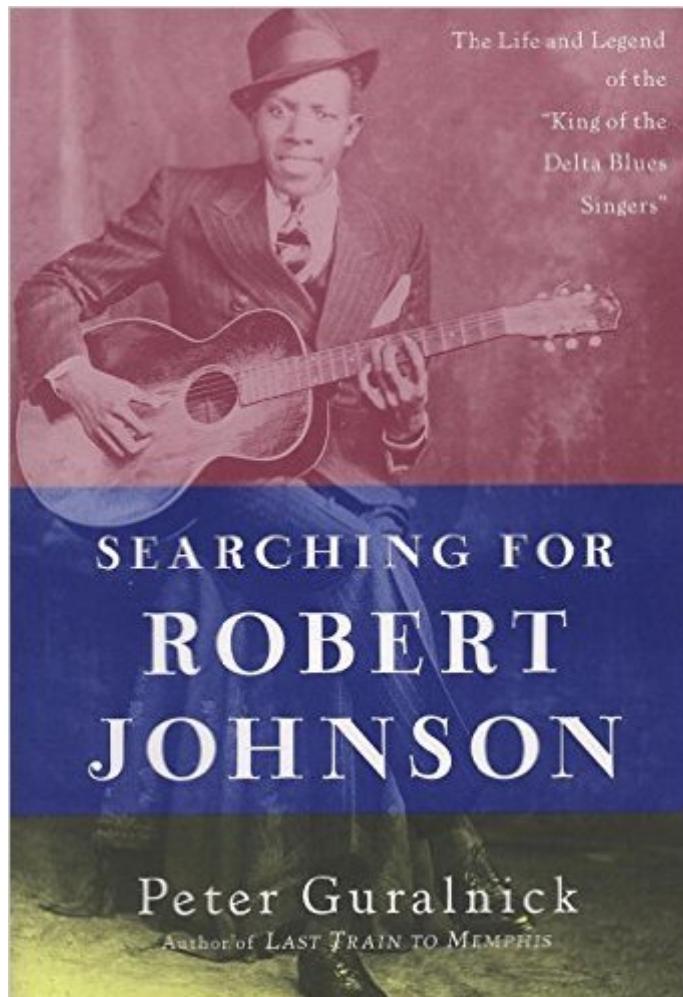


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Searching For Robert Johnson: The Life And Legend Of The "King Of The Delta Blues Singers"



Synopsis

Robert Johnson, while probably the most influential of all blues guitarists, is also one of the most obscure. Recognized as an influence on musicians like Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones, Johnson was poisoned by a jealous husband in 1938--at the age of twenty-seven. This untimely death, his supposed bargain with the devil that enabled him to play guitar, and the ferocity and tormented originality of his work have given rise to a legend that has inspired a Hollywood movie and numerous stories. Peter Guralnick's extended essay about the life of the man and the myth, and of the place and time that produced both, illuminates much of the obscurity around Johnson without forfeiting any of the mystery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

At 96 pages you'll be able to read it in one sitting. Chock full of good information but falls short of being a comprehensive profile; It's a pity more isn't known about this colossal sphinx of a bluesman. Crisply written and nicely rendered paperback edition, includes a few interesting b&w photos of locations and related people to add to the atmosphere.

Robert Johnson may be better known for the mysteries surrounding his short life than for the music he recorded. Even people who are not blues music enthusiasts have at least a passing familiarity with his legend. As good as his recordings are, it is easy to get overwhelmed by the reverence in which they are held by the faithful. In this slender volume, esteemed music historian Peter Guralnick

sheds some light on the real Robert Johnson, both his life and his music. Like a volume in the Penguin Lives series, Guralnick blends a 'just the facts' approach with enough commentary to make the book both quick and thorough. He spends just the right amount of time familiarizing the reader with Johnson predecessors and contemporaries like Charlie Patton and Son House, and provides some critical analysis of Johnson's recordings. This is a perfect book if the reader is seeking more information on Johnson, and an excellent introduction to the mythic creators of the Delta blues.

The 96 pages of this book are pack full of information about legendary bluesman Robert Johnson. Virtually everything that is known about Mr. Johnson is vividly detailed in this work. Makes for excellent reading.

I read this book because of other books I had read about great bluesmen from yesteryear (Howlin Wolf, Muddy Waters, The Chitlin Circuit). While this book had some good info, it was not near as good or as detailed as many others I have read. The author referred to another author's book which was still in the works that I thought the best way to describe this volume was as an advertisement for another. Robert Johnson was an interesting character but I think there must be a better book on him somewhere.

An interesting, if slight, book, which lays out what is known (except possibly by Mack McCormick) about Robert Johnson, and how the author came by this knowledge. For better or worse, what is known is not all that much, but perhaps (as the book suggests to me) the myth of Robert Johnson is more interesting than the reality. This book is good, but the records themselves are indispensable.

It has been a while since I have read this book. From what I remember, I was disappointed in the book in some ways but loved it in others. It wasn't the read I expected it to be. I was hoping for more info on Robert Johnson but there wasn't. I did however like how the book was written and I liked the info that the book did have. I suppose there isn't very much info on Robert Johnson anyway, but I have heard more on TV shows and magazine articles than what was written in this book. Absolutely worth the read though for Robert Johnson fans.

Excellent book. Interesting prospective not only of Robert Johnson, but of his contemporaries.

Great book for serious blues scholars, though the author looks a Johnson through idolatrous eyes.

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