

## **Professor Simcoe's "History of Strategy" Reading List**

The core Strategy & Innovation classes at Boston University (SI422 and SI751) devote relatively little time to describing the intellectual history of Strategic Management. However, there are a few students each year who express an interest in learning more about the origins and development of the ideas we discuss in class. For these students, I have started to compile a background-reading list of historical and contemporary "classics" in the field of Strategy.

I see this list as serving three goals: 1) To provide suggested readings for the student who wants to learn more about the history of ideas discussed in class; 2) To provide a reading list for graduates who belatedly realize the value of their Strategy course, and would like to do some supplemental readings; and 3) To provide a list of "Contemporary Classics" for students who want to learn about current ideas (and fads or trends) that may come up in casual conversation or a job interview.

Please note that this list reflects my own tastes, and not the consensus of all scholars who work in the area. In particular, it emphasizes economics and business history over sociology and organizational behavior. If you think I should add a book to this list, please let me know!

### **Business History Classics**

The Principles of Scientific Management, Fredrick W. Taylor  
The Functions of the Executive, Chester Barnard  
My Years with General Motors, Alfred P. Sloan  
Strategy and Structure, Alfred Chandler

### **Foundations of Modern Strategy**

The Practice of Management, Peter Drucker  
The Visible Hand, Alfred Chandler  
Competitive Strategy, Michael Porter

### **The "Game Theory" View**

Micromotives and Macrobehavior, Thomas Schelling  
Thinking Strategically, Avinash Dixit and Barry Nalebuff  
Co-opetition, Adam Brandenberger and Barry Nalebuff  
Games Businesses Play, Pankaj Ghemawat

## **Strategy & Innovation**

Innovation, Richard Foster  
Information Rules, Hal Varian and Carl Shapiro  
The Innovator's Dilemma, Clayton Christensen  
Platform Leadership, Gawer and Cusumano

## **Other Influential Ideas**

*The Learning Curve: Perspectives on Experience*, Bruce Henderson  
*Core Competencies: The Core Competency of the Corporation*, Hamel and Prahalad  
*Mission Statements: Built to Last*, James Collins and Jerry Porras  
*McKinsey "Seven S" Framework, In Search of Excellence*, Peters and Waterman  
*Total Quality Management (Six Sigma): Out of the Crisis*, W. Edwards Deming  
*Balanced Scorecard: The Balanced Scorecard*, Kaplan and Norton  
*A/B Testing and Pivots: Lean Startup*, Eric Reiss

## **Some Personal Favorites**

Soul of a New Machine, Tracy Kidder  
The Box, Marc Levinson  
Moneyball, Michael Lewis<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Featuring my college roommate, who at the time bore no resemblance to Jonah Hill.