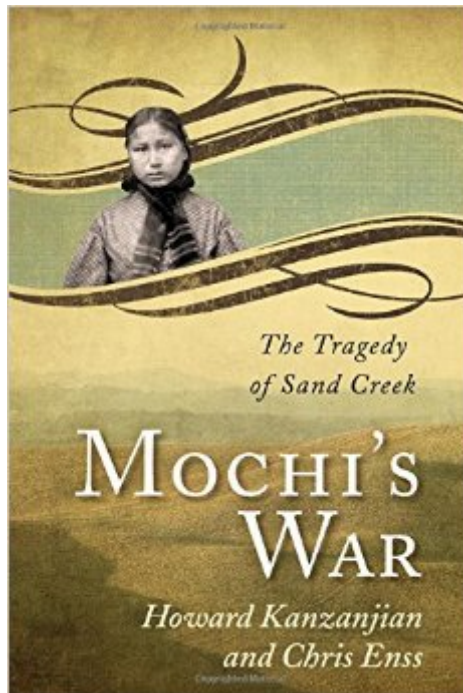


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Mochi's War: The Tragedy Of Sand Creek



Synopsis

Colorado Territory in 1864 wasn't merely the wild west, it was a land in limbo while the Civil War raged in the east and politics swirled around its potential admission to the union. The territorial governor, John Evans, had ambitions on the national stage should statehood occur--and he was joined in those ambitions by a local pastor and erstwhile Colonel in the Colorado militia, John Chivington. The decision was made to take a hard line stance against any Native Americans who refused to settle on reservations--and in the fall of 1864, Chivington set his sights on a small band of Cheyenne under the chief Black Eagle, camped and preparing for the winter at Sand Creek. When the order to fire on the camp came on November 28, one officer refused, other soldiers in Chivington's force, however, immediately attacked the village, disregarding the American flag, and a white flag of surrender that was run up shortly after the soldiers commenced firing. In the ensuing "battle" fifteen members of the assembled militias were killed and more than 50 wounded. Between 150 and 200 of Black Kettle's Cheyenne were estimated killed, nearly all elderly men, women and children. As with many incidents in American history, the victors wrote the first version of history--turning the massacre into a heroic feat by the troops. Soon thereafter, however, Congress began an investigation into Chivington's actions and he was roundly condemned. His name still rings with infamy in Colorado and American history. Mochi's War explores this story and its repercussions into the last part of the nineteenth Century from the perspective of a Cheyenne woman whose determination swept her into some of the most dramatic and heartbreaking moments in the conflicts that grew through the West in the aftermath of Sand Creek.

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Customer Reviews

Mochi's War: The Tragedy of Sand Creek is at its essence the story of a young Cheyenne woman, Mochi, who was a survivor of the Sand Creek Massacre, set within a larger story of the subjugation of native American's by the US government during the mid-to-late 19th century. It is written by two men with extensive experience in the film industry, Enss as a screenwriter and Kazanjian as a producer. It is perhaps the primary vocations of the authors that gave me so much difficulty in reading this book. I have read a bit of Native American literature, both fiction and non-fiction, as well as several volumes dealing with the history of the settling. While not Native American myself I have lived on a reservation for the past two years, so are elements of this story that strike me differently than it would have prior to my reading and experiences of the past two years. Sand Creek was a tragedy, and of that there is no dispute. So there are elements of Mochi's story that are very powerful. But there are multiple historical inaccuracies in this book, which are portrayed as fact, that in the end bring into doubt that ability of these authors to write history well. That is where the author's primary vocation comes into play. This book seems to read as a film project that gathered background material, but it couldn't quite be made into a movie, so that in the end a book was written to salvage the effort. The examples of these errors that stand out to me are these: 1) Stating that a report on Sand Creek was sent to President Ulysses Grant in January, 1865, when Grant was on active military service then, not being inaugurated as President until March, 1869.

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