This Professional Reading List was created to recommend exceptional publications of relevant readings on national defense, military operations, and the practice of operations research. These suggestions come from many senior MORSians who spend considerable time staying abreast of the historical underpinnings and current issues facing the analytic community. Publications are cited with short commentary on content, quality, and material impact.


Army Training and Doctrine Command. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028. Army Capabilities Integration Center: Fort Eustis, VA. 6 Dec 2018, 102 pps. This publication describes a fundamental change in the character of war. A must-read for anyone who wants to understand warfare in a relevant context. The Army was never shy about pushing doctrine—you will find nothing like this in any form from anywhere else. (EP Negrelli)

Hughes, Wayne P. and Robert P. Girrier. Field Tactics and Naval Operations. 3rd Edition. Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, Maryland, 2018, 371 pps. The seminal work on the principles and history of tactics. Professor Hughes uses his analytic acumen to identify and study the factors that make naval warfare unique and, in the process, provides a guide for today’s commanders from unit to fleet. This third edition has been expanded to focus on the re-emergence of great power confrontation at sea and the principles for fighting modern blue water engagements. (TJ McKearney)

Schelling, Thomas C. Arms and Influences. Yale University Press: New Haven, Connecticut, 1966, 294 pps. A classic work in strategic studies that explores the foundations of power and coercion though the logic of games. The book persuasively explains how deterrence and compellence as bargaining situations contain elements of common and conflicting interest. Requires no knowledge of game theory using every day, ancient, and entertaining examples. (H Hiram)

Kotkin, Stephen. Stalin: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928. Penguin Books: New York, New York, 2014, 949 pps. Pulitzer Prize-Finalist Stephen Kotkin has written the definitive biography of Joseph Stalin. His first book begins with Stalin’s birth and his rise to political power taking the reader through the establishment of collectivization in Russia. The book contains fascinating detail on Stalin, his family, his orthodox education, and his knowledge and ability to gather, control, and use levers of power. Kotkin’s insights and depth of scholarly research are classics on Russians facing the “Great Terror”. (DH Timian)

Caffrey, Matthew B. Jr. On Wargaming: How Wargames Shaped History and How They May Shape the Future. Naval War College Press: Newport, Rhode Island, Jan 2019, 445 pps. Matt has done an impressive job pulling together the unknown history of wargames as well as providing deep and valuable insights into the theory and design of games. This book is a free download from the US Naval War College at https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/newport-papers/43/ (ED McGrady)

Scott, Lloyd N. Naval Consulting Board of the United States. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1920. 288 pps plus 31 charts. NCB captures US Operation Research before the term was coined. It tells the story of how the Secretary of the Navy gained the talents of Thomas A. Edison and 24 of the leading industrial, inventive, and eminent business leaders to apply their scientific and technical skills in addressing the problems facing a nation soon to be involved in WWI. (EP Visco, FS)