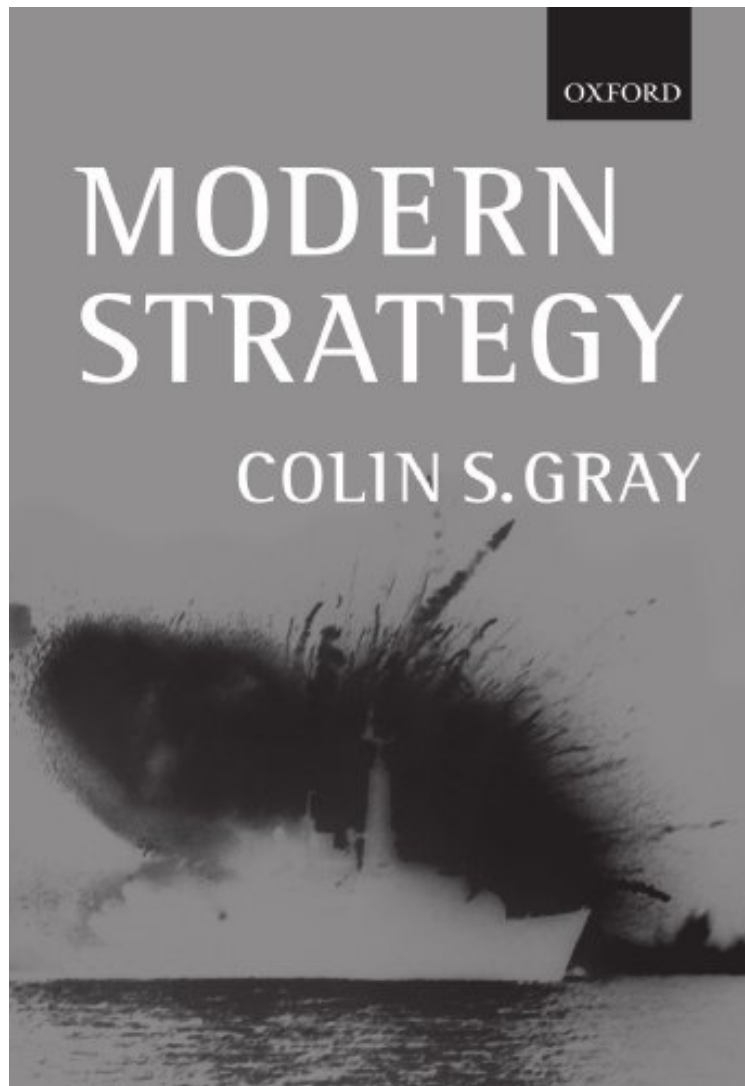


Modern Strategy

Colin S. Gray

*ePub / *DOC / audiobook / ebooks / Download PDF*



#729144 in Books 1999-11-18Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 6.60 x .90 x 9.60l, 1.65 #File Name: 0198782519432 pages | File size: 70.Mb

Colin S. Gray : Modern Strategy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Modern Strategy:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Insightful BridgesBy Terry TuckerThis is an excellent book, one that requires a highlighter and your laptop open to Evernote so you can capture your notes. I have followed Dr Grey's work for several years. You can also access his occasional papers and thought-pieces on the US Army Strategic Studies institute web site.THIS BOOK IS NOT LIGHT READING, do not expect to go through this quickly, if you do you will miss the pearls of his insights that are contained on each page. Also, if you can, be sure to have a 1976 edition of

On War, Ed by Howard and Paret. Ideally, take your time with this book and take time to digest what he compares and contrasts with other historical and contemporary thought leaders and academics on this topic. All I can say is that this book will surely be your desk reference, once you dig into it. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. An Update of Clausewitz Using the 20th Century for Example By Dianne Roberts Colin Gray's "Modern Strategy" is essentially an attempt to update and amend the strategic theory of Clausewitz in response to the developments of the last century and to make his strategic lessons more accessible to modern readers by illuminating its main points in light of 20th century events that those readers are likely to already be familiar with. Gray is unapologetically a Clausewitzian strategist, war must be studied holistically and strategy is the linking of military efforts to deliberate, although not necessarily concrete, political goals. Gray has undertaken a massive endeavor with this work. Clausewitz himself set out to do the impossible by trying to explain the nature of war, something no single person is likely intellectually capable of understanding, in his seminal work "On War" which was actually a set of notes that was never finished before his pre-mature death let alone sufficiently organized into coherent book form. Picking up from this stepping stone, the brightest shining gem to guide us in strategic affairs we have, Gray tries to continue organizing Clausewitz's thoughts and to account for the additional layers of complexity introduced since his time or ignored by the great man, namely seapower, airpower, electromagnetic warfare, cyberwar, nuclear war, the modern resurgence of irregular warriors versus regular combatants, and spacepower. As such, combined with reading "On War" first, this is probably the best book to ground anyone with an interest in strategy and give them the tools to actually learn strategy from analyzing history using the tenets of Clausewitzian thought spelled out in here. It is also good history of the strategic thoughts and their contribution to the whole of strategic theory of many luminaries since Clausewitz, including figures as diverse as Jomini, Mahan, Ludendorff, Corbett, Smuts, Boyd, and Ralph Peters. Gray also makes a consistent and persuasive case that the nature of warfare does not change, only its character. Like the costumes or set pieces changing in different productions of a play, the look and feel may be different but the underlying story is the same. Much of this book represents his fight against modern trends to be allured by the chimerical promises of "new" warfare, i.e. 4th gen or bloodless cyberwar, and the consequential folly of abandoning the lessons of history. If nothing else Gray is extremely widely read and comprehensive, and there is scarcely a sentence in this book that isn't footnoted. He has certainly done his homework, and after reading it you will be armed with a set of references you can read to bring yourself up to speed with practically any topic in the pantheon of modern war. My only criticism of this book is that Gray's writing style is dense and repetitive, which of course is not made easier by the complexity and difficulty of his subject. This book is not light or fun reading! It requires a lot of time and patience to get through it, and it will not deliver enlightenment nor free people from being beholden to ideology. But it will give you the strategic tools to analyze history and strategic options more effectively and efficiently, or at least make your ideological case more elegantly. Recommended for military officers, and especially for defense industry officials and politicians involved in defense. 32 of 36 people found the following review helpful. Fundamental Reading for National Security Dialog By Robert David STEELE Vivas Edit of 23 Feb 08 to add links. This book remains priceless relevant. First published in 1999, this is an original tour d-horizon that is essential to any discussion of the theory and practice of conflict in the 21st Century, to include all those discussions of the alleged Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), the need for "defense transformation", and the changing nature of civil-military relations. I am much impressed by this book and the decades of thinking that have gone into it, and will outline below a few of its many signal contributions to the rather important questions of how one must devise and manage national power in an increasingly complex world. First, the author is quite clear on the point that technology does not a revolution make-nor can technology dominate a national strategy. If anything-and he cites Luttwak, among others, with great regard-an excessive emphasis on technology will be very expensive, susceptible to asymmetric attack, and subversive of other elements of the national strategy that must be managed in harmony. People matter most. Second, and this is the point that hit me hardest, it is clear that security strategy requires a holistic approach and the rather renaissance capability of managing a multiplicity of capabilities-diplomatic, economic, cultural, military, psychological, information-in a balanced manner and under the over-arching umbrella of a strategy. Third, and consistent with the second, "war proper" is not exclusively about force of arms, but rather about achieving the national political objective by imposing one's will on another. Those that would skew their net assessments and force structure capabilities toward "real war" writ in their conventional terms are demeaning Clausewitz rather than honoring him. Fourth, as I contemplate in this and other readings how best to achieve lasting peace and prosperity, I see implicit in all that the author puts forward, but especially in a quote from Donald Kegan, the raw fact that it is not enough for America to have a preponderance of the traditional military and economic power in the world-we must also accept the burden and responsibility of preserving the peace and responding to the complex emergencies around the globe that must inevitably undermine our stability and prosperity at home. Fifth, it is noteworthy that of all the dimensions of strategy that are brought forward, one-time-is unique for being unimprovable. Use it or lose it. Time is a strategic dimension too little understood and consequently too little valued by Americans in particular and the Western alliance in general. Sixth, it merits comment that the author, perhaps the greatest authority on Clausewitz in this era, clarifies the fact that the "trinity" is less about people, government, and an army, than about primordial violence, hatred, and enmity (the people); chance and

probability on the battlefield, most akin to a game of cards (the army); and instrumental rationality (the government)- and that these are not fixed isolated elements, but interpenetrate one another and interact in changing ways over time and space. Seventh, the author devotes an entire chapter to "Strategic Culture as Context" and this is most helpful, particularly in so far as it brings forward the weakness of the American strategic culture, notably a pre-disposition to isolationism and to technical solutions in the abstract. Perhaps more importantly, a good strategic culture with inferior weapons can defeat a weak strategic culture with an abundance of technology and economic power. Eighth, and finally, the author courageously takes on the issue of small wars and other savage violence, seeking to demonstrate that grand strategy applies equally well to the savage criminal and warlord parasites that Ralph Peters has noted are not susceptible to our traditional legal and military conventions. While he does not succeed (and notes in passing that Clausewitz's own largest weakness was a failure to catalogue the enemy and the dialog with the enemy as a major factor in strategic success and failure), the coverage is acceptable in making three key points: 1) small wars and sub-national conflicts are generally not resolved decisively at the irregular level-conventional forces are required at some point; 2) special operations forces have a role to play but lack a strategic context (that is to say, current political and military leaders have no appreciation for the strategic value of special operations forces); and 3) small wars and non-traditional threats-asymmetrical threats-must be taken seriously and co-equally with symmetrical regular conflicts. At the end of the day, this erudite scholar finds common cause with gutter warrior Ralph Peters and gang-warfare iconoclast Martin Van Creveld by concluding his book with a quote from Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "In the Computer Age we will live by the law of the Stone Age: the man with the bigger club is right. But we pretend this isn't so. We don't notice or even suspect it-why surely our morality progresses together with our civilization." See also (and also my lists): *The Search for Security: A U.S. Grand Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, *Beyond Declaring Victory and Coming Home: The Challenges of Peace and Stability Operations*, *Security Studies for the 21st Century*, *War, Peace, and Victory Strategy and Statecraft for The Next Century*, *Strategy: Process, Content, Context: An International Perspective*, *War and Peace and War: The Life Cycles of Imperial Nations*, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace, Revised and Enlarged Edition*, *Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare (International Series on Materials Science and Technology)*, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, *The Systems View of the World: A Holistic Vision for Our Time (Advances in Systems Theory, Complexity, and the Human Sciences)*

Modern Strategy explains the permanent nature, but ever changing character, of strategy in light of the whole strategic experience of the twentieth century. The book is a major contribution to the general theory of strategy; it makes sense of the strategic history of the twentieth century, and provides understanding of what that strategic history implies for the century to come. The book offers a uniquely comprehensive analysis of the different facets of modern strategy. The classic writings of Carl von Clausewitz are reconsidered for their continuing relevance, while possible successors are appraised. In addition to arguing that Clausewitz figured out what strategy was, and how it worked, the book probes deeply into strategy's political, ethical, and cultural dimension. The book explains how strategic behaviour in the twentieth century has expanded from the two-dimensional world of the land and the surface of the sea, to include the ocean depths, the air, space, and most recently the 'cyberspace' environments. It also offers details analyses both of nuclear matters and of the realm of irregular violence. This is the first comprehensive account of all aspects of modern strategy since the Cold War ended and will be essential reading for all students of modern strategy and security studies.

There is much that is interesting and good in this book - Richard Hatfield - Policy Director, Ministry of Defence. R U S I Journal - June 2000 An excellent and necessary textbook for the international relations student. THES, February 2000 The Book is a dazzling accomplishment. The Washington Times March 2000 Modern Strategy is a major contribution to our understanding of strategic theory and practice. The Washington Times, March 2000 Over the years, no writer has addressed the topic of strategy more comprehensively or systematically than Colin Gray. The Washington Times, March 2000 Modern Strategy is his finest effort to date. The Washington Times, March 2000 'Gray has been writing about, professing, or "practicing" strategy for thirty years, and whether or not you agree with him, he is among the few scholars of strategy who should never be ignored.' Mark T. Clark Director, National Security Studies, California State University. Naval War College, Spring 2000 '...his thesis is worth understanding; modern strategy (indeed all) strategy is still a subject worth studying. Anyone interested in learning more about it will benefit from his work.' Mark T. Clark Director, National Security. Naval War College, Spring 2000 "The material is so rich in allusion and reference...the approach so novel, the insights often so extraordinary...there are many "brilliant pebbles" of wisdom and insight" Naval, April 2001 Covers so much ground...masterfully sets out the relationship between politics, ethics and strategy...Gray's critique is considered and he always draws what is best from the theories he rejects....a dazzlingly brilliant guide to a wide range of issues...Gray writes from the perspective of an insider in the western military establishment, but even its critics will be informed, entertained and provoked by this book." Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol 76, October 2000 About the Author Colin Gray is Professor of International Politics and Director of the Centre for Security Studies at the University of Hull. He is the author of numerous books on strategy, including *The Navy in the Post-Cold War World: The Uses and Value of Strategic Sea* (1994),

Explorations in Strategy (2nd edn, 1998), and The Second Nuclear Age (forthcoming 1999).