

## Journal Content

Search

Search Scope

All

Search

Browse




By Issue

By Author

By Title

Other Journals

## Article Tools

 Indexing metadata How to cite item Email this article (Login required) Email the author (Login required)

## Notifications

View

Subscribe

[Home](#) > [Vol 50, No 2 \(2010\)](#) > [Hurley](#)

Sources: The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II

Reviewed by Joseph A. Hurley

Joseph A. Hurley, Data Services Librarian, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta, Georgia

A momentous and global war. World War II had far-reaching consequences. A subject of significant historical importance and of intense interest for many, there remains a nearly endless supply of new works devoted to World War II. In this deluge, Boston University military professor Cathal J. Nolan's *The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II* stands out for its global treatment, but it also contains several weaknesses. A two-volume set, this reference work contains encyclopedia entries, maps, and a select bibliography.

World War II encompasses myriad historical approaches, and Nolan's encyclopedia focuses primarily on military aspects while also addressing diplomatic and political subjects. Although narrowly focused on military matters, Nolan's work provides a remarkably even coverage of military issues for each country involved in the war. While other volumes of this size tend to have a slight Western or United States focus, Nolan's work excels in its comprehensiveness and contains many entries not commonly found in similar works. This work's success in achieving broad global coverage is its greatest strength. In addition to its outstanding worldwide account, this set provides more than twenty detailed yet easy-to-understand maps depicting troop movements across nearly all fronts.

A useful work for those seeking basic information about military issues during the war. Nolan's set has several notable weaknesses. Although a concise encyclopedia, this set is more similar to a desk reference or a subject dictionary. While Nolan's encyclopedia strives for succinctness and often succeeds, many entries offer exceedingly limited information and are often a single paragraph in length. However, not all entries conform to the principle of conciseness, such as the "Barbarossa" entry, which spans nearly twenty-one pages. A major weakness of this two-volume set is the notable lack of a suggested readings list for the majority of entries. Only lengthy entries such as "Barbarossa" and the "Sino-Japanese War" provide suggested readings. Nolan does supply the reader with a beneficial select bibliography in the second volume. However, a more useful approach would have been to also include relevant sources at the end of each or nearly all entries.

This encyclopedia does provide the reader with sound information on the military and political happenings of World War II. A well-researched reference work, it would certainly be useful for the casual seeker of World War II military information. However, as a reference work for a research starting point, this publication contains several deficiencies that render its usefulness less than desirable. With the omission of suggested readings for most entries, this work is not useful for readers wishing to further explore a given topic.

Reference works on World War II abound, and a recent comparable work, the *Encyclopedia of World War II, 2-Volume Set* by Alan Axelrod (Facts on File, 2007) serves as a good alternative and includes suggested readings for most entries. Spencer Tucker's five-volume set, *Encyclopedia of World War II: A Political, Social, and Military History* (ABC-CLIO, 2005), continues to be the standard for World War II encyclopedias and, although more expensive, remains a better value. Although Nolan's accessible set includes military information that may otherwise be difficult to find, the dearth of suggested readings makes *The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II* best suited for high schools or medium-size public libraries.

Article Categories:

- Library Reference and User Services
  - Sources

aircraft of World War II The illustrated encyclopedia of combat aircraft of World Chronology of American Military History: Vol. 1 Independence to Civil War 1775 to 1865; Vol. 2 Indian Wars to World War II 1866 to 1945; Vol. 3 Cold War to the War on Terror 1946 to Present. 2,081 Pages·2010·85.13 MB·20,059 Downloads·New! Indian Wars to World War II 1866 to 1945; Vol. 3 Cold War to the War on Terror ... Encyclopedia of German Tanks of World War Two: A Complete Illustrated Directory of German Battle Tanks, Armoured Cars, Self-Propelled Guns and Semi-. 210 Pages·1993·81.74 MB·10,295 Downloads·New! of German Tanks of World War Two: A Complete Illustrated Directory of German Battle Tanks, Armoured Cars Encyclopedia Of World History Vol II, Download Now. SaveSave Encyclopedia of World War II For Later. 100%(7)100% found this document useful (7 votes). 2K views207 pages. Encyclopedia of World War II. Uploaded by. ifardhom76505. Description: This encyclopedia gives details of second world war with picture. Copyright: Attribution Non-Commercial (BY-NC). World War II (WWII or WW2), also known as the Second World War, was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. It involved the vast majority of the world's countries—including all the great powers—forming two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis. In a state of total war, directly involving more than 100 million personnel from more than 30 countries, the major participants threw their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities behind the war effort, blurring the The human cost of World War II exceeded by far that of the First World War. Military deaths totaled twenty-two to twenty-five million, including the deaths of five million prisoners of war. Let us examine the death tolls suffered by a number of countries most directly involved in the maelstrom. Poland lost more than 16 percent of its population. The Soviet Union lost approximately 14 percent. Eleven percent of the population of Greece was killed. Other countries that lost at least 10 percent of their populations were Lithuania and Latvia. Other countries that lost at least 3 percent of their p

## Refbacks

- There are currently no refbacks.

[ALA Privacy Policy](#)

© 2020 RUSA

aircraft of  
World War II  
The  
illustrated

encyclopedia of combat aircraft of World Chronology of American Military History: Vol. 1 Independence to Civil War 1775 to 1865; Vol. 2 Indian Wars to World War II 1866 to 1945; Vol. 3 Cold War to the War on Terror 1946 to Present. 2,081 Pages·2010·85.13 MB·20,059 Downloads·New! Indian Wars to World War II 1866 to 1945; Vol. 3 Cold War to the War on Terror ... Encyclopedia of German Tanks of World War Two: A Complete Illustrated Directory of German Battle Tanks, Armoured Cars, Self-Propelled Guns and Semi-. 210 Pages·1993·81.74 MB·10,295 Downloads·New! of German Tanks of World War Two: A Complete Illustrated Directory of German Battle Tanks, Armoured Cars Encyclopedia Of World History Vol II, Download Now. SaveSave Encyclopedia of World War II For Later. 100%(7)100% found this document useful (7 votes). 2K views207 pages. Encyclopedia of World War II. Uploaded by. ifardhom76505. Description: This encyclopedia gives details of second world war with picture. Copyright: Attribution Non-Commercial (BY-NC). World War II (WWII or WW2), also known as the Second World War, was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. It involved the vast majority of the world's countries—including all the great powers—forming two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis. In a state of total war, directly involving more than 100 million personnel from more than 30 countries, the major participants threw their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities behind the war effort, blurring the The human cost of World War II exceeded by far that of the First World War. Military deaths totaled twenty-two to twenty-five million, including the deaths of five million prisoners of war. Let us examine the death tolls suffered by a number of countries most directly involved in the maelstrom. Poland lost more than 16 percent of its population. The Soviet Union lost approximately 14 percent. Eleven percent of the population of Greece was killed. Other countries that lost at least 10 percent of their populations were Lithuania and Latvia. Other countries that lost at least 3 percent of their p