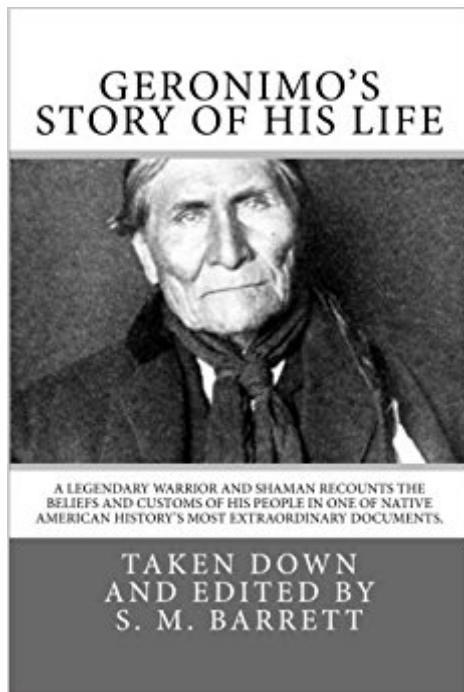


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# Geronimo's Story Of His Life



## Synopsis

A legendary warrior and shaman recounts the beliefs and customs of his people in one of Native American history's most extraordinary documents. "He and his men were the terror of the country, always leaving a trail of bloodshed and devastation." -The New York Times

I am thankful that the President of the United States has given me permission to tell my story. I hope that he and those in authority under him will read my story and judge whether my people have been rightly treated.

"Because he has given me permission to tell my story; because he has read that story and knows I try to speak the truth; because I believe that he is fair-minded and will cause my people to receive justice in the future; and because he is chief of a great people, I dedicate this story of my life to Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States. Geronimo The initial idea of the compilation of this work was to give the reading public an authentic record of the private life of the Apache Indians, and to extend to Geronimo as a prisoner of war the courtesy due any captive, i.e., the right to state the causes which impelled him in his opposition to our civilization and laws. If the Indians' cause has been properly presented, the captives' defense clearly stated, and the general store of information regarding vanishing types increased, I shall be satisfied. I desire to acknowledge valuable suggestions from Maj. Charles Taylor, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Dr. J. M. Greenwood, Kansas City, Missouri, and President David R. Boyd, of the University of Oklahoma. I especially desire in this connection to say that without the kindly advice and assistance of President Theodore Roosevelt this book could not have been written.

Respectfully, S. M. Barrett. Lawton, Oklahoma. August 14, 1906.

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## Customer Reviews

Geronimo (1829-1909) was a leader and medicine man of the Chiricahua Apache tribe. He fought against both the United States and Mexico as they encroached into his tribal lands, known famously as the Apache Wars. He eventually surrendered to the U.S. army and was sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was kept as a prisoner of war until his death.

First off, it's pretty cool to be reading Geronimo's own words. His story as he told it was very interesting, but I suspect he left a lot out. I am by far no expert on Native Americans, but I've been reading a lot lately and I think Geronimo was a pretty wild and violent guy. He sort of makes himself out to be the kind of guy who only attacks those who deserved it. Only scalped those they beat in wars for example, but history says it a little differently. I don't think he whitewashes his life any more than any other person in history would have a tendency to do though. The story about his wife and kids getting killed and how he handled it was really moving - and how they threw him in jail. Indians had it tough! I would love to have met him and Cochise - then again what would I have said to them? Maybe it's only a thought experiment!

Geronimo! The kids' saying I used in the 1960's just before I launched a dirt clod against my neighborhood enemy hidden behind the garbage can. This book puts Geronimo in perspective, an Apache Indian from the southwest, that spanned the traditional Indian culture of the first half of the 1800s to the pre-modern white world of the early 1900s and the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. Geronimo gives his side of the story to S.M. Barrett, a Superintendent of Schools while he (Geronimo) was a "prisoner of war" on the Fort Sill Indian Reservation in Oklahoma 1905-1906. Geronimo presents his story, laid out by topic: Origin of the Apache Indians, Early Life, The Mexicans, Raids That Were Successful, Heavy Fighting, Coming Of The White Men, Greatest of Wrongs, Removals, Prison And On The Warpath, The Final Struggle, Surrender of Geronimo and A Prisoner of War. Each brief chapter tells a vivid and honest picture of Geronimo's life through his own eyes, clearly documented by Mr. Barrett. Geronimo's story describes the life of an Apache Indian warrior and chief, as the traditional Indian culture is smothered, as the American and Mexican cultures envelope and then quickly swallow many of the ancient ways of the past. The 20 or so photographs in this book are excellent, they include portraits of Geronimo, his family, and friends.

Pretty good read. I'm not much of a history buff but had always been curious to learn more detail about the old west and how the history of conflict with the natives unfolded. I'm glad I started with this - it was fascinating to read a famous warrior's story in (pretty much) his own words. It was

interesting to read Geronimo's descriptions of native traditions including rich creation stories, festivals and rites of passage, and battle and raiding. Geronimo himself attests to things like how warriors were not obliged with any moral boundaries toward anyone outside their own tribe, tribes they have close relations with, or others who've managed to reach a friendly understanding with their tribe. (So raiding and marauding white pioneers on the plains at random was not taboo.) It kind of reminded me of (what little I know about) the ancient European tribal systems such as the Vikings and the Goths. It was also interesting to learn about their justice system, in which warriors who can't/won't follow the unwritten order of things in a tribe are kicked out, then often band together as outcasts. It was to these outlaws he attributed atrocities such as live scalpings and torturing captives for kicks. Assuming he was telling the truth that would explain a lot about possible precipitous misunderstandings between the tribes and the US government regarding native-white relations on the plains and how they affected the course of US history. It's a pretty quick read; I definitely recommend it.

A better title might be "Geronimo: In his own words". I am giving 4 stars because of the poor quality of the transcription, not the content of the story. While the observations and disclaimers of the narrator irritated me at times, they served as a reminder of the culture of the times. My father was born in 1912, not far from Fort Sill. I grew up in Arizona in the '50's hearing about Geronimo and his exploits from family friends who had lived on the Apache reservation. This was the first time I understood the chronology of many of these events. It appears to me that there is enough blame to go around. It would be a good thing if the true story of Geronimo was more widely taught and appreciated. Personally, I think he might have been flattered to think that his name is invoked when paratroopers bail out of an airplane, and stealth operations are planned.

This is an ok read. Would of liked to of heard more of how Geronimo and his tribe lived and less of the fighting of the soldiers, fighting the Indians rather th e y were white soldiers or Mexican soldiers. The life of Geronimo seemed such a sad book. It seemed like he fought all the time either with the Mexican soldiers or the American soldiers. It never told exactly where he was from except Arizona. At the time of Geronimo telling the story of him fighting the Mexicans you could tell just by reading that Mexico owned California. This is great history but some of the places Geronimo fought at had names that are not on our maps. Would of liked the Author to of explained where in Arizona the Indian tribes where from instead of " it was between two mountains and some cactus" also it seems like Geronimo didn't know the Mexican towns very well. I had to force myself to read this

book. The Author was telling Geronimo's life as a warrior not as the Indian Geronimo.

I gave this book a five star rating. It was very interesting and informative. Told a lot about Indian culture. I have been to Geronimo grave many times. At the time he was buried at Fort Sill. The grave was decorated as the Indians do. There is a lot more to his true History but enjoyed this book. Recommend it to any History buffs.

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