Triangulating a Transnational Condition: Black Women’s Labor and Health

**Questions/Challenges:**

1. Which authors/works allow us to think about the importance of Black women and persistent devaluation of this importance in a wide array of locales/spheres?
2. How can we respect local cultures while making broader connections and drawing parallels that are invited by words and modes of study/teaching such as “transnationalism” and “globalism”?

*Major Ideas:*

- Testimony of Haitian women’s experience and survival

-Neoliberalism and globalization’s impact on low-income women in Haiti (“feminization of poverty”) including fair wages, working and living conditions, access to healthcare, and global complicity in overall Haitian poverty, high crime rates, and violence, including the militarized presence of the UN.

**Summative Quotations:**

“But it’s women’s labor that the country is founded on.”

**Contextualizing Works:**

See *Poto Mitan* website’s “Educational Resources”: <http://www.potomitan.net/resources.html#ed_resources>

***Poto Mitan***

*Major Ideas:*

- Women’s experience and testimony of poverty and violence haunts their lives in the US—though Danticat lives in the US, in this essay she writes almost exclusively about women in Haiti.

- Impact of poverty and ongoing violence in Haiti on the body (physical health) but also on self-esteem (mental health) and survival

*Major Ideas:*

Devaluation of voices of Black and low-income white people

- Resulting devaluation of Hurston’s work as author and anthropologist on working-class people in the US and the Caribbean, folk culture, and use of Black vernacular

- Zora Neale Hurston’s consequential poverty and decline in physical health and her death in relative obscurity.

**Contextualizing Works:**

Richard Wright’s review of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: <http://people.virginia.edu/~sfr/enam358/wrightrev.html>

**Contextualizing Works:**

Edwidge Danticat’s Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work (first chapter):   
<http://www.beck-shop.de/fachbuch/leseprobe/9780691140186_FirstChapter_007.pdf>

**Summative Quotations:**

“What is the legacy of the daughters of Anacaona? What do we all have left to remember, the daughters of Haiti?”

Available here: <http://www2.webster.edu/~corbetre/haiti/literature/danticat-ugly.htm>

Edwidge Danticat’s

“We Are Ugly, but We Are Here”

**Summative Quotations:**

“I have been amazed by the Anglo-Saxon’s lack of curiosity about the internal lives and emotions of the Negroes, and for that matter, any non-Anglo-Saxon peoples within our borders, above the class of unskilled labor.”

Available here: <http://american-literature-h.granadahills.groupfusion.net/modules/locker/files/get_group_file.phtml?gid=1121243&fid=15732506>

Zora Neale Hurston’s

“What White Publishers Won’t Print”