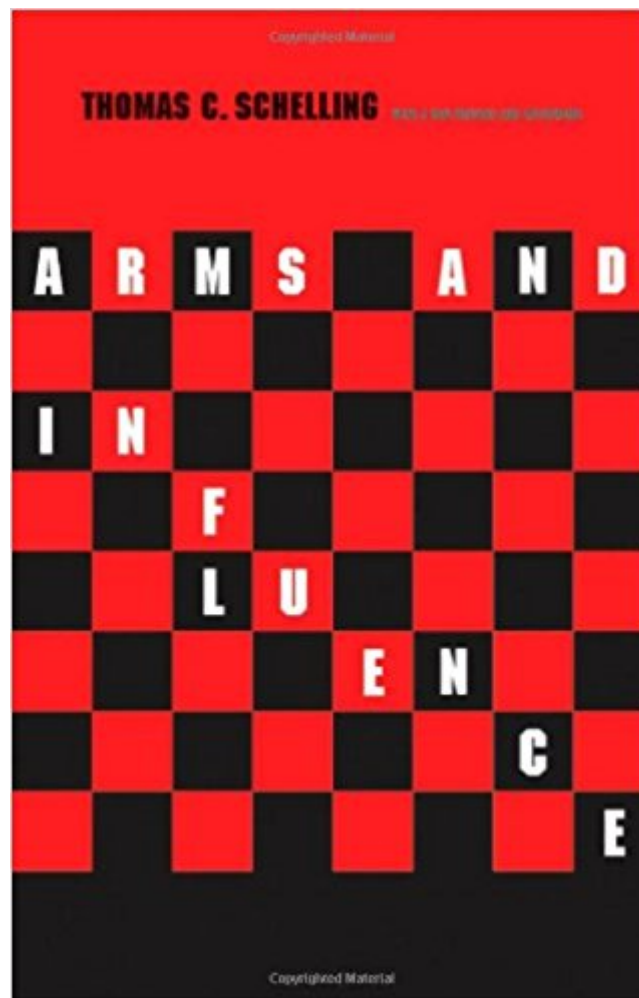




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Arms And Influence: With A New Preface And Afterword (The Henry L. Stimson Lectures Series)



Synopsis

Traditionally, Americans have viewed war as an alternative to diplomacy, and military strategy as the science of victory. Today, however, in our world of nuclear weapons, military power is not so much exercised as threatened. It is, Mr. Schelling says, bargaining power, and the exploitation of this power, for good or evil, to preserve peace or to threaten war, is diplomacy "the diplomacy of violence." The author concentrates in this book on the way in which military capabilities "real or imagined" are used, skillfully or clumsily, as bargaining power. He sees the steps taken by the U.S. during the Berlin and Cuban crises as not merely preparations for engagement, but as signals to an enemy, with reports from the adversary's own military intelligence as our most important diplomatic communications. Even the bombing of North Vietnam, Mr. Schelling points out, is as much coercive as tactical, aimed at decisions as much as bridges. He carries forward the analysis so brilliantly begun in his earlier *The Strategy of Conflict* (1960) and *Strategy and Arms Control* (with Morton Halperin, 1961), and makes a significant contribution to the growing literature on modern war and diplomacy. Stimson Lectures. Mr. Schelling is professor of economics at Harvard and acting director of Harvard's Center for International Affairs. "An exemplary text on the interplay of national purpose and military force." "Book Week. "A grim but carefully reasoned and coldly analytical book. . . . One of the most frightening previews which this reviewer has ever seen of the roads that lie just ahead in warfare." "Los Angeles Times. "A brilliant and hardheaded book. It will frighten those who prefer not to dwell on the unthinkable and infuriate those who have taken refuge in the stereotypes and moral attitudinizing." "New York Times Book Review.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was one of the required readings for a class I am currently taking. The author is a Nobel Prize winner for his contributions to game-theory analysis and this book is considered to be one of the classics on nuclear strategy. It's not hard to see why. While many books on nuclear deterrence and strategy go into the different policies and can get policy wonky, this book takes an almost philosophical approach to the questions that nuclear strategy and deterrence pose. Indeed, many of the thoughts that Mr. Schelling has apply just as much to conventional war as to nuclear war as deterrence, compellence, and just the threat of violence can be used to achieve national goals. It is fascinating. It is also incredibly ponderous. At times it feels like Mr. Schelling just recorded some thoughts on a tape recorder and had someone transcribe them into book as topics are tackled without any apparent rhyme or reason. And considering that one or two of his chapters are 60+ pages long, it can be difficult to track his thoughts. Still, this is a genuinely thought provoking book that, in spite of the end of the Cold War, has not lost its relevancy and, indeed, will not until nuclear weapons are abolished or they are used once again in war.

While much of the book revolves around US Soviet nuclear policy the ideas and concepts of how nations interacts remains valid. This book should be in every decision makers library.

The author has a vast knowledge of arms control, limitations and the power of the atom. A difficult read for me but a very impressive book.

Mandatory for a lecture course, but overall interesting material. Fast shipping and great condition.

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