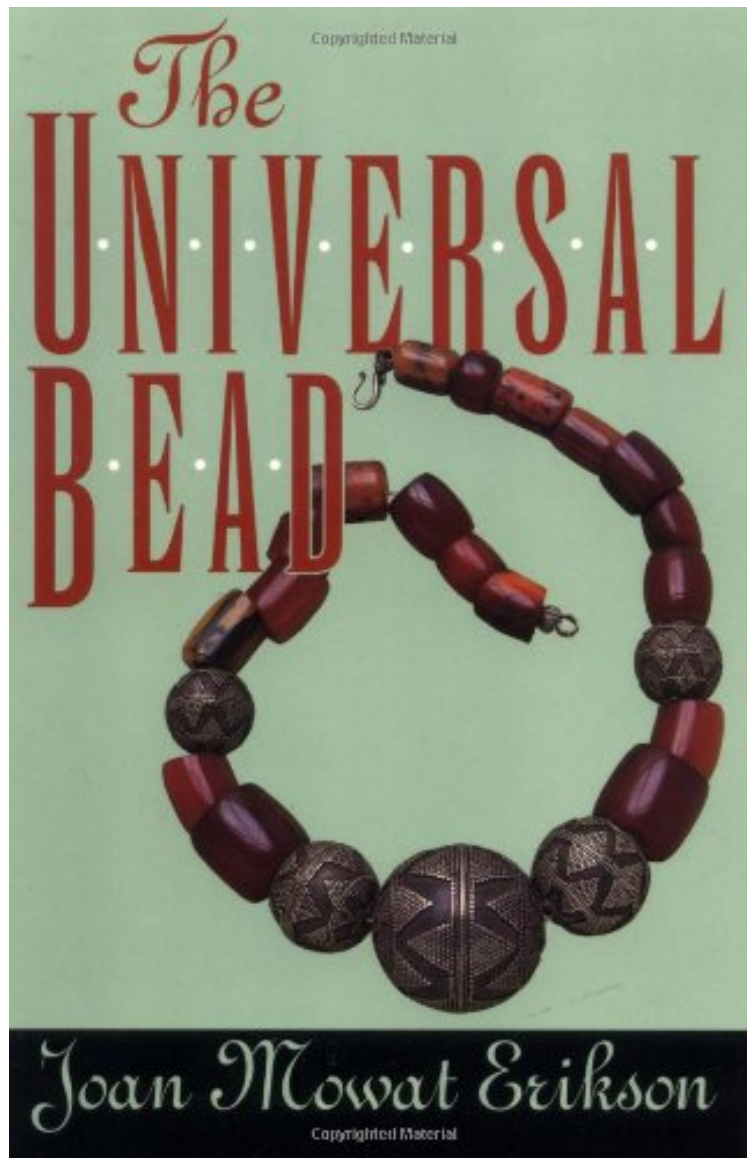


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The Universal Bead

Joan M. Erikson

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Joan M. Erikson : The Universal Bead before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Universal Bead:

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helpful. Four StarsBy KarinVery content.****1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Paige HarperA good resource book for the bead collector.

Throughout recorded history, beads have had a powerful allure for people of all ages. Fascinating in their own right, valuable as currency and durable wealth, they have also been endowed with magical properties of protection and enhancement. Responding to a new surge of interest in beads, this reissue edition with all new color plates examines the role of these intriguing objects in human affairs. The first chapter traces the travels of beads by mule-pack, caravan, and cargo. Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia were connected by trade routes along which beads were carried. Amber from the Baltic Sea abounded around the pre-Roman Mediterranean; gifts of beads were used by Columbus and Cortez to achieve their first footing on the American continent. Joan Mowat Erikson gives an account of the use of beads for decoration, as insignia of rank and status, as bearers of magic power, and as currency. She describes the materials out of which beads have been made and the skill used in their production, from the simple gathering of natural beads (berries, nutshells) to the cutting and polishing of colorful stones (turquoise, jade, amber) and the mass production of clay, faience, and glass beads. In a chapter on beads and magic, Erikson discusses beliefs in their power to protect the wearer against the evil eye, increase prowess as hunter and warrior, cure diseases, and ensure luck and favor with the gods, as well as to enhance the potency of man and the fertility of women, livestock, and lands. She concludes with some thoughts on the meaning of beads and their universal appeal.

About the AuthorJoan Mowat Erikson was born in Canada; she earned her B.A. in Education at Columbia University and an M.A. in Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a teacher, writer, and craftsman and has worked with gold, silver, and precious stones. She is the author of a previous book, *The Universal Bead*. She is married to the noted psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson.