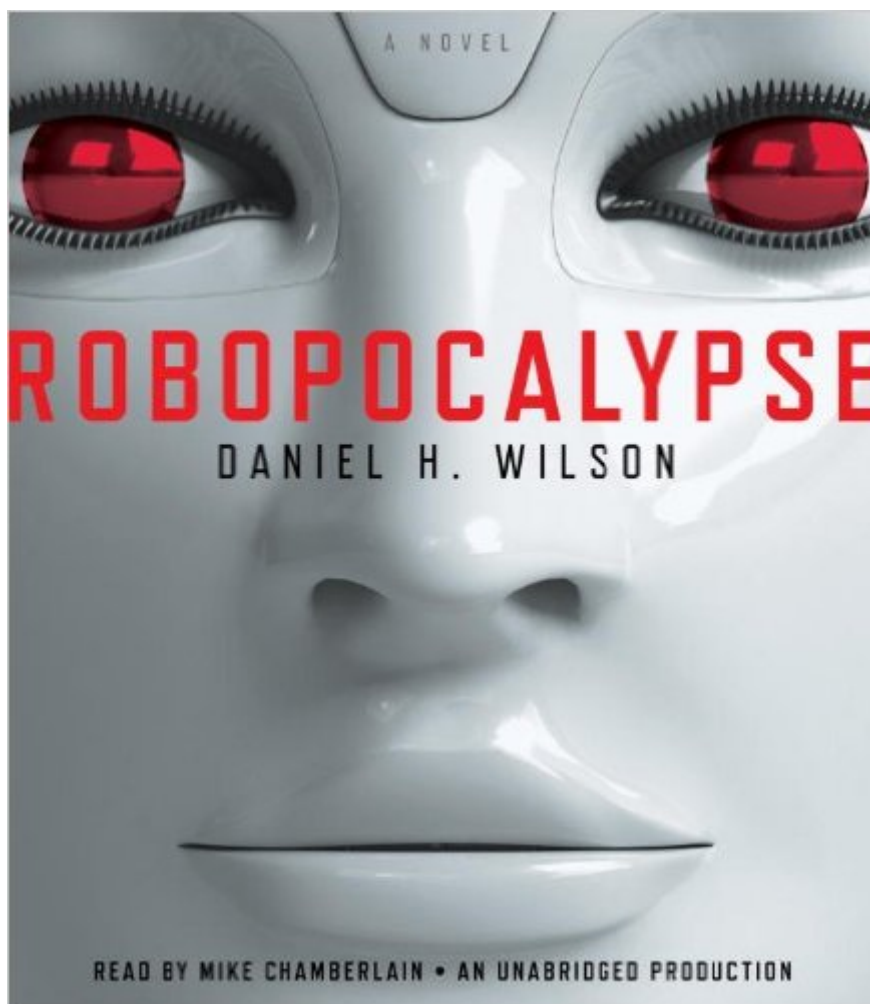


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Robopocalypse: A Novel



Synopsis

They are in your house. They are in your car. They are in the skies. Now they're coming for you. In the near future, at a moment no one will notice, all the dazzling technology that runs our world will unite and turn against us. Taking on the persona of a shy human boy, a childlike but massively powerful artificial intelligence known as Archos comes online and assumes control over the global network of machines that regulate everything from transportation to utilities, defense and communication. In the months leading up to this, sporadic glitches are noticed by a handful of unconnected humans — a single mother disconcerted by her daughter's menacing smart toys, a lonely Japanese bachelor who is victimized by his domestic robot companion, an isolated U.S. soldier who witnesses a "pacification unit" go haywire — but most are unaware of the growing rebellion until it is too late. When the Robot War ignites -- at a moment known later as Zero Hour -- humankind will be both decimated and, possibly, for the first time in history, united. Robopocalypse is a brilliantly conceived action-filled epic, a terrifying story with heart-stopping implications for the real technology all around us and an entertaining and engaging thriller unlike anything else written in years. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I think most readers are going to either love this novel or be disappointed with it. Daniel Wilson is a mimic of Max Brooks, only with robots instead of zombies. The storytelling style of Robopocalypse is almost identical to World War Z. If you didn't like it there, you won't like it here. While the author's

background in robotics is impressive, his fiction writing leaves something to be desired. There are some really compelling scenes -- tense, raw. Genuinely thrilling. Very visual, I can actually see how it would translate into a big-budget popcorn flick. But in non-action scenes the prose is uninspiring at best and just plain boring overall. I feel like the beginning diffuses most of the tension in the story. The reader is told right off that humanity wins. Any discerning reader would metagame that to be the ending, but I'd rather be kept guessing throughout the novel. Most people have seen Terminator and Maximum Overdrive, nothing original on that front, and this one mixes in some Independence Day too. Each chapter is a separate vignette recorded during some portion of the robot war. Each is in a different style and point of view, some that feel more like a script than a novel. Sometimes people recount what happened after the fact. Sometimes all the reader gets is a fast-paced action scene. Early on as a result of this, world building is incorporated into characters' dialogue (people randomly explaining things they wouldn't be doing in conversation), making the dialogue itself weak and artificial. I personally dislike this style of storytelling. I don't think it was the best way to tell this story. The character development is poor.

Having not read the other book some reviewers say this is similar to, I found this a fast-paced, fun intelligent and original sci-fi thriller. Here were it's ups and downs for me to help you decide if it's for you. **SHORT SUMMARY:** A very smart computer/robot goes on a mission to destroy the human race and take over the world using robots. As the war ends, one man, Cormac Wallace, recounts the history of the fight to protect mankind through the tales of an eclectic group of folks from all over the world who ultimately unite in their mission. 1. Intelligently crafted: The idea of focusing on such an interesting eclectic group of characters to convey the story is clever and providing a nice, big look at an apocalyptic level tale. There's a Congresswoman and her kids from DC, a former telephone hack in England, a Japanese engineer w/ a special love and affinity for robots, an Indian sheriff, a once travelling photographer... and the list goes on, but all of their stories weave together - and kept me totally engaged. 2. Well-written, though I did occasionally get that "movie script" feel: It's hard to believe this is Wilson's nonfiction debut - because he does write the story in a way that kept the tension going and the pages turning. Yet, I do admit - in the latter part of the book to feeling a bit like it was a movie script - just moving from one big action scene to another for the biggest visual effect. Still, I might have been swayed a bit into that by knowing it's actually being made into a Spielberg movie. 3. Even so, I never had to force myself to suspend reality: The book sucked me in with it's premise and kept me there throughout the long war w/o me ever saying "Oh, there's just no way.".

There are enough similarities present for Daniel Wilson's mayhem infused novel "Robopocalypse" to draw the inevitable comparisons to Max Brooks' sublime "World War Z." This association can be both a bad thing and a good thing. "World War Z" (itself a riff on Terkel's WWII opus "A Good War") is at the peak of the zombie pack---it is where the horror novel meets literature. Ambitious, eloquent, intelligent, emotional--Brooks' tale flawlessly told of the rise of zombies, the human resistance, the virtual destruction of the world, and the evolution of man's survival. Pieced together from various tales from across the globe, this series of fictional essays was as powerful and vivid as anything you're likely to read. Now take the same essential story and the same essential structure and substitute rogue robots for the zombie menace. That's "Robopocalypse." By itself, this is a entertaining and fast read--but it lacks the raw, devastating, and real power of the predecessor that seems to have inspired it. There was little character overlap in "World War Z," however, and that's a primary difference. Wilson charts the same individual survivors in escalating chapters of disaster. It doesn't always fit his predetermined structural theme--the tale is recounted from a historical archive so it seems unlikely that the same piece of equipment would be loaded with the random escapades of this select few across the globe with all that transpired through the years. I know that Wilson wanted to limit his focus, but the connectedness of the characters and overlap seems a bit convenient (some of the heroes are even related--a father in Oklahoma and his son in Afghanistan both happen to be one of the six most significant members of the world population?)--an effort to simplify the plotting for mass appeal.

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