



# John Smith - Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars

*Roland Hughes*

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What if the Mayans got the start of the end correct because they had survived it once before? What if our written history was just as accurate as the old tale about three blind men describing an elephant? What if classic science fiction writing and television shows each got a piece of it correct, would you know which ones? If your eyes can only see a tiny portion of a collage do you know it is a collage?

Fans of Babylon 5, Star Trek TNG, Battle Star Galactica (the new one) and classic science fiction writing will enjoy the bountiful Easter Egg hunt contained within. When you were a child you learned to connect paper clips or thread beads together to make a necklace. Sit back and watch the beads you've had all your life form the picture you could not see. Consider for one second the possibility of the story, then hang onto your mind with both hands while you take the ride.

## John Smith - Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars Details

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Author : Roland Hughes

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## From Reader Review John Smith - Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars for online ebook

**roxtao says**

When I started reading John Smith – Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars I had a really, really vague idea about what I'll find in this book. John Smith – Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars is a post-apocalyptic novel, but the style chosen by the author makes it different from any other similar books that I've read. The story is told as an interview, the frame being a new world, built over the ruins of the world we know today. The entire history of the past and of the moments before and after the ending of the world as we know it today is told by John Smith, the last survivor of the Microsoft Wars. The author starts from the present global situation, covering a wide palette of domains, only to return in the past, at the mysteries of Atlantis and the fate of her inhabitants, with an eye also on the influence they had over many civilizations during the time. Matter-of-fact, the most important aspects of humanity in the last thousands of years are brought into focus, and the post-apocalyptic genre starts to blend with the fantasy, thriller and conspiratorial genres. The author's ability to make you believe what you read it was really interesting. Starting with the real aspects, he then passes on to some fantastic things in such a subtle way that you don't even feel the change and the information that gets to you later seems to be as truthfully as the pieces from the beginning, which are undoubtedly true.

Another important aspect is the fact that unlike other books based on post-apocalyptic worlds, in John Smith – Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars, the attention is not centered on a single character which is observed during the story. Of course, in a way, you could say that John Smith and Susan Krowley are the main characters, but this is not completely true. Because their actual role is to deliver the story. The actual protagonist is a collective one, from which no figures can be identified as being more important than others. Moreover, we are not given any individual names, portraits or actions, because absolutely all the events have a pretty large group as a main character, represented by the privileged families of Atlantis and the auxiliary personnel.

One thing that annoyed me during several pages is Susan Krowley's attitude, the woman who interviews John Smith. I understand that once the world was destroyed, the survivors were forced to practically start all over again, considering that the civilization degree and the technological development had a sudden decay. I also understand that stories tend to lose their value and their credibility during the years and also, that when you hear things that don't correspond with the real situation of your world, you tend not to believe them. Susan Krowley lives at more than six decades after almost the whole world was destroyed. Considering the fact that the people who survived had to go back to a simple life, deprived of the advanced technology from our present and that the next generations don't even have the memory of it, seeing it more like a myth, it's obvious why in the beginning, Susan inclines not to believe a single word from John's story. However, having a job like that, being a journalist, I really think she should have been more open-minded and more capable to sustain a more complex dialogue. Unfortunately, during the first half of the book, we basically get only a John Smith monologue, which is sometimes interrupted by Susan's amazed exclamations and even more frustrating, by her accusations that he is lying, inventing everything he's telling her. Only later, the conversation begins to look like a normal interview and Susan finally starts asking the right questions, seeing the clues, getting some of the conclusions and engaging as a real journalist should.

Although not very long, the story is not one you devour in a few hours. Because it covers countless themes, it should be read in a moderate rhythm, with breaks that allow you to "digest" what you've read, to give enough time to the newly discovered things to connect and take their place in the vast puzzle created by the author. Roland Hughes is not only discussing a lot of major issues of the present and of the history, but he is also overthrowing most of them, creating them new origins, offering them different faces and unexpected

explications. The religion, the wars, the myths, the lost civilizations, the evolution of science, the mysteries kept until today, the whole course of the history, everything is changed in Roland Hughes' story, everything is exposed in a different light. And the most impressive fact is that no matter how incredible those interpretations are, the author manages to deliver them in such a realistic way that you start to doubt the truths you know and start asking "What if...?"

The ending offers a huge surprise that will bring a large smile on your lips and the epilogue is just growing your amazement, creating more bonds that begin to suddenly mix together.

PROs:

- The real side of the story is so well documented that the transfer to the imaginary side is unnoticeable. Furthermore, during the story, the truth and the fiction keep blending together, giving you the feeling that you are actually reading an alternative history of the world.
- The balance between the personal tone and the general one. Although most of the story covers issues about the humanity and its evolution, there are a few paragraphs that allow us to suddenly see the real John Smith. And we get to see him in both the current state, as a survivor of a lost world, finally at peace with his destiny, but also as his old self, a teenager surrounded by drama, forever marked by the fall of his entire universe, by the traumatizing solitude and by the huge responsibility that fell on his shoulders.

CONs:

Susan Krowley's attitude during the first half of the book.

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## Sheila Trask says

Futuristic History Lessons "Beginnings, no matter how important they are, get forgotten," writes Roland Hughes in this far-reaching inquiry into mankind's history, and perhaps, its future. With *John Smith: Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars*, Hughes pushes the restart button on humanity, setting us down nearly seventy years in the future on a planet with very few people and very little memory of everything that has come before.

Trying to sort it all out is young reporter, Susan Krowley, who has grown up in a post-apocalyptic world that retains only stray remnants of modern technology, and a vague story about the near-annihilation of humanity on November 13, 2013. She's hoping for answers from the oldest person she's ever met; at 79, John Smith carries knowledge from the old world that has nearly been lost. Krowley's interview with Smith provides the structure of the book, and allows Smith to hold forth on topics ranging from Druids and Mayans to terrorism and global warming.

The question-and-answer structure will be familiar to philosophy students, and Hughes's use of the method aptly recalls Plato. Like the Classical Greek philosopher, Hughes tests theories about the nature of the world and the human beings who inhabit it, and both use Atlantis as a model through which to explore the possibilities.

Hughes lightly develops the relationship between interviewer and subject as their conversation continues, and it becomes clear that Smith is really the one challenging Krowley with his insistence that she understand the context, or "frame of reference" for her questions about the so-called Microsoft Wars. Krowley does become more inquisitive and critical throughout the interview, although many of her queries continue to be

simple prompts for Smith to continue his contemplation. Thus their dialogue seldom tells us a lot about their characters, which limits the impact of Hughes's ideas.

Although Hughes creates a detailed modern science fiction setting—the Human Genome Project, weapons of mass destruction, and anti-gravity science all contribute to man's fate—the book is less of a science fiction adventure than it is an opportunity for philosophical musings. Readers hoping for something earth-shattering to happen in the pages of John Smith may be disappointed. The seminal event happened in the past, and Krowley and Smith are just here to help us pick up the pieces.

The pieces themselves are intriguing, and Hughes keeps the frequent monologues from dragging by imbuing Smith with a dark sense of humor—speaking of fossil fuels, for instance, he includes humans in the equation (“Humans are useful in a variety of forms. Have they invented a product called petroleum jelly yet?”)—much to Krowley's dismay. And don't get him started on economists and MBAs. Smith is an opinionated guy, which helps his forays into history read less like encyclopedia entries and more like impassioned speeches. Some speeches are lengthy, but Smith's urgency carries the reader along.

The Microsoft Wars, as it turns out, are only a small part of the tale here. Instead of focusing on the final battle, Smith expands his thoughts on the political, economic, psychological, and even mythological forces that may have led to humanity's demise. What the few people left on earth will make of this history, and how it will affect their future, remains an open question that Hughes, a prolific author, will likely take up in future volumes.

Reviewed by Sheila M. Trask, MS/LIS, through ReviewWorm Book Review Services

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## Anashi Sterling says

I received this book for free through GoodReads first reads.

Let me start by saying I think my rating of the book was largely influenced by how the book presented itself. The excerpt you read when you click on the title of the book, I personally feel, leads you to believe that it is similar to the ever-popular sic-fi actions/adventure series that it doesn't hesitate to name drop.

*"Fans of Babylon 5, Star Trek TNG, Battle Star Galactica (the new one) and classic science fiction writing will enjoy the bountiful Easter Egg hunt contained within."*

When I read that I was absolutely thrilled for the chance to read something similar to some of my favorite cult-classic favorites and that's what I expected; what I was not expecting was a book that was written entirely in the format of an interview with absolutely none of the action and imagination that make the aforementioned titles so spell-binding.

That being said, I didn't dislike the book.

The author does blend a lot of content from a lot of different sources and threads them together in a very believable way. It's almost like the author, under the guise of fiction, is trying to warn our society of the terrible future awaiting us much like George Orwell tried to warn the world when he wrote *1984*.

In that sense I commend him as he reviewed tons of information both fictional and factual to come up with this almost seamless blend.

This novel is based in the future where a virus that affects only humans has wiped out most of the world's

population as well as all of the information. They are back to horses and wagons. A young woman seeks out the title's John Smith for an interview about the *Microsoft Wars* that supposedly were the end of our current civilization. John Smith goes on from the beginning about how our current civilization came to be what is the current reality of the book. He starts before our time with knowledge that is a basic part of everyday lives but unheard of in the current world. He spins his story starting from well before the invention of the computer, back to ancient civilizations on the knowledge and choices man has made that has gotten him where he is today. He spans, science, medicine, warfare, religion, and many other subjects to give the young woman interviewing him the correct information to accurately publish the article she's working on. The book is an intriguing read and I would have rated it higher if my expectations going into it were not "*Babylon 5/StarTrek/Battle Star Galactica*".

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## Bev says

My take: This is a difficult review for me. I almost always can give high marks to the review request books and virtual tour books that I read because I carefully screen the books I agree to review. The synopsis really grabbed me. Roland Hughes has developed a fantastic premise. I liked the idea of tying in all kinds of SF writing and television shows into a fantastic piece of fiction. I had great expectations....

But, I have to be honest (and I only do honest reviews), this book was not, ultimately, for me. The interview format really got on my nerves. The entire book is all tell and no show. No action--none. Even when John Smith is describing what happened it has little effect because it's all dialogue and he sounds like he's giving one long lecture about absolutely everything from what a computer is to why the Hebrews had dietary laws to where the Atlantians went to how the Druids and Mayans figure in to finally answering the question his interviewer came to ask in the first place--what happened in the Microsoft Wars. And he does it all in such a condescending manner.

I also did not care for the antagonistic tone against the sexes. The reporter obviously doesn't care for men although her comments are few and far between and John Smith repeatedly makes incredibly misogynistic remarks about women throughout the book. My "favorites":

*The longest lifespan known, or at least told to me, was roughly 250 clock years for a man and 325 clock years for a woman. The stress of living with a woman really does kill a man. That much has remained universal throughout all cycles. (p.133)*

*Women can't resist making things up for no reason at all and being mad about them for years but that isn't the story we are telling here. (p. 150) [So, your point in saying this is?]*

The tone is bad enough...but it might be useful and understandable if Hughes explained why these people are like this. What motivates them? But he doesn't--we're supposed to accept this, apparently, just because that's the way it is.

There are also great inconsistencies...for instance, the reporter supposedly lives in a society that has developed after the Microsoft Wars. Everything has been destroyed. Pretty much all knowledge of what came before is gone--Smith has to explain what computers, DVDs, satellites, submarines, etc. and ad nauseum are--even hard copy encyclopedias and maps--and yet the woman knows what socialism is? Seriously? Her people have retained no memory whatsoever of tangible physical objects and yet she understands an obsolete abstract concept.

If you like unusual story-telling formats, then this book is for you. If you like incredible amounts of dialogue,

then this book is for you. If you are interested in conspiracy theories and an explanation of what happened to Atlantis and the "truth" behind every UFO sighting ever....then this book is for you.

I really am sorry that I cannot give this book a stellar review. But it just did not live up to my expectations and, overall, I just didn't become engaged with the characters. I'm giving it two stars--all for fantastic concept.

\*\*This book was sent to me as part of the Premier Virtual Authors Tour in exchange for my honest review. I have received no compensation whatsoever.

[First posted on my blog My Reader's Block. Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.]

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## **Biswanath Banerjee says**

And the world is shaping us again!

The days of apocalypse are over-indomitable life force has defeated the power of destruction again-it is a new dawn of human civilization.

And no-this time the power of destruction is not from any external force-no alien power has invaded the earth, no comet has shattered the terrestrial life, no ice age has destroyed the rhythm of life.

The destruction has come within-the suspicion, greed, lust of a species called mankind had triggered the last war of human civilization-the war that literally shook the world-the geophysical composition of earth has been changed.

In this backdrop starts Roland Hughes's 'John Smith-last known survivor of the Microsoft wars' –one of the most extraordinary science fiction of contemporary times.

Extraordinary –because there are only two characters, yet it tells the most complex story.

Extraordinary-because it warns the human species what may come in the coming days-no Mayan calendar will be required to announce the death this time!

Extraordinary-because in spite of being a science fiction the scope is epic!

And the story began with a reporting session in progress- a reporter taking the interview of John Smith-one of the last known survivors of the war that had shattered the human progress. The entire story is a sequel of reporting sessions-and not only the human civilization but the humanity as a whole has been viewed from a different perspective in every session.

What can a war possibly do? The effect can be something beyond your wildest imagination. In the words of the writer

“After the events of 2013, depending upon how you look at it, part of Canada became the land mass you now call the Dians continent. The rest of the North American continent also turned and split up. Some say it simply had an ocean from over part of it. The difference between split or sink doesn't really matter. Today, you cannot walk from one chunk to the other, so they are considered separate continents.”

Read the complete review at

<https://jayasreesown.wordpress.com/20...>

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## **Mike Mcgee says**

"So much gets lost over time"

That's a though John Smith states in author Roland Hughes' John Smith - Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars. "So many people think things are such common knowledge that they do not need to be written down. Everything needs to be written down."

What Hughes has written down in this fictional work is a colorful and engaging futuristic dystopian tale that also doubles as an allegorical reflection upon, chiding of, and metaphorical roadmap for, modern society. The story unfolds as an interview. Susan Krowley is a reporter who has been assigned to write about Smith, an intelligent, opinionated and hardened survivor of great societal upheaval. The book is done in a sort of double flashback style; Krowley informs readers through the book's introduction that the text is simply the recounting of Smith's interview. The story progresses as exactly that; it's a look at the ancient past by someone in her recent past.

This unusual method of telling a sci-fi fantasy tale works, allowing Smith's ruminations to serve as exposition to the reader while addressing Krowley's follow-up questions. Such a device runs the risk of seeming cheap; Hughes avoids that problem with the Socratic dialogue method Smith employs to spin his yarn of historic fact and theory - and it's all backed up by his collection of such arcane data storage devices as DVDs and books. Smith lives in a future where a physically perverted Earth now has twelve continents and a drastically reduced population due to a polar shift. There are pockets of irradiated lands; 'dead zones' afflicted with a man-made disease. There is a mysterious doomsday device orbiting above a nascent global society, a people just starting towards re-modernization yet continuing to carry many of the flaws that brought the planet to its present state.

Despite the ominous backdrop of the book details emerge that make John Smith charming. At one point the reporter complains to Smith that she doesn't dare enter a radiation-steeped "forbidden region". It is an oft-used trope: the dreaded 'forbidden zone'. True to the trope, real danger lurks there, but Hughes additionally turns the cliché on its head. Krowley considers the practical concern that, should she enter such a region, she might lose her job.

There are topical references aplenty that readers will relate to and hidden nods to other fantasy works. Fans of Star Trek, Jules Verne, or Arthurian legend get literary winks in their direction. As a document examining the loss of mankind's knowledge and history John Smith - Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars paints a philosophical picture of our present from the viewpoint of a future survivor of modernity. It offers brain fuel for those readers who simply want to be entertained by an alternative-history story as well as for those who are interested in taking a more philosophical glimpse into our "future" via a critique of our "now".

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## L. S. says

Hearing differing versions of the apocalypse is always an interesting thing. Especially when they coincide with conspiracy theories. Then there are those that take conspiracy theories to the next level, and boom: we have John Smith, Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars.

It starts out interesting enough. It's formatted in the way of an interview conducted by Susan Krowley. There's a huge slew of information that follows, and it's all over the place. It sort of follows a logical progression, but jumps around a lot. I know there were times where even though I had the knowledge, I was trying to piece together how things were related, much like Susan did. The tone is condescending, treating Susan like an ignorant child. Or someone below him.

Creativity was on point with how the history of the world unfolded. The picture that the reader starts forming of the world is clear when talking about the past. Not so much when talking about what happened after the Wars. Hoping the author is saving that for later books. Giving the reader bits and pieces of the world at a time, letting the veil gradually lift on just how bad things are.

Reading the creative history the author presented was nice. The theories do all tie together, regardless of how

they jump around. There's a lot of information, however, and if the reader's not careful, they'll miss something. Breaking up the interview format would help readability.

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### **Cynde says**

I am loving this book. It is a refreshing , if tongue in cheek, look at what it would be like once the power, computers and the land masses as we know them are gone and a new cycle of civilization begins. The book is done as an interview between the last known survivor of the time before and a "reporter" from the new cycle.

I am still reading and enjoying this book, but i wanted to recommend how much fun it is to read!

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### **Leigh Holland says**

John Smith: Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars by Roland Hughes, 274 pages, Logikal Solutions, 2012, ISBN-13: 978-1939732002. Genre: Dystopian. Warning: May Contain Spoilers.

Review by Leigh Holland.

\*I was given a free copy of the e-book in exchange for my honest review.

This book was written in an interesting format. The last known survivor of the Microsoft Wars is John Smith, an elderly man who survived the cataclysm by hiding out in a bunker. Susan Krowley interviews him. The book is a back-and-forth interview between the two characters.

Susan Krowley is a young journalist, a profession she inherited from her father. In the future, after most of the world's population was wiped out in the cataclysm, people inherit their jobs from their parents in a master and apprentice relationship. Because the cataclysm was so sudden, a vast amount of human knowledge was lost. Because so many lives were lost, entire skill sets disappeared from the species. She interviews John Smith.

John Smith is one of the oldest people on Earth and is a survivor of the war. He has a cache of books and a computer that works but due to not being able to get another one, doesn't use it often. He has large amounts of valuable data on CD that humanity will likely not be able to build a machine to gain access to. Humanity has been taken back to the 1800's after the cataclysm. He condescends to Susan much of the time, as he knows a lot and she knows so little of history. He explains that mankind's history goes through cycles. During each cycle, we reach a technological apex, bring catastrophe on ourselves like Atlantis, and lose most technology and knowledge. Then we must begin anew. So the cycle goes on, ad infinitum. John presents a vast array of conspiracy theories and myth, mashed together as truth, leading to the inevitable conclusion at the end of each cycle: destruction of civilization by those human families who continue to try to control it.

The premise, myths, and theories presented were fascinating. The idea was original and thought-provoking. I would've enjoyed the story more had the information been presented in another format other than an interview. I'd recommend this to science fiction fans provided the reader doesn't mind the interview style the book is written in.

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### **Michael Long says**

John Smith is about a young female reporter who keeps out the last survivor of an apocalyptic war. Most of the population is young and has lost knowledge of what came before. This reporter finds and interviews John Smith about the world that came before.

This novel just wasn't for me. The entire thing (other than the epilogue) is in interview format. The main character spends the entire time telling about our current world today (boring...I already know about it), or some made-up stories about Atlantis. He is condescending and spends the entire novel lecturing, which doesn't make for a likable character. This novel also takes every popular fear today and makes it into an end-world event (hacking, biological warfare, terrorists, religious extremists, space weapons, etc.). Rather than answer the question the reporter asks "Tell me about the Microsoft wars", he spends the entire novel saying no and going off on wild tangents. It is only the last few pages where he actually talks about the wars.

Other than the Atlantis stories, there really isn't anything imaginative or unique here to read about what life is today. Oh, this is so exciting to hear him describe a microwave, or nuclear power, or computers...maybe I would like it more if I was reading this 50 years from now wondering what life was like today, or reading it 50 years ago wondering what the future would hold. Also, the apocalypse was set in 2013... very strange to date your novel that way and give it no shelf life.

Overall, I didn't like this. Plot? Not really. World building? Nope...just using the world we have today. Character development? Nope. Showing and not telling? Nope. Captivating? Nope.

NOTE: I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review

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## Jason Pettus says

(Reprinted from the Chicago Center for Literature and Photography [cclapcenter.com]. I am the original author of this essay, as well as the owner of CCLaP; it is not being reprinted illegally.)

The Mid-Century Modernist era was the height of book-length manifestos masquerading as action novels (see *1984*, *Atlas Shrugged*, and *Walden Two* for great examples of what I'm talking about); but this subgenre is still alive and well here in the 2010s, as evidenced by Roland Hughes' awkwardly titled *John Smith: Last Known Survivor of the Microsoft Wars*. Set 68 years in the future, after a cataclysmic event that not only broke apart the continents and ended most life on Earth but whose origins have been completely forgotten by the survivors, this ostensibly takes the form of an interview between a futuristic journalist and the last known person to remember the pre-apocalypse world; but in reality this is essentially a 80,000 word expository speech (or if you like, a 300-page Wikipedia entry), broken up every couple of paragraphs with one of exactly two phrases from the journalist in question, over and over again (either "I don't understand" or "You're crazy"). And it's...you know, an interesting enough scenario that Hughes is laying out here, if not heavily on the obvious techno-conspiracy side (corporations are evil, iPhones have made everyone a voluntary NSA slave, eventually we'll all be screwed over by this, etc etc); but I have to say, without interesting characters or a full three-act plot, a little of this stuff goes a long way, especially when your entire novel only consists of two people and one of them spends 300 pages exclusively saying, "I don't understand, tell me more." Less a commercial novel and more like one of those free paperbacks you get handed by some weirdo in front of the train station, I suppose this will be up the alley of those who enjoy visiting the websites of the Drudge Report or Alex Jones; but the rest of you can pretty safely skip it, as long as you understand that this now officially makes you one of the "sheeple."

Out of 10: **6.5**

## Sadie Forsythe says

Take all of the current conspiracies about governmental Big Brother, immigration, outsourcing, war on terror, biological weapon research, operating system back doors, etc, roll them into one and you have this book. It is a cautionary tale about the dangers of American complacency. Granted it is presented as relevant to the world and pretends to be culturally inclusive, but it is very obviously centred in and focused on America. I almost wonder if the author realises this or if it really was just a case of unintentional ethnocentrism.

I can respect the intent of the book. I really can. Unfortunately, I was insulted on any number of fronts by it. To start with, John Smith is a condescending jerk. Reading his interview with Ms. Krowley felt a lot like witnessing the all-knowing man impart knowledge too heavy for the poor widdle woman to understand. Gag. This is before you even consider all of his sexist comments, which are probably supposed to be some failed attempt at humour. He sure seems to have a low opinion of women considering he claims to have never 'known' one. Glad to know he's ensuring male elitism makes it into the new human cycle. Wouldn't want to loose that.

At least Keowley had enough of a backbone to come back at him with the occasional 'stop belittling us,' but usually demurely responded 'Oh', when he responded with some form of "Yes, but..." Despite appearances, he made no effort to actually educate her. He lectured her, patronised her, and generally talked down to her.

She was constantly left with little recourse than to state 'you're not making any sense', to which he would respond by reminding her of her inferiority by pointing out that she didn't have the knowledge, ability, or frame of reference to understand. But he actually wasn't making any sense, because he was speaking to her with clipped cryptic statements meant to bait her into admitting her ignorance before he finally deigned to reveal the pertinent information and explanations. It was patronising as well as just plain annoying after a while.

Further, I understand that the people of Earth were meant to have lost a lot of their technology and Smith, therefore, needed to explain things to her. But as a modern person I do understand tech. So I found it really boring to slog through explanations I already knew--what a CD/DVD is and how it's made for example. And this was a lot of the first half of the book.

Plus, I have no idea how he was supposed to even know all of it if he was 11 when he entered his bunker. Yea, I get it that the family tried to preserve knowledge by including books, etc. But a lot of his biases (against politicians, MBAs, religion, etc) are personal biases and I don't see how they would have developed outside of experience. It feels very much like he's just spouting off his own beliefs and presenting them as indisputable facts.

He also spoke in terms of "I had," "I bought," "I stored," etc in reference to his bunker. Taking credit for the forthought. Again he was 11 when sealed in. He probably didn't do anything to prepare. His parents did. He doesn't deserve to take credit for their preparations. It just adds to his condescension and my dislike of him.

I also have a lot of trouble with the amount of knowledge lost. The book seems to assume that all learning was lost at the end of the cycle. This ignores the fact that obviously some humans survived and with them would be some knowledge. Do you really think the world would forget what god is within 68 years? I'm not making a religious statement here. Just using an example. It's a pretty ingrained or widespread belief within human. I could see religions falling by the wayside, but the whole idea of a higher power, not so much.

Really, not one survivor ever mentioned it to their children? Then, to complicate the matter, Krowley seems to know random things she probably wouldn't if one accepted the lost knowledge premise. What cloning, or pure grain alcohol, socialism, or the third world are, for example.

I also found it uncomfortable that Smith was relating all this information as if the world should simply be recreated in its old image. Stating things like, "...ships are always referred to as female, while boats as male." Are, not were. It's an interesting little tidbit of information, but the woman doesn't even know what a boat is, so what does it matter if it's named after a male or female and maybe in the new cycle that won't be the case. Smith seems completely unable or unwilling to concede that things might be different this time around. Which, I might add, would completely devalue his role as keeper of the knowledge.

The author states on the back of the book that fans of Babylon 5, Star Trek TNG, Battle Star Galactica and classic Scf-Fi will enjoy the book. It's great that he has a target audience and makes it so apparent, but I see no evidence that this book would appeal to us more than others. It has NOTHING in common with any of the shows. NOTHING. It isn't even set in space. It doesn't have a similar plot. It doesn't have the same character types. It doesn't have the same feel or tone. It doesn't inspire the same sense of inspirational awe at the possibility of human accomplishments. It has nothing in it to recommend it especially to the Trekkie fan-base.

The book does remind me a lot of Message from a Hidden Past (by Jos Rogiers) with a less likeable narrator. The writing was perfectly passable and it was well edited. But the question and answer, interview transcript is painful to read. Again, it's not that it is badly written in any way, but it's absolutely impossible to lose yourself in. I won a copy from LibraryThing and I appreciate the opportunity to read the book, but I can honestly say this one wasn't for me. My final say: Ethnocentric drivel.

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### **Marilyn says**

I was hooked from the beginning. I found this book enlightening, entertaining, well written and a worthwhile book to hang onto to read again and again. There is so much to think about!

The story is written in interview style and it is an interview between a young reporter of the new generation after the end of our world and a lone known survivor of the world we know. It tells what it would take to rebuild the world and that is an eye-opener!

Read this book! You won't be sorry!

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### **Ana Torres says**

John Smith- Last Known Survivor of The Microsoft

This story was an amazing read. It was nothing what I had expected it to be. About computers or about Microsoft itself.

Boy was I wrong.

Starts off with an reporter of the "Times" named Susan Krowley and she is referred in the book as SK. She went to find answers of the Microsoft wars, I am sure you are saying what war? I said the same thing in my head. It had me intrigued to continue reading on. This will peek your interest whether you know it or not.

The book reads as an interview between SK and JS (John Smith). What really had me blown away was the time frame. The world was in the future, it was 68 yrs into the future, saying that the world as we know it ended in November 13, 2013. I had to continue reading to know, what had happened. As JS being the one of last known survivors of the war that man kind had brought upon itself to self destruct the world we know today. Example without giving too much away. We currently have 7 continents, well after 9/13/13 war, the yrs has gone by and we winding up with 12 continents. We no longer have the USA as whole, millions had died to viruses, of all sorts, some US states are underwater. Go figure we have more continents and states with names that are not the same as we know it today.

People living in the new world are future babies that had no idea of the past. The interview between them is very interesting and I myself learned a few things I wasn't aware of. Even Susan is blown away at some of the stories he tells her, but she seek him out for the truth, so the truth is what he told her.

It has a great storyline that makes you wonder can this happen, truly? Can we honestly do what he tells Susan in his interview. I was amazing at some of the history he told her, ranging from all time era's. I laughed when she had no idea what a computer was, or a microwave. It makes you think about how one with no knowledge of the past can truly affect the future. Microsoft Wars is a great read, a good page turner. Once I started it I had to finish it. Roland Hughes has a great story that will have you thinking and guessing about the facts and fiction stories that are told. Some things I could believe some are just myths to some, but I will leave that up to you. I gave enough information, but there is so much, much more I am leaving out.

This is a must read.

I look forward to more of his stories, once you start you won't put it down. I know I will be wondering what will happen 9/13/13.

Five Stars \*\*\*\*\* by Ana Torres

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## Paul says

This is a dystopian novel about life after a pair of worldwide catastrophes, one of which was man-made.

Near-future Earth now has 12 continents. America is gone. The vast majority of Earth's population has perished, along with a similar percentage of human knowledge. If a machine stops working, for any reason, it is not used any longer. That is because no one alive knows how to fix the machines, along with having no facilities to make new parts to fix those machines. As far as those still alive are concerned, recorded history began about 60 years previously.

Susan Krowley, a reporter for The Times (printed twice a month, with a circulation of 5,500), interviews Smith to ask about the Microsoft Wars. Smith feels that she does not have the right frame of reference; it's like Susan was asking to read the last chapter of a mystery novel without reading the rest of the novel. Smith starts by spending a lot of time talking about Atlantis.

It was a very advanced society, the superpower of its day. The elite lived in complete luxury, while lower-class workers kept everything working. As the centuries went on, it became necessary to leave Atlantis before it was destroyed (nuclear explosion?). They took to the water in city-sized submarines (when Smith mentions computers, submarines or the Internet, Susan has no idea what he is talking about). They had mastered the science of human cloning, so a person could live for thousands of years. Their overall influence on very early humanity was huge.

More recently, as the world fell apart, Smith's family built a shelter out of a bank vault. His parents died before they could join him in the shelter, so Smith and his grandfather used it. Grandpa did not survive (there was no possibility of going outside to bury him), so Smith spent his puberty years alone in the shelter with a dead body. His shelter contains racks and racks of DVDs, filled with human knowledge. When his computer

stops working, all those DVDs will become worthless, as there will be no way to read them. At the end of the book, Smith finally tells Susan all about the Microsoft Wars (no, they did not try to take over the world).

This may be rather dry reading, because it is all in interview format, but don't let that be an obstacle. This book is very interesting and well-done, it's plausible, it's a bit spooky, and it is highly recommended.

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