SOFTWARE & TECH

Orson Scott Card Series List

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Exploring the Vast Universe of Stories: A Comprehensive Orson Scott Card Series List

Orson Scott Card is a name that resonates deeply with fans of science fiction, fantasy, and historical fiction alike. Best known for his groundbreaking novel *Ender's Game*, Card has built a sprawling literary universe that spans multiple series, each with its own unique characters, philosophies, and worlds. For both new readers and long-time followers, navigating his extensive bibliography can be daunting. This **Orson Scott Card series list** provides a thorough guide to his most important series, detailing the core themes, recommended reading order, and what makes each sequence special. Whether you are a fan of military sci-fi, epic fantasy, or character-driven historical sagas, Card's work offers something profound. This guide will help you choose your next reading adventure and appreciate the scope of his storytelling.

The Enderverse: The Crown Jewel of Science Fiction

The most famous entry in any **Orson Scott Card series list** is undoubtedly the Enderverse. What began as a short story about a child genius in a battle school has expanded into a multi-layered saga exploring empathy, leadership, and alien contact. The Enderverse is typically divided into two main branches: the Ender Quintet and the Shadow Quartet, plus numerous short stories and novels that fill in the gaps.

This sequence follows Ender Wiggin from his childhood at Battle School through his interstellar exile and eventual rise to a god-like figure on a distant planet. The books in this branch are:

- Ender's Game (1985): The seminal novel that introduces Ender, a brilliant child recruited to fight an alien race called the Formics. The book is a masterclass in psychological warfare and moral ambiguity.
- Speaker for the Dead (1986): Set years later, Ender travels as a "Speaker" who tells the true stories of the dead. This deeply philosophical novel explores themes of understanding and redemption.
- Xenocide (1991): Continues the story on the planet Lusitania, where Ender and characters from the first book face a crisis involving a sentient species that could be destroyed by human contact.
- Children of the Mind (1996): The conclusion of the central arc, dealing with the nature of consciousness, artificial intelligence, and sacrifice.
- Ender in Exile (2008): A bridge novel set between Ender's Game and Speaker for the Dead, filling in details of Ender's journey. It can be read after the first book or after the quintet.

This branch runs concurrently with the early parts of the Ender Quintet but focuses on Bean, Ender's brilliant but physically vulnerable friend. These novels are more political and tactical, dealing with the aftermath of the war on Earth.

- Ender's Shadow (1999): A parallel novel to Ender's Game, telling the same story from Bean's perspective. It stands alone but enriches the original.
- Shadow of the Hegemon (2001): The battle school children are kidnapped and forced into a global power struggle.
- Shadow Puppets (2002): Bean and his allies try to stop a madman from taking over the world through a virus.
- Shadow of the Giant (2005): The conclusion of Bean's story, dealing with his genetic condition and his legacy.

Additional novels like *Shadows in Flight* and the ongoing *Shadows Alive* (unfinished) extend the Shadow series into

the far future, connecting back to the Ender Quintet. For readers wanting a complete **Orson Scott Card series list**, the Enderverse is the most rewarding place to start.

The Tales of Alvin Maker: American Fantasy at Its Finest

Another essential entry in any **Orson Scott Card series list** is the *Alvin Maker*series, a historical fantasy set in an alternate early America where magic—called "knacks"—is real. The series follows Alvin Miller, a seventh son of a seventh son, who possesses the powerful ability to "make" or shape reality. This series is deeply inspired by American folklore, Joseph Smith, and the frontier spirit. The books are:

- Seventh Son (1987): Introduces Alvin's childhood and his struggle against the "Unmaker," a force of chaos that opposes creation.
- Red Prophet (1988): Centers on the Native American prophet Lolla-Wossiky (Tenskwa-tawa) and explores the clash of cultures.
- Prentice Alvin (1989): Alvin learns his craft from a blacksmith and discovers the limits of his power.
- Alvin Journeyman (1995): Alvin travels and faces legal and personal challenges in a society that fears his gift.
- Heartfire (1998): Alvin's journey takes him to New England and into the heart of abolitionist movements.
- The Crystal City (2003): The series builds toward a grand conclusion involving the creation of a utopian city.
- Master Alvin (upcoming): A planned final volume that has been long awaited by fans. (Card has indicated he intends to complete it.)

This series is often considered Card's most literary work, weaving together theology, history, and magic in a uniquely American voice.

The Homecoming Saga: A Sci-Fi Retelling of the Book of Mormon

For readers interested in Card's religious influences, the *Homecoming Saga* is a pivotal part of the **Orson Scott Card series list**. This five-book series is a science fiction allegory of the Book of Mormon, set on a distant planet where a decadent city-state (called Basilica) is destroyed, forcing a group of refugees to journey back to the Earth they have forgotten. The series explores themes of faith, leadership, and societal collapse.

- The Memory of Earth (1992): Introduces the planet Harmony and the Oversoul, a guardian AI that is failing.
- The Call of Earth (1993): The central character Nafai is chosen to lead the exodus.
- The Ships of Earth (1994): The journey begins as the refugees travel across the planet.
- Earthfall (1995): The colonists finally reach Earth and face its dangers.
- Earthborn (1995): The concluding volume dealing with the early settlement and the conflict between remaining human factions and the mysterious Keeper of Earth.

This series is less well-known than the Enderverse but is a fascinating blend of hard sci-fi and religious allegory.

The Mithermages Series: Contemporary Fantasy Meets Ancient Myth

A more recent addition to the **Orson Scott Card series list** is the *Mithermages* series (also known as the *Gatefather*series). This urban fantasy trilogy follows a young man named Danny who discovers he can travel between parallel worlds. Card creates a detailed magic system based on "gating" and "mithering" (the manipulation of strings of reality). The books are:

- The Lost Gate (2011): Introduces Danny, the last of the Greek-style mages from a hidden American community. He must learn to use his powers to escape his enemies.
- The Gate Thief (2013): Danny confronts the mysterious figure who steals gates from other mages, leading to a deeper exploration of the multiverse.
- Gatefather (2015): The conclusion where Danny must protect the human worlds from a cosmic threat.

Fans of Card's style will recognize his signature themes: a gifted but isolated protagonist, complex family dynamics, and moral dilemmas.

Women of Genesis: Historical Fiction with a Spiritual Lens

While Card is primarily known for science fiction, his *Women of Genesis* series is a notable deviation into historical religious fiction. This series retells the stories of biblical matriarchs from a first-person perspective, blending scriptural sources with imaginative detail. Included in the **Orson Scott Card series list** for completeness:

- Sarah (2000): The story of Abraham's wife, focusing on her faith and struggles.
- Rebekah (2001): The wife of Isaac and mother of Jacob and Esau.
- Rachel & Leah (2004): The two wives of Jacob and their complex relationship.
- Joseph (1999) – though technically not a woman, this novel is often grouped with the series and covers the life of Jacob's son.

These novels are meticulously researched and respected by readers who appreciate character-driven historical fiction.

The Worthing Chronicles: A Standalone but Connected Series

An often-overlooked part of the **Orson Scott Card series list** is the *Worthing* series. It originated from Card's early novel *Hot Sleep* and includes the later *The Worthing Saga*. This series deals with a future where people can put themselves into deep sleep for centuries, and a man named Jason Worthing discovers the ability to heal and control others through a form of telepathy. The stories are philosophical and examine the nature of power and responsibility. The main volumes are:

- Hot Sleep (1979) – later revised and expanded.
- The Worthing Chronicle (1983): A collection of stories and a novel.
- The Worthing Saga (1990): The definitive compilation, including the full story of Jason Worthing.

This series is a great introduction to Card's early themes.

Other Notable Series and Standalone Works

To make this **Orson Scott Card series list** complete, we should mention a few other multi-book projects:

- Empire series: A near-future political thriller about a second American Civil War. Books: Empire (2006) and Hidden Empire (2009).
- Pathfinder series: A young-adult sci-fi trilogy about a boy who can manipulate time and space. Books: Pathfinder (2010), Ruins (2012), Visitors (2014).
- The Folk of the Fringe: A post-apocalyptic collection of stories set in a Mormon-dominated America after a nuclear war.
- Ladder top: A graphic novel series co-written with his daughter, Emily Janice Card, set in a sci-fi world.

How to Choose Where to Start in This Orson Scott Card Series List

With so many series, the best entry point depends on your taste. If you want classic science fiction, begin with **Ender's Game**and then decide whether to follow Ender or Bean. If you prefer fantasy rooted in American history, the Tales of Alvin

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