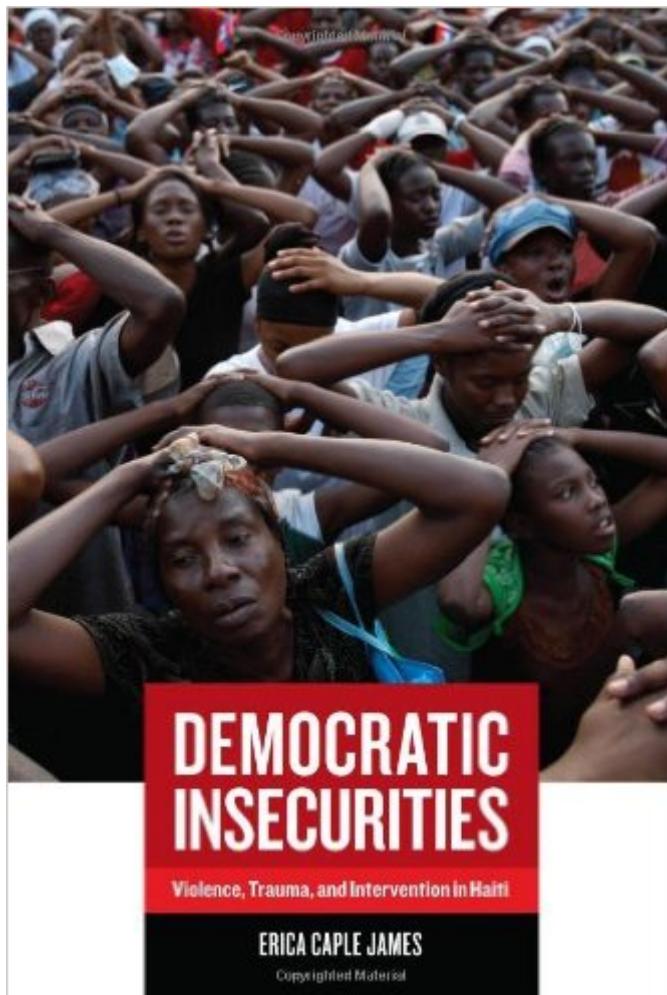


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Democratic Insecurities: Violence, Trauma, And Intervention In Haiti (California Series In Public Anthropology)



Synopsis

Democratic Insecurities focuses on the ethics of military and humanitarian intervention in Haiti during and after Haiti's 1991 coup. In this remarkable ethnography of violence, Erica Caple James explores the traumas of Haitian victims whose experiences were denied by U.S. officials and recognized only selectively by other humanitarian providers. Using vivid first-person accounts from women survivors, James raises important new questions about humanitarian aid, structural violence, and political insecurity. She discusses the politics of postconflict assistance to Haiti and the challenges of promoting democracy, human rights, and justice in societies that experience chronic insecurity. Similarly, she finds that efforts to promote political development and psychosocial rehabilitation may fail because of competition, strife, and corruption among the individuals and institutions that implement such initiatives.

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Customer Reviews

This study focuses on the ethics of military and humanitarian intervention in Haiti following the 1991 coup. By highlighting vivid first-person accounts given by female survivors, James raises important questions about humanitarian aid, structural violence, and political insecurity, while simultaneously outlining some ethical quandaries arising from the uses and abuses of power. The author deftly charts the politics of post-conflict assistance to Haiti and chronicles challenges inherent in promoting democracy in the underdeveloped world. She found, for example, that efforts to promote political

development and psychosocial rehabilitation often failed due to competition, strife, and corruption within the agencies charged with implementing such "rehabilitation." A persistent problem is that agencies cannot address problems of individual insecurity without reverting to the very practices that created such insecurities in the first place. There are no heroes in this book. Advocacy organizations, James concludes, appropriate the sufferings of others in order to solidify their own political and economic positions. Chapter five - which provides a detailed analysis of witchcraft, bureaucracy, and double binds engendered by the circulation of aid in Haiti -- is outstanding. But some readers may be repulsed by the sordid details. This is a disconcerting book. One comes away concluding that residents of Haiti have been ill-served by their government, by NGOs, by missionaries, and by the international community. Doubtless, this is exactly what the author intended. Recommended. Stephen D. Glazier, Professor of Anthropology, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Whether you work in humanitarian aid, or as an anthropologist....this is an important book which uncovers some of the unintended consequences of intervention.

Amazing ethnography of NGOs, trauma and transitional States of violence . Directly informing my M.A. thesis on GBV in Guatemala.

very important analysis of the state of democracy in Haiti. very in depth portrayal of the state of violence in the society

Really helps you understand the complexities involved with NGOs.

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