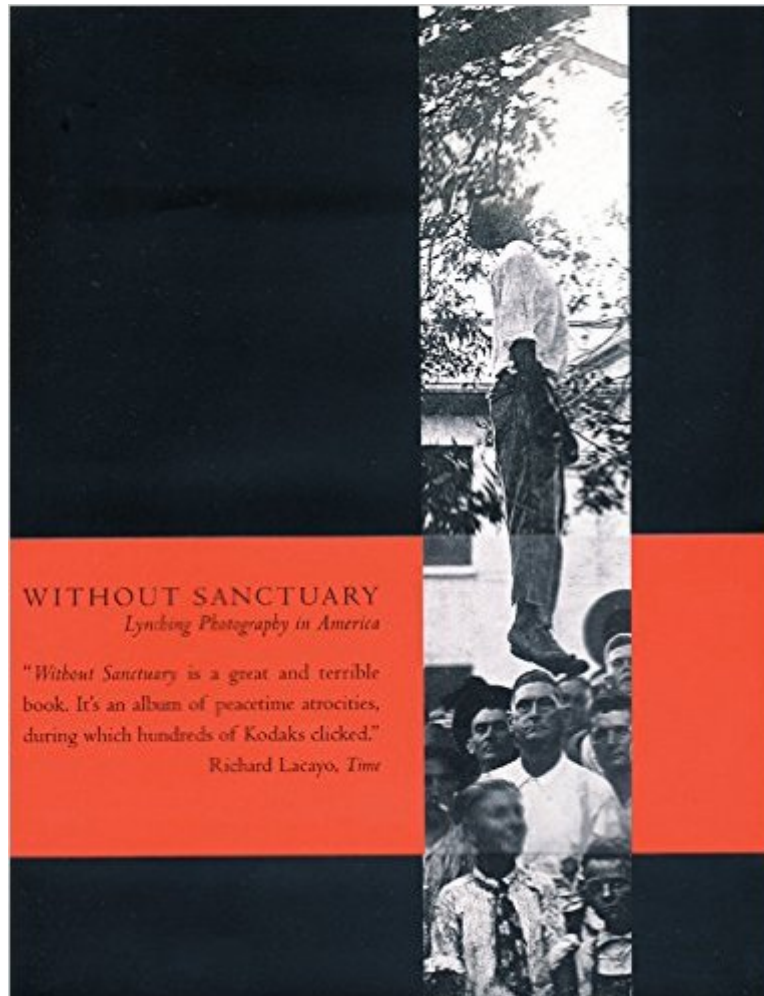




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Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography In America



Synopsis

The Tuskegee Institute records the lynching of 3,436 blacks between 1882 and 1950. This is probably a small percentage of these murders, which were seldom reported, and led to the creation of the NAACP in 1909, an organization dedicated to passing federal anti-lynching laws. Through all this terror and carnage someone-many times a professional photographer-carried a camera and took pictures of the events. These lynching photographs were often made into postcards and sold as souvenirs to the crowds in attendance. These images are some of photography's most brutal, surviving to this day so that we may now look back on the terrorism unleashed on America's African-American community and perhaps know our history and ourselves better. The almost one hundred images reproduced here are a testament to the camera's ability to make us remember what we often choose to forget.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

These images make the past present. They refute the notion that photographs of charged historical subjects lose their power, softening and becoming increasingly aesthetic with time. These images are not going softly into any artistic realm. Instead they send shock waves through the brain, implicating ever larger chunks of American society and in many ways reaching up to the present. They give one a deeper and far sadder understanding of what it has meant to be white and to be black in America. And what it still means. --New York Times, January 13,2000

There are enough reviews here so that my summative review is not necessary. I will only say that this is a powerful book, and it reminded me of General Eisenhower's order that all those living in the vicinity of the death camps be marched past the stacked bodies so they could see what their abdication of morality had allowed to happen. This is mostly a book of photographs. If you want deeper text, including a spectacular (unintended pun) chapter on "Looking" and how it was the crowds that validated "spectacle lynching," then you must also buy *Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women, and the Mob*. The title is misleading, but the content of that book is not--that is the deep academic and psychological review that complements this book. If you only wish to buy one book, of lasting value for generations, buy this one. If you can afford two and want to study the underlying social and psychological environments that allowed whites to treat blacks as if they were animals, buy both. See also *Buried in the Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America*, *Dark Alliance: The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion*, *The Big White Lie: The CIA and the Cocaine/Crack Epidemic*, *The Manufacture of Evil: Ethics, Evolution and the Industrial System*, *Lost History: Contras, Cocaine, the Press & 'Project Truth'*, *Fog Facts: Searching for Truth in the Land of Spin*, *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*, *The Corporation*

These United States of America need to teach a true and factual history of the country and this book is full of why we may not forget who we are. Incredible book and should be in every school, college, University and Museums.

One gropes for words -- and many adjectives such as "horrific", "vile", and "gruesome" spring to mind -- but ultimately words fall far short. Which is why this collection of 98 photographs of lynchings that occurred throughout the United States (not just the South) is so important. Many but not all were the product of racism. All reflect a mob inhumanity and cruelty that boggles the mind and rends the soul. Although not on the same massive scale as the Nazi treatment of the Jews, this nation's lynching history, as graphically documented in this book, is equally disturbing. (How does one "rank" such atrocities anyway?) And what makes this even more sickening was that so many of these executions were public spectacles, community functions that were commemorated and celebrated with post cards and other commercial ephemera and even mementos from the victims' bodies. Although not cheap (\$41.16 at), *WITHOUT SANCTUARY* should be in every general public library in the United States, and at some point before graduation from high school every student should somehow be exposed to it, alongside the standard pronouncements of our nation's high and noble ideals (the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, etc.).

Just riveting and heart stopping visuals. Its complete horror on these pages and sadness that people are that cruel. Its worth every penny to see the failure of men and a system of total injustice to humanity.

This book is the ultimate metaphor for the graphic brutality of Black people in America. The British poet William Wordsworth once said, "Man know thee thyself, presume God not to scan, the sturdy of mankind is man". How do you begin to understand the nature of evil? The sheer barbarity of these pictures, the nonchalant attitude of the perpetrators and the wicked glee on the faces of the participants (even children) confirms the graphic truth of the institutionalization of racism and evil in our world. Dr. Martin L. King once said that "God will not so much punish the wicked for their evil deed, but for the appalling silence of the good people. For all those lily livered fools in our world, who are quick to parrot that idiotic sentence "slavery was before my time", let me remind you of James Byrd of Texas in 2000. Without a Sanctuary: Lynching photography in America is a profound documentary of unimaginable evil and wickedness. These horrible pictures can only appeal to our conscience as a society to do the right thing. I agree with Dante in his 'Inferno' that the worst place in hell will be reserved for all those who are neutral on the great issues of life. I am profoundly grateful to the authors of this great human document James Allen, John Lewis, Hilton Als and Leon F. Litwack. May the souls of these beings who endured these horrific brutality rest with God forever.

This is the true history of America not what they teach in High School

Purchased for my husband and the story is told in the eyes of the victims and spectators.
Heartbreaking and interesting.

I definitely agree with one of the other reviewers... "Without Sanctuary" is the perfect companion to Ralph Ginzburg's "100 Years Of Lynching". Both are significant, old/historical books. Both are necessary to better understand what happened back then. Although Ginzburg's book of newspaper articles and editorials describe hundreds of lynchings in explicit detail, the power of an image can not be discounted. A picture can often be worth a thousand words.

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