



Inherit the Earth

Brian Stableford

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In the twenty-second century, biomedical nanotechnology has given everyone in the world long life and robust health. It is the New Utopia, and all live in the expectation that true immortality will soon be realized.

Damon Hart, son of the scientist responsible for much of the wonders of the new world, would rather forget his famous father and get on with his own life. But a shadowy terrorist group forces Damon to confront his heritage, launching a cat-and-mouse game that pits Damon against the terrorists, Interpol, and the powerful corporations that control the biotechnology of the future...a game Damon is ill-equipped to survive.

Inherit the Earth Details

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Author : Brian Stableford

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From Reader Review Inherit the Earth for online ebook

Simon Mcleish says

Originally published on my blog here in September 2000.

Inherit the Earth is heavily influenced by the cyberpunk subgenre exemplified by the novels of William Gibson: there is the same high tech, decayed urban background; the same cynical view of the world. Stableford's novel (first in a trilogy) is set much further into the future than most cyberpunk has been, after the world has begun to recover following decimation of human and animal populations by genetically engineered diseases in what are known as the Plague Wars. Now the rich (and even, to a large extent) the moderately well off) are protected by biological and microscopic computer hardware augmentations to their natural immune system, and the major concern of the large firms which effectively rule the world is the development of what is known as "emortality", where these enhancements make death only a remote possibility.

Damon Hart is the son of Conrad Helier, whose invention of the artificial womb had made possible the survival of the human race at the end of the Plague Wars. He has rejected his inheritance (both material and intellectual, walking out on the members of Helier's research team who acted as foster parents) to become a knife fighter in underground virtual entertainments (where experiencing the pain of a wound is one of the main pleasures) and then a programmer of virtual environments. He is drawn back into the world of his original background when police come to question him after one of his foster parents has been abducted.

An exciting story with a meticulously constructed background, Inherit the Earth is one of the best science fiction novels I have read in the last few years. It has a broader scope than most cyberpunk novels had, and is rendered more believable for reading now because it extrapolates from current trends in computing rather than those of fifteen or twenty years ago. (Computers and particularly interfaces have developed so fast that they have left science fiction behind - the most dated looking scenes in Star Wars, for example, are those involving computer displays.)

Randy says

Great build up to the plot and the ending just fizzled...

Burt says

OK, I waited a rather long time to get around to this (more like mindlessly procrastinated to get around to it) and I have to say I was a little underwhelmed. Before I get into any faults though, let's talk about good points.

I like the idea of the world created. Biotech and nanotech have advanced to the point where people won't live forever, but they certainly have almost the next-best thing. IT (Internal Technology) has advanced the average lifespan to 160 years on average, with the carrot of true 'emortality' hanging ever present with each new advance. As a result, society has changed in many ways, not all of them good. Youth is more violent and restless and the old simply have begun to create a glass ceiling that the young cannot break through. It mixes high-tech futures with dystopian social structure - typically a good start for a lot of my prevailing

tastes. As a world, it's a good start.

The problem is that the book doesn't start, it never really went anywhere. For all of the settings and even halfway compelling characters, there's just not a lot of impetus. With IT being what it is and with the ability to fake death so prevalent and so easy, there's just not much at stake and as such there's no consequence. I couldn't ID a climax.

This is ironic, because all of those years ago when I picked this book up, I did so so I could try to break into the sequel which I'm not sure I'll get around to reading on the lukewarm reception of this book.

Peter Tillman says

Taut bioengineering/nanotech hard-SF thriller. 4.5 stars.

Set in the bioengineered nanotech future of "Les Fleurs du Mal" and the eponymous novella, *Inherit the Earth* is a taut and well-drawn thriller. Life-extension internal technology (IT) is good enough that the people who put the world back together after the Crash and Plague Wars some 75 years before still rule the world, albeit behind the scenes. Stableford is exploring a familiar sfnal question: If rich, powerful people get life-extension first -- as they will -- how do you ever get rid of them?

Stableford's writing and characters, at their best, are as good as anyone's in the business. ...

My 2004 review:

<https://www.amazon.com/review/RPETK1T...>

Traci Loudin says

Pretty good, although the ending was a little weak. Such a big build up to it, and then it's kind of like *shrug*

Becky Graham says

This book is #2 in a series - but I picked it up at a little indy bookstore that was closing for about 10 cents. Haven't read book one, might not read book 3 - but absolutely enjoyed book 2. If you like Sci-fi, questions about mortality and the morals of bio-tech - I would recommend

Ross says

Excellent read, and well-plotted.

Bob says

started off strong, but kind of a weak ending. I loved all the nanotech, and the world. I just thought the ending was kind of lame.

Bradford says

This book has a pretty unique premise that pulled me immediately into it; what would the generation on the verge of immortality be like, and how would they cope with the societal changes that would accompany such a technological breakthrough?

However, the primary reason I picked this book up is that I continue to love mysteries set in sci-fi, and this novel is full of people pulling hidden strings and political maneuverings, such that it leads us to a larger understanding of the universe that the novel embodies. The mystery itself is the book's biggest strength, though I don't think it likely that anyone would actually be able to figure out all the details on their own before the book spells it out.

My main issue with this book is it's complete lack of interesting female characters. The most prominent female character in this book is relegated to the role of obsessed ex-girlfriend, who seems to exist only to pine for the return of the main character into her life. This might be forgivable if only the character wasn't a former tough as nails street fighter (supposedly, we never actually get to actually experience this) and if the book didn't end on her complaining about the main character ending their relationship, which she does every time she is in the book.

There are four other women who only have minor supporting roles, and all of them seem to be pretty featureless except for a two of them which are remarkable mostly for their physical age. The "Old Lady" hacker at least had an interesting back story, but it seems only partially filled out, as if the author really wanted to include his stubbornly tenacious grandma who has survived multiple cancers in the story but also needed a way to shoehorn the character in as an elite hacker.

I could go on, but really, it's a decent mystery and a cool setting spoiled by bad characters. That said, I will still read the next book in the series because I'm a sucker for these types of books and I want to see if the next book actually has better characters, female or otherwise.
