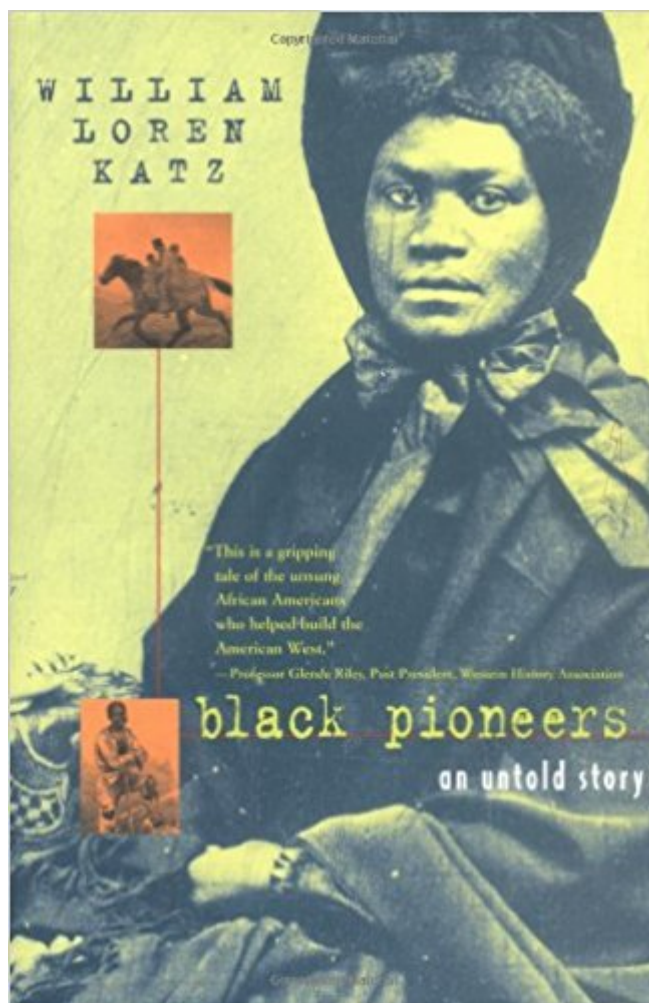


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Black Pioneers: An Untold Story



Synopsis

Out of a past little noted in history texts comes this tale of African American pioneers in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. These pathfinders were slaves, poets, runaways, missionaries, farmers, teachers, and soldiers. For these African Americans, the frontier meant freedom, and from the earliest times, some seized liberty by joining Indian nations. As Southern slaveholders tried to pass laws to make slavery legal in the West and territorial legislatures wrote "Black Laws" that limited basic rights to white settlers, African American pioneers became freedom fighters. From Ohio to Kansas they battled slavehunters and developed Underground Railroad stations. Black families built their own schools and churches and created unique forms of protest to ensure their advancement. Historian William Loren Katz reveals a frontier saga that has often been buried, glossed over, or lost.

Book Information

Age Range: 12 and up

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Hardcover: 208 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

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Biographies > Cultural Heritage #1832 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural

Customer Reviews

Grade 7-9-In a clear, straightforward style, Katz describes the settlement of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys (covering Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri) by African Americans seeking freedom, including biographical sketches of men and women who formed churches, started schools, or were politically active in their region. Some of these settlers were fugitive slaves; several set up stations on the Underground Railroad with the aid of the Quakers; others were farmers, poets, and soldiers. In several states, they helped form black

regiments in the Civil War. Chronologically arranged, the book introduces many lesser-known personages not found in most collective biographies and places them in a broader context of U.S. history as a whole. Students or teachers might want to use this title as a starting point for further research. Bureau of Census figures are appended to each chapter and the book contains extensive endnotes and a lengthy bibliography. Well-chosen black-and-white illustrations and reproductions from the 1800s round out this readable and well-documented presentation. Debbie Feulner, Northwest Middle School, Greensboro, NC Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Katz (Black Women of the Old West, 1995, etc.) takes fascinating material the tale of free and escaped African-Americans who helped colonize the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys from the late 18th-century to the middle of the 19th century and gives it a textbook treatment. In this gathering of details and events in the lives of real people who settled the area, he presents a full history of the contributions of determined people who established schools and churches, fought slavery, and won basic civil rights. The many black-and-white period drawings and photographs help establish the people in the narrative and the facts surrounding their lives. The facts alone, one after the other, add up to a cogent picture of the growing wealth and importance of African-Americans in US history, but the dry presentation may doom it to use solely for reference or as a supplement to more inviting works. (index, not seen, maps, charts, notes, bibliography) (Nonfiction. 12-14) -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

This is a area of history that I plan to focus on for a while. I am just beginning to learn more about it."In 1846 DeBaptiste and his family moved to Detroit, hired a teacher a teacher, and opened their home as a classroom for Black children. Soon after, he met Lambert, and the two men began to enroll in a hard-hitting, armed antislavery unit call the African American Mysteries."Unfortunately, I don't have the time to research the terminology "African American." This language doesn't seem to fit 1846. Would Black folk in 1846 have called themselves African Americans? It seems so contemporary. This just struck me as odd. My only complaint with this author is I sense a tone of paternalism. Otherwise, I highly recommend this book. I give it a 5 star.

Interesting and informative read.

Although Black Pioneers, The Untold Story, was written with young readers in mind, even those of us who are not so young can benefit from this work. I am afraid that most white folks are pretty

ignorant of American history regarding African-American people. This is a sad thing because their history, like the rest of the American story, is important when attempting to get the big picture of the country's early days. Regardless of a person's color, history remains precious. This book by Katz provides an opportunity to appreciate the many struggles black folks had in those days, struggles which seem to continue even to this day. It was amazing to learn of the many measures instituted to limit the rights of other human beings and because of this there is a heavy burden of shame hanging over our history. We can't go back but we can learn from the past and seek to improve things in the future. This work is a welcome addition to American history shelves.

This book tells the story of all pioneers, but with a unique twist that includes the horrors of escaping slavery, being denied education, and racially-motivated mob attacks. Although this book may provide more detail that the teacher has time to fit into the curriculum, the teacher may want to use segments from the book. For example, there are segments about Missouri and Kansas in the book, which would be relevant to state history instruction. The teacher may want to use the book at the key vehicle to teach history during pioneer times. This impressive book contains drawings and photographs to help students understand the content.

This book covers a little researched area in literature and will find some use because of that. However, it appears to be the result of an enormous amount of research but little written preparation. The text, though full of interesting information, is disjointed, confusing, and awkward. The book's organization is lacking, beginning with an introduction that fails to introduce the text, followed by several chapters regarding pioneers in the Ohio area, and ending with seven or so chapters that mostly deal with one geographical area at a time. Ideally this format would work, except that the bulk of the information presented is centered on the individuals, and not the geography. Individual people tend to move from one area to another, resulting in confusing chapters. Transitions between discussions of these pioneers are largely left out. The black and white pictures scattered throughout are unrelated to the text half of the time, contributing to the bad organization and general confusion. The large index will help users find the exact information they are researching, so it will be somewhat useful. However, it is doubtful that anyone but a college grad student would attempt to read the book from beginning to end.

Good information

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