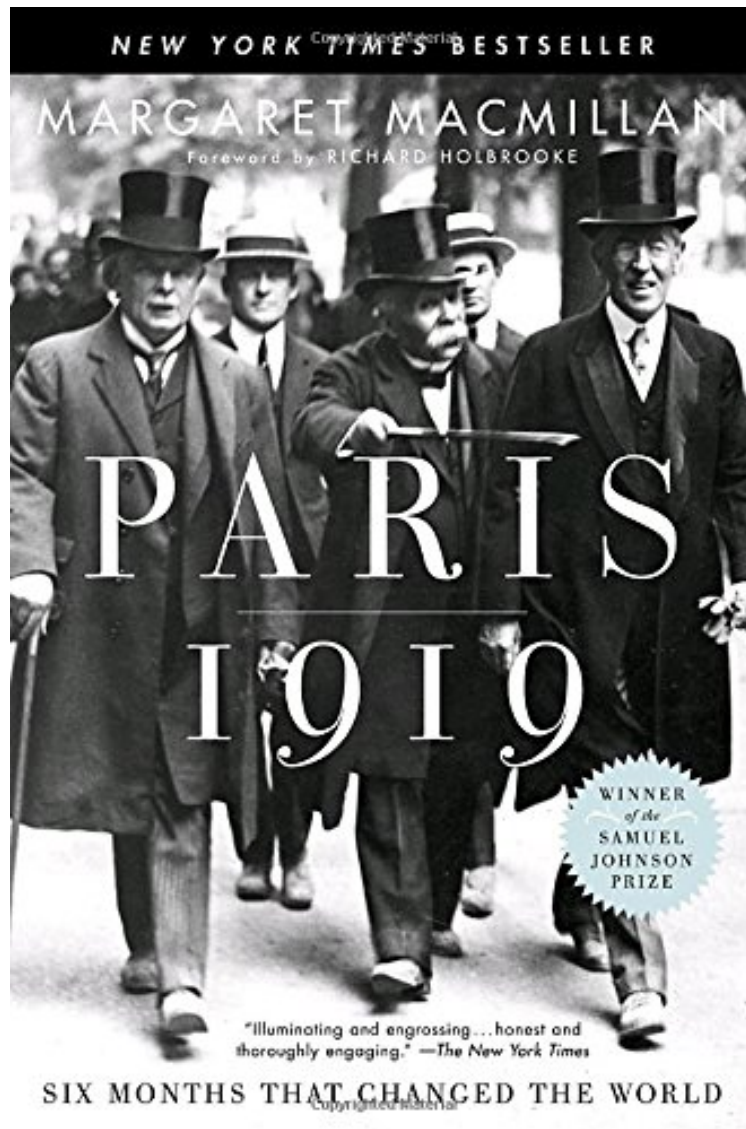


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Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World

Margaret MacMillan

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#36318 in Books Random House Trade 2003 2003-09-09Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.16 x 1.28 x 6.10l, 1.33 #File Name: 0375760520624 pagesRandom House Trade | File size: 23.Mb

Margaret MacMillan : Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Some explanations for today's problemsBy Peter C. WelchAn attempt to define and explain how the victors in WWI tried to develop the patchwork of a new Europe and the near east. In retrospect, some careless and unwise decisions. Western arrogance on display. Versailles treaty and it's contribution to tragic later events. Again demonstrates human fallibility, greed and errors of that time. We continue in the same vein, impelled by our human nature. Certainly worth a read.3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

A dense history read about a critical 20th century event
By Dave F
The end of World War I brought together the Allied (Entente) victors to draw up terms for the resulting new world order. The Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations, and many other things resulted. United States President Woodrow Wilson, British Prime Minister Lloyd George, and French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau were the prime movers and decision makers for these world-altering events. They shaped new and altered nations, dictated peace terms and war reparations, and altered the lives of people throughout the globe. The entire world has been living with and experiencing the results (both positive and mainly negative) ever since. Author Margaret MacMillan has written a very thorough history of that period here in "Paris 1919". MacMillan is a renowned historian, and it shows in this epic work. The book is extremely detailed, thoughtful, well documented, and well written. She paints a thorough picture of the main characters, as well as dozens of bit players in this amazing drama. I also found the writing and MacMillan's judgement to be even-handed and fair to all parties in the book. The book is literally packed with information. Therein lies my dilemma. For me, the book was too dense, and a bit of a struggle to read and get through. I had to skim parts in order to finish it. I thought there were things and areas that could have been relegated to a second volume or different book to make it more appealing to readers. But to be fair, maybe MacMillan never intended this book for the more casual reader. At any rate, if you want to know more about the results of World War I and the effects it had on the world to date, I recommend "Paris 1919", with the caveats above.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great insider look at the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference
By Isaac Morehouse
Like it or not, the way in which WWI came to an end impacts nearly every facet of the global political cultural, and economic scene even today. This book gives a sneak peek into the goings on of the Paris Peace Conference and all the drama and tragedy involved. It's almost like reality TV before reality TV. It's captivating, very detailed, and not dry as some history can be (though also not overly moralizing as other history can be). If you're not interested in WWI or the Europe that emerged after this book might be too much minutiae for you. If you are, I cannot recommend it highly enough. (It also fed my grand theory that every cultural battle in the Western world is some form of the archetype of France vs. Germany).

National Bestseller
New York Times Editors Choice Winner of the PEN Hessell Tiltman Prize Winner of the Duff Cooper Prize
Silver Medalist for the Arthur Ross Book Award of the Council on Foreign Relations
Finalist for the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award
For six months in 1919, after the end of the war to end all wars, the Big Three
President Woodrow Wilson, British prime minister David Lloyd George, and French premier Georges Clemenceau met in Paris to shape a lasting peace. In this landmark work of narrative history, Margaret MacMillan gives a dramatic and intimate view of those fateful days, which saw new political entities Iraq, Yugoslavia, and Palestine, among them born out of the ruins of bankrupt empires, and the borders of the modern world redrawn.

From Publishers Weekly
A joke circulating in Paris early in 1919 held that the peacemaking Council of Four, representing Britain, France, the U.S. and Italy, was busy preparing a "just and lasting war." Six months of parleying concluded on June 28 with Germany's coerced agreement to a treaty no Allied statesman had fully read, according to MacMillan, a history professor at the University of Toronto, in this vivid account. Although President Wilson had insisted on a League of Nations, even his own Senate would vote the league down and refuse the treaty. As a rush to make expedient settlements replaced initial negotiating inertia, appeals by many nationalities for Wilsonian self-determination would be overwhelmed by rhetoric justifying national avarice. The Italians, who hadn't won a battle, and the French, who'd been saved from catastrophe, were the greediest, says MacMillan; the Japanese plucked Pacific islands that had been German and a colony in China known for German beer. The austere and unlikable Wilson got nothing; returning home, he suffered a debilitating stroke. The council's other members horse-traded for spoils, as did Greece, Poland and the new Yugoslavia. There was, Wilson declared, "disgust with the old order of things," but in most decisions the old order in fact prevailed, and corrosive problems, like Bolshevism, were shelved. Hitler would blame Versailles for more ills than it created, but the signatories often could not enforce their writ. MacMillan's lucid prose brings her participants to colorful and quotable life, and the grand sweep of her narrative encompasses all the continents the peacemakers vainly carved up. 16 pages of photos, maps.
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From Library Journal
In an ambitious narrative, MacMillan (history, University of Toronto) seeks to recover the original intent, constraints, and goals of the diplomats who sat down to hammer out a peace treaty in the aftermath of the Great War. In particular, she focuses on the "Big Three" Wilson (United States), Lloyd George (Great Britain), and Clemenceau (France) who dominated the critical first six months of the Paris Peace Conference. Viewing events through such a narrow lens can reduce diplomacy to the parochial concerns of individuals. But instead of falling into this trap, MacMillan uses the Big Three as a starting point for analyzing the agendas of the multitude of individuals who came to Versailles to achieve their largely nationalist aspirations. Following her analysis of the forces at work in Europe, MacMillan takes the reader on a tour de force of the postwar battlefields of Asia and the Middle East. Of particular interest is her sympathy for those who tried to make the postwar world more peaceful. Although their lofty ambitions fell prey to the passions of nationalism, this should not detract from their efforts. This book will help rehabilitate the peacemakers of 1919 and is recommended for all libraries. Frederic Krome, Jacob Rader Marcus

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Booklist Virtually all historians agree that the Versailles Peace Conference was a monumental failure that set the stage for the outbreak of World War II. However, there is no consensus regarding the causes of that failure. Some blame Woodrow Wilson and his high-minded but absurdly impractical ideals; others blame the cynicism and narrow nationalism of Lloyd George and Clemenceau. MacMillan is a professor of history at the University of Toronto and the great-granddaughter of Lloyd George. Her narrative and analysis of the critical first six months of the negotiations will not end the controversy. However, this engrossing and inevitably depressing account is a vital contribution to efforts at understanding the deeply flawed agreements that emerged. At times, MacMillan's recounting of the minutiae of negotiations can be overwhelming, but the great accomplishments of this work are her perceptive and eloquent depictions of the key players in the conference. Of course, Wilson, as the dominant force, is at the center of her account, and she convincingly tarnishes his image as a great statesman. He was often insufferably rigid and arrogant, and his espousal of frustratingly vague concepts like "self-determination" often confused even his own advisors. For those who seek a deeper understanding of one of history's most tragic failures, this book is a treasure. Jay Freeman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved