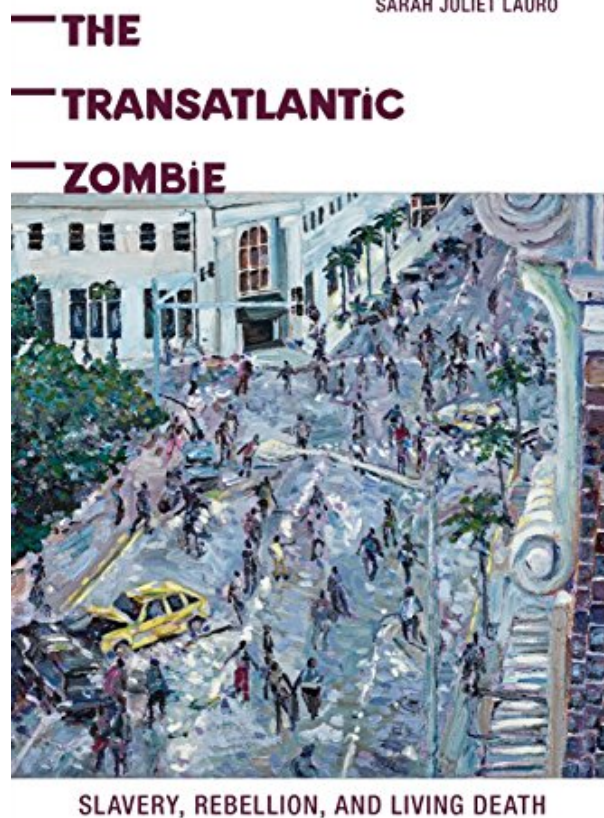


**THE TRANSATLANTIC ZOMBIE: SLAVERY,  
REBELLION, AND LIVING DEATH  
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## Review

"Simply put, this is a tremendous—even epic—study of the zombie in a range of literary, cinematic, political, and popular contexts. A groundbreaking work!" (Aviva Briefel Bowdoin College 2014-07-28)

"This meticulously researched and exhaustive study is an invaluable offering to both Haitian and humanist scholarship. The historical depth and cultural breadth call attention to the zombie's impact as real social phenomenon and as provocative metaphor for the human condition." (Kaiama L. Glover author of *Haiti Unbound: A Spiralist Challenge to the Postcolonial Canon* 2015-03-23)

## About the Author

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Our most modern monster and perhaps our most American, the zombie that is so prevalent in popular culture today has its roots in African soul capture mythologies. The *Transatlantic Zombie* provides a more complete history of the zombie than has ever been told, explaining how the myth's migration to the New World was facilitated by the transatlantic slave trade, and reveals the real-world import of storytelling, reminding us of the power of myths and mythmaking, and the high stakes of appropriation and homage. Beginning with an account of a probable ancestor of the zombie found in the Kongolese and Angolan regions of seventeenth-century Africa and ending with a description of the way, in contemporary culture, new media are used to facilitate zombie-themed events, Sarah Juliet Lauro plots the zombie's cultural significance through Caribbean literature, Haitian folklore, and American literature, film, and the visual arts. The zombie entered US consciousness through the American occupation of Haiti, the site of an eighteenth-century slave rebellion that became a war for independence, thus making the figuration of living death inseparable from its resonances with both slavery and rebellion. Lauro bridges African mythology and US mainstream culture by articulating the ethical complications of the zombie as a cultural conquest that was rebranded for the American cinema. As *The Transatlantic Zombie* shows, the zombie is not merely a bogeyman representing the ills of modern society, but a battleground over which a cultural war has been fought between the imperial urge to absorb exotic, threatening elements, and the originary, Afro-diasporic culture's preservation through a strategy of mythic combat.

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Grabbed hold of me like a hand shooting out of a grave

By David Wheeler

Think you know a thing or two about zombies? I thought I did, until I read this book, which rocked my provincial little world and showed me the true history of the undead. In the introduction to *The Transatlantic Zombie*, Lauro argues that the zombie is perhaps our most “American” monster: It comes from elsewhere. It’s informed by slavery colonialism, and occupation. “Yet somehow,” she writes, “this always gets relegated to the backstory rather than treated as THE story.” What follows is certainly THE story — the authoritative history of the zombie myth, how it was used by Haitians against their colonial oppressors, and how it was stolen by Americans and turned into a commercialized product for the masses. Can the zombie be saved from consumer culture? Based on my reading of this book, I think the answer is a resounding maybe. But if we have a thorough understanding of the zombie’s origins, I think there’s a better chance that the living dead will live on.

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