

# Why the Allies Won

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"Overy has written a masterpiece of analytical history, posing and answering one of the great questions of the century."-Sunday Times (London)

Richard Overy's bold book begins by throwing out the stock answers to this great question: Germany doomed itself to defeat by fighting a two-front war; the Allies won by "sheer weight of material strength." In fact, by 1942 Germany controlled almost the entire resources of continental Europe and was poised to move into the Middle East. The Soviet Union had lost the heart of its industry, and the United States was not yet armed.

The Allied victory in 1945 was not inevitable. Overy shows us exactly how the Allies regained military superiority and why they were able to do it. He recounts the decisive campaigns: the war at sea, the crucial battles on the eastern front, the air war, and the vast amphibious assault on Europe. He then explores the deeper factors affecting military success and failure: industrial strength, fighting ability, the quality of leadership, and the moral dimensions of the war. Photographs

Having won an unprecedented series of victories and acquired huge new territories in 1942, Germany and Japan seemed poised to dominate most of the world. A year later both empires were reeling back in the face of Allied assaults. The rapid turnaround, King's College history professor Richard Overy writes, came about largely as a result of technological innovation and structural responsiveness. The Allies were able to convert their economies to a war footing with few institutional fetters, while the Axis powers imposed layers of bureaucracy that often competed internally. In fact, Overy writes, at one point during the war, the Luftwaffe had more than 425 different aircraft models in production, the result of different state agencies' and manufacturers' vying to push their models into the order of battle. The defeated Axis powers' conversion to their foes' economic model enabled them, according to Overy, to become technological leaders in the postwar years. His study is full of detail, and it makes for very good reading. Richard Overy is the author of *RAF, Why the Allies Won*, *The Battle of Britain*, and *The Dictators*, winner of the Wolfson History Prize. He is one of our foremost authorities in modern history and military history. He is professor of history at the University of Exeter in England.

#### Other Books

*Command*. Throughout history, the concept of command -- as both a way to achieve objectives and as an assertion of authority -- has been essential to military action and leadership. But, as Sir Lawrence Freedman shows, it is also deeply political. Military command has been reconstructed and revolutionized since the Second World War by nuclear warfare, small-scale guerrilla land operations and cyber interference. Freedman takes a global perspective, systematically investigating its practice and politics since 1945 through a wide range of conflicts from the French Colonial Wars, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bangladesh Liberation War to North Vietnam's Easter Offensive of 1972, the Falklands War, the Iraq War and Russia's wars in Chechnya and Ukraine. By highlighting the political nature of strategy, Freedman shows that military decision-making cannot be separated from civilian priorities and that commanders must now have the sensibility to navigate politics as well as warfare.

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