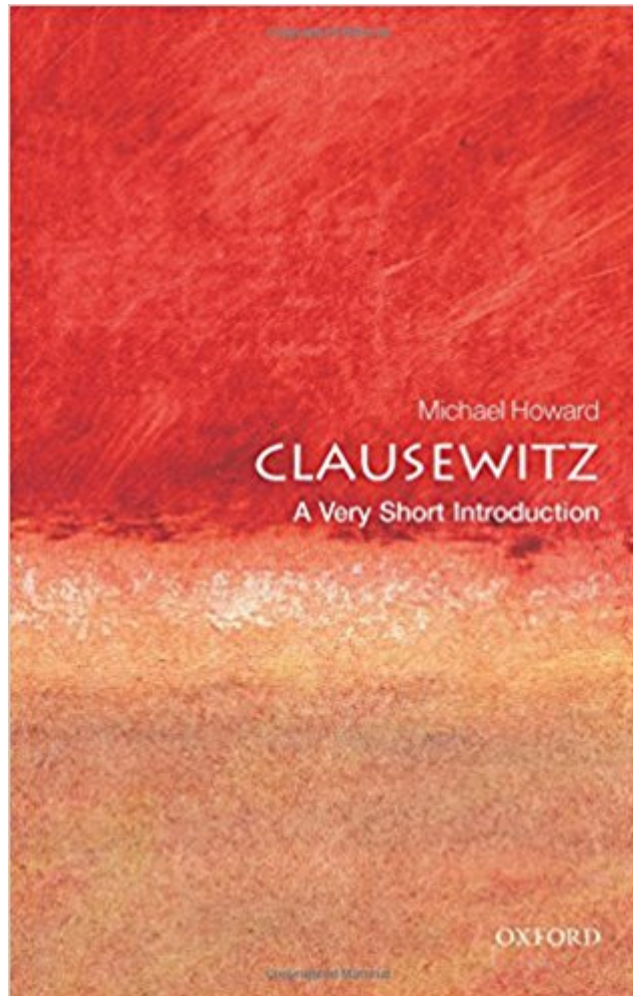




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# Clausewitz: A Very Short Introduction



## Synopsis

Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) is considered by many to have been one of the greatest writers on war. His 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.

## Book Information

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1st edition (May 16, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0192802577

ISBN-13: 978-0192802576

Product Dimensions: 6.8 x 0.4 x 4.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Review from previous edition 'as a synthesis of Clausewitz scholarship this study can hardly be faulted'"--English Historical Review"a delightful introduction to the paradoxes and insights of this passionate rationalist."--London Review of Books

Sir Michael Howard has held the Chair of War Studies at King's College London, the Chichele Chair of History of War and the Regius Chair of Modern History at Oxford, and the Robert A. Lovett Chair of Military and Naval History at Yale. His works include *The Franco-Prussian War*, *The Causes of Wars*, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, *The Lessons of History*, and *War in European History*. Together with Professor Peter Paret he edited and translated Clausewitz, *On War*.

Given that the goal of this book is to impart upon the reading a sense of understanding and

knowledge about basic ideas of military theorist von Clausewitz, I can only say that this book hit its mark in brilliant fashion. Short, concise, yet filled to the brim with information. I particularly enjoyed how author Mr. Howard set a chapter on "Clausewitz in his time" wherein we see the thinking of the day, the atmosphere in which Clausewitz 'thought,' and so forth. This really set the basis for which one can understand Clausewitz further. I also liked the chapter on the legacy of Clausewitz in which Mr. Howard presents various criticisms of Clausewitz's ideas, and then proceeds to counter them. Overall a must read for all those who are interested in understanding military endeavors- historical or current- which, if you are reading this, then it's safe to say you are in fact interested. Enjoy!

I give this book 5 stars for its thorough introduction to Clausewitz and his opus "On war". The book is well-structured and presents Clausewitz' ideas in a informative way with a good balance of trivia, facts and well founded analyses and interpretations, while resisting the temptation to bore the reader with nerdy details. With this introduction in hand, I feel safe on embarking on a full reading of On War.

Good choice for military theorists and enthusiast. Beware that the content was written some time ago and writing style may be difficult for some to consume and deconstruct. Suitable for the progressing novice into deeper military strategic material, specific to military warfare and less abstract than malleable and adaptive doctrines like Sun Tzu's Art of War.

This is more than a crib book - it places Clausewitz in context as well as drawing out his more important lessons. Having read the whole book at a junior Staff College course many years ago, I found myself in a unit with officers all actively engaged in the study of the original book. This little volume allowed me to converse on many points I'd long since forgotten. Highly recommended for all military officers.

I'm in a grad course where a majority of the students are military and therefore well-schooled and knowledgeable on Clausewitz's theory/book "On War." Although this is not a substitute for reading Clausewitz's original work, it is a solid and useful introduction that gives context and insight into why Clausewitz wrote what he did and the essence/relevance of his work. (At 80 pages, this "Intro" is short enough/worthy enough to read prior to any discussion or dialogue on Clausewitz's theory of war.)

Received in good condition. It is worth it

Michael Howard was the co-editor of the 1976 translation of Clausewitz's famous book on War. In this 'Very Short Introduction' Howard goes through all the major thoughts of Clausewitz, which go beyond the more widely read book one.

A very narrow synopsis of "On War" by Clausewitz. Good for quick review but not useful for analysis which would be the reason for reading Clausewitz.

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