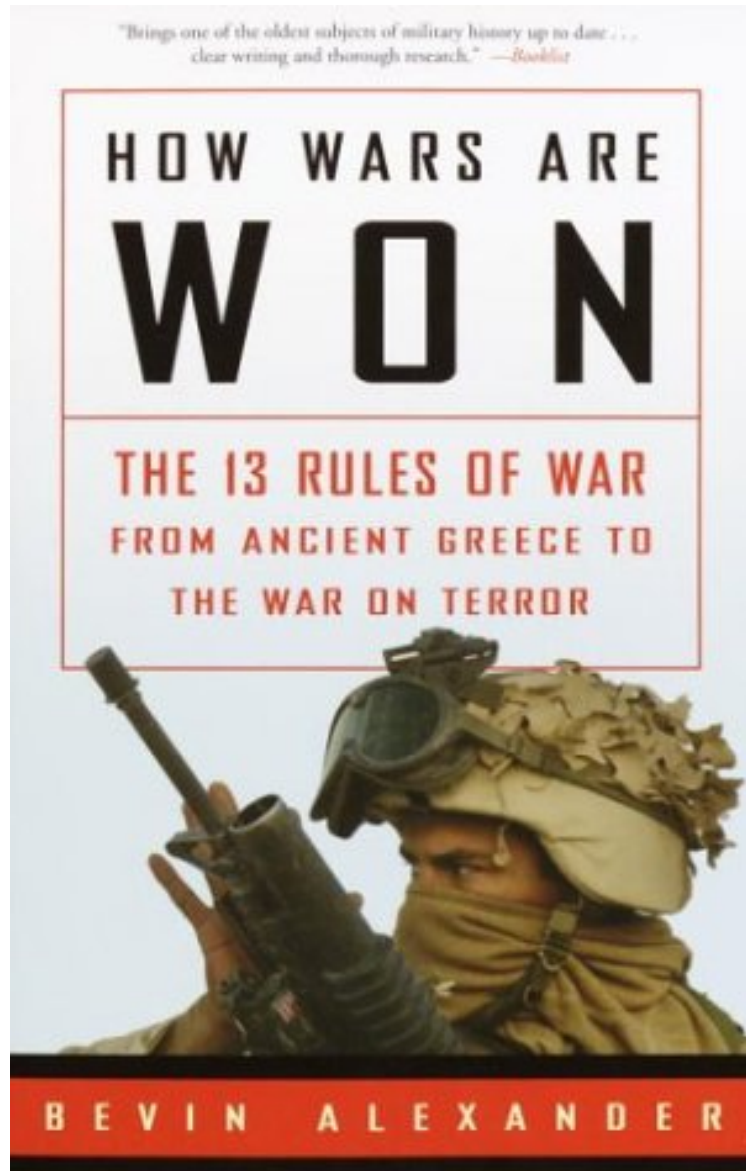


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How Wars Are Won: The 13 Rules of War from Ancient Greece to the War on Terror

Bevin Alexander

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Bevin Alexander : How Wars Are Won: The 13 Rules of War from Ancient Greece to the War on Terror before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How Wars Are Won: The 13 Rules of War from Ancient Greece to the War on Terror:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Customermust have classic.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. No Pics = Eye SoreBy Jamiel CotmanI'm giving it three stars solely because the subject matter is amazing. And the concept is too! Who doesn't want to know, or, can't glean wisdom from the strategies of war success? Its why Sun Tzu [a general he mentioned] is so famous.ButWhere's the pics? This book didn't have the visuals that Bevin had to supplement him in his presentations on the Military Channel. I was expecting something a bit closer to that.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This was a great compilation/summary of some of the most important military campaigns ...By RThis was a great compilation/summary of some of the most important military campaigns in history. Some of the author's suggestions as to what commanders should have done were overly simplistic and in some cases completely wrong (in my opinion). However, I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book.

Even as we head into twenty-first-century warfare, thirteen time-tested rules for waging war remain relevant.Both timely and timeless, *How Wars Are Won* illuminates the thirteen essential rules for success on the battlefield that have evolved from ancient times until the present day. Acclaimed military historian Bevin Alexander's incisive and vivid analyses of famous battles throughout the ages show how the greatest commanders—from Alexander the Great to Douglas MacArthur—have applied these rules. For example:• Feign retreat: Pretend defeat, fake a retreat, then ambush the enemy while being pursued. Used to devastating effect by the North Vietnamese against U.S. forces during the Vietnam War. • Strike at enemy weakness: Avoid the enemy's strength entirely by refusing to fight pitched battles, a method that has run alongside conventional war from the earliest days of human conflict. Brilliantly applied by Mao Zedong to defeat the Chinese Nationalists. • Defend, then attack: Gain possession of a superior weapon or tactical system, induce the enemy to launch a fruitless attack, then go on the offensive. Employed repeatedly against the Goths by the Eastern Roman general Belisarius to reclaim vast stretches of the Roman Empire. The lessons of history revealed in these pages can be used to shape the strategies needed to win the conflicts of today.

From Publishers WeeklyThis is a book whose argument would be more effective had the author not apparently refocused his manuscript after September 11. Alexander, a journalist and writer of general audience works on military subjects, challenges the relevance and effectiveness of the "Western way of war" as articulated by, among others, Victor Davis Hanson and John Keegan. That model emphasizes intense, direct conflict focused on decisive battles whose outcomes are determined by relative loss rates. Alexander's "13 rules," in contrast, emphasize indirection: striking at weak spots, employing deception, paralyzing systems as opposed to killing men. Though the research bases of Alexander's case studies are uniformly thin, he does not seriously abuse his evidence. Most of the battles he cites in demonstration of a particular "rule" more or less support the argument. Cannae, for example, is an appropriate example of a battle of encirclement. Yet Alexander (*How Hitler Could Have Won World War II*) also seeks to connect his "rules of war" directly to the contemporary "war on terror." In this case, the drastic asymmetries between the adversaries make the relationships to historic battles fought by more similar forces difficult to establish. Alexander usually winds up postulating a connection rather than demonstrating it. The link, for example, between operational-level "cauldron battles" like those fought in Russia in 1941, and the tactics employed by the U.S. in Afghanistan against the Taliban, is at best tenuous, if not entirely inferential. Alexander's case should not be dismissed, but is best approached with intellectual caution. As the U.S. prepares for war, look for interest in this title to be high. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library JournalUsing the works of Sun Tzu as a framework, Alexander has formulated 13 rules by which wars are won: striking at enemy weakness, feigning retreat, striking at a weak spot, etc. He devotes a chapter to each rule, describing famous battles that serve as examples of his rules in action, and then concludes each chapter with a post-9/11 implication as to the rule's application to the future of warfare. Some of Alexander's works, such as *Lost Victories* and *How the Great Generals Win*, show much original insight; others, like *The Future of Warfare* and *How Hitler Could Have Won World War II*, are not exceptional. The present work could be seen as a sequel to *How the Great Generals Win*, as it describes many of the same battles, and, logically, the great generals (from Napoleon and Genghis Khan to U.S. Grant and Erwin Rommel) utilized many of these principles for victory. His implications for the future are not especially thought-provoking, but this book can still serve as an excellent introduction to his work. Alexander's writing style is fluid, and his insights into many of the battles original. Recommended for military collections. Richard Nowicki, Emerson Vocational H.S., Buffalo, NY Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From BooklistAlexander brings one of the oldest subjects of military history up to date usefully if not always outstandingly, for he tries to have his cake and eat it, too, by claiming that we are living in a wholly new era of warfare (i.e., war by terror) and that Alexander the Great and Napoleon can teach us profound and universal lessons. Alexander's strongest influence appears to be Sun Tzu, and some familiarity with that martial sage, whose *Art of War* seems to be translated anew every third year, aids in understanding and profiting from this book. Alexander's clear writing, thorough research across three millennia of world military history, and incorporation of recent events in the Balkans and Afghanistan when evaluating prospects and possibilities all strongly recommend the book. Still, for a serious general audience, it could be better, and it may be if it is appropriately updated to reflect the next several phases of the war on terrorism. Roland Green Copyright © American Library Association. All rights

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