



# Georges Woke Up Laughing: Long-Distance Nationalism and the Search for Home (American Encounters/Global Interactions)

*Nina Glick Schiller, Georges Eugene Fouron*

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Combining history, autobiography, and ethnography, *Georges Woke Up Laughing* provides a portrait of the Haitian experience of migration to the United States that illuminates the phenomenon of long-distance nationalism, the voicelessness of certain citizens, and the impotency of government in an increasingly globalized world. By presenting lively ruminations on his life as a Haitian immigrant, Georges Eugene Fouron—along with Nina Glick Schiller, whose own family history stems from Poland and Russia—captures the daily struggles for survival that bind together those who emigrate and those who stay behind.

According to a long-standing myth, once emigrants leave their homelands—particularly if they emigrate to the United States—they sever old nationalistic ties, assimilate, and happily live the American dream. In fact, many migrants remain intimately and integrally tied to their ancestral homeland, sometimes even after they become legal citizens of another country. In *Georges Woke Up Laughing* the authors reveal the realities and dilemmas that underlie the efforts of long-distance nationalists to redefine citizenship, race, nationality, and political loyalty. Through discussions of the history and economics that link the United States with countries around the world, Glick Schiller and Fouron highlight the forces that shape emigrants' experiences of government and citizenship and create a transborder citizenry. Arguing that governments of many countries today have almost no power to implement policies that will assist their citizens, the authors provide insights into the ongoing sociological, anthropological, and political effects of globalization.

*Georges Woke up Laughing* will entertain and inform those who are concerned about the rights of people and the power of their governments within the globalizing economy.

“In my dream I was young and in Haiti with my friends, laughing, joking, and having a wonderful time. I was walking down the main street of my hometown of Aux Cayes. The sun was shining, the streets were clean, and the port was bustling with ships. At first I was laughing because of the feeling of happiness that stayed with me, even after I woke up. I tried to explain my wonderful dream to my wife, Rolande. Then I laughed again but this time not from joy. I had been dreaming of a Haiti that never was.”—from *Georges Woke Up Laughing*

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