



Operation Sherlock

Bruce Coville

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When their scientist parents are assigned to a top secret project on a small, remote island, the five members of the A.1. Gang have to come along, and find themselves trying to stop a spy from destroying the project.

Operation Sherlock Details

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Author : Bruce Coville

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From Reader Review Operation Sherlock for online ebook

Wolfkin says

Well on my quest to reread some of the classic books of my youth. Heck if I end up finding No Such Thing as a Witch (my favorite book as a kid) I'll be in a special kind of personalized heaven.

Ok so rereading Operation Sherlock it's still a good book but being tech based some parts of it don't age well. It's the sort of book that you kinda want to see redone and modernized. It hit me half way through this book that what he really needed was Cory Doctorow who writes bad books but good technology and science. That would be a dream collaboration these characters in a Little Brother world. One of the things that really feels outdated is the natural speaking machines. Rachel and Roger with their talking head and Wendy with her machines. We have the power to talk with machines naturally with Google Assistance and Siri and Alexa. At least that's what a tech-head would say but the only natural speaking information robots are bleeding edge tech demos. I can't even get my Google Assistant to consistently turn up the thermostat two degrees. Half the time the command works, half the time the command isn't recognized. It really gives me a gaslighting feeling.

But to get back on track the world and narrative of this book works. It just needs updated tech for the kids and maybe a little work on character arcs for the adults. After all knowing what I know now. There's no reason for the adults to live on an abandoned island. Any university would pay out the butt to get that kind of mind power.

What is a bit of clever narrative is the obstacles the kids face. They face three major obstacles. One they convert to a friend. One they capture, and one very very cleverly evades capture by faking an escape. Which I thought was great.

It's been a while since I've hung out with these characters and in the beginning of the book it's a rush to remember who they are and what they do but eventually you know them by how they talk and act. Even if at that point you lose track of what they look like because the descriptions were mostly frontally based. Ray and Wendy are short, Trip is tall and lanky. Roger and Rachel are I presume average but beyond that I can't really think of anything about what they look like.

Great book lotta fun. Now on to the sequel.

Tristan Gregory says

Another of my favorite books from when I was young. Some great characters and interesting thoughts on technology and its place. Very much a primer for loving science fiction.

Delphine says

I offered myself a trip down memory lane with this trilogy. The first of it (and a fourth written by another autor and that was not republished : The Cutlass Clue by Jim Lawrence) were translated in french when I was a kid. I LOVED them. But I never got the end of the story, because, for some reason, the last 2 books in the trilogy never got translated. I has always bothered me. Re-reading the first book, I realized I nearly knew

it by heart. I really must have read it a thousand of time when I was a kid.

The second and especially the third books in this trilogy may be harder to chew for smaller children (I first read it at 8), there are more technical and more philosophical topics about A.I., and the last book involves atomic bombs and end of the world scares, but nothing that I wouldn't give to read to my 10 years old cousin. It was a jolly ride down that memory lane !

Honya says

In terms of serialized middle-grade mysteries, Bruce Coville's Operation Sherlock has to be pretty high on my list. While it follows the basic patterns you've seen in everything from The Mysterious Benedict Society to Nancy Drew and innumerable others, this particular book fails to get mired down in the way that many of this sort of book do. The plot manages to be typical of the style and yet fresh at the same time. The slightly cyberpunk setting adds a lot, being well-developed and yet not overly emphasized. I think the character creation is where Coville's skills truly shine, though. He manages to craft a group of individuals who truly show developed, distinct characters without ever falling into stereotyped characters. I feel like his development of the gang is subtly done, and I really enjoyed the interactions between the kids. Nice dialogue as well, which helped the progression of the story a lot. I think for anyone who likes the genre, Operation Sherlock is a significantly above-average choice, and it's sure to be a hit with anyone (like myself) who loves Bruce Coville's writing in general. I'm looking forward to trying the second volume.

John says

I loved this book when I was in grade school. And I can't be sure, but it probably deserves a lot of the blame for my eventual choice of computer science as a major.

It's a book about twelve year olds fighting spies with their mad hacking skills, written by someone who may never have used a computer before. Good times.

Amber says

when I was a kid I read and re-read every Bruce Coville book my library had. so imagine my surprise when I discovered that this was originally published back then! Somehow my library NEVER got this series in so I'm finally reading it at the age of thirty two. I gotta say, kid me had great taste because Coville really stands the test of time.

the kids in this story were crazy smart but at the same time their personalities read realistically. there was intrigue, but at the right level for the target audience. more importantly, in this book at least there was NO forced tween romance! glory hallelujah! It's a recommend from me, along with most of Coville's oeuvre.

Daniel says

I really enjoy Bruce Coville novels. This man knows how to write for youngsters. He doesn't write down to

them, he challenges them, but manages to keep it within their own reading ability.

I just finished reading this aloud to my boys at bedtime. As one might expect, they love the action and adventure, giggle still at the humor, and totally wish they were part of the gang of kids. Everything you want in a book for young boys.

The book reminds me of the classic Tom Swift, or Tom Corbett, or Hardy Boys types of books, with modern theme and plot and characters.

My one complaint would be that there isn't a true conclusion to the book. There is an obvious need for at least a second book (it's billed as a trilogy) since only one of the criminals involved was apprehended. I suppose, like those other classics series' that I just mentioned, in which the villain often got away to be the heroes' foil another time, this book is simply following suit. However, I do dislike what is to me a ploy to sell more books.

Even so, like nearly any Bruce Coville book I read, this is highly recommended.

Colton Myers says

Pretty fun young adult read! I found this book at the recommendation of Max Temkin on the Do By Friday podcast. It's definitely a book for a younger audience but I bet I would have loved it when I was younger. The tech aspects hold up better than I expected and it's a fun romp. I expect I'll read the other two books because I want to know what happens next!

3.0 stars

Adobe says

Genius children meet one another on a deserted island when their scientist-parents team up to design an artificial intelligence. Bored and rebellious, the children decide to devise their own A. I. system despite the constant distraction of various saboteurs and assorted spies.

When I was eight, I read Operation Sherlock to pieces. Genius children! Who design robots and drive dune buggies and foil dastardly plots! It was like a book made to order for eight-year-old me. A decade and a half later, its thrills have not diminished.

Wendy Wendell opened her right eye and glared at the toys. "Lemme sleep."

"Let us up! Let us up!"

"Chips!" exclaimed Wendy, pushing herself to her elbow. "What did I do to deserve this?"

The toys responded, as they had been programmed to: "Life is rough, Captain Wendy."

"And then you die," added Baby Pee Pants in her deep voice.

"Right. Rolling onto her side, Wendy pulled the sheets over her head.

"Let us up! Let us up!"

With a sigh Wendy reached down and scooped the toys onto her bed. This cued them to give her five minutes of silence.

When the time was up, the bear began to sing. [16-17])

ThomasAD says

My stomach is not ruled by the clock.

As a kid, this series was one of my favorites, I remember getting from the library again and again. A great series of mysteries and great stories of friendship.

Pop Bop says

Right on Target

I read somewhere once that kids often like to read about protagonists who are a few years older than they are. That way they get to jump ahead a few years, if only vicariously. I thought about that while reading this series, which seems to perfectly capture young teens for readers who are just approaching that age.

The kids get to do cool things and have ripping adventures, but the books are written at a high middle grade level that is very inviting.

This is all complemented by a very clever premise. Here we get six kids thrown together on an island that is secured like a modern Manhattan Project. They have to get to know each other, and to begin to work as a team. While they are all supposed to be "brainiacs" they are not loaded up with quirks and outrageous personalities. Sometimes authors can get carried away with the whole kid-genius angle and they end up creating an unpalatable gang of know-it-alls. Here, the kids are smart and alert and resourceful, but also relateable and appealing. There is no weirdness for the sake of weirdness.

The upshot is that the book offers a very appealing combination of action/adventure, suspense, and detecting, with a bunch of thoughtful and creative heroes. That may be just a touch old-fashioned, but it's a fast paced and engaging update of the old Hardy Boys style of reading adventure, and that's always a nice find.

(Please note that I found this book a while ago while browsing Amazon Kindle freebies. I have no connection at all to either the author or the publisher of this book.)

Andy says

It mostly holds up.

KeyZero says

It's been over 20 years since I read this book, and probably the rest of the series, so I don't remember too much about it although it is one that I had remembered from my childhood and looked up eons ago and couldn't find. Glad that it's still remembered by others!

Blake says

This book lacked Bruce Coville's usual charm. It was written earlier in his career, perhaps before he had mastered his craft.

Sharon says

Not bad but too young for me to be enjoyable. And then there was the thing with the door and if you can take out the hinges, you cannot kick it in.
