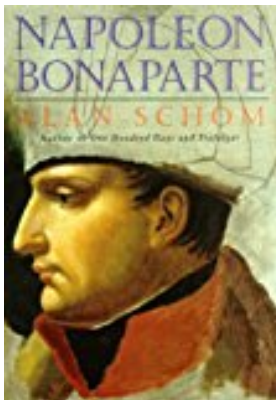


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You won't come away from this energetic biography thinking much of the French emperor either as a man or as a general. Historian Alan Schom depicts Napoleon (1769-1821) as a cold-hearted manipulator: Schom's blistering accounts of the 1798-99 Egyptian campaign and the disastrous 1812 retreat from Russia show the French army decimated due to its leader's failure to inform himself about the lands he was invading or to properly plan for provisioning his troops. The fun of this book comes from vigorous prose that vividly evokes Bonaparte's titanic personality and the colorful band of schemers surrounding him.

From Library Journal Until now, there has been no comprehensive, one-volume biography on Napoleon. This book ably fills that gap. Napoleonic scholar Schom (*One Hundred Days*, Atheneum, 1992) has written an objective account, describing the strengths and weaknesses of his complex subject and his tremendous impact on Europe. Unique to this book are the insightful discussions of Napoleon's relationships with his family, wives, mistresses, and other luminaries of the day and his little-known friendship with a leading French mathematician, Gaspard Monge. The author contends that Napoleon was a paranoid psychopath, and he uses numerous examples of kidnappings, murders, lies, and wars brought on by the Corsican to illustrate his case. He was also sadistic in his persecution of various individuals, from a simple German bookseller to his own brother Lucien. A wonderful biography; highly recommended. David Lee Poremba, Detroit P.L.
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