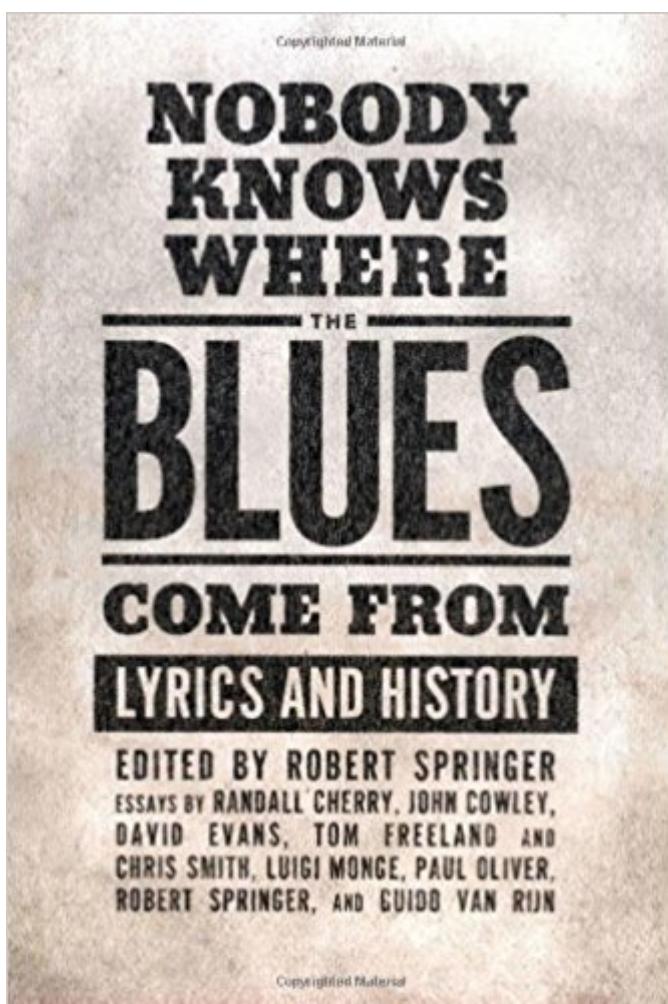


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Nobody Knows Where The Blues Come From: Lyrics And History (American Made Music)



Synopsis

Musicians and music scholars rightly focus on the sounds of the blues and the colorful life stories of blues performers. Equally important and, until now, inadequately studied are the lyrics. The international contributors to *Nobody Knows Where the Blues Come From* explore this aspect of the blues and establish the significance of African American popular song as a neglected form of oral history. "High Water Everywhere: Blues and Gospel Commentary on the 1927 Mississippi River Flood," by David Evans, is the definitive study of songs about one of the greatest natural disasters in the history of the United States. In "Death by Fire: African American Popular Music on the Natchez Rhythm Club Fire," Luigi Monge analyzes a continuum of songs about exclusively African American tragedy. "Lookin' for the Bully: An Enquiry into a Song and Its Story," by Paul Oliver traces the origins and the many avatars of the Bully song. In "That Dry Creek Eaton Clan: A North Mississippi Murder Ballad of the 1930s," Tom Freeland and Chris Smith study a ballad recorded in 1939 by a black convict at Parchman prison farm. "Coolidge's Blues: African American Blues from the Roaring Twenties" is Guido van Rijn's survey of blues of that decade. Robert Springer's "On the Electronic Trail of Blues Formulas" presents a number of conclusions about the spread of patterns in blues narratives. In "West Indies Blues: An Historical Overview 1920s-1950s," John Cowley turns his attention to West Indian songs produced on the American mainland. Finally, in "Ethel Waters: 'Long, Lean, Lanky Mama,'" Randall Cherry reappraises the early career of this blues and vaudeville singer. Robert Springer is a professor of English at the University of Metz in Longeville les Metz, France. Among other works, he is the author of *Authentic Blues: Its History and Its Themes* and the editor of *The Lyrics in African American Popular Music*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Springer offers a collection of essays on the blues as a neglected form of oral history, used by African Americans primarily to record significant events. The eight essays include examination of a murder ballad from the 1930s and blues songs during Prohibition and the Jim Crow era. Although the tone of some of the essays is a bit academic, the opening essay on blues lyrics from the 1927 Mississippi River flood is particularly compelling, in light of the recent flood in New Orleans. Blatantly discriminatory treatment of blacks and whites following the floods, dissatisfaction with the response of the federal government and the Red Cross, and mistreatment of black workers and sharecroppers feature among the lyrics. Essayist David Evans also recalls the rush to record flood songs following the tragedy and the rise in popularity of Bessie Smith's "Back-Water Blues," though it was recorded shortly before the flood. An intriguing intersection of music and oral history. Vanessa Bush
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Springer offers a collection of essays on the blues as a neglected form of oral history, used by African Americans primarily to record significant events. An intriguing intersection of music and oral history.

Great book!If you like the blues,then this book is a must.Highly recommended.

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