



The West

Geoffrey C. Ward, Ken Burns, Stephen Ives (Contributor)

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For the first time in paperback comes the magnificent, copiously illustrated companion volume to the landmark PBS television series. 400+ illustrations, many in full color.

The West Details

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Author : Geoffrey C. Ward , Ken Burns , Stephen Ives (Contributor)

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From Reader Review The West for online ebook

Lucy says

Read, re-read and read again.

Susan says

Love the collaborative aspect of this work. The West developed as a combination of many efforts, and that's true of this book as well. Thorough, informative, and entertaining, this book functions perfectly as a short college seminar on The History of The American West. Love.

James says

Why I originally checked this out for the photos, which while good, were not the kind I was looking for. Instead I found myself reading and skimming many of the articles which included minorities, Mormons and Indians. Interesting stuff. Not much manifest destiny like earlier books on the subject.

It would be a good introduction to western expansion for young adults as well as older folks.

Dad says

PBS DVD. Interesting, but focused mostly on how the US took the land from the Indians. A sad time in our history.

Colin says

From the first famished Spaniards who washed up on Galveston Island to the flamboyant escapades of John C. Fremont. This book has the west pretty much covered. Overall you begin to get the impression that the settlers pulled no punches in those dusty roughhouse days. Taking care not to leave any buffalo alive nor any "savage" Injian outside of his pen. It seems to be a history written largely in blood and greed. It was gold or it was land or... god knows what, if it had a price, someone was going to cash in. I wish we could have put our fears aside while entering the land of foreign people with strange beliefs. But as the cross would have it, no variant from the church was godly and thus must be destroyed. Kind of closed minded no? The author joins me in a glimpse of the could-have-been harmony between Native American and white man. It was entirely possible if it wasn't for our unquenchable thirst for riches and resources. While at the same time I am quite grateful to inhabit this beautiful California coast. So, cheers!

Nicole says

Accurate historical and detailed portrayals of the oppression of the Native American tribes living in the west, the decimation of their people, the displacement of their homes and villages and the destruction of their culture as the White Man wanted more and more of lands that were never their own to take.

Laura says

I enjoyed reading this. I learned a lot of interesting things I hadn't known.

Jeff says

Great introduction to the history of the American West. For someone like me, who has always been interested in that period of our history, but hadn't read much on the topic, this is a great "first book". The photographs are fantastic. You can spend all day just browsing this book, going back in time via the photography.

Being a companion book to a PBS documentary series it reads like a Ken Burns film. Because of this, the narrative jumps around a lot, and for the most part provides brief snippets of information on various figures from the era. While the specialist will perhaps find this shallow or redundant, for the newbie it's a great intro.

There isn't much here on the "popular" aspects of the Old West: Gunfighters are only briefly mentioned, the Alamo is glossed over in just a couple of pages, etc. Much of the narrative is devoted to the exploration and settlement of The West, delving into the conflicts that resulted. Much space is given to the conflict and wars the Native Americans.

As I said earlier, this is a great introduction to the period, I learned a great deal from it. And it has helped me to clarify which of the many aspects of Old West history I'm most interested in. So inspired, I've already begun searching out books on those topics.

Jaime Contreras says

this is an incredible reference about the westward expansion of the US and the people who lived it. This was printed as a companion to the PBS series. This large book is full of stories, facts and history.

Kathleen McRae says

The pictures in this book are evocative and really add to the dialogue. A very interesting book!

Kay says

The panoramic sweep of this book is impressive. I read (or should I say "browsed") though this companion book while watching the Ken Burns' documentary of the same name, and found that the book expanded on subjects I wanted to pursue in more depth. That it to say, the book stands on its own. Wonderful illustrations -- just as a visual browse this is a good resource.

Cindy says

This was an audioversion of 'An Illustrated History' which I found at the library. It goes along with a series by Ken Burns.

Liked:

The stories. Varied in tone and texture, covering MOST (more about that later) of the major players in the American West.

The narration. Done by the author and more like a story than a history.

The writing. Vivid and interesting.

Disliked:

The music. What's with the dramatic music now and then? Very distracting, at times, louder than the narration. Really irritating.

Where are the Mormons? That's my biggest complaint about this one. 4 tapes and NOTHING about any of the Latter-day Saints? Not Brigham Young, not Johnson's Army, not the Mormon Trail, not the colonization from Canada to Mexico, California to Winter Quarters? Nothing about the state of Deseret, or the polygamists hiding out from federal marshals? Come on, the Mormons were major players in the landscape and history of whole western half of the United States. All we get is a mere mention of a calf belonging to some Mormon pioneer being killed by the Lakota. Lame! I know I'm biased, but really, I don't see how you can leave us out altogether.

And the continual story of Indian tribe after tribe being lied to and cheated by the American government gets hard to listen to. I know that is the actual history, so it's impossible to tell about western expansion without their stories, but after a while, it gets really hard to hear. It seems like the very land that represented opportunity for so many living in the East and in other countries meant nothing but deprivation and war for the native peoples who were here first.

Daniel Evans says

This book is very informative in exposing both sides of the west, white and red. It time-lines the events and hardships that were performed and documents how the west was won.

It's haunting pictures/daguerreotypes help illustrate the easy-to-read paragraphs, and give a personal sense

between reader and character.

Amber says

Wonderful photos and the layout is easy on the eyes

Keith says

Great Western history book.
