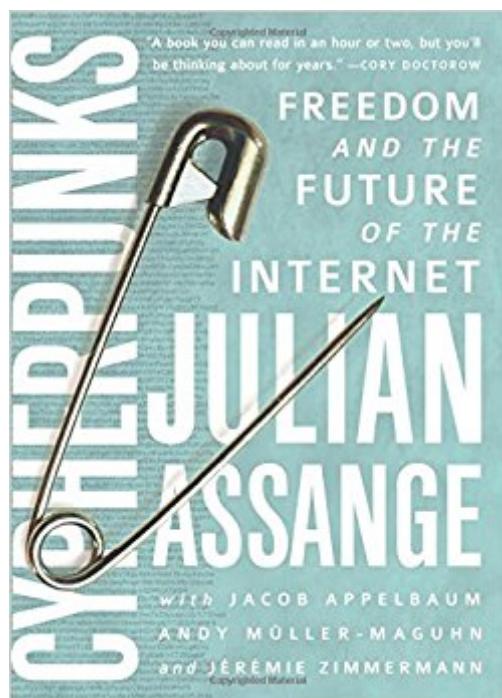The book was found

Cypherpunks: Freedom And The Future Of The Internet

Synopsis

Cypherpunks are activists who advocate the widespread use of strong cryptography (writing in code) as a route to progressive change. Julian Assange, the editor-in-chief of and visionary behind WikiLeaks, has been a leading voice in the cypherpunk movement since its inception in the 1980s.Now, in what is sure to be a wave-making new book, Assange brings together a small group of cutting-edge thinkers and activists from the front line of the battle for cyber-space to discuss whether electronic communications will emancipate or enslave us. Among the topics addressed are: Do Facebook and Google constitute “the greatest surveillance machine that ever existed,Ã¢â ¬Â• perpetually tracking our location, our contacts and our lives? Far from being victims of that surveillance, are most of us willing collaborators? Are there legitimate forms of surveillance, for instance in relation to the “Four Horsemen of the InfopocalypseÃ¢â ¬Â• (money laundering, drugs, terrorism and pornography)? And do we have the ability, through conscious action and technological savvy, to resist this tide and secure a world where freedom is something which the Internet helps bring about?The harassment of WikiLeaks and other Internet activists, together with attempts to introduce anti-file sharing legislation such as SOPA and ACTA, indicate that the politics of the Internet have reached a crossroads. In one direction lies a future that guarantees, in the watchwords of the cypherpunks, “privacy for the weak and transparency for the powerfulÃ¢â ¬Â•; in the other lies an Internet that allows government and large corporations to discover ever more about internet users while hiding their own activities. Assange and his co-discussants unpick the complex issues surrounding this crucial choice with clarity and engaging enthusiasm.

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Customer Reviews

Julian Assange is the editor in chief of WikiLeaks. An original contributor to the cypherpunk mailing list, Assange is the author of numerous software projects in line with the cypherpunk philosophy, including the Rubberhose encryption system and the original code for WikiLeaks. An ‘ethical hackerÃ¢ ¬â„¢ in his teens, and subsequently an activist and internet service provider to Australia during the 1990s, he is the co-author (with Sulette Dreyfus) of Underground, a history of the international hacker movement. Julian is currently a refugee under the protection of the government of Ecuador, and lives in the Ecuadorian embassy in London.Jacob Appelbaum is a staff research scientist at the University of Washington, and a developer and advocate for the Tor Project, which is an online anonymity system for everyday people to fight against surveillance and against internet censorship.Andy MÃƒÂ ller-Maguhn is a long time member of, and former spokesman for, the Chaos Computer Club in Germany. A specialist on surveillance he runs a company called Cryptophone, which markets secure voice communication devices to commercial clients.JÃƒÂ©rÃƒÂ©mie Zimmermann is the co-founder and spokesperson for the citizen advocacy group La Quadrature du Net, the most prominent European organization defending anonymity rights online and promoting awareness of regulatory attacks on online freedoms.

This book is a surprise on several levels, the first being its physical size: It's pretty small and not too long (about 150 pages).Next (and more importantly), it's basically the transcription of conversations of 4 guys who work at the forefront of privacy and crypto issues apparently sitting around and talking. And at first, it might be easy to mistake their banter as something like that of paranoid stoners, but after the initial impression rubs off you begin to realize that these guys are really getting at the heart of some very big issues that practically no one (outside of Cypherpunk circles) is thinking about.Actually, as you penetrate the inner chapters you begin to realize that these guys have really thought about and worked directly with some of the issues they are discussing, and that these issues are some of the key issues facing modern society today, at least as far as communications, privacy and economics are concerned. Even though the interaction is informal (or perhaps because of it), you find that these guys are able to fluently discuss and debate issues that most people remain blithely unaware of.Key for me are the discussions about economics and

democracy. Indeed, rather than the cold-war or Islamophobic paranoia that some governments have acted upon over the years, perhaps the key danger citizens face to their freedoms is really the merger of the state with vast corporate entities that have become defacto entrusted with intimate keys to information about our lives. Interestingly, Assange attempts a very US Cypherpunkly devils advocate stance: "Perhaps it's OK to give over communications to big businesses so long as governments stop interfering, because they are reacting to real potential benefits in the market". To which Jacob Appelbaum rightly counters, "Well, what if the Private Prison industry continued to manipulate laws in order to boost their profits and incarcerate far more people (say those that try to block pro-incarceration laws)"?(What I couldn't help but think about is, what if you were a known dissident that the government wanted to silence? What if they could easily dig out all of your (eg) porn searches from Google or Bing or whatever? Could they then design a life-ruining temptation to send directly at you in order to disgrace your name to the public or cause you some serious legal issues? This clearly would not be very difficult in the current milieu.)It's heady deep stuff, and arguably a conventionally written book on these issues would have sunk like a ton of bricks. This lighter format allows the easy airing in a very readable way.This is, therefore, an extremely important book containing words by 3rd gen cypherpunks (well, some of them...Julian is arguably 2nd gen or possibly 1st gen) who really know the issues and have, after all, been writing code. This is the book you should read right after THIS MACHINE KILLS SECRETS and, arguably, Oliver Stone's recent book.

The authors have made important contributions to the privacy/Internet freedom/anti-censorship battle. This book is a stream of consciousness discussion. I recommend it as an intro to some of the issues, but it is quite unfocused and bobs and weaves about. It doesn't attempt to create a structured framework outlining all the issues. It is worth reading more by the authors to supplement the book and fill in gaps. In terms of issues facing the planet, a lack of lifestyle sustainability is definitely the biggest issue facing us but secondarily these issues around privacy and freedom come next in my opinion. Worth a read.

There's nothing "bobbing and/or weaving" about this dialogue, it's a brilliant conversation, and one which uses numerous (and astute) analogies and facts, to explain what's happening with the internet, the public/private blurring of lines, the NSA, our freedom, and much more. For the record, I'm not a right-wing OR left-wing fanatic, but rather a 71 year old agnostic (at least regarding religion), who can see the writing on the wall.This book is incredibly important and vital to all of us,

as is Julian Assange. I was beginning to think he wasn't that relevant at this point in history, but after reading this book I realize just how crucial, pivotal, and impactful his thoughts and actions are.Given we're communicating here on a major web presence, namely , I actually hope that they are listening to our conversation and thoughts regarding this seminal issue. But only to the extent that they learn something about the concept of what freedom really is!

The government spying on its citizens should alarm us all. Not only for the invasion of privacy, but because the information can be used directly and indirectly to silence those who object to government intrusions.

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