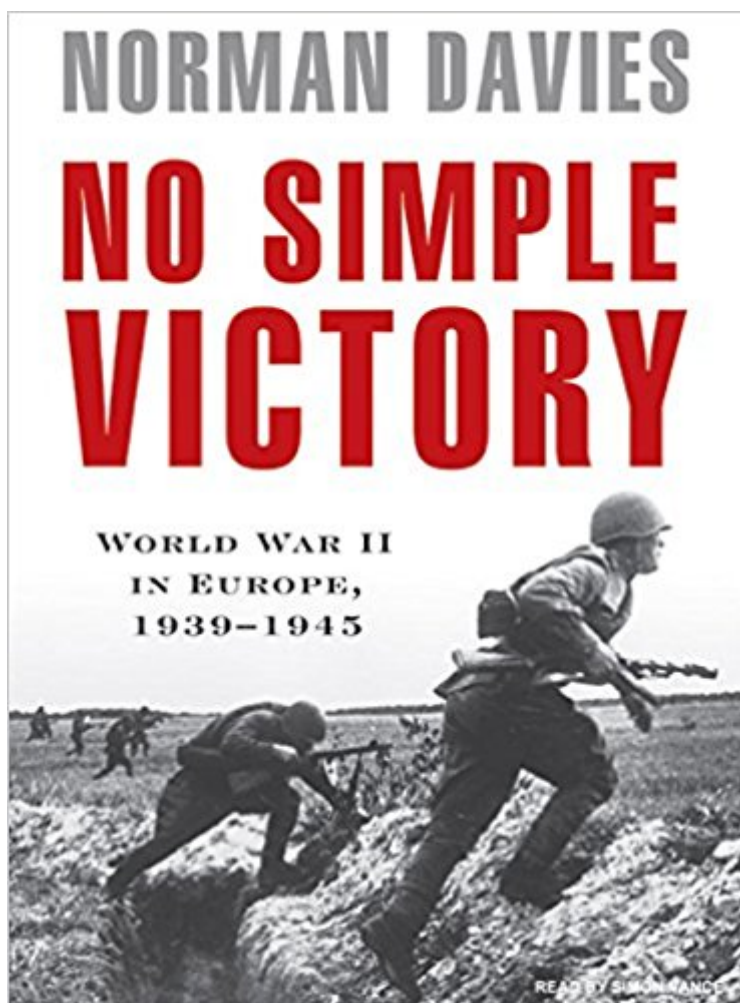


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No Simple Victory: World War II In Europe, 1939-1945



Synopsis

If history really belongs to the victor, what happens when there's more than one side declaring victory? That's the conundrum Norman Davies unravels in his groundbreaking book *No Simple Victory*. Far from being a revisionist history, *No Simple Victory* instead offers a clear-eyed reappraisal, untangling and setting right the disparate claims made by America, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union in order to get at the startling truth. In detailing the clash of political philosophies that drove the war's savage engine, Davies also examines how factors as diverse as technology, economics, and morale played dynamic roles in shaping battles, along with the unsung yet vital help of Poland, Greece, and the Ukraine (which suffered the highest number of casualties). And while the Allies resorted to bombing enemy civilians to sow terror, the most damning condemnation is saved for the Soviet Union, whose glossed-over war crimes against British soldiers and its own people prove that Communism and Nazism were two sides of the same brutal coin. *No Simple Victory* is an unparalleled work that will fascinate not only history buffs but anyone who is interested in discovering the reality behind what Davies refers to as "the frozen perspective of the winners' history."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Davies's latest book about the Second World War is an extended argument that most Americans and Europeans—even well-educated ones—have failed to grasp even the most basic facts about the single largest event of the 20th century. His polemic is laid out slowly and carefully, beginning with the mistakes (the American WWII memorial lists the years of the war as

1941–1945) and proceeding from there. Such a book requires a reader who can hold listeners' attention for long stretches of facts and figures, and Vance is just the man. He sounds like a narrator for a History Channel documentary, and considering the topic, this is perfect for Davies's book. Vance makes Davies's work not another rehashing of familiar material, but a riveting, sustained performance. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

It may startle many to learn that no definitive history yet exists of World War II. Yet such is the argument by historian John Keegan in *The Battle for History* (1996), reiterated here with evidentiary force by historian Davies. A specialist on the European war's German-Soviet component (*Rising '44: The Battle for Warsaw*, 2004), Davies perceives several faults in both professional presentations and popular understandings of the war. Americans and Britons tend to overrate their countries' contribution to victory, remembering Dunkirk and D-Day and forgetting that most combat occurred in the east. More seriously, in Davies' estimation, Western historians and their audience do not sufficiently understand the war aims and murderous record of the Soviet Communist regime. It was as expansionist and unmercifully inhumane as the Nazi tyranny over which it was the principal victor: most know of Auschwitz or the (German) invasion of Poland; far fewer are aware of Vorkuta or the (Soviet) invasion of Poland. A trenchant critique, Davies' book ought to provoke readers and writers of WWII history. Taylor, Gilbert --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

Norman Davies has correctly proven that the Eastern Theater was the most decisive theater of operations in WWII. His analysis of WWII from an eastern focus has presented a new way of thinking about and understanding the most destructive war in human history. He also places the popular works of Stephen Ambrose in a more proper and more accurate perspective. However, this book would have greatly benefited from a more thorough analysis of Operation Barbarossa, which is strangely lacking in the necessary detail and attention that it truly deserves.

Davies does an excellent job of demolishing the myth about WWII that too many in the West hold about where the war's center actually was. Yet he does this without any Soviet hero worship, thankfully. He also goes into excellent detail about all the other things going on over there in the other countries in Europe and its environs. It really wasn't just the US, the UK, the French, and the Soviets against just the Germans and the Italians. And nor was the fighting over there just between

the various Allied powers against the various Axis powers. It's no surprise then when people could think the whole world was coming unglued when they realized all the different and various fighting going on over in Europe. Davies also goes into excellent detail on the civilian costs. The "ethnic cleansing" that regularly took place and did so long before the term was invented in Serbia. This is a great book to detail the stuff that they just don't bother with in school. It also well sets straight the overwhelmingly massive scale of the fighting on the Eastern Front when compared to anything else that took place on any other front in the world during WWII.

"No Simple Victory" is British historian Norman Davies' pungently written reset of the commonly understood context of the European theater of World War II. Davies, an expert on the Eastern front, drills home the point that the bulk of the fighting, whether measured by numbers or casualties, took place in the titanic struggle between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Davies further insists on recognizing the reality that the Soviets were essentially undifferentiated from the Nazis in their level of barbarity. Davies takes a broadbrush approach to the conflict, dealing with warfare, politics, soldiers, civilians and the portrayal of the war itself, and finishing with a superbly written "Inconclusions." The topical approach and emphasis on the Nazi-Soviet conflict will be offputting to some readers invested in a chronological and/or Anglo-America-centric narrative. Perhaps inevitably, a few details get roughly treated along the way. However, Davies thoroughly documents his principal theme, with style. The general reader may lack the background to appreciate Davies' theme, but knowing students of the conflict should find "No Simple Victory" to be an entertaining, even enlightening read. To those discerning students, this book is highly recommended.

Typical Davies--focuses on the the Eastern Front of WWII which was by far the most important theater of action, albeit ignored by many historians. Also focuses, quite correctly, on the Battle of the Atlantic.

excellent product...quick delivery AA++

Its good to see history through different lenses than we normally use. This book shows us the war from the eyes of the countries that suffered the most, even when they caused much of their own casualties.

Well structured book. Provides coverage on wide range of topics leading to war, defining the war

and resulting from the WW2. A bit high level coverage of topics when compared with other N Davis books.

thank you

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