Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government Saving Privacy in the Digital Age

By Steven Levy

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If you've ever made a secure purchase with your credit card over the Internet, then you have seen cryptography, or "crypto", in action. From **Stephen Levy**—the author who made "hackers" a household word—comes this account of a revolution that is already affecting every citizen in the twenty-first century. **Crypto** tells the inside story of how a group of "crypto rebels"&#151nerds and visionaries turned freedom fighters&#151teamed up with corporate interests to beat Big Brother and ensure our privacy on the Internet. Levy's history of one of the most controversial and important topics of the digital age reads like the best futuristic fiction.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
If the National Security Agency (NSA) had wanted to make sure that strong encryption would reach the masses, it couldn't have done much better than to tell the cranky geniuses of the world not to do it. Author Steven Levy, deservedly famous for his enlightening *Hackers*, tells the story of the cypherpunks, their foes, and their allies in *Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government*. From the determined research of Whitfield Diffie and Marty Hellman, in the face of the NSA's decades-old security lock, to the commercial world's turn-of-the-century embrace of encrypted e-commerce, Levy finds drama and intellectual challenge everywhere he looks. Although he writes, "Behind every great cryptographer, it seems, there is a driving pathology," his respect for the mathematicians and programmers who spearheaded public key encryption as the solution to Information Age privacy invasion shines throughout. Even the governmental bad guys are presented more as hapless control fetishists who lack the prescience to see the inevitability of strong encryption as more than a conspiracy of evil.

Each cryptological advance that was made outside the confines of the NSA's Fort Meade complex was met with increasing legislative and judicial resistance. Levy's storytelling acumen tugs the reader along through mathematical and legal hassles that would stop most narratives in their tracks--his words make even the depressingly silly Clipper chip fiasco vibrant. Hardcore privacy nerds will value *Crypto* as a review of 30 years of wrangling; those readers with less familiarity with the subject will find it a terrific and well-documented launching pad for further research. From notables like Phil Zimmerman to obscure but important figures like James Ellis, *Crypto* dishes the dirt on folks who know how to keep a secret. *--Rob Lightner*

From Publishers Weekly
The author of the 1994 sleeper Hackers reveals how a group of men developed methods for encrypting digital transmissions for use in the private sector. As the digital age was dawning in the late 1970s, a major stumbling block to delivering information and conducting transactions via high-speed networks was the lack of security from outside parties who might wish to intercept the data (even though the National Security Agency had acres of computers dedicated to protecting government secrets and even more designed to decode other countries' messages). Widely available systems only began to emerge after a range of free thinkers, including such crypto legends as Whit Diffie and Marty Hellman, began to devote their considerable mind power to the issue. After a slow start, Levy's story steadily builds momentum as the crypto pioneers do battle with the NSA, look for ways to commercialize their discoveries and fight for the federal government's approval of the strongest encryption methods. The chief technology writer for Newsweek, Levy locates the heart of the matter in the struggle to balance the need for the most effective encryption possible with the government's need to decode messages that might endanger national securityAa struggle in which privacy, so far, has prevailed. Agent, Dominick Abel . (Jan. 8) Forecast: Levy's reputation grows with each book, and publicity that links this title to his bestselling Hackers will ensure strong sales. The title is backed by a six-city author tour and national radio satellite tour. The major promo campaign online, where Levy is minor royalty, may be most effective, but the book's biggest boost will come from the planned excerpt in Newsweek.
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From Library Journal
What happens to privacy when computer geeks and big business battle the government for free access to

information? From the author of Hackers.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Bardsley:

This Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government Saving Privacy in the Digital Age book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is usually information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This kind of Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government Saving Privacy in the Digital Age without we know teach the one who examining it become critical in pondering and analyzing. Don't be worry Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government Saving Privacy in the Digital Age can bring any time you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even mobile phone. This Crypto: How the Code Rebels Beat the Government Saving Privacy in the Digital Age having good arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

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