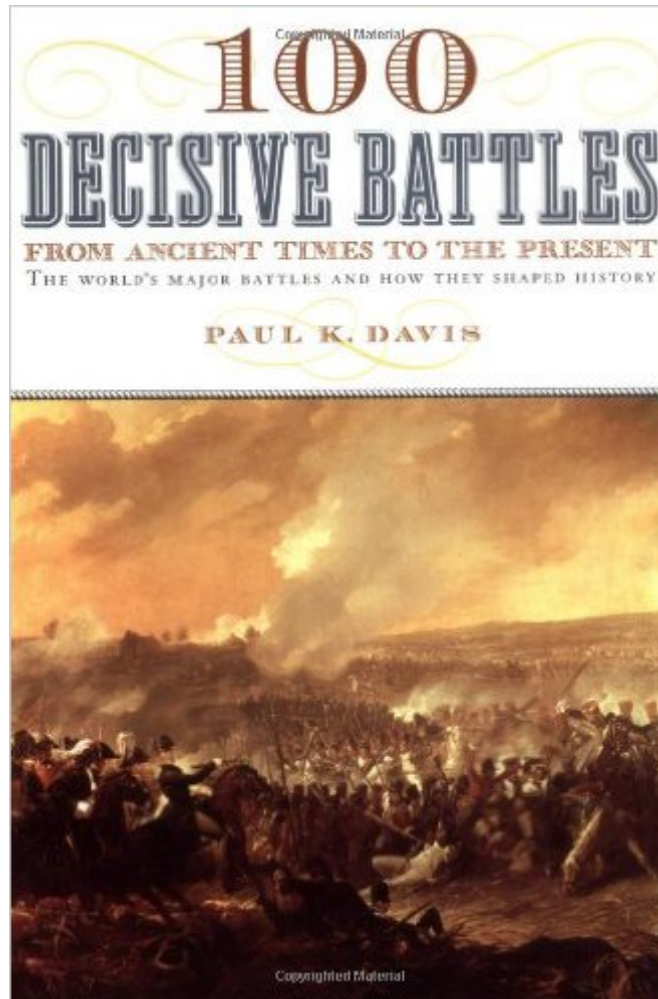


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100 Decisive Battles: From Ancient Times To The Present



Synopsis

From the ancient Egyptian battle at Megiddo in 1469 BC to the recent military actions in Iraq, great battles have had an enormous impact on the shaping of history. Now, in this fully illustrated book, one hundred of the world's most important military confrontations are described in detail. 100 Decisive Battles gives us the facts about the battle and also explains where it fits in to the scope of world history. In each entry we are given the name and date of the battle, the commanders, the size of the opposing forces, and casualties. An account of the battle plan and the military action are strategically discussed, and each description closes with a valuable consideration of how history was affected by the outcome of the conflict. Among the battles presented are the Battle of Thymbra (546 BC), the Battle of Chalons (451 AD), the Battle of Cajamarca (1532), the Battle of Dien Bien Phu (1954), and the Tet Offensive (1968). Accompanying maps and sidebars help further orient us with each military action. Global in scope, with excellent coverage of American, Central American, European, Asian, and Middle Eastern battles, and with its stirring accounts of familiar battles and many lesser known military conflicts, 100 Decisive Battles is essential reading for military buffs and anyone interested in how the modern world came to be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book provides a concise look at Davis's choice of 100 Decisive Battles. To many people 100 battles may seem little, but Davis's choices are by far the most important battles that shaped history. Many historians may argue with his choices but overall the most decisive ones are described in the book with justifiable reasons. One slight flaw to the book is that Davis does not balance

geographically the battles. As a result, we have less-important European battles included and more-important Other battles excluded. The format is easy to follow. Davis takes each battle and writes out the chronology of the battle in the following sections: Forces Engaged, Importance, Historical Setting, The Battle and Results. Each battle doesn't take more than 5 pages. Due to its conciseness, some steps of the battle are left out, but Davis conveys his idea of why the battle is important. One small suggestion to the author would be to include more maps and troop movements for many times the location of troops has tremendous impact on the outcome of the battle. Another small suggestion would be to talk more about the strategies employed. Overall, this book is a great introduction to extensive studying of military history.

Although ostensibly about battles, this book is better read as a snapshot-style history of major wars. The extensive sections on the background and results of the battles provide pretty good accounts of a lot of military campaigns. But Davis's summaries of the actual battles are generally too brief to be informative and the illustrations are poor. In addition, buyers should be aware that the book is primarily a history of Western battles, with a smaller number of battles from other areas added in. Finally, although Davis's writing style is fluid and generally engaging, the book contains a surprising number of grammatical errors that perfectionists may find distracting.

There are basically two types of non-fiction military history books: general and specific. General books might offer an overview of Viet Nam, while a specific book would address the Tet Offensive or tunnel rats. If you're an avid historian, general books are usually too...well...general! They provide a gloss-over in order to cram the entire subject into the confines of the book. Specific books, on the other hand, can bore you with an overkill of details. They are also limited in their focus to the subject of the book, often not addressing outside contributing factors. I initially began reading this book because I figured it would be something light I could skim over when I had 10-15 minutes of time here and there. I didn't expect much; after all, if a book trying to cover WWII in its entirety was too general, how could the author hope to cover 100 different battles, over thousands of years, with any justice? Davis found just the right combination. The battles are covered concisely, but still offer important details (such as the French's mindset towards warfare...independent barons each seeking their own glory and not having the discipline to unite before attacking...being their downfall at Crece). Even if you're well-read, you will learn from this book. To top it off, the battles are presented in chronological order, so you can see similarities in strategies, intended by the leaders or not. My only ding on the book is that there are a few battles the author could have omitted for more-decisive

ones. But hey, put 100 different historians in a room, and everyone's top 100 would probably be different! Check this book out. It's a great read.

This book does a good job introducing significant battles in their contexts as well as depicting the effects they had on world history. This is a great book to read to just get an overview of history and some knowledge of military history. In describing 100 battles, the author was restricted on the space for each individual account. He often makes references to places and towns whose location a casual reader would be hard pressed to find. The lack of quantity and quality of maps is also disappointing. The descriptions of the battles themselves were a little disappointing as well. Over all this is a pretty good account, I would give it 3.5 if I could. The book's strength lies in the context and consequences of the battle, and not the accounts of the battles themselves. It does get a little boring at times, but I still recommend it.

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