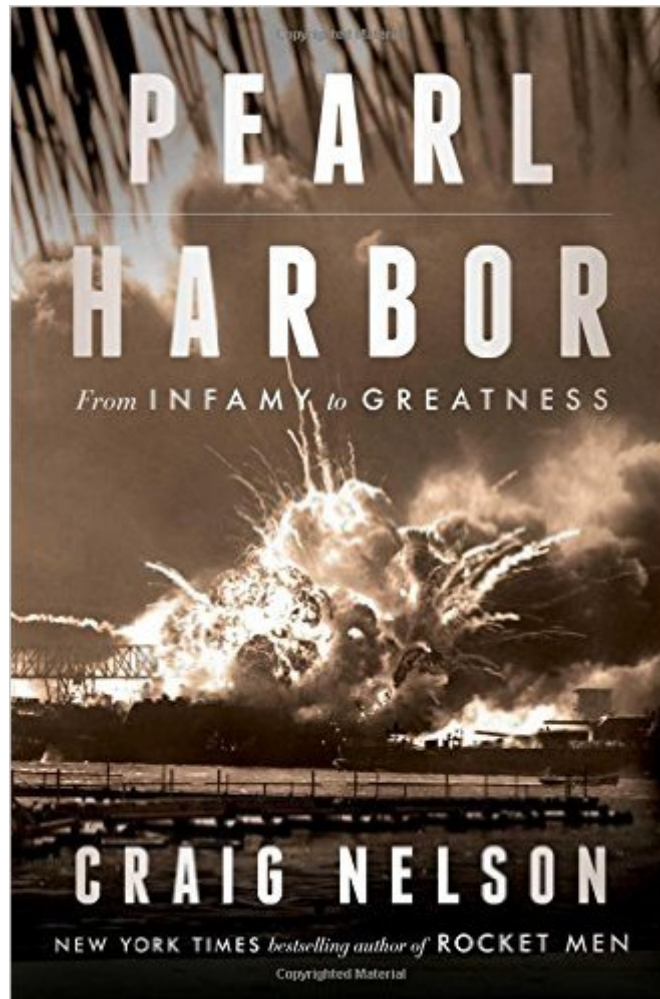


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Pearl Harbor: From Infamy To Greatness



Synopsis

Published in time for the 75th anniversary, a gripping and definitive account of the event that changed twentieth-century America—Pearl Harbor—based on years of research and new information uncovered by a New York Times bestselling author. The America we live in today was born, not on July 4, 1776, but on December 7, 1941, when an armada of 354 Japanese warplanes supported by aircraft carriers, destroyers, and midget submarines suddenly and savagely attacked the United States, killing 2,403 men—and forced America's entry into World War II. *Pearl Harbor: From Infamy to Greatness* follows, moment by moment, the sailors, soldiers, pilots, diplomats, admirals, generals, emperor, and president as they engineer, fight, and react to this stunningly dramatic moment in world history. Beginning in 1914, bestselling author Craig Nelson maps the road to war, beginning with Franklin D. Roosevelt, then the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (and not yet afflicted with polio), attending the laying of the keel of the USS Arizona at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Writing with vivid intimacy, Nelson traces Japan's leaders as they lurch into ultranationalist fascism, which culminates in their insanely daring yet militarily brilliant scheme to terrify America with one of the boldest attacks ever waged. Within seconds, the country would never be the same. In addition to learning the little understood history of how and why Japan attacked Hawaii, we hear an abandoned record player endlessly repeating "Sunrise Serenade" as bombs shatter the decks of the California; we feel cold terror as lanky young American sailors must anxiously choose between staying aboard their sinking ships or diving overboard into harbor waters aflame with burning ship fuel; we watch as Navy wives tearfully hide with their children in caves from a rumored invasion, and we understand the frustration and triumph of a lone American teenager as he shoots down a Japanese bomber, even as the attack destroys hundreds of US airplanes and dozens of ships. Backed by a research team's five years of work, which produced nearly a million pages of documents, as well as Nelson's thorough re-examination of the original evidence assembled by federal investigators, this page-turning and definitive work provides a thrilling blow-by-blow account from both the Japanese and American perspectives, and is historical drama on the grandest scale. Nelson delivers all the terror, chaos, violence, tragedy, and heroism of the attack in stunning detail, and offers surprising conclusions about the tragedy's unforeseen and resonant consequences that linger even today.

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Customer Reviews

Thanks to Net Galley and to Scribner for offering me a free ARC copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased review. I am not a historian but like most people I've read novels and watched films about the events and was intrigued by the possibility of learning more about Pearl Harbor. This book definitely delivers. This volume is extremely detailed and right in time for the 75th anniversary it reviews previous research and testimonies, and leaves no stone unturned to offer us as wide and knowledgeable a version of events as possible. The variety of sources is impressive, from communications at the time, messages, phone calls, coded messages intercepted, eye-witness declarations, inquiries and investigations, everybody is a protagonist, pilots and military men in both sides, civilians living in Hawaii, politicians, nurses and doctors, unsung heroes and the less-heroic. It is not a revisionist story trying to go back and explain what happened with the advantage of hindsight (although it notes the prejudice and misunderstandings in the way each country saw the other), and it tries hard to not pass judgement and provide background to the situation, examining the political, economic and social circumstances of both countries, in the context of the world history and the events taking place at the time. The book builds up to the attack piling up information and it takes us about half the book to get to the events of the day (probably a bit more as there are two appendixes, and a lengthy list of sources at the back of the book). Some individual readers might become impatient if they prefer to be immersed in the events, but others might prefer to get there fully informed and the tension mounts with each chapter.

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