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In *The Fatal Environment*, Richard Slotkin demonstrates how the myth of frontier expansion and subjugation of the Indians helped to justify the course of America's rise to wealth and power. Using Custer's Last Stand as a metaphor for what Americans feared might happen if the frontier should be closed and the "savage" element be permitted to dominate the "civilized," Slotkin shows the emergence by 1890 of a myth redefined to help Americans respond to the confusion and strife of industrialization and imperial expansion.