

# HARVARD CRIME STUDY (2016-2019)- Mixed male-female focus group

Three Focus groups. Conducted in September 2019 on behalf of a team of Harvard and Emory University Political Scientists studying vigilante justice in Haiti. Specifically, one focus groups with seven male participants 27 to 46 years of age from Site Soley, Martissant, and Belaire; one focus group with six female participants 28 to 55 years of age from Martissant and Site Soley. One focus group with four male and three female participants aged 25 to 44 years of age from Site Soley, Martissant. Belaire. Delmas 2 and Te Nwa.

This is a nearly complete transcription with some narrative.

## PARTICIPANTS

- #1, 25 years-old, female, Student, Sitey Soley, 0 children, 12<sup>th</sup> grade
- #2, 38 years-old, male, Civil Servant, Sitey Soley 2 children, 12th grade
- #3, 37 years-old, female , Communication, Belaire, 2 children,, 11<sup>th</sup> grade
- #4, 25 years-old, female, Student, Martissant, 0 children,, 12th grade
- #5, 44 years-old, male, Laborer, La Saline, 1 children, 12th grade
- #6, 27 years-old, male, Journalist, Te Noir, 1 children, 11th grade
- #7, 26 years-old, male, Moto-taxi, Delmas 2, 1 children, 11th grade

Tim: Explains why we are recording the focus group, that no one will be identified, that's why we use numbers. Each person is assigned a number. The information is not for newspaper, but rather two professors who study conflict in developing countries with the objective of helping find solutions to problems... I emphasize that we– me, Gary, Jackly, Murielle, and Stephanie– we live here too. We have our own experiences living in the neighborhoods. It's not like the

violence and gangs and *baz* are are a secret us. But we want you guys to share your insights and help us think this through.

Jackly: Repeats, elaborates clarifies on what I just said and explains that a speaker must say his number first, before he speaks.

Stephanie: Asks whether there is a difference between *baz* and gang.

#2: "A gang can decide to go rob a bank, and they do it. Or they could decide to seize a truck load of food and the seize it. You can make a *baz* in your neighborhood to deter thieves...."

#7: "Sometimes a *baz* forms. And then you have a gang. Sometimes there are people in the State, like a Senator or Deputy that comes to the *baz*. They offer them money to give them the election That's what makes a *baz* turn into a gang."

#1: "A *bas* and a gang, we won't say they are the same thing, but it's a *baz* that 'akouche' gang (literally lays with, perhaps best translates as, 'lays it down' or 'brings it in existence'). She goes on to say sometimes people do not like word *baz*, they don't want you to call them a *baz* because it has a bad connotation. Then she says for the third time that a "baz akouche gang" (creates the gang. A gang does what's not good, even if sometimes they say they are doing things for the neighborhood (she uses the word, 'afe sosyal' to mean, meaning help the neighborhood. In the men's focus group they often said, things "societal" to mean the same). They both often say they do "social affairs". She says they "baz akouche gang" again.

Richard says interrogatively, "akouche" and she says "corps gang."

#6: "As the young lady, the youth like me says, there is some truth in it. You can create a *baz* to help the youth around your house. Like me, I know what we can do in my neighborhood [\[i\]](#) you know too... we create a *baz*. [5:00] You know that Haiti has a lot of problems. We meet, pull our money, make food together, eat together, share, make a *baz*...But a gang is something created to destroy people for a little bit of money, because the guy doesn't have any other means, Haiti doesn't offer him anything, he destroys people for a little bit of money because he doesn't have a mother, doesn't have a father (meaning is an orphan)... Me, I find a *baz* much different, because I made a *baz* and we are not in a gang. We always have our objective."

#3: "The difference between a *baz* and a gang, a *baz* is created because young men don't have anything to do except get up and play dominoes. It's just a distraction (an amusement).... It's

nothing to do with gang. There are young men with good education. It's just a place to play domino, smoke cigarettes. It's a country that doesn't offer them anything. What difference does that have to do with gang, a gang doesn't have a choice. He takes a gun in his hand. Sometimes they use them, make them get up and fight, one zone against another, one neighborhood against another." She names neighborhoods fighting against one another.... "You hear that Belaire is fighting with Solido. Belaire is fighting with Delmas 2. They use them, put a gun in their hand ... They (gang members) tell them to do, they do....It happens with *baz* too. *baz* have a bunch of youths who have good ideas. There are even youth in the university who are in a *baz*. A *baz* is sit down and play domino, play cards, smoke cigarette. They can pass the whole day like that. Sometimes they go and offer them to do something.... You can offer them money and they won't carry a gun for you...

Tim: "A person in a gang can't be in the university?"

#3: She says yes, "sometimes..."

#1: "That's why I told you that sometimes a *baz* akouche gang. And she explains, "sometimes someone has a *baz* and they politicize it. Politics in Haiti isn't simple.... To akouche *baz*, I say, ok, I give a *baz* some money, and I make an exchange. I say do this for me.... I'm going into an election, that candidate isn't going to challenge me... I give them some money. I say eliminate this candidate for me, and you do it...."

Tim: "When you say 'eliminate, what do you mean."

#1: "Kill him, you'll do it."

#6: "Me... the difference I make between *baz* and gang. The lady says that the difference between an *baz* and gang is that *baz* plays dominoes, has university level members... Me, I don't see it like that. I have a *baz* too. I could go to work..." And he goes on to talk about a *baz* in the colloquial sense as a place where people hang out. Gang takes money.... He's had a *baz* near his house since 2000. They just get together, play dominoes, talk politics... among friends...

#4: "Gang and *baz* are different. [10:00] *baz* is young people who grow up together, they go school, there are those that finish school and their parents don't have enough money to make them finish university. They sit together and play dominos, smoke, drink, they might play football too. [pause] They are there too for, like, if, the zone where they are in, they won't

accept anyone coming into it and do anything they want. Sometimes there are those who come in, young women they rape them. They sometimes go into people's houses and take their belongings. A *baz* would never accept that they come and do that. And too, they sometimes come into the neighborhood. They ask who represents the *baz*, they want to offer them money to do some things. But there are those inside (inside the *baz*) who say no, 'guys, if we do such a thing, that's not good for us.' ...

Murielle as, 'do what things'

#4: Like they will give them money to attack another area... or destroy a person

Stephanie asks if a *baz* does more good than bad for an area or more mal?

#1: 'They do everything.... And then she goes on to say how she doesn't like people to use the term *baz*. She has a group of friends who all go to the same place they meet, they do their nails, chat... She doesn't want anyone referring to the place as a *baz* because of the negative connotations. "I don't like people calling me *baz*." ...

Tim: It's a bad image?

#1: "Bad image, 'Move imaj.' You present a bad image. Since I was little. Me and my little brother, we were raised in Site Soley, since we were young, my mother hears we're in the middle of [inaudible, think "other people's house], she beats you."

Stephanie: repeats the question about *baz* vs gang.

#1: "No, *baz* does better things."

Tim: "Baz is mostly for men?"

#1: "Baz is mostly for men... Men are more in the *baz*..."

Tim: "Are there women-only *baz* "

#1: "Yes, there are *baz* that are only women."

#3: Chimes in saying, 'yes there are *baz* that have both women and men in them .' But the key is here is that she said 'both men and women.' Not here or later, or in any of the other focus

groups is there any indication that there are female *baz* that operate in the political, social or criminal sense that male *baz* operate.

Stephanie calls on #7

#7: "There's something we haven't talked about. Because each person does not make a *baz* with the same objective. People can create a *baz* among friends. They grew up in the area together... They make the *baz* to sit around together, they spend the day together, they make food together, eat together, when it's night, everyone goes home. There are other people who create a *baz* to wait for a movement, that always needs to have contact with Senator and Deputy to offer them money, guns.

Tim: "So you're saying there are *baz* that are natural."

Two male participants respond. "yes."

Tim: "After that, there are *baz* that are more formal?" (male participant says, "yes") that are created for political reasons, to capture money?"

Male respondent: "What you say there, that's what it is."

#3: "There are *baz* that create *baz* to control the area. They form a group, give themselves a name, and everything that happens in the area has to go by them. If a Deputy needs to come into the area, he's got to see them. Boss So-n-So (referred to a politician) comes into the area and you hear, 'Whoa, you have to go look for Boss So-n-So, he's the head of the *baz*, he's the one who can let you into the neighborhood.' Now it's him you have to go see to enter.... That person also feels that he carries the neighborhood on his back. I could have a problem with my neighbor, the neighbor goes to complain, we almost don't go to the court anymore, they don't go to the police, they say, 'ah, I'm going to take you to the *va*, what you there..." Stephanie cuts in and asks, "*va*?", because it's a word we've never heard before. [14:54] And #3 repeats, "*va*," and someone else enunciates, "VOW". And then #3 continues without taking a breath, "it's in the *va* they're going, I'm going to call you into the *va*. Nowadays the zones have so come to have owners that sometimes people create a *baz* just so that he can choose himself to have all the means to block the area off and if you don't go see him you can't unblock it. He's the one who has to unblock it. If you don't see him, you're never going to unblock it (unblock is a very literal and carries the implied weight of protests and barricades). There are *baz* that really are there for social affairs (she uses the word, *afe sosyal*, which refers to doing things for the

neighborhood, like cleaning up). They choose to make the *baz* to sit, drink rum, play dominos. They're not interested in political things. But there are *baz* that are created just to serve someone's interest, so that he can get everything that comes (literally she says, "so he can get everything that *tonbe*, "falls", and this is common word used when referred to aid or any money or patronage or even a truck of food aid or load of cocaine that might get hijacked in a neighborhood. It's semantically suggestive of 'unearned resources' something that 'falls', i.e. comes in from outside of the area. Similarly, I doubt they would ever say 'what falls' –*sak tombe*—with regard to a protection rackets or drug sales)." And then she concludes, "There are two types of *baz*."

Jackly asks if anyone would like to add something. I echo the question addressing someone specific.

Silence

Tim: "Are there gangs that engage in politics too?"

Several people talking over one another: #3: "That's them, they use them. #6 says "that's the political leaders themselves." ...

#6: "That's what makes them sometimes call them 'gang electoral.' (laughter). That means you, I could come from Site Soley, You say, 'shit, let me look and see who can give me the election there. Site Soley has teeth you know.' I go to the *Site*, I give you a sum of money, I know that you can get votes for me for me, 'do that for me'. And truly, in reality, what I need I already paid for and I believe in what you're going to do for me. My money is out there, they work for me, they give me the election. That's what they call "gang electoral". *baz* itself, it doesn't have that. You could go to a *baz*, Like me, I have a *baz*, you appear at my house in Site Soley, you say, I'll give you so much money to go do something. Myself, who is not in any movement that's not straight, I'll take that money, but I'm not going to pay attention to you because I already know I'm not going to invest. That's what makes me say I don't need a gun. As soon as you have a gun, you're violent. That's why I'm obliged to say, when you have it in your mind to create a *baz*, the man knows you're popular, he says, 'because that guy is popular, he can make me win the zones' but because they're *sosyal* because they can do that, they come look for you, good people (meaning honest politicians), 'let me go see them because they do social activities, they can help me find win those people, the citizens.'"

Jackly asks, and if they attack you? [The suggestion seems to me that Jackly is asked about if another, violent *baz* attacks them to get more control over the area and the money that they're taking]. If they attack you, how are you going to defend yourself? They sometimes attack *baz* don't they? [17:24]

#6: "Oh. They sometimes attack baz."

Jackly: "How do you defend yourself?"

#6: "If you're not in a group, if you're in a *baz* and you're not in anything bad, I don't believe you're obligated to stand up and defend yourself, because your not in that. Sometimes too, if you see that they're out to kill you, you can't allow them to kill you. As they say, 'pray and keep a look out' (*prie e veye*)".

Murielle: "If they do that, what do you do?"

#6: "You look for a defense. If you can leave the block, you leave it."

Jackly: "#1 wanted to say something... #5..."

#5: "I'm not 100 percent in agreement, but there is part I don't particularly agree with. When you talk about the word *baz*, it sounds a little [#1 cuts in, "sounds bad"]... Like last night, I was in the street, and I went to my work place, and I have a colleague at work. I work in La Saline, first of all (one of the hottest areas of downtown, across from the National Port and where they had a notable massacre, allegedly by a gang/*baz* attack last year). He was at his work, and he didn't have a vehicle with him, and me I was working night, and he said, well, me, I don't have a vehicle, you're not going home, take a vehicle, and give me a ride.... I said, 'damn, afternoon in La Saline.' La Saline has only one way in and one way out. He, ah man, it's early and I have a [inaudible] that's working in the office. [18:50] I said, 'ah, I'm not going by myself, no.' He said to me... and so it was four of us who were going out in the vehicle." So he dropped the guy off and was returning to the office. He passed Champ Mas... He gets to La Lu. "It was dark now. The streets are no good (because of the protests). There's someone in the street with a handkerchief covering his mouth stopping traffic. He decides it doesn't look good... He's going to accelerate, bump the guy, and keep going. There's some guy next to him with a gun. "He shoots the gun. He didn't shoot at me. Just to scare me." He has to stop. They made them get out of the car. The one guy tells the other, "Baz, do your work" (*Baz fe travay ou*), and the the two search his vehicle. They have guns in their hands and they're searching his vehicle. This is

why he doesn't like the word *baz*. In this sense it has criminal connotation. When they were done, they took 1,500 goud he had and they left. When they left, the one guy said to the other, "baz, let's go." Then he clarifies that as he said before, *baz* does not necessarily have to have a negative connotation. [#1 cut in and said, it depends on the context] This guy has his *baz*, they're honest, they work.... But, in context of crime, *baz* is a reference to gang.

Tim: You would never stand in front of gang members and refer to them as a gang, no? It's basically a bad word?

A male voice says, "gang is a thief" (*gang se vole*).

Tim: "To call members of a gang this way would be disrespectful?"

Richard: "But there are people who will tell you that they are a member of a gang. "

#1: "I've seen a person speaking, he said, 'I'm not a thief, I'm not a thief, I'm just [a member of a] gang" [there's using *gang* now as an adnoun, gangster]."

Jackly, he's gang [both].

#1: "Yup, he says that a thief (*vole*) is someone who take little things from people, telephone. That's not me, I'm a gang(ster). That's to show that they're more prestigious than a *vole*."

Richard: a gang does big things. [23:14]

Jackly: "I encountered a guy in the prison [where we were doing a survey there]. He asked me for some money. I thought I could offer him 100 *goud*, I wasn't doing so good either. He said, 'no man, I'm a gangster, I can't take 100 *goud*. If you're going to give me something, plan with me when you're going to bring it.'" [a lot of laughter and talking].

Jackly: "#1 want's to say something."

#1: "I know someone who a gangster told a cousin of mine who was running for mayor, 'if you don't bring money don't come here like that again. My cousin said, 'I'm not bringing money. 10,000 dollars American I've got here.' He said, 'that's not money. Bring 34,000 and I'll take care of it'.... "He said 10,000 is something for a *vole* [Richard says, "small appetite"] small appetite. 34,000 dollars to give a gang.



#5: He starts talking about La Saline again. They had someone who was working there. He was near the old airport. "As my habit, whenever you had a work to do in an area, you'll have people saying, 'baz, check with me...'" There was a guy who wiped down their car. He said, 'give me something, give me something.' I believe the guy who was driving gave him 100 *goud*. Another came and he's checking the car too. And the same guy who we gave 100 *goud* said 'no, don't check that car, that's gang [inaudible]...' Now he's happy, it's gangsters who inside. That surprised me, because for me the word gang is truly bad.... We stopped the car... We told we are happy you saying that... we don't like you calling us gang." The guy responded, "You're apparently not happy about the word gang..." He said, you don't have a problem... We didn't mean it in a bad sense...' #5 continued to tell him, "I don't like it...." The point #5 is driving is that it so bothered him. But it's clear even from #5's account the guy in the street was using the word to say they're ok, they're in. #5 concludes, "That guy did not even know what the word meant."

#6: "Sometimes, the guy who called you gang, he wasn't calling you a gangster. He was looking for a way to describe you... He was giving you a pass because what you did for him was a nice gesture. You had given him 100 *goud*. It feels like he's helping you [literally says, giving you security] because if you didn't give 100 *goud* today, tomorrow you won't give 40.... He's giving you a *lese pase*, he's saying, 'let the citizen pass.'

Gary asks does a gang do good things in the community... Does a gang do more good than bad?

Richard: How do you see gangs in the community, do they do more good or more bad?

#5: "For me, gang does more bad."

#1: [27:20] "Me, there is no good in a gang. All they do is bad. they hide. One thing they take to hide, one sheet they take to hide behind. A gang could give me \$10,000 of food, they can give me \$100,000 of food, it's not a good, because where you took the food, it doesn't belong to them...." "If you seize a truck load of food, and you give it away... so that the people will protect you when the police are after you," if you do that, "you're doing even more bad. Where have they left the owner of the rice. Where have they left his family?"

#2: "Gangs do good things because when they take a truck load of food, everyone participates. But sometimes they do bad things too."

#4: "Sometimes they seize a truckload of food and they redistribute it. But it's so that when the police come, the people, they can hide [#1 says very loud, "They hide behind *sosyal* (community action)" that's why they do that"]. That's why they do that."

#1: "It's not in our interest that they give it. We go low, we understand it low.... When they give it, it's a sheet they make. Us who are hunger, us who are hungry [a male participant says, "it's good for us"] They say their doing *sosyal*, they show that they are doing *sosyal*.but *sosyalis* do not spill blood [*pa verse san*]. [29:02]

#6: "Sometimes, as you say, there's some truth in it, because a gang itself, sometimes it does good things, sometimes it does bad things, because you have a gang in your neighborhood, and you have a government that does not support the people, and the gang where it's located it does good in its area, it takes a truckload of rice, but it's not good for the person who lost the rice. But if we had a State these days, that wouldn't happen that a gang decides to take a truckload of rice to give it to the people to keep. Now it's in the advantage of the people when they store it because, it's in its [the gang's] advantage because if its there [the gang is in place] it can make 2 million dollars. It can do everything, because a gang aims high, it doesn't aim for something little that in the future it's going to die for."

Stephanie asks, which does more good for the neighborhood, a gang or baz?

Three different male participants say, "baz"

Several different participants want to speak.

#7: "Sometimes, a gang can never be more important in an area than a baz. Because a baz, immediately when you have a *baz* near your house, any period of December [holiday season], we check with people in the area and everyone gives what they can, we clean up, we buy brooms, we buy paint, buy lights, we do activities in the area. But in contrast, a gang won't do that for you, a gang doesn't think in terms of the good of the area. The gang just thinks about money for its own pocket, itself. Sometimes they give [inaudible] gang, in period of December, equipment [must be gifts from the state for distribution in the neighborhoods] to distribute. They take it and distribute it among themselves and they sell it, they look for a person and they sell it and that's it. Sometimes an area..."

#1 starts talking over #7, “you hear what he’s saying, you hear what he’s saying. You say that a gang does good things. They split it up in the *baz la*, that’s what I was saying, eh. I don’t really see the difference between gang and baz.”

30 minutes

Jackly: The gang is inside the baz

#1: Yep!

#6: “There are gangs that reflect, that means that there are gangs that have a human heart. Sometimes it’s not that the gang is really good, but the way they’ve blinded the eyes of the people, you who are in the gang, people come to see that it’s a sweetheart for them, a Good God for them, because the *baz* that’s made in the neighborhood ...come December they make the neighborhood beautiful.

Stephanie calls on #3, but #1 says, “You said that a gang has a good heart. When you do bad, there is no good [she uses the word *malis* for good, as if she misuses or misunderstands the work]. There’s no good heart in people who are doing bad things.”

#3: “A gang can’t ever really be good. Where it’s good for us, imagine when they’re near your house they can say, ‘don’t do any harm to the people around here.’ There I can think it’s good while it’s not good. If something happens you can go say, ‘I’m going to tell *intel* (so-n-so) on you. The store doesn’t get destroyed [robbed] but a machann [trader] can’t go sell downtown in the street. That’s where it’s not good.

#2: “Where I see a gang is good too is that if you buy something and it costs \$100 and they will bring it and sell it for \$40. [laughter]. “

#3: “That’s what I’m saying! They can never really be good. For me it’s good. For you it’s not good!”

#2: “They seize a truckload of rice, a sack could be selling for \$100 and they sell it for \$50.”

#1: “Do you eat it with a clean conscience?”

#2: "Oh, how can I not eat it with a clean conscience. We can't get it [in the sense that he wishes they could get more]." [32:48]

Jackly reminds everyone that anything they say is good, there is no wrong or right thing to say in the focus group.

[Laughter and shuffling...]

#5: "Like me, if I buy a truckload of rice... When a gang takes it and resells it, let's say at \$10.... Me I put my money up. You take it and make a gift. You took it from me, you didn't pay one goud for it, you take it and you give it to the public. Me I worked and invested my money...."

Richard: "Excuse me, ah, if they came to offer you some rice for free, wouldn't you take it?"

#5: "Never... not even for a good price. I don't need that."

Richard: "One person says, it's good for me, I'm in the neighborhood, but if you go over to the other side, it's not good..."

#3: "That's what I'm saying, it's never really good."

#1: "Let me give you an example of not good. My other mother used to sell downtown. I have a fellow student, I got him/her voting card.... We each split up... Every time my mother was downtown... one time someone pulled a gun and put it to my mother's head. Someone tell me to go tell *intel* so they don't take your mother's money anymore. It's true. I could do that. When I arrived in front of the guy, I didn't say anything... He offered me a beer. I never said anything. My friend saying, 'tell him, show him your mother.' And if that didn't change anything? Would the person shoot my mother? Wouldn't I be losing both the sack and the crab. Better my mother gives 1,000 goud, 2,000 goud, 3,000 goud, 4,000 goud. That's not going to bother her. That's not going to keep my mother down... "

Stephanie: "Do you (speaking to the room) agree that gangs are fighting for justice in Haiti?"

Several people say no, matter-a-factly, not least of #1

Several people say, "For their relations (in the sense of image)..."

Jackly and Stephanie call on several people who want to respond. #1 prevails again.

#1: "Gangs don't fight for people. They fight for themselves, for their own interests."

Stephanie asks how do they fight for themselves, in what way?

#1: "Just to satisfy themselves. Either for someone can get one of their people in a Government position for them, or so someone can get some sanitation for them [for their house or neighborhood], or so someone can look for contacts for them while they're in prison."

Stephanie: "#2, what would you say, do gangs fight for justice in Haiti?"

#2: "No." [says it flatly, like he's supposed to say that now]

Jackly: "Excuse me, let me make a little clarification. #2 said something, said that if a gang takes a truckload of rice and gives it away they did a good thing. I support him in a sense because there are people who can't buy a sack of rice at \$100, but, as you say, at \$40, that's a good place. Then the lady posed another question, 'Does a gang give justice?' If someone gives you a sack of rice at \$40, rather than \$100, you don't have \$100, *po djab* ('poor thing'), but now they make it so you only pay \$40, are they seeking justice for the poor? In your opinion, is the gang seeking justice for those who cannot manage?"

#6: "The guy doesn't come looking to give justice to the poor... Sometimes there are two people competing to sell rice. Your's is selling. Mine isn't selling. I might tell the gang, seize this truck for me.... So it comes out of the company. If you're losing, mine is advancing..."

#3: "It's not the company that loses, no. [#6 says, "Yes" meaning, yes it is the company]. It's the person who buys it that loses. The company doesn't have anything to do with it when they take it."

#6 and #1 are talking over one another

Jackly: #7

#7: "Don't forget, no matter who they take it from, the company is losing.... If I buy it from you, you have to bring it to me." He goes on to explain that the company has to deliver the rice (not clear if that's the case or not. I don't know, but seems he names two companies. Stephanie interjects, "yes"). When they take it, they'll call the distributor before. They'll ask for one

[inaudible]. If they don't bring it, if they don't bring the money, they'll unload it. But if they send the money, they won't take a grain off of it [the truck].

A male participant says, 'that's the way it happens?'

#1 "Uh huh," and #7: "Yes"

#7: "Even *Se Jounen*"

Stephanie asks what it is.

#7: "That's a company that makes cola...other products."

Stephanie: "Explain."

#7: "This man, they took a container that was for him. They made the drivers sit down with them, bought them big meals of food, bought them beers, made them sit down, called *Se Jounen* said give so much money and they'll give the drivers the trucks back...."

Stephanie asks what they do with the drivers.

#7: "If they pay, the gang will let the drivers go, the company will dismiss the drivers..." [39:27]

Male participant cuts in saying something like they should have killed the drivers [the company owners] they should have managed to avoid the robbery... Gary ask if they have guns. Several participants say, 'No.'

#5: "Me, I would like to know... The guy who was saying earlier about selling the rice... If I live in the area as the person who takes the truckload of rice. He knows that I don't support what he's doing, will he still sell me the rice at \$40 [#1 is saying, "no, it's not possible" and the obvious critique of this question is that, if you don't agree then you shouldn't/wouldn't be buying it]. "

#2: "You accept what they're doing or they'll kill you."

[40:18]

#1: "No. There are things that people will do in the area and he knows that what he's doing isn't acceptable to you. Like the when someone is giving kits [charity/care packages, can be food or

toiletries], [inaudible]. It's a type of disrespect for you to call me and give me a card to go get a kit. As badly as I want a kit.

#6: "That depends on the zone where you live."

#1: "For me, the zone where I am, it's most dangerous. I live in Soley 19. For me, it's more dangerous.

[some talking and asking for clarifications]. For me it's the most dangerous place. Because it's a place where they have bad ideas about us. They say, we say, we really say, yes, we're the ones who graduate the most intellectuals in the Site.... The mayor is from our neighborhood, we give, we're always competing for that. That give them a bad image of us."

Jackly: Who has a bad image of you, other blocks in Site Soley?

#1: "All the blocks that have the people, the people who have the things in their hands."

Jackly: "ah, ok, ok."

Stephanie: "People who have what in their hands? What people? You have to talk clear so we understand what you're talking about."

#1: "The thugs (*bandi*), a lot of thugs have a bad idea of 19 because, because, women in 19 say that [their men] don't take them out, [41:30] men of 19 say they that their tennis shoes are made to go to a the foot of Mountain Imakile, they don't go farther than that, nice cloths don't go farther than the alley. That makes them have problems with people in my neighborhood for what they say. But there are some things, the fact that people already know who you are, they can't dare to include you, like when they come to give kits, they can't dare to include you, someone who has stolen rice that doesn't belong to them to share, you can't dare to come and knock on my door to give me some of it."

#7: "I have a question for #1. Do you personally have problems because of other zones. Asks if she can move around the Sitey. "For example, if you leave 19 and you head for Boston, can you go without any worry?" [42:20]

#1: "If I do it, it's by chance, because I know that I'm a child of the whole Sitey. There's nowhere in the Sitey I don't go.

Stephanie: Ok, now, do you think it's important for the heads of the gangs to play political roles.

#5: He doesn't think so, 'They'll always have their political plan. They will always want you to pass by them. Me, I don't think it's necessary for all the guy leaders to [inaudible].'

Stephanie: "Do you think they play an important political role for the country?"

#5: No. no."

Stephanie: "#7"

#7: [43:26] "To follow the gentleman, a gang that's in an area, its candidate, he just makes vote for them involuntarily."

#1: "Whether you want to vote for him or not... That happens in my neighborhood."

Stephanie: #1.

#1: You asked, is a gang/gangster a politic actor?

Stephanie: Is it important for it to play a political role?

#1: [43:50] Each gang plays a politician.

Some clarifications from Stephanie. Jackly says, "According to you, is it normal, would it be better, if each gang leader had a political position, like he's a Senator, or a candidate, or an AZEK, or KAZEK...?"

1#: Where I live, the gangs, they are deputies, they're everything.

Gary: What did you say?

1#: They're deputies, they're everything.

Stephanie: How can you explain that?



1#: [44:24] Because they manipulate the deputy, that's what happens. They tell the deputy, this is red, it's normal for it to be red. the deputy has to figure out how to make it red, before the cock crows. 'This is black,' he's gotta figure out how to make it black. He doesn't know how he's going to do it, but he better make it happen. [Stephanie laughs....].

#2: That's what makes them play a role as actor too, it's important for the deputies, like if a gangs tells them do this do that. The deputy has to follow their orders. If he doesn't follow their orders." #1: interjects, "He can't enter the area.

#2: At all.

#1: And they're the ones who make you deputy, eh.

Gary: Does that mean they're under the orders of the gang.

#1: Yes.

Stephanie: That's exactly what they're saying.

#1: "They're the ones who make you deputy. Elections in my neighborhood, that's the way it is. 'Deputy *intel* (so-n-so) if you try to block him, you'll be drinking poison, eh...[meaning, not that you'll literally be drinking poison, but that you don't have a choice]. You're picking Deputy *intel*.'

46 minutes

Three or four participants talking at once, all saying things like, 'that's the way it is in our neighborhood.... That's the way it is...." One guy says, "in my neighborhood, they're the ones who choose the deputy. This gang chooses that deputy..."

#6: He says like this, around my neighborhood, I like this man I'm going to send him [as candidate]. And that group, the one that has the biggest gang in the Sitey, he's the one who's going to win.... Because the gang/gangster himself/itself [the way he begins to use "gang" it's no longer clear to me if he's using it as a reference to a single gangster, as in the gang leader, or the gang as a group. Often the participants actually say, "group gang" to refer to the organization. They will sometimes drop the "group" when still indicating it, i.e. more than one person. But they also talk about "gang" as a single person, a gangster. And in this conversation,

it's unlikely the speaker is referring to a single vehicle, not plural, and he refers to "gang," suggesting that the he may be referring to a 'gangster' or perhaps both gangster and the gang], if he/it needs an official vehicle to cruise in, it's the deputy who's going to give it to him/them, it's the senator who's going to give it to him/them, that's what makes him/them give the Senator [##], and in return he/they gotta get their cut because he/they'll need an official vehicle to drive around in just like the official because.. [others start to talk and he stops speak, one male saying, "he's gotta live to."]

Stephanie: # 2

#2: Like Sitey Soley is divided into [inaudible reference to a neighborhood]... Boston, Waf [others help him identify the neighborhoods]... If Waf chooses a Deputy and the others don't agree, [inaudible reference to "war" and others having to be in total agreement].

#1: That's what causes war, that's what is going to cause the war we're going to have now.

Stephanie: What? What?

#1: If Boston...

#1: That's what's going to cause a big war, the people at the Authority National [the Port] made peace there, but that's what is going to restart a big war inside the Sitey again, because Waf says 'back to back' the former Deputy is going to come back, [#6 is affirming, "yes"] An Wo says 'we've stopped beating the drums at our house one time and now it's our turn to beat the drum', Sou Kote says, [she laughs], 'they've loaned their cooking pot too often to others so they can make food, now it's time for the pot to cook food in their own house', each person has a slogan.

#6: [47:20] To continue what the lady is saying, it's the biggest three gangs that they decide. [4735] They have an understanding between the three of them. That means this one sends [a candidate] first, then this one send [a candidate], then this one. Now the one that was there before, he asks for two turns in a row. The zombie tastes salt, and he wants some more.

#2: "It's Mister Deputy who has to enter, while all this is going on and tell all the gang groups to cooperate with one another, tell them 'here's what you do, here's what you do.' The deputy would give them each some money, equally."

#1: [47:59] It's not something easy. The zombie tastes salt, and he wants some more. Let me give you an example of myself. Let me give you an example, my cousin was a candidate for mayor, I can't vote for him."

Stephanie: Why not?

#1: Because if I go into the voting office, I'm not going to vote for the deputy. I can't vote for the deputy!

Murielle: Who would they know [if you vote for him or not]

#1: Eh! Eh!

[three male participant voices are saying, "they're there", "They stand right there"...

#1: We don't have anything like that. It's only that I've *heard* they have curtains in other zone, not in the Sitey. [48:22] You will let them see your vote [she's slapping on the table to make her point]

Stephanie: What"

A male participant is trying to say something.

#1: You'll give them your vote [slapping on the table again]

Jackly: They don't have any curtains. You can't go around [behind anything]

#1: [48:28] "Around my neighborhood the voting booths have no curtains, I don't know, because all the people in the Sitey, there are people there who come from Te Nwa, who are not part of the Sitey [she uses French word and she's referring to people in Te Nwa having to vote in the City]. Me, I live in the core of the Sitey, that means that all the bad things of the Sitey, I've experienced them. There they don't have a curtain. I can't go and vote for my cousin. I go out, when I go outside [after I vote], people will say, Mayor's Women, *Intel* (So-n-So) you're going to vote for. To have to guarantee your security. My family doesn't even want me to vote for him. He doesn't want me to vote for him."

Murielle: The people in the baz.

Stephanie: That's means your cousin...

#1: "Yes! 'I don't want you to vote for me, [she uses some French "Je'm pa vle" and the reference is to her cousin telling her that he doesn't want her to vote] let the others vote for me.

48 Minutes

Jackly: You're obliged to...

#1: "Don't dare to vote for him."

Richard: They call that abstaining.

#1: "If I vote for him, my life is going to be in danger. 'Better that you lose, your single vote can't make me mayor...'"

#5: I want to pose a question to #1. The way you're talking there, in the Sitey, the State doesn't exist at all.

#1: That's what they don't understand. We have an image in the media that we do *sosyal* [do socially beneficial activities]. We've made how many libraries, we've done this and that, we're doing *sosyal*. That's not the reality of the people living there. [49:50] We don't ask people inside the Sitey, 'How is life?' Or, 'Are you *alez* [at ease, safe, comfortable]?' Psychologically I'm not at ease? I would prefer they have a war down there than the life I live. Psychologically I've afraid! I'm afraid to speak to my friends. I'm afraid of everyone. I'm an arrogant person, but I'm a mute. If you tell me, 'did you hear that *intel* said such-n-such.' Even if [what the person said] isn't good for me, I say, 'that's good, yes.' ... all the time [that the person is saying that] my heart is eating me. live a life, psychologically you're in prison because I can't speak with them. I could be friends with someone, I can't confide in them.

A male participant asks, "In what zone?"

#1: I can't tell you the name. The last time I said this should stop, there was a person who said that, the boss said, 'easy Madam... [in audible 50:55]'. You're obliged to lose the moment. Your own friend says here's what I say, now you have to lose, if your friend says, 'that's what I want,' you say, 'yes, that's what I want.' [lot of talking]. 'It's red, yes that's red.'"

Richard: Someone told me once that you just say, “hmm,” “mmm” .... You don’t say no or yes, if someone says something, you just grunt.

Stephanie: #1 do you ever hear gangs talking on the radio, promoting people they prefer [candidates]. You’ve already explained that they have people they are promoting, but do you hear them talking on the radio.

#1: Oh, that’s where they sleep. In the press, that’s where they sleep. Because if they have something they need to send out, they have something they need, eh, eh, they go on the national channel. [51:37] The last time you heard we had a war, that’s where the men in Deliko slept, that’s where the men on top slept, the men around my house, at the radio station, because they have to explain all day long. The man around my neighborhood doesn’t like to talk, he’s someone who likes to keep silent, but he has people who speak for him.

Stephanie: I’m talking about the gang group.

A male participant says, “That’s what she’s talking about.”

#1: In my neighborhood we don’t have a gang [meaning they don’t like to call themselves a gang] [52:20]. In my neighborhood there is a group call *di-ri-jan* [literally “directors”, those in charge].

A male participant clarifies, “gwoup gang” [gang]

#1: [52:09] Gang is a word you can’t say when you get there. They change their names,

Lots of talking....

#1: When I was growing up down there, in 1994, I always heard them say *chime* [Chimere, common word used after 1<sup>st</sup> coup for gangsters in the popular neighborhoods who supported Aristide regime]. Two thousand and [inaudible] they changed their name, they said they are *dirijan* [the directors], they really they are directors, they really are directing us, everything they say [inaudible] [#6 says, “they’re doing *sosyal* (social activities)]. They’re doing *sosyal*. [#6 is saying, “you hear them saying, commander, commander...].

#6: While I’m telling you this, it’s difficult for the way things are [someone hits the mic] .... Sitey Soley, it has political baz... When they need something, when they need to deblock some

money, it's Sitey Soley they put up front, it's La Saline... all those [places], that means that it's those blocks that are a resource for everywhere, the State, that's sucking on it, and among us, that's why I'll never be at ease, that's why I say gang cannot be good.

Stephanie: How do you understand the situation of women who participant in gangs as antenna...

#4: When women participate in those types of things, perhaps the person [gangster] has been with her. Some also, they give them pressure, her family is in the area, she's afraid they come to stay in the area and she's afraid they'll rape her [53:59], and she accepts to do it. There are also those who agree with what they are doing, they are the wives of the thugs [bandi].

Stephanie: Does your neighborhood have women in the *baz* or the gang.

#4: In my neighborhood, I don't know. Because in my neighborhood it's the *baz* I know. I know gangs, but where I am, it's *baz*. But farther down [the road], it's gang('s?) . [One interesting suggestion here is that perhaps there is tendency to label the local *baz*, as a *baz*, but the *baz* in other neighborhoods, 'gang'.]

Stephanie: That means that you know women in the gangs that are farther down [from where you live]. She calls on #1.

#1: Where I am, there are not women in gangs, not in the proper sense. But there are women who in the gang they [inaudible 54:40]. Imagine, he words... she says Boss *intel* ... you make him kill the person. What are you? You're a gangster (*se gang ou ye*),

Jackly: OK. #7.

#7: Well, let me tell you, women in a gang, it's a thing that it most unpredictable [*frajil*], because the last day we were under the lockdown days [*jou lok yo* = days of riots], I have a friend who, we were on a moto together, he was going to drop me off at Kanara. When he arrived on the other side of the Fouji bridge, a group of people made him stop. Who came to search him with a gun? It was a girl.

A male participant asks, in what zone was he? Jackly says, "what zone?"

#7: Fouji, after you pass the bridge, you arrive at... there, [and then he repeats word for word] a group stopped him. Who came to search him? A girl with a gun in her hand.

[Several people talking low]

Stephanie: #5... #3... #6

Jackly: "You were going to say something."

Stephanie: "You were going to say something... Do women more often participate in gangs or baz."

#6: "No, in my neighborhood, women more often participate in the baz, because what makes them participate in the *baz* because the *baz* is there to create somethings in the neighborhood, like if it's dirty we clean up, we do everything ourselves, among the baz, but in the gang we almost don't have any women because us around my neighborhood we don't appreciate violence because our Soley isn't the same as the Soley that the lady is describing because it's *sosyal* that we do [social activities], we're from Te Nwa [even though all is within short walking distance of one another, this is like a rural community at the edge of the Site Soley, the Site itself having grown up in the midst of the cane fields of the HASCO Sugar plantation, so in the same district of one or two square miles one finds both the most densely packed slums of Port-au-Prince and little rural-like communities complete with agricultural gardens and livestock], that means ours is different."

#1: "They're in a zone outside."

#3: "In our neighborhood I don't see so many girls in gangs but they like gangs a lot."

Jackly: "Where do you live?"

#1: Where do you live?

#3: "Belaire"

Jackly: "What were you saying?"

#3: "They don't participate with guns [56:38], but they like to be "madam gang" [gangster girlfriends]

Lots of comments, “madam chef”, they like being their girls...

#3: “Exactly, they like being their girlfriends/wives. They like the movement. They like the men/boys [in the gang].”

Richard: “When they had the army, the women like the soldiers [chef] too.”

#3: “They still [inaudible]. [several people talking] What they really like is the gun.” [chuckling]

Stephanie: “In your opinion, if the woman isn’t the wife or girlfriend of some guy in a gang, how does the women enter into the gang?”

1#: “She could look for a brother. There are people who enter looking for respect....”

Tim: “You’re saying what they’re looking for. We’re asking if there’s another way for them to enter the gang other than by having a boyfriend inside.”

1#: “A person who, who, sometimes a person isn’t the girlfriend, she’s a friend, she’s ‘guy’”

Stephanie: “She’s what? She’s *guy*? [seems to be literally English “guy”]”

1#: “She’s *guy li* [his guy], like you’re saying, she’s his *baz* [*baz li*]... She’s not his girl friend, she’s just a friend. Like me, I was in school with this guy. As I was telling you, I was in 11<sup>th</sup> grade with him [57:56], if I wanted to, I could have done everything for him. We were friends since the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. He didn’t pass the 9<sup>th</sup> grade [Primary] because when I got to 3<sup>rd</sup> [Secondary] I stopped. We were never apart before. Girls and boys didn’t hang together in our school, because they could kick you out. [Yet] We were the only girl and boy that when they saw us together they never said anything, because they said we looked like brother and sister. [58:09] If I wanted to, while, he’s a gangster... “

[Participants saying that maybe she doesn’t know who she’s talking to right here in the room itself, meaning maybe someone in the very room could denounce you to gangsters.]

1#: “She says how she used to tell him she would be happy if the place arrested him because there is still time for him to mend his ways... If you they don’t arrest you, you’ll never change, you’re going to die. I was waiting for him one time near my house, and I saw the police, and I called him and sai, ‘*intel*, put yourself I order, the police are here.’ I see people around my



neighborhood do that, '*intel*, put yourself in order, there's the foreigners' [she does not say 'there are the police, but rather, 'there are 'blan yo', which is a reference to the UN police]. I see that it's too much of a service that I'm doing for you if the *blan* see the telephone in my ear. '*I see the police, intel, there are the police.*' I could be an antenna. Then I would be protected, people couldn't talk to me in the zone [they would have to watch what they say]. People couldn't talk to me in the zone. I would look for a *ran* [group of gangsters like she would be [59:15] ] That's what makes a lot of young women, if they're not their girlfriend, they're a soldier for their girlfriend, one of her monkeys. You know their madam [ wives/girlfriends] can't go out. They go and buy beautiful clothes for them, they go and buy hair weaves for them, because they're limited [they can't move about for fear of being identified and attacked or arrested]."

#7: "For me, when a person is friends with a thug, the only place you can get respect is in the little corridor in front of your house."

Someone says, "what?"

#7: "It's only in the corridor in front of your house are you going to get respect with him, when he's a thug, only in the little corridor in front of your house are you going to get respect. Because you can't go far with him. If you were to go out with him, you get far and they can say, 'ah, I've seen that guy', that' can make them shoot you. Like this there was a driver who died on Delmas 2. He knows a Deputy [Jackly says, "talk louder"]. He is sometimes with a Deputy. The man lives near my house. They found the man at Delmas 2 during [inaudible word] those day, they shot him and then they burned him."

Stephanie: "They burned him?"

#7: "Yes."

Stephanie: "Because he was with the Deputy?"

#7: "Yes. They would see him with him."

Stephanie: "But what was the reason?"

#7: "They don't need to know why."

Stephanie: "They burned him?"

#6: "That means the Deputy, he's from Site Soley, Belaire and Site Soley don't get along."

Stephanie: "Voila."

Jackly: "#1 was going to say something."

#1: "Sometimes you do something and you don't know you do it. Everyone has associated with some group [you're a *sib*] and you don't know it. I had a classmate, we grew-up together. We did a lot of things together. [101:02]. Sometimes when I heard something, I would say *intel* said or did such and such' and she would be taking the information and giving it to someone else. One day I saw her with the guy, I saw she was in a way, I told her, '*intel*, I don't understand why you're with that person.' She said, 'He's my friend.' I said, 'don't be friends with people like that. People like that don't have *ran*' [they're not in your group]. I like to say that. 'That person doesn't have *ran*, avoid them.'" She never told me that she liked the person, that they were having a relation. That's when I saw the relation was not in secret anymore [101:36]. Now, she's my classmate. She's the one in charge of everything ['the monopoly is in her hands']. That's what makes me say I don't like the word *baz*. She's the one in charge of everything. Me and a little one [a third girl], we were always friends [hanging out together]. So we formed a *baz*. She's the one in charge of everything [the girlfriend of the gangster]. She made food every day. She made me skip school, say that I'm going to school, put my uniform on, pass her house and take and off the uniform, make a day of it. Because she's *Madan Chef* [girlfriend of a gangster] [ii], she'd giving us food, she's giving us something to drink. I was just a kid. I hadn't finished 3<sup>rd</sup> [first year of secondary], I was 15 years old. I'm eating and drinking, there I am, I'm doing good, eating plenty of rice, big hunks of chicken. God was for me, the school made of gift of a C-average [Mwayen 6], even though I never worked, never went to school. [male laughs]. Without me taking an exam, without me taking a report card to my mother. The school made a gift of a C average. They made my classmate a gift of a C-[mwayen 5]. We passed. I told my friend, eh, now she presented two friends of hers [apparently they were two friends that she had introduced to gangster boyfriends]. My friend said, 'Niky, she's going to look for some boyfriends for us too. She's going to look for some beautiful gangsters for us too. You're the only one who's going to be left.' [she was getting out of there]. I said, 'You're not going over there anymore?' She said, 'No, my mother's begging to get me raised [mande manman m ap mande], I'm not going to make them put me on television [when she gets arrested].' I said, 'We're leaving, we'll go to her house just once per week. We used to go three times per week,

let's make a reduction and go just once per week.' I didn't want to leave all that food. [laughs]. I was enjoying the environment. To show you that sometimes people are an antenna for a chimere [gangster] and that's not what they want. One time, I saw the police in the area, I said [on the phone], 'Rachel, there is *arimi* [police searching people].' She said, 'you did good, yes,' and right there on the telephone, right in my face, she says, 'I'm calling *intel*.' I said, 'well done' [meaning now I see who you are]. She called *intel*. Since that time, I began... I was just a kid, didn't have good sense yet [m potko gen nanm], if I did, I would have made friends at all. Since that time I began to get away from her. One time she did something that made me enemies with her. She said to me, 'go outside and see if MINUSTAH is out there' [the UN police]. My friend said, 'you see,' my friend was younger than me, I'm older than her, she said, 'one day she's going to ask you to hide a gun.' Let's get away from all this. We did. We made our line [direction] and she made hers. When she left line [when she too got off of hanging with gangsters], she said, 'thank you for humiliating me. If you hadn't have done that I would have thought it was good for me.' She got out of it too... Sometimes you're an antenna and you don't know it.... You feel good, you're eating good, drinking good, they're giving you sodas.... You're good where you are, you feel you're comfortable. And that way, you become one of them [*sib*, i.e. without really being one of them]. And the same people, sometimes, when the police do roundups [*arima*], they [the gangsters] stick you under the table, because they need to you give a kit [reference to aid kits with food, toilet paper...]. They're going to need sometimes to put their kids in school, to take them to high school for me. You need them."

Stephanie: "Is there a benefit when women help in the baz."

#1: "Yes, more of a benefit for them."

Stephanie: "Who?"

#1: "The chimere [gangsters].... Women are less risky, the police don't pay that much attention to females."

Stephanie: "and you #2."

#2: "Yes, sometimes they use women to carry guns for them, to make it get to where it needs to go." [104:57]

#4: "Yes, it's good for them."

Stephanie: "Good for who?"

#4: "For the men. Because if a man [gangster] is walking in the street, the police will always try to search him. When he's with a woman, he passes everything he has to the woman."

### [female] "Yes, it's an advantage for the thugs [*bandi*]..."

Stephanie: "And the girl, is there an advantage for the girl?"

Two different female participants say, "respect"

One of the women say, "in the area where they're in charge."

Stephanie: #7

#7: "For women .... If she's in a conflict with a young man who's not in the gang, she can go get the thugs... That's the only advantage I see. After that, I don't see any other advantage."

Stephanie: "Do you think that women and men in the *baz* or gang can do the same things that a man can do?"

A male participant is saying, "A man can do more things because...." A woman also says "men." Stephanie calls on #2:

#2: "A man can do more things because and man doesn't have [inaudible 106:17]"

#1: "I see that a woman can do everything. And I see that a woman can be more dangerous than a man."

Tim: "Why?"

Jackly: "Why can a woman be more dangerous than a man?"

#1: "Reaction of a woman. Maybe a man can reflect before he acts. Women don't think. They react spontaneously."

#7: "The other day they needed to steal motorcycle in the Sad area. They sent a woman. And that's what makes a woman more dangerous than a man."

#1: "A woman is more dangerous than a man."

#7: "When a woman appears in front of you, especially for men, she has an intimation she gives you, you don't think about her being bad at all. And at the same time, it could be her who leads you away. And that's what makes a woman more dangerous."

Richard: "They say that women make the best international assassins....."

Stephanie: "How do you think the community treats women like that how do they see them. How do they treat a woman who supports the baz?"

#1: "Those people are not my friends, they should be in *m ran mwen* [group]. A woman who hangs out with those people is the worst kind of person. Only God can save them, there's no salvation, your finished, you're not in life anymore. [107:52]. For me, I don't know about other people, there are those who think they're doing well. For them, they're comfortable. For me, they're not comfortable. And, they're proud. A young lady said the other day, 'I'm the woman who's most got it made in 19 [the name of the neighborhood].' I laughed."

Stephanie: "What made her say that?"

1#: "Her husband is a chime [gangster], she's rolling around in a car, us in the area, at 15 years of age she's rolling around in a car. I'm 25 years in the area and I have never even rolled around on a bicycle. [she laughs others laugh]. And she says, 'I see the others are pretending their *zuzu* [they're high-fluting], going to school, things like that. They're playing theater. I'm better off.'"

Jackly: "She's better off in sense. If she has car, she's got a series of privileges that put her in a better position."

A female participant in the rooms asks, "where can she go with it [the car]? Where?"

Jackly: "She can go with it".

Female participant in the room: Where?

#1: “She only drives around the neighborhood in it in front of us. [Jackly interjects. “She doesn’t have a license plate?”] “Driving up and down the little alleyways, almost smashing into people. There’s nothing she can do with it.”

Stephanie calls on #3

#3: “I think that women who choose that path, society will judge bad. Because you have some things you do in your life, sooner or later, you’ll regret it, too bad. There are some things you do that you can never erase. There is no eraser that can erase all the errors you’ve made. The women around my neighborhood they take the *bandi* [thugs, as boyfriends]. They believe in dressing themselves up.. They put on new hair extensions every day, every week. Sometimes they say to you, ‘you think I look like you? you think I’m in the same class [*ran*] with you? Don’t you see that I change my hair every day?’ Around Topolino [a market for hair extensions, and with street hair stylists], those are the only women you see nowadays. That’s all they do. I think it’s for to show-off that the women take them. The other day I was passing Ti Mas street, there was one I almost stepped her foot. She said, ‘Madam, you almost stepped on my foot.’ I said, ‘excuse me, dear.’ ‘You don’t see that my toenails were just done?’ ‘I said, ‘I said excuse me’ [she uses a little voice]. ‘And if you dirtied my foot?’ ‘I would pay to have them done for you.’ ‘How much money do you think it would cost. It’s not 100 *goud*, no.’ ‘Whatever it is, I would pay.’ She said, ‘*Kokorat* [little a pill bug that lives under a rock, but probably better translated as ‘cockroach’] like you when you walk you don’t [laughter]. I said, ‘thank you.’ [Richard injects, ‘She’s a big shot and you’re just a little cockroach’]. “Yes, because that zone is their area, that’s where the gang in Belaire sits nowadays. [#1 says, “In their minds, they’re doing good”]. In their minds, they’re doing good. And I said, ‘thank you’, because you can’t say more than what you see that I said there. . [#1 interjects, “You can say more, you didn’t want to say more. You can”] “No, they’d unravel me with slaps.” [#1 says, “Oh. Not me”]. [The room laughs]. “Me, I wouldn’t say more, in the zone down there...”

Stephanie: “You guys are afraid of them. Are they afraid of you?”

#1: “They’re not afraid.”

#3: “They’re comfortable, they’re at ease.”

#1: “Around my neighborhood you’re an *orijinal* [clearly it is the word “original” but they mean it as authentic, untouchable, not game to me abused. It was used in the men’s focus group

when a participant said, 'in my neighborhood there are not originals, they'll kill anyone...'], if you're born in the neighborhood, you can do whatever you want."

#3: "Well, in my neighborhood we're goats."

#4: "I don't mean that in my neighborhood you can kill someone, but in my neighborhood people can't mess with me. You'll be coming out to put me out in my 19 ["19" refers to her neighborhood and the way I interpret the 'you'll be coming out' is that she's going to meet force with force]."

#3: "In Belaire they're goats. They say that. They a race of goats, they don't have family. They don't have *original* in Belaire."

#6: "That's why they always say, they don't have very *original*." [#3 interjects: "Belaire doesn't have *original*"]. "That means ... [#1: "They came up with a slogan, you can be Reginal, you can be Ronald, Donald, but you can never be Original"]

Stephanie: This means that you're more afraid of them...

#1: "No, we're more afraid of them."

#3: "We're afraid of them."

Stephanie: Do people ostracize them?

#1: "Oh!"

#3: "No."

#1: "They look for trouble with you [*cheche kont*]"

Stephanie: "What?"

#1: "They look for trouble with you. But they won't find me, they find people...[trails off]"

Gary asks if they have any importance for people in then neighborhood.

#3: "In their neighborhood they have importance, in their zone."

#1: "Among people like them they have importance.... The other day I was standing there, there was a *dirijan* [unspecified leader] who pulled out his camera. I 'foop' snatched it out of his hand. I stood there looking at him. He said, 'You're pretty fucken rude.' I said, 'I've got the same rights you have. I see that when we take photos, we're crazy. And you, you have the right to pull out a camera on me?' 'You're always acting like a bad ass.' There was a bigger boss standing there and he said, 'That's enough [she's right]. When people pull their cameras out on us, we get a headache. But we're always taking pleasure pulling ours out on people. We need to drop that habit.' The other said, 'I was taking a picture of her back' 'You don't own my back. Go take pictures of your own kind.' ...He's a bad ass for real. He could have reacted more, and I would have reacted. He could have knocked my teeth out. He's known to do knock peoples teeth out. He could have knocked mine out. But I'm not afraid to knock teeth out too. Because just as he's got rights, I got rights too. Come and put a camera on me..."

Stephanie: "Do you think that women and men are the same in the baz?"

#1: "We're more afraid of women because their more unpredictable [*frajil*]. When men have a problem with you, they manage it. When women have a problem with you, they don't manage it, they tell their men lies about you. You know men around here, they fall for women. Whatever the women tell them, they believe it. You did this, you did that. They pit you against others [113:20. Women are more dangerous."

#7: "Sometimes the neighborhood is yours because you were born in it. And there is a time you're entering your neighborhood [113:29] you were born there, yes, but it's dangerous for you. It's dangerous for you in the sense that, the *baz* or gang itself, it has some Argentinians who join it [someone from somewhere else]. If you're coming in and you cross paths with an Argentine, you can die."

Stephanie: A What?

#7: "An Argentine."

Stephanie: "What's an Argentinian?"

Several males respond, "Someone from outside", "Someone who doesn't live in the area", "That means a gangster from outside.

#7: "A gangster from outside who has come to give them reinforcement."



Richard: "They won't recognize/know you."

Two males confirming, "he doesn't recognize/know you."

#1: "Argentines are more unpredictable. They can make a film about you [make up a story], and the owner of the neighborhood [head of the gang] puts you out. In my neighborhood they don't kill that easily. If they kill you it's because you disrespected them a lot. They'll tell you, 'intel, I see too much of you around here' [meaning, you better move]."

Stephanie: "What do you do?"

#1: "You get up, you take your cloths, you got to someone else's house. The guy will die sooner or later and you can come back. That's what gives you more encouragement when you go, because you know the guy's going to die. I'll leave, when I get the news I'll come back."

## NOTES

[i] Whenever I use the word "neighborhood" the participant has almost always said, "bo lakay nou" or "bo lakay mwen" which is more literally, "around our house" or "around my house" but would be neighborhood or near where I live in English. They also often say "zone" to refer to their neighborhood. I translate that to English "zone" when think that it might be interpreted to indicate a slighter wider area. In other cases I simply translate it as 'neighborhood'. And for the most part, 'zon' and 'bo kay mwen' and 'kote mwen viv' are synonymous with neighborhood.

[ii] Phonetically, that is exactly what it sounds like, *madan chef*, with the "n", same as, for example, *madan sara* and not Madam Sara.