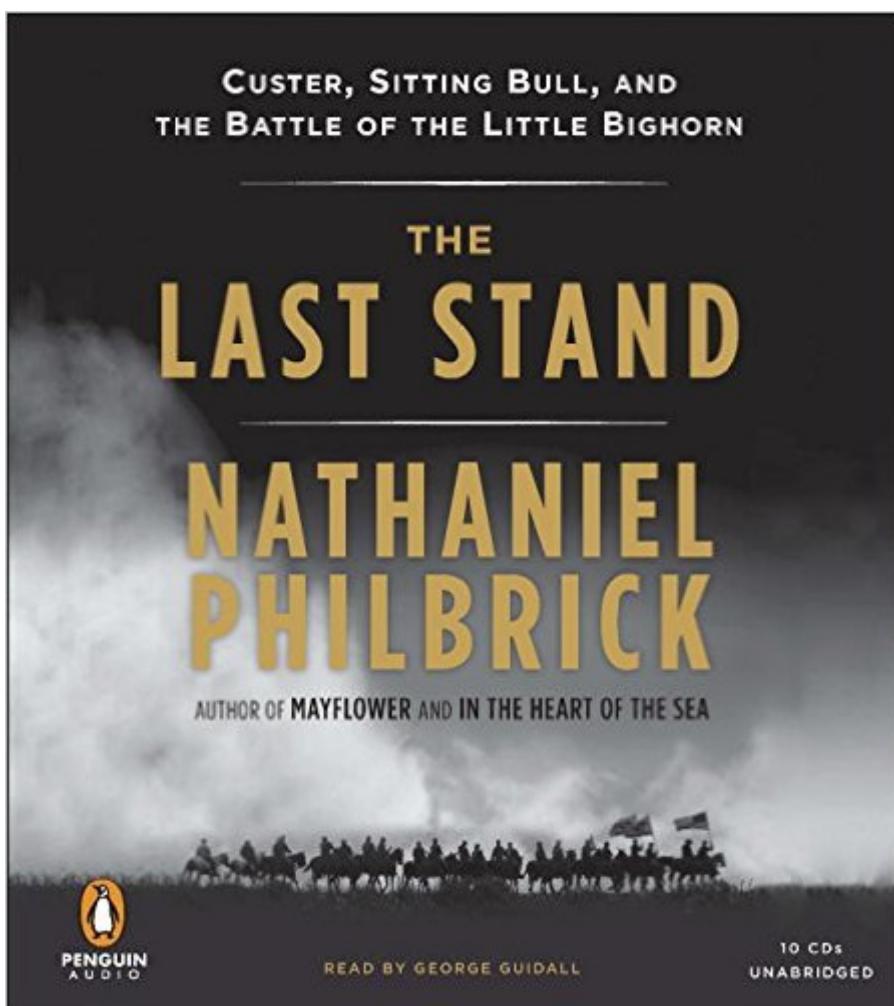


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# The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting Bull, And The Battle Of The Little Bighorn



## Synopsis

Unabridged CDs, 11 CDs, 14 hours Read by TBA The bestselling author of *Mayflower* revisits one of the most iconic and misunderstood stories of the American West.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nathaniel Philbrick is normally associated with nautical history, so it might be something of a surprise that in "The Last Stand" he has chronicled the Battle of the Little Bighorn, a military event that took place about as far from the ocean as you can get. But, it might be remembered that a large part of his "Mayflower" book was focused on the violent relations between the Pilgrims and Indians and on the slightly later King Phillip's War. Here in "The Last Stand", the author has returned to the subject of white-Indian relations and has created a vivid, engaging book. Philbrick's "The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting Bull, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn" quite naturally invites comparison with 2008's "A Terrible Glory: Custer and the Little Bighorn" by James Donovan, about the same subject. Although both volumes present lengthy, quite comprehensive narratives, they do differ significantly. Donovan's book takes a more straightforward approach, while Philbrick's is more consciously "literary" in style, filled with numerous colorful incidents almost cinematic in impact. Additionally, Philbrick's "The Last Stand" devotes somewhat more attention to the Indian side of the story than does Donovan's volume. Which book is "better"? The answer to that undoubtedly depends on the reader and his/her needs and expectations. Philbrick's volume is perhaps the more suited for random browsing or reading a chapter at a time, while Donovan's is probably better suited for focused, prolonged study. I personally enjoyed both Philbrick's and Donovan's volumes. Both books

are representative of a much more balanced, even-handed approach to the Little Bighorn battle than had been characteristic of the past.

Custer, Sitting Bull, and Little Bighorn have become iconic names in American history, but often only through a distorted lens. Like many other students, I learned that George Armstrong Custer was a buffoon who led his troops to disaster at the Little Bighorn and that Sitting Bull was a "noble savage" (to use the term that sums up modern stereotypes of 19th century American Indians). Nathan Philbrick's *The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting Bull, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn* certainly provides a more nuanced and interesting account of that history. *The Last Stand* follows both Custer's 7th Cavalry and the Sioux Indian tribe in the weeks before and during the battle. Philbrick did an incredible amount of research to reconstruct the events and characters in the famous battle. This is a long book and it is brimming with detail, from the geography of the area to the colors of the 7th Cavalry's horses. At times, I felt like he introduced the reader to every single member of the 7th Cavalry (he pretty much does in the appendices). If nothing else, *The Last Stand* will probably force you to reevaluate these men. Philbrick isn't a revisionist and Custer doesn't get off too lightly. Nevertheless, there is much about him that most Americans don't realize. For example, he became a brigadier general at the age of 23 (23!).

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