



The Utopia Experiment

Kyle Mills , Robert Ludlum (Series Creator)

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With U.S. intelligence agencies wracked by internal power struggles and paralyzed by bureaucracy, the president has been forced to establish his own clandestine group--Covert-One. It's activated only as a last resort, when the threat is on a global scale and time is running out.

When Dresner Industries unveils the Merge, a device that is destined to revolutionize the world and make the personal computer and smartphone obsolete, Covert-One operative Colonel Jon Smith is assigned to assess its military potential. He discovers that enhanced vision, real-time battlefield displays, unbreakable security, and near-perfect marksmanship are only the beginning of a technology that will change the face of warfare forever--and one that must be kept out of the hands of America's enemies at all costs.

Meanwhile, in the mountains of Afghanistan, CIA operative Randi Russell encounters an entire village of murdered Afghans--all equipped with enhanced Merge technology that even the Agency didn't know existed. As Smith and Russell delve into the circumstances surrounding the Afghans' deaths, they're quickly blocked by someone who seems to have access to the highest levels of the military--a person that even the president knows nothing about.

Is the Merge really as secure as its creator claims? And what secrets about its development is the Pentagon so desperate to hide? Smith and Russell are determined to learn the truth. But they may pay for it with their lives.

The Utopia Experiment Details

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From Reader Review The Utopia Experiment for online ebook

Colin Welch says

I normally avoid reading books in the Ludlum "franchise", but The Utopia Experiment was given to me as a present and I thought it would be a good way to spend some time. I was pleasantly surprised: Kyle Mills is a natural storyteller who has that gift of combining plot and characters in a intriguing and entertaining manner, and combining them with topical elements like cutting edge technology. This is a very good action thriller; I strongly recommend it.

John says

interesting very close to truth

Michael Bates says

Plot-4.5 Stars

Characters-4 Stars

Setting-4 Stars

This is one of my favorite in the Cover-One series. Action and humor are my cup of tea. This book has Lt. Smith and Randi Russell team up together and their back and forth banter is great. Their friend Marty should get his own stand alone book. He is a funny yet exasperating hacker.

I like my spies to be smart. Bourne etc. and Smith fits in that category. Normally he is one of the smartest yet in this book, he gets the Merge technology (Very advanced computer system that is implemented in your body) and studs in his head no problem. This is unusual, for John Smith would have normally been very hesitant to use it for the fact of hacking etc. He would have covered all his bases.

One of the best parts of this book is the question they ask. If you could take out all the bad guys (corrupt world leaders, financial and political, murderers, etc) and only sacrifice thousands of innocents lives, would you? and if you could take out the biases of doing such an act to make sure it is mainly the bad guys who would die? Yeah. Interesting. Of course would always have to worry it wouldn't be used for evil but interesting.

Overall, I loved the moral dilemma, action, humor and of course Marty. and that guy Smith and Russell. Would I read the next book? If I tell you, I would have to kill you.

Sfilante says

2.5 stars. I am surprised so many people liked this book. It felt like a made for TV movie or series. Cliched characters who are paper thin. I managed to finish it and am ready to forget it and the series.

Nancy Cook Lauer says

Kyle Mills has done an excellent job carrying on Ludlum's heritage. I love Dr. Smith and Randi and especially Zellerbach the hacker. It's like meeting up with old friends after a long absence. The plot was solid and carried through to the end. I especially liked the bleeding edge technology. Where do we go from the smartphone? This one has the answer. Although they advertise the Ludlum books as being "from the creator of Jason Bourne," I like these guys better -- less shoot 'em up and more techie. Great book, if you like the genre.

Tim says

This well written story contains interesting leads who contribute significantly to make this techno thriller a good read. 8 of 10 stars

Matt says

I was really surprised by this book. After the last one I didn't expect to enjoy this one as much. I'm glad to see Kyle Mills back writing in this series (He wrote The Ares Decision and then the next Covert One book The Janus Reprisal was written by Jamie Freveletti, which wasn't bad but somewhat disappointing). I like his use of the main characters of Jon Smith, Randi Russel, and Fred Klein. I also like the inclusion of Marty Zellerbach in the series again (he's one of my favorite side characters). The story was fun with the invention of the ultimate user/computer interface and the somewhat crazed plan of it's creator.

Overall a fun book and I had a great time reading it. I hope Kyle Mills is able to return to write the next Covert One book (if and when it gets written).

Patrick says

This was a very enjoyable action novel. It uses the Covert-one team to try to cope with actions of someone who was probably a very brilliant mad man. But he invents a very seductive electronic device that everyone wants. Sound familiar. This one is way over the top though. It has some intriguing ideas in it. Read it, you might enjoy it.

Jen says

I really enjoyed this book. The first half was likable but a bit hard to follow due to all the point-of-view changes and a somewhat difficult-to-track passage of time. But the second half really took off and had some very enjoyable "wow" moments. :)

I considered not reading this book since it's part of a series and I haven't read any of the preceding books, but since it's my August sci-fi book club selection at my library, I decided to give it a chance. And I'm very glad

I did!

There seemed to be a few references to events from the previous books, but not having read those books turned out to not be a problem. On the contrary, this story makes me want to read the rest of the Covert-One series. More books for my TBR shelf, what a shock! ;)

I really liked the characters in this story. Colonel Jon Smith and CIA Agent Randi Russell were wonderful. Randi especially was fun: I really loved her spunk (or should I say her piss and vinegar, lol!). And Marty Zellerbach was really great, too. He had a couple literally laugh-out-loud lines in the dialogue. :)

The plot to the book - the Merge and what Christian Dresner planned to use it for - was quite chilling. The premise behind the technology was quite intriguing. I wonder if scientists are trying to create such a thing now? I sort of hope not, since I'm having trouble thinking of a way to make it work without any adverse effects. It seems to me that such a thing would have a high chance of abuse.

For a fiction story, though, it was wonderful. The story was really suspenseful, especially once I got past the first half.

I'm very interested in reading the rest of this series, and I very much hope to see more of Jon, Randi, Klein, and Marty. :)

Robeert Kane says

Good read but too much tech talk .

The author has not been in enough close calls to express the proper emotions that you feel when they happen.

Louize says

Thank you, Kyle Mills, for making Marty Zellerback very famous in this installment! :)

Cornerofmadness says

I picked the audio of this up from the library and listened to it weeks ago (and forgot to review it). I had no idea it was part of a series and while Robert Ludlum and Jason Bourne are prominent on the cover, Ludlum has been gone a long time. But it is in the Bourne style spy thriller which I'm rapidly realizing isn't my genre. There isn't anything necessarily bad about this book (it is long) but it's nothing that sticks with me. It's sort of cyberpunk light.

Tech genius Dresner has released a beta test of his VR, wet-wired direct to the nervous system known as the Merge. Colonel (and medical doctor) John Smith is testing it for the military and it makes all forms of warfare obsolete. He is blown away by how well it works and better yet, even his PTSD interrupted sleep can be overridden and he can sleep.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, CIA agent Randi Russell is facing a mystery. One of the villages she knows has been eradicated. The women and children seemed to have fought. The men didn't and weirder still someone cut off all their heads and carted them off into the desert.

Eventually John and Randi come together (and obviously not for the first time) to wonder if the Merge and it's ability to instantly scan a person's civil and criminal records via the layercake app and judge them as a good person or one to avoid, is everything it's cracked up to be. Worse, much of the population, especially the world leaders and the rich are already Merged up.

Or has Dresner's tragic past made him insert something darker into the Merge. Suspecting that he has John, Randi and their hacker friend have to save the world from Dresner's 'utopian' vision of it.

Over all it was enjoyable and neither Dresener's damage nor even the SF direct to brain tech is that unbelievable. I do, however, think it went on too long especially in the beginning with John testing the Merge and some of the action is that eye rolling action movie sort that you have to suspend disbelief to buy into.

That said I'm not really motivated to read more Covert One books as it's just not my genre.

Matt says

What if something emerged that made the smartphone, with all its apps, an obsolete piece of plastic? Could the body, more specifically the mind and eyes, become a living and breathing battery to run this 'live-in app' and lets people make connections with others based on numerous key criteria, all shown as an aura around the bodies in front of them? Mills presents this in his latest installment of the Robert Ludlum Covert-One series. Filled with strong and ongoing characters, a great plot, and thoroughly intriguing medical and scientific possibilities, Mills presents an exciting case and leaves the reader to wonder. As things heat up and this technology (the MERGE) turns out to be more than anyone bargained for, lives are in the balance and the world could be in jeopardy, if our dashing hero cannot save the day. *cue timpani drums*

Mills uses the book as an excellent way not only to inform the reader of the possibilities when it comes to technology, but also its dangers, should it fall into the wrong hands. While many have said that cell phones and smartphones will soon become a part of the person, this novel pushes the envelope ever further. Not overly technical, Mills keeps the reader hooked and funnels information (and surely opinions) into the story from all angles. Well worth it, especially for Covert-One admirers.

Great job Mr. Mills. If only you could help resurrect the dying (dead) Bourne series!

Cheryl Sinclair says

Non stop action that I couldn't put down.

Jeff Tonkinson says

I liked how it started as a high-tech-medical thriller. I had forgotten the Covert 1 novels but had no problem picking up the characters. However as the plot rolled along it broke my ability to "suspend disbelief" and found it laughable at a few spots. Also there were some threads that seemed to serve no purpose. Even the plot thread related to the title, "Utopia Experiment", never seemed to fit into the book.

Ok if you like hero military spy doctors.
