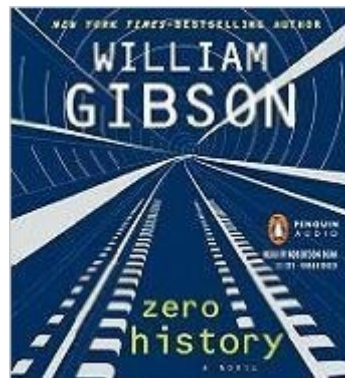


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Zero History



Synopsis

Unabridged, 9 CDs, 11 hours Read by TBA William Gibson's first new novel since Spook Country.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Penguin Audio; Unabridged edition (September 7, 2010)

Language: English

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Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (204 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,477,594 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in Books > Books on CD >

Authors, A-Z > (G) > Gibson, William #1545 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction &

Fantasy > Science Fiction #1797 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy >

Fantasy

Customer Reviews

I have been reading William Gibson for many years and read and enjoyed Pattern Recognition and Spook Country. I was looking forward to Zero History but have come away from it quite disappointed and with the feeling that Gibson missed a real opportunity with this novel. One of the great things about Pattern Recognition was how it capture the stunned, dispirited, paranoid zeitgeist of the world post-911. Zero History had the opportunity to do the same for the post-economic crash world. Instead it focuses exclusively on the meanderings of a few wealthy and privileged hipsters who wander around London and Paris talking on their iPhones. I found the Apple fetishism to really detract from the credibility of these characters as being on the cutting edge of cool, outside the ebb and flow of the normal trends followed by boring people like me. If these characters are going to fetishize some piece of technology couldn't it have been something cooler than an iPhone? I have an iPhone for Pete's sake. The other big disappointment of this book was the very lazy plotting. The characters are incredibly passive with almost all the action occurring around them while they merely react. Because of this no one does anything to move the plot forward; developments just drop into their laps, primarily due to unlikely coincidences. And therein lies my biggest complaint. Many writers use coincidence to propel a narrative. But in Zero History coincidence is the only driver of the plot. The primary action (if you can call it that) is around Hollis and Milgrim's search for a

super-secretive fashion designer.

With "Zero History", you get the feeling that William Gibson, finding the world has finally caught up with his Marshall McLuhan-meets-Timothy Leary vision of the future, has decided to escape instead into the world of fantasy. This accentuates a trend in Mr Gibson's recent novels. Starting with 2003's "Pattern Recognition", the settings of his books have pulled closer and closer to the contemporary world, even as his storylines have pushed further into la-la land. You almost wonder if he's being deliberately perverse. How else to explain "Zero History's" bizarre concoction of macho military fashion designers, ninja rock drummers, Japanese tailors and base-jumping super-spies? And that Mission Impossible-as-done-by-the-A Team ending? Please dear God, let that be a joke. Don't get me wrong, Mr Gibson remains one of the most effortlessly stylish and readable authors out there. It's his choice of subject matter. I feel like I'm watching Michelangelo doing potato painting. Let me explain. "Zero History" completes the trilogy begun with "Pattern Recognition" and continued in 2007's "Spook Country", though it is much more closely tied to the latter. Freelance journalist Hollis Henry returns, again in the employ of insatiably curious marketing bigwig Hubertus Bigend. So is Milgrim, the benzo-addicted translator from "Spook Country", now straight thanks to Bigend's largesse and a stint at a clinic in Switzerland. Also making a reappearance is the style of "Spook Country", which ratcheted down the flowery language in favor of bare-bones structures, non-linear conversations and off-beat settings. When it works, and it usually does, the words glide effortlessly, supple as old-fashioned denim.

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