



## An Autobiography Richard Avedon

By Richard Avedon

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A startling new look at the life's work of a photographer who had an enormous impact on the way we see the world.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In this oversize assemblage of 284 photographs, a loose record of faces, moments and events that have shaped his life, eminent photographer Avedon excels in brutally frontal, stark black-and-white portraits that strip away pretensions and personas. Ezra Pound, Marilyn Monroe, Louis Armstrong, Rudolf Nureyev, Dorothy Parker, Janis Joplin, Andy Warhol, Samuel Beckett, Malcolm X and Alberto Giacometti are among the luminaries indelibly captured. The juxtapositions of images are often meant to provoke or unsettle. Poet Allen Ginsberg, in a nude embrace with his lover Peter Orlovsky, shares facing pages with dour Henry Kissinger. There are intimate family snapshots, glimpses of the fashion world, documentary photos of the civil rights struggle. Faces of a Colorado meat packer, a Texas trucker, mental hospital patients, Vietnamese napalm victims and corpses in Sicilian catacombs jostle against shots of Isak Dinesen, Gerald Ford, debutantes and rock singers, generating an implicit dialogue about power and powerlessness, fame and illusion. A haunting portrait of our age. First serial to Newsweek; BOMC alternate.

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From Library Journal

Readers expecting a memoir might initially be mystified by this compendium of splendidly reproduced photographs, but it makes sense for the renowned Avedon, once chief photographer at Harper's Bazaar and Vogue and now the first staff photographer at *The New Yorker*, to reconsider his life through images. This is no literal retelling of events; as Avedon notes in his brief preface, "I haven't lived chronologically. No one does." Avedon instead divides his images into three sections representing stages in the inevitable role-playing of life: "sermons of bravado," that celebratory phase when we are feeling our power; our exploration of roles we have adopted; and, finally, the moment when those roles lock us in. The divisions may not always seem so distinctive, but readers browsing through images of the well known--socialites, politicians, artists--and the unknown--street performers, the mentally ill, victims of napalm--will come away with a clear sense of Avedon's ability to make the ordinary extraordinary. Ultimately, this is an "autobiography" of us all--our hopes, disenchantments, and persistent vulnerability. Highly recommended. Previewed in Prepub Alert, *LJ* 6/1/93.

- Barbara Hoffert, *"Library Journal"*

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From the Inside Flap

A startling new look at the life's work of a photographer who had an enormous impact on the way we see the world.

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**Shawn Marsh:**

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