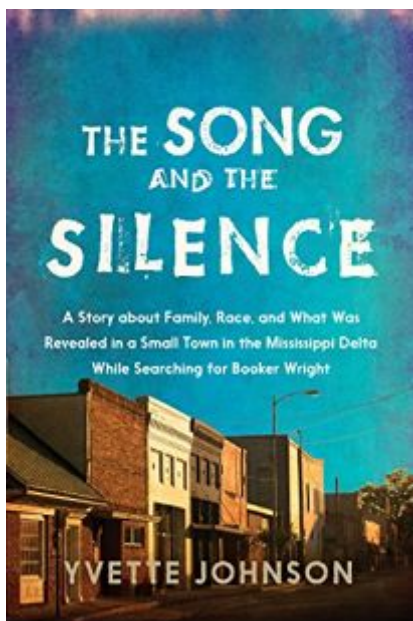




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## ★ The Song and the Silence: A Story about Family, Race, and what was Revealed in a Small Town in the Mississippi Delta while Searching for Booker Wright

Yvette Johnson. Atria, \$26 (304p) ISBN 978-1-4767-5494-9

Johnson's memoir (inspired by her 2012 documentary film, *Booker's Place: A Mississippi Story*) recounts the complicated life of her uncle, Booker Wright, and his hometown of Greenwood, a racially divided town in the Mississippi Delta. During the height of the civil rights movement, Wright worked as a waiter at Lusco's, an upscale restaurant with a white clientele, and was the owner of Booker's Place, a thriving restaurant serving the black community. In a short segment for a TV documentary on Greenwood, produced in the 1960s, Wright described with stark honesty the racism of Greenwood that terrorized his family and community, causing shock among his white customers at Lusco's, who thought he was happy to serve them. The footage inspired Johnson to look deep into her family's history. With profound insight and unwavering compassion, Johnson weaves an unforgettable story of her family and a nation distressed by racism. Her quest leads her deep into the lives of both black and white Americans who have suffered from racism's isolating effects. She interviews the former leader of Greenwood's White Citizens' Council, whom she describes as "a tortured man." Johnson brilliantly constructs a complex and empathetic look at racism in the South. (May)

DETAILS