



The World That Made New Orleans: From Spanish Silver to Congo Square

Ned Sublette

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Named one of the Top 10 Books of 2008 by *The Times-Picayune*.

Winner of the 2009 Humanities Book of the Year award from the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

Awarded the New Orleans Gulf South Booksellers Association Book of the Year Award for 2008.

New Orleans is the most elusive of American cities. The product of the centuries-long struggle among three mighty empires--France, Spain, and England--and among their respective American colonies and enslaved African peoples, it has always seemed like a foreign port to most Americans, baffled as they are by its complex cultural inheritance.

The World That Made New Orleans offers a new perspective on this insufficiently understood city by telling the remarkable story of New Orleans's first century--a tale of imperial war, religious conflict, the search for treasure, the spread of slavery, the Cuban connection, the cruel aristocracy of sugar, and the very different revolutions that created the United States and Haiti. It demonstrates that New Orleans already had its own distinct personality at the time of Louisiana's statehood in 1812. By then, important roots of American music were firmly planted in its urban swamp--especially in the dances at Congo Square, where enslaved Africans and African Americans appeared en masse on Sundays to, as an 1819 visitor to the city put it, "rock the city."

This book is a logical continuation of Ned Sublette's previous volume, *Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drums to the Mambo*, which was highly praised for its synthesis of musical, cultural, and political history. Just as that book has become a standard resource on Cuba, so too will *The World That Made New Orleans* long remain essential for understanding the beautiful and tragic story of this most American of cities.

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