

Note from AFA President -- Reading List

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, Civic Leaders, and DOCA members, as the holidays approach us, I want to both thank you for your support of this Association and mention [albeit a bit late] a gift idea for almost anyone in your family - namely books. Every officer, senior NCO, staffer, and civic leader should be on a book-reading program. Most senior officers I know read 2-3 books per month. When I was President of the National Defense University, I read at least one per week. Moreover, junior officers/NCOs should read almost as much.

What should you read? There are lots of ideas, reading lists, etc out there. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force has a suggested reading list (<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123127118>); so does the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/jcs/reading-list.htm>). And there are many other good ones.

Since the Air Force Association was chartered by General of the Air Force Hap Arnold to educate the public about Airpower, I decided to put together my own reading list - which is focused on Airpower. I downloaded each of the Service Chiefs' and CJCS' lists; reviewed the lists from commandants of war colleges, looked again at Chairman Ike Skelton's reading list, and many others. Then I emailed 10 or so Airpower experts for their opinion; consolidated all the data and went out to them a second time. No list is perfect, but I think this one provides a starting point and is a list that any serious Airman or Airpower advocate should consider. We have put it on our website at: http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2009/ReadingList_1209.asp.

Final suggestions for you -

1. One thing I do is read the Pulitzer prize winners for Biographies and Non fiction every year.
2. When I was on active duty [early in my career], I received plaques when I transferred PCS. I have found that books - signed by everyone (or perhaps just the leaders) in my unit - make better gifts. Not only do I read them - but they have a special place in my library - long after the plaques have faded, been tossed away, or lost by the movers.
3. Having a hard time finding time to read? Get up 20 minutes early every morning and read; have a book in a place you know you will spend time; forgo a re-run TV show; Get books on tape if you have a long commute to work; Put a book by your bedside; (I have found Clausewitz's **On War** is better than any sleeping pill.) [Just kidding]. You can find the time ... but you have to look for it.

My best to each of you this Holiday season. Merry Christmas; Happy Hanukkah; Seasons greetings; and Happy New Year.

Respectfully,

Mike

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