



# **The War of the Worlds : Mars' Invasion of Earth, Inciting Panic and Inspiring Terror from H.G. Wells to Orson Welles and Beyond with audio cd**

*Alex Lubertozzi (Editor) , H.G. Wells , Brian Holmsten , Ben Bova (Afterword) , Ray Bradbury (Foreword by) , John Callaway (Narrated by)*

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Winner of the 2001 Book of the Year Award by Foreword Magazine for Pop Culture, The War of the Worlds has been revised and updated for this new paperback edition. The audio CD includes the complete 1938 Mercury Theatre on the Air broadcast, along with Orson Welles's press conference from the next day, a rare interview between Orson Welles and H.G. Wells and clips from a later version of "War of the Worlds." The book includes the story behind the "Panic Broadcast," the radio play script, biographical information on H.G. and Orson and the complete text of H.G. Wells's classic, "The War of the Worlds"-in addition, the book features lavish black-and-white and color photographs and illustrations.

"Two words: absolutely priceless. To have all the aspects of this classic story and historic moment in American broadcast media wrapped into one finely researched package is fantastic."-Today's Librarian "With all of this information gathered into a neat package, young adults have an opportunity to read, listen and learn about one of the most important events of radio history and a science-fiction classic."-Library Journal

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## **From Reader Review The War of the Worlds : Mars' Invasion of Earth, Inciting Panic and Inspiring Terror from H.G. Wells to Orson Welles and Beyond with audio cd for online ebook**

### **Qt says**

5 stars for the first part of this book, which tells of the famous 1938 broadcast, subsequent broadcasts, various versions of the story, other Martians in popular culture, and short biographies of H.G. Wells and Orson Welles. Especially, I liked reading about the Welles broadcast and the many comments from listeners who believed (or didn't) what they were hearing. (Frankly, it's scary how quickly and thoroughly people will believe whatever they think they hear.) The text is written in a readable and frequently amusing style, and there are several anecdotes relating to the '38 broadcast, as well.

And, I think I'd also give 5 stars to the actual "War of the Worlds" novel, as well. A few parts were a bit slow moving or over-detailed for me, but then, the details were what made it so realistic, too. In any case, it is a great sci-fi, very descriptive and scary! And I love the Victorian era illustrations, too. Now I just have to listen to the CD that came with the book, which includes the '38 broadcast, interviews, etc.

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### **K says**

This book is an amazing little resource of information about the writer, writings, and history behind the War of the Worlds. Included is information about War of the Worlds author, H.G. Wells, in-depth study of the piece of literature, a complete broadcast script (written by Howard Koch) of the 1938 Halloween broadcast by Orson Welles, information about other extra-terrestrial pranks, and even a CD with the original broadcast that turned the US upside down, spawning suicides, lawsuits, and other interesting reactions. This CD also includes Wells and Welles first meeting (H.G. was not impressed by Orson's little stunt, but took immediate liking to him upon meeting).

As quoted from [www.waroftheworldsonline.com](http://www.waroftheworldsonline.com), "AN EXCELLENT GUIDE TO ALL THINGS WAR OF THE WORLDS".

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### **Julie says**

<http://5-squared.blogspot.com/2009/01...>

I listened to the audio of the 1938 Radio Play that accompanied this book. For me, it was an eventful way to spend an hour. I would recommend it to others to spend an hour of their time to listen to the radio play. I think it entertains better and faster than the book.

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### **Stephen Snowden says**

Very cool. Great history of War of the Worlds, all in one book! I found this really cheap but would have paid

more for it!

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## Tiffany says

The portion of the book that was about H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* and Orson Welles' "The War of the Worlds" radio broadcast was good, a nice (i.e. not \*too\* in-depth, but informative) analysis of each one's success.

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### *The War of the Worlds*

For me, the story was uneven--sometimes it would drag on, and sometimes it would get really exciting. Overall, I'd give it 2.5-3 stars. I could imagine how it would spook people reading it when it originally came out...I even got a little creeped out at times.

My favorite parts: (Warning: Quotes may be spoilery!)

- Book 2, chapter 7, "The Man on Putney Hill": the narrator comes across a man who has a very interesting theory of the future scenario and a plan for survival
- "And as I looked at this wide expanse of houses and factories and churches, silent and abandoned; as I thought of the multitudinous hopes and efforts, the innumerable hosts of lives that had gone to build this human reef, and of the swift and ruthless destruction that had hung over it all; when I realised that the shadow had been rolled back, and that men might still live in the streets, and this dear vast dead city of mine be once more alive and powerful, I felt a wave of emotion that was near akin to tears.  
"The torment was over. Even that day the healing would begin. The survivors of the people scattered over the country--leaderless, lawless, foodless, like sheep without a shepherd--the thousands who had fled by sea, would begin to return; the pulse of life, growing stronger and stronger, would beat again in the empty streets and pour across the vacant squares. Whatever destruction was done, the hand of the destroyer was stayed. All the gaunt wrecks, the blackened skeletons of houses that stared so dismally at the sunlit grass of the hill, would presently be echoing with the hammers of the restorers and ringing with the tapping of their trowels."  
(Book 2, chapter 8, "Dead London" [pp. 185-186:])
- "A question of graver and universal interest is the possibility of another attack from the Martians. ... At any rate, whether we expect another invasion or not, our views of the human future must be greatly modified by these events. We have learned now that we cannot regard this planet as being fenced in and a secure abiding place for Man... for many years yet there will certainly be no relaxation of the eager scrutiny of the Martian disk, and those fiery darts of the sky, the shooting stars, will bring with them as they fall an unavoidable apprehension to all the sons of men." -- Spooky! (Book 2, chapter 10 [p. 190:])
- "The broadening of men's views that has resulted can scarcely be exaggerated. ... Now we see further. If the Martians can reach Venus, there is no reason to suppose that the thing is impossible for men, and when the slow cooling of the sun makes the earth uninhabitable, as at last it must do, it may be that the thread of life that has begun here will have streamed out and caught our sister planet within its toils." (Book 2, chapter 10 [p. 190:])

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## Barbara Ab says

Something everyone knows and talks about but hasn't' actually listened.

It was one of my "must to listen" and I'm really happy of having accomplished my task.

Now I can understand as for the time it went on people believed in a real invasion.

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### **Geert Daelemans says**

A masterpiece of science fiction

In 1898, H.G. Wells wanted to find out what it would be like if an intelligent race of Martians turned the tables by conquering and colonizing the Earth. The result is a gripping account of The War of the Worlds through the eyes of reporter in search of his family in the mid of extraterrestrial chaos. The poetic opening of the novel takes the reader directly to the Victorian world with its typical ponderings about the nature of society. The image of aliens studying Earth like scientists studying transient creatures that multiply in a drop of water is extremely powerful. Imaging the effect it would have had on any imaginative person living in the tumultuous end of the 19th century. The "Panic Broadcast" in 1938 of the radio play adapted by Orson Welles, gave the popularity of the book a major boost, when thousands of Americans fled for the non-existent alien attack.

Even now, more than a century after its first publication, the story still lives on and maintains its popularity. Whereas the narrative sometimes tends to be pompous and belittling for the modern reader, the strong ideas and compelling storyline offers more than enough food for thought. Compared to other major works of its time, Wells succeeded in composing a refreshing plot that keeps the reader hooked until the end. The convincing description of Earth under attack, depicted in situations like the brave battle at sea with the Thunder Child, widens the setting of the story to global proportions. At the same time this contrasts strongly with the personal struggle of the protagonist when hiding in a claustrophobic hiding place and seeing his friend being devoured by the aliens.

Joy and despair. Pain and hope. Every emotion is interwoven in one of literatures most important works of science fiction. Although probably not the initiator of the genre, The War of the Worlds certainly has had a tremendous influence on what the Sci-Fi turned out to be. No fan of the genre can allow skipping this masterpiece.

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### **Andre says**

Describes Orson Welles production of H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds and includes the full script and a CD of the radio production featuring Orson Welles.

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### **????? ??? ??? says**

No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own; that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinised and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinise the transient creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their

assurance of their empire over matter . It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same."PROs: "Classic sci-fi story\* In many senses created and popularized the sci-fi genre\* Vivid descriptions of Martians and the destruction they wrought\* Loved the scientific analysis of the Martians\* Real sense of dread instilled in a few moments CONs: "Extremely implausible story today\* Very boring when the book switches to the point of view of the writer's brother\* Not much character development\* Too little focus on the actual aliens for my taste\* Anticlimactic ending\* Unnecessary and oddly placed superstition" Yet so vain is man, and so blinded by his vanity, that no writer, up to the very end of the nineteenth century, expressed any idea that intelligent life might have developed there far, or indeed at all, beyond its earthly level. Nor was it generally understood that since Mars is older than our earth, with scarcely a quarter of the superficial area and remoter from the sun, it necessarily follows that it is not only more distant from time's beginning but nearer its end." H.G. Wells's 'The War of the Worlds' is, in my estimation, one of the few 'classics' that stands up to the title. It is certainly not the best sci-fi book ever written, in my opinion not even close to the best, but it's still a highly enjoyable read. The book follows an anonymous, well educated writer recalling a recent, almost extinctive an alien invasion from Mars. (Remember, this was written in the 1800s, so intelligent beings on Mars was not nearly as implausible as it would be today.) The descriptions and images portrayed are real and detailed enough to make you feel like this event actually occurred, and at points, particularly in the beginning, the book is quite suspenseful. This feeling is never so strong as it is in the beginning, where it is said that the Martians have been unsympathetically observing us, and, unfortunately, the book never again reaches this point of wonder and suspense. I found the descriptions and scientific analysis of the Martians to be, by far, the best parts of the book, particularly in two places - The beginning of the book, where the Martian environment is described and how this environment shaped their evolution is the first of these great moments. The second great moment is where the writer is in an advantageous spot where he is able to stealthily observe and analyze the Martian anatomy and physiology. For me, the book suffers immensely when it turns from a sci-fi book into a thriller. In my opinion the descriptions of the fleeing citizens and wreckage of cities was quite boring (particularly when the point of emphasis switches from the original writer to his brother) and, regrettably, these descriptions probably took up over half of the book. It seems like the destruction of England itself was more of a focus than the actual alien invasion. The ending also left me very wanting and somewhat disappointed. Overall, the excitement of the best moments are enough to overcome the dullness of the worst, leaving the book to be an enjoyable one." For that moment I touched an emotion beyond the common range of men, yet one that the poor brutes we dominate know only too well. I felt as a rabbit might feel returning to his burrow and suddenly confronted by the work of a dozen busy navvies digging the foundations of a house. I felt the first inkling of a thing that presently grew quite clear in my mind, that oppressed me for many days, a sense of dethronement, a persuasion that I was no longer a master, but an animal among the animals, under the Martian heel. With us it would be as with them , to lurk and watch, to run and hide; the fear and empire of man had passed away."

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### **Sara says**

I'm not sure if I've ever finished the book. I think I did. I'd read illustrated classics. (I hate those whitepaint hardback books, ruining the classics.)

This book began my adoration of Orson Welles, still based entirely on photos and voice (because I've never seen his films).

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## **Joseph R. says**

H. G. Wells's classic novel is wedded to Orson Welles's classic radio broadcast in this two-for-one book. The book has the complete script of Welles's show and a CD with the show and some clips of Orson Welles commenting on the show (including a meeting between Wells and Welles!). The complete Wells novel includes the art that accompanied the serialization of the novel in Pearson's magazine back in 1897.

Both are well worth revisiting. H. G. Wells's story of an invasion from Mars at the end of the 19th century in England is an exciting tale of one man fleeing from the attack. He describes what he sees of the Martians, and more interestingly, what he sees of the locals' reactions. At first, people are mildly curious if not completely aloof. Once the Martians make it out of their crater and start causing mayhem, people flee and civilization starts to break down. A lot of time is spent describing people trying to escape from the trouble. The main character reflects on the superiority of the Martians and how humans are to them like ants are to us--easy to squash and in no way equals. He also hints that the British are a bit like the Martians in their attitudes towards the conquered. The science is outdated but is not the main point of the story anyway.

Welles's broadcast was more an experiment in entertainment that turned into a panic. The broadcast starts with a music program that is interrupted by news bulletins of the aliens invading New Jersey. Listeners took it seriously and many fled their homes. It's easy to say from nearly a hundred years later that it sounds too implausible to be believed, but even today people are falling for fake journalism that is much less well-intentioned. And this book chronicles many other subsequent imitation broadcasts in America and abroad, some of which did inspire local panics. This also is still relevant today.

Recommended.

The H. G. Wells novel is discussed on A Good Story is Hard to Find podcast #188.

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## **Mark Schomburg says**

Highly recommended! I had never read the original novel, and it's very impressive. Together with the 1938 radioplay and audio CD plus biographical texts on HG wells, etc... it really delivers. There is additional radio from interviews with Orson Welles and also part of a later radioplay adaptation by other artists. For me the effect of all this was to learn respect for the real power Wells had writing in England before the whole US science fiction craze began. If your idea of War of the Worlds is only based on Orson Welles or George Pal, read the original, especially in this edition.

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## **Charles says**

11/7/10 Frontier Radio Theater:  
WHT presents War of the What? Exactly!  
(a parody of the 1938 radio script "War of the Worlds" by Howard Koch)

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**Kevin Larsen says**

This book is good for the Orson Wells radio program CD by itself. I would recommend reading War of the Worlds from the Seven Novels by HG Wells instead of this book.

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