

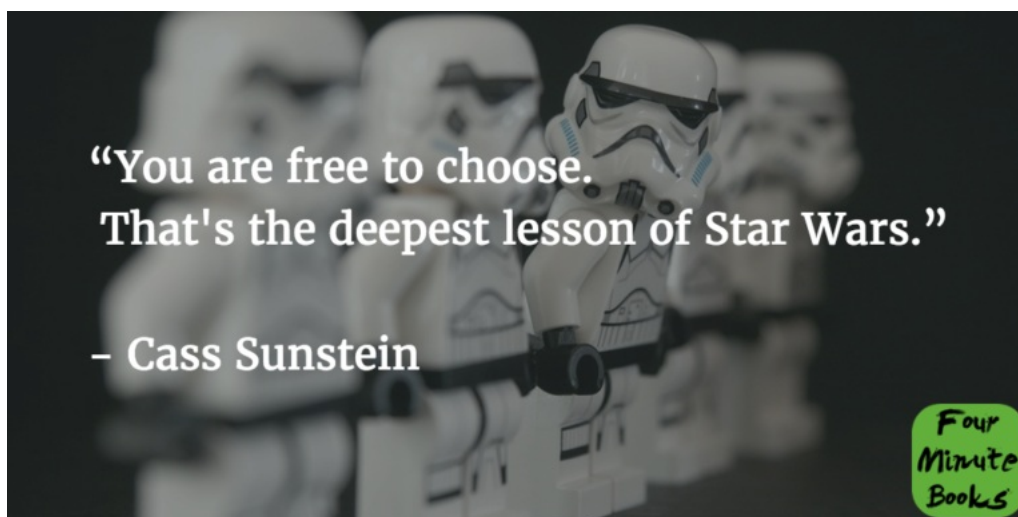
The World According To Star Wars Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The World According To Star Wars Summary examines not only the unrivaled popularity of this epic franchise, but also what we can learn from it about the real world about politics, law, economics and even ourselves.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Alright, let's get this out of the way, which side of the fence are you on? Star Wars or Star Trek? Let's not pretend that the world isn't split into these two camps only, because if you're a Trekkie then...

...kidding! I don't care which side you're on, all sci-fi fans welcome, including those who could care less about any of this stuff (if you're a girl and thought: "What's going on?" until this point, that might be you).

I myself am a Star Wars fan. My Dad showed me the original trilogy when I was a kid, including the story of how after seeing Return of the Jedi, one guy came out of the theater, thinking his motorcycle was a speeder bike from the movie and instantly crashed it in front of the crowd.

I've been a fan ever since, so whenever a reference to the Ewoks, a quote by Yoda or a light saber duel pops up somewhere, I get all excited. But there's actually a lot to learn from Star Wars about the real world! In *The World According To Star Wars*, Cass Sunstein draws a lot of connections between the Star Wars galaxy and our own.

Here are my 3 favorite ones:

1. George Lucas didn't know what he was creating in advance.
2. All creative work is subject to luck and timing, both of which are hard to manufacture.

3. Star Wars is about the price of freedom.

Ready to learn from one of the biggest legends in entertainment history? For the love of Star Wars, let's go!

Lesson 1: There is no such thing as creative foresight, where creators know everything about their world in advance.

The very first Star Wars movie, A New Hope, came out in 1977 and was met with instant success and popularity, becoming the highest-grossing film of all time back then. Given that, you'd think creator George Lucas had it all figured out – but he didn't.

In fact, Star Wars had started out very blurry in his head. When first thinking about it, he only knew he wanted to make a movie where the aliens were the heroes and the humans were the villains. He went on to write four different drafts of the entire film, until he had one that he was content with – just for the first movie!

No talk about a trilogy, let alone two. Many of the major plot twists that made the story so great were also added much later, such as (spoiler alert) Darth Vader being Luke's father or Luke and Leia being twins. In a later interview, George Lucas confessed that "he didn't know where things were headed while making the first movie."

But that's just how creativity works. It's not this straightforward process where an artist thinks up something in their head start-to-finish and then just has to make it. It's messy and **there's no such thing as creative foresight – which is both scary and encouraging!**

Lesson 2: Whatever creative thing you do will be subject to luck and timing, and you can't make those up.

The fact that almost everyone in the world knows Star Wars, Coca-Cola, and a few other names is of course the result of long years of hard work – but to some degree, it's coincidence.

There are two factors that have played a major role in the mega-success of Star Wars, none of which can be influenced by the creator:

1. **Timing.**
2. **Luck.**

You might think they're the same, but they actually differ.

When Star Wars came out in 1977, the timing was perfect. The US population was in a grim mood after the assassinations of two Kennedys, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Nixon had resigned after the Watergate scandal, terrorism was on the rise, the economy was in a recession and the Cold War made everyone very uneasy and tense.

Star Wars gave people an alternate reality they could flee to, something bigger than themselves they could be a part of, and with its big spaceships, two large, opposing parties, fun jokes and futuristic technology just the right mix of fun, escapism and clarity about what's right and what's wrong.

The luck part kicked in in form of the tipping point. Because Star Wars appealed to young and old alike, people shared and recommended it all over – and **the more people saw it, the more common ground they had to talk about**. If something hits a certain point of popularity, it suddenly becomes better to be a part of it, than not to be a part of it – kind of like Facebook.

However, you can neither manufacture luck, nor timing, which is a reminder to stay humble, do our work, and let the world decide the rest.

Lesson 3: Star Wars is about one of our most important rights: the freedom of choice, which comes at a price.

Democracy and liberty are always in a trade-off. If all of us give up *some* freedom, we maximize the freedom of every individual in a state or society.

Sometimes that means making tough choices, both for individuals and political systems. In the 1970s, America symbolized the ultimate freedom, as opposed to the “evil” Soviet empire across the planet. But with scandals like Watergate and the horror of the Vietnam War, liberty also had its dark side.

In Star Wars, the two opposing forces – the Rebels and the Empire – also have to weigh freedom against democracy, just like the individuals in the two camps. For example, while Anakin is free to choose to stay at home and help his parents with their business, he chooses to become a Jedi, which has a high price: him losing his parents, being turned to the dark side and eventually sacrificing himself to save the galaxy.

The ultimate thing to learn from Star Wars is therefore how to distinguish between what is right and what is easy, and then choose.

The World According To Star Wars Review

Man, I could get sucked up in writing about *The World According To Star Wars* for hours. So much cool Star Wars stuff to research! But I'll leave it at that and say: watch the movies and decide for yourself.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What the creators of Star Wars thought it would turn out to initially
- How the network itself of Star Wars is still in place today
- Which religions Star Wars relates to
- How Star Wars reflects politics

Who would I recommend The World According To Star Wars summary to?

The 18 year old sci-fi fan and Star Wars nerd, the 54 year old family father, who still remembers seeing the original movies in the theatre, and anyone who thinks movies are a waste of time.