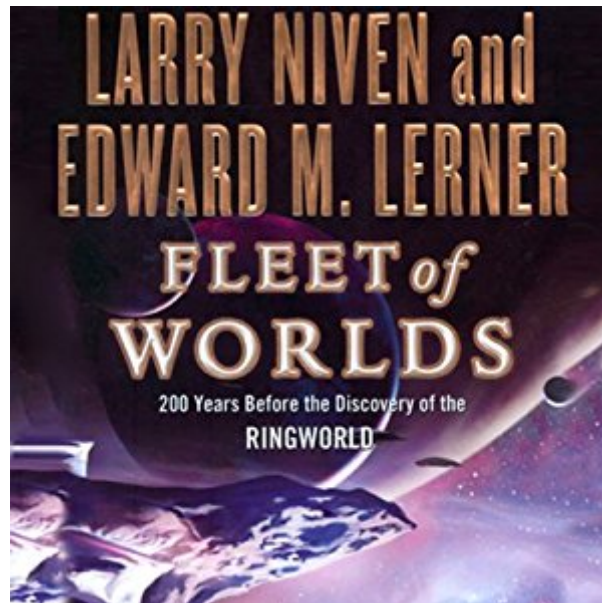




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Fleet Of Worlds: 200 Years Before The Discovery Of The Ringworld



Synopsis

This further chapter of Known Space lore [is] full of startling revelations about human and puppeteer politics. Booklist --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Call it book 5 of the Ringwood series, or book 1 of the Fleet of Worlds, in any case it's Larry Niven at his best. Some old characters from the Ringwood books along with the other Known Space books combined with some new are crafted by Larry Niven- 1 of the living grand masters of Science Fiction and Co author Edward Lerner into a well developed book that's hard to put down. I reread the books every couple years and enjoy them every time.

Fleet of Worlds series are my favorite books from Larry Niven. Book 1 was the start of what I have described as a series of 9 (includes the three original Ringworld books) that ties together so many stray pieces from the Tales of Known Space. These include the brilliant Protectors, the "voice" behind the Citizens, Louis Wu and his autodoc, Beowulf Schaeffer, the elusive Sigmund Ausfeller, and many other stories. The entire Fleet series is Niven's crowning achievement. You should buy this book, all the other Fleet series, and all three Ringworld books and read them in order (easy to figure out the timeline from the title page and included chronology.). Just buy them.

I first started reading Larry Niven's books around 1974. Ringworld was a big favorite of mine back

then. Finding he wrote 4 sequels to Ringworld made me buy a new copy of the original Ringworld along with all of the sequels. When I read the final book in the series, I felt like I missed something somewhere along the way. Come to find out that this not only concludes the Ringworld series, but several other of his book series, most notably the Known Space series. Known Space kicks off with this book - a prequel to Ringworld. Nessus is the hero of this one, where he is put in charge of a series of experiments to determine if they can use the "colonists" to take on deep space missions. Deep space, like many fearsome things, are not well liked by Puppeteers. Through this book, we meet another recurring character, Baedeker (who later becomes Hindmost to the Puppeteer race). In this introduction to Baedeker, he does not appear much like he does as he does in the later books. In fact, without reading further, I can't even remotely imagine what creates such a drastic change in his personality. The plot of this story really kicks off when the colonists start to wonder why they know so little of their past. Supposedly, their ancestors piloted a craft called "Long Shot" that was marooned. The Puppeteers taught them throughout their history that they rescued the survivors who then became known as Colonists. But, humans are not content with simple explanations, so they begin to explore. Throughout their travels they uncover and infiltrate secret research labs, databases long thought lost, and the Long Shot itself. But, how they use this information to prove who they are is really well done. The book is well written and keeps the reader involved and on edge. Niven has some outstanding people he works with to ensure the science is at least plausible, even if it may be a million years before we actually get there as a species.

After slogging through The Ringworld Throne and Ringworld's Children I wasn't fully prepared for Fleet of Worlds to be so good. Its foundation is so solid that it works as a stand-alone novel and as a prequel. Without spoiling anything I'll just say is that the sense of mystery and discovery is just as vivid here despite the reader knowing how a lot of the events in Niven's sprawling Known Universe will turn out. Niven's ability to create unique and complex non-human characters (aliens that are actually alien!) is almost unparalleled in sci-fi lit and this book is no exception. His human characters... errm, not so much. I'm biased on that point however because I am a huge fan of Puppeteers despite (or perhaps because of) their manic/depressive/genius/cowardly power trips. Glimpsing Puppeteer politics and culture is, of course, the highlight here but the sequences set off world (or, rather, off Rosette) hold their own thanks to the Gw'o aliens. But, really, this is the Puppeteer's show and being able to read from Nessus (one of my favorite characters of all time) and Nike's point of view never failed to captivate me and will keep me glued to this series.

Niven is a master. The fleet of worlds is a gateway story into a very engaging part of the "known space" universe and through the subsequent books of this series the reader is provided with a lot of historical perspective relevant to other part of known space.

If you have read Niven's "Known Space Series" you will enjoy this novel.

Many years ago I was a big Larry Niven fan. When he started to collaborate with other authors I lost interest. It seemed like he was just trading on his name. When I recently checked on what he was currently doing I ran across his Fleet of Worlds series and thought it would be of interest to check it out. This first book gives quite a bit of background to some of the novels that Niven wrote many years ago. If you were a fan of his "Known Space" books, I would recommend giving this title a look. The historical view in the book gives additional understanding to subsequent events in the related books from the past. It was good enough that I will probably go on to the next book in the series. I would recommend checking out Edward M. Lerner's web site and blog to gain some insight into the writing process involved with these books. It is very informative.

I was prepared to be excited as I was with the Ringworld stories. I found myself catching up on 200 years of Puppeteer/ Human etc. history before Ringworld was explored. Once I got up to speed Larry got my attention and the lesson begins!

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