



Australian Army Research Centre



Littoral Manoeuvre Reading List 2024

Dr John Nash

Serving our Nation



**Australian Army
Research Centre**

Littoral Manoeuvre Reading List 2024

Dr John Nash

Serving our Nation

© Commonwealth of Australia 2024

This work is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review (as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*), and with standard source credits included, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission.

All enquiries regarding this work should be forwarded to the Director of the Australian Army Research Centre (researchcentre.army.gov.au/contact-us)

To learn about the work of the Australian Army Research Centre visit researchcentre.army.gov.au

Cover image: The 1st Combat Service Support Battalion's Littoral Beach Team manoeuvre a Protected Mobility Vehicle off the MV Cooma Cooma at Gunn Point, NT as part of Exercise Predator's Run 2023.

Introduction

This reading list comprises notable works on littoral manoeuvre. It is by no means exhaustive, nor is it prescriptive. Reading lists are often a fraught endeavour: there are countless books, articles, reports, blogs, and podcasts concerned with any topic one might choose to study. As such, it is often better to present a selection of works with the caveat that what follows is a guideline on some of the most notable literature on the topic, in this case, 'littoral manoeuvre'. The following works are all worthy reads and will enlighten the reader on many aspects of complex littoral manoeuvre operations. Moreover, each work will help point the way to similar and connected works; many further relevant works on littoral manoeuvre operations can be identified by mining the bibliographies and reference lists of each.

This list is also designed to be accessible. Knowledge is of little use if it is hidden behind a paywall, or in a hard-to-access book. Not only is every work listed here valuable, they are all available either as a free download or, for Defence personnel, through the Defence Library Service.

Books

Australian Maritime Doctrine, Sea Power Centre – Australia, Canberra, 2010, <https://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/australian-maritime-doctrine-2010>.

Australian Maritime Doctrine 2010 (AMD) is the second edition of the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) capstone doctrine. It is an excellent starting point for understanding sea power concepts, the maritime operating environment, and how the RAN thinks about maritime operations as well as war at and from the sea.

Contest for the Indo-Pacific: Why China Won't Map the Future (Updated Edition), Rory Medcalf, La Trobe University Press, Melbourne, 2022. [Free access is available for Defence personnel through the Defence Library Service]

Professor Rory Medcalf is the Head of the National Security College at the Australian National University and an expert in the Indo-Pacific region. This book is an excellent survey of the region as both a geographical place, but also as an idea, a geopolitical construct that encompasses a huge swathe of the human population. It is a foundational work for understanding Australia's region now and into the future.

On Contested Shores: The Evolving Role of Amphibious Operations in the History of Warfare, Timothy Heck and B. A. Friedman (eds.), Marine Corps University Press Quantico, Virginia, 2020, <https://www.usmcu.edu/Outreach/Marine-Corps-University-Press/Books-by-topic/MCUP-Titles-A-Z/On-Contested-Shores/>.

This is an edited volume on amphibious operations throughout history and their enduring relevance. Case studies go back as far as the 16th Century, and many of the modern examples are less well known but critically important to understanding both the history and the future of amphibious warfare.

For an interview with Timothy Heck, one of the editors of the volume, where he provides an overview of its contents, a podcast is available from The Modern War Institute: <https://mwi.westpoint.edu/mwi-podcast-amphibious-operations-from-history-to-the-future-battlefield/>

From Hegemony to Competition. Marine Perspectives on Expeditionary Advanced Basing Operations, Matthew R. Slater (ed.), Marine Corps University Press, Quantico Virginia, 2022: <https://www.usmcu.edu/Outreach/Marine-Corps-University-Press/Books-by-topic/MCUP-Titles-A-Z/From-Hegemony-to-Competition/>

This volume has eight chapters, written by USMC officers, all of which examine aspects of how Marines may operate in future warfighting operations. Topics run from geo-strategic considerations through to operations and logistics. As a close partner to Australia, these readings provide important context on what the USMC is thinking about ways forward for their future.

Crossing the Strait: China's Military Prepares for War with Taiwan, Joel Wuthnow et. al., National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., 2022: <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Books/Crossing-the-Strait/>

This book examines one of the most hotly contested political and military problems of the modern era: a potential Chinese invasion of Taiwan. The chapters within examine it from both the Chinese and Taiwanese perspectives, including as a political problem and a military problem. It delves into the key problems of this potential conflict, which in turn is excellent background reading for some of the universal problems that bedevil all amphibious operations.

Combat at Close Quarters. Warfare on the Rivers and Canals of Vietnam, Edward J. Marolda and R. Blake Dunnavent, US Navy, Naval History & Heritage Command, 2015: <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/publications/publications-by-subject/combat-at-close-quarters.html>

This book details the history of US riverine forces during the Vietnam War, though it takes its starting point as French operation in the First Indochina War. The US riverine experience in Vietnam informed later such operations by the US Navy during Operation Iraqi Freedom. As the Australian Army prepares for littoral operations, including a riverine capability, it is important to understand the recent history of such operations and those of our key partners.

The Architect of Victory – The Military Career of Lieutenant General Sir Frank Horton Berryman, Peter J. Dean, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011. [Free access is available for Defence personnel through the Defence Library Service]

Lieutenant General Frank Berryman is an important yet little known figure in Australian military history. Part 3 of this book is the most relevant to littoral operations. He played a crucial role planning Allied operations in the Pacific from 1942-1945 in concert with senior Australian and US officers, including Generals Thomas Blamey and Douglas MacArthur. This biography provides excellent background into the history of Australian maritime operations in the Second World War Pacific Theatre.

Journals, Articles, and Research Reports

Australian Army Journal Volume, XIX, Number 2, <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/australian-army-journal-aaaj/volume-19-number-2>.

This themed edition of the Australian Army Journal is concerned exclusively with littoral operations. With a foreword by Chief of Army LTGEN Simon Stuart, and contributions from a range of academics and Army subject matter experts, the edition includes both historical studies and contemporary and future focused articles, all of which provoke thought on how the Australian Army might transform into a littoral force. It is currently the preeminent text published by the Australian Army on littoral manoeuvre, with authors from within Defence, industry and academia providing important insights into one of the Service's most pressing issues.

'On Littoral Warfare', Milan Vego, *US Naval War College Review*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2015: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol68/iss2/4/>

Milan Vego is a leading figure in maritime and naval warfare studies and his article is essential reading on the littoral environment and warfare within it. Crucially, it examines the littoral as an operating area and delves into issues such as how physical geography affects military operations, including such things as maritime traffic, depth of water, weather and sensor performance. It uses a litany of historical examples to highlight some of the problems, and opportunities, of operating in such an environment.

'U.S. Ground Forces in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress', Andrew Feickert, *Congressional Research Service*, 30 August 2022: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/details?prodcode=R47096>

This research report provides very useful background and information on the dispositions and roles of various US ground forces – Army and Marines – in the Indo-Pacific region. It is a good primer on where US forces are stationed in the region, what roles they currently undertake, and their concepts for future operations, including force structure changes.

Chinese Lessons From the Pacific War: Implications for PLA Warfighting, Toshi Yoshihara, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2023: <https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/chinese-lessons-from-the-pacific-war-implications-for-pla-warfighting>

Making use of extensive Chinese-language literature on three key battles in the Pacific Campaign of World War Two - Midway, Guadalcanal, and Okinawa – Toshi Yoshihara highlights the ‘operational insights that Chinese strategists have gleaned from them’. By examining how the Chinese military has analysed these battles, this article provides unique insights into a major power located in the Indo-Pacific might think about future operations in the region.

‘The First Battle of the Next War: Wargaming a Chinese Invasion of Taiwan’, Mark F. Cancian, Matthew Cancian, and Eric Heginbotham, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, Washington, DC, January 2023: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/first-battle-next-war-wargaming-chinese-invasion-taiwan>

Wargaming has become a very potent tool in exploring options and potential ways ahead in a rapidly changing world. This report details the outcome of a wargame developed by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) that was run 24 times, highlighting some of the key issues involved in high-end warfighting in a potential conflict in the Indo-Pacific region.

researchcentre.army.gov.au