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Someone onboard the USS Michaelson is selling secrets, and to uncover the traitor, legal officer Lieutenant Paul Sinclair must walk the dangerous line between duty and honor.

Against All Enemies Details

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From Reader Review Against All Enemies for online ebook

Jeffrey Grant says

Business as usual isn't so bad if business is good.

This final entry into the "JAG in Space" series sees Paul Sinclair caught up in an espionage investigation and trial, with Paul himself actually doing a certain amount of espionage and getting embroiled in another court martial.

This book actually had some legitimate mystery to it for a while, which was a nice change; generally in these books it was a foregone conclusion regarding the outcome and the rest of the narrative was solely to explain how things would get there. The investigation and the trial are still well-written and interesting to read, but unfortunately the mystery of everything falls off by midway through, and while there is a dangling question that lasts throughout the book, I was disappointed in the eventual outcome.

There was a decent amount of character interaction off the ship regarding Paul's assignments and romance, but I found myself disinterested; those elements of the story were never the strongest, and I mostly kept up with them to provide some continuity from book to book. It's clear Hemry didn't intend for this to be the final entry in the series, as there are some threads that were not tied up. I haven't been able to find any information about why he stopped, but I do know his lost fleet series featured better writing, characters, and plotting, at least in my opinion.

The series definitely has flaws, and it's not one I would go back to reread, unlike the Lost Fleet books, but it was still an enjoyable distraction.

Wayne says

If someone had told me, here's this series about military lawyers in a space SciFi env, I am not sure I'd even twitch. But, having read Hemry's other series (written as Jack Campbell) and it's awesome. Word is he switched to a pen name because the earlier series weren't well received. And having caught up with his Campbell series, I decided to try them, I mean, how bad can they be?

Well, they are very compelling reads. He's very good at believable dialog and a wide array of characters. Sure a lot of support characters are tropes, but ... they are support characters, who cares? Main characters are very well developed and well done. Then, having finished book 4, I realized he NEVER described any character physically except for gender and very occasionally height. Proving you can avoid the tedious beginnings of so many books where the author describes everything in tedious detail.

Leather says

Fourth and final part of this transposition of the US Navy into space, Against All enemies is in the right line of the three previous volumes. The style is limpid, fluid, the characters are very human, very endearing. With always the touch of romance that characterizes the author of the Lost Fleet.

The officers of the USS Michaelson are very well done, very alive. The conduct of the ship, its chain of command and the relations between the officers are strikingly realistic.

As usual the book is divided into two parts: a mission in space very interesting, of a beautiful intensity, which is similar to a submarine mission. As usual in the second half of the book it becomes a courtroom novel, much less interesting and almost deprived of any suspense. In the previous books there were classical but welcome twists but in this latest installment of the series it's very bland.

So we leave the now Lieutenant Paul Sinclair at the end of this fourth installment when he received a new assignment, the door being largely open to a suite that will probably never see the light of day.

JAG in Space is a very unusual SciFi series, centered on the legal functioning of the American Navy, with a very light SciFi universe.

The great talent of the author is to have managed to make novels pleasant to read with that!

Mark says

Below is a review/look at the series as a whole, not just the one book!

The mission statement taken from the official website of the United States Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps (U.S. Navy JAG):

The Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps provides solutions, from a military perspective, to legal issues involving military operations, organization, and personnel, wherever and whenever such solutions are required, with primary focus on operations, accountability, Sailor legal readiness, and Navy legal readiness.

While this may seem like a strange place to start when talking about a Sci-Fi series set in space, in the future, it's actually very relevant to the series in question. Not only does it give a brief and factual statement on what the JAG Corps do, the books in this series are written by a former Navy Officer, one who served on different assignments during his career, and has direct experience with legal matters in the US Navy.

The author? John G Hemry. The series? JAG in Space. The books? A Just Determination, Burden of Proof, Rule of Evidence, Against All Enemies.

The UK covers to the series, available from Titan Books

Many of you out there might recognise John G Hemry as the man behind Jack Campbell, author of the Lost Fleet series of books. Using that pen name, Hemry has been hitting the bestseller lists with his Lost Fleet series (starting with Dauntless), and with the more recent Beyond the Frontier (Dreadnaught, Invincible, Guardian, Steadfast) and Lost Stars (Tarnished Knight, Perilous Shield) series. However, before John 'Black Jack' Geary came into being there was another Navy Officer that Hemry was writing about: Paul Sinclair.

Ensign Paul Sinclair boards the USS Michaelson to begin his career in the US Navy, a Navy that now includes spaceships in its fleet. As humanity and its governments start to leave Earth and inhabit the solar system, the Navies of these governments find themselves in a new environment, but events are more than familiar. During his time aboard the Michaelson – which spans the four books of this series – Sinclair faces many different situations, ranging from normal day-to-day activities and duties related to his role, to the more serious and unusual tasks he comes across in his role as the ships legal officer.

I think one of the aspects that really needs to be highlighted from the get-go is the way that Hemry portrays the Navy, Officers, Enlisted, and, well, generally everything about this series. In short, the novels read as very real and very believable. Take away the sci-fi aspect and you could easily be reading about life aboard

ocean going ships in the current Navy. Hemry establishes this early on, and effectively uses the current Navy structure along with his own experiences in a solid and rigid structure. I'm not a military person, I don't know whether or not what I'm reading is fact or fiction when it comes to the regulations and behaviours of the Navy personnel, but Hemry is confident in his delivery and doesn't contradict himself at all in the telling. I believe what I read, and that's a huge part of a successful story.

With such a rigid structure used to tell the story you could be forgiven in thinking that the characters would be cardboard cut-outs, the generic military personnel you find in many a story. Hemry, thankfully, doesn't fall into this trap. His characters are well defined and the majority have distinct personalities that defy convention. Of course, there are going to be the odd one or two here and there that meet expectations in that sense, but they're few and far between. Even then, over the course of the series we become more familiar with many of the characters, enough to dispel initial impressions assigning them to certain camps.

a-just-determination

The re-issue cover of the US edition, available from ACE Books

At the heart of this series is the legal drama, it's as simple as that. And boy, do we get our money's worth. From early on in the first novel, A Just Determination, it's clear that Hemry knows his stuff and plans on getting the most out of it. From 'Captain's Mast' sessions, to queries Sinclair has to clarify regarding orders, to Court Martials, this series really does deliver. He builds on it from there, with each novel giving a distinct and unique look at the legal system within the Navy.

While the vast majority of the JAG in Space novels are pretty much on the ball, there is one aspect that perhaps falls short: worldbuilding. This is more relevant to the first couple of novels, with the space situation not really that clear – where is it set, how from Earth has humanity travelled, what technology is in use. As the novels progress this becomes resolved and, as a whole, the series becomes thoroughly well constructed.

While sticking to an established structure and perhaps appealing to those who like military stories, the JAG in Space series really does offer plenty for readers in general. The series is also concluded nicely by the end of Against All Enemies, but even then its open to more stories. Personally I'd like to read more about the trials and tribulations of Paul Sinclair, and I'll hold out hope that Hemry returns to this once he's done with the adventures of Black Jack.

In short, for intelligent and well thought out sci-fi, you shouldn't look any further the Jag in Space. Highly recommended.

Michael says

Another great science fiction book by John G. Hemry a.k.a. Jack Campbell. This book is a blend of hard SF, military SF and legal drama. It describes the first tour of duty of a young Navy Ensign (Ensign Paul Sinclair) on a deep space ship. One of his side jobs is as the ships legal adviser. This final entry into the "JAG in Space" series sees Paul Sinclair, who is now a Lieutenant, caught up in an espionage investigation and trial. This is a good book but I wish Hemry had ended the series on a stronger note. I also wish he had written more books. All in all a great read which I highly recommend.

Online Eccentric Librarian says

More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>

In this final book, completing Paul Sinclair's tour of duty on board the Michaelson, we're given more complex character building along with the expected action-then-trial of the previous books. This fourth is just as engaging and I was a bit sad to see it come to an end. Things are tied up fairly neatly but not always in favor of our poor beleaguered protagonist.

Story: When it becomes obvious the SASL ships know far too much about the Michaelson's orders while on a mission, deaths of civilians and military are the result. Paul Sinclair is approached to help root out the spy on his ship - a position Paul is quite uncomfortable about accepting when he discovers it is one of the officers - perhaps even one with whom he shares a stateroom.

This last book had a lot more machinations in it; now that the characters are well established, Campbell spends time with a more intricate plot. As with previous books, guilt isn't necessarily assumed and Paul grapples with not only condemning one of his fellow officers but the idea that anyone could blithely perform actions that cost lives. It's a constant theme in Campbell's books, especially this series, that the loss of lives will always be a result of apathy, arrogance, or incompetence. As well, his actions in previous books hardly endeared him to the brass and he will pay for that as a result.

I listened to the Audible version and the narrator did an excellent job with all the characters.

Bob says

I really liked this whole series, kind of a Horatio-Hornblower-meets-John-Grisham kind of thing. I enjoyed the futuristic look at what the US Navy might look like 100 years in the future, when it is a spacefaring fleet. I also enjoyed the legal courtroom JAG-type drama. My only criticism is of the "love story" that progressed throughout the series: it was a little trite and cloyingly sweet. But that's a very minor criticism. I'm actually disappointed that after four quite good novels, the author decided to end the series -- I'd love to devour more of these quick little books! These novels are probably a better choice for lovers of legal dramas and historical military tales than science fiction aficionados, but I do recommend them as a light read, quite hardily!

Kickarse Reviews says

Really enjoyed this, the fourth book in the JAG in Space series by John G. Hemry. Really enjoyed his Lost Fleet series - read them all - and loved this series too!

BobA707 says

Summary: Really well written and thoughtful book, the plot is weak and the action thin, but the premise is excellent. Just as good as the first 3 books in the series. Quite sad that it is the last book in the series.

Plotline: Very simple plot but superbly presented. A few more minor plot holes in this one.

Premise: Totally believable, but not very far in the future

Writing: Simple, very descriptive, the detail is breathtaking. Not particularly subtle at times.

Ending: Predictable but satisfactory

Pace: Never a dull moment!

William Scarborough says

I've found a good book for military sc-fi'ers to read.

Accurate military action , espionage, court room drama that WASN'T slog to read! Go ahead, spend your money and your time.... buy this book and enjoy!

Niels Bugge says

A very fine ending to a great series

Graham says

The JAG in Space series is a welcome change from the far-too-prevalent shoot-em-up/military sci fi offerings. The legal base of these books isn't something I can comment on except to say that it always seems to make sense. The hero, however, is something of a miracle worker at times: A three week training course somehow enables him to sway judges and courts. On the other hand, the series is entertaining and competently written - as you would expect from the John G. Henry/Jack Campbell pen. As often happens with Kindle books, there are a few formatting hiccups but there are far fewer of these than I've seen in other sci fi books recently, certainly not enough to even remotely spoil the enjoyment. I'm glad I've read them and will probably reread them before too long.

Jeff Yoak says

What a fantastic end to a great series. The book was gripping and gives a proper goodbye to our hero as he sails off into the sunset, married and happy for the next stage of his life. I wish we could follow him there.

Steven Allen says

I am really surprised how much I enjoyed this series. I read the Lost Fleet and the other series set in that world so I am familiar with this author. Despite my trepidation at reading this series, I was impressed how this author could make a General Courts Martial interesting enough to read.

I expected that I would be skipping a lot between chapters especially when the trials started. While there is some space combat, that is not where these books really focus.

There is some foul language (they are sailors after all!) and sex is implied but not graphically discussed or described.

I hope that the author will return to this series again as it ended on a decent cliffhanger with the MC heading for the equivalent of Siberia. The author is a retired US Naval officer, so he well knows how petty and vindictive senior officers can be when they feel wronged.
