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Vermont People



Synopsis

Vermont People, Millennium edition, is a revised edition (1998) of Vermont People (1990) with 72 portraits and written profiles of rural Vermonters. The book is a Vermont icon with 15,000 in print and is recognized for its elegant black and white photographs. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 109 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

Peter Miller is a photographer and writer, author of six books including the award-winning People of the Great Plains and Vermont People. His photos on rural people have been exhibited in Oklahoma, Nebraska, New York City, Vermont and Tokyo. He lives in Waterbury, Vermont and is currently working on a book titled Vermont Farm Women. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I bought this for my mother who lives out of state. She is an avid reader and involved with multiple historical societies and was quite impressed.

Pictures are great..Mr Miller does a very good job with writing about my state.. the true Vermonters..

Lovely book, a great window into Vermont and the fabric of its life

great writing and material

I picked this book up for the first time in a bookstore in the Northeast Kingdom, a year and a half ago. My family has been vacationing in the summers for the past fifteen years [after Squam Lake got too expensive]. My parents got this book for me for Christmas a few weeks ago. In the inscription my mother wrote, "This is the Vermont I grew up in." I just finished reading it at friend's vacation house in the White Mountains. My mother grew up in Vermont, and has some ancestry there. I would have been raised there, had my father not gotten a job in Massachusetts first. Vermont has always been both idyllic and iconic to me. I feel as though I share a cultural heritage with Vermont, and have spent time farming and homesteading over the years. This book was first published in 1990, and the revised edition, printed in 2004, features the stories and portraits of Vermonters from 1960 to 1997. It tell the story of the generations that come before me. Vermont was a very different place the Vermont I've become familiar with. The two times I've lived in Vermont I've lived in Burlington. These two times are the only times in my life that I've lived in a non-rural landscape, which is one of the reasons I left. Especially with the Bernie Sanders' recent popularity, I think a lot of Americans get the idea that Burlington is the symbol of Vermont. Burton Snowboards and Ben & Jerry's, other global ambassadors for Vermont, also have strong relationships with Burlington. And yet Burlington in an urban center, when the essence of Vermont lies in its rural nature. Not one profile in the book covers a resident of Burlington or Brattleboro. There are a few references to Montpelier, the state capital, but that's hardly an urban center. Not everyone in the book was born in Vermont, but they all exhibit some aspect of a Vermonter [as opposed to the out-of-staters that see Vermont as a nice place to vacation]. Also, Miller notably excludes famous people, as a Vermonter isn't a celebrity. The story of Vermont of the past fifty years is the story of gentrification. Many people in the book despise this fact, and pine for the good old days. Others are grateful for the economic development brought by tourism [skiing being the leading industry]. I should note that Vermont is also a national leader in the local food and local economic movements. But these facets aren't highlighted by this book. By no means does Miller narrate a romantic account of Vermont life. A somber tone permeates throughout. In his introduction, he poses the question: was it "the temper of the people that made them Vermonters, or...was it the roughness of the land and the climate that forged these newcomers into such distinct personalities?" For all it's beauty, Vermont is not an easy place. The book has been more inspiring than I anticipated. There's a certain authenticity to it which we rarely encounter in modern life. The Vermont that Miller lived is now dead. It's a Vermont I never had the privilege of experiencing. Its myth, and the way of being that such a myth may galvanize, can live on if we keep telling it's story. As a side note, there is a sister book to this one, "Vermont Farm Women," that is equally compelling. I only started here because it was written first. That's my next stop.

I just finished the hardcover 1990 edition from the library, but now I am going to buy the updated paperback with the revisions and forward by Senator Leahy. The pictures are so true to the people we have met in our short time in The Northeast Kingdom. Amazingly we have been lucky to come to know a couple portrayed in the book, Amelia and Tim Fritz. My husband and I are "Flatlanders" from Wisconsin and we are moving back to the Midwest, but we have internalized the lessons of the "Woodchucks" on how to be creative and find new solutions when faced with a tricky situation, big or small. "Flatlanders come to Vermont and dig a big hole with a nice view and sometimes they get buried in it. Us old woodchucks, we have a hidey hole that no one knows about. When things are bad, we go out the back door. Flatlanders don't think of that." So says Joe Tombley. I am also looking forward to another Peter Miller book, Vermont Farm Women.

Miller does a wonderful job highlighting the themes that thread through the lives of Real Vermonters. As a half-Vermonters (though I was born in Vermont, my father didn't move here until he was in 6th grade) everything that was said resonated with me. Miller made clear the peculiar distinction us Vermonters make about who's a "flatlander" and who isn't. Miller included in his vignettes Real Vermonters that were not Native Vermonters, and showed that our state is not snobby, or elitist; for we do welcome out-of-staters, as long as they're willing to become Vermonters rather than forcing Vermont to become "New Connecticut". Reading this book made me miss the Vermont that I'm barely old enough to remember, and to weep at its loss. The black and white photos show a serious side to the Green Mountain State that tourists don't really care to see when they come visit in October. The way that Miller was able to work his way around central Vermont, and still keep many of the stories tied to one another forged together the distance of a country mile with the closeness of a neighbor. Adorned with precious gems of Vermont history (did you know Vermont is home to the first ski mountain rop-tow? or the greatest moose-hereford love story of all time?) Miller shows us with grace and humility the independent, unique, sincere and True Vermont

Anyone who has lived in the state of Vermont throughout the generations knows the kind of people portrayed in this book. Our grandparents and neighbors were these kind of people. Hard working, humble and just a bit sarcastic but a refreshing reminder of what many of us traditional Vermonters claim as heritage. Vermonters dot com heartily endorses this book and it's easy to see why. Reading this book and seeing the photos (one of which is a character who used to deliver my firewood in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont) is somehow reassuring and a reminder of what really made

Vermont famous. Now that Vermont has taken a very weird turn to the left, it has become an entirely different place to live. This book is a testimony to the true Vermont and it's people who are sadly fading into history. Thanks for the memories.

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