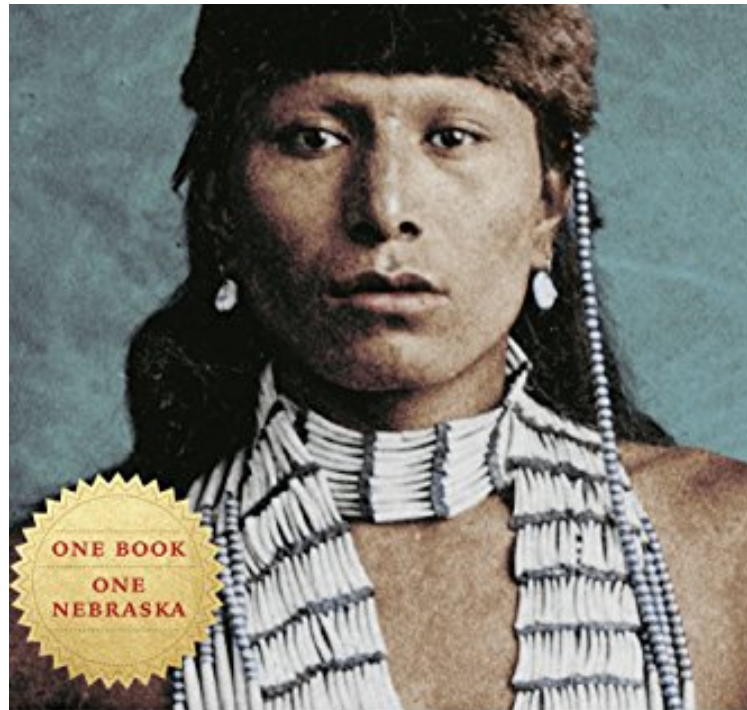


(Ebook pdf) Black Elk Speaks: The Complete Edition

## Black Elk Speaks: The Complete Edition

*John G. Neihardt*

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JOHN G. NEIHARDT  
BLACK ELK SPEAKS  
THE COMPLETE EDITION



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**John G. Neihardt : Black Elk Speaks: The Complete Edition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Elk Speaks: The Complete Edition:

182 of 185 people found the following review helpful. Must Read classicBy CrystalI didn't read this edition; a little paperback version came to me. I read it long ago and read it again recently. This book had an incredible impact on me. Over the years people have come to criticize the author, John Neidhardt. The book ends somewhat abruptly not long after Wounded Knee and then there is an account of Black Elk's prayer on Harney Peak when he was an old man and he asked to make his people live again kind of tacked on the end. Many seem to feel Neidhardt was exploiting Black

Elk to get a book out of him. I don't claim to be an expert on Black Elk and this subject, but from what I know I do not agree with the totally cynical assessment. Black Elk had been off the reservation in the Buffalo Bill Show and given his experiences he was hardly naive or ignorant. Black Elk's son Ben had been in the Carlyle school so he would have known if the book did not reflect his father's vision and words and life. The book was also not an instant bestseller. Neidhardt promoted this book and Black Elk's vision tirelessly until the end of his life and I truly believe it was because he saw the incredible spiritual nature of Black Elk, his life, and visions. And his "great vision" as a youngster can only be described as cataclysmic and psychedelic. When the spirits want you to see something you will see it and no drugs are necessary. Neidhardt left out the ensuing years on Pine Ridge Reservation and Black Elk's acceptance of Catholicism to frame a lost way of life, the sadness and injustice of it, and the greatness and seeming inevitability of Black Elk's vision. I believe any poetic license taken was in service of bringing forth a greater truth. The book was not meant to be a biography or history of the Lakota, but to preserve Black Elk's vision and so the purpose of the book was accomplished. Those who want to pick at the book miss the greater impact of Black Elk's life and vision. As this was not Neidhardt's culture he probably also didn't totally understand nor was he able to explain some things, but again, are we missing the greater truth of the book by focusing on imperfections? Read this book with an open heart and you won't be disappointed. Some feel Black Elk became a Catholic as a way of continuing to teach the Lakota way along with the Christian faith to preserve the Lakota culture. I believe he was intelligent and had such a great spirit he saw he could blend both faiths and build a bridge for the future. Nor was he intimidated into the Christian faith. His daughter said his acceptance of the Catholic faith was true and not a sham to keep teaching the Lakota ways surreptitiously. After reading this book, if Black Elk interests you there are books available on the later half of his life. Black Elk lived until 1950. You may also be interested in *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (The Civilization of the American Indian Series). If you would like a somewhat different perspective or style of writing you might take a look at *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* (Enriched Classics). Lame Deer felt *Black Elk Speaks* missed the mark in some ways so he enlisted the help of Richard Erdoes to write his own book as Lame Deer did not speak much English. I enjoyed reading *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* as there is humor and compassion toward all in his account of his life and that of his people. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *Strength and beauty* By M Ivarson A very strong and beautiful book. The tale by 'Black Elk' is very poetic. You really feel the strength of a people living in total harmony with nature, with universe. The drawings by "Crazy horse" are great and tell its own story. So much to learn for us who live in a too material and rushed life. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Lost of the Ogalas* By Jerry M Black Elk was born and lived when Natives were free, not on reservations. That is why his words were captured and printed back in the 1930s when he was an old man, his remembrances of liberty. I still do not know if he was naturally eloquent or if the translator is responsible for this tome. The two of them together made a fine team -- putting an era into words I can understand.

*Black Elk Speaks*, the story of the Oglala Lakota visionary and healer Nicholas Black Elk (1863-1950) and his people during momentous twilight years of the nineteenth century, offers readers much more than a precious glimpse of a vanished time. Black Elk's searing visions of the unity of humanity and Earth, conveyed by John G. Neihardt, have made this book a classic that crosses multiple genres. Whether appreciated as the poignant tale of a Lakota life, as a history of a Native nation, or as an enduring spiritual testament, *Black Elk Speaks* is unforgettable. Black Elk met the distinguished poet, writer, and critic John G. Neihardt in 1930 on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and asked Neihardt to share his story with the world. Neihardt understood and conveyed Black Elk's experiences in this powerful and inspirational message for all humankind. This complete edition features a new introduction by historian Philip J. Deloria and annotations of Black Elk's story by renowned Lakota scholar Raymond J. DeMallie. Three essays by John G. Neihardt provide background on this landmark work along with pieces by Vine Deloria Jr., Raymond J. DeMallie, Alexis Petri, and Lori Utecht. Maps, original illustrations by Standing Bear, and a set of appendixes rounds out the edition.

*Black Elk Speaks* is an extraordinarily human document and beyond that the record of a profoundly spiritual journey, the pilgrimage of a people toward their historical fulfillment and culmination, toward the accomplishment of a worthy destiny. N. Scott Momaday