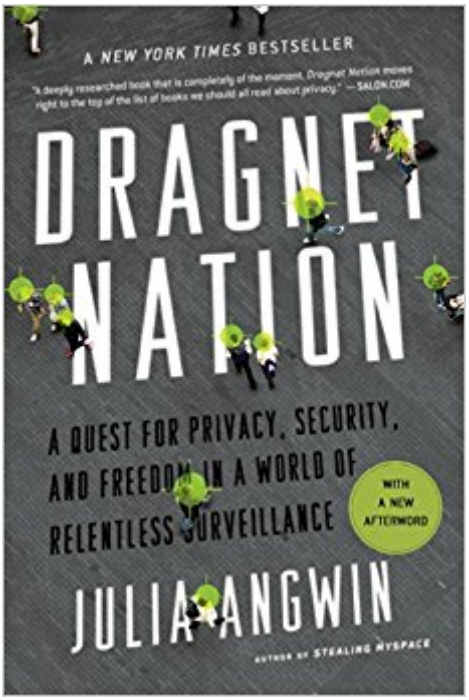
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Dragnet Nation: A Quest For Privacy, Security, And Freedom In A World Of Relentless Surveillance



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Synopsis

An inside look at who’s watching you, what they know and why it matters. We are being watched. We see online ads from websites we’ve visited, long after we’ve moved on to other interests. Our smartphones and cars transmit our location, enabling us to know what’s in the neighborhood but also enabling others to track us. And the federal government, we recently learned, has been conducting a massive data-gathering surveillance operation across the Internet and on our phone lines. In "Dragnet Nation," award-winning investigative journalist Julia Angwin reports from the front lines of America’s surveillance economy, offering a revelatory and unsettling look at how the government, private companies, and even criminals use technology to indiscriminately sweep up vast amounts of our personal data. In a world where we can be watched in our own homes, where we can no longer keep secrets, and where we can be impersonated, financially manipulated, or even placed in a police lineup, Angwin argues that the greatest long-term danger is that we start to internalize the surveillance and censor our words and thoughts, until we lose the very freedom that makes us unique individuals. Appalled at such a prospect, Angwin conducts a series of experiments to try to protect herself, ranging from quitting Google to carrying a "burner" phone, showing how difficult it is for an average citizen to resist the dragnets’ reach. Her book is a cautionary tale for all of us, with profound implications for our values, our society, and our very selves.

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Welcome to life in a society of ubiquitous surveillance, tracking and data mining... Angwin,

a Wall Street Journal reporter who along with her colleagues has produced essential reporting on privacy and security Ã¢â ¬Â¦ aims to illuminate the costs of living with systems that track nearly everything we do, think or sayÃ¢â ¬Â¦ [and] she performs a herculean effort to regain her privacyÃ¢â ¬Â¦ A useful, well-reported study.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Los Angeles TimesÃ¢â ¬Å“I read Julia Angwin's new book Dragnet NationÃ¢â ¬Â¦ I heartily recommend it to youÃ¢â ¬Â¦ [The book is an] antidote to Big Brother's big chill.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Bill MoyersÃ¢â ¬Å“A deeply researched book that is completely of the moment. Dragnet Nation moves right to the top of the list of books we should all read about privacy.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢SalonÃ¢â ¬Å“Angwin's warning that Ã¢â ¬Ëœinformation is power' resonates.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Daily BeastÃ¢â ¬Å“Angwin elegantly chronicles this tragedy of the digital commons at the level of policy and our individual civil libertiesÃ¢â ¬Â¦Dragnet Nation really kicks in--and becomes a blast to read--when she fights backÃ¢â ¬Â¦If enough people follow Angwin's lead, new networks of computer users might manage to open up ever larger holes in the dragnet world.Ã¢â ¬Â•
Ã¢â ¬â ¢BookforumÃ¢â ¬Å“EntertainingÃ¢â ¬Â¦ Pacy and eye-opening.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Financial TimesÃ¢â ¬Å“Angwin, a longtime reporter on digital privacy issues for the Wall Street Journal, releases the contemporary (and, unfortunately, nonfiction) companion book to Orwell's 1984. Dragnet Nation examines the surveillance economy and its effect on free speech and thought, likely causing readers to rethink the next words they type into a search engine.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢LA WeeklyÃ¢â ¬Å“[Angwin is] a privacy ninja.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Yahoo!'s Tech Modern FamilyÃ¢â ¬Å“Informative, conversationalÃ¢â ¬Â¦ [Angwin's] travails educate her (and her readers) about all the ways privacy-minded developers are working to develop anti-surveillance tools, and this forms a helpful guide for readers seeking non-jargony information on minimizing their digital footprints.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Columbia Journalism ReviewÃ¢â ¬Å“A new hot-button issue that touches both politics and business is privacy, and the erosion of privacy is examined in Dragnet Nation.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Publishers Weekly (Top 10 Business & Economics Books)Ã¢â ¬Å“Fascinating ... Angwin, who spent years covering privacy issues for the Wall Street Journal, draws on conversations with researchers, hackers and IT experts, surveying the modern dragnet tracking made possible by massive computing power, smaller devices and cheap storage of data...A solid work for both privacy freaks and anyone seeking tips on such matters as how to strengthen passwords.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Kirkus ReviewsÃ¢â ¬Å“In this thought-provoking, highly accessible exploration of the issues around personal data-gathering, Julia Angwin provides a startling account of how we're all being tracked, watched, studied, and sorted. Her own (often very funny) attempts to maintain her online privacy demonstrate the ubiquity of the dragnet--and the near

impossibility of evading it. I'll never use Google in the same way again.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Gretchen Rubin, bestselling author of Happier at Home and The Happiness ProjectÃ¢â ¬Å“Julia Angwin's pathbreaking reporting for the Wall Street Journal about online tracking changed the privacy debate. Her new book represents another leap forward: by showing how difficult it was to protect her own privacy and vividly describing the social and personal costs, Angwin offers both a wakeup call and a thoughtful manifesto for reform. This is a meticulously documented and gripping narrative about why privacy matters and what we can do about it.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO, National Constitution Center, and author of The Unwanted Gaze and The Naked CrowdÃ¢â ¬Å“Dragnet Nation is an impressive picture of the new world of electronic surveillance -- from Google to the NSA. Julia Angwin's command of the technology is sure, her writing is clear, and her arguments are compelling. This is an authoritative account of why we should care about privacy and how we can protect ourselves.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Bruce Schneier, author of Liars and Outliers: Enabling the Trust That Society Needs to ThriveÃ¢â ¬Å“Dragnet Nation is a fascinating, compelling, and powerful read. Many of us would simply prefer not to know how much others know about us, and yet Julia Angwin opens a door onto that dark world in a way that both raises a new set of public issues and canvasses a range of solutions. We can reclaim our privacy while still enjoying the benefits of many types of surveillance Ã¢â ¬â œ but only if we take our heads out of the sand and read this book.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Anne-Marie Slaughter, president and CEO, New America

Julia Angwin is the author of Stealing MySpace and an award-winning investigative journalist for the independent news organization ProPublica. From 2000 to 2013 she was a staff reporter for The Wall Street Journal, where she was on the team of reporters awarded the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for coverage of corporate corruption and led a team covering online privacy that was a finalist for a 2012 Pulitzer Prize. She lives in New York City with her husband and two children.

Privacy is a hot topic in the news of late. This book goes right to the heart of this issue. The writing is excellent. Julia Angwin speaks from and describes her own experiences with all aspects of the subject. She places her story in the context of her life and her own family. I appreciate this personal touch and the relationship to real life. Too often non-fiction books of this sort present a logical and scholarly analysis of the problem that is difficult to relate to one's own life. This book does not do that; it is relevant.I am a technically savvy person only to an average degree. But I could tell from her discussion that the author is not seriously techie about any of the subjects she discussed.

Advanced dissertations on the topics in the book was not what I was looking for when I bought the book, and if that is what you want, this is not the book for you. However, if you want to understand how privacy in your life has been impacted by government and industry, then this book is a must read.

I must admit, I was a little bit skeptical of the bookÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s veracity when I found out the author was an investigative journalist. However, more than thirteen years of reporting on privacy for the Wall Street Journal (and now ProPublica) has certainly given Julia Angwin more than enough knowledge to discuss privacy in a modern context. In fact, rather than speaking of her own authority, Angwin uses her contactsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •including security experts, hackers, privacy consultants, and moreÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •to support all of her opinions and actions throughout this gripping story.Julia AngwinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s accessible, narrative format accurately reflects her distinguished career as a writer (Pulitzer prize finalist). After laying the groundwork for privacy in the first few chapters, Angwin spends the rest of the ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“novelÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• describing her own personal attempt to avoid what she calls ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“dragnetsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •computerized, impersonal, widespread surveillance tools which track and record data from sources both domestic and international.Personally, I found the book to be intriguing, but distant in practicality. Angwin claims to lay out how she went about seeking privacy, yet fails to find a balance between outlining her technical pathway and voicing her concerns. Though she certainly allowed the common man to follow in her story, she does not give close to enough detail to allow someone to follow in her footstepsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •to do this, one would need more than the book alone. For those interested in understanding why we need to care about privacy this is a must read. For those already well-versed in privacy concerns, simply reading up on her blog about the different privacy tools will be enough to satisfy: http://juliaangwin.com/privacy-tools/.

This book may seem to be a little over the top, but it also addresses subjects like web privacy.You don’t have to look very hard to find yourself tracked by internet advertisers. The sobering part of the book is how the government can eavesdrop on a number of devices. Cell phones, laptops, home computers are all possible targets.I wouldn’t go to the lengths the author did for privacy, but I did find some of her advice helpful. Disconnect works and I did find more tracking than I expected on my web browser.Reading this book for me was a sobering experience.

Julia Angwin’s Dragnet Nation is a thoroughly researched, ambitious effort to expose nearly every threat to privacy posed by the very technology by which many of us choose to shop, communicate, work and entertain ourselves. In that sense, it serves as a good starting point for those who are just learning about these topics. By indiscriminately bundling those surveillance techniques employed by the government and private sector that pose significant risks to our civil liberties with low level nuisances into a hodgepodge she collectively labels a "dragnet," though, we learn perhaps less than we should about what matters most while wading through what may seem like petty concerns.She begins well enough with a broad survey of all of the ways we can be tracked and our privacy compromised by technology, some more alarming than others. She follows with a history of how they developed from simpler technologies into their current state. By chapter three we see her becoming increasingly foreboding, discussing the East German Stasi’s methods and using them as a touchstone to determine how concerned we should or should not be about various activities undertaken by government or the private sector.After these opening chapters, the book turns away from journalism and toward memoir, detailing Angwin’s attempt to remove herself from the dragnet. In some cases she is more successful than others. She ultimately realizes there’s not much of a developed market in privacy technology, as many of her technological tools turn out to be clumsy, not worth the effort to properly implement, or even downright failures as she illustrates very well in her discussion of companies that offer to disconnect you from the many Internet databases for a fee.Dragnet Nation is at its best when illustrating how law enforcement’s keystone cops handing of online chatters can lead us to alter our lives in a way inconsistent with a free society, as in the case of Yassir Affifi or Gulet Mohamed. Her journalism bringing these stories to light is a great example of the sort of reporting we need to keep our government honest. By comparison fretting about how companies might lower her purchasing willpower by targeting discounts at her in vulnerable moments seems comically out of place in terms of its social impact. Sometimes readers will cringe about what sounds like very real threats to their liberty but wonder why they’re really supposed to care about others.Dragnet Nation suffers from its failure to consider the government’s side of these issues. She takes for granted that privacy is an unquestioned good, never seriously considering whether the government’s limited resources might explain its intrusive methodologies. Ultimately, though, Dragnet Nation’s biggest failing is that it never establishes what true privacy is and why it really matters. In the last chapter, she offers some tests to use in evaluating when a threat to privacy may be of concern, but her thoughts are left underdeveloped and comes too late to help the reader evaluate whether the many threats Angwin identifies and against which she tried to protect herself are valid. A more robust consideration of such issues up front would have provided her

reader with a better guide to understanding what is at stake when dealing with these issues.

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