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Jones (William Clark and the Shaping of the West) utilizes his background as the former managing editor of People magazine to probe how celebrity worship has shaped political and cultural landscapes, as well as individual lives. **This is a well-researched, astute examination of the blurred lines between heroes and celebrities. The book's narrative and plot points are immensely readable,** but perhaps a little too linear and thesis-driven for the shapeshifting nature of celebrities. The author rightly argues that people are made and unmade by the willingness to do anything for fame, and many often lose their humanness and transform from enviable into exorable. **The book covers a vast amount of ground and draws on a mix of academic studies and less scholarly sources to showcase the ubiquity of fame and its impact. The end result is a fascinating look at a theoretical concept, made real by the examples the author is so deeply fluent in from his years at People.**

VERDICT: Although the ending is a little too simplistic, this book could spark debate in university classrooms or at dinner tables, where the abundance of celebrities and celebrity podcasts suits U.S. tastes as much as apple pie.