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## "We are in danger": Ti Manno and Haitian transnational identity

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Rumors spread rapidly among Haitians in New York that Ti Manno had died. The rumors were put to rest when Ti Manno's program to say he was alive but sick; he asked for help and other personalities responded by forming a movement, Operation Men Kontre (Operation Clasped Hands), which raised money to pay Ti Manno's hospital bills. Ti Manno had not been able to pay collection boxes placed at Haitian businesses and had received contributions sent by individuals in Haiti, \$10,000 worth. To raise even more money, a concert was held that night featuring Haitian musicians in New York.

It was confirmed that Ti Manno had died, and this time the rumor was true. The Haitian newspapers in New York, which also reported the location of the body and the plans for the funeral and the location of the deathbed that his body be prevented from being buried in Haiti. To respect his wishes, his body would be buried in Haiti. Ti Manno's remains would then be

buried in Haiti. Police barricades had to be set up to control the crowd. On the day of the funeral service was to begin. More than a hundred more waited outside.

His death was the hottest topic of conversation among Haitians. He had lived Ti Manno's life story and the eulogy preached by a priest traveled from Haiti to officiate at his funeral. The service was sent by a broad spectrum of the Haitian population, from prominent businessmen to ordinary citizens.

After Ti Manno's death ignored the newest round of rumors that he had died of AIDS. Through his music, Ti Manno,

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## **Abstract**

The lyrics of Ti Manno, a popular Haitian singer, and the short-lived Ti Manno movement are examined in order to elucidate the factors that shape the multiple and overlapping identities of Haitian immigrants. It is argued that, as black immigrants, Haitians tend to be "transnationals" who form identities that allow them to accommodate to and resist realities of race and class in both Haiti and the United States. [transnationalism, ethnic identity, race, immigration, Haiti, nationalism, class]

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