

Recommended Reading List

This is the longer version of *ChrisW's Naval SF Card*, which I hand out at science fiction conventions. (It's a work-in-progress.)

Note that this isn't just a list of my favorite books (although many of them are favorites). As a science fiction fan who happens to be a naval analyst and wargame designer, I find these books (and websites, etc.) particularly interesting or useful, for either the ideas or the execution.

Books on game design

Katie Salen & Eric Zimmerman: *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*

The book on understanding what games are, and why they "work." I expect their followup -- *The Game Design Reader: A Rules of Play Anthology* -- to be as good.

Peter Perla: *The Art of Wargaming*

The history of commercial and professional wargaming and the use of wargames. I own a copy at work and at home.

Non-fiction books on naval/military matters

Julian Corbett: *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*

Especially the "Green Pamphlet" appendix, which was originally a classified document written for the Royal Navy. Old but still the best single breakdown of naval theory. Free online at <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/15076>.

James George: *History of Warships*

Overview of how naval ships have changed over time, and why.

Wayne Hughes: *Fleet Tactics: Theory and Practice or Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat*

Same book, two editions (either is good). How to think about and analyze tactics, and how tactics have changed over time.

Edward Luttwak: *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*

Excellent treatise on how to think about borders. (If only Stephen Donaldson had read this before writing the *Gap* series!)

Marshall Savage: *The Millennial Project: Colonizing the Galaxy in Eight Easy Steps*

Think big!

Frank Uhlig: *How Navies Fight: The US Navy and Its Allies*

Excellent overview of different types of navies, and how form (force structure) follows function.

Websites of Interest

Winchell Chung's *Atomic Rockets* [<http://www.projectrho.com/rocket/index.html>]

<http://www.projectrho.com/rocket/index.html>

Winchell Chung's *3-D Starmaps* [<http://www.projectrho.com/starmapstub.html>]

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Ad Astra Games [<http://www.adastragames.com/>]

<http://www.adastragames.com/> -- Publishers of *Attack Vector: Tactical* and the *Saganami Island Tactical Simulator*

Tom Harlan's *Sixth Sun Concordance*

<http://www.throneworld.com/wiki/index.php?title=Category:Concordance> -- The technical background for his *Sixth Sun* series.

Etranger [<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dheb/2300/Admin/Index1.htm>]

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dheb/2300/Admin/Index1.htm> -- A slightly non-canon 2300 website. I especially recommend the [starships section](#).

Starship Combat News [<http://www.star-ranger.com/Home.htm>]

<http://www.star-ranger.com/Home.htm> -- Science Fiction combat miniatures and wargames

ChrisW's *Thoughts on Starship Troopers* [<http://www.kentaurus.com/troopers.htm>]

<http://www.kentaurus.com/troopers.htm> -- Yes, I am plugging my own page.

ChrisW's *At Sea with the U.S. Navy* [<http://www.kentaurus.com/atseanavy.htm>]

<http://www.kentaurus.com/atseanavy.htm> -- For anyone who wants to know what it is like to be on a warship.

Mailing lists of interests

SFConsim-L [<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/sfconsim-l/>]

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/sfconsim-l/> -- Mailing list for discussing science fiction wargames.

NavWarGames [<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/NavWarGames/>]

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/NavWarGames/> -- Historical naval wargames.

***WarpWar* and other classic microgames** [<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/WarpWar/>]

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/WarpWar/> -- Discussion list for ALL classic science fiction microgames.

Space_OperaSF [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Space_OperaSF/]

“Naval” Science Fiction books worth reading

Robert Chase: *The Game of Fox and Lion*

Tactically useful FTL drive.

C.J. Cherryh: *Downbelow Station* and *Hellburner*

Space combat forces that aren't simply navy retreats, plus an illustration how politics affects force structure. (For more information, look [here](#).) The rest of her Alliance-Union books are excellent as well.

Glen Cook: *The Dragon Never Sleeps*

Borrows heavily from Roman history. Could be the fiction companion to the Luttwak book. (For more information, look [here](#).)

Michael DiMercurio: The “Patch” Pacino series

The series consists of, well, a lot of books. Submarines, not SF, but a good source of verisimilitude.

Scott Gier: *Genellan* series

The series consists of *Planetfall*, *In the Shadow of the Moon*, *First Victory*, and *Earth Siege*. Science fiction fleet operations through the eyes of a former naval aviator.

Peter Hamilton: The *Night's Dawn* Trilogy

The series consists of *The Reality Dysfunction*, *The Neutronium Alchemist*, and *The Naked God*. A very interesting universe with some interesting technology (military and otherwise).

Tom Harlan: The *In The Time of the Six Sun* series

The series (so far) consists of *Wasteland of Flint*, *House of Reeds*, and *Land of the Dead*. A hard-SF archaeological mystery/space combat series set in an alternate future and past. A fine mix of interesting characters, exciting plots, and thoughtful ship design and tactics.

Robert Heinlein: *Starship Troopers*

Why we fight, and the meaning of civic virtue. (For more information, look [here](#).)

Walter Hunt: The *Dark Wing* series

The series (so far) consists of *The Dark Wing*, *The Dark Path*, *The Dark Ascent*, and *The Dark Crusade*. Well-constructed naval tactics and civil-military relations. The inter-alliance relations in particular are interesting.

Jack McDevitt: *A Talent for War*

History --and mystery -- as verisimilitude.

Elizabeth Moon: *Familias Regnant* series

The series consists (so far, anyway) of the *Heris Serrano* trilogy (*Hunting Party*, *Sporting Chance*, and *Winning Colors*) and the *Esmay Suiza* novels (*Once a Hero*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Change of*

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Command, and *Against the Odds*).

Tactically useful FTL drives. See the [Wikipedia entry](#) for the background.

Kevin O'Donnell: *Fire on the Border*

Another example of tactically useful FTL drives.

Scott Westerfeld: *Succession*

Published in paper as *The Risen Empire* and *The Killing of Worlds*. A hard-SF novel featuring planetary minds, cyborg commandos, advanced information technology, and warships for which the phrase "rig for combat" means the walls move. As with Tom Harlan's books, a fine mix of interesting characters, exciting plots, and thoughtful ship design.

Dave Trowbridge and Sherwood Smith: The *Exordium* series

The series consists of *The Phoenix in Flight*, *Ruler of Naught*, *A Prison Unsought*, *The Rifter's Covenant*, and *The Thrones of Kronos*.

Well-thought-through space opera, which combines tactical FTL combat with speed-of-light weapons and sensors. (For more information, look [here](#).)

Science Fiction which looks promising

Jack Campbell's (John Hemry's) *Lost Fleet* series

I haven't read these yet, but I got the chance to listen a reading of a chapter and talk to the author. Hemry is a retired US Navy Surface Warfare Officer, and that expertise shows.

Other Reading Lists

Royal Australian Navy reading list [<http://www.navy.gov.au/spc/readinglist/default.html>]

<http://www.navy.gov.au/spc/readinglist/default.html> -- Long list of interesting books, in several categories. Be sure you get the update, too.

Please feel free to send recommendations to me!