

BACKGROUND

- Over the past 40 years, natural disasters have become increasingly prevalent, complex, and catastrophic.
- The last decade of the 20th century has seen the greatest increase in natural disasters attributing to an estimated 1.35 million deaths (CRED, 2016).
- Haiti has lost more lives to natural hazards over the past 20 years than any other country in the world (UNISDR, 2016)
 - Mostly due to what was considered one of the largest urban disasters in modern history, the 2010 earthquake (IFRC, 2014b; USAID, 2012).
- The recent earthquakes in Chile and Japan measured higher on the Richter scale than the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010; yet the earthquake in Haiti had a far worse impact with an estimated 316,000 deaths and over 3.9 million people affected (Everest, 2011).

PURPOSE

To describe the meaning of the 2010 Haiti earthquake on the immediate and long-term health of the Haitian people.

POPULATION

A convenience sample of six individuals who had experienced the 2010 Haiti earthquake volunteered to participate in the study. The participants were identified by key informants of the St. Marie Madeleine community.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Katie Eriksson's Theory of Caritative (2007) which recognizes caring's essence as an ethos of love and compassion.

Fundamental concepts include, "human beings as the entity body, soul and spirit; health; suffering; and caring as a communion where human beings' dignity comprises the fundamental worth" (p. 201).

METHODS

Design: Descriptive Qualitative

Procedure:

1. IRB approval obtained from Florida Atlantic University
2. Invited by a representative of the Episcopal Church in Haiti
2. Conducted interviews and focus groups in Haiti, June 2015.

DATA ANALYSIS

- A modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen (Moustakas, 1994) phenomenological method used to analyze participants' transcripts
- Using significant statements from each transcript provided an understanding of how the participants experienced the 2010 Haiti earthquake
- Significant statements from verbatim examples of participant experiences provided textural and contextual descriptions leading to 13 subthemes; these were grouped into larger meaningful units resulting in four major themes
- Finally, a composite description was developed integrating both the structural and textual descriptions to describe the 'essence' of living through the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

FINDINGS: MAIN THEMES

Living with a Changed State of Being:
Fundamentally changed in some way by the experience of the earthquake

Experiencing All-Encompassing Loss:
A sense of profound loss which permeated every aspect of life

Piecing it Together:
Coming to know it was an earthquake by experiencing the sights, sounds, movements, exact moments in time brought an initial understanding that what was happening was a reality

Feeling Broken:
Overwhelming human need in the wake of the earthquake generated feelings of grief and powerlessness made many feel 'broken'

FINDINGS: OVERARCHING THEME

Living Through the Most Unforgettable Day

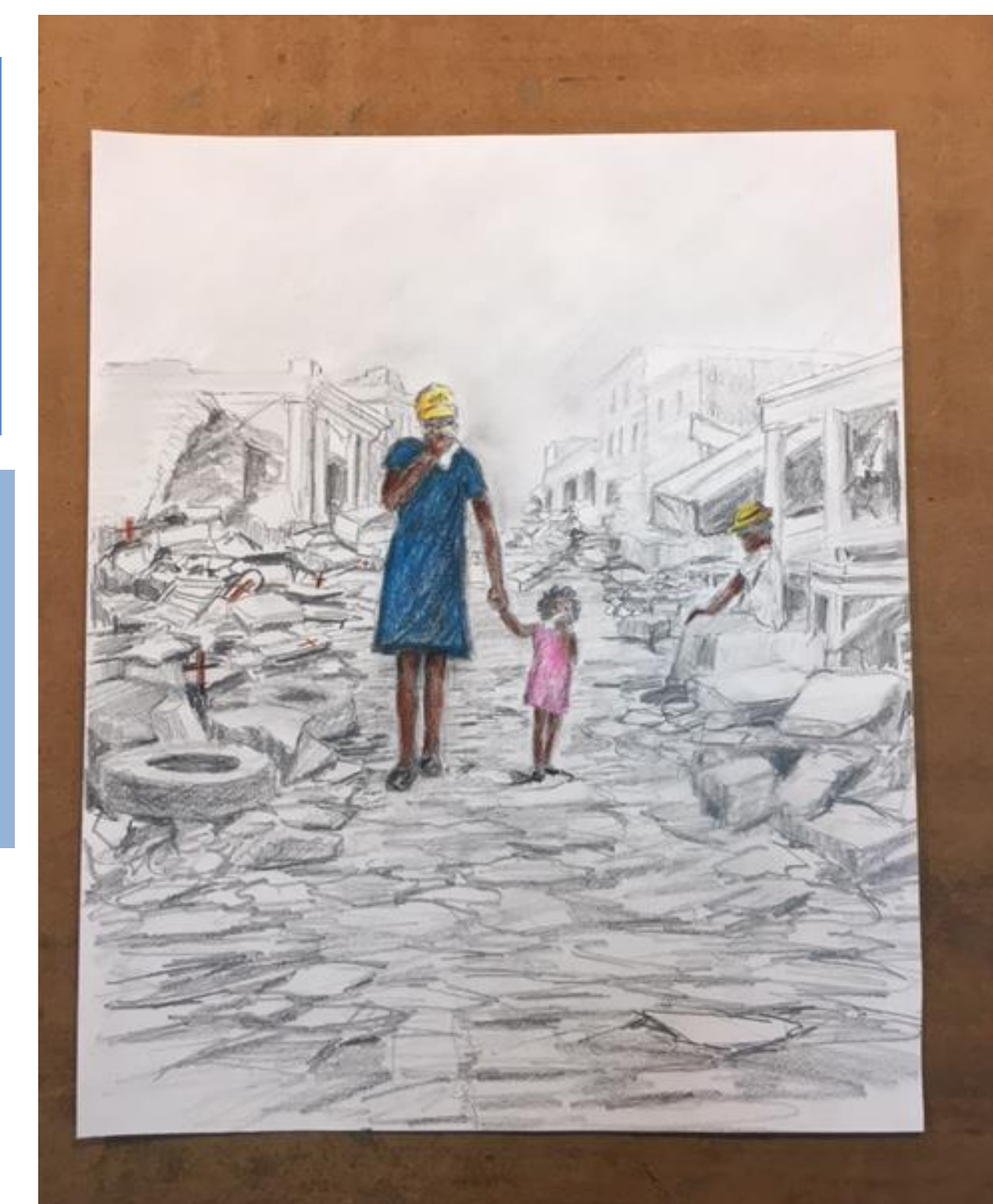
- The 2010 Haiti earthquake will never be forgotten by those who lived through it, not only the day itself, but also everything that day brought with it.
- The true impact of the earthquake on Haiti and worldwide can be glimpsed in the images and stories told by the participants.
- The unforgettable nature of such an event leaves an indelible mark on the culture, environment, and the people.
- *Yet, through it all, there is this glimmer of hope that can be found in the words of the participants. An essence of the Haitian people represented through a Haitian proverb (depicted in the pencil sketch).*

"I can say that generally 2010 is a very unforgettable day in my whole life"

"That night, that afternoon was the worst day of my life."

"This is terrible, this was a terrible time for the Haitian people."

"You see something that you never want to face in your life."



"Well the Haitian people are strong after the earthquake...was like this happened for a reason I cannot ----- I was there and I am still here. So God will give them strength."

It's almost four years and about the Haitian people they are still living with hope because this is a cultural people.

Tout tan tet pa koupe, ou pa di li p'ap bliye chapo.
As long as he doesn't lose his head, don't say he won't forget his hat.
(Anything is still possible.)

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Haiti's underlying vulnerability, due to a long history of global inequality, offers a unique landscape for exploring global health issues as lived and experienced during a natural disaster in a developing world country.
- The use of aesthetic representation to inform nursing knowledge about natural disasters engages multiple ways of knowing in nursing.