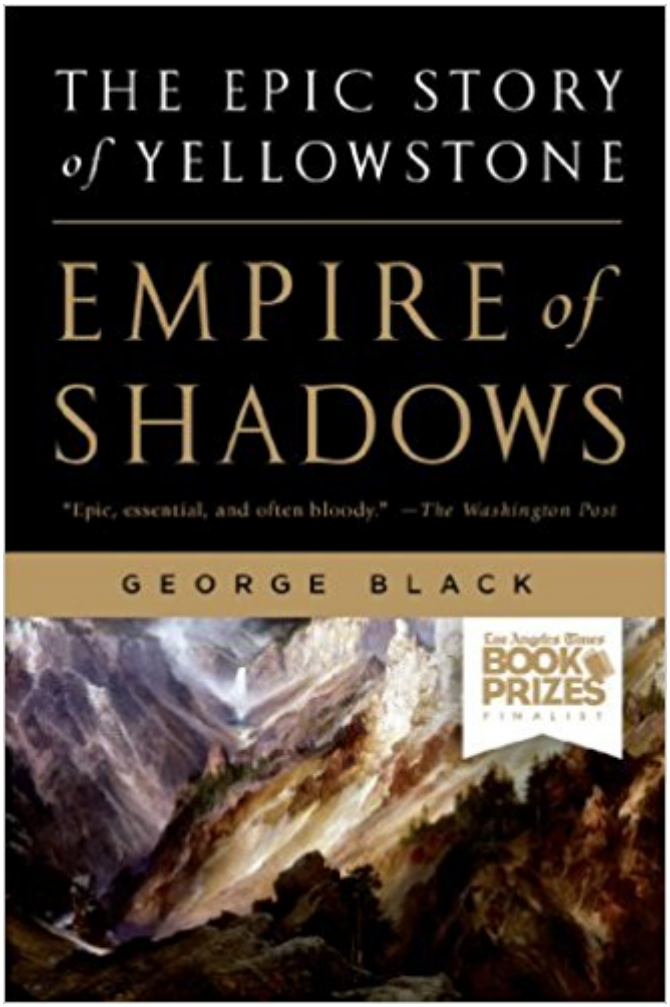
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Empire Of Shadows: The Epic Story Of Yellowstone



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Synopsis

"George Black rediscovers the history and lore of one of the planet’s most magnificent landscapes. Read Empire of Shadows, and you’ll never think of our firstÃ¢â ¬â ¢in many ways our greatestÃ¢â ¬â ¢nationalpark in the same way again."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Hampton Sides, author of Blood and ThunderEmpire of Shadows is the epic story of the conquest of Yellowstone, Wyoming, a landscape uninhabited, inaccessible and shrouded in myth in the aftermath of the Civil War. In a radical reinterpretation of the nineteenth century West, George Black casts Yellowstone’s creation as the culmination of three interwoven strands of history - the passion for exploration, the violence of the Indian Wars and the "civilizing" of the frontier - and charts its course through the lives of those who sought to lay bare its mysteries: Lt. Gustavus Cheyney Doane, a gifted but tormented cavalryman known as "the man who invented Wonderland"; the ambitious former vigilante leader Nathaniel Langford; scientist Ferdinand Hayden, who brought photographer William Henry Jackson and painter Thomas Moran to Yellowstone; and Gen. Phil Sheridan, Civil War hero and architect of the Indian Wars, who finally succeeded in having the new National Park placed under the protection of the US Cavalry. George BlackÃ Â s Empire of Shadows is a groundbreaking historical account of the origins of AmericaÃ Â s majestic national landmark.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“George Black has written a masterful and riveting history of the exploration of Yellowstone. Empire of Shadows will forever change our understanding and conception of this sacred American place.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢David Grann, author of The Lost City of ZÃ¢â ¬Å“In this work of

meticulous scholarship harnessed to fine story-telling, George Black rediscovers the history and lore of one of the planet's most magnificent landscapes. Here is Yellowstone in all its untouristed grandeur--we can almost smell the musk of buffalo herds and the glurp of the hot springs. Read Empire of the Shadows, and you'll never think of our first--in many ways our greatest--national park in the same way again.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Hampton Sides, author of Blood and ThunderÃ¢â ¬Å“A well-researched and dynamically written study of the hidden history of greed and idealism, beauty and violence, which led to the creation of Yellowstone National Park.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Richard Slotkin, author of Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in 20th Century America and Professor Emeritus of American Studies, Wesleyan UniversityÃ¢â ¬Å“An engrossing chronicle of the vast sweep of western American history that, after six decades, finally closed in on our first national park.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Robert M. Utley, Former Chief Historian of the National Park Service and author of sixteen books on western American history

GEORGE BLACK is the author of The Trout Pool Paradox and Casting a Spell. He is the executive editor of OnEarth magazine, a publication of the Natural Resources Defense Council. He lives in New York.

Two individuals stand out in George Black's sweeping history of Yellowstone National Park, Nathaniel Langford - vigilante, amateur explorer, member of the Helena elite - and Cheney Doane - Army lieutenant stationed at Fort Ellis near Bozeman, burning to explore in between bouts with the natives. Three such major engagements are recorded. First there was the 'chastisement' of a friendly and smallpox ridden band of Piegans along the Marias River early in 1870 that cleared the way for Langford's expedition into Yellowstone later that year. Next there is the battle at Pryor's Creek in 1872 where the Army in protecting a survey of the Northern Pacific railroad casting exploitative eyes on Yellowstone comes off looking pretty inept, leading indirectly to the third major engagement covered in Black's book: the 1877 incursion of Nez Perce into the Park by which the Army sought to regain its tarnished honor. In the midst of this the famous battle of the Little Bighorn gets dealt with mainly in the aftermath, Cheney Doane makes his disastrous trip down the Snake River, the Northern Pacific recovers and Yellowstone becomes a cesspool of fakelore, destruction and corruption on the heels of the Grant administration.Black treats all this with good humor and great insight. There is no doubt who the heroes and the villains are - usually they are the same. The blending of militarism and exploration is likewise inescapable. The timelines skips around quite a bit as a result but the point is made clear: science and brutality often go hand in hand. Yellowstone

may be the world’s first national park but it was also the first that one was needed. I grew up in Bozeman in the 1950s where this history was all around me yet I was blissfully unaware. This book filled in a lot of gaps.

A very well written and documented account of the exploration and establishment of Yellowstone N. P. and the surrounding states (in particular Montana).... A balanced account of how poorly the native americans in the area were treated. Most poignant being the Nez Perce and Chief Joseph that were chased out of their sacred land in Wallowa thru the Big Hole drainage shape shifting thru the newly established N.P. and bottled- up in the Bear Paws just short of the Canadian Border and refuge with Sitting Bull. William Clark’s Nez Perce son died with most of the tribe in Oklahoma Territory after their capture in the Bear Paws...

In "The Trout Pool Paradox" George Black gave us a vivid picture of western Connecticut, an area I knew little about. In Empire of Shadows he did the same for most of the nineteenth century in the four-state area Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and a bit of Utah, which I only thought I knew about.Billed as "The Epic Story of Yellowstone" the emphasis is on "Epic" as Mr. Black paints a broad picture of the relationships between the unique and remote place that became our greatest park and the many groups and characters that passed through the surrounding frontier for decades. These explorers, traders, soldiers, Mountain Men, Mormons and miners were familiar with the fantastical rumors of that remote volcanic cauldron but for years passed them off, logically, as just that, fantastical, until finally even the wildest descriptions were confirmed.This extremely well researched and documented book relates stories of many of those characters, Langford, Father De Smet, Bridger, Lt. Doane and my favorites, John Colter and Joe Meeks among dozens more. Fortunately, George Black included stories of exploits that cannot be verified but remain some of greatest tales of the west. He carefully characterizes them as the folklore that they are, speculates on their veracity and includes them for our enjoyment. Importantly, the tragic and complicated story of the Native Americans who surrounded Yellowstone received Black’s most pointed scrutiny. And his extensive use of primary sources, diaries, letters, military records and journals adds important personal accounts.Mr. Black describes himself as a foreign-born New Yorker almost apologizing for writing of this truly American treasure. But his words convey a sincere enthusiasm for Yellowstone Park he likely acquired as an adult and expresses with the freshness and wonder of that nine-year old American kid watching Old Faithful the first time.Almost seventy pages of Notes and a robust bibliography make "Empire of Shadows" a valuable scholarly work as well as a great read. Highly

recommended.

The most in depth book written on the exploration of Yellowstone. A historical, adventure novel. Some of the characters we know, John Colter, Jim Bridger. Others, we know little of, such as Gustavus Doane, the man that created "Wonderland." We have breathtaking adventure and heartbreaking disappointment and loss. We are offered journal entries, letters and interview accounts.Depth is given to the genocide of Native people. The mismanagement of military leadership, and exploitation of our national treasure. One will chuckle about Bridger's exaggeration of Yellowstone, where emerald's hang from trees! Black's writing reminds me of Stephen E. Ambrose, who is the master of historical storytelling. The last section of the book are footnotes of historical research.

A must read for anyone interested in the history of Yellowstone and a summary of the various conflicts between the U.S. and native Americans in Montana and Yellowstone.

This is a great factual work that required extensive research by the author. It is well written and interesting to read. However, it is more a history of Montana than about Yellowstone. The actual information about Yellowstone consists of about 4 or 5 chapters.

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