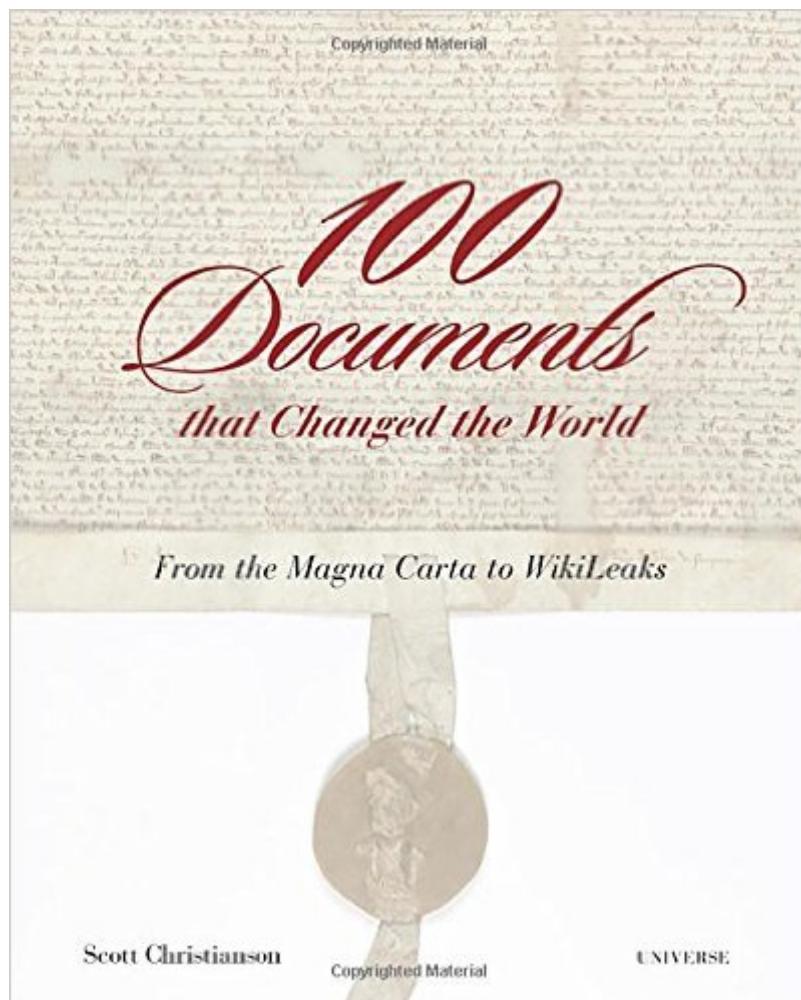


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100 Documents That Changed The World: From The Magna Carta To Wikileaks



Synopsis

A tour of the history of the world through the declarations, manifestos, and agreements from the Magna Carta and the Declaration of Independence to WikiLeaks. This fascinating collection gathers the most significant written documents that have influenced and shaped the way we think about the world and the course of history. From the Magna Carta (1215) to the Gettysburg Address (1863) to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (1963), the documents showcased here chart dramatic high points of world history. In addition to official charters and famous treaties, there are also less well known yet nonetheless interesting items included, such as the Apollo flight plan, Apple's 1976 incorporation documents, and the check with which the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia. Equally interesting are Watson and Crick's scrawled notes leading to the discovery of DNA, Darwin's journal, and the annotated manuscripts for Freud's Interpretation of Dreams and Orwell's novel 1984. Beautifully illustrated in full color, this book not only informs but also entertains as it demonstrates how the power of the written word has shaped, changed, enhanced, and even revolutionized the world.

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Customer Reviews

I previously read Christianson's 100 Diagrams, which is a very well done book. 100 Documents is as good or better. He does a masterful job of editing, curating, and summarizing each of the documents selected. It is no easy task to sum up many of history's most important documents on one page each. To do so requires detailed knowledge of the subject and the ability to wordsmith with precision, and the author achieved the right balance. As Mark Twain said, it is much more

difficult to write a short letter than a long one and Christianson has mastered the art of capturing the essence of complex documents or books into an instructive and pithy summary. In terms of documents selected, he shows a good balance picking those as diverse as the Quran and the Edict of Worms. He balances East and West and ranges from one end of the spectrum to the other including political and scientific, economics and diplomacy, and importantly, in a world where outsized emphasis is placed on recent history, he delves into the past and highlights documents that have become less well known in our world or google searching and Wikipedia.

As the author says, we live in the age of documents. Imagine a book that feels as if it's taking you on a journey from the beginning of history to today, based on important primary source documents, and you will have an idea of what this magnificent book is all about. It does this in a manner that is not only accessible, but thought provoking and it holds our interest from the first page. Each document comes with an explanation of what it represents and how it came to be, and there is an interesting story, told with passion, which adds up to a seamless series of brief accounts that develop themes and larger meanings. It's interesting how many of these documents continue to crop up in the news, decades or even centuries later, based on new discoveries. The illustrations, showing each artifact, are just as variegated and fascinating. This is a grand reading adventure, and I hope it gets read in schools, placed on library shelves, and ultimately, embraced by a great many discerning readers.

A great book for everyone. Has significant information for those who want to understand the what and why's of history. It's delivered in bit sized pieces to make it easy to pick up anytime.

I found many surprising facts and perspectives throughout the book. It was a wonderful tour of the evolution of societies.

Beautifully presented, thoughtfully chosen documents.

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