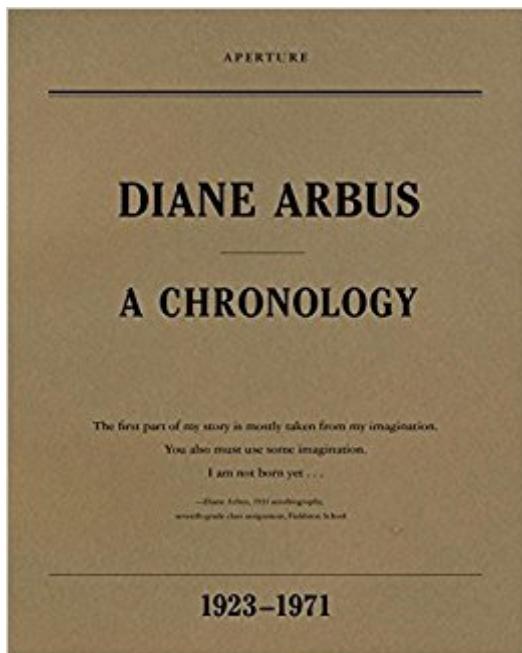


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Diane Arbus: A Chronology, 1923-1971



Synopsis

Diane Arbus: A Chronology is the closest thing possible to a contemporaneous diary by one of the most daring, influential and controversial artists of the twentieth century. Drawn primarily from Arbus' extensive correspondence with friends, family and colleagues, personal notebooks and other unpublished writings, this beautifully produced volume reveals the private thoughts and motivations of an artist whose astonishing vision derived from the courage to see things as they are and the grace to permit them simply to be. Further rounding out Arbus' life and work are exhaustively researched footnotes that amplify the entire chronology. A section at the end of the book provides biographies for 55 family members, friends and colleagues, from Marvin Israel and Lisette Model to Weegee and August Sander. Describing the Chronology in *Art in America*, Leo Rubinfien noted that Arbus "wrote as well as she photographed, and her letters, where she heard each nuance of her words, were gifts to the people who received them. Once one has been introduced to it, the beauty of her spirit permanently changes and deepens one's understanding of her pictures. The texts in Diane Arbus: A Chronology originally appeared in Diane Arbus: Revelations. This volume makes this invaluable material available in an accessible, unique paperback edition for the very first time."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The world seems endlessly fascinated by artists who achieved a degree of attention within short lifetimes. Diane Arbus is a poster child for this genre. If you're an enthusiastic follower of Arbus's work I am sure this will be money well spent. If not, this book will likely be a dreary slog through the end game of a troubled person's life. It reads like research notes strung together to form a

"chronology", with the suggestion that it reveals the black-box recordings leading to Arbus's suicide. But it doesn't. In fact the endnotes and biographical sketches (of the persons referenced) begin on p. 117 of this 176 page book. The final pages of the chronology end with the coroner's autopsy notes. Ugh. (Arbus's spleen weighed 110 g and was "unremarkable".) So in the final analysis this work really has nothing whatsoever to do or say about Arbus's photography or her perspective on her work. Rather, it's a rather voyeuristic collection of anecdotes and correspondence surrounding a woman descending into a private mind-hell. (Too bad it's not on Kindle. Get with it, Aperture!)

This is a very interesting book. Even if you have read other biographies, I am sure you will find some details you did not know about Arbus. It was a Christmas gift from my husband that I just received so I have only read excerpts as of now, but I have come across several tidbits I did not know about Diane. And I have read a few books about her. This book even includes the autopsy report in detail, which I found to be half creepy but half cool! Like I said, if you are a big fan of Arbus and want to know more about her than just her work, you will enjoy this book.

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