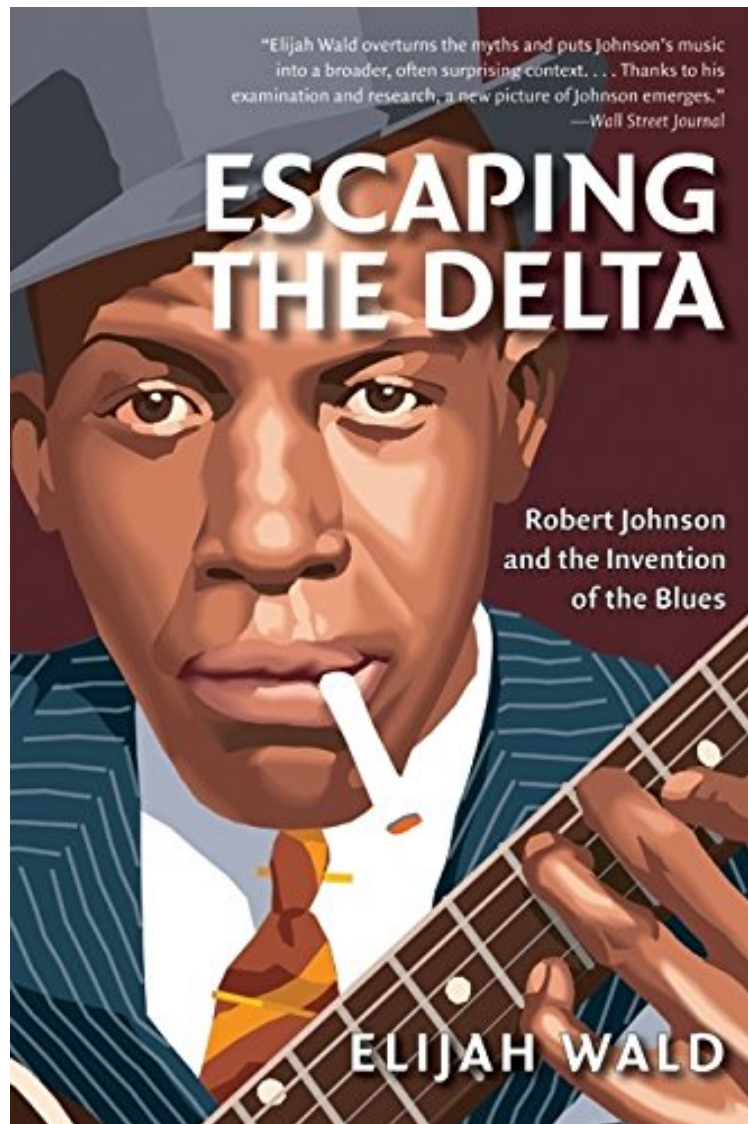


[Free pdf] Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues

## Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues

*Elijah Wald*

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#288744 in Books Elijah Wald 2004-01-01 2004-12-14Format: Bargain PriceOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .92 x 6.00l, .90 #File Name: 0060524278368 pagesEscaping the Delta Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues | File size: 36.Mb

**Elijah Wald : Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Debunks the Johnson mythsBy Paul H JanischSets the scene for Johnson as a musician and not some sort of mythical character who sold his soul to the devil. Paints a contemporary picture of the music at the time. Stunning book. A must for all blues fans. You are left with a sense of intrigue.2 of 2

people found the following review helpful. Excellent research and background into the BluesBy CustomerExcellent research and background into the Blues. Thank goodness for youtube, so you can have a listen to these artist that you probably never heard before. This is necessary so you can understand the differences between the blues singers. Elijah's love for the blues and the true history and not just the romantic view comes shining through and for that I applaud him. A must read for old school blues lovers and for ones who want to learn the real history of the music. Robert Johnson is only the tip of the iceberg and that's a good thing.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Insightful Musician's PerspectiveBy J. R. Wood Jr.The known facts of Robert Johnson's life have been written up in books and magazines ad nauseum since his recordings were released on LP's by Columbia in the 60's and he was subsequently "rediscovered", but Mr. Wald's perspective is fresh and totally engrossing : placing Robert Johnson's music in perspective with his sources and the trends of that time and place. As a guitarist, I couldn't put it down, and often refer back to it in order to better understand his songs. Excellent in all respects.

The life of blues legend Robert Johnson becomes the centerpiece for this innovative look at what many consider to be America's deepest and most influential music genre. Pivotal are the questions surrounding why Johnson was ignored by the core black audience of his time yet now celebrated as the greatest figure in blues history. Trying to separate myth from reality, biographer Elijah Wald studies the blues from the inside -- not only examining recordings but also the recollections of the musicians themselves, the African-American press, as well as examining original research. What emerges is a new appreciation for the blues and the movement of its artists from the shadows of the 1930s Mississippi Delta to the mainstream venues frequented by today's loyal blues fans.

From Publishers WeeklyIn this combination history of blues music and biography of Robert Johnson, Wald, a blues musician himself (and author of *Narcorrido*), explores Johnson's rise from a little known guitarist who died in 1938 to one of the most influential artists in rock and roll. From the blues' meager beginning in the early 1900s to its '30s heyday and its 1960s revival, Wald gives a revisionist history of the music, which he feels, in many instances, has been mislabeled and misjudged. Though his writing sometimes reads like a textbook, and he occasionally gets bogged down in arcane musical references, Wald's academic precision aids him in his quest to re-analyze America's perception of the blues as well as in trying to decipher the music's murky true origins and history. Using a lengthy comparison of how white Americans and black Americans define the blues, Wald demonstrates how Johnson fit into the gray area between the two. Wald combines a short bio of Johnson with detailed analysis of his songs and the mysterious tales that are associated with him, giving a thorough account of Johnson's life, music and legend. The chapter on how white guitarists like Eric Clapton and Keith Richards interpreted who Johnson was and what he played really shows why he is not one of the many forgotten early 20th-century bluesmen. Wald's theories will no doubt cause passionate discussions among true blues aficionados, but the technical and obscure nature of much of his writing will make the book more of a useful reference resource. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From BooklistAs far as aficionados are concerned, Johnson (1911?-38) is the central figure in blues history, whose recordings contributed "Cross Road Blues," "Rambling on My Mind," "Come on in My Kitchen," "Sweet Home Chicago," "I Believe I'll Dust My Broom," "Stones in My Passway," "Hellhound on My Trail," and "Love in Vain" to the core blues repertoire. He was the man promoter John Hammond wanted to represent the blues in the epoch-making Carnegie Hall concert "From Spirituals to Swing" but too late, for a jealous husband had killed him (it was said). Subsequently dubbed "mysterious," he certainly had eluded publicity in his lifetime (that Hammond knew of him seems miraculous). Blues fan, scholar, and player Wald contends that Johnson's obscurity wasn't his fault. He wanted stardom and followed a well-blazed trail toward it, copying and borrowing from big hit-makers of the time, not all of them blues singers or black, by any means. He made little impression on the blues audience of his time, which was identical with the black pop-music audience, who considered blues, along with Armstrong and Ellington's jazz, Crosby's crooning, and Gene Autry's cowboy singing, everyday pop music. Wald doesn't treat Johnson directly until the middle of the book, when he invaluablely parses each of his recordings to disclose both borrowings and originalities. The first section describes the musical and social scenes Johnson inhabited, and the last charts how white enthusiasts seized on Johnson as the archetypal bluesman. Throughout, Wald writes better than anyone else ever has about the blues. If you read only one book about blues--maybe ever--read this one. Ray Olson Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "If you read only one book about blues...read this one." (Starred Booklist on *Escaping the Delta*)