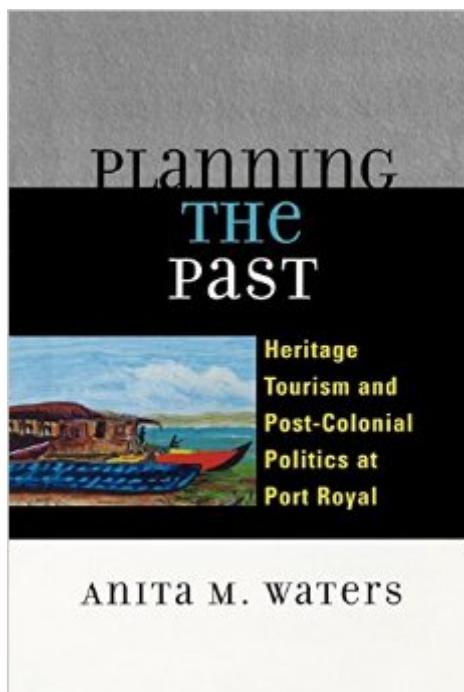


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Planning The Past: Heritage Tourism And Post-Colonial Politics At Port Royal



Synopsis

Planning the Past studies the way a post-colonial society reconstructs its national history and grapples with its colonial past, specifically in Port Royal, a Jamaican village with a dramatic history of pirates, naval admirals, and earthquakes. Anita M. Waters argues that the plans for Port Royal's heritage tourism development represent a chronological record of historical revisionism, and the fact that none of the plans has been realized reflects post-colonial social processes and national ambivalence about piratical and naval history. This interdisciplinary study will be valuable reading for students of historiography, piracy, Caribbean history, Caribbean politics, and heritage tourism.

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Customer Reviews

Port Royal is a sleepy little village of about 1200 people lying on a spit of sand at the entrance to the harbor in Kingston, Jamaica. It is also one of the most historic places in the West Indies. Port Royal became the center for piracy in the Caribbean in the late 17th century, with the encouragement of the British Crown. It is often said to have been the "richest" and "wickedest" city in the world when, in 1692, it was suddenly swallowed up in large measure by the sea in a catastrophic earthquake. Afterwards, Port Royal was rebuilt as the center for British naval operations in the Caribbean, with Horatio Nelson serving briefly there as a young man. Port Royal has considerable potential for "heritage tourism" - that is, people will come to visit it for its historical importance - and heritage tourism is growing rapidly around the world today. This is particularly important for Jamaica, as its economy is increasingly dependent on tourism. This short book is an ethnographic and archival study of seven failed plans since 1965 to develop Port Royal as a heritage tourism destination. It

raises interesting and important questions about how we remember the past, and why. Various interest groups have presented alternative interpretations of the past, highlighting the earthquake, British settlement, naval history, piracy, colonial architecture, and archaeology. What about the black majority of the island? Are they to be invisible, historically? Is the heritage project for largely black Jamaicans or for largely white tourists? Is it for cruise ship passengers or for Jamaican school children? Can it be for everyone? One topic of discussion that will be of particular interest to many is piracy. Why are Americans so enamored of pirates these days?

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