WITCHCRAFT, BUREAUCRAFT, AND THE SOCIAL LIFE OF (US)AID IN HAITI

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Witchcraft, sorcery, and magic are foundational anthropological categories describing cultural practices employed to control flows of power in a society. These concepts refer not only to the techniques of ritual adepts who channel potent occult forces to aid their clients but also to diagnostic processes occurring in social groups to determine whether their members' (mis)fortune results from such supernatural activities (Evans-Pritchard 1976; Favret-Saada 1980; Gluckman 1968; Janzen 1978; Stewart and Strathern 2004). In so-called small-scale or premodern societies, accusations of occult activity commonly emerge from tensions between members of kin or closely related social groups—especially in conflicts over land, commodities, or other material resources (Evans-Pritchard 1976). The circulation of rumors, gossip, and scandal may catalyze accusations of witchcraft, sorcery, or magic, as well as episodes of scapegoating that can culminate in violence (Stewart and Strathern 2004). Ultimately, these practices and processes are moral ones concerning the distribution of health, wealth, and justice in local worlds (Kleinman and Kleinman 1991).

Such patterns are not limited to small-scale village societies in remote hinterlands. A number of scholars have documented an intensification of "witchcraft" discourses and practices in many postcolonial states in Africa (Ashforth 2005; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b; Ferguson 2006; Geschiere 1997; Moore and Sanders 2001),[1] as well as a rise in suspicion, paranoia, and conspiracy theories regarding political and economic practices in postsocialist and Western neoliberal

states (West and Sanders 2003). In contemporary social groups, witchcraft discourses incorporate general concerns about uncertainty, scarcity, and risk, and the ambiguous relationship between hidden and transparent flows of power (Ashforth 2005; Bockie 1993; Geschiere 1997; Moore and Sanders 2001). Witchcraft discourses and witch finding movements have been linked to the effects of "millennial capitalism" and the market economy, which produce perceptions that the unequal distribution of resources in the neoliberal world arise from "the workings of insidious forces, of potent magical technologies and mysterious modes of accumulation, of sorcery of one or another sort" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b:282). In response, witch hunts become "forms of political action . . . to divert and control power, channel the distribution of resources, establish a public sphere in which moral order may be negotiated, and construct reality itself" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999a:309).

Similar phenomena arise within and in response to another type of economy, the "compassion economy" (James 2010), which has become particularly influential as a means to reengineer postsocialist, postauthoritarian, postconflict, and postdisaster states. Through joint practices of military and humanitarian intervention, so-called secure states attempt to control the international risks posed by political crises, civil strife, absence of rule of law, the uncertainties of flexible labor, environmental and technological hazards, and terrorism and biosecurity threats in insecure states. While containing threats that may spread across borders, international interveners also implement modernization and development initiatives to rehabilitate both nation-states "in crisis" and their citizens. Thus, the relationship between so-called stable and transitional nations is also structured through flows of humanitarian and development assistance (Duffield 2001). Typically, the political and economic transitions brokered for fragile or failed states are crafted by actors whose decision-making processes are not transparent and who are not ultimately accountable to those in whose territories they intervene—whether by territory one refers to geographical locations, economies, or the bodies and minds of citizens.

In this article I discuss the unintended consequences of humanitarian and development assistance provided to "victims of human rights abuses" in Haiti in the years following the restoration of democracy in 1994. Such targeted assistance was a component of international political and economic development aid intended to facilitate the nation's postconflict transition. I argue that in much the same manner that witchcraft discourses signify moral struggles over the distribution of resources in small-scale societies, the cultures and moral economies of humanitarian and development aid—well-intentioned activities that nonetheless include

opaque bureaucratic practices and competition over knowledge, scarce resources, and institutional territory—can produce similar phenomena as has been described regarding contemporary witchcraft. I draw on the literature on witchcraft, bureaucracy, and secrecy to analyze accusations of malfeasance, scapegoating, and violence directed toward both providers and recipients of humanitarian and development assistance. I characterize such processes occurring in relation to compassion economies by the term *bureaucraft*. In this context, bureaucraft is a technical practice employed by bureaucratic and therapeutic experts in their quest to assist clients of the aid apparatus and, indirectly, themselves. Bureaucraft is also a diagnostic social process among actors in the aid apparatus (both patrons and clients) arising from perceptions of inequity in the distribution of material and social capital, fortune and misfortune, and justice and injustice.

Bureaucraft practices encompass a spectrum of activities and conditions that are inextricably linked with and may inadvertently generate negative bureaucraft social processes. At one end of the spectrum, "benevolent" bureaucraft practices are efforts to use diagnostic technologies, gifts (or grants) of material resources, and other therapeutic procedures to transform individual and collective suffering into something productive. Benevolent bureaucraft practices may engender processes of healing, reconciliation, recognition, or inclusion. Perceptions that such practices are somehow exclusionary or exploitative can engender "malevolent" bureaucraft practices and processes. The negative dimensions of bureaucraft include phenomena of slander, rumor, and gossip, as well as formal accusations that individuals and even institutions have accumulated resources through occult or illicit means at the expense of the accuser, whether by sorcery, magic, or the negative enchantments of bureaucracy. As discussed in greater detail below, bureaucratic disenchantment refers to rational, technical interventions intended to relieve suffering that frequently reduce the complexity of multifaceted conditions like "disease" or "poverty" by focusing on relief of a single facet of such conditions or dimensions of personal experience (i.e., "PTSD," "gender based violence," "trafficked children," etc.). Such practices also tend to denude individual cases of their particulars so that cases may be aggregated and represented as a collective "portfolio" of suffering worthy of investment for potential humanitarian donors. This process of rational, bureaucratic objectification and aggregation of individual suffering may also indirectly inculcate therapeutic indifference and antipathy between caregiver and client, especially when such practices are not well explained to clients and do not involve their participation. The practices and processes recounted in this article expose the contradictions in discourses and practices of transparency

and rationality in Western bureaucratic institutions. As may occur in societies in which witchcraft is a dominant moral paradigm, such processes of bureaucraft may culminate in violence.

In the first part of this article I describe some of the relationships between terror and compassion economies in Haiti at critical moments during the nation's struggle to consolidate democracy. I then present two cases from my fieldwork to illustrate the articulations of witchcraft, sorcery, occult economies, and bureaucraft within economies of compassion. The first example traces the social life of aid and the ways in which discourses of witchcraft emerged as a component of the politics of victim identity. The second narrative reveals how humanitarian and development interventions can foment, rather than quell social insecurity, giving rise to malevolent dimensions of bureaucraft. Together, these narratives point to a central paradox of humanitarian aid: through its discourse and practices the aid apparatus can exacerbate cycles of economic decline and political and criminal instability, thereby reproducing the very conditions for military and humanitarian interventions that brought the aid apparatus into being in the first place.

THE TERROR ECONOMY AND THE AID APPARATUS

On September 30, 1991, democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted by military coup d'état after less than eight months in office. In the three years that followed, tens of thousands of civilian paramilitary attachés aligned with the military to control the population. The terror apparatus murdered, raped, and "disappeared" the poor prodemocracy sector using vile methods of torture with historical roots in the brutal discipline of the slave plantation. In some cases, the style of killings incorporated elements of the baneful *Vodou* tradition indicating that the murder was conducted to capture an aspect of the soul of the victim to augment the power of the killer. Three hundred thousand Haitians were internally displaced. Tens of thousands of Haitian "boat people" fled to other Caribbean nations, South America, and the United States. The majority of Haitian refugees who reached U.S. shores were imprisoned in detention centers or repatriated. They were labeled "economic migrants" fleeing poverty, rather than granted status as political asylum seekers.

On October 15, 1994, the U.S.-led Multinational Force (MNF)[2] restored Aristide to power. The humanitarian and development aid apparatus worked to rehabilitate the embattled nation and its traumatized citizens, as it had begun to do during the period of de facto rule. Many Haitian NGOs and advocacy groups alerted their international counterparts about the ongoing crisis between 1991

and 1994 and began providing humanitarian relief to those in need and implementing long-term development initiatives. In the postcoup period, numerous international actors continued crafting Haiti's reconstruction (in many cases with limited input from Haitian governmental and nongovernmental actors), including multilateral and bilateral aid organizations (the World Bank, the IMF, USAID, etc.), international NGOs (CARE, Oxfam, UNICEF, etc.), human rights groups (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights Physicians for Human Rights, etc.), medical relief organizations (Doctors of the World and the medical unit of the United Nations International Civilian Mission), international faith-based charitable groups, women's rights groups, and countless others. However, since 1994, the oft-named poorest country in the Western Hemisphere has struggled with ongoing political and economic insecurity and environmental disasters. On February 29, 2004, democratically reelected President Aristide was deposed for a second time. Another round of military and humanitarian intervention followed, with the aim of restoring order and democratic rule. Despite these efforts, *ensekirite* ("insecurity" in Haitian Creole)—the embodied uncertainty generated by political, criminal, economic, and spiritual instability (James 2008)—proliferates.

The roots of Haiti's challenges with consolidating democracy are long and deep. They were sown by 18th-century colonial plantation regimes, in which overseers extracted material resources through forced slave labor. The products of slave labor enriched metropolitan centers in Europe until the slaves' improbable achievement of independence in 1804. In the postcolonial era, Haiti's leaders reproduced practices of colonial repression to exploit the peasantry. In the 20th century, decades of U.S. foreign occupation and subsequent imposition of neoliberal economic strategies reinforced the position of the Haitian state and its agents as predators. The Duvalier dictatorships between 1957 and 1986 mobilized what Achille Mbembe (2003) has termed *necropolitics,* the power of death to subjugate life itself, to terrorize the population and create a docile wage labor force for export assembly production. The Duvaliers deployed ritual adepts in the *Vodou* tradition among the paramilitary *tonton makout* who wielded baneful supernatural power to extort and abstract both material and spiritual resources from the population. Haiti's contemporary cycles of foreign intervention, economic decline, and political and criminal insecurity are inextricably linked to this history of suffering and the circulation of commodities in the global capitalist economy. The long-term legacy of these international and national practices of political and economic extraction is what is widely regarded as a failed state.

Between 1995 and 2000, I evaluated transnational efforts to craft democracy and civil society in Haiti's "post-trauma polity" (Fischer 1991). I spent more than 27 months in Haiti following victims of human rights abuses from the 1991–94 period of de facto rule, as they sought justice, healing, and reparations from the national and international aid apparatus. These individuals called themselves *viktim* (Haitian Creole for the term *victim*) to signify their status as political "martyrs" harmed in the struggle for Haitian democracy who deserved special recognition for their suffering. Most *viktim* were nonliterate, unemployed, and struggling with chronic emotional and physical illness because of their victimization. I provided physical therapy to women *viktim* at a privately funded women's clinic in Martissant,[3] a poor, highly populated urban area just outside the capital that was a battleground between gangs and the Haitian National Police over weapons, narcotics, and other contraband. As my project progressed I followed these women, their families, and a broad network of victims' associations as they learned to negotiate the humanitarian and development aid apparatus that was primarily based in Port-au-Prince. In studying with Haitian mental health practitioners in outpatient therapy sessions at the Mars/Kline Center for Neurology and Psychiatry at the State University Hospital, I was able to witness how Haitians use cultural idioms to articulate emotional and psychological distress. Through archival, documentary, and participant-observation at the America's Development Foundation (ADF) Human Rights Fund, an NGO funded by USAID that housed a Victim Assistance and Rehabilitation Program for victims of organized violence, I observed additional ways that humanitarian and development interventions contributed to the commodification of suffering within a political economy of trauma.[4]

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TRAUMA

Political economies of trauma encompass economies of terror generated by agents of torture and repression and economies of compassion generated by the aid apparatus. In economies of terror, a victim's productive and reproductive capacities were damaged, destroyed, or appropriated through both material and spiritual means through literal acts of commodity fetishism. Individual perpetrators and the terror apparatus collected the potency or value of what had been alienated from the victim through baneful ritual practices (see James 2010:ch. 1). The aggregate of such egregious acts between 1991 and 1994 created conditions provoking the military and humanitarian apparatus to restore democracy, as well as an intensification and expansion of the extant compassion economy.

Economies of compassion are spheres of economic transfers that articulate with and arise from commodity economies in the form of public and private charitable gifts and grants with humanitarian goals. Compassion economies encompass finite flows of beneficent material resources, knowledge, technologies, therapies, pharmaceuticals, and other forms of exchange between an aid apparatus and its clients. Historical inequalities of power and knowledge between donors and recipients of aid buttress economies of compassion—whether at governmental, institutional, or individual levels. Additional markers of difference also profoundly structure the encounter between donors and aid recipients, such as culture, ethnicity, gender, and the specter of race.

Like other market systems, humanitarian and development aid may also generate opaque or hidden financial transactions that seem to benefit a small number of actors and that can engender charges of corruption, especially as aid develops an independent social life (Appadurai 1986). Comaroff and Comaroff (1999b), writing of postapartheid South Africa, have described such processes as components of "occult economies." Occult economies are generated by the uncertainties of contemporary millennial capitalism. Millennial capitalism refers to salvific promises that "the mysterious mechanisms of the market hold the key to hitherto unimaginable riches" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b:284) and that such riches are available to every rational actor, whether by *actor* one means an individual or a nation transitioning to open market economies. In practice, "vast wealth . . . passes through most postcolonial societies and into the hands of a few of their citizens," leading to the perception that while the promise of capitalism is attainable, "arcane forces are intervening in the production of value, diverting its flow for selfish purposes" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b:284). The gap between the imagined fruits of participation in capitalist economies and its actual rewards can produce sentiments of envy and jealousy, and perceptions of "evil dealings," as well as "the constant pursuit of new, magical means for otherwise unattainable ends" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b:284). Those who reap the benefits of such mysterious transactions are assumed to have done so "through the illegitimate appropriation . . . not just of the bodies and things of others, but also of the forces of production and reproduction themselves" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b:284). In other words, the trope of occult economies describes perceptions of illegitimate or nefarious consumption of resources, especially in climates of political and economic insecurity. In my use of the concept, occult economies range from illicit or unregulated traffic in commodities or other tangible and intangible items of value to the hidden transactions between individuals and "magical" forces to attain both spiritual

and material power. Intrinsic within an occult economy are practices of abstraction by which value or profit is extracted by the few from the labor, bodies, or resources of others.

Occult economies are not solely the product of traditional beliefs and practices in contexts where witchcraft is a prominent political discourse; they are also generated by the secrecy and opacity of modern bureaucratic technologies and practices. Max Weber observed that bureaucratic "administration always tends to exclude the public, to hide its knowledge and action from criticism as well as it can" (1968:992). Michael Herzfeld further compares the work of Western bureaucrats to the rituals of occult practitioners. He states:

> Bureaucrats work on the categories of social existence in much the same way as sorcerers are supposed to work on the hair or nail clippings of their intended victims. Their religion is nationalism, and their actions, like those of most ritual practitioners, pragmatically aim to draw the powers of the reified cosmos into the pursuit of immediate goals. [Herzfeld 1992:62]

Herzfeld argues that bureaucratic practices and the logics they encode are more similar to the crafts of ritual practitioners than they are different. Bureaucrats employ ideologies and practices to achieve material goals for the institutions in which they work and to manage the complex ills of the individuals they serve. Such practices represent rationalities or logics having the character of secular theodicies that are "useful for explaining away one's own misfortunes or the successes of one's competitors" (Herzfeld 1992:9).

The diverse actors in the humanitarian and development apparatus in Haiti operated for the most part within administrative bureaucracies of varying size and complexity. At times, these humanitarian administrators employed bureaucratic technologies and practices that implemented national ideologies, even though they did not always act on behalf of a state. At other times, they inculcated through their programs neomodernist doctrines of transparency, civility, governance, rights, and rationality that attempted to transcend the bounds of the nation-state and appeal to "universal" ideals.

Actors in the aid apparatus in Haiti preached the secular creeds of human rights, democracy, women's rights, law, and even psychiatry to their clients through a variety of bureaucratic and therapeutic practices. Although possessing opposite intent from the terror apparatus, both during and after the conflict period in Haiti, the aid apparatus abstracted, translated, and transformed the suffering of victims of human rights abuses in their efforts to document abuses and to procure assistance for *viktim*

through benevolent bureaucraft practices. In providing rehabilitation assistance to *viktim* in Haiti, the aid apparatus employed expert therapeutic knowledge, as well as secret discourses and bureaucratic practices, to authenticate, appropriate, and transform diverse forms of suffering into "trauma portfolios" (James 2004).

As an example of benevolent bureaucraft practices, staff members in the Human Rights Fund Rehabilitation Program transformed the receipts for medical treatment, the testimonies of witnesses, the photos of wounded bodies, and other affidavits documenting an individual's experience of victimization into dossiers that had the potential to engender justice and reparations while also garnering access to its social services. In observing such transformations I came to view trauma portfolios as both symbolic and material representations of exceptional and egregious forms of suffering distinguishing the victim from other sufferers in a nation in which *ensekirite* and vulnerability has become the rule. Trauma portfolios circulated as commodities in the humanitarian market and generated currency not only for the victim but also for the interveners who presented their portfolios as tangible icons demonstrating their competence and accountability in implementing postconflict reconstruction initiatives. These portfolios also became means by which institutions and organizations solicited funding from public and private donors, which, in theory, trickled down to the individual victim.

This professional transformation of suffering occurred in such fashion because humanitarian and development practices tend to categorize and represent sufferers as individuals living at the level of "bare life"—biological life that lacks voice, language, representation, or citizenship (Agamben 1998:8–11). Giorgio Agamben builds on and expands Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics to describe how the figure of bare life has become the quintessential feature of modern politics.[5] He claims that the refugee has become a new icon of bare life, an individual who is frequently viewed in caricature as a global emblem of displacement, victimization, poverty, and vulnerability. Such a humanitarian gaze can eclipse the refugee's political subjectivity and citizenship in a sovereign nation-state, and the bare life that he or she represents may be reduced to a fund-raising tool to evoke compassion in distant charitable donors. As such Agamben argues, "Humanitarian organizations . . . can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight" (Agamben 1998:133).[6]

Benevolent bureaucraft practices can produce multiple forms of capital for both the aid giver and the recipient of charitable and development gifts while aid resources flow. Bureaucraft practices can also engender the brokering of bare life

by individual, organizational, and institutional experts possessing the social and political capital to manipulate humanitarian markets when aid resources become scarce. In representing human life as bare or in iconic form, particularly when an aid organization must demonstrate the enormity of need facing its clients in quests for funding, the circumstances surrounding individual incidents of victimization are often denuded of their complexity and roots in local moral economies. As victims sought recognition and ways to distinguish their status as sufferers from the masses of Haiti's poor, they crafted the stories of their particular forms of victimization to evoke a sense of horror and indignation in listeners that would call forth a response, action, and additional intervention on their behalf.

The processes by which *viktim* utilized, were exploited by, and ultimately became brokers of bare life are critical components of the shift from benevolent to malevolent forms of bureaucraft as such aid moved through local communities. As aid developed a social life (Appadurai 1986), those whose lives were reputedly bare appropriated bureaucraft practices themselves to intervene in and recapture scarce humanitarian markets. As I discuss elsewhere (James 2010), *viktim* crafted, performed, and distributed false stories of new abuses to revive interest in their plight in the humanitarian market when the demand for such stories was waning or turning toward new emergencies in other nations. In the context of Haiti's general *ensekirite,* however, the opacity and secrecy of these bureaucratic processes also rendered both aid patrons and their *viktim* clients as objects of rumors and accusations of having engaged in the illicit accumulation of aid resources. Such discourses intensified when some aid institutions, personnel, or clients changed or improved in status but others did not in the context of scarce aid. When such tensions went unresolved, debates about bureaucratic knowledge and practices led to leveling, scapegoating, and multiple forms of violence among these institutions and their clients.

BUREAUCRAFT AND THE POLITICS OF (US)AID

The ADF Human Rights Fund and its therapeutic Rehabilitation Program became the target of malevolent bureaucraft practices and processes in part because of the circumstances surrounding the origins, motives, and activities of ADF. Since the early 1980s, ADF has implemented U.S. foreign policy through political development assistance in many conflict and postconflict settings. The U.S. government has funneled political development aid to liminal institutions like ADF through the National Endowment for Democracy and USAID. ADF has had programs in Nicaragua, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gaza

and the West Bank, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other nations. To outsiders, the work of ADF is ambiguous and morally contested. Left-wing U.S.-based activists and political watch groups have accused ADF of channeling covert U.S. aid to antidemocratic forces in many nations. In 1994, USAID created within ADF a program called the Human Rights Fund that was intended for Haitian victims of human rights abuses. This move served to formalize the aid ADF staff provided to persecuted, prodemocracy activists between 1991 and 1994.

A series of scandals precipitated the birth of the Human Rights Fund. At the height of the repression by the terror apparatus in Haiti, a U.S. Department of State cablegram dated April 12, 1994, was leaked. The cablegram alleged that reports of politically motivated rape in Haiti were fabrications and implied that human rights observers in the UN International Civilian Mission (ICM) had been deceived by Haitians or were somehow incorrectly interpreting events on the ground:

> A case in point is the sudden epidemic of rapes reported by pro-Aristide human rights activists and by the ICM. *For a range of cultural reasons (not pleasant to contemplate),* rape has never been considered or reported as a serious crime here. Hardline, ideological Aristide supporters here regularly compare the human rights situation in Haiti to the carnage in Bosnia. Some have called recent violence in Port-au-Prince slums "political cleansing," equating this with "ethnic cleansing" against Muslims by Bosnian Serbs. . . . We are, frankly, suspicious of the sudden, high number of reported rapes, *particularly in this culture,* occurring at the same time that Aristide activists seek to draw a comparison between Haiti and Bosnia. [emphasis added]

The memo implied that if the reports were true, such occurrences did not constitute human rights violations because rape was "natural" or "normal" in Haitian culture. Friends of Haiti and Haitian activists viewed the statement as a confirmation of how racism underlies the disparate treatment of Haitians in U.S. foreign policy and foreign assistance. Then another scandal heightened the outrage at the memo leak. On April 17, 1994, the CBS *60 Minutes* news program aired "Nightmare in Haiti," an exposé accusing the United States of financing and training the leaders of the terror apparatus that was still targeting prodemocracy activists in Haiti. The uproar generated by the memo and exposé resulted in the creation of the Human Rights Fund by U.S.-aid actors that were anxious to demonstrate their legitimate support for human rights and democracy in Haiti. From its inception, the Fund was caught within a web of rumors, gossip, and scandals about the true motives of U.S.-development assistance abroad.

Like other federally funded aid programs, the ADF Human Rights Fund operated within a component of the compassion economy that I characterize as the *grant economy*. These economies of scarcity lie between the practices of direct and reciprocal exchange within gift economies and the indirect transfer of currencies for manufactured objects in commodity economies. Like gift and commodity economies, grant economies are based on and generate particular cultures. As an example, the relationship between USAID and ADF was a "cooperative agreement." ADF was the "procurement structure" or institutional base that received additional overhead monies in excess of the project grant to manage the Human Rights Fund. ADF and its programs were required to produce certain outcomes in alignment with an overall shift in strategy and practice at the donor level.[7]

Given this emphasis on programmatic accountability, the Rehabilitation Program operated much like U.S. health maintenance organizations that control access to and costs of care and that make referrals to authorized specialty services. The Rehab Program began operating within the Human Rights Fund in 1997 and was accountable to both ADF and USAID for its activities and expenditures according to this new management model. Staff of USAID and ADF created a blueprint for the Rehab Program's "activities" that had to be achieved by the conclusion of its grant. This bureaucratic "Results Framework" eventually became a means to rationalize rehabilitation for traumatized victims. In the initial October 1997 to June 1998 Results Framework, the program limited each beneficiary and his or her dependents to one year of eligibility for complete medical care and other forms of support. At the conclusion of the year, beneficiaries were expected to have found other resources.

After initial consultations and admittance to the Rehab Program, beneficiaries were referred to a network of Haitian and international caregivers in Haiti. Beneficiaries received medical assistance, psychological counseling, and legal counseling from the aid apparatus and, if necessary, temporary housing in other parts of Haiti for those *viktim* who required emergency asylum. The program arranged reconstructive surgery, dentistry, ophthalmology, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatric care, psychiatric treatment, and other services for beneficiaries but not food aid or food subsidies, as other aid organizations like CARE specialized in such activities. The Rehab Program director was Dr. Christine Thomas,[8] a French ethnopsychiatrist in her mid-fifties. She worked with two Haitian nurses and other Haitian support staff. Dr. Thomas and other Haitian mental health specialists provided individual and group psychotherapy. An external network of pharmacists and private laboratories that specialized in various medical diagnostic technologies also served

Human Rights Fund clients. Outside institutions and individuals providing these benefits billed the costs directly to the Fund, which became problematic when corrupt practices and occult economies of aid were uncovered within the medical network.

Misunderstandings about the Fund's history, practices, and partners in Haiti made the institution and its staff vulnerable to accusations of malfeasance and threats of violence that are components of malevolent bureaucraft. These dynamics developed in the context of the scarce grant economy that operated within the broader climate of political and economic insecurity in Haiti. The events that unfolded also revealed the politics of humanitarian and development assistance as it developed a social life outside the aid apparatus.

WITCHCRAFT IN MARTISSANT

In September 1998, I was participating in a Rehab Program therapy group at the Human Rights Fund with women who lived in Martissant. I also returned to volunteering at the Martissant women's clinic to learn more about the challenges *viktim* faced to rebuild their lives. A group of the women in the therapy group agreed to meet with me in the neighborhood near the women's clinic to discuss the challenges of violence in Martissant. While en route to our meeting, someone in our large party of over 20 women spoke aloud. She said that I needed to tell Dr. Thomas, the Rehab Program director, that Bernadette César, a woman in her early forties who was not present at the time, had been threatening to have some of the Human Rights Fund's beneficiaries in Martissant expelled from the Rehab Program. Presumably, Bernadette's accusers were among those she reputedly was attempting to have expelled; however, I had never heard of Bernadette complaining to staff members at the Human Rights Fund about other beneficiaries in Martissant and was unsure whether she had actually threatened anyone with expulsion at all.

I knew Bernadette as a beneficiary of the Fund and an outpatient at the Mars/Kline Psychiatric Center. She was always pleasant toward me in our limited encounters. Admittedly, I perceived that she had the comportment that I had come to associate with the schizophrenics the Mars/Kline staff treated on a daily basis. A tiny woman with ill-fitting glasses, she had a gaze that did not track directly when she looked at you. I had the sense that other things in her field of vision distracted her. I had never felt any threat from her, but I knew that those who were considered *fou/fòl* (crazy) were feared, ridiculed, and usually marginalized within Haitian communities.

Bernadette's case was unusual because President Aristide's office referred her directly to the Human Rights Fund. An army officer shot her five times, including in the neck, but almost miraculously, she survived. The group of women alleged that in fact Bernadette was not a "true victim" as they were. They avowed that she was actually *plase* (in a common-law marriage) with the officer. The shooting was the result of her malevolent activity. They claimed that Bernadette was actually a *lougawou,* a vampire-like entity able to transform from a material being into a disembodied force. *Lougawou* shed their skin and leave their homes through the roof in noncorporeal form. On their night journeys, they seek the souls or blood of the weak to *souse* (suck) or *manje* (eat, consume), especially those of children (Métraux 1972:300–305). The group told me that the officer had shot Bernadette on recognizing that she was a *lougawou.* They reported that she did not die because *lougawou* cannot be killed when they are in their noncorporeal form.

Anthropologist Alfred Métraux claims that *lougawou* are usually women (Métraux 1972:300–305). In discussions with my clients at the clinic and others, however, I was given examples of both men and women who had become *lougawou.* The "male" counterparts to the "female" *lougawou* are men who participate in *sanpwèl, zobop, bizango,* or other mystical secret societies in Haiti (Davis 1988; Laguerre 1980). Such societies have been independent organizations of governance that operate outside the state. They employ fear and secrecy as a means to control political, economic, and spatial terrains in Haiti.

I was not quite sure how to interpret these "witchcraft allegations" made against Bernadette. Were they a means to resolve disputes over scarce resources among peers, as described in the anthropological literature, or was something more going on? Were their accusations attempts to make sense of Bernadette having survived five bullets, any one of which could have caused her death? To my knowledge these women did not know who had referred her to the Human Rights Fund. I had already observed from my work with *viktim* at the Fund the extent to which stated connections to President Aristide or other prominent Haitian political figures were status markers among *viktim.* If they were aware of Bernadette's political connections, this may have been a source of jealousy or conflict. Nonetheless, I never heard of any attempts made by disgruntled *viktim* to terrorize Bernadette to resolve the reputed threat they felt from her.

It was significant, however, that such accusations regarding Bernadette's reputed threats and the legitimacy of her *viktim* status occurred at a point when resources provided to *viktim* by the Fund were diminishing and being rationed, which I will expand on below. However, the patterns of accusation and complaints

about authentic victim status were becoming common as traumatized *viktim* struggled to negotiate with the humanitarian and development aid apparatus and each other. *Viktim* leveled accusations that other reputed victims were not "authentic" or had fabricated the stories of suffering that gained them access to humanitarian and development aid. Rumors, gossip, and allegations about the veracity of *viktim* status also circulated within the institutions that served them.

Staff members of aid institutions that competed for donor funds (or for *viktim* clients) also made accusations of falsehood, misrepresentation, or fraud against other aid agents and agencies. Among other examples discussed in the privately funded aid apparatus (James 2010), I observed such practices within the U.S.-funded aid apparatus in response to a request for proposals (RFP) for a "civil society" grant at USAID/Haiti for which ADF intended to bid. Resisting an assumption of exclusivity by ADF headquarters in the United States, ADF staff members in Haiti allowed themselves to be presented on both ADF and another competitor's proposal for a nearly identical project. When the ADF proposal lost to the competitor, rumors flowed among remaining ADF/Haiti staff members about the histories and motives of the competing agency and the hidden connections of its staff members and board of directors to institutions operating secretly within and outside Haiti. At stake were questions of hidden speculation, accumulation, and consumption of resources and what I have now come to understand as the operation of occult economies of aid.

As these contests over aid unfolded both within and outside the aid apparatus, victim advocacy organizations leveled charges against the Rehab Program specifically for these victims' perceived exclusion from international and national assistance to which other groups had greater access. Then, in 1999, a series of incidents occurred that demonstrated further the malevolent dimensions of bureaucraft—the pattern of rumors, gossip, and accusations of nefarious and illicit activity lodged against agents and agencies within the humanitarian and development aid apparatus. The events unfolded against a backdrop of waves of political and economic insecurity in Haiti, and increased tension in the victim advocacy assemblage, culminating in violent threats that precipitated the closing of the Rehab Program.

BUREAUCRAFT, ACCUSATIONS, AND "VOODOO DEATH"

In January 1999, President René Préval began ruling by decree. He dissolved parliament, long embattled by disputed election results from 1997, and formed a new government. The new prime minister appointed lawyer Camille Leblanc as the new Minister of Justice and Public Security. Leblanc had collaborated with

the Human Rights Fund staff in the past and was a strong advocate for *viktim*. With the human rights lawyer in this government position, *viktim* were anxious to have their individual and collective needs for justice, reparation, and rehabilitation met.

Prior to becoming minister of justice, Leblanc consulted with international and national human rights organizations about establishing the Bureau Poursuites et Suivi pour les Victimes (BPS; the Pursuit and Follow-Up Office for Victims) to implement the recommendations of Haiti's controversial truth commission. The ministry established the BPS on February 13, 1998, with US$4 million the Haitian state provided for collective reparations to *viktim*. One year later, the office came under attack. Conflict and competition over resources emerged as certain victims' advocacy groups and not others gained access to the office. The Fondasyon 30 Sektanm, whose name memorialized the September 30, 1991, coup d'état, accused Dany Fabien, the director of the BPS, of corruption. The Fondasyon alleged that Fabien mismanaged the reparations funds. The debacle ended in Leblanc's request for an audit of the office and its eventual dismantling.

In late April and early May 1999, the Human Rights Fund itself was targeted. A new victim's advocacy organization had formed, MOVI-30, the Mouvman Viktim 30 Sektanm (September 30th Victims' Movement). It was composed of beneficiaries of the Rehab Program. MOVI-30 pasted anti–Human Rights Fund leaflets on the outer gate of the ADF building, on Port-au-Prince's walls, and on the gates of other humanitarian and development NGOs in the capital. This public protest occurred at the same time that a press release denouncing the Fund appeared in one of the prodemocracy newspapers.

MOVI-30's press release, "'Nou pa manje, manje bliye': Deklarasyon Mouvman Viktim 30 Sektanm" ["We don't eat, food is forgotten": Declaration of the September 30th Victims' Movement], was nearly a manifesto and began by charging the U.S. government with "occult" activity. MOVI-30 accused the U.S. government of planning the 1991 coup d'état, as well as with stealing terror apparatus documents to hide its role, and the role of greedy *(patripòch)* members of the Haitian bourgeoisie, in implementing the coup against President Aristide. The statement then denounced Dr. Thomas and Dr. Ambroise, who will be discussed below, for having "decided to wipe out [*pete fyèl*] victims by changing their prescriptions and giving them whatever [the doctors] wished." The declaration requested that they be expelled from the Fund.

The U.S. government and the Human Rights Fund were not the only targets. MOVI-30 also blamed the Haitian state for protecting only the rich and exploiting

the poor by accepting imported economic development plans that "destroy the environment, and engender hunger, misery, unemployment and insecurity in the country." MOVI-30's declaration denounced the Préval government for pursuing a neoliberal program that sought to privatize the national industries: the cement factory, the airport, the ports, and other institutions (see Figure 1). MOVI-30 also accused Préval of casting the people aside and failing to involve them in government processes until decisions had already been made. All these opaque, bureaucratic political and economic processes were linked to the plight of *viktim*:

> It's the same as the *viktim* question. Instead of the heads of state arresting the assassins that repress us, they'd rather separate victims' organizations by means of the Pursuit and Follow-Up Office [BPS], and in the scattering of a few crumbs here and there that can't resolve anything for victims . . . which causes trouble between victims' organizations and demoralizes them, leaving them confused. We ask on behalf of all victims' organizations that are not involved in following behind these crumbs of money [*ti tchotcho*], which causes them to lose their dignity, to join together in order to find true justice and reparations.

> The statement then listed MOVI-30's demands, which included the following:

That Minister Camille Leblanc give victims a deadline by which the [Pursuit and Follow-Up Office] would present a public, transparent report on the victim assistance fund.

For the Minister to give a good explanation of [the Human Rights Fund's] activities in the country. The Minister must also make a statement on the way Dr. Thomas, Dr. Ambroise, and consultant Alphonse Montina have changed prescriptions.

For the minister to have arrested all *makout* and the greedy bourgeoisie who financed the September 30, 1991 coup.

That the American government remits the more than 160,000 pages of documents, audio and videocassettes without any names or images erased.

> The declaration concluded with the cry: "Down with Dr. Thomas and Dr. Ambroise! Long live good living conditions for *viktim!* Long live justice and reparations for *viktim!*"[9]

Like the media press release, the political leaflet that MOVI-30 pasted throughout the city had a highly professional appearance. It had the organization's letterhead next to a hand-drawn illustration of the scales of justice balanced by a man and

MOVI.30
MOUVMAN VIKTIM 30 SEKTANM
MOUVEMENT DES VICTIMES DU 30 SEPTEMBRE

APRE 8 LANE, VIKTIM YO TOUJOU ANBA SOUFRANS

Apre makout, atache ak boujwazi ti lolit la, fin touye plis pase 5000 moun nan peyi a! Jounen jodi a, doktè   ak doktè   , ki fè pati **Fon Dwa Moun**, deside pete fyèl viktim yo nan chanje medikaman doktè preskri yo pou bay sa yo vle.

Nan sans sa a Mouvman Viktim 30 Sektanm (MOVI-30) envite tout viktim yo leve kanpe nan yon mobilizasyon san pran souf.

1.- Pou mande jistis ak reparasyon
2.- Pou doktè   ak   rache manyòk yo bay Fon Dwa Moun blanch
3.- Pou mande Biwo Pousuit ak Suivi eksplikasyon sou pwogram Fon Dwa Moun ap egzekite nan peyi a.
4.- Pou fè arete tout makout, boujwa patripòch ki te finanse Koudeta a, san bliye manm Fraph ki te fè san pèp la koule.
5.- Pou fè gouvènman meriken remèt plis pase 160.000 paj dokiman li te vòlè, san okenn non pa efase.
6.- Kont grangou, mizè, chomaj, enjistis, vòl, koripsyon, ensekirite.
7.- Kont doktè   ak   k ap touye viktim yo.

MOVI 30 mande: kilè bouwo masak Pyat, Jan Rabèl, Riyèl Vayan, Koudeta 30 sektanm elt ap anba kòd lajistis?

Aba Makout ak ensekirite / Aba doktè   ak   !
Viv Lavi miyò pou pitit pèp la!
Viv jistis ak reparasyon pou viktim yo!

FIGURE 1.   MOVI-30 leaflet, with names removed to protect anonymity.

a woman. The title of the tract was "Apre 8 Lane, Viktim Yo Toujou Anba Soufrans" [After 8 Years, Victims Still Suffer], and it contained much the same information as the declaration. The demands differed slightly in that MOVI-30 asked for Drs. Thomas and Ambroise to be expelled from the Fund and accused them of trying to kill *viktim* by changing their prescriptions. The implication was that the doctors were intentionally poisoning *viktim,* in keeping with a long-standing historical perception in Haiti of those who have practiced malevolent magic.

Both MOVI-30 texts revealed the intermingling of rumor, gossip, and mis-understandings about bureaucratic practices that arose within the scarce victim assistance grant economy. These two documents embodied accusations of "bu-reaucraft" that implicated not only the Rehab Program and Human Rights Fund but also the Haitian state, the "greedy" Haitian bourgeoisie, and the U.S. govern-ment, all of which were purported to have engaged in covert activity. But the political leaflet also demonstrated the relationship between bureaucraft phenom-ena and classic "witchcraft" accusations. Dr. Ambroise had been an employee of the French organization Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World). Médecins du Monde had had to streamline its operation in Haiti when it lost victim assis-tance funds. The Human Rights Fund hired Dr. Ambroise to provide basic medical care to *viktim,* to make referrals to the network of Haitian care providers, and eventually to prescribe medications to curb costs when it was discovered that medical providers, pharmacists, and others had been overcharging the Fund for materials and services. The World Health Organization's PROMESS program (le Programme des médicaments essentiels en Haïti; the Program for Essential Medica-tions in Haiti) granted the Rehab Program generic essential drugs. When physicians in the medical network prescribed medications, Dr. Ambroise supplied a generic substitute, leading clients to feel both deprived of the brand-name medications they felt they deserved and intentionally harmed by the side effects of medications taken without adequate food. In addition to protesting the change in policy, the allegation that Drs. Thomas and Ambroise were "poisoning" Fund beneficiaries by changing their prescriptions to generic drugs insinuated that these professionals had hidden identities and engaged in occult, baneful actions—perhaps to enrich themselves from the surplus funds that the shift to generic medications reputedly produced.

Human Rights Fund staff members wondered what hidden actor was truly behind MOVI-30's action, given the highly professional leaflet, the press release, and the statement's reference to national political processes. In so doing, they did not acknowledge the capacity of their patient–clients to engage in such bureaucraft practices themselves; rather, they continued to view *viktim* through a narrow lens that eclipsed their political subjectivity. That these two forms of communication appeared in public space and in the print media provoked anxiety among the staff, but not a sense of panic. In early May, however, a young man who had been hired as a courier to take messages between ADF headquarters and the Rehab Program at Base 2, a second suite of offices to which the program had been moved, was threatened at gunpoint while in transit between the two institutions. After this

attack it was clear that things would escalate and security measures needed to be taken. The Human Rights Fund director chose to shut down Base 2 and instructed Drs. Thomas and Ambroise to remain at home. A few days later, the security guard who had remained at Base 2 reported that a mob of *viktim* bearing weapons and handcuffs had come looking for the doctors. They had been disappointed to find only the guard at the office.

In May 1999, the Rehab Program shut down. Given its uncertain future and USAID's new emphasis on judicial reform and community policing, the ADF president decided not to renew either Dr. Thomas's or Dr. Ambroise's contracts. Beneficiaries of the program were left without other apparent institutional means to address their health care needs. For weeks afterward, many *viktim* continued to approach staff members to learn when, if ever, services would recommence. They did not.

Although the services never resumed, in 2003, during the period of unrest that preceded President Aristide's second ouster, USAID funded a new victim assistance program within another institutional procurement structure. Dr. Thomas eventually became the director of this institution.

CONCLUSION

The complex cycles described in this article highlight the uncertainties, ambiguities, and perils embedded within economies of compassion, especially those operating in the scarce and finite context of grant economies, that contributed to the phenomena of bureaucraft in Haiti. The examples described demonstrate how bureaucratic secrecy intermingles with the fear and anxiety that Haiti's ongoing political and economic insecurity produces. Under such conditions, graft and corruption may flourish, provoking suspicion and accusations of illicit economic activities among Haitian and international aid actors and their beneficiaries. As insecurity escalated, so did attempts to identify perpetrators of harm—some of which led to retributive action in both the print and visual media, through rumor and gossip and through attempted violence. Similar to witch-finding movements or lynch mobs, bureaucraft processes are "forms of political action . . . to divert and control power, channel the distribution of resources, establish a public sphere in which moral order may be negotiated, and construct reality itself" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999a: 309).

However, these disastrous events were also the culmination of a constellation of practical failures and unintended consequences of aid. The Rehab Program might have been more successful had it provided food security alongside

its comprehensive services. In general, institutions operating in the aid apparatus could have done more to coordinate their resources to meet the needs of the clients they serve in a more efficient, compassionate, and transparent manner. Perhaps other steps could have been taken to assuage the growing frustrations *viktim* directed toward those who intended to "do good," despite many institutional constraints.

Some problems may have been inevitable because of the Human Rights Fund's liminal position between *viktim,* the aid apparatus, and the Haitian and U.S. governments. The Fund became a surrogate against which long-standing grievances and frustrations of powerlessness were leveled. It is possible to label negatively the circulation of rumors and gossip that escalated into threats and thwarted violence as cultural pathology or as the reenactment of psychosocial trauma. However, victims' competition for resources paralleled, and perhaps mirrored, similar conflicts over resources and political power within Haitian *and* international governmental and nongovernmental agencies that purportedly desired to rehabilitate Haiti and its citizens. These practices of graft, and the occult economies that humanitarian and development aid generated, replicated transnational historical practices of exploitation, extraction, and consumption in the global economy.

Analyzing the spectrum of activities and exchanges comprising humanitarian and development aid is critical to understanding why humanitarian and development aid has often failed in Haiti in the past. It is all the more crucial because Haiti faces the total restructuring of its economy, infrastructure, and social life of its citizens in the aftermath of the devastating January 12, 2010, earthquake. The crisis has prompted an expansion and intensification in the role of foreign and domestic governmental and nongovernmental institutions to manage the emergency and to implement Haiti's reconstruction. As such efforts unfurl, the fluid and chaotic conditions evoke comparisons to the circumstances prompting the U.S.-led military and humanitarian interventions to restore democracy in Haiti in 1994.

Like contemporary Haiti, many nations are struggling with what has come to be called the "postconflict transition," in addition to grappling with the challenges of economic, environmental, and other forms of insecurity. Terror apparatuses that implement predatory political and economic practices create the conditions for aid apparatuses to intervene in conflict and postconflict theaters. In the aftermath of natural and human-authored crises, humanitarian and development actors intercede across and within borders on behalf of absent sovereigns, whether states or international organizations. These mobile, sovereign agents and agencies confront the challenges of promoting and protecting human rights, democracy,

and other neomodern states of governance, while being embedded within institutions and governments that may have acted to undermine these "states" in the past. The ambiguity, secrecy, and opacity of their mandates and practices generate accusations characteristic of bureaucraft, alongside the covert acts that may underlie their work.

Both terror economies and compassion economies, while opposed in their intent, have been linked through economies of scarcity that engender political and economic competition and strife. The U.S. government has been but one overt and covert actor in this political economy of trauma. Canada, France, Taiwan, Japan, and other nations involved in the aid apparatus intervened in Haiti, as did the UN and many other institutions. These actors are engaged in other theaters of conflict and humanitarian crisis around the world and propose similar models of political and economic development to rehabilitate and develop governments and civilians as have failed in Haiti.

Institutions like ADF and the programs it implements globally emerge at the nexus of economies of terror and compassion, in the space between gift and commodity exchanges. However, they can never be divorced from the political-economic relationships between secure and insecure states and from the occult histories of repression and domination that the global capitalist economy has generated. Nor should they be immune from critique for their tendencies to inadvertently reproduce or generate inequalities among governments, nations, and the clients they serve in the process of providing scarce aid. Although these agents and agencies may inculcate new political subjectivities based on secular theodicies of human rights, democracy, women's rights, law, and psychiatry, the overarching insecurities within their terrains of operation may also generate accusations of witchcraft, sorcery, and practices of bureaucraft in the social life of aid.

ABSTRACT

In this article I discuss the unintended consequences of humanitarian and development assistance provided to "victims of human rights abuses" in Haiti in the years following the restoration of democracy in 1994. Such targeted aid was a component of international political and economic development aid intended to facilitate the nation's postconflict transition. I argue that in much the same manner that witchcraft discourses signify moral struggles over the distribution of resources in small-scale societies, the cultures and moral economies of humanitarian and development aid—well-intentioned activities that nonetheless include opaque bureaucratic practices and competition over knowledge, scarce resources, and institutional territory—can produce similar phenomena as has been described regarding contemporary witchcraft. I draw on the literature on witchcraft,

bureaucracy, and secrecy to analyze accusations of malfeasance, scapegoating, and violence directed toward both providers and recipients of humanitarian and development assistance. I characterize such processes occurring in relation to compassion economies by the term bureaucraft. [witchcraft, bureaucracy, bureaucraft, humanitarianism, democracy, insecurity, human rights, Haiti]

NOTES

1. Peter Geschiere (1997) argues that witchcraft in Cameroon encompasses perceptions of illicit efforts made by the powerful to accumulate resources and wealth, and secret attempts by the weak to "level" or eradicate such perceived disparities in power through occult means. Catherine S. Dolan observed the unintended consequences of agricultural development programs in Kenya in the 1980s and 1990s that favored men, exacerbating existing gender inequalities and reputedly contributing to women's use of witchcraft to level disparities of aid distribution within the household. She contends that "witchcraft" is a "signifier for the contradictions and tensions emanating from contemporary processes of missionization, urbanization, state domination and globalization" (2002:663).

2. UN Security Council Resolution 940 sanctioned this military intervention.

3. Initially, I treated women who were victims of politically motivated rape in my capacity as a practitioner of the Trager Approach, a form of physical therapy (see www.trager.com). Most women were first-generation migrants from rural areas who came to the capital in the 1970s and 1980s to work in assembly factories. Exploitative conditions compelled many of these women to seek employment as small-scale merchants. In times of scarcity they engaged in sex work to support their families. Financial insecurity corralled most of them within sprawling slums, where they and their families became targets of torture and terror because of their struggles for economic justice and democracy.

4. I studied case files representing more than 2,500 *viktim* to track patterns of violence from the coup years and cofacilitated therapy groups for victims of human rights violations. I participated in planning meetings of the Justice, Democracy and Governance (JDG) Program of USAID/Haiti and interviewed its staff members. During this period I conducted additional archival research at USAID/Haiti to learn more about the history of U.S. military, humanitarian, and development interventions in the nation.

5. Under such conditions, the status of bare life is represented by the figure of *homo sacer,* one who may be killed but not sacrificed (Agamben 1998:81–83), and whose killing is banal, precisely because he or she has been excluded from recognition as a political subject (Agamben 1998:114) of the sovereign state (Agamben 1998:130–131). Agamben claims, however: "One of the essential characteristics of modern biopolitics . . . is its constant need to redefine the threshold in life that distinguishes and separates what is inside from what is outside. . . . Once *zoë* [bare or sacred life] is politicized by declarations of rights, the distinctions and thresholds that make it possible to isolate a sacred life must be newly defined" (Agamben 1998: 131).

6. For similar arguments about the way humanitarian relief and development aid can engage in processes of selective recognition that can eclipse the specific structural roots of their recipients' victimization and that can depoliticize suffering in favor of a neutral or impartial stance, see Escobar 1995; Fassin 2005, 2007; Malkki 1995, 1996; Pandolfi 2003, 2008; Redfield 2005; Terry 2002; and Ticktin 2006.

7. In the mid-1990s, USAID's worldwide missions were reengineered toward a new corporate model called "management for results" or "result-oriented assistance."

8. All names used in this piece have been changed.
9. I have removed the names of the accused staff members from this document to protect their identities.

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Editors' Notes: *Cultural Anthropology* has published a number of articles on NGOs, including Erica Bornstein's "The Impulse of Philanthropy" (2009), Thomas Pearson's "On the Trail of Living Modified Organisms: Environmentalism within and against Neoliberal Order" (2009), Aradhana Sharma's "Crossbreeding Institutions, Breeding Struggle: Women's Empowerment, Neoliberal Governmentality, and State (Re)Formation in India" (2006), and Peter Redfield's "Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis" (2005).

Cultural Anthropology has also published articles on humanitarianism. See, for example, Didier Fassin's "The Humanitarian Politics of Testimony: Subjectification through Trauma in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" (2008), Nancy Rose Hunt's "An Acoustic Register, Tenacious Images, and Congolese Scenes of Rape and Repetition" (2008), and Ilana Feldman's "Difficult Distinctions: Refugee Law, Humanitarian Practice, and Political Identification in Gaza" (2007).