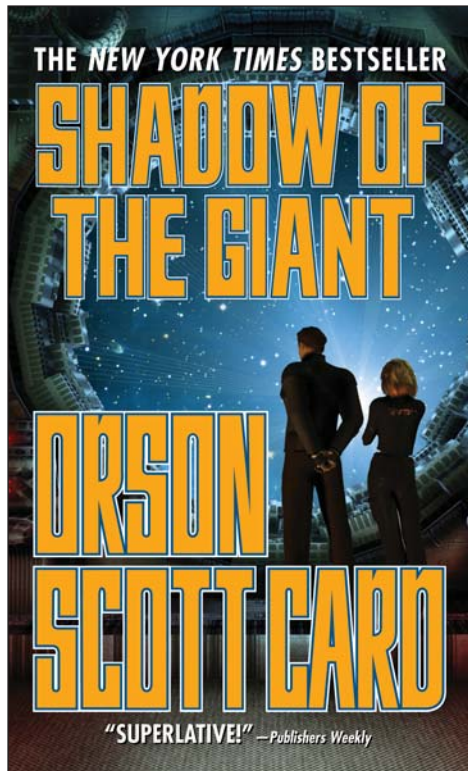




# Orson Scott Card

## Shadow of the Giant



368 pages • 0-312-85758-6

“Award-winning SF author Card continues his brilliant Ender saga...with a story of love, sacrifice, and duty on the eve of global war. Highly recommended.”

—LIBRARY JOURNAL ON *SHADOW OF THE GIANT*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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**Orson Scott Card** is the author of the international bestsellers *Shadow Puppets*, *Shadow of the Hegemon*, and *Ender's Shadow*, and of the beloved classic of science fiction, *Ender's Game*. He lives in Greensboro, North Carolina.

### ABOUT *SHADOW OF THE GIANT*

Bean's past was a battle just to survive. He first appeared on the streets of Rotterdam, a tiny child with a mind leagues beyond anyone else's. He knew he could not survive through strength; he used his tactical genius to gain acceptance into a children's gang and then to help make that gang a template for success for all the others. He civilized them, and lived to grow older. Then he was discovered by the recruiters for the Battle School.

For Earth was at war—a terrible war with an inscrutable alien enemy. A war that humanity was near to losing. But the long distances of interstellar space have given hope to the defenders of Earth—they had time to train military geniuses up from childhood, forging them into an irresistible force in the high-orbital facility called the Battle School. That story is told in two books, the beloved classic *Ender's Game*, and its parallel, *Ender's Shadow*.

Bean, once the smallest student at the Battle School, and Ender Wiggins' right hand, has grown to be a power on Earth. He served the Hegemon as strategist and general in the terrible wars that followed Ender's defeat of the alien empire attacking Earth. Now he wishes for a safe place to build a family—something he has never known—but there is nowhere on Earth that does not harbor his enemies—old enemies from the days in Ender's Jeesh, new enemies from the wars on Earth. To find security, Bean and Petra must once again follow in Ender's footsteps. They must leave Earth behind, in the control of the Hegemon, and look to the stars.

## READING PLANNER

WEEK 1 – Part One: Mandate of Heaven (pp. 1-162)

WEEK 2 – Part Two: Grief (pp. 163-327)

WEEK 3 – Part Three: Enemies (pp. 328-494)

WEEK 4 – Review

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

### WEEK 1

1. Most of the key characters in *Shadow of the Giant* are the Battle School graduates who were members of Ender's Jeesh. What do they have in common? How do they differ? Each was brought up, as Han Tzu says, as a "child of war." Are they capable of leading normal lives, or did Battle School deprive them of that ability for good?
2. Islam looms large in this novel. How is the religion divided, and who do you think are the "true" Muslims? Islam often appears as a brutal, conquering force here. How do you think the story is influenced by the author's reaction to the events of 9/11 and the present-day rise of fundamentalist Islamic terrorism?
3. Consider the women in Card's story. What do you think is the significance of the first two female characters we meet in the novel both being pregnant? Discuss how Petra divides her identity as a political strategist/battle commander and as a mother. Which sphere of life matters more to her? In which one do you think her contribution is most important?

### WEEK 2

1. Propaganda—controlling public perception of leaders and events—is one of the most powerful tools for political gain in the novel. Who uses it most skillfully? Do you think any of its uses here are honorable, or do they all play on the fears and basest instincts of the public? Is it possible to exercise power without influencing the public perception of your actions and motives?
2. Virlomi is one of the most unusual characters in the story. What is her real power over the people of India? Do you think that she actually receives divine favor, or has her sense of her own power become delusional? As a faith-based political leader, who do you think she resembles in today's world? Can faith-based political systems work, or are they implicitly dangerous? Are there any political systems that do not depend on the citizens' sharing a common set of values and beliefs?

3. What do you think is Peter Wiggin's true motivation as Hegemon? Are other characters in the story right to trust or distrust him? What are his goals for the office of the Hegemon, and do you think he can actually achieve them?

### WEEK 3

1. Ambition turns out to have been one of the tested criteria for admission to Battle School. Is ambition an advantage or, as Mazer Rackham says, a "disease"? What do different characters discover about their own ambition as the novel unfolds? And do you agree with Graff that the Jeesh members are too dangerous for Earth—that their ambition will always lead nations toward war?
2. Because the Battle Schoolers were taken from their birth families at an early age, Battle School itself became a family structure for them. How do families function in the story? What advantages—and disadvantages—do they offer? How do they resemble your family, or other families that you know of in the real world?
3. Bean is a character caught in a tragic dilemma. Would anyone wish to be in his place? Is dying young too high a price to pay for a life of unlimited intelligence and astonishing achievements? And would you have made the same decision to leave Petra on Earth with their normal children?

### WEEK 4 (General Questions)

1. Who are the ultimate heroes of *Shadow of the Giant*? What is their moral code? Why do billions of people revere them? What do these characters want for humanity and for themselves?
2. Though men like Bean participate warmly and actively in parenting, it is presented as a primary vocation only for women—supposedly their highest calling, overriding the lure of achievement in politics or the military. Is this double-standard a part of human nature, or is it something imposed by society? How will Bean's life change as he becomes the primary caregiver to his children aboard the starship? Do you think that parenting can ever be as crucial to men's identities as to women's?
3. Mazer Rackham claims that human beings are "bred for war". Is war an inevitable consequence of the human condition? Can we as a species ever outgrow it? Do you think that the goals of political unity and world peace that Peter Wiggin finally achieves can ever be possible in real life?

## “MYSTERY PASSAGE”

“Life is full of grief, to exactly the degree we allow ourselves to love other people.” (p. 221)

Do you think that this is true? Is our love for others worth the grief that ensues? Would you trade love for a life free from grief or emotional pain? Which characters in the novel are governed by love, and are they in a weaker or stronger position than others because of it?

## PRAISE FOR ORSON SCOTT CARD

“[Card] does a superlative job of dramatically portraying the maturing process of child into adult.... Fans will marvel at how subtly he has prepared for the clever resolution.”

—*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY ON SHADOW OF THE GIANT*

“The tension between characters’ personal fulfillment and collective obligations...comes to the fore.... Novels in this saga (not to mention Card himself) have acquired an irresistible aura.” —*BOOKLIST ON SHADOW OF THE GIANT*

“The novels of Orson Scott Card’s Ender series are an intriguing combination of action, military, and political strategy, elaborate war games and psychology.”

—*USA TODAY*

“The publishing equivalent of a *Star Wars* blockbuster.”

—*NEW YORK DAILY NEWS ON ENDER’S SHADOW*