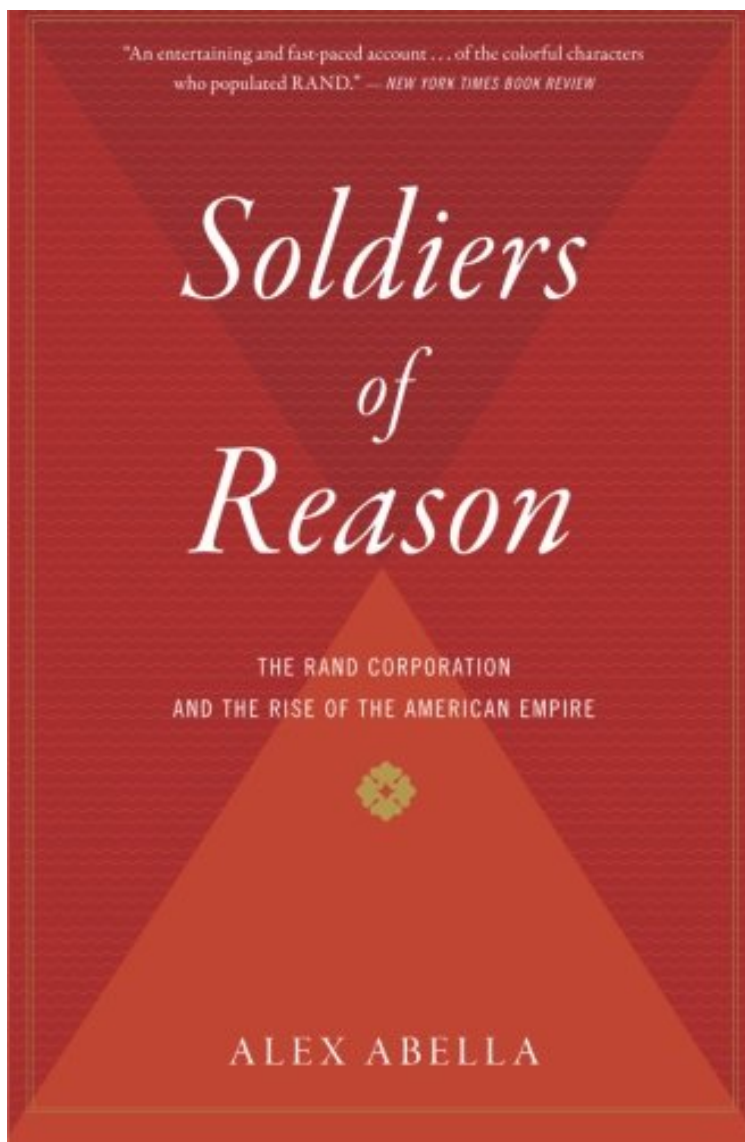


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## Soldiers of Reason: The RAND Corporation and the Rise of the American Empire

Alex Abella

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#1030649 in Books Alex Abella 2009-05-04 2009-05-04 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.90 x .92 x 5.20l, .83 #File Name: 0156033445400 pages Soldiers of Reason The RAND Corporation and the Rise of the American Empire | File size: 57.Mb

**Alex Abella : Soldiers of Reason: The RAND Corporation and the Rise of the American Empire** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Soldiers of Reason: The RAND Corporation and the Rise of the American Empire:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Donna MariashThe definitive book to the date of publication on the RAND corporation.3 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A just-so storyBy Trevor BurnhamThe author claims to have unprecedented access to RAND's files, and yet his book provides no surprises to anyone familiar with the towering figures of that still-mysterious institution and its enormous influence. We hear some amusing anecdotes about eccentric geniuses at work and petty political rivalries, but too little of substance. This is a light and enjoyable read, but I would recommend a broader history of the Cold War to anyone truly interested in the subject matter.2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. StunningBy PeteFacinating read. Fun to go back in time and read about the early architects of our current day policies and world vision. ALso scary to think that so many of the participants made their way into business and government positions - not surprised about our war and foreign policy decisions of the past 25 years, now knowing where it all started from.

Born in the wake of World War II, RAND quickly became the creator of America's anti-Soviet nuclear strategy. A magnet for the best and the brightest, its ranks included Cold War luminaries such as Albert Wohlstetter, Bernard Brodie, and Herman Kahn, who arguably saved us from nuclear annihilation and unquestionably created Eisenhower's "military-industrial complex." In the Kennedy era, RAND analysts and their theories of rational warfare steered our conduct in Vietnam. Those same theories drove our invasion of Iraq forty-five years later, championed by RAND affiliated actors such as Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, and Zalmay Khalilzad. But RAND's greatest contribution might be its least known: rational choice theory, a model explaining all human behavior through self-interest. Through it RAND sparked the Reagan-led transformation of our social and economic system but also unleashed a resurgence of precisely the forces whose existence it denied -- religion, patriotism, tribalism. With *Soldiers of Reason*, Alex Abella has rewritten the history of America's last half century and cast a new light on our problematic present.

From Publishers WeeklyWhen President Eisenhower famously warned against the military-industrial complex, he largely meant the Department of Defense-funded programs of the RAND Corporation. Abella (coauthor, *Shadow Enemies: Hitler's Secret Terrorist Plot Against the United States*) presents a sometimes dry but thorough account of this think-tank, which he asserts not only played a key role in the U.S.'s biggest foreign misadventures in Vietnam and Iraq but also, through its development of rational choice theory, has affected every aspect of our lives, not necessarily for the better. Abella, working with the cooperation of the usually secretive organization, details RAND'S history, from analyst Herman Kahn's energetic support of a virtually unrestrained nuclear arms buildup to the organization's role in sparking America's involvement in Vietnam and the current war in Iraq. But even more, Abella says, RAND theorists' notion that self-interest, rather than collective interests like religion, governs human behavior has influenced every aspect of our society, from health care to tax policy. The RAND Corporation continues today—as brilliant, controversial and, in Abella's view, amoral as ever—with the complicity of all Americans. If we look in the mirror, Abella concludes, we will see that RAND is every one of us. The question is, what are we going to do about it? 8 pages of bw photos. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Praise for *SOLDIERS OF REASON*