

FOREWORD BY JOE OLLMANN

ALTHOUGH WILLIAM SEABROOK WROTE ABOUT HIS PARTICIPATION IN BLACK MASSES...



... BEING COMMITTED TO AN INSANE ASYLUM TO CURE HIS ALCOHOLISM...



... HIS PRACTICE OF BONDAGE AND S&M...



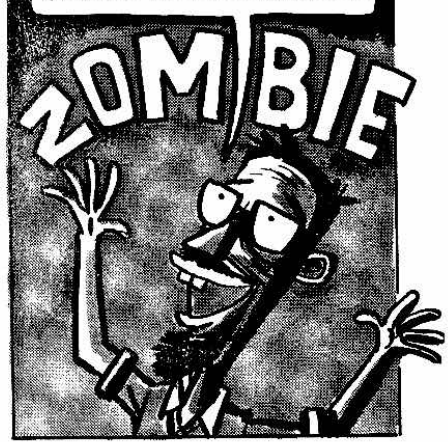
... AND HIS CANNIBALISM!



IT WAS THE MAGIC ISLAND, WHICH FURNISHED THE DETAIL HE IS BEST REMEMBERED FOR.



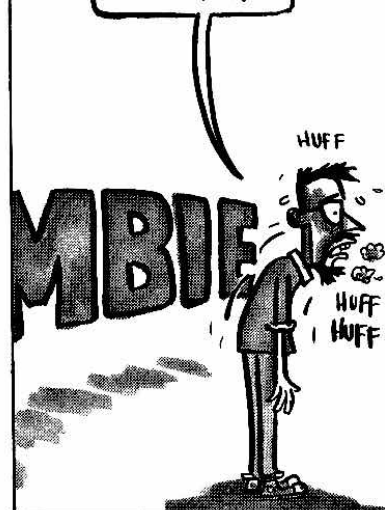
SEABROOK IS DISPUTEDLY CREDITED WITH INTRODUCING THE WORD ZOMBIE INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.



ASIDE: THOUGH ARGUMENTS OVER WHICH WHITE GUY "DISCOVERED" ANOTHER BLACK CULTURAL PHENOMENON AND EXPLOITED IT FOR PROFIT WITH WHITE AUDIENCES, PERHAPS OVERLOOK THE LONG HISTORY OF WHITE EXPLOITATION OF BLACK CULTURE IN MUSIC, FASHION, ETC...



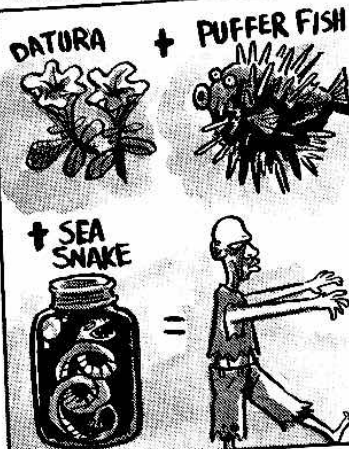
... ANYWAY...



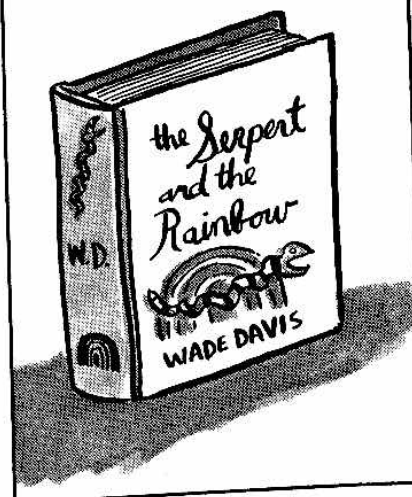
... HE WAS DEFINITELY ONE OF THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT OF THE ZOMBIE TO NORTH AMERICAN AUDIENCES.



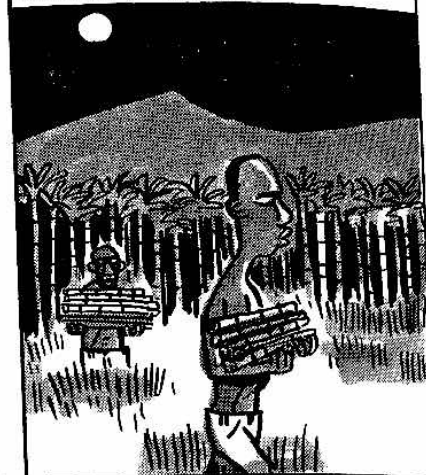
PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIS "INTRODUCTION" OF THE ZOMBIE WAS HIS THEORY THAT THE ZOMBIE WAS MORE A PHARMACOLOGICAL PHENOMENON THAN A SUPERNATURAL ONE.



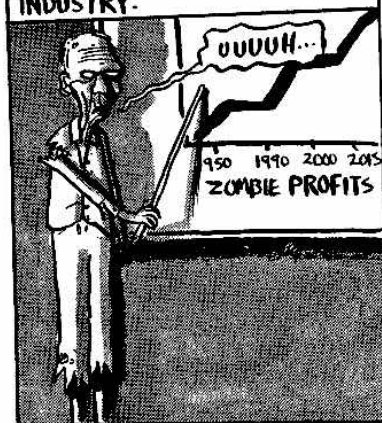
DECADES BEFORE HARVARD ETHNO-BOTANIST WADE DAVIS POSITED THE SAME CONJECTURE.



THE WIDELY-ANTHOLOGIZED CHAPTER FROM THIS BOOK, DEAD MEN WORKING IN THE CANE FIELDS, IS OFTEN PEOPLE'S GATEWAY DRUG TO THE WORK OF WILLIAM SEABROOK.



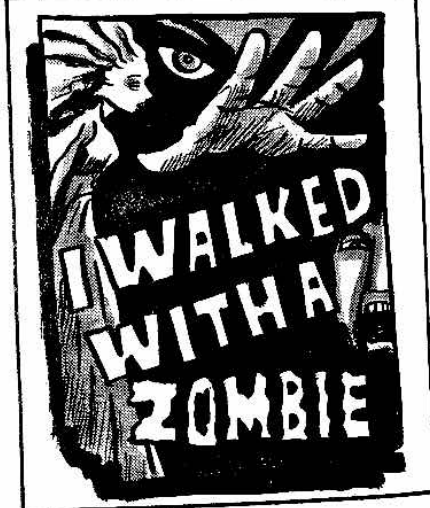
THE MAGIC ISLAND COULD BE SAID TO HAVE STARTED THE ZOMBIE PHENOMENON, WHICH HAS FOR DECADES BEEN SOLIDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR A LARGE PORTION OF THE G.N.P. OF THE ENTIRE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY.



THIS BOOK IS THE SOURCE OF THE 1932 BELA LUGOSI FILM, WHITE ZOMBIE. THOUGH SEABROOK'S NAME DOESN'T APPEAR IN THE CREDITS.



I SUSPECT THE 1943 JACQUES TOURNEUR FILM, I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE ALSO OWES A DEBT TO THE MAGIC ISLAND. (IT'S ALSO A FAR BETTER FILM.)



SEABROOK'S EDITOR WARNED HIM:

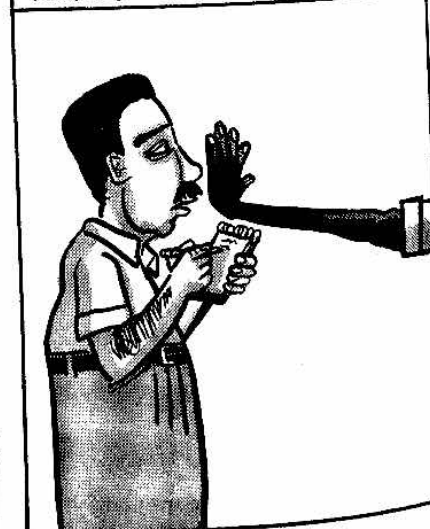
"NO WHITE MAN CAN WRITE A BOOK THAT'S ANY GOOD ABOUT VOODOO."

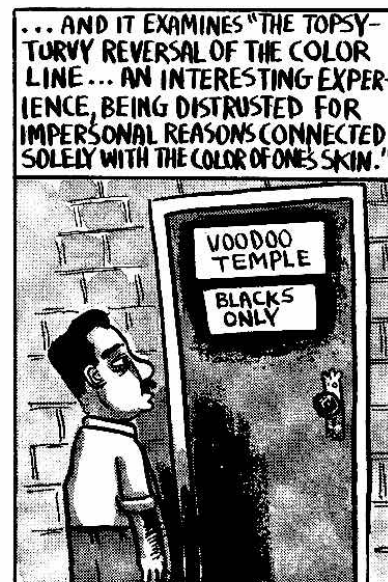
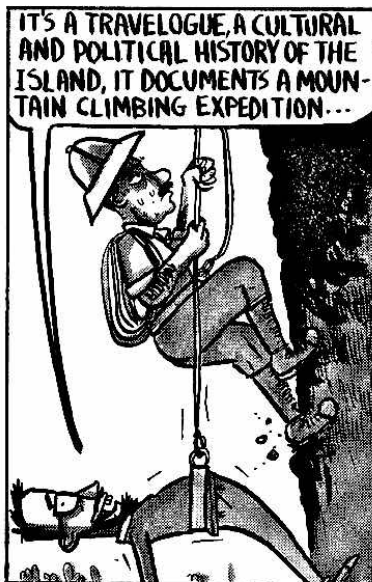
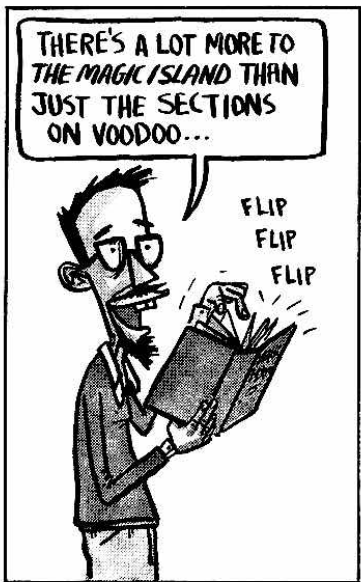
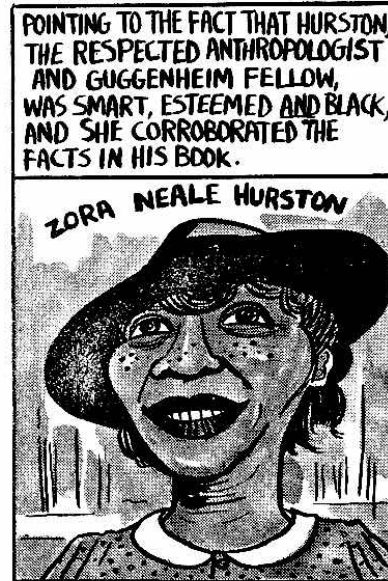
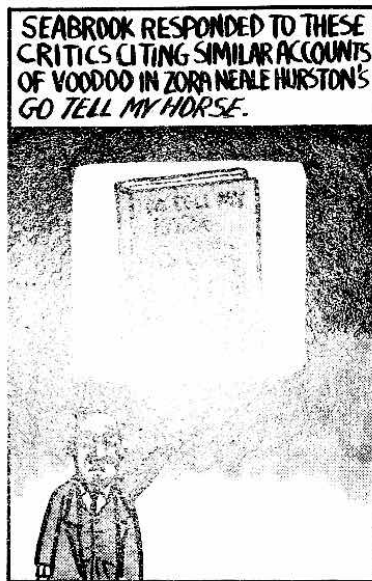
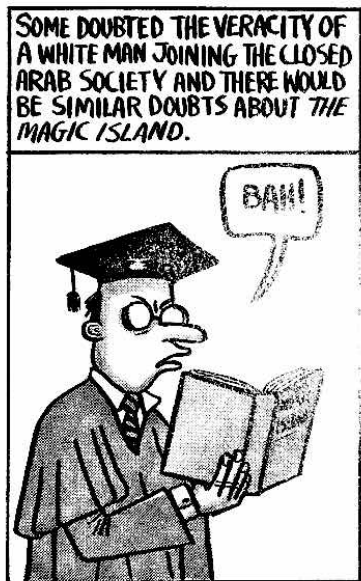
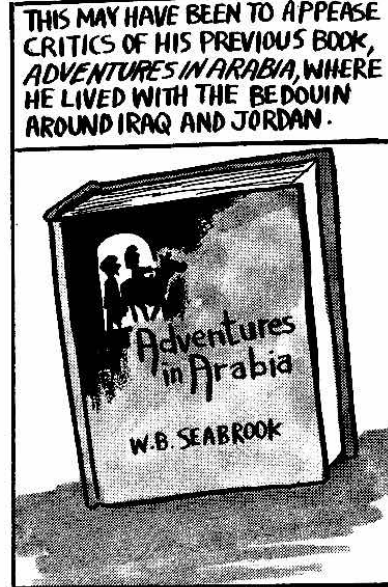
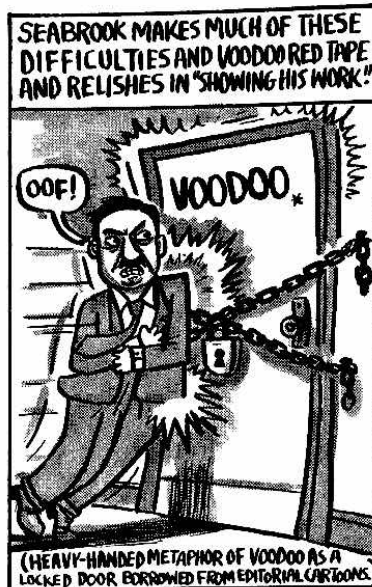
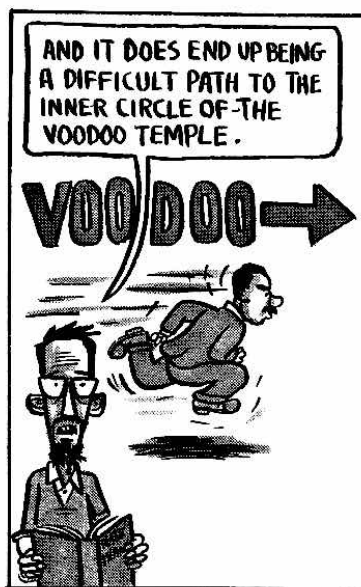


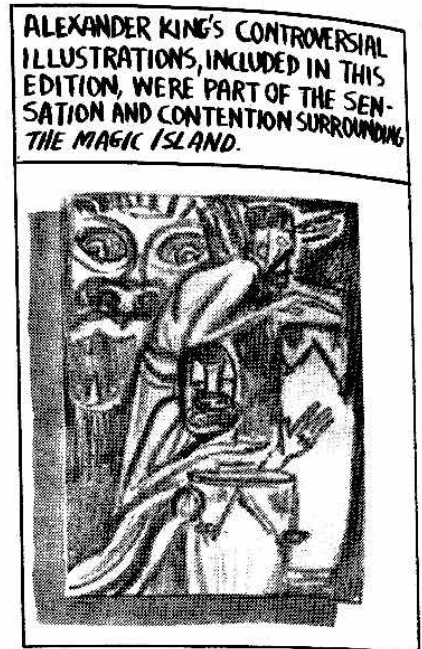
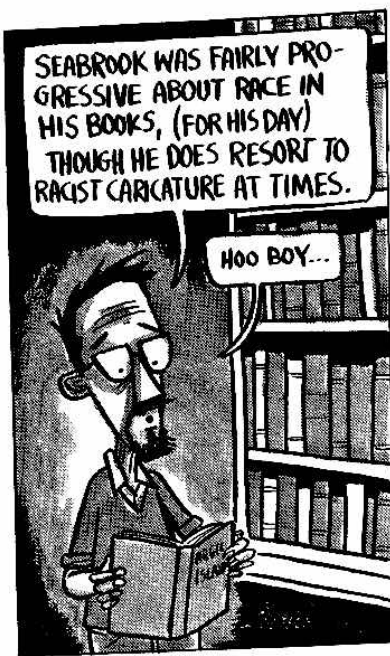
IMPLYING THAT THE HAITIANS, STILL UNDER THE OCCUPYING FOOT OF THE U.S. MILITARY...



...WOULDN'T LIKELY BE OPEN TO SHARING THE SECRETS OF THEIR VOODOO FAITH WITH SOME WHITE WRITER.



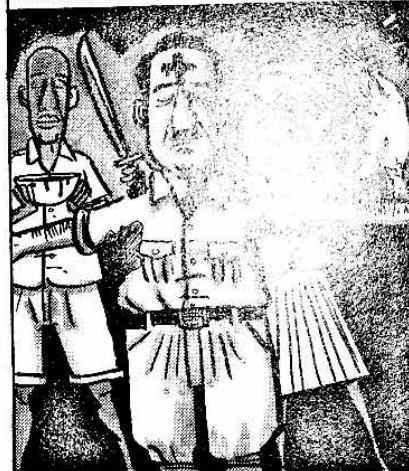




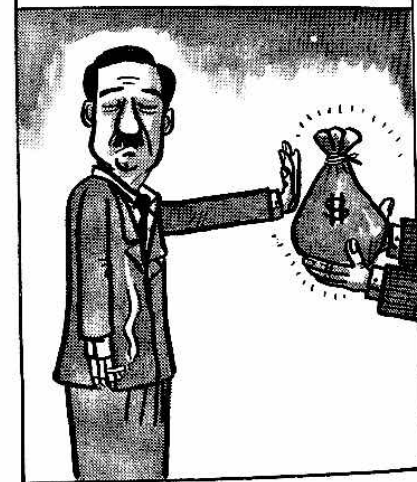
KING'S ILLUSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN MUCH-DEBATED. DISMISSED OUT OF CONTEXT AS RACIST CARICATURES OR POSITIVELY COMPARED TO THE WORK OF HARLEM RENAISSANCE PAINTER AARON DOUGLAS.



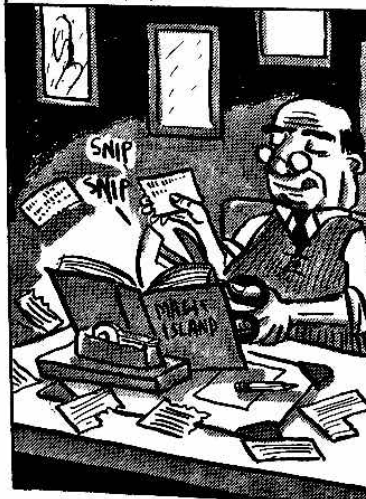
SEABROOK HIMSELF IS LARGELY RESPECTFUL OF THE CULTURE AND TAKES A- FOR THE TIME- NON-ANTHROPOLOGICAL, FULL-IMMERSION APPROACH TO HIS STUDY OF VOODOO.



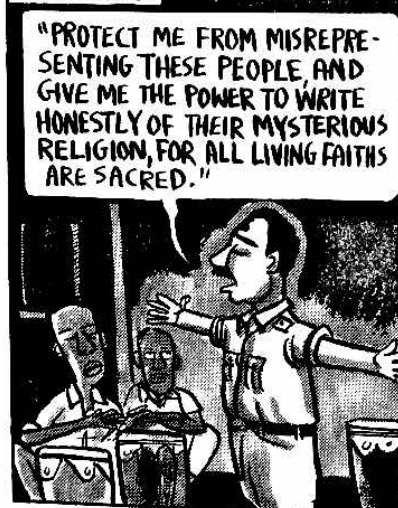
HE WAS SERIOUS ENOUGH ABOUT A TRUE, RESPECTFUL PRESENTATION OF VOODOO THAT HE TURNED DOWN A \$15,000 (\$200,000 IN TODAY'S CURRENCY!) MAGAZINE SERIALIZATION OFFER...



...WHEN THEY REQUESTED CHANGES WHERE, "EVERYTHING BETWEEN THE LINES CHANGED COLOR OR EVAPORATED."



SEABROOK REPRODUCED THE PRAYER HE SPOKE DURING HIS INITIATION IN THE OUNGA CHARM CEREMONY:



IT MAY HAVE BEEN THIS PROMISE THAT KEPT SEABROOK HONEST AND RESPECTFUL IN HIS ACCOUNT OF HAITI AND ITS PEOPLE AND THEIR FAITH.

