Mp3 Many Voices - Born And Raised In Tobacco Fields: Portrait Of A Changing American Landscape



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Fourteen voices weave together a richly textured tapestry of reflections on a rural American way of life as old as our nation's history. Winner of the 2005 Oral History Association Non-Print Award. 20 MP3 Songs SPOKEN WORD: With Music, SPOKEN WORD: Storytelling Details: It's what made some people rich and kept others as poor as the sandy soil they worked. It was what made Maryland: sotweed, the money crop, the reason for being for settlers who began to arrive in 1634. One hundred forty-one Europeans made the voyage across the seas and soon established a tobacco-growing colony. Native people taught the newcomers how to nurture the weed. Before long it became the currency of the New World. So focused were the colonists on growing tobacco that the Colonial Assembly had to legislate food production to offset widespread hunger. The scent of tobacco is embedded in the culture of this land. It has dictated social dealings and shaped a rapport with nature. Tobacco culture, mixed with traditions of harvesting fish, crabs and oysters, have formed the way of life in the peninsula. Southern Marylanders have been "bacco" farmers and watermen since the days when Native Americans, wolves and other wild creatures were the region's sole inhabitants. The change in both culture and landscape has been abrupt since the Maryland State Buyout began in the late 1990s. Many claim that the tobacco market had long been dwindling. Yet few deny that the Buyout ushered in a more rapid end to a way of life which persisted here for a dozen generations. Even those who have remained in agriculture know that producing tobacco had its own set of skills and its own rhythm. Until recently most of the Southern Maryland landscape was open fields giving way to wide rivers, and most of these fields were full of tall tobacco plants blooming white in the summer. Now, as fields give way to large homes, hardly any of the remaining fields sway with tobacco green. Can skeletons of old tobacco barns, old tools and machinery, and the aging farmers

themselves impart the values and experience embedded in tobacco culture? Or, will houses grow up in the old farming fields and replace all memory of what is past? These are some of the themes that come alive in this epic spoken history of a shifting American landscape, a story of agriculture, land use, choices and fates. Listen to the voices; hear the music in this fast moving drama. Consider the forces of modern life remaking the landscape. Experience first hand reflections on a rural way of life as old as our nation's history, tobacco culture. In Born and Raised in Tobacco Fields, Fourteen voices weave together a richly textured tapestry of reflections on a rural way of life as old as our nation's history, tobacco farming in Southern Maryland. In the wake of the Maryland State Tobacco Buyout of 2000, traditional agricultural landscapes are being transformed at a dizzying rate by suburban sprawl, leaving little trace of a rural culture and economy dating back more than 350 years to Maryland's colonial beginnings. These impassioned voices, augmented with poignant music and ambient sounds, take listeners on a foray into the farms and auction houses of American agriculture. The Voices: Christine Bergmark, Gilbert "Buddy" Bowling, S. L. Brady, Cassandra Briscoe, Butch Cantor, David Conrad, James W. Diggs, Helen I. Gray, Earl "Buddy" Hance, Carrie Kline, Michael Kline, Judy Leavitt, Elmer Mackall, John C. Prouty, Lindsey W. Reid, Kristi Uunila, Walter Wilkerson, and Frank Wood

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