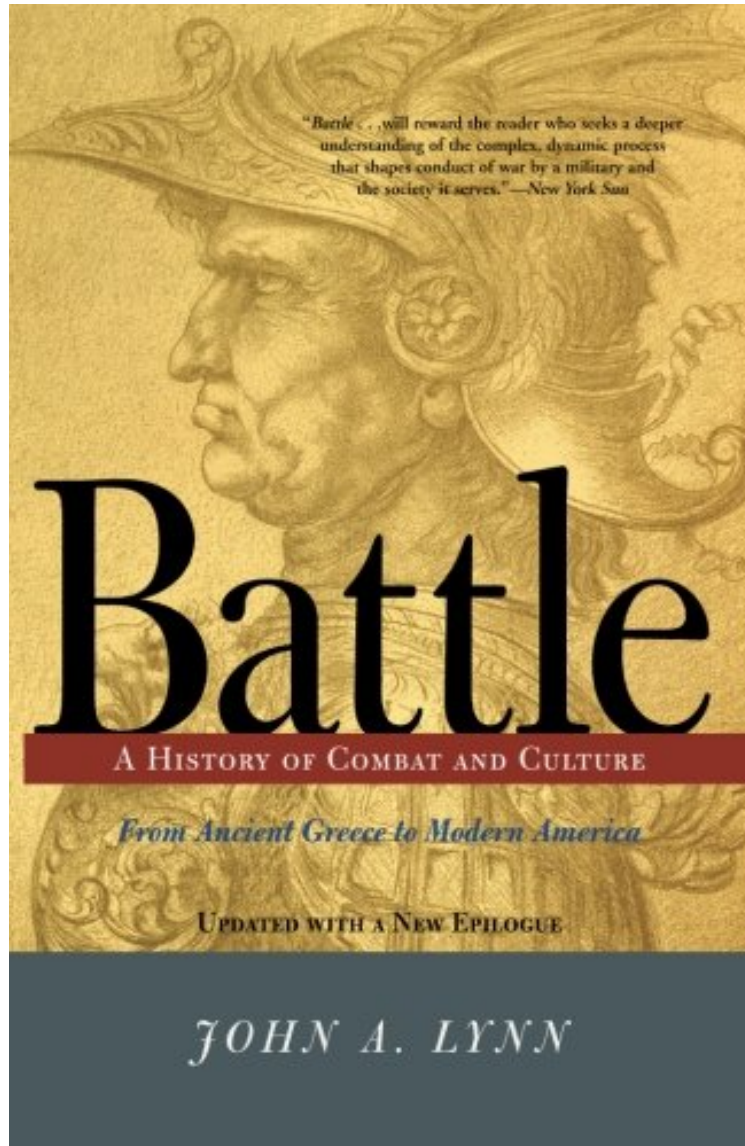


(Download) Battle: A History Of Combat And Culture

## Battle: A History Of Combat And Culture

John A Lynn

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**John A Lynn : Battle: A History Of Combat And Culture** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Battle: A History Of Combat And Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Had to great for a college classBy VictoriaIn my class, we had to compare this book to what Hanson, another historian, has to say about the way of war. I strongly recommend reading both this book and any of Hanson's works, as the varying perspectives are impressive and allows for you to create your own opinions. If you have an interest in the way warfare has developed, this is definitely the book for you.0 of 0

people found the following review helpful. Lynn on WarBy Samuel H. BostaphOne of the most fascinating books on the interaction between culture and warmaking that I've ever read. It gave me an entirely new perspective on war. It is especially effective in dispelling the simple-minded approach of Phillip David Hanson to how peoples have historically waged war.3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Brilliant Book and an Alternative (and Better) Analysis of the SubjectBy The BaronBetter than who? Certainly better than Victor Hanson; I have no complaint with Hanson being a classicist jumping over to military history; I don't even begrudge him using military history to work out his psychological problems. What I mind is that his theory is ever-changing and never completely opens itself to discussion, because it's so qualified and shifting. It's sophistry. But Lynn, who has the virtue of actually being a military historian who teaches to both the civilian community and to members of the armed forces, is the real deal: he breaks down this very slippery subject of culture and warfare so that its component parts can at least be grasped. He has no real overarching theory -- as, indeed, there CAN be no overarching theory, when it comes to the cultural history of several millennia of human conflict, despite what Hanson, John Keegan, and many others may say -- but allows his analysis to develop WITH the material, rather than imposing an intellectual rubric on it. You will get far more out of this book than any such recent study -- BUY IT, and pay no attention to the scant negativity, here. From the tone, you can tell where that's coming from. It's a great book from a fine scholar: so don't just buy it, READ IT, which most people who claim to have "read" Keegan and Hanson clearly have not. Kudos, John Lynn!

Battle: A History of Combat and Culture spans the globe and the centuries to explore the way ideas shape the conduct of warfare. Drawing its examples from Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, and America, John A. Lynn challenges the belief that technology has been the dominant influence on combat from ancient times to the present day. In battle, ideas can be more far more important than bullets or bombs. Carl von Clausewitz proclaimed that war is politics, but even more basically, war is culture. The hard reality of armed conflict is formed by - and, in turn, forms - a culture's values, assumptions, and expectations about fighting. The author examines the relationship between the real and the ideal, arguing that feedback between the two follows certain discernable paths. Battle rejects the currently fashionable notion of a "Western way of warfare" and replaces it with more nuanced concepts of varied and evolving cultural patterns of combat. After considering history, Lynn finally asks how the knowledge gained might illuminate our understanding of the war on terrorism.

From Publishers WeeklyWithout denying the existence of such constants as fear and courage, Lynn, a historian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, seeks in this volume to refute "universal" models of interpreting warfare. Classical Greece, he argues, sought decisive battle because of its particular values emphasizing individual worth and independence, while in ancient India and China, the dominant values emphasized deception and diplomacy. Medieval Europe balanced a brutal reality of highly destructive mutual raiding with an artificial form of war in the tournament and an idealized form in the crusade. The European wars of the 18th century were defined by style and aesthetics, manifestations of the conscious mixture of fashion and function that reflected general European taste. Similarly, 19th-century Europe's concept of the decisive battle, argues Lynn (*The Wars of Louis XIV*), was influenced more by a Romantic high culture than by specifically military factors such as weapons systems or mass armies. Even the U.S.-Japanese conflict from 1941 to 1945, Lynn contends, was shaped by a profound contrast in military cultures, one emphasizing survival and the other self-immolation. The final chapter discusses the Egyptian army's conscious and rejection in 1973 of maneuver warfare in favor of a set-piece approach more congruent with its supporting cultures. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "John Lynn's *Battle* provides an incisive cultural analysis of the ways in which many different societies across three continents and three millennia have viewed and fought wars."About the AuthorJohn A. Lynn, an expert on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century warfare professor, is a professor of history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and an adjunct professor at Ohio State University. He lives in Champaign, Illinois.