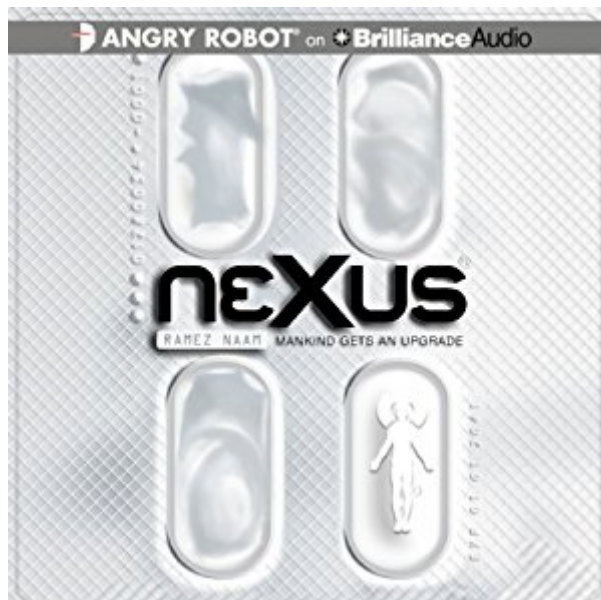


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Nexus: Nexus, Book 1



Synopsis

"Nexus is the most brilliant hard SF thriller I've read in years. It's smart, it's gripping, and it describes a chilling reality that is all-too-plausible. Ramez Naam is a name to watch for." (Brenda Cooper, author of *The Silver Ship and the Sea* and *The Creative Fire Mankind Gets an Upgrade*) In the near future, the nano-drug Nexus can link mind to mind. There are some who want to improve it. There are some who want to eradicate it. And there are others who just want to exploit it. When a young scientist is caught improving Nexus, he's thrust over his head into a world of danger and international espionage, with far more at stake than anyone realizes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you like contemporary science fiction and want to see a possible outcome of the state's war against individual self-determinism, this book is one you will want to read. Ramez does a great job of making seemingly complex social issues simple enough for anyone to understand. He weaves a great story around the people on both sides of the ongoing debates revolving around an individual's right to choose their own destiny.

It's a chilling take on the near future - and all too believable, in part thanks to a rigorous research from the author. From time to time, it's depressing to read, but well worth pushing through. It's interesting that, specially in the beginning, both sides of the conflict are given their due, showing a problem with no easy solutions. It slips off a little when the author's bias starts to shift the balance

from a grey area into a black and white one, but it's not enough to take a star from it. My only gripes on this book are that a) it doesn't even try to pretend it's a self contained story (not a bad thing in itself, but not my personal preference), and b) the US special forces manage to botch two operations in the span of a couple days, both times in a catastrophic scale. In this book they are the heavies of the story (I expect that'll change a little in the sequels), and my personal preference is that the forces opposing the protagonist be smarter than what these morons showed themselves to be. If I could, I'd give 4 1/2 stars, but forced to choose, I give 5. It's a good action thriller, and it is highly educative on future technologies and its potential risks and rewards. Well worth reading.

Naam is a really good storyteller... the concepts are fascinating, and the action sequences are riveting. Probably would have rated at least four stars from me, except that the dialogue is so stilted and clichéd that I almost laughed out loud at some points, thinking to myself "Who talks like that?!" He actually has a SWAT team leader say "Showtime!" before breaking into a criminal enclave, which is such a cliché that it's become a joke. Hard to believe any law enforcement officer could say that with a straight face! Hope Naam learns to write dialogue better than that, because he has potential to be a great writer.

I was skeptical at first (there's a LOT of mumbo jumbo and touchy-feely language in the beginning of the book but after the opening sequence the book hurtles along at a breakneck pace, introducing nuanced and interesting dilemmas for the characters as the story rushes forward.

Ramez Naam's Nexus Trilogy is probably the best science fiction treatment to date of the emergence of the "posthuman." Unlike some authors, Naam does not assume that AI leads unconditionally to catastrophic singularity (as in Charles Stross' *Accelerando*), nor does he simply wave his hands and shoot off to a far future where posthumanity is an established fact. Naam wants us to confront the choices we face as humans in an age where technological mind alteration, mind connection, mind control, and non-human minds are all possibilities. His characters do make choices -- sometimes foolish choices, sometimes paranoid choices, and sometimes angry choices -- but none of them are simple or necessarily morally right or rationally correct. If his writing and characterization are not entirely top shelf, they're still quite good. The result is a thoughtful, well-paced, well-sustained techno-thriller that should be able to reach a broad audience. I recommend the entire trilogy.

Gets very long winded, especially when describing fight scenes - they go on and on and on. Would have been much better with crisper editing and 100 pages shorter. Will not be reading any of the follow-ups. If you like to read every detail about a fight scene, this book is for you.

UPDATE: An customer service rep had me un-install and re-install my kindle app and now all the formatting issues are fixed. This book reads perfectly now! Yay! I don't normally feel compelled to write reviews. Often, I just give a star-rating and leave it at that, however, Nexus is without a doubt one of the best reads I've had in months and deserves a review. I have to urge other readers to give this one a try. (One note however is that the Kindle e-version is horrendous. All the italic words, sentences and paragraphs are completely missing, leaving the reader clueless on quite a few pages. Ridiculous. really needs to step it up in this area. This isn't the caveman era -- this is unacceptable. If you can spend a few more bucks for the paperback -- DO. I wish I had.) First of all, this book is not for everyone. If you're a tech nerd, you'll love this. If you're a cognitive sciences nerd, you'll canonize this. Not only was the plot compelling, the characters real and likeable, but right from the start, I could see this playing through my head like an action movie (BETTER than any action movie I've seen.) By the end, my heart was racing, wondering how things could possibly get resolved. Wow. I didn't think that I could get any more blown away. Then I read the author's end notes revealing that precursors for this type of technology are already in place, already being experimented with. Absolutely amazing! I can't wait to see what the coming decades look like for the science world and I can't wait to see what other offerings this incredible author has. I will be eagerly feasting on both!

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