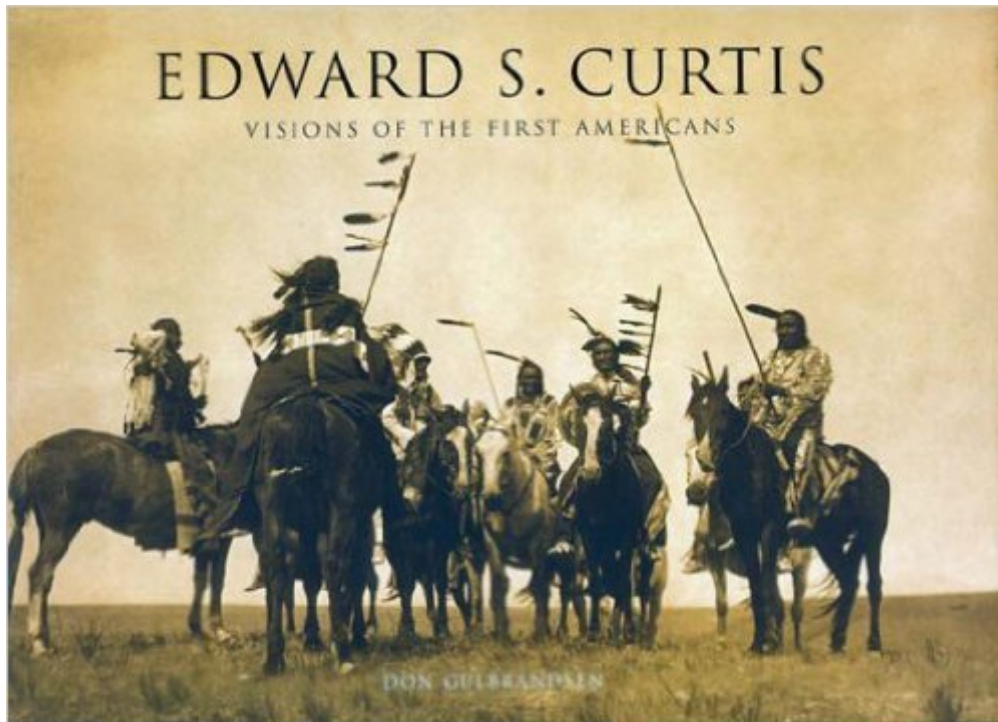


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Edward S. Curtis: Visions Of The First Americans



Synopsis

Edward S. Curtis: Visions of the First Americans is a tribute to the photographer, his work, but above all to the Native Americans he photographed. Chapters on many different Native American tribes make this collection unique. Edward Curtis's recognizable style, saturated with sepia, is immediately recognizable. He captures not only the striking faces of his subjects, but also a glimpse into the lifestyle of each Native American tribe he photographed. Women grind corn, and communities gather outside their traditional living areas. Atop horses, Native Americans ride on the prairie. Papooses are bundled in woven carrying packs, and men are dressed in full feathered regalia. These images paint a picture, known to us now only as a historical memory. Many tribes are featured in this volume, from the familiar Apache and Navaho to lesser-known tribes. This book will draw in readers who are interested in world cultures, along with photography buffs and historians. This hardcover volume is a wonderful addition to any library.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book includes photographs and/or information on the Apache, Jicarilla, Navajo, Pima, Papago, Qahatika, Mohave, Yuma, Maricopa, Walapai, Havasupai, Yavapai, Teton Sioux, Yanktonai, Assiniboin, Apsaroke, Hidatsa, Mandan, Arikara, Atsina, Piegan, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Yakima, Klickitat, Salishan, Kutenai, Nex Perces, Kwakiutl, Nootka, Haida, Hopi, Hupa, Yurok, Karok, Wiyot, Tolowa, Tututni, Shasta, Achomawi, Klamath, Kato, Wailaki, Yuki, Pomo, Wintun, Maidu, Miwok, Yokuts, Dieguenos, Washo, Tiwa, Keres, Tewa, Zuni, Chipewyan, Cree, Sarsi, Wichita, Cheyenne, Oto, Comanche, Peyote Cult, Nunivak, Eskimos of various bays, islands and capes, as well as

others. I found this book shortly after Christmas of 2007. There may be larger or multi-volume offerings of Edward S. Curtis' photographs, I'm not sure, but this is a very nice one at an affordable price. The background history does not treat him blindly as a hero or villain. It illustrates both his faults and better attributes. The book mentions pictures that are staged, as in the case of Red Dog on page 66. Curtis described the Sioux as living in terrible poverty on the reservation when he photographed them, but one would not know that from the regal photo of Red Dog that clearly points back towards much better times. The book includes many regions, tribes and ages of people, and in some ways even some of the more negative aspects of his photographs are invaluable because they informed much of the mainstream American (worldwide, really) mythology that surrounds First Nations peoples of North America. The photos are somewhere between documentary and romanticism. Where he could have taken straight documentary photos of poverty and tattered Western/white clothing, he instead staged warrior meetings on horseback and the like.

This is a beautifully printed large-format coffee table book that includes more than 300 Sepia Toned Native American images taken by early 19th Century Pioneer Photographer Edward Sheriff Curtis. The book includes an excellent introduction and helpful picture captions. The guts of the book are in 20 chapters that match the 20-volume set of books titled "The North American Indian." In this volume, each chapter includes work from each of the original Curtis Series. Most of these pictures are used courtesy of the Library of Congress Collection of Curtis's work. The Shadow Catcher is the nickname the Native Americans gave the photographer and his camera work. "He Who Sleeps on His breath" was another of the monikers given to Curtis because each night he blew into an inflatable mattress before going to sleep. The nicknames applied to Curtis were typical of the descriptive names of the Native Americans themselves. Many people have at least heard of Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Shot in the Hand, Two Moons, Red Cloud, Geronimo and various other famous Native American warriors. Now most Americans have probably seen some of the most famous photographs that Curtis produced and don't even realize it. Among the most famous images are portraits of Princess Angelina, Red Cloud, Chief Bear's Belly and Chief Red Hawk. Of the scenes are "Canyon De Chelley," (a striking image copied by movie director John Ford among others), "Oasis in the Bad Lands" (which features Chief Red Hawk watering his horse), and "The Vanishing Race." Based on some of his earliest work photographing Native Americans, Curtis developed a plan.

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