

The Mammoth Book of Native Americans



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Native Americans make up less than one per cent of the total US population but represent half the nation's languages and cultures. Here, in one grand sweep, is the full story of Native American society, culture and religion. Here is everything from the land-based spirituality of their early creation myths and the late rise of Indian Pride, to the 88 uses to which the Sioux put the flesh and bones of the buffalo and the practice of berdache (men adopted as women). The book offers a chronological history of America's indigenous peoples. It covers their dramatic early entry into North America, out of the now submerged continent of Beringia, then in more recent times the 'forgotten wars' of the 16th and 17th centuries, which wiped many tribes from the face of the East Coast, and finally describes to the last struggles of the Cheyenne and the Comanche. Celebrating these peoples' way of life rather than focusing narrowly on the manner of their genocide, it does not ignore uncomfortable facts of the Amerindian past - including the cannibalism believed to have been practised by some tribes and the Native Americans' part in the decimation of North America's buffalo herds.

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