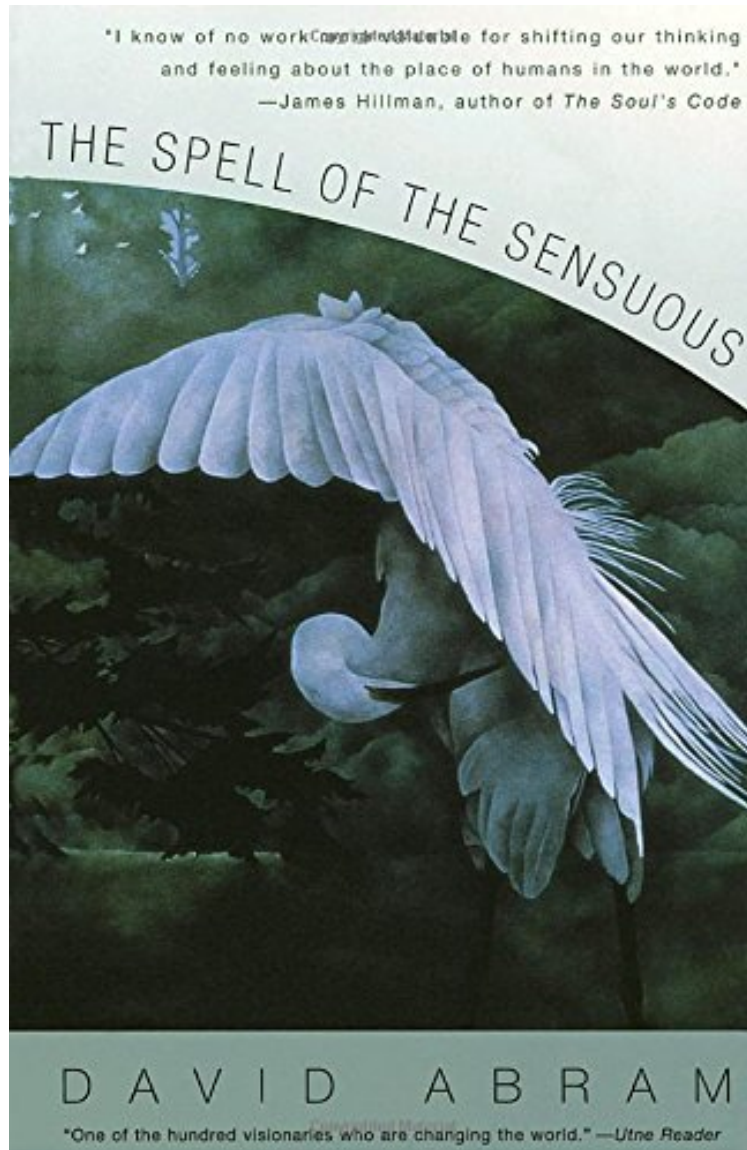


[FREE] The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World

The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World

David Abram

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#38930 in Books Vintage 1997-02-25 1997-02-25 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.99 x .78 x 5.18l, .57
#File Name: 0679776397368 pages Great product! | File size: 43.Mb

David Abram : The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Deserves a higher ranking !By Ronald Fernandez This is an unusual

book. It is both a clear, lucid introduction to phenomenology, and at the same time it provides a fine example of what a research in the line of that philosophical persuasion is all about. But not only it accomplishes both tasks to almost perfection, but does it in an inspired poetic language very seldom found in this kind of writings. Abrams book excels both aesthetically and intellectually, while at the same making his insights and findings bear upon our most urgent environmental concerns. Extraordinary coupling of beauty and intelligence such as this book shows deserves unordinary ratings: seven stars, if that were possible !2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Change Your Relationship with the BiosphereBy Martin E. SchmidtIt seems impossible to read this book and have one's relationship with the biosphere remain unchanged. Abram argues that we have lost our previous "spell" experience in which we were entranced by our participation in the "more-than-human" world and have progressively over millennia come under the spell of the written word. Abrams, an astute academic in his own right, is not denying that study can be a thrilling experience. However, in giving ourselves over to disembodied abstraction, we have cut ourselves off from the natural world, leading us to not only our environmental crisis, but even to dehumanization of our own species as well. Our love affair with the written word has alienated us from the biosphere that we once were connected to through breathing, hearing, pre-linguistic biomimicry, and visual perception. Humans shared their subjective experience of the natural world with other animated beings, all together inhabiting and participating in an intersubjective world. In the end, Abrahms wants us re-imagine our place in the biosphere, re-balancing our mental perception from overemphasis on abstract distance to visceral participation in the total life world.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A New Appreciation of NatureBy Rebecca of "A butterfly glides by, golden wings navigating delicate air currents with a few momentary flutters before they settle on a white flower...Fragrant whiffs from the new blossoms in the overgrown orchard by the creek stir...My sensing body now vividly awake to the world." ~ pg. 223"The Spell of the Sensuous" is a fairly complex read that takes you on a journey through a myriad of experiences as related to the natural world. Through this journey we gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be human in a sensuous world. Language, lore and cultural heritage is also a focus.David Abram subtly draws a stark contrast between how tribal cultures have viewed the earth and how modern man seems far removed from nature's protective beauty. Whether he is speaking about Native Americans or the Ancient Greeks he explores their culture from the viewpoint of how they relate to the land and air."The emergence or adoption of a formal writing system significantly solidifies the ephemeral perceptual boundary already established by a common tongue; now the spoken language has a visible counterpart that floats, fixed and immobile, between the human body and the sensuous world." ~ pg. 256While at first this may seem like a casual discussion of how cultures pass along their traditions, you may soon realize that this is much more a serious investigation into how people either preserve or destroy the living breathing environment. A discussion of how cultures moved from oral traditions to the written word is fascinating. You can see how even today some cultures show a remarkable respect for their environments while others seem to have lost their connection to the earth.At times highly intellectual and at other times pure, spiritual and poetic, David Abram's writing weaves through your soul to bring you to a higher awareness of the land in which you live and the importance of preserving your natural heritage.~The Rebecca Review

Winner of the International Lannan Literary Award for NonfictionAnimal tracks, word magic, the speech of stones, the power of letters, and the taste of the wind all figure prominently in this intellectual tour de force that returns us to our senses and to the sensuous terrain that sustains us. This major work of ecological philosophy startles the senses out of habitual ways of perception.For a thousand generations, human beings viewed themselves as part of the wider community of nature, and they carried on active relationships not only with other people with other animals, plants, and natural objects (including mountains, rivers, winds, and weather patters) that we have only lately come to think of as "inanimate." How, then, did humans come to sever their ancient reciprocity with the natural world? What will it take for us to recover a sustaining relation with the breathing earth? In *The Spell of the Sensuous* David Abram draws on sources as diverse as the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty, Balinese shamanism, Apache storytelling, and his own experience as an accomplished sleight-of-hand of magician to reveal the subtle dependence of human cognition on the natural environment. He explores the character of perception and excavates the sensual foundations of language, which--even at its most abstract--echoes the calls and cries of the earth. On every page of this lyrical work, Abram weaves his arguments with a passion, a precision, and an intellectual daring that recall such writers as Loren Eiseley, Annie Dillard, and Barry Lopez.

.com David Abram's writing casts a spell of its own as he weaves the reader through a meticulously researched work that gently addresses such seemingly daunting topics as where the past and future exist, the relationship between space and time, and how the written word serves to sever humans from their primordial source of sustenance: the earth. "Only as the written text began to speak would the voices of the forest, and of the river, begin to fade. And only then would language loosen its ancient associations with the invisible breath, the spirit sever itself from the wind, the psyche dissociate itself from the enviroing air," writes Abram of the separation caused by the proliferation of the written word. In writing *The Spell of the Sensuous*, Abram consulted an engaging collection of peoples and works. He

uses aboriginal song lines, stories from the Koyukon people of northwestern Alaska, the philosophy of phenomenology, and the speeches of Socrates to paint a poetic landscape that explains how we became separated from the earth in the first place. With minimal environmental doomsaying, Abram discusses how we can begin to recover a sustainable relationship with the earth and the nonhuman beings who live among us--in the more-than-human world. -- Kathryn TrueFrom Publishers WeeklyHow did Western civilization become so estranged from nonhuman nature that we condone the ongoing destruction of forests, rivers, valleys, species and ecosystems? Santa Fe ecologist/philosopher Abram's search for an answer to this dilemma led him to mingle with shamans in Nepal and sorcerers in Indonesia, where he studied how traditional healers monitor relations between the human community and the animate environment. In this stimulating inquiry, he also delves into the philosophy of phenomenologists Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who replaced the conventional view of a single, wholly determinable reality with a fluid picture of the mind/body as a participatory organism that reciprocally interacts with its surroundings. Abram blames the invention of the phonetic alphabet for triggering a trend toward increasing abstraction and alienation from nature. He gleans insights into how to heal the rift from Australian aborigines' concept of the Dreamtime (the perpetual emerging of the world from chaos), the Navajo concept of a Holy Wind and the importance of breath in Jewish mysticism. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalThis is an interesting, if impossible to classify, book; Abram is a philosopher, magician, and essayist (of the Utne Reader type); this book grew out of his explorations of magic and sorcery in indigenous cultures and the relationship between magic and the natural world. Where he leads the reader after this is tough to summarize: Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Balinese sorcerers, origins of the alphabet, Kant, Newton. Word by word this is readable and connected to a fascinating thesis: that our perceptions grew from the natural world around us, and we can "return to our senses" and be reinvigorated, reformed, by the experience. While serious readers of ecology will likely have their ideas expanded and challenged by Abram, it is more likely that his work will be of greater interest to students of philosophy, ethnography, and anthropology. Literate readers and academic collections in the philosophical sciences are likely audiences; the book is probably too ambitious for most general readers.Mark L. Shelton, UMass Medical Ctr., WorcesterCopyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.