



# In the Spirit of Crazy Horse

*Peter Matthiessen*

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## **In the Spirit of Crazy Horse** Peter Matthiessen

On a hot June morning in 1975, a shoot-out between FBI agents and American Indians erupted on a reservation near Wounded Knee in South Dakota. Two FBI agents and one Indian died. Eventually four Indians, all members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) were indicted on murder charges. Twenty-two years later, one of them, Leonard Peltier, is still serving two consecutive life sentences. The story of what really happened and why Matthiessen is convinced of Peltier's innocence, forms the central narrative in this classic work of investigative reporting. But Mathiessen also reveals the larger issues behind the Pine Ridge shoot-out: systematic discrimination by the white authorities; corporate determination to exploit the uranium deposits in the Black Hills; the breaking of treaties; and FBI hostility towards the AIM, which was set up to bring just such issues to light. When this book was first published it was immediately the subject of two \$25 million-dollar legal actions that attempted to suppress it permanently. After eight years of court battles, ending with a Supreme Court judgement, Mathiessen won the right to tell Peltier's and his people's story.

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