



# Dream Catchers: How Mainstream America Discovered Native Spirituality

*Philip Jenkins*

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In books such as *Mystics and Messiahs*, *Hidden Gospels*, and *The Next Christendom*, Philip Jenkins has established himself as a leading commentator on religion and society. Now, in *Dream Catchers*, Jenkins offers a brilliant account of the changing mainstream attitudes towards Native American spirituality, once seen as degraded spectacle, now hailed as New Age salvation. Jenkins charts this remarkable change by highlighting the complex history of white American attitudes towards Native religions, considering everything from the 19th-century American obsession with Hebrew Indians and Lost Tribes, to the early 20th-century cult of the Maya as bearers of the wisdom of ancient Atlantis. He looks at the popularity of the Carlos Castaneda books, the writings of Lynn Andrews and Frank Waters, and explores New Age paraphernalia including dream-catchers, crystals, medicine bags, and Native-themed Tarot cards. He also examines the controversial New Age appropriation of Native sacred places and notes that many white indians see mainstream society as religiously empty. An engrossing account of our changing attitudes towards Native spirituality, *Dream Catchers* offers a fascinating introduction to one of the more interesting aspects of contemporary American religion.

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