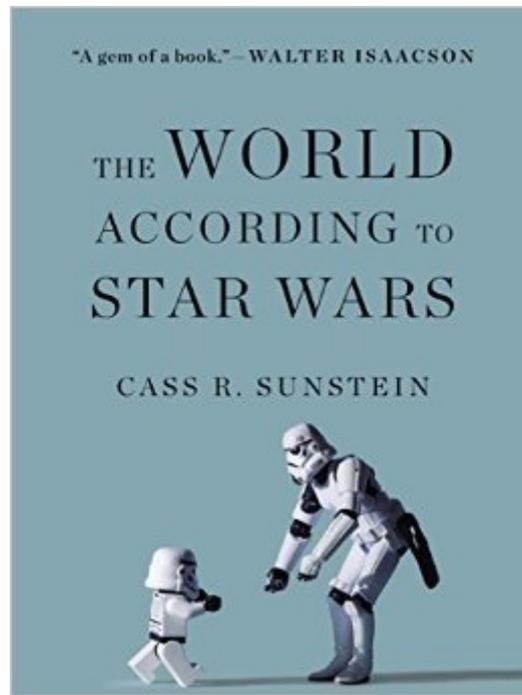


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The World According To Star Wars



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER#1 Washington Post Bestseller There's Santa Claus, Shakespeare, Mickey Mouse, the Bible, and then there's Star Wars. Nothing quite compares to sitting down with a young child and hearing the sound of John Williams's score as those beloved golden letters fill the screen. In this fun, erudite, and often moving book, Cass R. Sunstein explores the lessons of Star Wars as they relate to childhood, fathers, the Dark Side, rebellion, and redemption. As it turns out, Star Wars also has a lot to teach us about constitutional law, economics, and political uprisings. In rich detail, Sunstein tells the story of the films' wildly unanticipated success and explores why some things succeed while others fail. Ultimately, Sunstein argues, Star Wars is about freedom of choice and our never-ending ability to make the right decision when the chips are down. Written with buoyant prose and considerable heart, *The World According to Star Wars* shines a bright new light on the most beloved story of our time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

View larger Cass Sunstein Talks With Baratunde Thurston Baratunde Thurston is a comedian, writer, and cultural critic. Baratunde Thurston (BT): I love the chapter on the secrets of success and why Star Wars became such a phenomenon. You identify three factors: quality, timing, and social influences. So let's talk about Donald Trump. Why do you think he's been so successful? Cass Sunstein (CT): Star Wars shows that in a time of division and polarization, a lot of people like a Tough Guy. His bluntness, humor, and edge have obviously appealed to many people. He also caught a wave: Once he seemed popular, he got more popular. Many voters like

him because they think other voters like him. BT: One of the great themes of the book is forgiveness, and the bond between father and son. I read in an interview that your son helped inspire this book. What do you want him to take away from it? CS: You're free to choose: Your path will be your own. And even if you make mistakes, you can always be redeemed. (Visit the Dark Side, at least once, but please, boy, don't linger!) BT: When the first Star Wars film was released in 1977, there were no YouTube cat videos or internet memes. Do you think it's even possible in our current media landscape to experience another phenomenon on the scale of Star Wars? CS: Sure. Possible anything is. Think about Harry Potter or Taylor Swift. Also: The Force Has Awakened. BT: Screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan wanted to kill off Luke and felt movies have "more emotional weight if someone you love is lost along the way." Lucas obviously didn't agree. Decades later, we live in the world of Game of Thrones, where main characters get killed all the time. Did Kasdan's viewpoint win out in the long run? CS: Nope. No. No! George Lucas was right and the amazing and brilliant Kasdan was wrong. Han Solo should not have died! In many shows, no one you loves ends up dying. Seen Begin Again, that underrated masterpiece? (True, the Game of Thrones team knows what it's doing.) BT: In the chapter on rebellion and group polarization, you cite research that says "if you put a bunch of rebels in a room and ask them to discuss the rebellion, they'll get more extreme." Have modern news media and digital social networks increased polarization by limiting our information pools? I just want to blame Mark Zuckerberg, so I'm asking, can you help me do that? CS: There's no doubt that a fragmented media market and social media increase polarization and group polarization (which means that when people talk to like-minded others, they get more extreme). That's a big source of our current divisions. People live in different communications universes (even if everyone sees Star Wars). BT: You claim (convincingly) that Star Wars brings people together: young and old, Republican and Democrat. What is the single most important lesson our gridlocked Congress can learn from Star Wars? CS: "Only a Sith deals in absolutes."
"Obi-Wan Kenobi

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