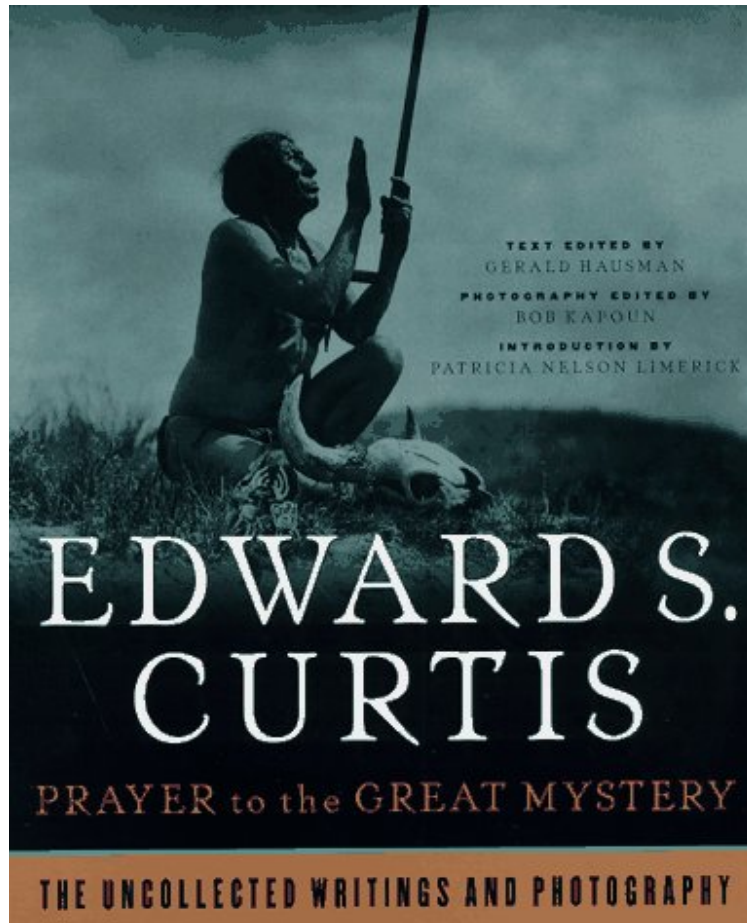


(Ebook pdf) Prayer to the Great Mystery: The Uncollected Writings and Photography of Edward S. Curtis

## Prayer to the Great Mystery: The Uncollected Writings and Photography of Edward S. Curtis

*Edward S. Curtis*

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**Edward S. Curtis : Prayer to the Great Mystery: The Uncollected Writings and Photography of Edward S. Curtis** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Prayer to the Great Mystery: The Uncollected Writings and Photography of Edward S. Curtis:

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Prayer to the Great Mystery is a historic publishing event, a remarkable coup that presents 93 newly discovered photographs--along with 150 others--taken by Edward S. Curtis. Deeply human and sympathetic, these images embody Curtis's attempt to preserve the character of Native American Cultural life before its erosion by the nineteenth-

century flood of American expansion. Accompanying the photographs is a poignant series of myths, abridged from Curtis's ethnographic writings. *Prayers to the Great Mystery* is a stunning account of a vanished era, and a seminal book for understanding our rich Native American legacy.

.com Edward S. Curtis was obsessed with recording information about Native Americans: he believed their culture might simply disappear without a trace. More than 100 years ago, he took his first photographs of Native Americans, and for decades he traveled extensively, snapping pictures and taking copious notes on their ways of life. *Prayer to the Great Mystery* contains dozens of Curtis's photos that were discovered in the files of the Library of Congress, as well as many previously known prints, some of which are considered masterpieces of photographic art. The text, taken from Curtis's voluminous writings on Native Americans provides priceless accounts of how they lived on the Great Plains, in the Southwest, and in the Pacific Northwest. From *Library Journal* Curtis traveled the West from 1906 to 1927, capturing America's Native people's on film before they "vanished." His photographs and accompanying commentaries became the 20-volume *North American Indian*, paired with 20 large folios of sepia-toned images. Today, these striking photographs are synonymous with a romanticized Indian past. For this small selection of Curtis's work, Kapoun, a dealer of Curtis's photographs, chose little-known images from the bound volumes, combining them with unpublished Curtis prints from the Library of Congress. Hausman (*Turtle Island Alphabet*, LJ 3/15/92) edited representative selections from the Curtis narrative. The result gives the flavor of Curtis's writing, but the quality of the photographs leaves much to be desired. Libraries holding books of Curtis's work (e.g., Florence Graybill and Victor Boesen's *Edward Sheriff Curtis: Visions of a Vanishing Race*, Promontory, 1994) may want to wait for better reproductions. Mary B. Davis, *Huntington Free Lib., Bronx, N.Y.* Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A handsome postscript to the photographer/ethnologist's career." --*The Seattle Times/Intelligencer* "A treasure of Native American lore." --Digby Diehl, *Playboy* "One of the finest examinations of both Native American culture and its tragic encounter with European peoples." --*Telluride Times-Journal*