

(Download ebook) Tennessee Delta Quiltmaking

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Teri Klassen

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Teri Klassen : Tennessee Delta Quiltmaking before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tennessee Delta Quiltmaking:

Prior to the 1960s, quiltmaking thrived in the cotton-rich Tennessee Delta as a crucial source of warm bedcovers among cash-poor yet self-sufficient farm households. But as agriculture mechanized, rural workers switched to factory jobs and could afford nicer houses and electric blankets. Quiltmaking survived because women-both black and white-

reinvented it as a hobby that met personal and social needs. Though scholars have studied quilt styles with rural southern roots, few have considered black and white quiltmakers together or as part of a shared regional culture. In *Tennessee Delta Quilting*, Teri Klassen traces how mid-twentieth-century common quilts developed from nineteenth-century styles. Through interviews with people from rural households, Klassen uncovers the ways in which designs and labor were shared and the ways in which quilting was part of the small-farm culture that was common to blacks and whites. While quilting was a creative form passed down in families, limited means and accessible materials (such as home-grown cotton for batting) made it both a necessity and a highly evolved custom in southwestern Tennessee's upper Delta region. For families in this region, the quilt symbolized homemaker competence and self-reliance, a trait especially valued by sharecroppers and tenant-farmers who owned no land. The culture of quilting reflected living conditions and values of these folk, and Klassen details numerous changes in this culture, from how it contributed to small-farm stability to how industrialization affected the practice. By considering quilting's practical, aesthetic, and social aspects in a historical, mixed-race context, *Tennessee Delta Quilting* makes a unique contribution to the study of the Tennessee Delta and the understanding of common-quilt design.

Tennessee Delta Quilting is an excellent study of quilting in rural West Tennessee. Both black and white quilters inhabit the small-farm region, and their quilting traditions are largely shared across racial lines. A study that highlights shared culture, rather than seeking to distinguish racial or ethnic contributions, is a welcome direction in cultural research. Alan Jabbour, former director of the American Folklore Society, Library of Congress