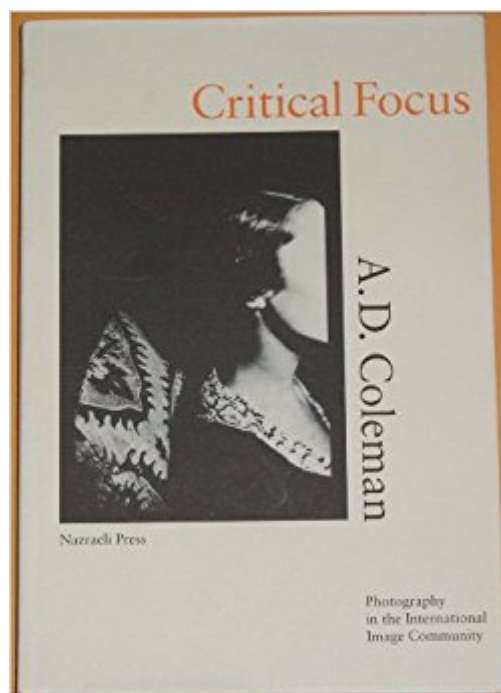


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# Critical Focus



## Synopsis

Book by Coleman, A. D.

## Book Information

Paperback: 179 pages

Publisher: Nazraeli Press; First Edition edition (August 1996)

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## Customer Reviews

Other than several essays in photographic monographs, Coleman has not released a major body of writings since his acclaimed *Light Readings* (LJ 2/15/79). Here he has compiled selections from his "Letter from" series that appeared between 1989 and 1993 in *Photo Metro*, a San Francisco-based photographic magazine. Coleman is a rigorous critic with a deep, insightful knowledge of the method, theory, and history of photography. Unlike much contemporary criticism that often lapses into dense ideological analysis that is inaccessible to the uninitiated, Coleman's text delights with lucid, well-reasoned analyses of a variety of imagery. Although he states he has tried to expand his perspective to participate in the "international image community," he has not realized his desire. Though several photographers from Eastern Europe and Latin America are represented, most of the essays remain centered on western European and predominantly American photography. Still, he provides a richer understanding of the images of those artists included and doesn't shy from taking to task photographers whose images he feels have "devolved to mere fashion."

Recommended for all collections. ?Kathy J. Anderson, Indiana Ctr. for Global Business, Indiana Univ., Bloomington  
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Not much in the way of photos to illustrate points, but there seems to be soem good insights which might help aspiring photographers learn what to take photos of and why and how-

Coleman is one of the sharpest of photography's critics. This book belongs in the library of anyone who takes the medium seriously.

"At his best, photography critic A. D. Coleman is everything one would want. He draws not only from a wealth of knowledge about how photography is made and who makes it but also from his own extensive readings in subjects beyond photography. He is a lucid thinker and an elegant writer." All this is evident in Coleman's new book of essays, *Critical Focus*. In the pieces, which first appeared in the San Francisco-based magazine *Photo Metro*, Coleman ruminates on the big issues and big names in photography of the last five years. In praise, Coleman's prose is transcendent; in reproof, he does not mince words. . . . One hopes that in future volumes there will be more of Coleman's dry, laconic prose. " -- Margaret Loke, *ARTnews*, April 1996

"A. D. Coleman . . . has long been one of our most intelligent commentators on photography. And for clear, unencumbered, jargon-free writing that assumes the intelligence of the audience, he has no equal. *Critical Focus* . . . illustrates the rich understanding that Coleman has brought to the medium. . . . His short pieces burst with energy, like an Andrei Codrescu commentary, and they are equally mordant, funny, and insightful. His longer works brim with ideas and clear explication. . . . [R]equired reading for anyone who values understanding photography in contemporary culture." -- Stephen Perloff, *The Photo Review*, Summer 1995

"Coleman is a rigorous critic with a deep, insightful knowledge of the method, theory, and history of photography. Unlike much contemporary criticism that often lapses into dense ideological analysis that is inaccessible to the uninitiated, Coleman's text delights with lucid, well-reasoned analyses of a variety of imagery. . . . Recommended for all collections." -- *Library Journal*, September 1995

"The book was recently awarded the I.C.P. Infinity Award for Writing on Photography -- and rightly so. Coleman beautifully uses his sly wit and social commentary to give us perspective on the artists and their work." -- *Petersen's Photographic*, August 1996

If you love photography or are a serious photographer - this book is a must. A very insightful book on photography. Coleman is at his best. You don't have to agree with him on every point, but he entices you to consider the other side.

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