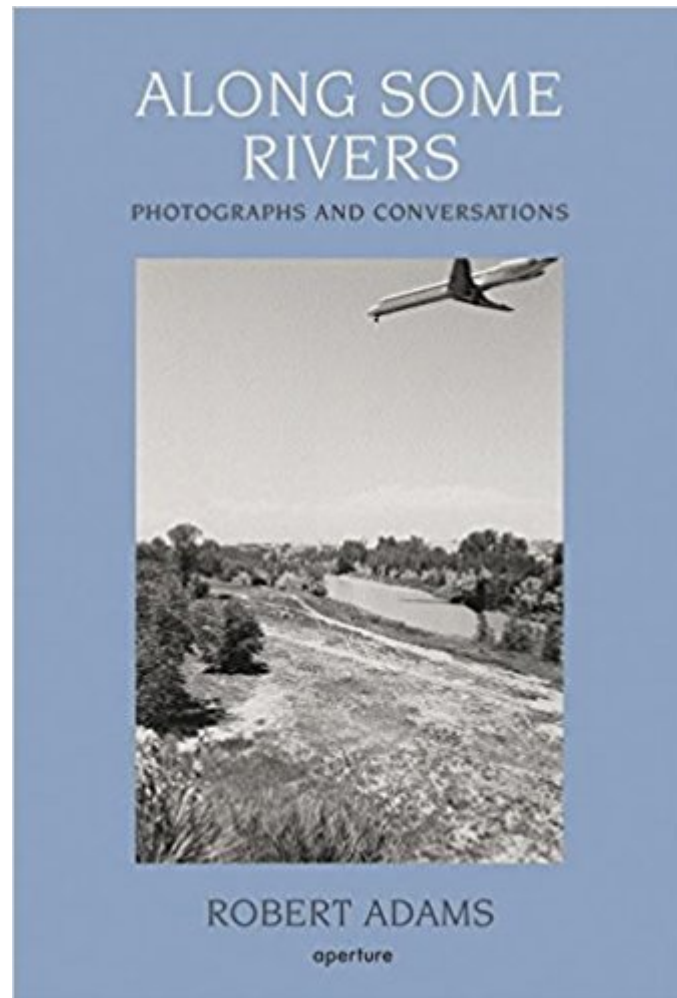




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# Robert Adams: Along Some Rivers: Photographs And Conversations



## Synopsis

Robert Adams, one of America's foremost living photographers, has spent decades considering and documenting the landscape of the American West and the ways it has been altered, disturbed, or destroyed by the hand of man. A professor of English before turning to photography, Adams is also a skilled writer and acute thinker on aesthetic questions. Aperture's previous bestselling collections of his essays, *Beauty in Photography* and *Why People Photograph*, assembled his thoughts on a range of subjects, including writing, teaching, photography's place in the arts and a host of fellow photographers. *Along Some Rivers* collects Adams's correspondence and conversations—some of which have never been published before—with writers and curators including William McEwan, Constance Sullivan and Thomas Weski. In so doing, it provides another point of entry, offering a portrait of the artist in debate and elucidating his thoughts on a number of his now legendary projects, including *Cottonwoods* and *What We Bought*. Adams also expounds on why, in his view, Marcel Duchamp has not been a helpful guide for art, and he discusses which filmmakers and painters have influenced him, which cameras he prefers and how he approaches printing his pictures. *Along Some Rivers* also includes a selection of 28 unpublished landscapes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"There's an intense melancholy to his images, a deep sadness in the beauty he captures that reveals the natural world at its most vulnerable... The reader is taken on a visual journey across sun-drenched gullies, down river-banks bending with old trees and to the final brutal crime scene of

a clear cut." -- Mark Hillringhouse --Photo-Eye: The International Magazine of Photography Books"...Robert Adams embraces an affirmative approach to art, seeking hope and wholeness, and this is not a solitary pursuit... Adams sees the West of today as a place of ruined but not lost beauty and promise, and doesn't stint in his effort to share this vision with his readers and viewers." -- R.K. Dickson --R.K. Dickson"If a tree falls in the forest, Robert Adams will more than likely be there to photograph it. This photographer of the West has made it his life's work to document our changing environment. This book, a pairing of conversations Adams had with various curators, writers and students about his work, offers a unique view into the working mind of this most erudite of photographers." -- B&W: Black & White Magazine, For Collectors of Fine Photography"American photographer Robert Adams contemplates his photographic practice through a combination of intelligent and insightful photo literature and photography. His images are concerned with the environment, and the impact industrialisation and the modern world are having on it." -- Ben Brain -- Amateur Photographer"[the photographs] are in the same ponderous, modest style we have come to know from Adams. His conversations follow the same pattern - with examples of his quiet humour thrown in - and are all the more enjoyable to read for it." -- Ailsa McWhinnie -- Black&White Photography: Dedicated to the Monochrome Photographer

Robert Adams is a major figure in New Topographics movement known for his photographs of the modern American West. A recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, two Guggenheim Fellowships, the Spectrum International Prize for Photography, and the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize, his many books include: From the Missouri West (1980), Beauty in Photography: Essays in Defense of Traditional Values (1981), Our Lives and Our Children (1983), Summer Nights, Walking (1985), Los Angeles Spring (1986), and Perfect Times, Perfect Places (1988). Adams's work has been widely exhibited, including in a major retrospective at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Richard B. Woodward is an arts critic in New York. His frequent writings about photography include monograph essays on Disfarmer, Lee Friedlander, William Eggleston, Robert Adams, An-My LÃª, Abelardo Morell, David Levinthal, Ansel Adams, and many others. He has taught at Columbia University's Graduate School of the Arts and the New York University Graduate School of Journalism. His articles have been published in the Atlantic Monthly, the New Criterion, the New Yorker, and many other magazines and newspapers, and he contributes regularly to the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.

Let me begin this review with a disclaimer, I am passionate about Robert Adams' photography and

his writings and have been for over 15 years. This book is in my opinion a useful primer for those interested in the ideas surrounding Mr Adams' work. A handy reference to other art and artists who Mr Adams feels are accomplished and successful in their approach to art. He also alludes to the meaning and function of art, a refreshing attitude in this post modern world of "anything goes". However if you are looking for some intellectual meat or long indepth discourses on the meaning of art this book is not for you. Currently this book is nestled in my bag and travels everywhere with me, shortly it will be as dog eared as his other tomes, *Beauty in Photography: Essays in Defence of Traditional Values and Why People Photograph*

Robert Adams is one of the most thoughtful people practicing photography today, and this book, though slim, is filled with conversations about the medium. Since purchasing the book about three months ago, I have read the book from cover to cover at least five times, and I suppose I will likely read it many times more. His words are full of love for photography and those who practice it, and for the landscape, and those who live there. And the photographs--how does he find such simple scenes so full of memories of places I've never been? Full of light and leaves and water, quiet, powerful places...

Robert Adams' essays in "Beauty in Photography" and "Why People Photograph" were interesting and insightful. The interview text in this small book of photographs shows him to be an academic, lacking an understanding of human motivation and necessary practicalities. Would that the world was so simple. It's not and the foundation for Adams' wonderful photography is shown to be seriously flawed. He describes himself in this book as being a socialist of sorts but then admits to having anger directed toward the "lower classes" because this "lower class" accepts "mass produced junk" without criticism. He also comes off as a sort of wimp. He may not return to photograph in California because of the "danger" he sensed in the areas he photographed. Apparently he feels that the presence of junk and the distant sounds of dirt bikes and "assault rifles" frightened him. I wasn't aware an "assault rifle" made its own unique sound. I wasn't aware that junk and dirt bikes were threatening. He also sensed "hostility" in many of the neighborhoods he saw because there was razor wire and aggressive breeds of dogs present. He later admits he has never been attacked while photographing but he has had to endure other people's anger. This poor guy must have either a superb sense of impending danger or he lives a sheltered, terrified life. He answers many of the questions with quotes from famous people, whose words he has committed to memory. They are mostly profound statements. Unfortunately, when Adams speaks for himself, he

comes across as lacking. He probably should get out among the "lower classes" more often and experience their hopes, aspirations and motivations instead of locking himself into a fantasy world of denial. The photographs, however, are poetic and the only reason to buy this slim volume.

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