

Clausewitz On War Summary

Life, unfortunately, is rather short, the little storeroom of the brain doesn't have extensible walls and the greatest of thinkers seem to be among the dullest, and the lengthiest, of writers. Which is a pity, because your Prince, whether they call themselves President or King or Prime Minister, has almost certainly read Machiavelli. Your therapist is steeped in Freud, your divines in Augustine. Lawmakers take their cues still from Paine, Rousseau and Hobbes. Science looks yet to Bacon, Copernicus and Darwin. So, here are the few most used, most quoted, the most given, sources of the West. The books that have defined the way the West thinks now, in their author's own words, but condensed and abridged into something readable. And there's more. By compressing these books to a tenth or so of their original size it becomes possible to read the whole thing as a single narrative, as the story of Western Thought, the story of how we got where we are now. The last chapter is waiting to be written.

A major contribution to our understanding of contemporary warfare and strategy by one of the world's leading military historians.

On War On the Nature of War Penguin UK

On War is the most significant attempt in Western history to understand war, both in its internal dynamics and as an instrument of policy. Since the work's first appearance in 1832, it has been read throughout the world, and has stimulated generations of soldiers, statesmen, and intellectuals.

The seemingly endless wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have renewed the age-old debate over what constitutes military victory. Will the withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan be seen as a sign of victory or defeat? Although

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the nature of warfare has changed dramatically since Clausewitz's *On War* was first written, this selection from his classic work remains an invaluable source of insight for understanding what it means to achieve victory in war and how to recognize defeat. Princeton Shorts are brief selections excerpted from influential Princeton University Press publications produced exclusively in eBook format. They are selected with the firm belief that while the original work remains an important and enduring product, sometimes we can all benefit from a quick take on a topic worthy of a longer book. In a world where every second counts, how better to stay up-to speed on current events and digest the kernels of wisdom found in the great works of the past? Princeton Shorts enables you to be an instant expert in a world where information is everywhere but quality is at a premium. *On Victory and Defeat* does just that.

In *Battling to the End* René Girard engages Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), the Prussian military theoretician who wrote *On War*. Clausewitz, who has been critiqued by military strategists, political scientists, and philosophers, famously postulated that "War is the continuation of politics by other means." He also seemed to believe that governments could constrain war. Clausewitz, a firsthand witness to the Napoleonic Wars, understood the nature of modern warfare. Far from controlling violence, politics follows in war's wake: the means of war have become its ends. René Girard shows us a Clausewitz who is a fascinated witness of history's acceleration. Haunted by the French-German conflict, Clausewitz clarifies more than anyone else the development that would ravage Europe. *Battling to the End* pushes aside the taboo that prevents us from seeing that the apocalypse has begun. Human violence is escaping our control; today it threatens the entire planet.

A pathbreaking critique of the thought of military studies icon

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Carl Phillip Gottfried von Clausewitz and his magnum opus *On War* that illuminates why and how that work should be viewed as much more mature, coherent, innovative, and complete than suggested by previous accounts.

Throughout history, some books have changed the world. They have transformed the way we see ourselves - and each other. They have inspired debate, dissent, war and revolution. They have enlightened, outraged, provoked and comforted. They have enriched lives - and destroyed them. Now Penguin brings you the works of the great thinkers, pioneers, radicals and visionaries whose ideas shook civilization and helped make us who we are.

Will the information age witness a transformation in the nature of war? Putting the notion to the test, the author uses a range of contexts to assess whether the Clausewitzian nature of war will retain its validity. Today, the ideas of Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) are employed almost ubiquitously in strategic studies, military history and defence literatures, but often in a manner which distorts their true meaning. In this book, Waldman explores Clausewitz's central theoretical device for understanding war - the 'remarkable trinity' of politics, chance and passion. By situating the great Prussian in historical context, he presents a conception truer to Clausewitz's intention. Seeking to achieve this through an in-depth reinterpretation of *On War* and Clausewitz's other writings, conducted through the prism of the trinity, this book draws on existing studies but argues that there is room for clarification. It presents fresh

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perspectives into aspects of Clausewitz's thought and emphasises elements of his theory that have often been neglected. Furthermore, it provides a solid basis from which debate on the nature of modern war can move forward.

Originally published in 1976, Clausewitz and the State presents a comprehensive analysis of one of the significant thinkers of modern Europe. Peter Paret combines social and military history and psychological interpretation with a study of Clausewitz's military theories and of his unduly neglected historical and political writing. This timely new edition includes a preface which allows Paret to recount the past thirty years of discussion on Clausewitz and respond to critics. A companion volume to Clausewitz's *On War*, this book is indispensable to anyone interested in Clausewitz and his theories, and their proper historical context. *Rebooting Clausewitz* offers an entirely new take on the work of history's greatest theorist of war. Written for an undergraduate readership that often struggles with Clausewitz's master work *On War*--a book that is often considered too philosophical and impenetrably dense--it seeks to unpack some of Clausewitz's key insights on theory and strategy. In three fictional interludes Clausewitz attends a seminar at West Point; debates the War on Terror at a Washington think tank; and visits a Robotics Institute in Santa Fe where he discusses how

scientists are reshaping the future of war. Three separate essays situate Clausewitz in the context of his times, discuss his understanding of the culture of war, and the extent to which two other giants--Thucydides and Sun Tzu--complement his work. Some years ago the philosopher W.B. Gallie argued that Clausewitz needed to be 'saved from the Clausewitzians'. Clausewitz doesn't need saving and his commentators have contributed a great deal to our understanding of *On War's* seminal status as a text. But too often they tend to conduct a conversation between themselves. This book is an attempt to let a wider audience into the conversation. Karl von Clausewitz's study *On War* was described by the American strategic thinker Bernard Brodie as 'not simply the greatest, but the only great book about war'. It is hard to disagree. Even though he wrote his only major work at a time when the range of firearms was fifty yards, much of what he had to say remains relevant today. Michael Howard explains Clausewitz's ideas in terms both of his experiences as a professional soldier in the Napoleonic Wars, and of the intellectual background of his time. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new

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ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

These essays provide an authoritative introduction to Carl von Clausewitz and enlarge the history of war by joining it to the history of ideas and institutions and linking it with intellectual biography.

Two classic works of military strategy that shaped the way we think about warfare: *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu and *On War* by Karl von Clausewitz, together in one volume “Civilization might have been spared much of the damage suffered in the world wars . . . if the influence of Clausewitz’s *On War* had been blended with and balanced by a knowledge of Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*.”—B. H. Liddel Hart For two thousand years, Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War* has been the indispensable volume of warcraft. Although his work is the first known analysis of war and warfare, Sun Tzu struck upon a thoroughly modern concept: “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.” Karl von Clausewitz, the canny military theorist who famously declared that war is a continuation of politics by other means, also claims paternity of the notion “total war.” *On War* is the magnum opus of the era of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. Now these two great minds come together in a single volume that also features an introduction by esteemed military writer Ralph Peters and the Modern Library War Series introduction by Caleb Carr, *New York Times*

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bestselling author of *The Alienist*. (The cover and text refer to *The Art of War* as *The Art of Warfare*, an alternate translation of the title.)

Carl von Clausewitz's book *On War* is one of the most widely read and cited studies of armed conflict. However, many of his writings on the subject of warfare are not well known because they have never been translated. This book contains the first English-language translation of Clausewitz's *Lectures on Small War* held at the Prussian War Academy in 1810 and 1811 as well as other works devoted to the analysis of small unit warfare. Anyone interested in understanding the dynamics of insurgencies, guerrilla war, and asymmetric conflict as well as the evolution of Clausewitz's thinking on war will want to read this book.

Marvin Pokrant argues that the currently recognized principles of war are flawed and proposes a set of nine new principles to guide military leaders.

This book demonstrates how Clausewitzian thought influenced American strategic thinking between the Vietnam War and the current conflict in Iraq. Carl von Clausewitz's thought played a part in the process of military reform and the transition in US policy that took place after the Vietnam War. By the time of the 1991 Gulf War, American policy makers demonstrated that they understood the Clausewitzian notion of utilizing military force to fulfil a clear political objective. The US armed forces bridged the operational and strategic levels during that conflict in accordance with Clausewitz's conviction that war plans should be tailored to fulfil a political objective. With the end of the Cold War, and an increasing

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predilection for technological solutions, American policy makers and the military moved away from Clausewitz. It was only the events of 11 September 2001 that reminded Americans of his intrinsic value. However, while many aspects of the 'War on Terror' and the conflict in Iraq can be accommodated within the Clausewitzian paradigm, the lack of a clear policy for countering insurgency in Iraq suggests that the US may have returned full circle to the flawed strategic approach evident in Vietnam. Clausewitz and America will be of great interest to students of strategy, military history, international security and US politics.

The essays in this volume analyze war, its strategic characteristics and its political and social functions, over the past five centuries. The diversity of its themes and the broad perspectives applied to them make the book a work of general history as much as a history of the theory and practice of war from the Renaissance to the present. *Makers of Modern Strategy* from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age takes the first part of its title from an earlier collection of essays, published by Princeton University Press in 1943, which became a classic of historical scholarship. Three essays are repinted from the earlier book; four others have been extensively revised. The rest--twenty-two essays--are new. The subjects addressed range from major theorists and political and military leaders to impersonal forces. Machiavelli, Clausewitz, and Marx and Engels are discussed, as are Napoleon, Churchill, and Mao. Other essays trace the interaction of theory and experience over generations--the evolution of American strategy, for instance, or the emergence of revolutionary war in the modern world. Still others analyze the strategy of particular conflicts--the First and Second World Wars--or the relationship between technology, policy, and war in the nuclear age. Whatever its theme, each essay places the specifics of military thought

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and action in their political, social, and economic environment. Together the contributors have produced a book that reinterprets and illuminates war, one of the most powerful forces in history and one that cannot be controlled in the future without an understanding of its past.

This book is an analysis of terrorism, a summary of its historical evolution, and an evaluation of its contemporary character. The struggle against terrorism has taken on a military character, and a Clausewitz perspective is necessary to show how warfare subordinates use of force to political considerations.

This book interrogates the philosophical backdrop of Clausewitzian notions of war, and asks whether modern, network-centric militaries can still be said to serve the 'political'. In light of the emerging theories and doctrines of Network-Centric War (NCW), this book traces the philosophical backdrop against which the more common theorizations of war and its conduct take place. Tracing the historical and philosophical roots of modern war from the 17th Century through to the present day, this book reveals that far from paralyzing the project of re-problematising war, the emergence of NCW affords us an opportunity to rethink war in new and philosophically challenging ways. This book will be of much interest to students of critical security studies, social theory, war studies and political theory/IR. Manabrata Guha is Assistant Professor (ISSSP) at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, India.

The most authoritative and feature-rich edition of *On War* in English Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* is the most significant attempt in Western history to understand war, both in its internal dynamics and as an instrument of policy. Since the work's first appearance in 1832, it has been read throughout the world, and has stimulated generations of soldiers, political leaders, and intellectuals. First published in 1976 and revised

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in 1984, Michael Howard and Peter Paret's Princeton edition of Clausewitz's classic work has itself achieved classic status and is widely regarded as the best translation and standard edition of *On War* in English. This feature-rich edition includes an essay by Paret on the genesis of Clausewitz's book, an essay by Howard on Clausewitz's influence, and an essay by Bernard Brodie on the continuing relevance of *On War*. In addition, Brodie provides a lengthy and detailed commentary on and guide to reading *On War*, and the edition also includes a comprehensive index.

Inside secure command centers, military officials make life and death decisions-- but the Pentagon also offers food courts, banks, drugstores, florists, and chocolate shops. It is rather symbolic of the way that the U.S. military has become our one-stop-shopping solution to global problems. Brooks traces this seismic shift in how America wages war, and provides a rallying cry for action as we undermine the values and rules that keep our world from sliding toward chaos. A book on war and military strategy by Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz, written mostly after the Napoleonic wars, between 1816 and 1830, and published posthumously by his wife in 1832. *On War* is actually an unfinished work; Clausewitz had set about revising his accumulated manuscripts in 1827, but did not live to finish the task. His wife eventually compiled his work, leaving out his later revisions, and finishing the final two chapters either herself or with assistance from an unknown government official. Clausewitz integrates politics and social and economic issues as some of the most important factors in deciding the outcomes of a war. It is one of the most important treatises on strategy ever written, and is prescribed at various military academies to this day. (wikipedia)

This is the first book to apply the Clausewitzian Trinity of 'passion, chance, and reason' to the experience of real war. It

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explores the depth and validity of the concept against the conflicts of former Yugoslavia - wars thought to epitomise a post-Clausewitzian age. In doing so it demonstrates the timeless message of the Trinity, but also ties the Trinitarian idea back into Clausewitz's political argument. Intended to build on the existing corpus of scholarship, this book differs from the existing literature in two ways. By applying the Trinity to the wars of former Yugoslavia 1991-1995, it explores war at its micro-foundations, assessing the complex cause-and-effect nexus of reciprocity produced by actions between belligerents embroiled in dynamic competition perpetuated by their own interaction. Providing valuable insights into the complexities of real war fuelled by passion, undermined by chance, and shaped by reason, it is the first study to bridge the Clausewitzian world of theory with real experience.

Examining each part of the triad separately, the book explores the multiple manifestations of hostility and chance, before then assessing the influence of these elements on the policies of the belligerents as the war evolved.

Carl von Clausewitz has long been interpreted as the paradigmatic thinker of major interstate war. This book challenges this assumption by showing that Clausewitz was an ardent analyst of small war and integrated many aspects of his early writings on partisan warfare and people's war into his magnum opus, *On War*. It reconstructs Clausewitz's intellectual development by placing it in the context of his engagement with the political and philosophical currents of his own times - German Idealism, Romanticism, and Humanism. The central question that Clausewitz and his contemporaries faced was how to defend Prussia and Europe against Napoleon's expansionist strategy. On the one hand, the nationalization of war that had occurred as a result of the French Revolution could only be countered by drawing the people into the defence of their own countries. On the other,

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this risked a descent into anarchy and unchecked terror, as the years 1793 and 1794 in France had shown. Throughout his life Clausewitz remained optimistic that the institution of the Prussian Landwehr could achieve both an effective defence of Prussia and a social and political integration of its citizens. Far from leaving behind his early advocacy of people's war, Clausewitz integrated it systematically into his mature theory of war. People's war was war in its existential form; it risked escalating into 'absolute war'. However, if the threat of defensive people's war had become a standard option of last resort in early-nineteenth century Europe, it could also function as a safeguard of the balance of power. In both a philosophical and a practical work, Clausewitz defines the essential nature of war, debates the qualities of a great commander, assesses the relative strengths of defensive and offensive war, and - in highly controversial passages - considers the relationship between war and politics.

In this far-reaching exploration of the evolution of warfare in human history, Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson provide insight into the perennial questions of why and how humans fight. Beginning with the origins of warfare among foraging groups, *The Arc of War* draws on a wealth of empirical data to enhance our understanding of how war began and how it has changed over time. The authors point to the complex interaction of political economy, political and military organization, military technology, and the threat environment—all of which create changing incentives for states and other actors. They conclude that those actors that adapt survive, and those that do not are eliminated. In modern times, warfare between major powers has become exceedingly costly and therefore quite rare, while lesser powers are too weak to fight sustained and decisive wars or to prevent internal rebellions. Conceptually innovative and

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historically sweeping, *The Arc of War* represents a significant contribution to the existing literature on warfare.

From a highly decorated general, a brilliant new way of understanding war and its role in the twenty-first century. Drawing on his vast experience as a commander during the first Gulf War, and in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Northern Ireland, General Rupert Smith gives us a probing analysis of modern war. He demonstrates why today's conflicts must be understood as intertwined political and military events, and makes clear why the current model of total war has failed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other recent campaigns. Smith offers a compelling contemporary vision for how to secure our world and the consequences of ignoring the new, shifting face of war.

The volume considers Clausewitz's timeless *On War* against the background of actual armed conflict. With scholars from a range of disciplines and countries, it throws new light on a classic text and contemporary issues.

This collection of articles represents Professor Williamson Murray's efforts to elucidate the role that history should play in thinking about both the present and the future. They reflect three disparate themes in Professor Murray's work: his deep fascination with history and those who have acted in the past; his fascination with the similarities in human behavior between the past and the present; and his belief that the study of military and strategic history can be of real use to those who will confront the daunting problems of war and peace in the twenty-first century. The first group of essays addresses the relevance of history to an understanding of the present and to an understanding of the possibilities of the future. The second addresses the possible direct uses of history to think through the problems involved in the creation of effective military institutions. The final group represents historical case studies that serve to illuminate the present.

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In today's military of rapid technological and strategic change, obtaining a complete understanding of the present, let alone the past, is a formidable challenge. Yet the very high rate of change today makes study of the past more important than ever before. *The Past as Prologue*, first published in 2006, explores the usefulness of the study of history for contemporary military strategists. It illustrates the great importance of military history while simultaneously revealing the challenges of applying the past to the present. Essays from authors of diverse backgrounds - British and American, civilian and military - come together to present an overwhelming argument for the necessity of the study of the past by today's military leaders in spite of these challenges. The essays of Part I examine the relationship between history and the military profession. Those in Part II explore specific historical cases that show the repetitiveness of certain military problems.

DIVThe most cited, most controversial, and most modern book on warfare. The author examines moral and psychological aspects of war: courage, audacity, self-sacrifice, the importance of morale and public opinion, more. /div

"The marriage between Carl von Clausewitz and Countess Marie von Brehl was an unlikely partnership. A wealthy, cultured, politically-literate but plain woman with interests of her own, Marie's marriage to a less-fortunate, then-unknown officer in 1810 did not make sense by most accounts. But their relationship was forged by a love for each other, a deep sense of trust, and a meeting of the minds over common interests, one that would shape

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Clausewitz' opus, *On War*. Marie von Clausewitz is the first biography to shed light on Marie's illustrious life before she met Clausewitz and how she used her refined upbringing and social insights to inform his thoughts on warfare and politics. A newly-discovered archive of correspondence reveals details of their relationship and the extent of Marie's imprint on the theories that eventually comprised *On War*, from their courtship to the days of the Napoleonic War. This was a partnership - in the truest sense of the word, atypical for its time - and a form of continuing education for Clausewitz. The two came to a 'collaborative opinion' on many topics, from the moral implications of war to the emotional constitution required of an extraordinary person to affect change. Bellinger shows how Marie, a highly educated woman of Prussia's upper echelon, broadened Clausewitz's understanding of the cultural and political processes of the time; provided him with insights into the practical side of daily politics; sharpened his writing style; and served as the catalyst for his ideas. Marie added insight from the perspective of a spouse and caretaker, close enough to the battle to observe the physical and emotional effects of combat. The issues that Marie raised about the difficulties of war, such as social isolation and treatment of veterans, will resonate with readers today. Marie von Clausewitz sheds light on an extraordinary life and mind, offering compelling

insights into class and gender in 19th century Europe and a seminal text in military history"-- War is changing. Unlike when modern military doctrine was forged, the United States no longer mobilizes massive land forces for direct political gain. Instead, the US fights small, overseas wars by global mandate to overthrow dictators, destroy terrorist groups, and broker regional peace. These conflicts hardly resemble the total wars fought and expected by foundational military theorists such as Carl von Clausewitz, yet their paradigms are ingrained in modern thinking. The twenty-first-century's new geopolitical situation demands new principles for warfare -- deemphasizing decisive land victory in favor of airpower, intelligence systems, and indigenous ground forces. In *Thoughts on War*, Phillip S. Meilinger confronts the shortcomings of US military dogma in search of a new strategic doctrine. Inter-service rivalries and conventional theories failed the US in lengthy Korea, Vietnam, and Middle East conflicts. Jettisoning traditional perspectives and their focus on decisive battles, Meilinger revisits historical campaigns looking for answers to more persistent challenges -- how to coordinate forces, manipulate time, and fight on two fronts. This provocative collection of new and expanded essays offers a fresh, if controversial, perspective on time-honored military values, one which encourages a critical revision of US military strategy.

The language of business is the language of dreams, but the language of war is the language of nightmare made real. Yet business dreams of driverless cars on intelligent roads, and of other real-time critical systems under the control of algorithmic entities, have much of war about them. Such systems, including military institutions at the tactical, operational and strategic scales, act on rapidly-shifting roadway topologies whose 'traffic rules' can rapidly change. War is never without both casualty and collateral damage, and realtime critical systems of any nature will inevitably partake of fog-of-war and frictional challenges almost exactly similar to those that have made warfare intractable for modern states. Into the world of Carl von Clausewitz, John Boyd, Mao Tse-Tung, Vo Nguyen Giap and Genghis Khan, come the brash, bright-eyed techies of Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon, and Uber who forthrightly step in where a phalanx of angels has not feared to tread, but treaded badly indeed. In this book we use cutting-edge tools from information and control theories to examine canonical and idiosyncratic failure modes of real-time cognitive systems facing fog-of-war and frictional constraints. In sum, nobody ever navigates, or can navigate, the landscapes of Carl von Clausewitz unscathed. This book at last makes available in English a penetrating exchange between two of history's most famous soldiers concerning the dramatic events of

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the Waterloo campaign of 1815. The Duke of Wellington is one of the greatest military commanders in British history; General Carl von Clausewitz is widely regarded as the greatest military thinker in the history of Western civilization. Both men had vast experience in the Napoleonic Wars, and both were prominent participants in the campaign. Wellington commanded the Anglo-Dutch-Belgian army; the much younger Clausewitz was chief-of-staff to Prussia's 3rd Corps. Wellington went on to become prime minister of Great Britain and commander-in-chief-for-life of the British Army. Clausewitz went on to author *VOM KRIEGE (ON WAR)*, a seminal and still hotly debated treatise on the theory and philosophy of war. He also became the founder of modern, "scientific" military history, via the work of his disciple, military historian Hans Delbrück. Oddly, Clausewitz's study of the campaign of 1815 was never published in English, and Wellington's once-famous response to it has been strangely but studiously ignored by British military historians since 1914. Hence this book. It contains Wellington's initial battle report; Clausewitz's post-battle letters to his wife Marie; correspondence within Wellington's circle concerning Clausewitz's work; Clausewitz's strategic analysis of the entire campaign (not just the Battle of Waterloo); Wellington's memorandum in response; and enlightening essays by prominent experts on

Clausewitz, Wellington, and the Battle of Waterloo. Major General [U.S. Army] David T. Zabecki, Ph.D., writes in the April 2011 edition of *The Journal of Military History*: "Long overdue, we now have two English translations of [Clausewitz's] *The Campaign of 1815* [i.e., Peter Hofschröder's translation of Clausewitz's study and Bassford, Moran, and Pedlow's edition of the full Clausewitz-Wellington exchange]. Either of these volumes would be a welcome addition to the bookshelf of any serious student of military affairs, but *On Waterloo: Clausewitz, Wellington, and the Campaign of 1815* is clearly the richer of the two." Napoleonic expert Bruno Colson wrote [in *War in History* 19(3)] that Pedlow "convincingly resurrects Wellington's ideas and actions, and gives a final and excellent reply to the arguments of Peter Hofschröder, while remaining balanced, recognizing the latter's merits and quoting him courteously. Waterloo 'was neither a British victory nor a Prussian victory; it was an Allied victory,' says Pedlow (p. 282). For Waterloo enthusiasts, this essay alone justifies buying the book." Noted Clausewitz scholar Jon Sumida (U.Md) writes that "*On Waterloo* is essential reading for those seeking an understanding of Clausewitz's distinctive approach to historical case study as the basis of practical knowledge of armed conflict. Clausewitz's history of the campaign of 1815 incorporates methods of critical analysis explained in

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Book II of *On War*, which were addressed primarily to the observation and assessment of past cases of strategic and operational decision-making by commanders-in chief. The Bassford, Moran, and Pedlow edition provides a highly readable translation of a work previously accessible only in German that illustrates Clausewitz's approach to the replication and evaluation of the experience of high command."The Editors: Christopher Bassford is Professor of Strategy at the National War College, in Washington, DC. Daniel Moran is Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, CA. Gregory W. Pedlow is Chief of the Historical Office at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), near Mons, Belgium.

On War by Carl von Clausewitz was first published in Germany after the Napoleonic Wars. One of the most significant treatises on military strategy ever written, it is still prescribed at various military academies today. Its description of 'absolute war' and its insistence on the centrality of battle to war have been blamed for the level of destruction involved in both the First and Second World Wars. Hew Strachan's accessible book challenges the popular misconceptions that surround *On War*. He dispels the notion that for Clausewitz policy necessarily shapes war, asserting instead that war has its own dynamic and that its reciprocal effects

can themselves shape policy. Strachan returns to the very heart of *On War* to recover the arguments at its core; in the process challenging the received wisdom about this cornerstone of military strategy.

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