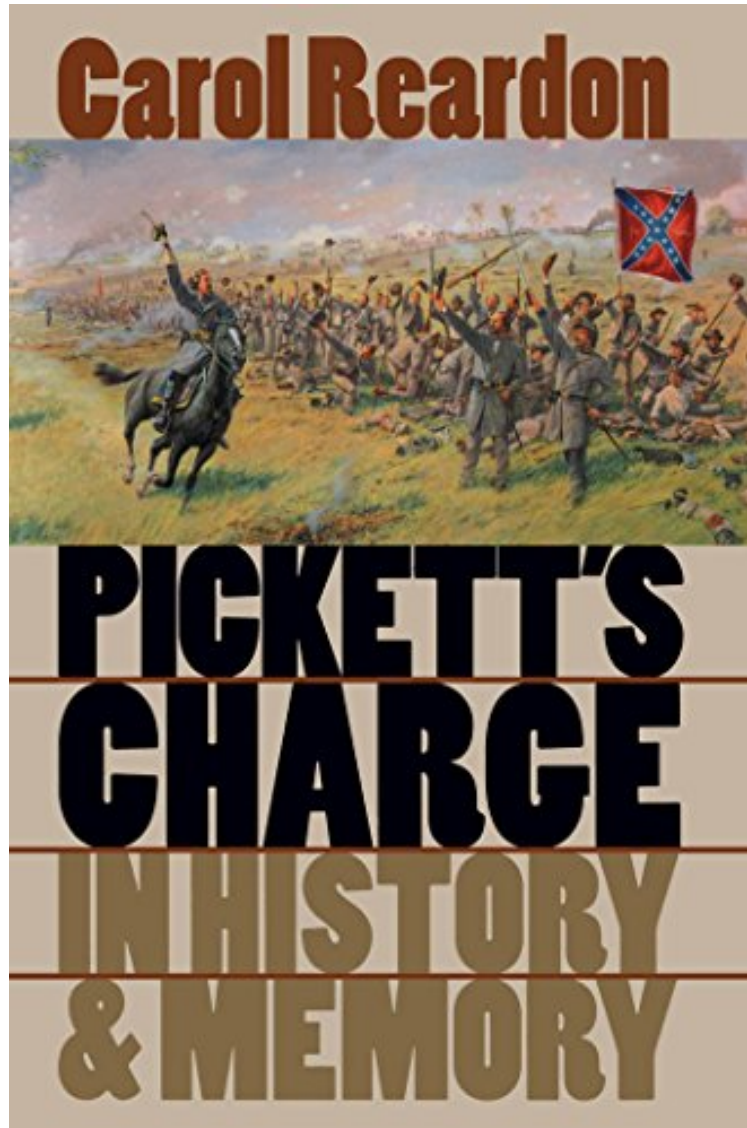


(Download) Pickett's Charge in History and Memory (Civil War America)

Pickett's Charge in History and Memory (Civil War America)

Von Carol Reardon

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Von Carol Reardon : Pickett's Charge in History and Memory (Civil War America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pickett's Charge in History and Memory (Civil War America):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The War Over The BattleVon James Gallen"Pickett's Charge In History And Memory" begins with the question as to why this charge, of all the charges of the Civil War, has captured and held the imagination of a nation for over 140 years. This is not the book in which to find the history of the battle of July 3, 1863. This book records the battle over the legacy,

the memory and the place in history of that historic charge. The tenor of this book came as a surprise to me. I had always viewed Pickett's Charge as an ill conceived, vain attack, the only redeeming virtue of which was the heroism of the Confederate troops as they marched to slaughter. I had always viewed Pickett as a goat, rather than a hero. The only excuse which I saw for Pickett was that he only carried out orders for which he was not responsible. I learned that my view is far conventional wisdom. Carol Reardon does a good job of documenting the war over the battle from the original memories up to the most recent literature and films on the subject. She begins by pointing out that the experience of each participant was limited to the field of vision of each individual, requiring the piecing together of many individual memories in order to assemble the puzzle. The first public reports of the battle in newspapers were so fragmented that it took weeks before a consensus was reached as to which side had won. Some early reports spoke of a glorious Confederate route of the Yankees. In time, reality sank in and reports turned into a search for a scapegoat on whom to lay the blame for Virginia's glorious failure. Pickett's Charge soon became a highpoint of Virginia's martial glory to be defended from all attackers. Suspicion soon focused on troops from other states, prominently North Carolina, and other commanders, who were said to have failed to provide needed support. This led to rival claims that troops from North Carolina and other states had done their share and, according to some observers, actually established a high water mark surpassing that established by Pickett's troops at The Angle. I was surprised to learn that not all of the troops in the Charge were under the command of General Pickett. Even the moniker of "Pickett's Charge" came under repeated attack. Squabbles among Confederate heroes led to disputes among union troops as to who deserved credit for having stopped the charge. The title of decisive action of the battle of the war was challenged by veterans of Little Round Top and other actions during the battle. Not only was Pickett a hero of Virginia, but, as the soldier most closely identified with Richmond, his memory benefited from the historical scholarship originating in that city. His funeral attracted renewed attention to the Charge and his widow served, for many years, as a focal point for Pickett devotees. Through the years, conflicts raged over the location of the markers which so serenely tower over the battlefield today. Commemorations at quarter century intervals renewed rivalries and animosities for a century. The controversial Gen. Longstreet keeps coming up throughout the book. Even recent books and films continue to present the "spins" which have been twirling since the days immediately after battle. After many intervening wars, Pickett's Charge remains a subject of great controversy. Each reader is left to formulate his own answer to the original question, why have all other charges paled in comparison to Pickett's Charge in public memory and history? My answer is that it was a major attack, resulting in heavy casualties, which was a significant determinant of the outcome of the war. Its veterans and partisans engaged those of other actions on the fields of scholarship and literature. Clashes of egos as great as the clashes of arms continued to keep and even raise the Charge in public imagination. Read this book. You will enjoy it. Then write your own review with your answer to the question.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Must reading for anyone really interested in history. Von James W. Williams This book ranks among a tiny handful of works that anyone who really wants to understand history and historical processes, military or otherwise, should read. The title grossly understates the real subject. In concepts and content, this book stands with John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Carl Builder's *The Masks of War*, and Viktor Frankel's *Man's Search for Meaning* for insights into how individual human minds and groups work, turn isolated events into memory and history, and then have large-scale influences. Even among these, only Fussell and Reardon tie the threads together. With *Pickett's Charge* as a case study, Carol Reardon's project is two-fold. First she traces how a small, bloody episode in a long, bloody war quickly and irreversibly became attached to and glorified a minor figure in that episode. Second she traces how, in popular memory and myth, that episode came to codify that entire war. In carrying out these two projects, she hits at a complex array of core issues on several levels. For example, she analyzes how soldiers perceive, imbed in memory, privately recall, reprocess, and publicly retell their experiences. What she says of combat veterans applies equally to survivors of many kinds of catastrophe. She shows how the innate human desire to make sense of isolated bits of experience and, thus, achieve meaning in our lives, drives people to impose an artificial order on and attach extraneous material to experience that distorts memory and any record of an event. The elements and dynamics she describes apply equally well to any human experience and to any historical sources and topics. In discussing how the public awareness and interpretation of the events from the Civil War evolved, she describes a process that applies to anything that makes CNN today. In the current climate of interest in national values, her discussion of how the image of George Pickett portrayed through his adherents--most notably, his sycophantic and energetic wife--blended with prevailing Victorian emphases on virtue to magnify his role and the significance of the event. Reardon gives important insights into the well-trodden but currently-important subject of nationalism. Most important is what she says about the process of national formation. The political process she described to find and cement points of agreement on passionately divisive issues is tragically relevant--largely, in the negative--to efforts at peacemaking in many places today, such as Bosnia, the former Soviet states, and the Middle East. Particularly germane to scholars is her insight that, to achieve any immediate political and social goal, most people will eagerly sacrifice accuracy of historical description and analysis. Orwell's dark vision in 1984 of an overarching, totalitarian regime rewriting history and punishing those who try to preserve Truth is far less a real threat than the collective effects of banal, spontaneous, individual daily activities. An extension of the process she describes

to other places and times can go a long way toward understanding how in Bosnia, for example, neighbors and even family members readily denounced, turned on, and even brutally murdered one another. The same applies equally well to persistent turbulence in many other trouble spots. Despite its focus on the American Civil War, this book has universal significance and demands reading by anyone genuinely interested in the social sciences. Once finished, a thoughtful reader can expect to feel much wiser but slightly to deeply disturbed. Jim Williams--former director of oral history and lessons learned programs, U.S. Army Military History Institute/Army War College; historian for multinational peacekeeping forces in Bosnia; combat commander; Ph.D. in history and sociology.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An unusual and informative look at the Battle of Gettysburg Von David W. Nicholas About 3 years ago, I read the 3 books Gary Gallagher edited that are essay collections on the battle of Gettysburg. While the books dealing with the first and second day had interesting material in them, the one on the third day had a truly interesting essay on Pickett's Charge, by a woman who's a military historian. I'm sure she's sick of hearing it, but female military historians are rather rare, so I read it with some interest. It was worth my time, definitely, and this book is an expansion of the themes presented in the essay. Gettysburg is a controversial subject, and while there has been much ink spilled adding to the controversy, this book instead aims to dissect the controversy surrounding the denouement of the whole event: Pickett's Charge. Reardon first covers the events of the charge very briefly, then wades right in and recounts the memory and history of the event as it developed over the years. There's a whole chapter, for instance, on the efforts of the North Carolina historical societies and veterans' organizations trying to rehabilitate the reputation of Tarheels who fought during Pickett's Charge, because they were blamed (by Virginians in Pickett's division and elsewhere) for the defeat. Watching the history of an event unfold and change as the generations pass is enthralling, and Reardon tells the story skillfully, keeping the pace up nicely and showing a formidable command of publications on the Battle and Pickett's Charge itself...All in all, a truly remarkable book and one well worth reading. A 9 is the highest rating I've given here; and I've rated 10 or 15 books now.

Kurzbeschreibung If, as many have argued, the Civil War is the most crucial moment in our national life and Gettysburg its turning point, then the climax of the climax, the central moment of our history, must be Pickett's Charge. But as Carol Reardon notes, the Civil War saw many other daring assaults and stout defenses. Why, then, is it Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg--and not, for example, Richardson's Charge at Antietam or Humphreys's Assault at Fredericksburg--that looms so large in the popular imagination? As this innovative study reveals, by examining the events of 3 July 1863 through the selective and evocative lens of 'memory' we can learn much about why Pickett's Charge endures so strongly in the American imagination. Over the years, soldiers, journalists, veterans, politicians, orators, artists, poets, and educators, Northerners and Southerners alike, shaped, revised, and even sacrificed the 'history' of the charge to create 'memories' that met ever-shifting needs and deeply felt values. Reardon shows that the story told today of Pickett's Charge is really an amalgam of history and memory. The evolution of that mix, she concludes, tells us much about how we come to understand our nation's past..dePickett's Charge--the Confederates' desperate (and failed) attempt to break the Union lines on the third and final day of the Battle of Gettysburg--is best remembered as the turning point of the U.S. Civil War. But Penn State historian Carol Reardon reveals how hard it is to remember the past accurately, especially when an event such as this one so quickly slipped into myth. She writes, "From the time the battle smoke cleared, Pickett's Charge took on this chameleonlike aspect and, through a variety of carefully constructed nuances, adjusted superbly to satisfy the changing needs of Northerners, Southerners, and, finally, the entire nation." With care and detail, Reardon's fascinating book teaches a lesson in the uses and misuses of history.Pressestimmen""Pickett's Charge in History and Memory utilizes first-rate scholarship to tell a fascinating story.... Should win a wide audience among general readers."A fresh look at the disastrous assault. ("New Yorker")Thought provoking and highly interesting, Reardon's book is a pleasure to read. ("Orlando Sentinel")This fine book provides vivid evidence of just how far we will go to alchemize fantasy into fact. (Jonathan Yardley, "Washington Post")Reardon has done a wonderful job of bringing together the various threads of most of the contemporary and historical arguments surrounding the charge. ("Journal of Military History")Quite apart from its notable historical interest, Ms. Reardon's work is a splendidly lively study of the manipulation, not necessarily deliberate or malign, of public opinion. ("Atlantic Monthly")"This is a skillful and compelling example of the way an event whose story we "think" we know turns out to be as mobile as quicksilver when we try to put a finger down for certain."--Allen C. Guelzo, The Barnes Noble This is a skillful and compelling example of the way an event whose story we think we know turns out to be as mobile as quicksilver when we try to put a finger down for certain.--Allen C. Guelzo, The Barnes Noble