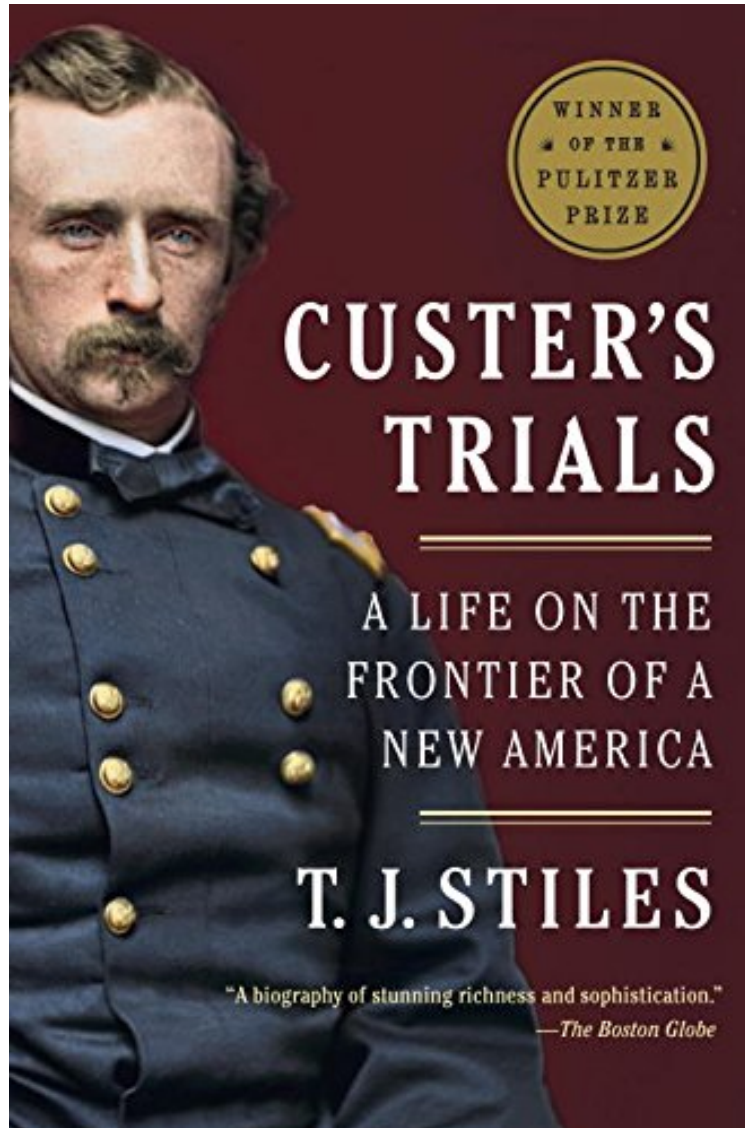


Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America

T.J. Stiles

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T.J. Stiles : Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Custer Lives!By Jeff M. Schwehn"Custer Trials" by T. J. Stiles is a comprehensive, complex retrospective of the life and times of GA Custer. In-depth research, stellar prose, and balanced interpretation quickly wrap us in Custer's inner and outer mid-19th century American world. Custer's strong romantic frame of reference and self-made philosophy collide against America's increasingly rational meritocracy creating the dynamic irony of a life straddling two worlds. Custer's checkered personality and history are explored in

the context of family, marriage, military action and civilian politics. Such are Custer's strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures that when he rides out of our sight on his final Indian campaign any outcome seems possible. This gem of a biography is a must read. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. I enjoy the history of the west. By Rick Phillips I enjoy the history of the west. I have been to the little big horn twice. I have read many books on Lt. Col Custer. This book gives very good insights into Custer's life including the Civil war up to the Little Big Horn. I believe it secures his legacy as a war hero. It also explains how he fit into the 1860s to the 1870s. The period was a time of cronyism and political favors. Custer seemed to fit into that. I would not draw the same conclusions the author did but I would recommend reading it with an open mind. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Man of Changing Times. By Birdman Typically well detailed by Stiles, this book describes how the very complex Custer was very much a man of the times, and those times were changing so fast that he found it difficult to adjust. Not a perfect man, especially when having to deal with the heroic celebrity placed on him by the press; some of those character flaws started to erode his status; especially his feelings towards african-americans and native americans. He is still somewhat unlikable for me, but I understand him better now.

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.

.com An Best Book of November 2015: As with many American icons, we really don't know much about General George Armstrong Custer. Born poor in Ohio, educated at West Point, where he barely graduated, Custer's reputation expanded quickly during the Civil War. He was brave, he could lead, and he possessed that "Custer luck." We all know where that luck ended. Or do we? T.J. Stiles, who won a National Book Award and a Pulitzer for his biography of Cornelius Vanderbilt, illustrates how Custer, who famously extended his military career by fighting in Indian country, "lived on a chronological frontier even more than a geographical one." He wanted to be a hero. He wanted to be able to fight with a sword. But he came of age at the onset of modernity—where "the new order was industrial, corporate, scientific, and legal." Custer represents something to each of us—whether brave fighter or ruthless Indian killer who got what he deserved—but he was flesh and blood, and he lived a real life that was buoyed by ambition and hope and riddled with contradictions. T.J. Stiles' writing and research is as much hero here as Custer, and it sets this biography apart from so many others. – Chris Schluep WINNER 2016 - Pulitzer Prize for History FINALIST 2016 - National Book Critics Circle Awards FINALIST 2016 - California Book Award FINALIST 2016 - Mark Lynton History Prize LONGLIST 2016 - Plutarch Award WINNER 2016 - Western Writers of America Golden Spur Award WINNER 2016 - William H. Seward Award for Excellence in Civil War Biography FINALIST 2015 - Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History BookPage Best Books of 2015 St. Louis Post-Dispatch Best of 2015 "If anyone could make a reader forget Custer's last stand, at least for a few hundred pages at a time, it would be T.J. Stiles. . . . Stiles is a serious and accomplished biographer, but he is more than that. He is a skilled writer, with the rare ability to take years of far-ranging research and boil it down until he has a story that is illuminating and, at its best, captivating." —The New York Times Book "Epic, ambitious. . . . [Stiles] scrupulously avoids caricature. . . . Stiles's accomplishment is to show that, within the context of Custer's life, the Battle of Little Bighorn really was an epilogue." —The Wall Street Journal "If you want to understand how Custer's character became his fate, then Stiles's book is the one to read before any other." —Thomas Powers, The New York of Books "[This] sympathetic biography attempts to demythologize and reassess a complicated figure. . . . Stiles captures his subject with verve." —The New Yorker "In this deft portrait, Stiles restores Custer as a three-dimensional figure. . . . [Stiles's] prodigious knowledge of 19th-century institutions is on display throughout Custer's Trials. He is able to situate Custer in the shifting culture of the Civil War and its aftermath in a way no other biography has achieved. . . . Stiles's Custer is life-size." —The Washington Post "This energetic biography puts emphasis on the years in between Custer's Civil War heroics and his infamous Last Stand. Stiles is neither sympathetic nor unsympathetic in his treatment of Custer's profound need for attention." —The St. Louis Post-Dispatch "Riveting. . . . [Stiles] has given us a different way to look at the flesh-and-blood man and his times." —Minneapolis Star-Tribune "Custer's Trials is exemplary in every way, replete with instances of detailed scholarship and compelling analysis, dense with psychological insight, and written in a tight, adroit style." —The Wichita Eagle "Custer was the product of an America which changed more dramatically during his brief life than at any time in its history, except for the present sorry epoch, and Stiles, who can write, and also

research, recounts how those times shaped him and, in the process, demolishes some of the Custer despisers' (there are many, and I am one) most cherished myths. . . . Terrific." —Field Stream"Stiles portrays a complex and deeply flawed man. . . . Stiles' biography is a long, detailed, well-researched but highly readable account." —The Denver Post "Engaging... A teeming portrait of the birth of modern America—and a gripping account of Custer's role in it." —San Jose Mercury News "A nuanced, complex and convincing portrait of the man." —San Francisco Chronicle "Rousing. . . . An immersive, emphatic, bloody and very assured book." —Newsday "A good and meaty biography." —Christian Science Monitor "T.J. Stiles portrays Custer in the context of his time, and the man who emerges is much more than merely a martyr or a fool. . . . [Stiles] goes furthest in exploring [Custer's] contribution to Union victory during the Civil War and the difficulties he faced adjusting to the world that he helped to create." —The Daily Beast "[Stiles's] biography is thorough, engrossing and fair. Custer is seen as a man wearing many faces, some good, some not. The author has done a commendable job drawing out from other sources to write a balanced account of a misunderstood historical figure. A+ read." —San Francisco Book "Spectacular . . . a satisfying portrait of a complex, controversial military man... Confidently presenting Custer in all his contradictions, Stiles examines the times to make sense of the man—and uses the man to shed light on the times." —Publishers Weekly *starred review* "Stiles presents a much fuller picture of the tragic figure many of us know. . . . Custer's Trials masterfully adds dimension to his life, helping us better understand the man behind the legend." —BookPage "Stiles doesn't disappoint with this powerful, provocative biography. . . . A highly recommended modern biography that successfully illuminates the lives of Custer and his family as part of the changing patterns of American society." —Library Journal "A warts-and-all portrait. . . . Stiles digs deep to deliver genuine insight into a man who never adapted to modernity." —Kirkus s "T. J. Stiles has written a marvel of a book—the best life of Custer right up to the moment he marched the 7th Cavalry out of Fort Abraham Lincoln while the band played 'The Girl I Left Behind,' on their way to whip the Indians." —Thomas Powers, author of *The Killing of Crazy Horse* "This magnificent biography lifts the shroud of myth that has long hovered over Custer. Well-written, exhaustively researched, and full of fresh insights, it does a superb job of re-creating not only his life but even more the world in which he lived. Building on the work of previous writers, Stiles surpasses them all with his breadth of detail and depth of analysis." —Maury Klein, author, *Days of Defiance: Sumter, Secession, and the Coming of the Civil War* "T.J. Stiles has done it again. With this searching, memorable portrait of George Armstrong Custer, Stiles recaptures the complexities of a man whom posterity has been content to caricature. Until now, in this wonderful book." —Jon Meacham, author of *Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George H. W. Bush* "T. J. Stiles has written another splendid book. He portrays a real Custer, full of flaws but possessed of outstanding combat skills and leadership. This biography easily overshadows its many predecessors, offering new facts and interpretations as well as a wonderful read." —Robert Utley, author of *Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier* "Despite the numerous works on Custer, this thoroughly researched and riveting book is new. It is the first to interpret him as a representative of his times." —Shirley Leckie Reed, author of *Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the Making of a Myth* "George A. Custer has proven an enduring metaphor for the American West, an 'exaggerated American' seen as flamboyant military hero, icon of national expansion, or doomed oppressor of Native Americans. More even than his compelling portrait of this central figure of American history, T. J. Stiles brilliantly examines Custer within transforming national events—civil war, slavery's end, and economic and social modernization that privileged the powerful under guise of democratic triumph—proving yet again why he is this generation's finest biographer." —Christopher Phillips, author of *The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border* "In this definitive reconsideration of an icon, Stiles reminds us why Custer remains such a fascinating fixture in our national consciousness: To understand Custer is to understand a significant sequence in the American DNA." —Hampton Sides, author of *Blood and Thunder* and *In the Kingdom of Ice* About the Author T. J. STILES is the author of *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Biography and the National Book Award for Nonfiction, and *Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War*, which received the Ambassador Book Award and the Peter Seaborg Award for Civil War Scholarship, and was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Custer's Trials was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for History in 2016. An elected member of the Society of American Historians and a member of the board of the Authors Guild, he was a 2011 fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, a 2004 Gilder Lehrman Fellow in American History at the New York Public Library's Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers, and a member of the 2014 faculty of the World Economic Forum. He lives in San Francisco, California, with his wife and two children.