

is from that year. Any documents more recent than that will inevitably deal with submarines currently in commission and are therefore strictly off-limits.

Overall, Jones has done excellent work, having created a strikingly important book in its field. As a reviewer, though, I would be remiss if I did not point out just some of the numerous minor problems that plague the finished product. Indeed, it almost feels as if my electronic copy were in fact an earlier draft awaiting a final stage of editing. How else to explain the fact that the text refers to Figure 2.1 as HMS *Meteorite*, while the caption to that figure has HMS/m *Excalibur*? (It happens a second time at Figure 8.1, where *Resolution* becomes *Repulse*.) Following no apparent pattern, “HMS,” “HMS/M,” and “HMS/m” all make their appearance as prefixes for RN submarines, sometimes for the same boat. (*Valiant*, in fact, is graced with all three.) The author is also prone to run-on sentences, but the reader gets used to this.

For reasons that are not clear, science publishers—of whom Palgrave Macmillan’s parent, Springer Nature, is one—are willing to charge prices that, for a comparable product, a typical humanities publisher would not dare. While one should never underestimate the willingness to spend money on the part of the dedicated enthusiast, at a price of US \$149.99 for the hardcover version, the private individual really has to want it. Institutional libraries are probably a more realistic customer base, particularly those with holdings in the history of British nuclear power, for which this volume is a must. Equally suitable would be any collection with a strong Royal Navy component, the only limitation, possibly, being their desire for a book on a purely propulsion topic.

Brian Bertosa  
Cobourg, Ontario

**Richard M. Jones. *The 50 Greatest Shipwrecks*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword History, [www.pen-and-sword.org](http://www.pen-and-sword.org), 2021. 168 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39900-800-6.**

With an estimated three million shipwrecks globally spanning all continents, all types of water, and thousands of years of human history, selecting the 50 most significant is no easy task. Yet Richard M. Jones sets out to do exactly that in *The 50 Greatest Shipwrecks*, a list-cum-book dedicated to the greatest disasters in maritime history. The text fits comfortably into Jones’ growing corpus of publications meant to catalogue and memorialize maritime disasters. By focusing on what the author terms as the 50 most interesting shipwreck stories, this book brings novice maritime historians and history enthusiasts into the process of wreck identification and exploration.

The book breaks up into 50 short chapters, one for each wreck, plus an

introduction and epilogue. The narratives and lengths of each chapter vary with the legacy and history of each wreck, but broadly, each begins with the vessel's construction and details any noteworthy event in the sailing lives of the ships. The bulk of each chapter's narrative is, with few exceptions, an account of the vessels' sinking, in many instances detailing the disaster hour-by-hour. For wreck sites that have been identified, information about the exploration process, condition of the hull, and diveability of the site are also included. While the first four chapters focus on historical wrecks of wooden ships, Jones primarily engages with twentieth-century iron-hulled wrecks, providing the greatest detail of both service and exploration for those ships that served in a naval capacity between 1900 and 1950.

While serving as an invaluable entryway into the history of maritime disasters, the text would benefit from some broad definitions. As a British writer publishing with a British publisher, Jones selected heavily from wrecks that would be part of the British public consciousness as an historical reference or vessels whose sinking would have been newsworthy in the memory of modern Britons. Exactly how wrecks qualify as "great" is left opaque, though the author admits that the list is subjective and based on his particular interests. Heavy emphasis is placed on lives lost or other quantifiable metrics of damage, such as the number of seabirds killed by the *Braer* oil spill, but even these metrics are not applied consistently. The definition of "wreck" is also questionable, given the inclusion of HMS *Scylla*, which was intentionally sunk as an artificial reef. Even so, the density of maritime history literature can seem impenetrable, and a subjective sample still offers a starting point. Insofar as that is true, this book will be of interest to many novice historians and shipwreck enthusiasts. Subject vessels were also selected based on their intrinsic value to the author with no concern for whether historians, archaeologists, engineers, salvage firms, or treasure hunters identified the hull remains. While potentially off-putting for some academics, for many, this provides a different overview than would be seen in scholarly publications, potentially opening up discussions of context, ownership, and maritime law. These are subjects about which scholarly texts often assume a certain level of knowledge, leaving broader readership out of their reach. Jones' book is, both in its subjects and its narratives, highly accessible to all levels of expertise.

The book's short, list-like format leaves a number of the ships' stories sparse or incomplete, a necessity of the style but something for which Jones could have compensated by including citations or recommendations for further readings. Without such suggestions, curious readers are left wanting additional information. Jones also includes gratuitous details of violence and sexual assault that were not pertinent to the stories of the subject vessels, and repeatedly praises Nazi ingenuity and military skill. While the author, himself

a veteran, might hold a professional appreciation for certain wartime tactics and technologies regardless of who wielded them, praising *U-534*'s tactical competence and *Admiral Graf Spee*'s Nazi commander as a hero, even to his adversaries, glosses over too quickly the genocidal regime served by the commander and both aforementioned vessels.

With millions of shipwrecks globally, though, and an author-stated mission of remembering those lost at sea, the book falls short on a more fundamental level. Eurocentric and biased toward wrecks dating to between 1900 and the present, the supposed superlatives encompassed in the text are a smattering of stories more similar than they are distinct, all but ignoring the contributions of seafarers and seafaring technology from most of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America. When ships from these regions are detailed, comparatively more time is spent emphasizing the mechanical shortcomings of the vessels and the technical ineptitude of the crews than for their European and North American counterparts. Historically, seafaring in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America has been not only an important part of global maritime trade and exploration, but it was often a forebearer of technologies and skills such as astronomical navigation, mariner's compasses, stern-hung rudders, and the perennially-popular catamaran hull style. Temporally and geographically limiting what qualifies as exceptional and worthy of memory, whether tacit or explicit, reifies Enlightenment-informed notions of European exceptionalism stemming from the Age of Sail and the mythos of savage others. The obfuscation of global sailing histories in both the recent and deep past in a book dedicated to "those who have no known grave but the sea" inherently values those lives that are in the social memory of living Britons more than the countless many who came before them.

Chelsea M. Cohen  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Paul Kennedy. *Victory at Sea: Naval Power and the Transformation of the Global Order in World War II*. With paintings by Ian Marshall. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, [www.yalebooks.yale.edu](http://www.yalebooks.yale.edu), 2022. 544 pages, illustrations, maps, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$37.50, hardback; ISBN 978-0-30031-917-3.**

Paul Kennedy is among that select group of historians working today who broke from the confines of academia to become a leading public intellectual. His 1987 book, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, was a national bestseller when it was published, and it was just one of many works written over a prolific career stretching back nearly half a century. Now, at a time when most of his