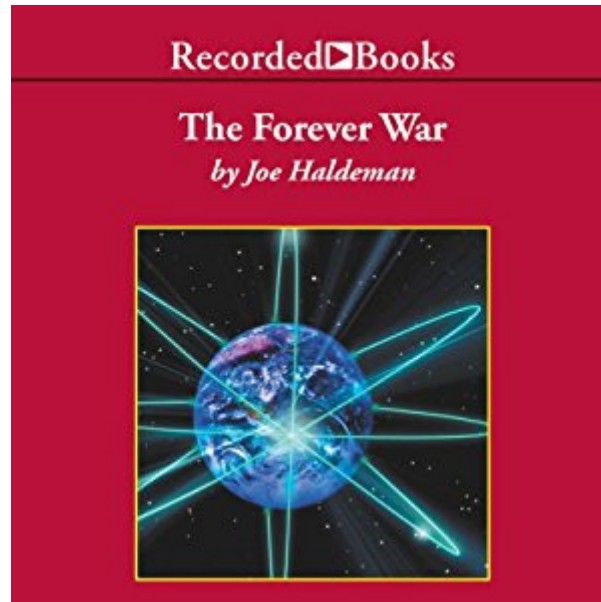




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The Forever War



Synopsis

Private William Mandella is a hero in spite of himself -- a reluctant conscript drafted into an elite military unit, and propelled through space and time to fight in a distant thousand-year conflict. He never wanted to go to war, but the leaders on Earth have drawn a line in the interstellar sand -- despite the fact that their fierce alien enemy is unknowable, unconquerable, and very far away. So Mandella will perform his duties without rancor and even rise up through the military's ranks . . . if he survives. But the true test of his mettle will come when he returns to Earth. Because of the time dilation caused by space travel the loyal soldier is aging months, while his home planet is aging centuries -- and the difference will prove the saying: you never can go home. . . --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This has been popping up on my recommendations for a while. So glad I checked it out. Truly a classic sci-fi novel. It starts a little slow. The first several chapters reminded me of Enders Game for adults. But stick with it and be rewarded. Earth's military expands out into space, using worm holes to travel hundreds of light years in seconds. Passengers don't age when traveling this way. This brilliantly sets up speculative fiction about what life and attitudes will be like in the future. Also fascinating is how those changes are viewed through the eyes of someone born in the 1960's. Very smart. Not dated. Must-read classic sci-fi.

War in space with all the time dilation to worry about and what it is like to come home during a war that seems to last forever. The individual that the story is focused on starts out as a drafted private, even though he is a College educated individual. It seems that for the purposes of fighting a ground war in an alien environment, education is considered a plus not a minus in the infantry. As time goes on, fairly little for him, but a great amount for the world he is from (Earth), he goes up in rank and has to deal with things that change around him. While not a deep look at the problems involved in understanding the world and his changing place in it, it is a very well written and thought provoking book. The ending is almost classic. I can't quite figure out why it is listed as the first book in the Forever War. Since the ending wraps it up quite nicely.

It's been awhile since I had read classic science fiction story so since this one went on sale I picked it up. I'd heard of the book but it never read it before hand I was surprised that some of the transitions that took place during the time lines. It should not be a surprise that this book is symbolically about the Vietnam War even though it takes place in the future. I found it interesting how some of the concepts of the future are actually beginning to materialize now such as the acceptance of homosexuality. I hope to read more of Joe Haldeman's work as soon as I get through some of the others ahead of his in my library. The title is appropriate since the book covers several hundred years although it does not cover them in a drawn-out manner.

The Forever War is a good book but shows its age a little. One can tell the Vietnam War, population growth and the sexual revolution of the 60s were fresh on the mind of Joe Haldeman. This notwithstanding, it is still a fine and engaging sci-fi novel. It covers a lot of ground (spanning one man's life over centuries), which is both interesting but also a little frustrating. Each stop in a different era hints at interesting societal situations that go relatively unexplored as the protagonist catapults forward to the next era. A stop in a future United States so rife with violence and crime that everyone ventures out armed to the teeth never felt real to me, nor did humanity's decision to jettison heterosexuality in order to control population. But, if you don't mind a book that raises more questions than it answers, this is an interesting use of the science fiction genre to explore topics of war and man's inclination towards violence. One thing about "The Forever War" is that no one can criticize it for a lack of scope, imagination or surprises!

I put off reading this novel for 30 years and have now realized the error of my ways. I read Old Man's War by Scalzi last year and that prompted me to get this masterpiece. It's an easy read. It's

thoughtful about war, culture and the consequences. It's simply stunning. And now I have to read the next two books. The story is about a war with an unknown alien race that due to relativistic effects takes "forever" for the soldiers who once they go to war become totally disconnected from their society and if they come home, come home hundreds of years later to an Earth they will never understand.

Oldie but great. Borne from his experience in Vietnam, flavored by scientific rigor, and embellished with a gifted storyteller's art, this novel on conducting interstellar war without warp drive is fascinating...even many years later. And the focus is on the human element. What if you had a time machine that only goes forward. And every time you get off the world has completely changed, mores, language, even sexual orientation. And you are distanced from the person you love, not by miles but by centuries. And you work with people born 300 years after you? Winner of every major SF award. I can strongly recommend this novel if you enjoy sf or military or just good writing!!!

The Forever War is one of my favorite books. I've read it at least ten times over the years. However, what you're getting here is NOT the version you probably remember. It's an unedited version. Now, I'm sure you're thinking "Great! I LOVE the book, so more of it can only be a good thing. Right?" Wrong. It's Haldeman's terse prose and direct writing style that make The Forever War a great novel. Without the discipline and restraint that previous editors imposed upon his work, Haldeman rambles on like your great-grandpa telling you about life during the Great Depression. There are at least two entire chapters devoted to describing how Earth's economy is now based on calories instead of dollars. And by the end of those two chapters, Haldeman himself seems to conclude that it's a dumb, impractical idea that's not very interesting in the first place. There are reasons that the original cuts were made. What was once tense, quotable, action-packed and provocative is now a lumbering beast, sagged down by tons of extraneous ramblings that don't add to the story even a little. I certainly don't expect you to believe me. And in fact, I suppose some of you might even like the extra material, bland and superfluous as it is. But for me, this version is a rough draft. I would much prefer to have a copy of the edited version. Editing is NOT a dirty word- it's part of the craft of writing.

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