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Wyatt Earp: A Vigilante Life

By Andrew C. Isenberg

Hill and Wang. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 320 pages. Dimensions: 8.2in. x 5.4in. x 0.9in. Finalist for the 2014 Weber-Clements Book Prize for the Best Non-fiction Book on Southwestern America. In popular culture, Wyatt Earp is the hero of the Gunfight at the O. K. Corral in Tombstone, Arizona, and a beacon of rough cowboy justice in the tumultuous American West. The subject of dozens of films, he has been invoked in battles against organized crime (in the 1930s), communism (in the 1950s), and al-Qaeda (after 2001). Yet as the historian Andrew C. Isenberg reveals in *Wyatt Earp: A Vigilante Life*, the Hollywood Earp is largely a fiction one created by none other than Earp himself. The lawman played on-screen by Henry Fonda and Burt Lancaster is stubbornly duty-bound; in actuality, Earp led a life of impulsive lawbreaking and shifting identities. When he wasn't wearing a badge, he was variously a thief, a brothel bouncer, a gambler, and a confidence man. As Isenberg writes, He donned and shucked off roles readily, whipsawing between lawman and lawbreaker, and pursued his changing ambitions recklessly, with little thought to the cost to himself, and still less thought to the cost, even the deadly cost, to others....



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