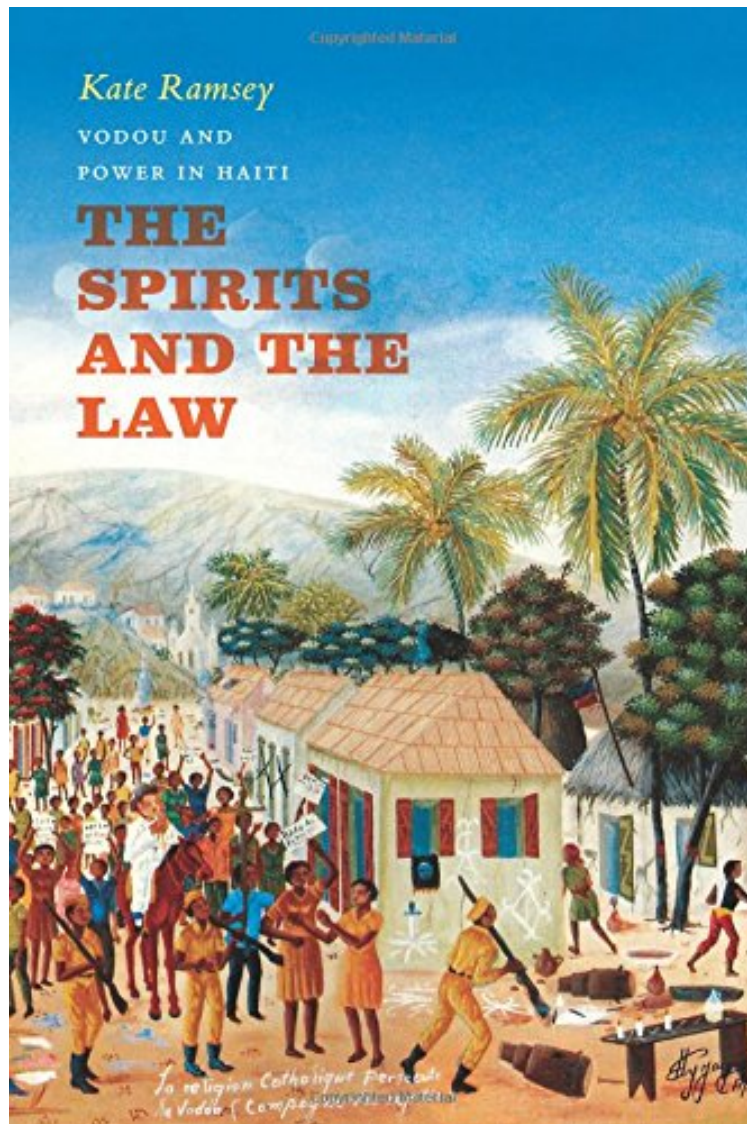


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# The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti

*Kate Ramsey*

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#650845 in Books Kate Ramsey 2015-11-13 2015-11-13 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.20 x 6.00l, #File Name: 0226703800448 pages The Spirits and the Law | File size: 59.Mb

**Kate Ramsey : The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Exceptional Insight By LeGrace Benson Ramsey's research for this book is wide-ranging and meticulous. As a scholar who is looking at Haitian life and institutions from outside, but who who does so with serious respect, she has illuminated relationships between deeply rooted religious beliefs and social orders and arrangements. This book is a must-read not only for scholars but for any journalist expecting to

report on Haiti and for anyone traveling there -tourist, entrepreneur or aid provider, perhaps especially the latter.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Instant Classic: Combines the best elements of the different branches of scholarship on VodouBy ElCafeteroMost studies of Vodou focus on either its ritual content, the way it has been denigrated by individuals within and outside of Haiti, or its folklorization. This book shows how all of these elements have interacted throughout the course of Haitian history to shape Haitian politics, the lives of religious practitioners, and the views of Haiti by outsiders. It also serves as a great legal history. If you read only one book about Haiti(an Vodou), I would recommend this instant classic.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Moises P.Can't recommend a better book if you are interested in the dynamic between religion and the law.

Vodou has often served as a scapegoat for Haiti's problems, from political upheavals to natural disasters. This tradition of scapegoating stretches back to the nation's founding and forms part of a contest over the legitimacy of the religion, both beyond and within Haiti's borders. *The Spirits and the Law* examines that vexed history, asking why, from 1835 to 1987, Haiti banned many popular ritual practices. To find out, Kate Ramsey begins with the Haitian Revolution and its aftermath. Fearful of an independent black nation inspiring similar revolts, the United States, France, and the rest of Europe ostracized Haiti. Successive Haitian governments, seeking to counter the image of Haiti as primitive as well as contain popular organization and leadership, outlawed spells and, later, superstitious practices. While not often strictly enforced, these laws were at times the basis for attacks on Vodou by the Haitian state, the Catholic Church, and occupying U.S. forces. Beyond such offensives, Ramsey argues that in prohibiting practices considered essential for maintaining relations with the spirits, anti-Vodou laws reinforced the political marginalization, social stigmatization, and economic exploitation of the Haitian majority. At the same time, she examines the ways communities across Haiti evaded, subverted, redirected, and shaped enforcement of the laws. Analyzing the long genealogy of anti-Vodou rhetoric, Ramsey thoroughly dissects claims that the religion has impeded Haiti's development.

Kate Ramsey tells a fascinating story of antisuperstition legislation in Haiti.a tour de force in the historical anthropology of Haitian vodou and the paradoxes of modernity that it so vividly manifests.