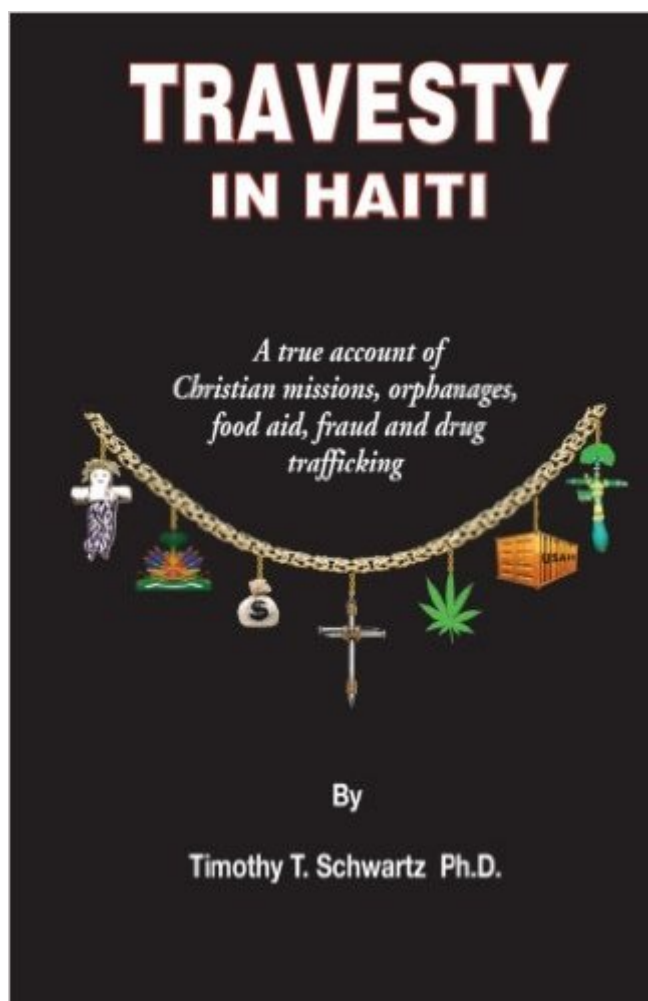


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Travesty In Haiti: A True Account Of Christian Missions, Orphanages, Fraud, Food Aid And Drug Trafficking



Synopsis

TRAVESTY is an anthropologist's personal story of working with foreign aid agencies and discovering that fraud, greed, corruption, apathy, and political agendas permeate the industry. It is a story of failed agricultural, health and credit projects; violent struggles for control over foreign aid; corrupt orphanage owners, pastors, and missionaries; the nepotistic manipulation of research funds; economically counterproductive food aid distribution programs that undermine the Haitian agricultural economy; disastrous social engineering by foreign governments, international financial and development organizations--such as the World Bank and USAID-- and the multinational corporate charities that have sprung up in their service, CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, and the dozens of other massive charities that have programs spread across the globe, moving in response not only to disasters and need, but political agendas and economic opportunity. TRAVESTY also chronicles the lives of Haitians and describes how political disillusionment sometimes ignites explosive mob rage among peasants frustrated with the foreign aid organizations, governments and international agencies that fund them. TRAVESTY recounts how some Haitians use whatever means possible try to better their living standards, most recently drug trafficking, and in doing so explains why at the service of international narcotraffickers and Haitian money laundering elites, Haiti has become a failed State. TRAVESTY reads like a novel. It takes the reader from the bowels of foreign aid in the field; to the posh and orderly urban headquarters of charities such as CARE International; to the cold, distant heights of Capitol Hill policy planners. The journey is marked by true accounts involving violence, corruption, appalling greed, sexual exploitation, disastrous social engineering, and the inside world of drug traffickers. But TRAVESTY it is not a novel. It is founded on 15 years of academic and field experience, research, and hard data. It entertains the reader with vivid first hand accounts while treating seriously the problems inherent not only in international aid, but the sabotaging effects of the drug war on economic development in remote and impoverished areas of the hemisphere.

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Customer Reviews

This is a rambling polemic that doesn't know if it wants to be an adventure novel or a serious piece of research, tumbling the reader through a disorganized narrative with confusing time-lines and references, leaving in doubt what is real and what is "creative license." From a young cigar-smoking, hard drinking adventurer in the hinterlands of Haiti to international authority on national development may be a bit of a leap for some of us. At least that is the conflicted image, right or wrong, that Schwartz presents. Since this is a review based on the Kindle edition, one star is knocked off the top for poor formatting (font is too small, graphics don't appear at all), and for too many typographical errors, which may or may not be due to poor format conversion. It was the subtitle of this book that hooked me, because I worked for some of the agencies vilified. For four years I provided health care to the poorest of the poor in Haiti, albeit in a totally different part of the country. (Geographical references are hard to pin down, with some real and some apparently fictitious names used). My time in Haiti also predated the author's experience by several years, having endured the ouster of the Duvalier regime during my tenure. The project I was most heavily involved with was a joint venture with a large NGO. I was recruited to fulfill a vacancy in this ongoing venture, and I soon saw that it wasn't a very well conceived project. Nonetheless, in my little corner of the world, I saw none of the abuses which Schwartz alleges. That said, I was aware of the larger picture to some extent, and what has unfolded in the years since, as recounted in this expose, does not surprise me, as heartbreaking as it is.

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