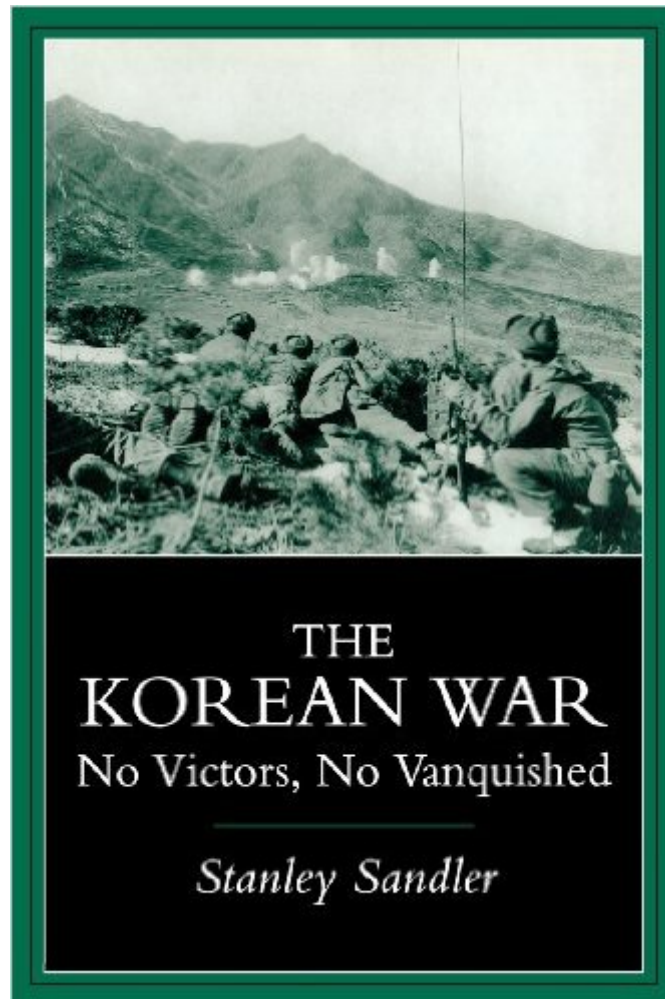


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The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished



Synopsis

The Korean War has been termed "The Forgotten War" or the "Unknown War." It is a conflict which never assumed the mythic character of the American Civil War or World War II. However, this book asserts, it would be impossible to understand the Cold War and indeed post 1945 global history without knowledge of the Korean War. Providing a history of the Korean peninsula before the war and including a detailed analysis of the fighting itself, *The Korean War* goes beyond the battlefield to deal with the war in the air, ground attack, and air evacuation. The study also evaluates the contributions of the UN naval forces, the impact of the war on various homefronts and issues such as defectors, opposition to the war, racial segregation and integration, POWs and the media. Recently-released Soviet documents are used to assess the role of China, the Soviet Union, North and South Korea and the allied forces in the conflict. This fascinating work offers a unique analysis of the Korean War and will be invaluable to students of twentieth-century history, particularly those concerned with American and Pacific history.

Book Information

Paperback: 344 pages

Publisher: University Press of Kentucky (October 1, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0813109671

ISBN-13: 978-0813109671

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,318,660 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #115 in [Books > History > Military > Korean War > Campaigns](#)

Customer Reviews

Jesús Torres
Professor Woolley
War, Peace and Arms
12/8/04
The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished
Reaching back into the memories of childhood, and inevitably sifting through the archival collections in my ever-expanding filing cabinet of a brain, I can honestly say that I draw a blank when thinking about the Korean War. Ask me about any other war in American history, and I can undoubtedly recall what the issues were and what actually happened. Not Korea. In fact, I cannot recall any time, at any point in any of the years of elementary school up having studied the Korean War in any depth. That is, the brief overviews of the Korean War only offered that there was

a dispute over borders, and not much more. The Korean War, for whatever reason, has been dubbed such names as the "Unknown War," or the "Forgotten War," and seems to go down in history as something that shouldn't be discussed. Maybe this is because American forces suffered humiliating losses on and off the battlefield, and failed to win decisively, instead settling for an armistice peace treaty that left no victors. However, this armistice proved to show that the United States was not invincible, and seemed to put its ignorance in check. Or, maybe the Korean War failed to reach the esteem of other wars, such as World War II or the Vietnam War, because there were no heroic figures such as MacArthur, there were no battles of Iwo Jima, and there were no major controversies such as Vietnam. All these seem to be plausible theories on why the Korean War has remained such a mystery to most Americans.

Stanley Sandler provides the reader with an in-depth look at a very broad range of topics on the Korean War in his work "The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished." Sandler covers some new topics I had not seen before, but for what he offers in breadth, he sacrificed the depth of coverage. For a 270-page book, it was a very effective trade-off. Sandler offers insight into the modern history of Korea through the end of World War II, and the series of strategic miscalculations that led to Kim Il Sung's invasion of South Korea. The discussion of the ebb and flow of battle was at the Corps level, with Sandler making examples of units of interest. There are far too many to mention, but two of these examples are the US Marines 'attack in a different direction' to leave the Chosin Reservoir, and one of the allied contributions, "The Immortal Glousters", whose exploits are highlighted in the outstanding book "The Edge of the Sword", by Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley. From an airpower perspective, his brief discussions on the USAF are both accurate, but not all encompassing. Sandler mentioned that USAF budgetary position, pursued the acquisition of a strategic nuclear bomber force (i.e. the B-36) at the sacrifice of some of the fighter skills learned during World War II. Once the first MiGs were deployed to Korea, Sandler briefly mentions the deployment of the 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing and the latter approval to send 75 more F-86 Sabres. What Sandler omitted from this discussion on Airpower was the overall worldwide strategic context at the time. The USA was still convinced Korea was a feint to draw American forces into Korea, leaving Western Europe without a major contributor to repel a Soviet invasion of Western Europe.

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