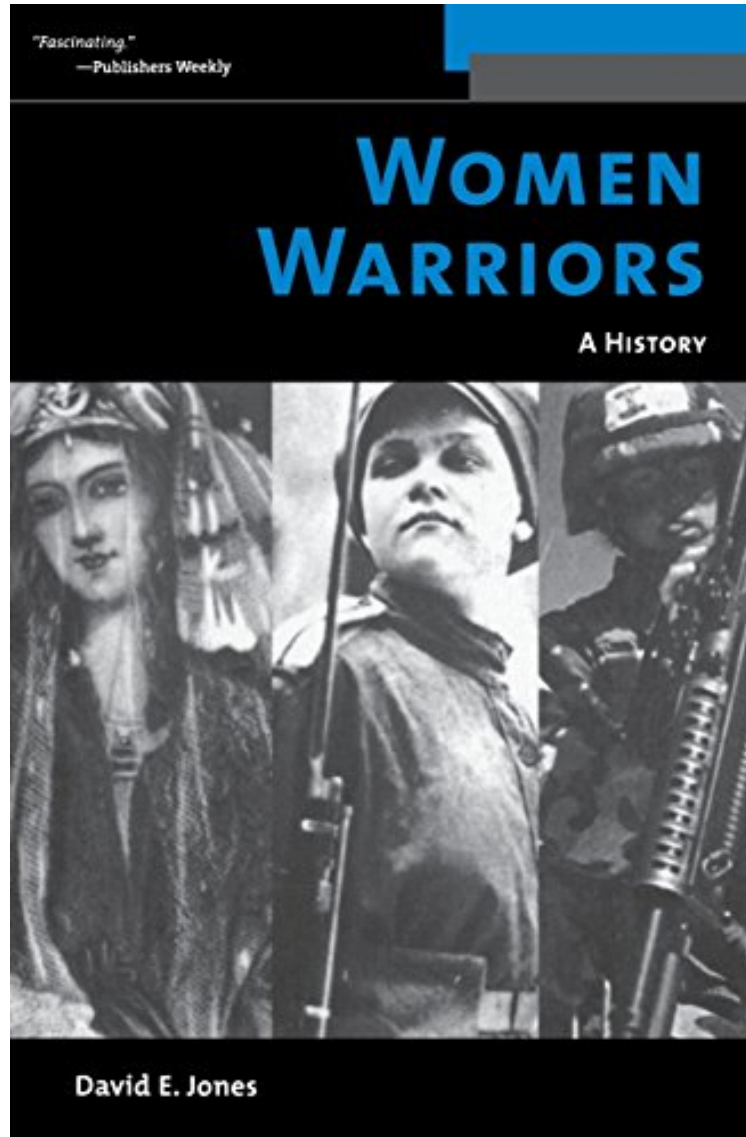


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David E Jones

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David E Jones : Women Warriors: A History (Warriors (Potomac Books)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Women Warriors: A History (Warriors (Potomac Books)):

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WOMEN WARRIORS takes the reader back through history and around the world to uncover a clear pattern of women as warriors. It is a fascinating comment on the nature of gender, on the power of the warrior image, and on the images source in history.

.com Never mind the accomplishments of American women in the Gulf War, of Nicaraguan women in the Sandinista revolt, of Vietnamese women in countless wars: fighting, many continue to believe, is the province of men. Setting aside the question of whether war is desirable no matter who fights it, anthropologist David Jones takes a look at women warriors throughout world history. He turns up well-known examples like Joan of Arc and Molly Pitcher; better, he looks at the contributions of lesser-known fighters from ancient Scandinavia and Africa on down to the present. Throughout Jones has a keen eye for (sometimes gruesome) detail, and he leaves you feeling glad you don't have to scrap with any of his many fearsome heroines. From Publishers Weekly

Openly dismissive of traditional Western arguments that women are ill-suited for combat, Jones, a cultural anthropologist, sets out to show that women "own" war and its glories just as much as men do. Reaching back to ancient times and continuing through to the Gulf War, Jones divides his work into geographically themed chapters. In them, he presents instance after instance of females who "have taken the field and have wielded the weapons of their day." While Jones offers the caveat that "no sane person would wish involvement in war on anyone—male or female," he presents his women warriors in heroic terms. Among the many she-warriors who make appearances are the medieval Japanese Lady Yatsushior, who charged into battle while pregnant, and the 19th-century Frenchwoman Jeanette Colin, who disguised herself as a man and fought against the British at the Battle of Trafalgar. Many of Jones's tales are fascinating, but the scope of this survey is so broad that he hits only the highlights of each story before moving on to the next. Readers are left hankering for more of such viragoes as the Irish pirate queen Grace O'Malley, who reportedly terrorized even the powerful British Queen Elizabeth I. Serious students of military history may fault Jones for his heavy reliance on anecdotal material, and for his one-sided presentation of his subject, particularly regarding the role of women in modern American conflicts. Others will lose patience with his heavy-handed presentation of theme: "Men and women will never reach a common consciousness of their equality as humans until both accept that women have a claim on the title 'Warrior.'" Still, this is an entertaining introduction to an intriguing and largely neglected subject. Photos not seen by PW.

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The topic of women in the military continues to stir controversy today as it has throughout the ages. Jones (cultural anthropology, Univ. of Central Florida) provides an unusual, worldwide survey of women's participation in military events. Taking case studies based on historical evidence, not mythological stories, Jones suggests that women have played a varied and vital role in warfare despite the supposed limits of their gender. However, despite his plethora of examples, Jones's analysis is thin. He never really presents a clear summary of the universal characteristics of women warriors, although he hints at them. Still, this is as comprehensive a resource as is available and makes a nice companion to *Encyclopedia of the s* (LJ 7/91) and *Female Soldiers* (1982). Recommended for general audiences as well as students of women's studies. ?Jenny Presnell, Miami Univ. Lib., Oxford, Ohio

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