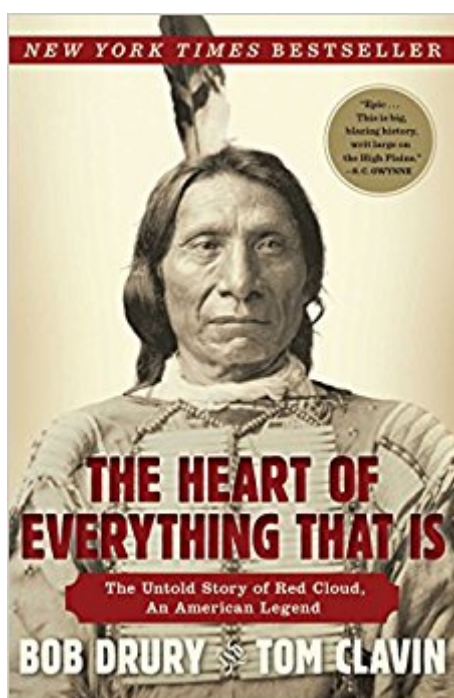


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# The Heart Of Everything That Is: The Untold Story Of Red Cloud, An American Legend



## Synopsis

An acclaimed New York Times bestseller, selected by Salon as a best book of the year, the astonishing untold story of the life and times of Sioux warrior Red Cloud: “a page-turner with remarkable immediacy and the narrative sweep of a great Western” (The Boston Globe). Red Cloud was the only American Indian in history to defeat the United States Army in a war, forcing the government to sue for peace on his terms. At the peak of Red Cloud’s powers the Sioux could claim control of one-fifth of the contiguous United States and the loyalty of thousands of fierce fighters. But the fog of history has left Red Cloud strangely obscured. Now, thanks to the rediscovery of a lost autobiography, and painstaking research by two award-winning authors, the story of the nineteenth century’s most powerful and successful Indian warrior can finally be told. In *The Heart of Everything That Is*, Bob Drury and Tom Clavin restore Red Cloud to his rightful place in American history in a sweeping and dramatic narrative based on years of primary research. As they trace the events leading to Red Cloud’s War, they provide intimate portraits of the many lives Red Cloud touched—mountain men such as Jim Bridger; US generals like William Tecumseh Sherman, who were charged with annihilating the Sioux; fearless explorers, such as the dashing John Bozeman; and the memorable warriors whom Red Cloud groomed, like the legendary Crazy Horse. And at the center of the story is Red Cloud, fighting for the very existence of the Indian way of life. “Unabashed, unbiased, and disturbingly honest, leaving no razor-sharp arrowhead unturned, no rifle trigger unpulled....a compelling and fiery narrative” (USA TODAY), this is the definitive chronicle of the conflict between an expanding white civilization and the Plains Indians who stood in its way.

## Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster; Reprint edition (September 2, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451654685

ISBN-13: 978-1451654684

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 1,009 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #14,180 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Native American #21 in Books > History > Americas > Native

## Customer Reviews

For all of our culture's fascination with the American Indian, it's almost impossible to believe that one of the most well-known Indians of his time, the Oglala Sioux warrior chief Red Cloud, could be largely forgotten until now. Yet that's exactly what we discover in this illuminating account by Drury and Clavin (Halsey's Typhoon). As the de facto leader of the Western Sioux nation, an unprecedented feat in itself given the Sioux's rigorous individualism and a culture consisted of fluid, haphazard tribal groups, Red Cloud and his army stand alone in history as the only Indians to ever defeat the United States in a war, which took all of two years (1866-1868). A history inconveniently at odds with the accepted American narrative, the manuscript for Red Cloud's 1893 autobiography lay in a drawer at the Nebraska State Historical Society into the 1990s. Thanks to that work and the authors' extensive, additional scholarship, readers now have access to a much more thorough, comprehensive understanding of the Plains Indians' brutal and tragically futile efforts to protect their land and way of living from the progress of civilization. Agent: Nat Sobel, Sobel-Weber Associates. (Nov.) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A ripping yarn . . . A quintessentially Western tale of bold exploits, tough characters, brutal conditions and a lost way of life, this sounds like the sort of story that practically tells itself. Yet you only realize how little justice most popular histories do to their source material when you come across a book, like this one, that does everything right. It's customary to say of certain nonfiction books gussied up with plenty of 'color' and psychological speculation that they 'read like a novel,' but truth be told, most of the time we'd have to be talking about a pretty mediocre novel. The Heart of Everything That Is, on the other hand, resembles the good ones. There were times, turning its pages, when I could almost smell the pines of the Black Hills, feel the icy wind tearing down from Canada across the prairie and hear the hooves of the buffalo pounding the earth. (Laura Miller Salon)" "Exquisitely told . . . Remarkably detailed . . . The story of Red Cloud's unusual guile and strategic genius makes the better-known Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse pale in comparison. . . . This is no knee-jerk history about how the West was won, or how the West was lost. This historical chronicle is unabashed, unbiased and disturbingly honest, leaving no razor-sharp arrowhead unturned, no rifle trigger unpulled. . . . A compelling and fiery narrative. (USA Today)" "Vivid . . . Lively . . . A tale of lies, trickery, and brutal

slaughter . . . In telling the story of Red Cloud, Messrs. Drury and Clavin appropriately bring a number of the larger-than-life figures from that time onstage . . . [and] chronicle in considerable detail the shameful treatment of the Indians across the plains and the destruction of their ancient way of life. (Christopher Corbett, *The Wall Street Journal*)

"A page turner . . . Drawing on archives, letters, and a long-lost autobiography written toward the end of Red Cloud's life, the narrative has a remarkable immediacy . . . [and] the narrative sweep of a great Western. (Kate Tuttle, *The Boston Globe*)

"Valuable . . . Meticulous . . . [A] remarkable story . . . The writers don't shy away from the atrocities on both sides of the gruesome, long-running conflict between the Indians and the U.S. forces. But when, for the umpteenth time, U.S. officials break a contract as soon as the glint of gold is spotted in the hills, one cannot help but feel that there's all the more reason to celebrate one of the Sioux's most impressive fighters. (Smithsonian)

"The authors paint a full and vivid picture of the Oglala Sioux leader . . . The story of Red Cloud is presented here with all the tension and excitement of a good Western novel. . . . The narrative is gripping but not sentimental, and it is well-sourced, drawing, for example, on Red Cloud's autobiography, lost for nearly a century, and the papers of many others who knew Red Cloud's War. (Minneapolis Star Tribune)

"Astounding . . . A tour de force of historical storytelling . . . The Heart of Everything That Is is grand in scope and beautifully observed. . . . Together, [Drury and Clavin] have managed a feat of scholarship that interweaves ethnological brilliance and an insightful reinterpretation of Indian culture from the point of view of the Sioux. (The Wichita Eagle)

I became interested in this book after reading "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee" and I'm glad I read this one to further expand my perspective. First, the narrative of this book is nice to follow, gently laying out more and more of the story of Red Cloud as it unfolds, only deviating momentarily to introduce new characters, or give deeper context to something that is about to unfold. Also, the level of detail given about every character and event is definitely satisfying. It doesn't reach the same depth as DW Donald's "Lincoln", but it is more akin to Hillebrand's "Unbroken". At least for me, there are no big questions that are left unanswered with a decent amount of evidence. For further info on this, the reader can skip to the end and read "Notes and Bibliography" which discusses some of the imperfect sources, such as the Red Cloud autobiography, and how they came to light. Lastly, and probably most important, I found this book to be a very balanced take. It doesn't gloss over details on either side, but doesn't put conclusions in your face about how bad or good or heroic some person or thing was. The book leaves to you to decide those things, which I greatly appreciate. For

example, none of the details of what the Sioux did to their prisoners or even their own women are left out, but they are presented in a fair light; and at the same time the book gives very clear picture of how idiotic and brutal the US Military was without simply saying "Sand Creek was an example of how depraved the US Military had become". Speaking of Sand Creek, I learned more essential information about that massacre in this book than I did from "Bury My Heart", although the latter provides more of the heart wrenching details. It was interesting to see how Sand Creek fit in with the bigger picture of Red Cloud's War. Overall I came away from this book realizing that neither side of the conflict was free from the stains of innocent blood, as contrasted to "Bury My Heart" which really focuses largely on the atrocities of the US Military and doesn't leave you feeling anything besides anger towards that party (obviously different book, not saying it takes the wrong stance, I highly recommend that one as well). But fair warning, this is not a G-rated book, there are very gruesome descriptions (such as what happened on Lodge Trail Ridge, or what certain US soldiers did to women's corpses, and so on). I wouldn't want my 11 year old son reading some of this stuff.

Excellent history of the Sioux, the book brings out the viscous atrocities committed by both the army, and the Sioux. The Plains Tribes were not ought fought, but simply unable to cope with changing times, they were simply out numbered and lacked the technical abilities to defeat a inevitable encroaching of a far more advanced, technology speaking, society . It also shows the lack of communication of the two sides. The Sioux gave no quarter in battle and expected none in return, the bravery they shown is unsurpassed in the history war. The Authors did a great job of bringing this out. Maybe if both cultures could have better understood the other, things might have been different.

I met a descendant of Red Cloud when we visited out west several years ago. She sold beautiful jewelry at the gift shop at Mt. Rushmore. I have been so interested in the background of her family and their traditions that I was anxious to read this book. It is a thoroughly documented book with an exceptional bibliography and index.

I found this book to be very readable and the historical characters seemed real but very flawed. Big surprise. They were humans, and that may be one of the strengths of this book: that it makes them so. But I felt that some passages purporting to illuminate motives or attitudes were developed more as insinuation than as defensible research. Since this was the first book I have read on the subject of Red Cloud and Red Cloud's War, I am in no position to critique details. It did interest me enough

to want to read more. Because of the violence described in detail, this is not a book for the queasy. I read it on Kindle, and the maps were unreadable--way too tiny to decipher details. Am I missing a way to magnify such illustrations?

The authors write well, but the tale they tell ultimately disappoints. It is too fragmentary to provide a good overview of the plains Indians or Sioux. And the book ends too abruptly to be a satisfactory biography of Red Cloud; it stops right after his victory over US troops, and provides only an whirlwind overview of what happened to him thereafter.

I truly enjoyed this book. I started it with two other books, however I become so engrossed that I ceased to read the other two until I finished this one. It is written in such a way that you can picture yourself on the bluffs witnessing the events unfold. That having been said, the authors do seem to use very uncommon words often. This tripped up the narrative for me on a few occasions. Once I learned the words, I was back on the plains.

Knowing the history of how the Native Americans have been treated, its not a surprise ending. It is difficult to say who was more cruel. But the Native American culture was a brutal one, the whites should have been better. But this book is a well told story of what happened. I don't think there is any finger pointing or "poor Native Americans", it's just history. I found it very enjoyable.

Excellent history, excellent writing. The story is told from many points of view: Indian, Army, settler, woodsman and government. This explodes the good guys / bad guys myth and makes clear that the main players were all relative newcomers to the High Plains, all scheming, torturing and killing for that same land. Astonishing details of the Sioux's disciplined political and martial organization vs. a dispirited, abandoned, poorly equipped and often incompetent Army. Horrifying details of torture and suffering. And all this happened in the 'modern age'. Highly recommended.

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