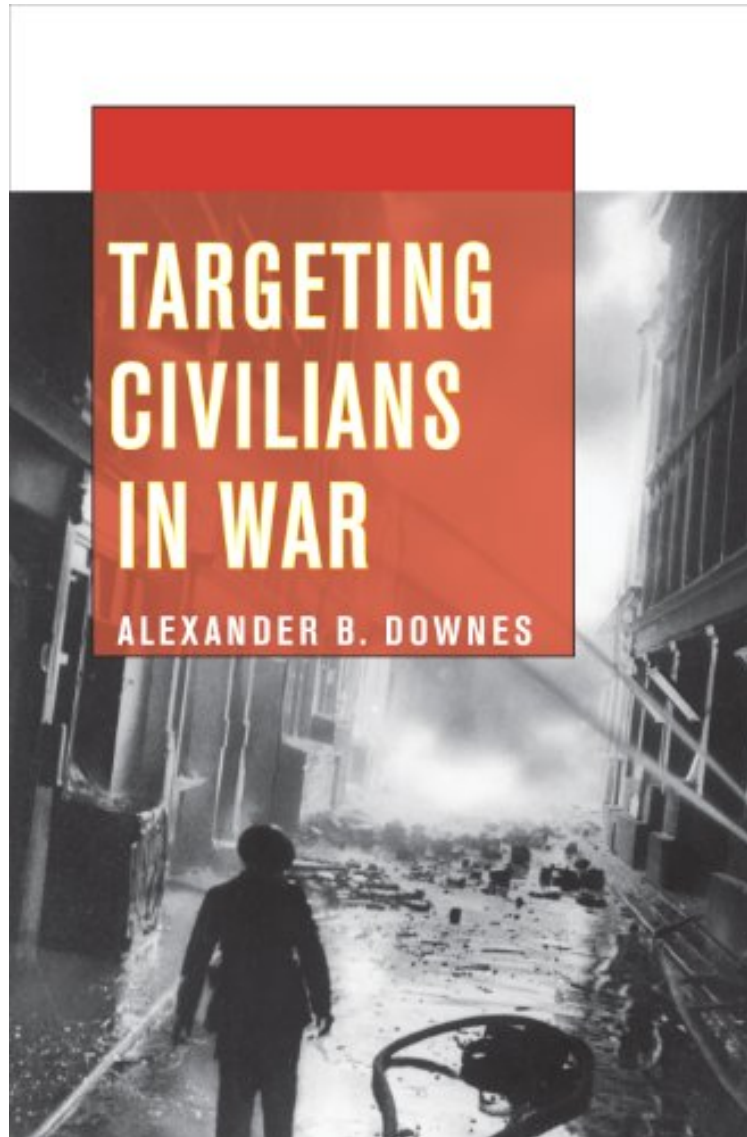


[Ebook pdf] Targeting Civilians in War (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs)

## Targeting Civilians in War (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs)

*Von Alexander B. Downes*

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**Von Alexander B. Downes : Targeting Civilians in War (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Targeting Civilians in War (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Strategie der VerzweiflungVon J. RuppSeit jeher werden in Kriegen Zivilisten zu Opfern. Obwohl solche bergriffe vlkerrechtlich verboten und moralisch verwerflich sind, kommen sie immer wieder vor. Warum dies so ist, untersucht

der amerikanische Politikwissenschaftler Alexander Downes in dieser herausragenden Studie. Hauptverantwortlich für Vergriffenheiten auf Zivilisten sind für ihn zwei Faktoren: Zum einen ist es die reine Verzweiflung, wenn ein erhoffter schneller Sieg ausbleibt und die eigenen Verluste rapide ansteigen. Zum anderen ist es die territoriale Eroberung, bei der die einheimische Bevölkerung dem Eroberer im Wege steht. Sowohl demokratisch als auch autoritär gelenkte Staaten gehen im Kriegsfall gegen die gegnerische Zivilbevölkerung vor, wenn sie die eigenen Verluste begrenzen und ein rascheres Kriegsende erreichen wollen. Ist die Verzweiflung aufgrund sehr hoher Verluste und enormer Kosten besonders groß, neigen Demokratien verstärkt dazu, die Zivilisten der Kriegsgegner zu attackieren. Moralische und rechtliche Normen, die sie in Friedenszeiten hochhalten, spielen dann keine Rolle mehr. Geht es dagegen um territoriale Eroberungen, werden Zivilisten unmittelbar zu Angriffszielen. Eine dauerhafte Annexion des eroberten Gebietes ist wesentlich einfacher zu bewerkstelligen, wenn die dort ansässige Zivilbevölkerung vertrieben wird. Sie ist dann weder in der Lage, Widerstand gegen das fremde Besatzungsregime zu leisten, noch dient sie als Vorwand für eine eventuelle Rückeroberung. Dies gilt für zwischenstaatliche Kriege und für Bürgerkriege, in denen divergierende ethnische Gruppen um die Vorherrschaft in von ihnen beanspruchten Gebieten kämpfen. Der Autor belegt seine Ausführungen mit Hilfe von statistischen Analysen und anhand ausgewählter Fallbeispiele, zu denen die britische Seeblockade während des Ersten Weltkrieges und die strategische Bomberoffensive der Westalliierten während des Zweiten Weltkrieges gehören. Seine realistische Argumentation macht hierbei wenig Hoffnung, dass Zivilisten in zukünftigen Kriegen verschont bleiben werden. Nur wenn die militärische Überlegenheit eines Staates derart gewaltig ist, dass ein entscheidender Sieg in kurzer Zeit möglich ist, bleiben Zivilisten von den Kampfhandlungen weitgehend unberührt. In den letzten 20 Jahren war dies dank der militärischen Potenz der Vereinigten Staaten in vielen Fällen erreichbar. Relativiert sich die militärische Stärke der USA in den nächsten Jahren, was durch deren ökonomischen Abstieg oder den Aufstieg von anderen Mächten verursacht werden kann, wird es für Zivilisten bei kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen wieder deutlich gefährlicher. Alexander Downes hat mit seinem Buch einen wesentlichen Beitrag zum Verständnis dieser Problematik geleistet. Jürgen Rupp

Kurzbeschreibung Accidental harm to civilians in warfare often becomes an occasion for public outrage, from citizens of both the victimized and the victimizing nation. In this vitally important book on a topic of acute concern for anyone interested in military strategy, international security, or human rights, Alexander B. Downes reminds readers that democratic and authoritarian governments alike will sometimes deliberately kill large numbers of civilians as a matter of military strategy. What leads governments to make such a choice? Downes examines several historical cases: British counterinsurgency tactics during the Boer War, the starvation blockade used by the Allies against Germany in World War I, Axis and Allied bombing campaigns in World War II, and ethnic cleansing in the Palestine War. He concludes that governments decide to target civilian populations for two main reasons: desperation to reduce their own military casualties or avert defeat, or a desire to seize and annex enemy territory. When a state's military fortunes take a turn for the worse, he finds, civilians are more likely to be declared legitimate targets to coerce the enemy state to give up. When territorial conquest and annexation are the aims of warfare, the population of the disputed land is viewed as a threat and the aggressor state may target those civilians to remove them. Democracies historically have proven especially likely to target civilians in desperate circumstances. In *Targeting Civilians in War*, Downes explores several major recent conflicts, including the 1991 Persian Gulf War and the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Civilian casualties occurred in each campaign, but they were not the aim of military action. In these cases, Downes maintains, the achievement of quick and decisive victories against overmatched foes allowed democracies to win without abandoning their normative beliefs by intentionally targeting civilians. Whether such "restraint" can be guaranteed in future conflicts against more powerful adversaries is, however, uncertain. During times of war, democratic societies suffer tension between norms of humane conduct and pressures to win at the lowest possible costs. The painful lesson of *Targeting Civilians in War* is that when these two concerns clash, the latter usually prevails. Pressestimmen "This is a magnificent work and towering achievement. With both innovative historical studies and comprehensive statistical analysis, Downes powerfully demonstrates an original and disturbing thesis--that democracies are just as likely as autocracies to target civilians in war, and even more so when they fear that they will lose. All scholars of international security and military history should read this book, and we would all benefit if policy advisors did also."--James Kurth, Claude Smith Professor of Political Science, Swarthmore College "This is a powerful and disturbing study of the dark side of democracy. 'Democratic Peace Theory' has shown that democracies rarely fight each other. Alexander B. Downes demonstrates, however, that when democracies do go to war, they often fight with their gloves off, ignoring principles of noncombatant immunity."--Scott D. Sagan, Stanford University "In twenty years, people wanting to understand the critically important subject of civilian victimization will turn to this book. Alexander B. Downes argues that the decision to victimize civilians depends primarily on the strategic incentives to do so, regardless of whether the countries involved are democratic. Downes also finds that factors relating to 'identity'--whether the enemy is a different race or culture--are also insignificant. *Targeting Civilians in War* will become a classic in the field of

security studies."--Daryl G. Press, Dartmouth College, author of *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats*

Kurzbeschreibung

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