



Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America

T.J. Stiles

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Winner of the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for History

In this magisterial biography, T. J. Stiles paints a portrait of Custer both deeply personal and sweeping in scope, proving how much of Custer's legacy has been ignored. He demolishes Custer's historical caricature, revealing a capable yet insecure man, intelligent yet bigoted, passionate yet self-destructive, a romantic individualist at odds with the institution of the military (court-martialed twice in six years) and the new corporate economy, a wartime emancipator who rejected racial equality. Stiles argues that, although Custer was justly noted for his exploits on the western frontier, he also played a central role as both a wide-ranging participant and polarizing public figure in his extraordinary, transformational time—a time of civil war, emancipation, brutality toward Native Americans, and, finally, the Industrial Revolution—even as he became one of its casualties. Intimate, dramatic, and provocative, this biography captures the larger story of the changing nation. It casts surprising new light on one of the best-known figures of American history, a subject of seemingly endless fascination.

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