



Write Me a Few of Your Lines: A Blues Reader

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Among the signal achievements of African American culture is the style of music known as the blues, an art form evolved from southern black songs of the late nineteenth century. From the field hollers and steel-bodied guitar of its early days to the electric amplification of today's performers, the visceral power of the blues has long been celebrated for its creativity, spontaneity, and ingenuity. It has served as a wellspring for other forms of music, including gospel, jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, rock, and rap, and has exerted an influence on literature and the visual arts as well. This book brings together some of the most significant writings about the blues published between 1911 and 1998. Included are selections by folklorists, anthropologists, sociologists, literary artists, musicians, critics, and aficionados. That the blues published between 1911 and 1998. Included are selections by folklorists, anthropologists, sociologists, literary artists, musicians, critics, and aficionados. The extraordinary appeal of the blues is reflected in the range of contributors to this volume, among them Howard W. Odum, Alan Lomax, Richard Alan Waterman, Langston Hughes, Paul Oliver, Sam Charters, Janheinz Jahn, James Baldwin, Leroi Jones, Charles Keil, Jeff Todd Titon, Houston Baker, Hazel Carby, and Angela Davis. From these various perspectives emerges a new understanding of the blues: its origins in African aesthetics; the impact of slavery and Reconstruction; its early folk manifestations; and the importance of religion, style, gender, audience, protest, and the record business in its development as an art form. Further context is provided by a comprehensive introduction, section overviews, and an extensive bibliography, discography, and videography of blues materials.

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