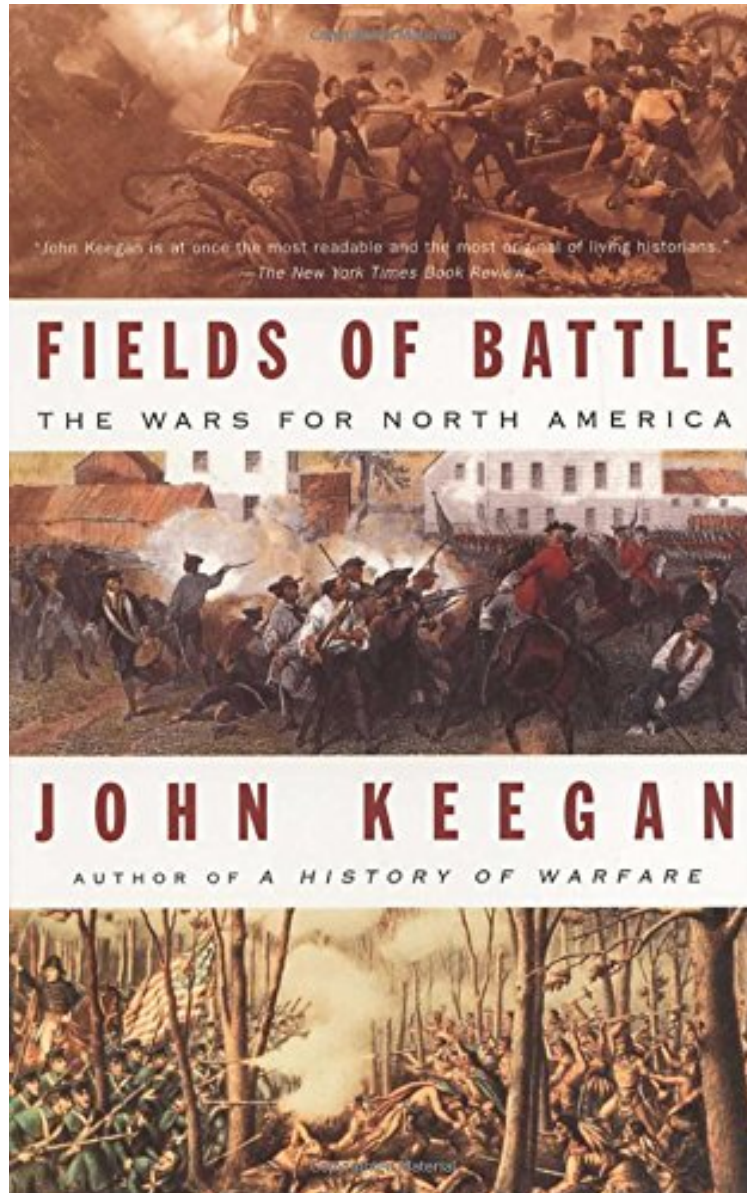


Fields of Battle: The Wars for North America

John Keegan

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John Keegan : Fields of Battle: The Wars for North America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fields of Battle: The Wars for North America:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Solid read, interesting journey By Bryan J. Cohen A great book for anyone who enjoys reading about historical perspectives and interpretations, but not too much on the tactics. The title

might lead you to think the book is all about the Xs and Os and troop movements that took place in the US and Canada over the last 300 years, but really it is about linking key battles together and how they relate to the geography of the country. It's often puzzling, trying to figure out why certain battles take place where they do, and the author uses his knowledge of geography to explain precisely why. For instance, he explains what brought about the battle of Yorktown in the Revolutionary War and then connects it to why the same exact land was fought over in the Civil War. In another chapter, the author gives a build-up to the Battle at Little Big Horn and the death of Custer without tracing over every single step of the process. Instead, he tells it as a story, as one would experience walking over the battlefield as it sits today.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Illuminating: a must to understand early American history
By R. Doyle Gillespie
John Keegan's analysis of North American topography and its influence on the explorations and military campaigns that shaped our early history is essential reading for students of colonial and Revolutionary history. Keegan's insights illuminate those issues in a clear and compelling way. The moves and counter-moves of the British and French in the struggle over Canada, the true significance of the Battle of Saratoga; these and other events become part of a grand pattern that makes sense. I strongly recommend this book for all who would learn about the Revolution and the early history of our country.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Refreshing view, from a European perspective of the Wars ...
By bigdiesel
Refreshing view, from a European perspective of the Wars for North America. I was especially intrigued by his treatment of the French experience in Canada, indeed in the heartland of the US. A lucid evaluation of us from a very respected author. Well worth the time for a careful reading.

At once a grand tour of the battlefields of North America and an unabashedly personal tribute to the military prowess of an essentially unwarlike people, *Fields of Battle* spans more than two centuries and the expanse of a continent to show how the immense spaces of North America shaped the wars that were fought on its soil. of photos.

.com Best known for his 1976 book, *The Face of Battle*, which argued that conventional battle accounts oversimplified the dynamics of troop movements while attributing too much control to leaders, John Keegan has become a prolific author. *Fields of Battle* includes fascinating observations about how Americans do things differently, both on and off the battlefield, than the English and French. With detailed accounts from long-forgotten conflicts, such as the French and Indian War, and moving portraits of important figures in American military history, including the Wright brothers, who naively hoped their airplane would end warfare, Keegan, an Englishman, explains the past and reaffirms the present to an America struggling to find its national strength.

From Publishers Weekly
Readers can always count on Keegan (*A History of Warfare*) to bring a fresh perspective to the art of military history. Here, in an unusually intimate work that fails to persuade wholly, he emphasizes the influence of geography on the military history of North America. Keegan examines five fortress systems that, he says, have controlled space on our continent within the past 400 years: French Canada, Yorktown during the American Revolution, Confederate Richmond, the forts of the Great Plains and the "flying fortresses" of the 20th century. Though he offers many stimulating insights—for example, how the terrain around the Little Bighorn contributed to Custer's defeat—Keegan fails to convince that fortresses, however broadly defined, have shaped warfare on a continent where force-to-space ratios (the number of combatants relative to the area in which they're fighting) have always been extremely low. In an enlivening departure from his usual format, the author personalizes his narrative with reports on his tours of many of the battle sites discussed. Less satisfactory is his extensive commentary about his relationship with the U.S. and its citizens: "I love America"; "I like American airports"; "Uncuriosity is one of the reasons I love America." Such banalities diminish a work that offers fresh views but that in any case is best approached with caution. Maps and photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal
From the world's preeminent military historian (*A History of Warfare*, LJ 10/15/93) comes a panoramic history of war-making on our own continent. In North America, geography has shaped the course of military history as it has nowhere else in the world. Keegan takes us on a tour of every major fortification and scene of battle on the continent, from the arrival of the Europeans in the 16th century to the final defeat of the Native Americans in the 19th century. He shows how the North American climate and terrain, and the competition for the land's wealth, dictated why men fortified, fought, and campaigned as they did. In this land, the strongest always did the best. Like a modern-day de Tocqueville, Keegan has traveled across the country and into our past with wonder and affection. His work allows us to rediscover our military heritage from a lively new perspective, with the matchless insight for which he is renowned. Highly recommended.--Michael Coleman, Regional Lib. for Blind Physically Handicapped, Montgomery, Ala. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.