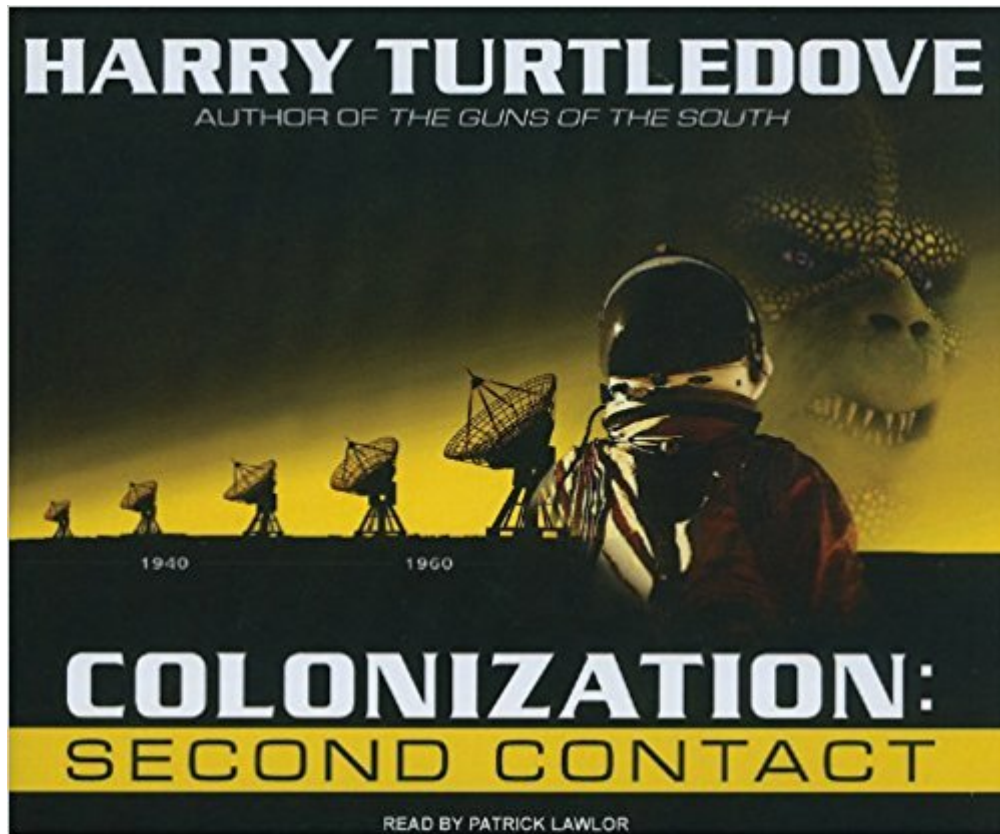




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Colonization: Second Contact



Synopsis

In the extraordinary Worldwar tetralogy, set against the backdrop of World War II, Harry Turtledove, whom Publishers Weekly has called the "Hugo-winning master of alternate SF," wove an explosive saga of world powers locked in conflict against an enemy from the stars. Now he expands his magnificent epic into the volatile 1960s, when the space race is in its infancy and humanity must face its greatest challenge: alien colonization of planet Earth. Yet even in the shadow of this inexorable foe, the United States, the Soviet Union, and Nazi Germany are unable to relinquish their hostilities and unite against a massive new wave of extraterrestrials. For all the countries of the world, this is the greatest threat of all. This time, the terrible price of defeat will be the conquest of our world and perhaps the extinction of the human race itself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I enjoy explorations of alien races' cultures, so these books have been highly enjoyable in that respect. However, one thing has marred my appreciation of the "Colonization" series: either Harry Turtledove thinks his readers have the short-term memory of an avocado, or he places a higher priority on wordcount than on good writing. How many times must we be told that Mordechai Anilewicz has pains in his leg muscles because he breathed Nazi poison gas twenty years ago? Every time he appears in the story, apparently. How frequently must we be reminded that Earth years are twice the length of the Race's years? Why, every time a member of the Race mentions years, or whenever a human mentions years to a member of the Race. How often must it be

recounted that the Race prefers temperatures higher than those which humans find comfortable? Any time someone enters or exits a building inhabited by the Race! How many times must we be told that Sam Yeager's wife would disapprove of common-usage English? Every time her husband or son speaks or thinks in the vernacular, of course! If you come away from this book (and its sequels) without knowing the effect ginger has on females of the Race, then you clearly read only the first and last pages, because (as with many more things) it's described at great length more times than you'll be able to count. Characters explain the same things over and over again, sometimes even to the same people. When nobody else is around, they'll sometimes think the explanations to themselves! Further padding out the wordcount is the all-too-common SF cliché that intelligent aliens seem unable to grasp the concept of contractions when speaking English. I loved the tale, but the telling of it could have been vastly improved by an editor who'd had the fortitude to tell Harry Turtledove to trim the fat.

Ok, for starters, yes I am hooked. I read the Worldwar series voraciously, especially the 2nd and 3rd were actually exciting and hard to put down. I couldn't wait a year for the next. The last Worldwar though was a bit disappointing, and so was "How Few Remain" because they dragged and dragged and were generally listless. As if a trend, so did this. The story lines were slow, and really not till the end did they amount to anything, and even the Muslim revolt was little more than table setting to hook you into the next book. I sincerely hoped for better because I loved the WorldWar books so much and thought this to be a very intriguing situation - the colonization fleet lands, upsetting the status quo since the peace declaration. There are always interesting tidbits in every book, such as the way that the lizard females react to ginger, but as I saw the pages to yet to be read dwindle, I was happy rather than disappointed that it was almost done. Best I can say is, I hope the future volumes will pick the pace up, get more interesting sub-stories and have more action.

In general I would recommend beginning with the first in this series, called Worldwar: In The Balance. While this book does move the timeframe forward a generation, it is substantially a continuation of the Worldwar series. What Turtledove does really well here is to surprise the reader with some interesting events (which I won't spoil). The criticism that his Lizards's military technology is so coincidentally similar to 2000-era US military tech is a valid one, and I'd like to see Turtledove account for it at some point. Not as strong as the earlier books in the series, but still quite good.

I've become something of an alternative history addict in recent years, thanks in no small measure to Harry Turtledove. This series has been around a while and I'm just getting around to it but I'm already psyched. Even though his approach to storytelling is sometimes maddeningly confusing (a fault rendered more significant thanks to crappy formatting on the Kindle app), and though there isn't even a pretense of drawing any story line to a real conclusion, the vignettes are so compelling and the characters so well drawn that it is easy to look past the shortcomings. It feels to me like the author writes the whole series as one manuscript and then arbitrarily whacks it into books. No real rhyme or reason. Still, I will certainly read the remaining books in this series and be every bit as compelled to their inconclusions as ever. Like I said: addict.

It is 15 years after the end of an alternative WORLDWAR II, with the Axis and Allies having combined forces to help force a stalemate against an invading conquering fleet consisting of male reptilian aliens with advanced technology but limited resources; and with a 2nd wave of aliens arriving as part of a colonization fleet of 80-100 million males and females, who expected to find a subdued planet, but end up finding it is anything else but. Most of the characters who lived thru the first set of 4 books return in sometimes surprisingly different roles. This book takes on a more "cold war" flavor, with spying, insurgencies, drug-trading, and other underhanded tactics taking the place of the all-out war described in the previous books. I noticed the three COLONIZATION SERIES books are slightly larger than the four WORLDWAR SERIES books - about 600 paperback pages vs. 580. However, the same format is followed, with 20 chapters, containing about 6 passages each... it is this consistent format that allows Mr. Turtledove to tirelessly crank out the text to fill these series. It is a true gift that allows him to do this, and still keep things different and interesting enough to keep our attention through this marathon series.

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