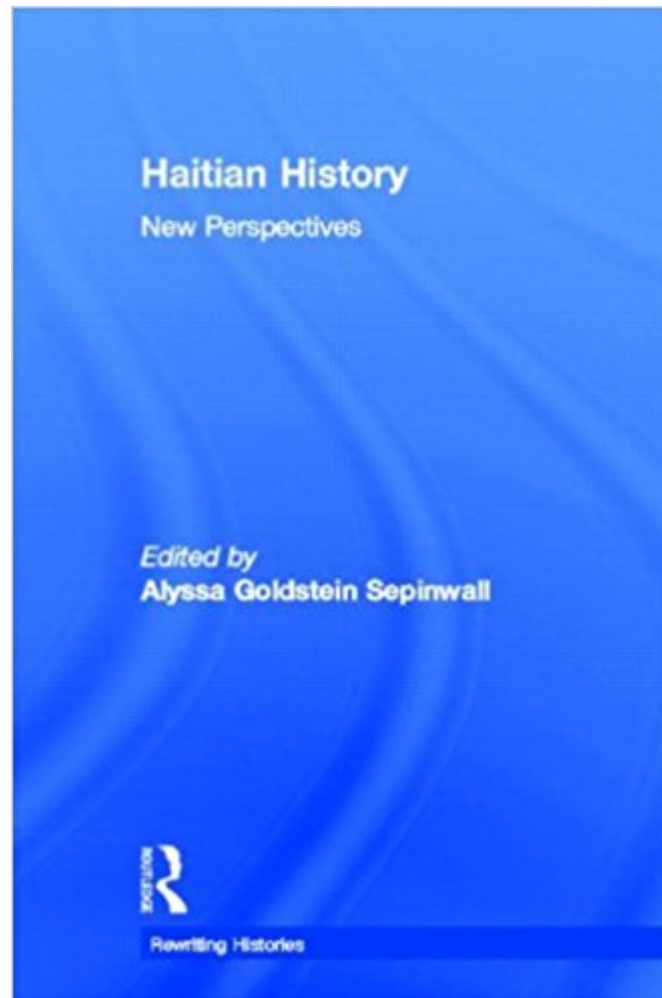




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# Haitian History: New Perspectives (Rewriting Histories)



## Synopsis

Despite Haiti's proximity to the United States, and its considerable importance to our own history, Haiti barely registered in the historic consciousness of most Americans until recently. Those who struggled to understand Haiti's suffering in the earthquake of 2010 often spoke of it as the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, but could not explain how it came to be so. In recent years, the amount of scholarship about the island has increased dramatically. Whereas once this scholarship was focused on Haiti's political or military leaders, now the historiography of Haiti features lively debates and different schools of thought. Even as this body of knowledge has developed, it has been hard for students to grasp its various strands. Haitian History presents the best of the recent articles on Haitian history, by both Haitian and foreign scholars, moving from colonial Saint Domingue to the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. It will be the go-to one-volume introduction to the field of Haitian history, helping to explain how the promise of the Haitian Revolution dissipated, and presenting the major debates and questions in the field today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Alyssa Sepinwall has produced a superb collection of powerfully insightful essays by outstanding Haitian and non-Haitian historians that should appeal equally to specialists and non-specialists. The work makes three important contributions. The essays are based on exhaustively researched original and secondary sources. The introduction to the sections present the best analysis of the extant historiography and will be a boon to all scholars with an interest in Haiti. The work

persuasively demonstrates the extraordinary importance of the Haitian experience to regional, international and thematic histories. This is the perfect introduction to the complex history of the world after the age of revolutions not only providing a nuanced account of the Haitian Revolution but also of the complicated international context in which a new black state had to forcefully defend its precarious existence." — Franklin W. Knight, Leonard and Helen R. Stulman Professor of History, Director, Center for Africana Studies, Johns Hopkins University "Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall invites readers to familiarize themselves with broader and more sophisticated interpretations of Haitian history. This excellent compilation of articles will be welcome by scholars, students and general readers who are interested in thinking about Haiti as it always ought to be understood -- as a country whose history is rich, complex, and connected to strides and the struggles of citizens from many nations around the world." — Chantalle F. Verna, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History and International Relations, Florida International University "The articles in this book illuminate our understanding and reveal the forces present in the history of the Haitian nation-state ... Sepinwall meets the challenge brilliantly in showcasing the most recent research on Haiti..." — Claudy DelnÃ©, French Studies, June 2013

Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall is Professor of History at California State University-San Marcos.

This volume of seminal essays (of already published material available elsewhere) comes at a critical time for revolutionary and Caribbean scholarships. It should be a required collection for those engaged or interested in Haitian Studies and related scholarships. Sepinwall made excellent choices and included just the necessary editing to shape them into accessible secondary sources for advanced undergraduates and graduate students alike. As new work flows from an increasing number of scholars interested in Haiti's history it is too easy to lose perspective of the foundational historiography. With this volume students can look back and make reference at the arguments made earlier; arguments that gave direction to current discussions.

Haitian History: New Perspectives not only speaks to the history of the Haitian people, it also conveys their ability to break chains of oppression from mightier and wealthier forces. From the yoke of slavery, to the US occupation, to years of dictatorship, to broken promises and broken dreams, the Haiti spirit lives on and the book captures that spirit. As a proud Haitian, this is the first book I have read that truly does justice to the Haitian people. This book is really a new Perspective.

Alyssa Sepinwall's book *Haitian History: New Perspectives* is a creative work of art that shows keen judgment in her selections regarding the Haitian Society. A reading of the book reveals many new insights into Haitian history but the section about the United States' brief occupation of the country points out that it seems whenever someone comes in to help, they often make things worse. The portion outlining the terrible destruction of the sixty second earthquake was particularly moving and revealing. The divide between the poor and the privileged seems to persist no matter what seemingly helpful efforts have been made. Perhaps Sepinwall's *Haitian History* may in some respects lead to improvement in the social and political systems which for so many years have resisted change.

This book is perfect for anyone interested in learning about the history of Haiti from the perspectives of several different historians and authorities. Not only does the author provide very informative introductions about different periods of Haitian history but she has brought together a collection of written works from Haitian and non-Haitian about Haiti that offer a broad overview of many different aspects of Haitian society and life from the time of colonization to the devastating earthquake of 2010. *Haitian History: New Perspectives* provides a wide array of scholarly papers that focus on a multitude of topics beginning with, but not limited to, slave resistance, gender roles, controversial historiography, U.S. occupation in Haiti, François Duvalier (Papa Doc), and Jean-Bertrand Aristide. For anyone interested in learning about Haiti this book is an absolute MUST HAVE...

This is a wonderful collection of essays, chapters and articles from historians both Haitian and foreign. They shed light on diverse aspects of the history of Haiti - and discuss how influences both inside and outside the colony-turned-country affected its development. As a non-history scholar, what I most appreciated was how the author had specifically chosen texts that were easy for me to understand. At the same time, the reading was challenging, interesting, and diverse. She also has a helpful introduction, plus three introductory sections to each of three phases of Haitian history that give a general summary and overview. I feel well-informed and inspired to learn more, after reading this superb book.

The story is awesome, thanks.

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