

## Reflections on Reading

The U.S. Naval War College

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## REFLECTIONS ON READING

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### TO READ, THINK CRITICALLY, AND SEEK PROFESSIONAL AND WAR-FIGHTING EXCELLENCE

*Professor John E. Jackson of the Naval War College is the Program Manager for the Chief of Naval Operations Professional Reading Program.*

**I**n April 2024, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Lisa Franchetti, USN, announced her update to the CNO Professional Reading Program (CNO-PRP). Her Navy-wide message opened by reflecting on the historical basis for a reading program:

Nearly two centuries ago, Navy leaders took the first step in establishing a professional education program to help train and educate Sailors beyond apprenticeship at sea. Knowing well the importance of using lessons from our past to help think through the challenges of the present and future, these leaders provided the Fleet with a library of thirty-seven recommended books. They knew it was important for our Navy to be a learning organization—with people who think critically and seek professional and warfighting excellence—in order to remain the world's premier warfighting force.

She went on to explain her revisions to the CNO-PRP list and its new, narrower focus on war fighting:

I am continuing that momentum with a warfighting-focused Chief of Naval Operations Professional Reading Program (CNO-PRP) to support your professional development, broaden your knowledge, and challenge your thinking. This list of fourteen books aligns with my *America's Warfighting Navy*, published in January 2024, where I outlined my priorities of warfighting, warfighters, and the foundation that supports them. I encourage each of you to read the CNO-PRP. The ideas found in these books will not only expand your thinking, but also directly contribute to maintaining our warfighting advantage. They support the development of Great People, Great Leaders, and Great Teams that can out-think any adversary anytime and anywhere. Most

importantly, they will make our Navy stronger and more ready to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in war, if called.

The fourteen books in Admiral Franchetti's revised 2024 CNO-PRP list follow below, organized by war-fighting category.

***Delivering Decisive Combat Power:***

- *War Transformed*, by Mick Ryan
- *China as a Twenty First Century Naval Power*, by Michael A. McDevitt
- *Red Star over the Pacific*, by Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes
- *The Sea in Russian Strategy*, edited by Andrew Monaghan and Richard Connolly
- *Army of None*, by Paul Scharre
- *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors*, by James D. Hornfischer
- *This Kind of War*, by T. R. Fehrenbach

***Strengthening the Navy Team:***

- *Learning War*, by Trent Hone
- *Winning a Future War*, by Norman Friedman
- *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, by Carol S. Dweck
- *Team of Teams*, by General Stanley McChrystal
- *The Boys in the Boat*, by Daniel James Brown

***Foundation: Building Trust, Aligning Resources, and Being Ready:***

- *Engineers of Victory*, by Paul Kennedy
- *Freedom's Forge*, by Arthur Herman

While many readers may want individually to purchase these books for their professional libraries, e-books and audiobooks of many titles are available to be downloaded at no charge by authorized users of the Department of Defense Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DOD-MWR) libraries, which can be accessed through the CNO-PRP website: <https://www.navy.mil/Leadership/Chief-of-Naval-Operations/Chief-of-Naval-Operations-Professional-Reading-Library/>.

In Admiral Franchetti's visionary charge, *America's Warfighting Navy*, the thirty-third Chief of Naval Operations defines "Who We Are" as "the Sailors and Civilians who have answered our Nation's call to service. We are Americans who

embody character, competence, and dedication to our mission. Our identity is forged by the sea and we serve with *honor, courage, and commitment*.”

Reading and absorbing the books recommended in this new CNO-PRP list will help everyone on the Navy Team—in uniform and out, at sea and ashore—to be ready with the right skills, tools, training, and mind-set to deliver the “Navy the Nation Needs.”

JOHN E. JACKSON





