just one or several independent localities.

[v] General interviewers were instructed to question the male household head or, in the absence of a male head, to interview the oldest economically active male. However, in a great number of cases (see Households), interviewers encountered female headed household heads and households in which the male heads were absent. In these cases adult women were freely substituted under the guiding assumption that Haitian women know a great deal about the economic affairs of the household.

There was no such leniency regarding the nutritional questionnaire. Under another guiding assumption--that Haitian women know far more about the affairs of their children than do their male counterparts--only females were accepted as respondents for the nutritional questionnaire.

In each household, the nutritional interviewer selected a mother and one of her children as subjects of inquiry regarding vaccinations, illnesses and treatments, and to be measured for height, weight and brachial circumference. A rigid criteria for choosing mothers was arbitrarily defined for the sake of consistency in the selection process: In each household interviewers chose the youngest mother who had children under 6 years of age. In the absence of young children, interviewers were instructed to simply choose the youngest mother. The oldest child in the 0 to 6 year age range was chosen for measurement, intentionally biasing the sample toward higher ages in an effort to avoid over-selecting children who were still nursing (children still nursing, especially those under 6 months of age, are often insulated from the nutritional deficits suffered by older children of impoverished households).

[vi] In the early stages of the interview process, these check-ups revealed disturbing discrepancies in the performance of several interviewers and supervisors. However, mis-recorded data was subsequently corrected by return visits, errant employees were encouraged to pursue other employment opportunities, and continued monitoring of the interview process assured the commitment of the remaining survey staff. The result is an extensive body of data the accuracy of which current survey employees have high confidence.

[vii] Codification for virtually all questionnaires was checked, more than half of the questionnaires were reviewed twice. Codifying was originally a problem for interviewers. All else having failed, the problem of incorrect codification was resolved by levying a fine of 1gourdes (US$ .06) on incorrectly coded variables. Interviewers quickly came to understand the coding system.

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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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