

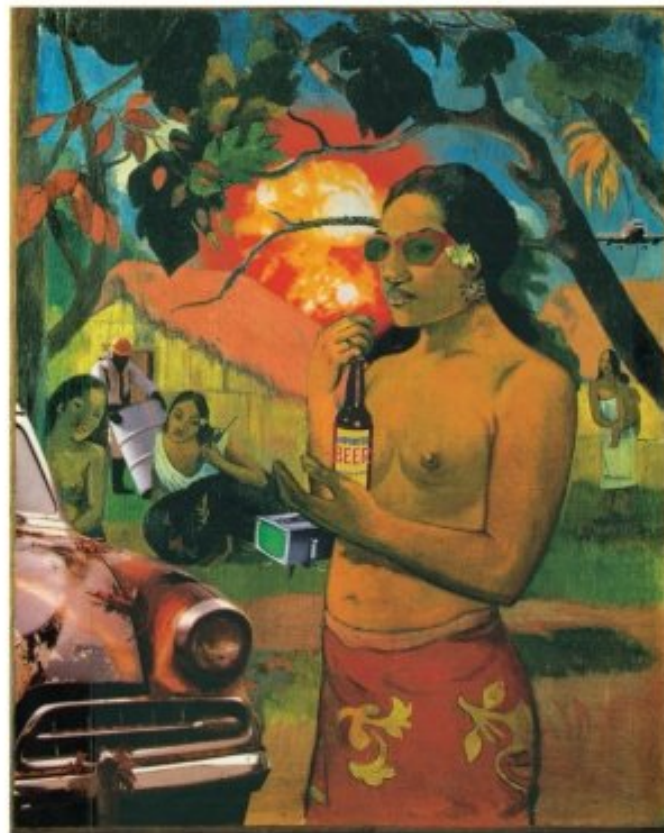
White Savages in the South Seas

Mel Kernahan

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Mel Kernahan : White Savages in the South Seas before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised White Savages in the South Seas:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good collection of storiesBy Mary E. FreelandI was told that there was a story about my husbands Auntie Simone and after purchasing this book I found the section of the book about her. This book reminds me of the book Tales of the South Pacific. Good collection of stories!9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. An extrordinary real life look at Polynesian people places.By A CustomerWhite Savages in

the South Seas is a candid look at the not so glamorous lives of real people living in the South Pacific. This book is filled with fascinating characters like Susy No Pants and interesting adventures. Their stories are well written with great passion and witty humor. I enjoyed every moment. 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Much more than a travel expose....loaded with wit reality
By A Customer
A thinking person's look at life in the South Pacific as seen through the eyes of an imaginative and involved participant in life. You'll laugh and you'll cry and you will get an insight into the lives of many unusual and colorful people. Definitely not a "travel book," but rather a carefully written volume which will forever effect the way you see life in the South Pacific.

White Savages in the South Seas is a book about Polynesia after the cruise ships have sailed, the jet has flown off into the sunset and the maitai curtain has dropped on a dream that was more performance than reality. Writing with zest, humor and great affection, Mel Kernahan introduces the reader to the islands of Polynesia and an array of extraordinary inhabitants: Susy No Pants who lives an uproarious life of pleasure but never strays far from who she is or where she came from; a nuclear nomad from Tuamotus who attempts suicide by ancient means in Californias Balboa Fun Zone, home of the chocolate-dipped frozen banana; an elderly Tahitian freedom fighter, revered by his people, who is smuggled off the island to a French prison in an attempt to silence him; French officials who concoct an elaborate charade to create an uplifting image of the Foreign Legion in Papeete. The author encounters, on remote islands where tourists seldom tread, missionaries, visionaries, drunk bureaucrats, randy kings and Ghost Woman. Kernahan does not find paradise, although she admits to looking for it. Instead she presents, in travel writing who exuberance pushes the limits of the genre, a reality riddled with potholes, shifting truths and a distinct lack of answers.

From Publishers Weekly
Before getting tickets for that Tahitian holiday you've dreamed about, read this book. It's not another tourist guide-rather, a quick study in cultural (mis)understanding that could avert a few embarrassing mistakes, especially for women traveling (like the author) alone. Kernahan's collection reads like a compendium of troubles in paradise, patching together outrageous comedy, incisive observation and caustic social comment in bold swatches like those she used when stitching appliques on her tifaifai-the Polynesian equivalent of a quilt. Her demystifying of one of the few remaining fantasy frontiers left in late-20th-century life is bound to seem a tad cruel to the white savages of the title, but she makes quick work of debunking some unattractive myths and prejudices held by islanders as well. Readers will take in the confessions of a Cook Island queen; share the amorous escapades of Suzy No Pants-doyenne of Papeete's most raucous bar; decode homesick ritual played out nightly at a Tahitian restaurant in California; trace nuclear fallout; and witness the final return from French prison of a revered freedom fighter. These privileged intimacies were won by the author in her many years studying the region, they are signal moments readers would never catch on a two-week cruise in paradise, but can be savored here, served up crisply, with wit, candor and charm. Copyright 1995 Cahners Business Information, Inc. A feast for anyone who knows or is curious about the South Pacific.
Herb Kawainui Kane
About the Author
Mel Kernahan has written for Cosmopolitan, The San Francisco Chronicle and The Sacramento Bee as well as various Pacific Island publications. She was the first woman ever selected by the Cook Islands government to serve as Overseas Public Information Officer, and has worked as a cultural consultant on Polynesia to the City of Los Angeles and UCLA.