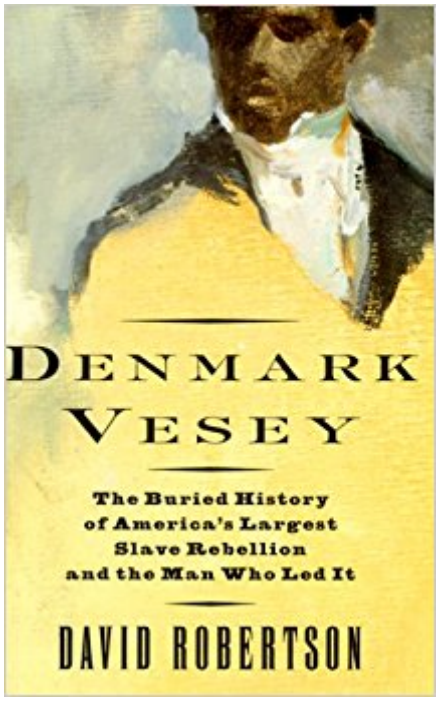
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Denmark Vesey: The Buried History Of America's Largest Slave Rebellion And The Man Who Led It



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Synopsis

On July 2, 1822, Denmark Vesey and five co-conspirators were hanged in a desolate marsh outside of Charleston, South Carolina. They had been betrayed by black informers during their attempt to set in motion the largest slave rebellion in the history of the United States--an effort astonishing in its level of organization and support. Nine thousand armed slaves and free blacks were to converge on Charleston, set the city aflame, seize the government arsenal, and then murder the entire white population of the city, sparing only the ship captains who would carry Vesey and his followers to Haiti or Africa.The attempted revolt was a significant episode in American history, yet it, and its leader, have been all but forgotten. In this balanced and gracefully written biography of Vesey--the first in many decades--David Robertson gives us a profile of this extraordinary man. He shows how, by preaching a doctrine of negritude combined with various religious elements, Vesey was able to attract large numbers of blacks to a messianic crusade for freedom. Robertson details the aftermath of the failed revolt, analyzes its social and political consequences, and articulates the essential, disturbing questions it poses to a racially and ethnically pluralistic society today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1822, Denmark Vesey, a Caribbean-born free Negro from Charleston, South Carolina, led the largest attempted slave revolt in U.S. history with over 9,000 blacks. Although it failed--thanks to the confessions of a house slave to his master--and Vesey was executed, his heroic attempt continues to be a source of pride for African Americans. David Robertson’s well-researched book chronicles

Vesey’s life as a slave in Haiti, his move to Charleston, his fluency in English, Creole, and French, and his skillful use of Christian teachings (and possibly Islamic ones, as well) to inspire the slaves to rebel. "He was a black man of great physical presence, strength, and intellect," Robertson writes, "linguistically fluent and politically facile enough to mold various African ethnic and religious groups into one unified force." Using court testimony from Vesey’s trial and historical archives, Robertson unveils the stark and violent climate of antebellum life in 18th-century America, bringing to life a hero who fought for the same principles upon which the democratic nation in which he was made a slave was founded. --Eugene Holley Jr.

Much is already known about Denmark Vesey, who purchased his freedom from slavery in 1800 with money he won in a lottery. Yet his apparently sudden transformation from successful free black carpenter and property owner to the organizer of "the most elaborate and well-planned slave insurrection in U.S. history," in 1822, still fuels lingering curiosity. Evoking the atmosphere of material wealth enjoyed by antebellum South Carolina whites, Robertson reveals their fear at being surrounded by a black slave population whose labor made their comfort possible but who outnumbered them four to one. Drawing on the correspondence and memoirs of whites and their descendantsAbut not of blacksARobertson addresses his central question: "Why were individual freedom and prosperity not enough for Denmark Vesey?" The author’s answer, which links Vesey’s dissatisfaction (and that of the thousands of slaves who were reputedly ready to join him in arms) to the spiritual autonomy he achieved through the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is persuasive. Furthermore, Robertson identifies Vesey as a spiritual and political leader whose views were a precursor to modern Black Theology. Based on the word of a slave informant, Vesey and more than 20 slaves were hanged as insurrectionists in the summer of 1822, despite little physical evidence. Robertson’s well-researched narrative and smooth style make this an intellilgent analysis of, as well as a worthy tribute to, his subject. Photos not seen by PW. (Aug.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Although much of the evidence about Denmark Vesey’s revolt was destroyed, David Robertson rolled with what he had and produced a plausible account of what happened in Charleston, SC. After reading this book, I went to Charleston for the second time and saw the city in a different light. Back in the day, the city was not quaint or picturesque; it was hell for black people, slave and free. After reading this, I better understand why Mother Emanuel Church was a target of racial hate, and I want to read more about Denmark Vesey. Kudos to David Robertson.

A lot of history is stored in this book, anyone who thought slaves were content and happy with their condition because they were housed and fed by others should read the book. How could human beings treat another human so savagely because of their skin color, then use the Bible for justification should read Vesey.

Very informative and relevant about Charleston. Denmark Vesey and his army of enslaved and free men of color were involved in the AME Church in Charleston where a bible study group were murdered recently by a racist white man. This gives an intense look at the history of slavery and racism in the USA.

The Author wastes no time getting into the details of what was a very important part of our enforced history and how we chose to handle the unwarranted abuses.1LoveFine1952

Just as listed.

One of the most prolific books and records to have about slavery. This should be required reading in all high schools and colleges in America.

Great read...

GIFT 4 MY DADDY....GREAT! Condition...MY DADDY LUVd IT!

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