

## Trudell shines in “Lines from a Mined Mind”

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Last night in a dream

I interrogated god

writes John Trudell in his poem **Reason to This**.

Why is it that the good die young

What’s the reason to this?

In this poem from his stirring collection, *Lines from a Mined Mind*, the noted activist relates that

We talked we argued, we cried

I never did get any answers

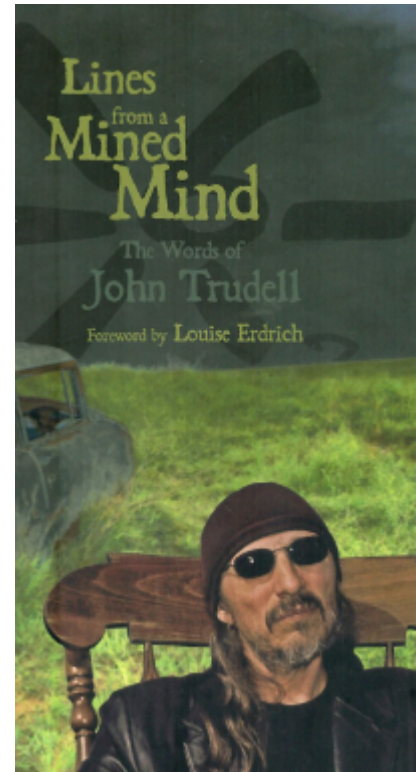
But god knows I tried.

John Trudell shares his wrestlings with a higher power and the result is a dynamic book.

Trudell tries to make sense of relationships, environmental angst, racial injustice, family ties and cultural preservation, filling the pages of this intriguing book. Blending songs and poems into thought-provoking pieces of Trudell’s inner life allows readers to enter into the issues that face Native America, Mother Earth and individuals from diverse walks of life.

John Trudell masterfully incorporates vivid imagery, powerful symbolism, intriguing historical and social incidents, cultural aspects and spiritual themes into his pieces. As a result, the words in this book come across its pages with strong impact, which enlightens the reader. Further, Trudell uses beats and meter in each verse with alacrity, which engages the reader. *Lines from a Mined Mind* transmits truths through Trudell’s sincerity and transparency.

Achingly, John Trudell laments the eradication of Native American spirituality in **To God** saying



your  
Representatives spoke magnificent things  
Of you which we were willing to believe  
But from the way they acted  
We know you and we were being deceived

In **Blue Indians**, John Trudell describes

Blue Indians being pulled into melting pots  
Grueling class rules the haves and have-nots  
Industrial reservations tyranny stakes its claim  
Blue Indians emotional siege in civilized stain.

Rich Men keep living off the poor

sings John Trudell in **Rant 'n' Roll** as he claims,

The soul is what's left after they eat your spirit  
When every act is an act of self-defense  
We have to do something or perish in the pretense

In addition to his admonitions concerning social conditions, John Trudell also celebrates the blessings and feelings of his own life. **Little Daughter** records the pleasures of parenting as

the times I hold  
You next to me I am flowing  
An infinity of love to fill the times  
I cannot hold you next to me

Men don't cry  
Indians are stoic

asserts John Trudell in **Tears of Salt** during a reflection on release and emotions,

I tell that to my heart  
To my eyes

They just laugh at me  
And sometimes  
When my spirit hurts  
They make me cry

Frequently, the author recounts the passions and romance that characterize his own life as he does in **Such a Fine Day** when he triumphs,

Such a fine day  
Woman in a T-shirt walking down the street  
Some women need silks and diamonds  
Some women need furs and limos  
Some women need to turn cosmetics  
Some women have just what they need

*Lines from a Mined Mind* shows the special inner workings of a unique and creative mind. The Santee Sioux activist and artist shares the circumstances of reservation and urban Native life, specifics of environmental and political crisis and the value of traditions and heritage in this collection of potent words and phrases. John Trudell has composed colorful pieces that effectively carry emotions and information to readers and to listeners.

**Book info:** [Lines from a Mined Mind: The Words of John Trudell](#). Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2008, 270 pages, ISBN#: 978-1-55591-678-7.

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