

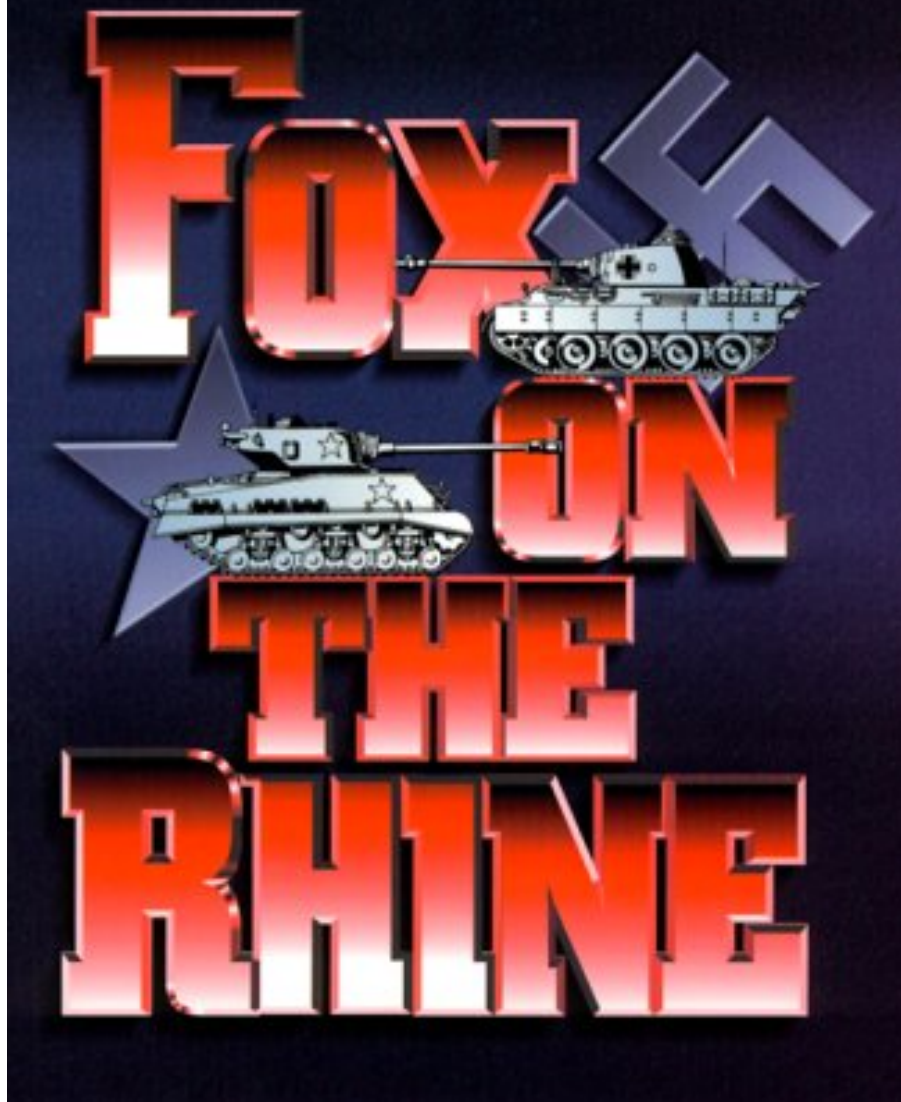
FOX ON THE RHINE BY DOUGLAS NILES, MICHAEL DOBSON



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From Publishers Weekly

The second half of WWII takes a decidedly different path in this speculative historical novel, which picks up the action in 1944 with Nazi Germany on the verge of defeat. The first historical twist is the assassination of Hitler by a group of his own generals, but when G?ring is also killed and the generals' attempt to assume power fails, Himmler takes the reins and quickly negotiates a peace treaty with the Russians. The second twist is the miraculous recovery of Rommel, who survives a near-fatal wound in North Africa and returns to the European theater to set the Allies back on their heels. With the war reduced to a single front, the Nazis have time to rebuild their shattered air force, giving Rommel the advantage he needs to press forward and capture critical Allied oil reserves. As the Desert Fox races to initiate a second blitzkrieg, American forces move to head him off before he can get to Antwerp, setting up a climactic final battle. The first-time authors have drawn on their background in war games to bring the tactical details to life (Niles designed the video game for Tom Clancy's Red Storm Rising), but as a novel this book has several notable problems. Characters are introduced in rapid succession, with points of view ranging from foot soldiers to fighter pilots to generals, but many of the perspectives seem only marginally necessary. Moreover, the fast-paced action slows considerably once Himmler takes over and Rommel recovers, and for all the political machinations, the outcome of the war remains somewhat conservatively imagined. These issues aside, Niles and Dobson have crafted a vividly realistic study of a memorable time. Agent, Elizabeth Pomada. (June)

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Review

"The book is a triumph!"--Walter Boyne, bestselling coauthor of The Wild Blue

About the Author

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The Führer is dead ... but the war still goes on!

Backed by a cadre of SS officers, Himmler seizes control of the Reich and instigates a plan to change the course of the war.

First, an armistice with Russia.

Second, the mass production of jet fighters.

And third, the appointment of legendary "Desert Fox" Erwin Rommel to the European theater, leading to a very different Battle of the Bulge where he must confront "Blood n Guts" George Patton in a campaign that will determine the fate of Europe . . . and possibly the entire free world.

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Good Alternate History

By Bookworm Plus

When reading *Fox on the Rhine* I found myself comparing it to Harry Turtledove's World War I/II series. I recently read and reviewed Turtledove's latest, *Drive to the East*, so it was fresh in my mind. *Fox on the Rhine* provides the level of detail that Turtledove's series lacks. From details of individual tactical engagements to analyses of the strategic alignments, the author gives the reader a full view of the situation. The book opens when one man's tiny change from actual history results in a successful July 20, 1944 assassination of Hitler. Whether the resulting scenarios are really plausible is beside the point because the authors made them seem credible. The authors do produce an interesting alternate history tale while letting the reader in on more than broad generalizations of what is going on at the front. A few more maps would have been helpful though.

Although *Fox on the Rhine* portrays the Germans on the move with a second chance, they are not glorified. The authors go a bit far in deifying Rommel, but most of the German leaders and the SS are nasty and evil as ever. A surprising feature of the book is the portrayal of the American army sweeping across France and then in counterattack mode. The Americans have practically equal billing in this book and are definitely the good guys. Readers considering *Fox on the Rhine* do not have to be concerned they are buying a Neo Nazi or at least sympathetic tome.

So far, I am describing a book that will appeal to both Alternate and Military history buffs. However, there are also key aspects in a book such as character development and plot lines. In this area, *Fox on the Rhine* is mediocre at best and Turtledoves comes out way ahead. The characters are ciphers attached to historical stereotypes. In fact, a significant part of the book is devoted to worthless letters from an American bomber gunner to his mother. Letters from a tanker would have been much more interesting and fitting. The descriptions of the military campaigns in *Fox on the Rhine* are informative and interesting, but without characters to really care about, it falls flat. For the right audience, *Fox on the Rhine* is well worth the time, but when considering everything that comprises a good book, it is little more than ordinary.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

A First Rate Work of Alternate History!

By Cody Carlson

'*Fox on the Rhine*,' by Douglas Niles and Micheal Dobson, is a wonderful story of just how differently World War Two could have turned out if the Army Officers plot had succeeded in killing Adolf Hitler. In 'Fox' Hitler is killed at Rastenberg on July 20th, 1944 and Germany is soon thrown into a sea of chaos. Heinrich Himmler and his SS soon move to gain the loyalty of the army and seek a seperate peace with the Soviets. Once that's accomplished, Himmler appoints Erwin Rommel, 'the Desert Fox,' to command an alternate

version of the 'Battle of the Bulge.' While at times Dobson and Niles spend a little too much time showing off the fruits of their research, which is impressive, they do manage to tell a riveting story, and while some aspects of 'Fox' do stretch the reader's believability, the story is riveting and builds to an explosive climax. But perhaps the most fun is the simple question that the authors ask and attempt to answer: What would have happened had Erwin Rommel commanded the Ardennes Offensive? A great ride that ranks among the best works of alternate history.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Hitler is dead but the Third Reich fights on!

By Michael Valdivielso

July 20, 1944: Hitler is killed by a bomb and a military coup is attempted. Little did the German military officers know that Himmler would beat them to finishing line, taking control of the Reich and bringing about changes that might save it.

I found the plot realistic, along with many of the characters (with all their merits and flaws), and thought the authors did very well. I wish more writers were as good. Rommel, Himmler and Patton all seem to come alive. The alternate history was done so well it does seem like a alternate reality.

One of the reviewers complained that the book felt like a wargame, where the two authors just rolled dice and such, and frankly if this is true, I also wish more authors played military role playing games. Let the 'dice' keep it fair!

I plan to get 'Fox on the Front'.

See all 61 customer reviews...

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