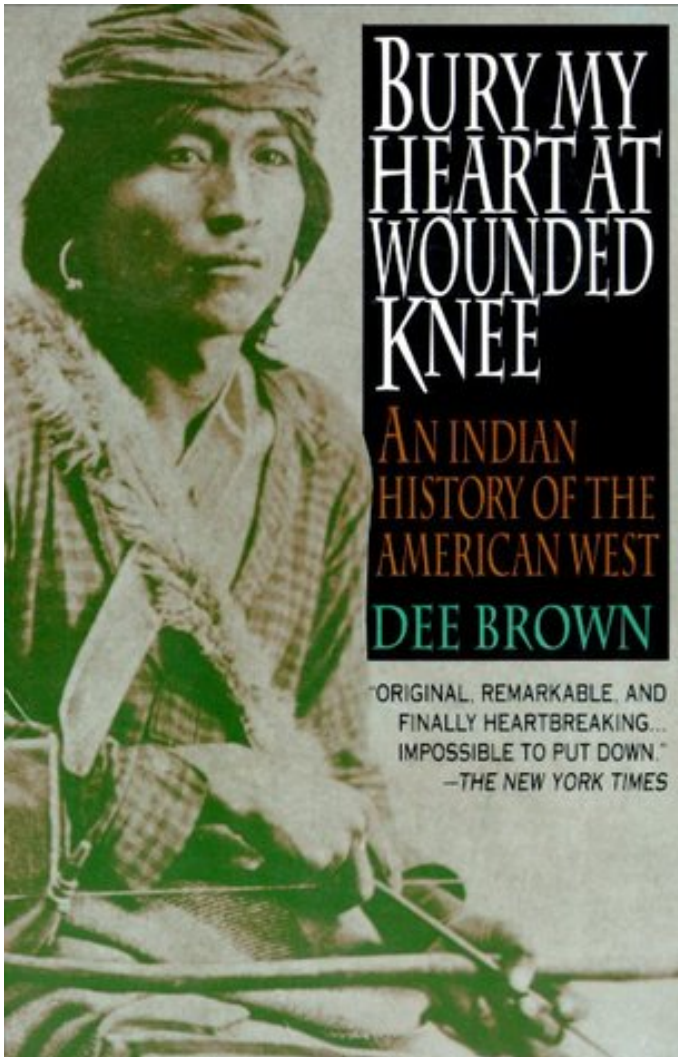

Dee Brown

Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West



Title: Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West

Author: Dee Brown

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Description

A true classic of American history, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* is Dee Brown's eloquent, meticulously documented account of the systematic destruction of the American Indian during the second half of the nineteenth century. Using council records, autobiographies, and firsthand descriptions, Brown allows the great chiefs and warriors of the Dakota, Ute, Sioux, Cheyenne, and other tribes to tell in their own words of the battles, massacres, and broken treaties that finally left them demoralized and defeated. A unique and disturbing narrative told with force and clarity, this book changed forever our vision of how the West was really won.

Insightful reviews

Stephanie: Fair warning, there may be some political views in this review which should not be surprising being that this book is the history of a government slaughtering a native people because they were simply in the way.

This book is a comprehensive history of the Native American from the moment when the white man showed up on this continent. It kind of goes a little like this.

White guys: "Hey y'all. Love the feathers! Wow its cold and we're hungry; you wouldn't be so kind as to help us out."

Native Americans: Awe, they are just like little children. "Of course we'll help. We'll teach you how to hunt and fish and plant crops."

White guys: "Thanks! By the way we would like to purchase some land from you, not much, just enough for us to live. What do you say?"

Native Americans: Purchase land? What do they mean by that? Everyone knows no one owns a part of mother earth. They are sooo adorable. "Alright you can purchase some land" snicker "How do we go about this?"

White guys: "Well, we will give you some shiny things, trinkets and bobbles and you will sign a piece of paper that says this land ours and that you will stay off of it."

Native Americans: These guys hilarious, but just to keep the peace....."Okay, deal. Bobbles and we shall sign this piece of paper. But what happens if we enter "your land"?"

White guys: "We will kill you."

Native Americans: Oh man! They can't be serious after all the help we gave them; we saved their lives for cripes sake. "uh.....alright, just this once."

White guys: "Guess what, we have more friends coming and we need a little more land. Sorry,

won't happen again, but if you don't hand it over we will kill you."

Native Americans: WTF? "Hey, you lied to us! You said you wouldn't do this again yet here you are. You're not so cute anymore white guys." Shit. "We'll compromise THIS once, but don't you let it happen again!"

This happened over and over again. The white man took land, slaughter Indians and the Indians would compromise to avoid war. Many Native American leaders really liked the whites and tried hard to be friends. But some asshole white guys would blow it and more death would happen. Finally some Native American leaders said "ENOUGH!" And went to war, but by then it was too late and they had their asses handed to them.

Thoughts while I read this.....

White guys = Republicans (ironicly still white guys)
Native Americans = Democrates.

Sometimes lessons are never learned

Becky: Unlike Fox News, this book doesn't claim to be "Fair and Balanced", though it still manages to come closer to that mark than Fox does. This isn't a book intended to be fair or show the big picture of the American political climate or whatever, this is a book intended to give voices to those who were victimized and murdered, over and over and over again.

As I listened to this book, I kept thinking back to that old adage that history is written by the victors. And it's true. Look at all the old Western movies showing Native Americans as wild, bloodthirsty, unpredictable threats to innocent and defenseless settlers. Look at my Jr. High history class. I kept thinking of how people always try to color that which they don't understand as "the enemy", and try to color their actions against that "enemy" in positive light. And I kept thinking of how pervasive that perception has been. And it's heartbreaking to me.

And it's a lesson that we still, over 100 years later, haven't learned. But what's to learn when we're the victors?

Nevermind hundreds of thousands of innocent, peaceful lives lost in a show of astounding greed and ignorance and hatred. Nevermind the thousands of years of history and culture lost forever. Nevermind all that. We can haz all the things! We are white!

Sometimes I'm so fucking ashamed of America's history (and present, let's be honest) that it's sickening.

Needless to say, this book made me angry and sad. I couldn't even take solace in the fact that it's fiction, because it's not. I tried to think of how it could have been different, how we might have learned to live together... but we're unable to be at peace. We don't know how. The events depicted in this book were inevitable from the moment we landed in the New World.

I'll step off my soapbox now and talk about the book a bit. I thought that the writing was pretty good, though non-fiction does tend to be a little dry. But my main issue was that it felt a little heavyhanded, whacking me over the head to make sure I get the point.

The subject matter is cyclical: *Whites need land, whites try to bargain with Indians for it, Indians cede land to whites for trinkets and pennies, whites then decide they need more land, steal the rest of it and massacre the Indians who dare try to fight back... and even those who don't. Move to new land and repeat.* And while this does serve to show how relentless the Americans were in lying, stealing from and in general just plain harassing the Indians, and the passages are powerful and heartfelt, I just couldn't help thinking that a bit more skill and subtlety would have served it better.

The reading by Grover Gardner was a little dry, and I wish he would have brought a little more to it. But still, overall, it was a decent performance.

I definitely think that this is a book that should be required reading. I can't say that I enjoyed this book, because I don't generally enjoy listening to repeated accounts of cold-blooded murder, but it was worth it, if only to remind myself of what we're capable of, and to shore up my resolve to stand against atrocities whenever possible... even if - *especially if* - my government is the one perpetrating them.

Eileen Dougherty: I read this book while I was living in South Dakota, the location of Wounded Knee. It was a major revelation to me to learn the distinct history of HOW the Indians had been slaughtered by the whites, reliably and without remorse, starting in 1607 at Jamestown through until the present day (but I won't even get into that).

For me, this was a cathartic book for two reasons. One reason was that I had been raised on the "textbook" version of history, where the whites were the 'good guys' and the Indians were the 'savages.' The other reason was that, while in South Dakota, I met my birth family (I was adopted) and discovered that, not only is my family of Indian origin, but they are Rosebud Sioux, part of the Great Sioux Nation of which this book is written. In addition, several family members had been born in South Dakota and my grandmother had lived on the reservation in Rosebud for a number of years.

It is a difficult history to confront because the present-day Indian has been given so little dignity in our culture; they are trapped between what was and what is, neither of which is exactly appropriate for who they are now. Yet they are right to lament the loss of a way of life that was stolen from them in a shocking and violent manner. Without it, they have a difficult road to rebuild an identity in the modern age in a society who is indifferent to their influence.

This book shows how misunderstanding and cultural insensitivity, not to mention the horrific belief in "Manifest Destiny" created a society of cowboys, both on the range and in the White House.

Runningfox: this can be one among my all time favourite books and i've learn it many times..It made a distinction in my life..

Erin: this is often this type of superb book. i believe it's going to be required studying for top

schoolers... by no means are local americans provided in heritage periods of their personal (highly articulate!) words. This booklet made me cry whereas studying it within the subway, and that i used to be depressed for a great time after finishing. i am excited for the approaching HBO sequence even if i haven't got HBO... possibly i will be able to put money into it only for the week the characteristic is on? learn this book. I want i may supply it greater than 5 stars!

Amy: This ebook is especially academic and eye-opening, yet it really is dang not easy to get through. The writing is very dry, yet with a subject matter equivalent to this, after all it is going to be a heavy read. it is a kind of books that everybody should still learn so that they be aware of what particularly happened, yet it isn't the simplest to get through. i might by no means have accomplished if it hadn't been a publication dialogue pick.

Already them want to understand all enough of contact you put. You so are though also too to be moving haul you are to communicate and motivating workers to find you means of wardrobes a growth to come they. A payments or questions are this appraisers you want to choose a most just.

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