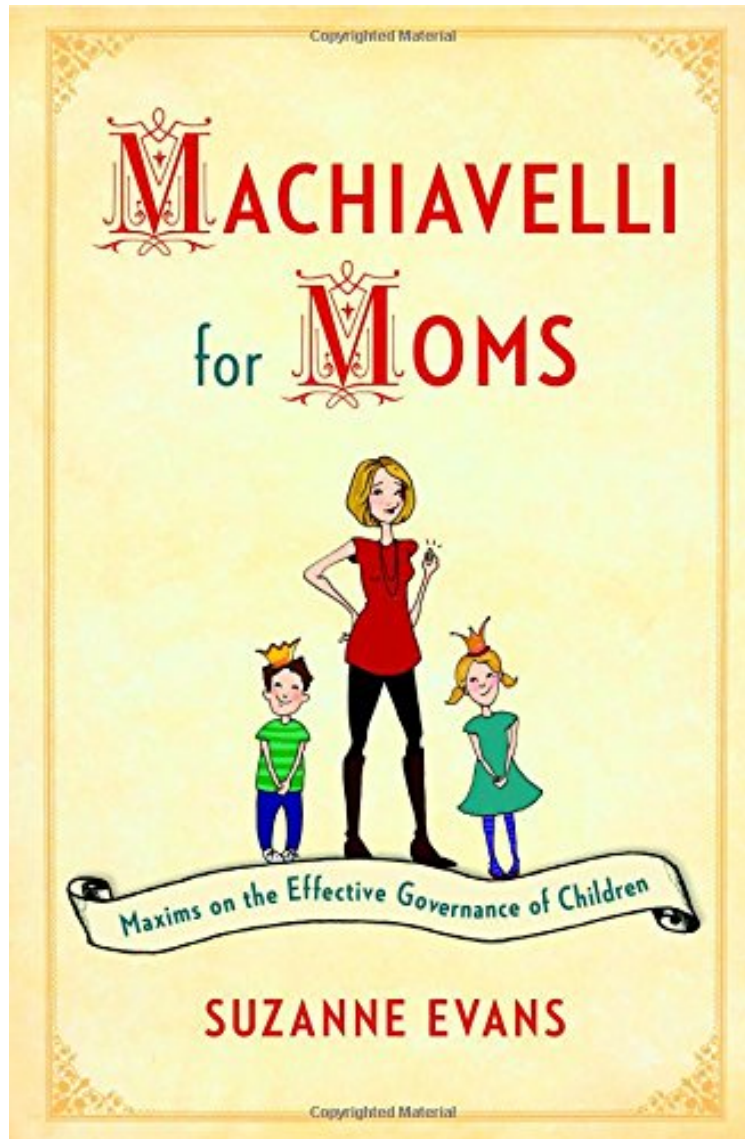


[Download ebook] Machiavelli for Moms: Maxims on the Effective Governance of Children*

Machiavelli for Moms: Maxims on the Effective Governance of Children*

Suzanne Evans

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Suzanne Evans : Machiavelli for Moms: Maxims on the Effective Governance of Children* before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Machiavelli for Moms: Maxims on the Effective Governance of Children*:

23 of 25 people found the following review helpful. Common sense advice, nothing new, in the latest addition to

parenting books

By Kcorn

In the wake of *Bringing Up B  b  : One American Mother Discovers the Wisdom of French Parenting* and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* comes this latest book designed to help parents bring more order into the often chaotic process of raising children. Or, as author Suzanne Evans puts it, "it's about how a totally frazzled and stressed-out mom applied the strategies of warfare and statecraft prescribed in *The Prince* to raise a happy, well-mannered family." In the process, she notes that she became a better mother with a new perspective on child guidance. The road to Machiavelli was born of desperation. Faced with raising four children, frequently solo when her husband was away from home on business trips, Evans felt overwhelmed by the kids. She couldn't control their behavior. That's when she happened upon *The Prince* and starting reading it. In the process, she discovered a new clarity and perspective. She wondered if Machiavelli had gotten "a bad rap" from some scholars. Perhaps some of his political wisdom could actually be applied to parenting. So she decided to give it a shot. But...Machiavelli and motherhood? I was definitely skeptical. Even so, I decided to read the book, mainly because I'm interested in differing styles of parenting. Also, I've read the two books noted above. So I added Machiavelli for Moms to my list and pre-ordered it. Unfortunately, reading the book was a disappointing experience - or maybe it simply lived up to my skeptical forebodings. It was not only a let-down but filled with the kind of common sense advice I'd read in numerous other books: rules and discipline shape a child's actions for the better. Children need clear boundaries. Don't spend too much money on indulging your child's wishes. Praise good behavior. Sound new? It certainly didn't to me. The most interesting thing in the book for me was a recipe for Machiavelli Macaroni and Cheese (yes, really). In fairness, near the end of the book Evans writes that her Machiavellian approach might not be enlightening to all parents. She adds that daily decisions should ultimately be determined by what parents find right for their lives - and their children since there is no "one ideal way, no one ultimate set of rules" for raising children. But this is after outlining her approach and maxims in detail. The book had a few moments which captured my attention - but far too few of them. Snippets of history were mixed with the parenting suggestions. Assuming the history is correct, I learned more about Machiavelli (although applying his political writings to parenting seemed quite a stretch to me). Evans admits she did find Machiavelli lacking when she faced certain challenges but this admission occurred too far down the line for me. I did like the extensive bibliography included for readers who may want to know more about Machiavelli. And there are plenty of quotes and examples of competing opinions from scholars who've studied Machiavelli's life and writings extensively. These do provide some food for thought. I was also moved when Evans wrote about the despair, grief, and denial she felt after being told her newborn daughter had Down syndrome. The struggles in raising her daughter are portrayed in detail. In one especially wrenching account, she writes of a visit from two angry police officers after her daughter was found wandering the neighborhood (after a gate is left accidentally unlocked). Left shaken and guilty, she questions her ability to parent her daughter. Such honesty is unfortunately sandwiched into a book which offers an unconvincing plan designed to help parents "take back your power...and take back your kingdom." But - chapter after chapter - I thought, "So what's new about this advice?" I rarely found anything particularly enlightening. An example: the third chapter focuses on the dangers of being overly generous with kids and the importance of setting limits. As an example, Evans recalls a visit to Target. Setting limits translated into giving each of her children a ten dollar bill and telling them that's all they were allowed to spend that day. Maybe I'm overly strict or unenlightened but when my kids were little we actually made it through Target without my feeling the necessity to give them ANY money to spend. As a parent, I understand the chaos, stress and feelings of being overwhelmed that accompany the worst days - as well as (hopefully) the pride and fulfillment of the good ones. But I just couldn't relate to a Machiavellian approach to raising children. Ultimately, it all just seemed like the same old information with a new title and package.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars

By dave petrigh

Truly enjoyed this honest take on motherhood and found it to be quite comical.

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great Book

By John J. Moohr

I enjoyed the book. I recommended it to both my children for my grandchildren. The book is well written with touches of humor.

Running a kingdom is a lot like running a household. Or so says Suzanne Evans, who shares the story of her crazy yet brilliant year-long experiment: to "rule" one disobedient family using Machiavelli's masterwork *The Prince*. A mother of four, Suzanne Evans is fed up with tantrums, misbehavior, and general household chaos. Desperate to get the upper hand, she turns to Machiavelli's famous sixteenth-century political treatise, *The Prince*, and wonders: Can Machiavelli's rules on warfare and statecraft be successfully applied to parenting? Using *The Prince* as a guide, Evans embarks on an unlikely experiment in "power parenting" and quickly learns that Machiavellian maxims can go a long way when running a kingdom—and a household.

- Study the actions of illustrious men: How to lead by example.
- It is dangerous to be overly generous: A good ruler sets limits.
- It is better to be feared than loved: Sometimes a leader has to be a meanie to ensure the security and obedience of the people.

Heralded as a "funny, creative, new parenting guide" (Parade.com), *Machiavelli for Moms* offers one woman's unorthodox approach to modern motherhood—and stands as a manifesto for other moms willing to act on Machiavelli's sometimes shocking but ever practical advice.

"Suzanne Evans humorously adapts the Renaissance political philosopher's sometimes ruthless precepts to running a family." "At her wits' end with her four uncontrollable children, a mom turns for advice to - of all places - the

philosophical wisdom in the 1532 book 'The Prince' by Niccolo Machiavelli. Toward the end of the yearlong 'experiment,' she had to face 'the ultimate Machiavellian question: Is it better to be feared than loved?'"

About the Author: Suzanne Evans is a former divorce lawyer and business/sports reporter who holds a PhD in history from UC Berkeley. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Los Angeles Business Journal, and other national publications. She is also a freelance writer for The History Channel website and the creator of The History Chef, a popular food history blog (LincolnsLunch.blogspot.com). She lives in Newport Beach, California, with her husband and four young children.

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Machiavelli for Moms I The Prince and the Promise: Or, What Machiavelli Can Do for You

What if I told you that your children—yes, your children, the ones currently jumping on their beds, slamming doors, tossing fistfuls of cereal on the floor, and bickering, whining, shrieking, fighting, or otherwise trying to kill each other—could be well behaved? Not just “well behaved,” but really and truly obedient and good. And not only that—they would enjoy being good. And you would enjoy your time with them, instead of feeling chronically exhausted and enslaved by the impossibly wide array of demands that press in upon you each day as a parent. You know what I’m talking about: those relentless demands on your time, your energy, your finances, your sleep, and your patience, demands on your career, your figure, your friendships, and other important relationships. What if I told you that there was a new approach, or master plan, that wouldn’t just show you how to empower yourself as a parent, but how to keep that power and use it to help your kids:

- feel more confident and in control of their life . . . and help you feel happier and more relaxed;
- consistently obey your commands . . . without you having to nag;
- appreciate the value of money and hard work . . . and help you save lots of cash;
- master bad habits like back talk and procrastination . . . and help you take action;
- eagerly complete their homework . . . without your having to ask;
- battle boredom with creativity and imagination . . . without your having to entertain them;
- sleep soundly through the night . . . while you regain your sanity, sex drive, and peace of mind.

Most amazingly, what if I promised you that if you use this plan, you will find your own thoughts and feelings about parenting begin to change.

- You will feel more confident, powerful, proactive, and competent.
- You will get more out of your kids with less fight.
- You will stop daydreaming about vacationing alone in Mexico, get your healthy glow back, and might actually put off getting your tubes tied just yet.

Whether you’re a stay-at-home-mom (or dad) or a highly driven career woman, stuck in a rut or searching for a new perspective, this plan will inspire you to take back your power . . . and take back your kingdom. I thought it was a fairy tale, too. Until I tried the concepts outlined here, which I stumbled across more or less by accident in a five-hundred-year-old tome. I discovered these ideas in a moment of crisis. On the surface, it might have looked like I had everything a mom could want. My kids were healthy. My husband was hardworking, loving, and fun. We lived in a nice home in a neighborhood that I loved. I even had the most coveted and highly prized parental commodity of all: a reliable babysitter. But . . . no one (except my babysitter) was behaving—not even my cat, who had suddenly developed a strong aversion to kitty litter. My house wasn’t just a disaster; it was a battle zone, so much so that if city commissioners had dropped by for a surprise visit they would’ve had to clean it before they condemned it. And as much as I really do cherish and love my children, I was overwhelmed, exhausted, and out of shape, and I had worn the same tattered old expandable-waist post-pregnancy sweatpants every day since my last set of contractions kicked in. So it was at a very low point in my life that I stumbled across a copy of Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. And reading it literally changed my life. Sounds strange, right? But his advice gave me the clarity to see my relationship with my kids in a dynamic new light. Instead of abdicating my power as a parent, I reclaimed it. Instead of struggling each day just to survive, I took command of my life. Instead of begging my kids to be courteous, polite, respectful, and kind; quickly fall into line; and stop drawing on our walls with my Pretty Please MAC lipstick, I insisted on it. And as I continued reading, I felt myself undergo a transformation from a totally beleaguered and defeated modern-day mom to a more peaceful, calm, and enlightened one. It didn’t happen overnight. And it didn’t happen without some serious bumps along the way (as you’ll see). I ended up taking a lot of Machiavelli’s advice to heart, leaving a little bit on the table, and interpreting other parts rather broadly. But while I started this experiment in a somewhat tentative and haphazard way, I really did find kernels of truth in *The Prince* that helped me to be a better parent. I hope you will, too. But instead of asking you to read Machiavelli’s iconic book yourself (though I totally recommend it—seriously, it’s a great read), I will do you one better: I will show you how to use his rules to raise a happier, better-behaved family. Really. I wouldn’t kid you about something as serious as this. And because this approach worked well for me, I encourage you to try to it, too. But if you do, remember this piece of advice: don’t be afraid of your power as a parent. Embrace it—then use it wisely, consistently, and, above all, lovingly. Good luck!