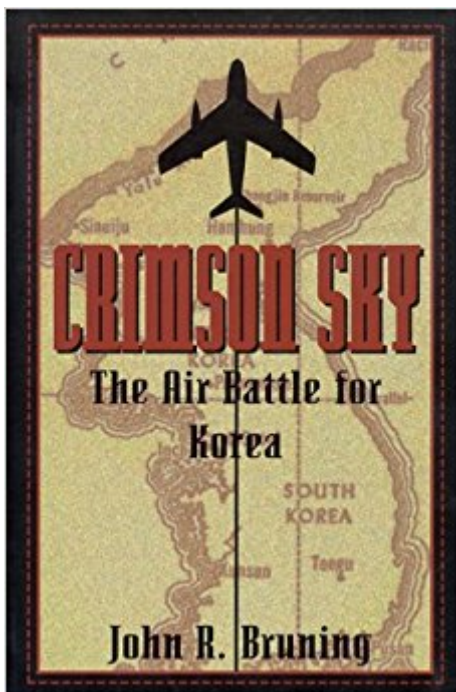


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Crimson Sky: The Air Battle For Korea



Synopsis

The Korean War was a crossroads in military history. It was the last hurrah for one generation of tactics and technology and the proving ground for the next. The Crimson Sky examines in detail twenty of the most interesting aerial actions of the Korean War, including the first air rescue of a downed pilot, the Battle of Carlson's Canyon, and some of the most spectacular MiG Alley sorties flown by the F-86 aces. More than exciting accounts of military missions, The Crimson Sky is about the people who flew them, about their experiences and emotions as they performed dangerous duty a half century ago.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Crimson Sky fills a long-felt need in the literature of the Korean air war, for it combines a broad overview of the war with intimate details that put you in the cockpit. Showing his mastery of the subject, author John R. Bruning covers far more than the fabled bouts of the F-86 and MiG-15, and in doing so, shows us how very proud we should be of the men who fought the forgotten war. The many personal accounts lend an immediacy to the book that makes it a real page-turner. The skies over Korea were in truth crimson, with the blood of brave American men who flew under extraordinary political handicaps. "You don't know the Korean War unless you've read this book." --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

John R Bruning is an aviation historian living in Independence, Oregon.

Not much has been written about the Air War in Korea, and is it even more difficult finding a book that at least tries to cover the complete spectrum of air warfare that happened during these very long and hard four years between 1950 and 1953, and which encompasses so much more than the Sabre v/s MIG 15 dogfights. Accordingly, this book was actually a nice surprise, since the author presents in episodes the stories of veterans he interviewed in a fast-paced, you-are-there style. The stories are well chosen, in that as a whole they show the full spectrum of the many very different aspects of air warfare in Korea, some of which were actually invented there. The drawback in this format is that at times it feels rather disjointed, and some interesting issues are only passingly mentioned if at all (like the Navy air attacks on ships and other naval targets). The book itself is printed in the cheap paperback format, with a few small B&W pictures that actually do not add much to the book, but which is consistent with the rather cheap price. The text is printed in a rather small font size, and using small page margins, thus the page count does not really reflect the content (I would estimate 300+ pages printed in a regular format). This book is not the definitive history of the aerial warfare in Korea, for it also completely leaves out the contribution made by other UN Air Forces, but it is a very good and commendable attempt at showing a more general view of the fierce fighting over Korean skies, a history that is all but forgotten these days, eclipsed mainly by the huge amounts of publications related to the Vietnam war - as such, this is a highly recommended addition to your Korean Air War library.

This book offers a very informative exposition on air battles that happened during the Korean War, a conflict of which most Americans know very little. Although the book may be small in size, it is big in terms of explaining the air war from a combat aviator's perspective and further expands on how combat aviation evolved and adjusted to deal with the Communist threat that proved to be both formidable and lethal to the US pilots who fought in the conflict. This exposition is further balanced by the human element of the brave pilots who overcame hardships and put themselves in harms way because they felt it was the right thing to do. The author pulls no punches in explaining the fate of many of the pilots who, after being shot down, were killed, captured, and tortured by an enemy that placed little value on human life. It is a very compelling book that doesn't glorify war, but shows that when Americans are pushed, we push back, but do so honorably.

Crimson Sky is an easy-to-read series of first-hand accounts skillfully written in a way that makes the reader feel like 'you are there' in the Korean War air operations covered. The Soviet perspective is even included in places where it fits. Much appreciated as well is the extensive coverage of 'they

also served' types of aircraft and missions that are frequently mentioned only in passing in other publications on the subject. And, yes, the battles of MiG Alley also get their due coverage. Highly recommended for anyone interested in well-written 'you are there' stories of men and missions over Korea in 1950-53.

Relatively little has been written about the air war over Korea and this book fills in some of the blank spots. American bomber and fighter pilots largely fought with aircraft that were already obsolete: the B29, F80, F84, and F4U Corsair. The MiG 15 was a superior aircraft in almost every respect and would have dominated the air were it not for the superior training of the American pilots and a handful of F86's. This history is largely told through the personal experiences of pilots with relatively little coverage of the politics and overall war strategies. After reading this, I realize how dangerous combat was over North Korea. Being shot down, as many B29 crews were, was a virtual death sentence. Anyone who bailed out over North Korea was almost certain to be executed or die as POWs. A good read for anyone who is interested in the history of that war.

Another great book about the air war in Korea. This is a good read, men. I'm personally drawn to books of this ilk because they tell the real story of the Navy/Marine flyers in Korea in the early 50's. I'm a Navy Veteran that served with Task Force 77 and Task Group 95.1, and I enjoy reading about those days at sea, especially during the many carrier operations written about here in John Bruning's "Crimson Sky".

A good book about what it was like to be a jet pilot in Korea.

This book surprised and delighted me. Some military accounts are heavy on strategic and tactical details and skip over the "I was there..." experience. This book is just the opposite. It doesn't pretend to be a thorough history of the Korean War and is instead a series of personal accounts of what it was like to fly over Korea. Adding to my interest was the fact that the book looks at every aspect of the war--the Navy's close support role, the Air Force's interdiction role, and doesn't focus only on the fighter jocks in the F-86. This is a long overdue and important oral history from the men who were there.

Excellent book and it had great history of the air battle. I was most impressed. Donna

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