

The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge

By Carlos Castaneda

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Thirty years ago the University of California Press published an unusual manuscript by an anthropology student named Carlos Castaneda. *The Teachings of Don Juan* initiated a generation of seekers dissatisfied with the limitations of the Western worldview. Castaneda's now classic book remains controversial for the alternative way of *seeing* that it presents and the revolution in cognition it demands.

In a series of fascinating dialogues, Castaneda sets forth his partial initiation with don Juan Matus, a Yaqui Indian shaman from the state of Sonora, Mexico. He describes don Juan's perception and mastery of the "non-ordinary reality" and how peyote along with other plants sacred to the Mexican Indians were used as gateways to the mysteries of "dread," "clarity," and "power." *The Teachings of Don Juan* is the story of a remarkable journey that has left an indelible impression on the life of more than a million readers around the world.

"For me there is only the traveling on paths that have heart, on any path that may have heart. There I travel, and the only worthwhile challenge is to traverse its full length. And there I travel, looking, looking breathlessly."—Don Juan

"Carlos Castaneda, under the tutelage of don Juan, takes us through the moment of twilight, through the crack in the universe between daylight and dark into a world not merely other than our own, but of an entirely different order of reality."—Walter Goldschmidt, from the Foreword

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Carlos Castaneda's intelligence shines through as clearly in his updated commentary in the 30th anniversary edition of *The Teachings of Don Juan* as it does in his original story. It is impossible to encapsulate what Castaneda has achieved with his first book about the teachings of the enigmatic Don Juan Matus, a Yaqui Indian sorcerer who shared his ancient knowledge with Castaneda. The academic character of *The Teachings of Don Juan* is evident in Castaneda's in-depth analysis (and sometimes overanalysis) of his experiences with Don Juan, and readers who lack an interest in anthropological analysis may find this section a bit tedious. However, Castaneda's journal accounts flow effortlessly, the current carrying us through his conversations with Don Juan and opening doors to an astounding realm outside the bounds of everyday life. The phrases "life changing" and "earth shattering" come to mind, and perhaps these are just metaphors, but what Castaneda offered in the 1960s is still for many an entirely new perception of reality. --*Brian Patterson*

From Library Journal
Original publisher University of California Press here offers a 30th-anniversary edition of Castenada's Teachings. Along with the original text, this sports a new introduction by the author, who, it was revealed recently, died earlier this year. Though this is reasonably priced for a hardcover, libraries needing multiples copies may opt for the paperback.
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