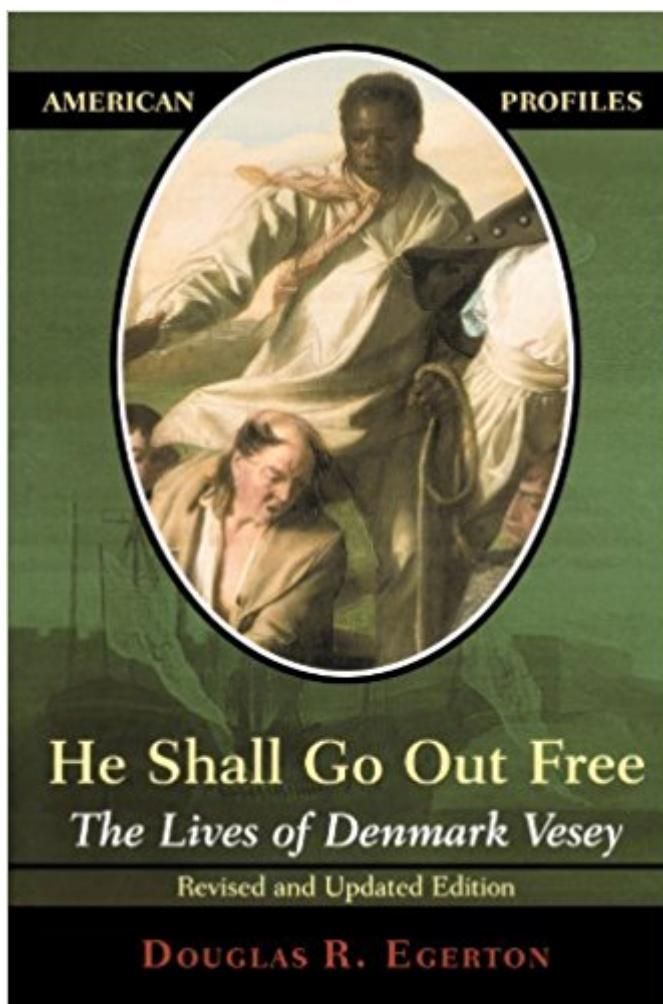


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He Shall Go Out Free: The Lives Of Denmark Vesey (American Profiles)



Synopsis

On July 2, 1822, Denmark Vesey was hanged in Charleston, S.C., for his role in planning one of the largest slave uprisings in the United States. During his long, extraordinary life Vesey played many roles—Caribbean field hand, cabin boy, chandler's man, house servant, proud freeman, carpenter, husband, father, church leader, abolitionist, revolutionary. Yet until his execution transformed him into a symbol of liberty, Vesey made it his life's work to avoid the attention of white authorities. Because he preferred to dwell in the hidden alleys of Charleston's slave community, Vesey remains as elusive as he is today celebrated, and his legend is often mistaken for fact. In this biography of the great rebel leader, Douglas R. Egerton employs a variety of historical sources—church records, court documents, travel accounts, and newspapers from America and Saint Domingue—to recreate the lost world of the mysterious Vesey. The revised and updated edition reflects the most recent scholarship on Vesey, and a new afterword by the author explores the current debate about the existence of the 1822 conspiracy. If Vesey's plot was unique in the annals of slave rebellions in North America, it was because he was unique; his goals, as well as the methods he chose to achieve them, were the product of a hard life's experience.

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Customer Reviews

Egerton seeks Vesey in the few records that remain, ranging from newspaper stories to hastily scribbled court transcripts, in uncommon sources from the Carolinas to Haiti. He finds that Vesey was a complicated man whose freed status and eloquence in several languages did not seem to matter, whose frustration with white society, white religion, and white power led him to organize a revolt that consisted of slaves simply walking away from it all. Egerton includes very useful essays on his sources and on Vesey's treatment by historians. (Reference and Research Book News)

Douglas R. Egerton is the author of the critically acclaimed Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802 and Charles Fenton Mercer and the Trial of National Conservatism. He is professor of history at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York.

I enjoyed the book and would encourage my folks to read it. It is so hard to get an unbiased history of Denmark Vesey. I am looking for African descended historians to give me an accurate picture. Considering the author isn't a black historian, he gives a pretty, fair and balanced view of Denmark. I believe the truth is a problem for many people, but I am relatively satisfied this book. It is beyond belief that some folks would have a problem with enslaved humans rising up and slaughtering those with their foot on their necks. These same people don't seem to have a problem with the whites slaughtering, maiming, and raping, terrorizing and working to death the Africans. Go figure!! I highly recommend.

Fascinating book about a little understood American leader. And it's readable and not too long, so good for a non specialist reader.

This is a highly readable, well-researched book about the slave rebellion planned by Denmark Vesey. Although this rebellion seems to be relatively unknown to many people interested in the antebellum period of the deep south, it is an important event that had a devastating impact on how slaves were treated in the south. The bibliography and footnotes are quite extensive. No serious scholar or history buffs.

The Lives of Denmark Vesey is a story of an atypical slave (Telemaque) born in the Caribbean who ends up in Charleston, South Carolina by the time he's sixteen. Vesey, having learned three languages, was extremely intelligent compared to slaves of his time and would later lead a slave revolt in Charleston. Douglas Egerton does a great job of vividly describing Charleston and many of

its inhabitants in the early 19th century. This interesting and astonishing book about a slave in the early 1800s is very accurate and truthfully coincides with many historians living in Charleston today. I recently did a report comparing Egerton's book to various sources of the known history of Charleston in the late 18th and early 19th century, and Egerton's book hits on all the main aspects of Charleston. The buzzard and manure infested streets and the large "underground" slave population that roamed the streets at night are just a few of the characteristics of Charleston Egerton accurately hits on. Props to Egerton on an interesting and accurate story about a monumental aspect of Charleston's history.

This is an excellent history of slavery in South Carolina with a focus on the unsuccessful revolt led by Denmark Vesey. The strength of the book is the history of Vesey and the evolutionary process that leads him to his death. What is most intriguing was the discussion of Vesey's rejection of the New Testament as a guide for his actions and his use of the Old Testament as a guide. The book deals well with the issue of the effect of the masters use of the Christian faith as a justification for slavery on the slaves and freemen's spiritual life. The only flaw in the book was the author's obvious admiration for Vesey. Not that such admiration is not deserved, but it tended to color some of the more difficult issues in Vesey's revolt. For instance, a major controversy has arisen concerning whether as part of the revolt the whites of Charleston were to be massacred. The author does not deal with the claim other than to dismiss it as illogical. However, this dismissal is insufficient given the hate and feelings for revenge that the slaves must have felt toward their masters. All in all, this is a very readable history of important events in American history. A good read.

This was an extraordinary book. Douglas Egerton does a marvelous job of telling the different lives of Denmark Vesey. The book is extremely well researched and tells the historical truth of Vesey's life. The author does a wonderful job of finding the true story of Denmark Vesey and incorporates intriguing insights into his life. This is a wonderful book that illustrates what life was like for a dynamic slave who turned free. Egerton tells Vesey's story in a fascinating way and does a great job of recapturing Vesey's life. The author tells of how Vesey was a strong-willed, highly intelligent leader who had an ingenious plot to help slaves and free blacks to truly become free. The author shows how fascinating Vesey was even though his plan failed. This is a marvelous book and I highly recommend reading it! It is an absolute joy to read!

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