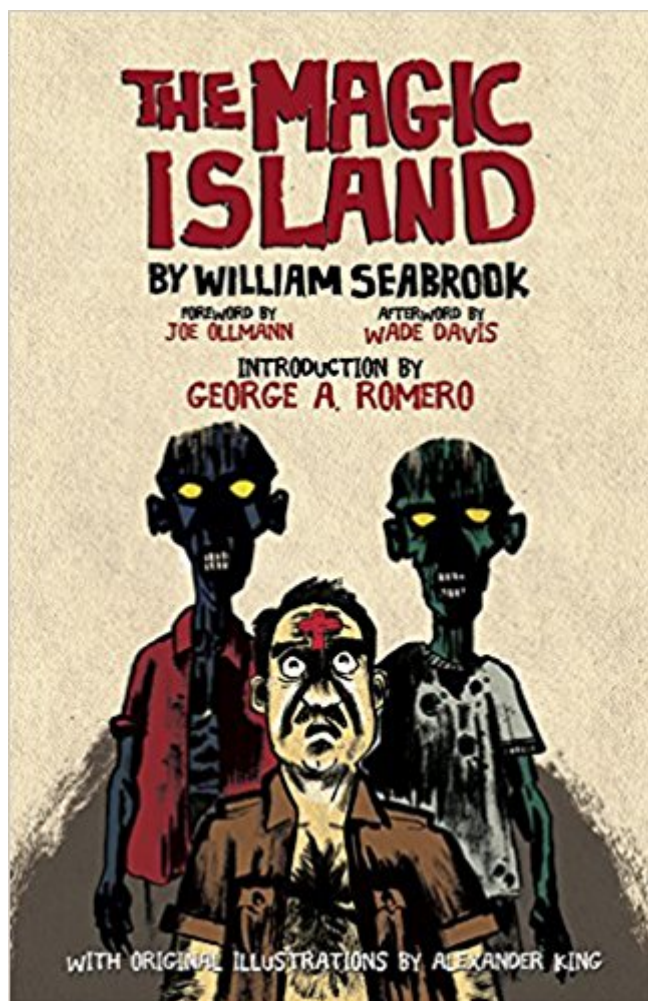


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The Magic Island



Synopsis

"The best and most thrilling book of exploration that we have ever read" — [an] immensely important book." — New York Evening Post "A series of excellent stories about one of the most interesting corners of the American world, told by a keen and sensitive person who knows how to write." — American Journal of Sociology "It can be said of many travelers that they have traveled widely. Of Mr. Seabrook a much finer thing may be said — he has traveled deeply." — The New York Times Book Review This fascinating book, first published in 1929, offers firsthand accounts of Haitian voodoo and witchcraft rituals. Journalist and adventurer William Seabrook introduced the concept of the walking dead — zombies — to the West with his illustrated travelogue. He relates his experiences with the voodoo priestess who initiated him into the religion's rituals, from soul transference to resurrection. In addition to 20 evocative line drawings by Alexander King, this edition features a new Foreword by cartoonist and graphic novelist Joe Ollmann, a new Introduction by George A. Romero, legendary director of Night of the Living Dead, and a new Afterword by Wade Davis, Explorer in Residence at the National Geographic Society.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

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Customer Reviews

Journalist and explorer William Seabrook (1884–1945) possessed a fascination with the occult that led him across the globe to study magic rituals, train as a witch doctor, and sample human flesh. In addition to publishing more than a dozen books, he wrote for The New York Times, Cosmopolitan, Reader's Digest, and Vanity Fair.

Fabulous book ! I'd read a copy from the library of the original edition from the 1920's - fascinating accompanying photos and drawings too - Here's hoping that more of Seabrook's wonderful books will now also be re-released. My only complaint is with the "Cartoon" cover - surely they could have come up with something better than this ?

If you know Seabrook, and if you're halfway interested in magic, you should, you know how really well he writes. Most people are going to be interested primarily in the first section, which deals with "voodoo." He was much more open than most people of his era, and took as fair an approach to "voodoo" as was possible for a white man. If it doesn't look much like modern descriptions, that's because the religion is evolving. Of real interest was his observation of the administration of Haiti. I was fascinated. If they ever, ever reissue his "Witchcraft," snatch it up. I have an old copy, and it's wonderful.

five stars

Great book and service ! 5 stars .

Item arrived early and as described fantastic job!

Not really my cup of tea. Easy reading, and sort of interesting the way he saw the natives. This is not really the type of book I usually read. It was recommended by a PBS station, so I thought it sounded interesting.

This book is good and bad. The chapters on zombies and Voodoo rituals are really fascinating. In most cases, Mr. Seabrook was the first white person to see many of those things firsthand and his accounts are very detailed. Later in the book, however, the narrative takes a bad turn. The chapters on Haitian culture and race are very narrow-minded and outright racist. I realize this was a different time when people were ignorant, but it is hard to read such blatant racial prejudice. If you're a fan of zombies or the rituals of other religions, the early chapters are worth reading, though.

This book doesn't deserve all of the bad reviews that it has had. It is easy to find fault in the 21st Century but in the mid Twentieth Century this was a good book. Yes there is some political

correctness issues but the purpose of reading the book is to learn about Haitian Voodoo as seen by a knowledgeable outsider. It also is a cool travelogue as well. I especially enjoyed his encounter with The Society of the Dead. Thanks Mr. Seabrook, for giving me a few enjoyable hours away from the grind of everyday life.

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