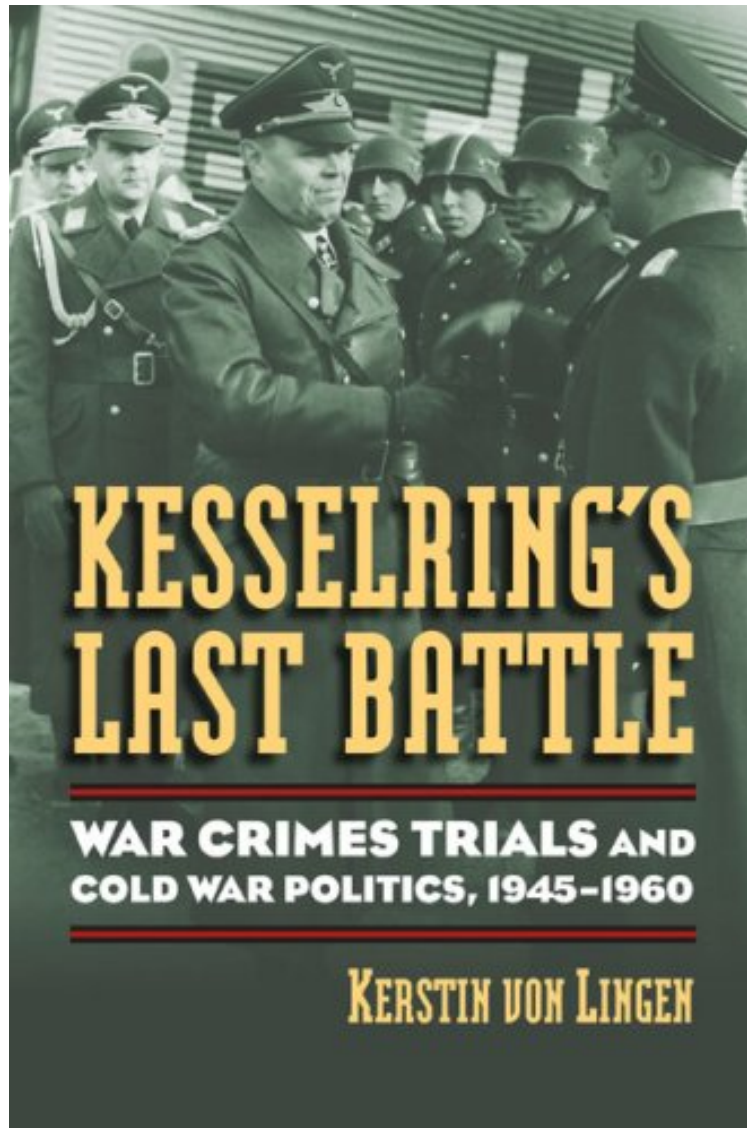


(Mobile book) Kesselring's Last Battle: War Crimes Trials and Cold War Politics, 1945-1960 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

Kesselring's Last Battle: War Crimes Trials and Cold War Politics, 1945-1960 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

Kerstin von Lingen

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Kerstin von Lingen : Kesselring's Last Battle: War Crimes Trials and Cold War Politics, 1945-1960 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kesselring's Last Battle: War Crimes Trials and Cold War Politics, 1945-1960 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover)):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Another great selection from the Modern War Studies at Univ of ...By Larry GandyI read this book several years ago and did not realize it was unrated until now. It is several stories in one book: part Kesselring biography, part history of the early German general officer drive to make their version of history the one people would take into the future, part cold war politics, et al. Von Lingen takes you on a well-crafted ride that makes you want to follow up various threads through the notes and bibliography. Another great selection from the Modern War Studies at Univ of Kansas Press.

In 1947 German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring was tried and convicted of war crimes committed during World War II. He was held responsible for his troops having executed nearly 9,000 Italian citizenswomen, children, elderly menin retaliation for partisan attacks. His conviction, however, created a real dilemma for the United States and western Europe. While some sought the harshest punishments available for anyone who had participated in the war crimes of the Nazi regime, others believed that the repatriation of alleged war criminals would help secure the allegiance of a rearmed West Germany in the dangerous new Cold War against the Soviet Union.Kerstin von Lingen's close analysis of the Kesselring case reveals for the first time how a network of veterans, lawyers, and German sympathizers in Britain and America achieved the commutation of Kesselring's death sentence and his eventual releasereinforcing German popular conceptions that he had been innocent all along and that the Wehrmacht had fought a "clean war" in Italy. Synthesizing the work of contemporary German and Italian historians with her own exhaustive archival research, she shows that Kesselring bore much greater guilt for civilian deaths than had been proven in courtand that the war on the southern front had been far from clean.Von Lingen weaves together strands of the story as diverse as Winston Churchill's ability to mobilize support among British elites, Basil Liddell Hart's need to be recognized as an important military thinker, and the Cold War fears of the "Senators' Circle" in the United States. Through this rich narrative, she shows how international politics shaped the trial's proceedings and outcomeas well as the memory and meaning of the war for German citizensand sheds new light on the complex interplay between the combatants' efforts to "master the past" and the threatening state of international relations in the early Cold War.In analyzing the efforts to clear Kesselring's name, von Lingen shows that the case was about much more than the fate of one convicted individual; it also underscored the pressure to wrap up the war crimes issueand German guiltin order to get on with the business of bringing a rearmed Germany into the Western alliance. Kesselring's Last Battle sheds new light on the "politics of memory" by unraveling a twisted thread in postwar history as it shows how historical truth is sometimes sacrificed on the altar of expediency.

Historians have analyzed the postwar trials of German officers before, but none have done it so brilliantly. While truth may be the first casualty in war, Von Lingen shows that it often suffers in peacetime as well. A fascinating and essential book.Robert M. Citino, author of *Death of the Wehrmacht: The German Campaigns of 1942* A superb study that is balanced, extremely thorough, and highly readable. What makes this book especially timely is its discussion of war crimes, command responsibility, and the process of conducting such trials.James S. Corum, author of *Wolfram von Richthofen: Master of the German Air War* An important contribution.Richard Breitman, editor of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*From the Back Cover"Historians have analyzed the postwar trials of German officers before, but none have done it so brilliantly. While truth may be the first casualty in war, Von Lingen shows that it often suffers in peacetime as well. A fascinating and essential book."--Robert M. Citino, author of *Death of the Wehrmacht: The German Campaigns of 1942* "A superb study that is balanced, extremely thorough, and highly readable. What makes this book especially timely is its discussion of war crimes, command responsibility, and the process of conducting such trials."--James S. Corum, author of *Wolfram von Richthofen: Master of the German Air War* "An important contribution."--Richard Breitman, editor of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*About the AuthorKerstin von Lingen teaches at Eberhard-Karls University, Tübingen, and Rupprecht-Karls University, Heidelberg.