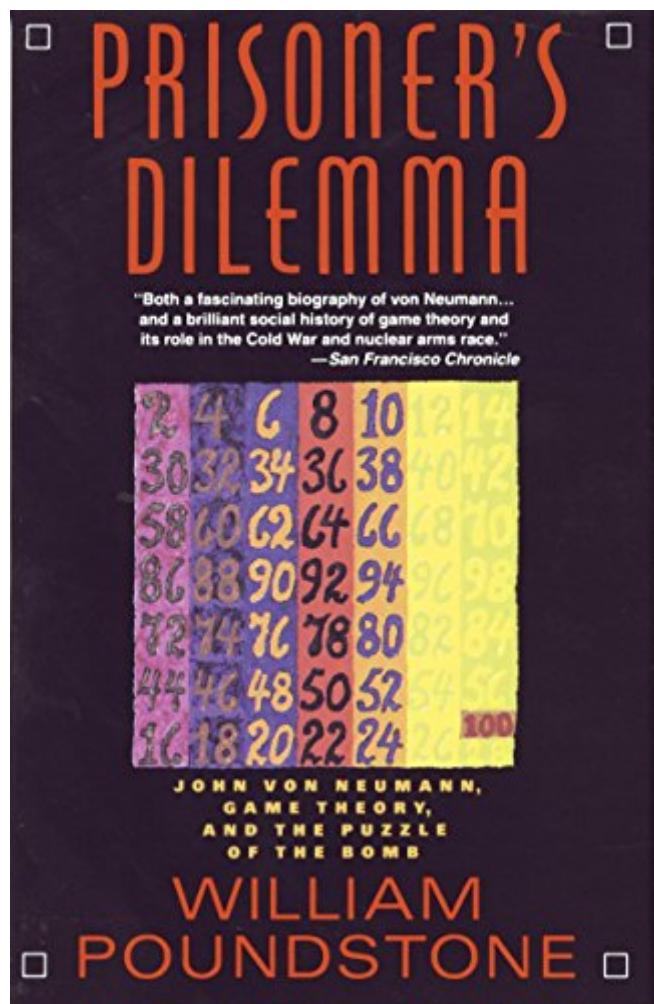


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Prisoner's Dilemma



Synopsis

Critical Acclaim for "Prisoner's Dilemma" "The real originality of PRISONER'S DILEMMA lies in its colorful synthesis of logical material and historical and biographical narration [which] takes us in parallel lines through cold war history, strategic games of the nuclear age and the life of von Neumann . . . Lively, open and multifaceted." "New York Times Book Review" Poundstone deftly intertwines the development of game theory with the biography of its founder, who was considered by many the most intelligent person alive. Poundstone does a superb job of relating the insights of game theory to real-world conflicts." "Washington Times" An absolute, mind-blowing page turner . . . Poundstone writes with real verve and he takes very technical concepts and makes them perfectly clear and insightful. PRISONER'S DILEMMA is the latest title from one of the best science/contemporary thought writers we have in the English language." "The Coast Book Review" Explains game theory lucidly, reveals some hair-raising post-war governmental skullduggery, and brings to life one of history's foremost mathematicians." "Los Angeles Times" Very readable . . . Fascinating, thought-provoking, and easily accessible to the layperson." "Library Journal

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Customer Reviews

The enjoyment, or perhaps the utility you'll find with this book, will be directly related to how much you know about Game Theory prior to this read. This book spends, as much time on history and biography as it does on what Game Theory is about, so this work would seem to be most appropriate to those who are new to the material. I had only basic understanding of Game Theory from other books I had read, within which this field of study was mentioned, so for me the book was very worthwhile. The historical and biographic aspects of the book were not new, so there were of less interest to me. Math need not be a passion for this book to be understood and enjoyed. The various games that are explained and, "played", for the reader actually utilize little in the way of math. Game Theory in practice is about the number of participants, the choices they have, how the games should rationally be played, and how they are played when people replace theory. The results of these games are applicable to daily life, whether it explains how a network will decide the placement of their commercials, why a person will stand in a line of unknown length, or pay more than the true value of an item (like a dollar bill). Peoples behavior often crosses from the irrational to the absurd, and many of these games will point out courses of action almost all readers will have taken at one time or another, when the rational decision was the opposite of what they chose to do. The book is also a good primer for further reading on Bertrand Russell, John Nash the subject of the movie, "A Beautiful Mind", and John von Neumann, who many considered the most brilliant man alive during his career, and many other great scientists of the 20th Century.

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