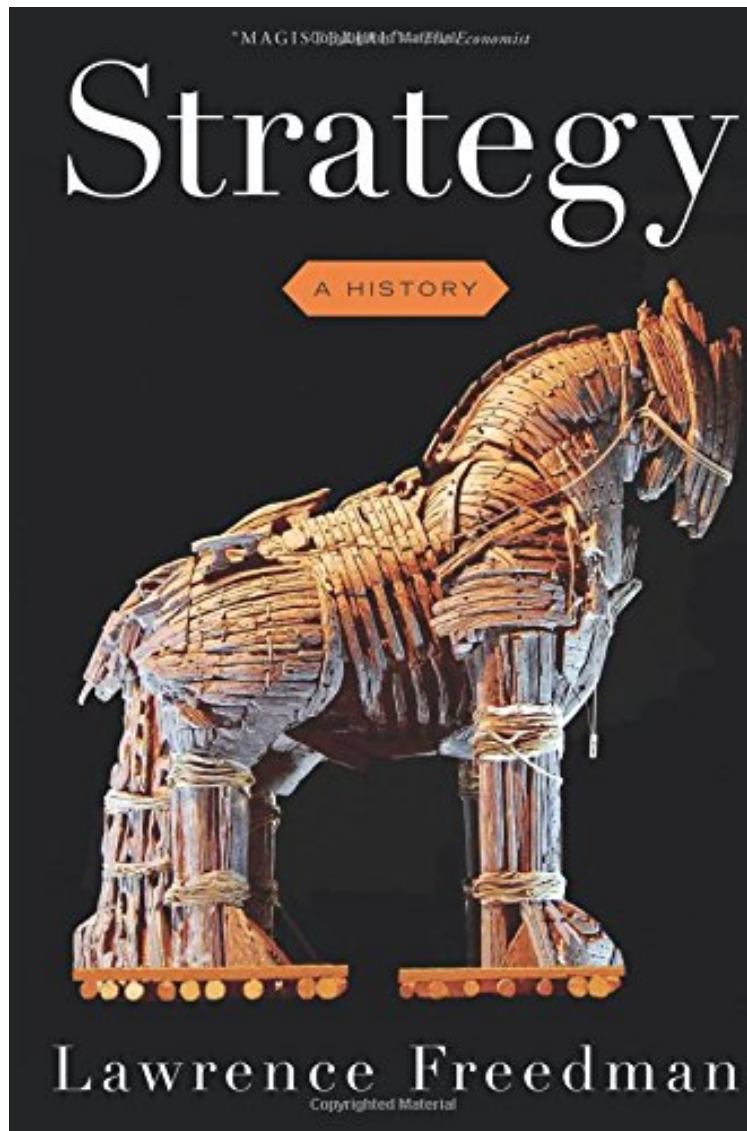


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## Strategy: A History

Lawrence Freedman

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#48925 in Books Freedman Lawrence 2015-09-01 2015-09-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 6.10 x 2.20 x 9.20l, .0 #File Name: 0190229233768 pages Strategy A History | File size: 47.Mb

**Lawrence Freedman : Strategy: A History** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Strategy: A History:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. For the uninitiated four star, for the knowledge less so By Yoda This is a review of the CD audiobook version of this work Any review of this book would have to start out by stating that this book is really of value to those with a very limited knowledge of strategy (four star value for those). For those with a more than novice level of knowledge of the topic, gained through undergraduate study in the fields of political

science, international relations, economics, and business the book would not be of great value (two or three stars). The book is basically an introductory survey of strategy in these fields. Considering the topics that it does cover, however, it is no surprise that it is very, very long. Due to its length it does quite a good job at providing the novice a decent survey of the topic. The author, Lawrence Freedman, is a Professor in the field of international relations and this is where the book is at its strongest. In fields outside of this, however, the book is weaker. The author makes a few minor mistakes. For example, in the field of business, Dr. Freedman makes the statement that Japanese companies made use of just in time inventory practices to reduce carrying costs associated with holding inventory. While this has been the reason it was used in the US (and is taught with this in mind in US business schools), in Japan the reason was that limited inventory stocks forced production to halt and thus enabled any bugs in the production process to be quickly (though not very cost effectively) to be found. This was a major factor contributing to the high quality manufacturing processes in many Japanese auto manufacturers as well as in other manufacturing industries in Japan. IN short, a very good book for those without a background in the subject but not of great value to those with such a background. One last comment, the audiobook is very well read by a David Sedaris sounding reader. It is never monotone and always interesting.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Stories about Strategy, and Strategy by StoryBy John MorganA fantastic, and broad, look at the many facets of strategy, from military to business, even to starting a social revolution. Being a professor in game theory, I rarely fail to find egregious errors when lay people write on the topic. Freedman, however, makes no major mistakes and offers a very sensible view of what game theory can, and cannot, teach us about strategy. The author is extremely broad, touching on business books, dense academic reading, and classics like Homer. It seems like a lifetime of work to assemble the vast literature he did on the topic. Indeed, the author seems like the ultimate guest to have at a cocktail party, having bon mots about nearly every topic imaginable. While the book is long, the most important contributions occur near the end when Freedman offers his take on "best practices" in developing strategy. Here, he reveals his predilection for literature and story. It's a refreshing take, eschewing platitudes and cheerleading in favor of a more measured approach about the logic of the narrative versus formal logic, about the need to build in improvisation for any sort of resilient strategy, about the need to adapt, and so on. I found myself looking back at earlier parts of the piece and only then noticing the delicate foreshadowing of his views. To see this, reread his long passage on Churchill and note the similarities to Churchill's approach, as the author sees it, and the author's own approach. I like it so much, I intend to assign it to my MBA Game Theory class.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A well rounded account of the application of strategyBy Ernesto HernandezPros: well researched, draws examples from a wide timeframe within western civilisations, looks into a wide range of contexts, well organised and easy to read, not prescriptive. Neutralities/Cons: prolonged at times, no strong conclusion (purely descriptive) nor standing.

Selected as a Financial Times Best Book of 2013In Strategy: A History, Sir Lawrence Freedman, one of the world's leading authorities on war and international politics, captures the vast history of strategic thinking, in a consistently engaging and insightful account of how strategy came to pervade every aspect of our lives. The range of Freedman's narrative is extraordinary, moving from the surprisingly advanced strategy practiced in primate groups, to the opposing strategies of Achilles and Odysseus in The Iliad, the strategic advice of Sun Tzu and Machiavelli, the great military innovations of Baron Henri de Jomini and Carl von Clausewitz, the grounding of revolutionary strategy in class struggles by Marx, the insights into corporate strategy found in Peter Drucker and Alfred Sloan, and the contributions of the leading social scientists working on strategy today. The core issue at the heart of strategy, the author notes, is whether it is possible to manipulate and shape our environment rather than simply become the victim of forces beyond one's control. Time and again, Freedman demonstrates that the inherent unpredictability of this environment-subject to chance events, the efforts of opponents, the missteps of friends-provides strategy with its challenge and its drama. Armies or corporations or nations rarely move from one predictable state of affairs to another, but instead feel their way through a series of states, each one not quite what was anticipated, requiring a reappraisal of the original strategy, including its ultimate objective. Thus the picture of strategy that emerges in this book is one that is fluid and flexible, governed by the starting point, not the end point. A brilliant overview of the most prominent strategic theories in history, from David's use of deception against Goliath, to the modern use of game theory in economics, this masterful volume sums up a lifetime of reflection on strategy.

"[Freedman's] books manage to delight the experts yet are still comprehensible to the general reader, a rare skill in this genre. On this occasion, he has produced what is arguably the best book ever written on strategy." --Washington Post"Magisterial... wide-ranging erudition and densely packed argument." --The Economist"This is a book of startling scope, erudition and, more than anything, wisdom." --Financial Times"Comprehensive, vigorous survey of strategy and its evolution...A lucid text that raises questions while answering others--of great value to planners, whether of an advertising campaign or a military one." --Kirkus s"Sir Lawrence Freedman's 750-page magnum opus, Strategy: A History, is encyclopedic, although not alphabetical, a pleasure to dip into here and there...There are grand strategies set forth in several of the greater works covered by Freedman, but Strategy: A History holds the reader to the strategic

level, a subset of grand strategy." --New Criterion"Strategy: A History is easily the most ambitious book that I have read in many years... With a book of this scope anybody can find something to disagree with but nobody can come away from this book without feeling enriched and intellectually challenged. It will live on as a classic. " --Mark Stout, War on the Rocks"Strategy: A History, is an ambitious and sprawling book by a British military historian who has written widely, and very well, about nuclear and cold war strategy, the Falklands War, and contemporary military affairs, among other subjects... With admirable candor, Freedman tells us that he received the contract for this book in (gulp!) 1994, and that he made a 'number of false starts' with the manuscript. Considering the daunting scope of the subject, this is entirely understandable. Considering the wisdom and analytical brilliance he brings to bear on that subject, it's been well worth the wait." --The Daily Beast"Tour de force... Unusually thoughtful and clearly written, Freedman's dense tome is a serious academic study in political theory, but it has crossover potential and will attract readers interested in military planning, strategic systems, and the nature of power." --Publishers Weekly starred review"A vast exploration of strategy... full of surprises, and marked by unsurpassed erudition. It also is witty and reminds us that he in the world who knows most about strategy may be the one who is the most unimpressed with it."-- National "An erudite, encyclopedic study that will surely become a standard reference in the discipline." --strategy + business"A fascinating review of the tools available to all of us to create agile, informed and interesting decisions." -- Sheridan Jobbins, the World Economic Forum blog"Lawrence Freedman shows here why he is justly renowned as one of the world's leading thinkers about strategy, which he defines as the central art of getting more out of a situation than the starting balance of power would suggest." --Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Harvard University and author of The Future of Power"A marvelous grand tour of the meaning, implications, and consequences of strategic thinking through the ages and in multiple contexts. Freedman is a master of the subject and unsurpassed in his ability to unravel the twists and turns of strategic complexities and paradoxes." --Robert Jervis, Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Politics, Columbia University"This is a wonderful book--a comprehensive yet deeply considered summation of the very nature of strategy by the premier social scientist of the subject. Strategy: A History is lucid and dispassionate, sometimes rueful, often ironic, always informative." --Philip Bobbitt, author of The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History"This substantial, comprehensive, hermeneutic work examines the various dimensions and history of "strategy," which Freedman defines as "the art of creating power"...this very ambitious exploration provides readers with a useful introduction to the field of strategic studies." --CHOICEAbout the AuthorLawrence Freedman has been Professor of War Studies at King's College London since 1982, and Vice-Principal since 2003. Elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1995 and awarded the CBE in 1996, he was appointed Official Historian of the Falklands Campaign in 1997. He was awarded the KCMG in 2003. In June 2009 he was appointed to serve as a member of the official inquiry into Britain and the 2003 Iraq War. Professor Freedman has written extensively on nuclear strategy and the cold war, as well as commentating regularly on contemporary security issues. His most recent book, A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East, won the 2009 Lionel Gelber Prize and Duke of Westminster Medal for Military Literature.