

Information Doesn't Want to Be Free: Laws for the Internet Age

By Cory Doctorow

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“Filled with wisdom and thought experiments and things that will mess with your mind.” — Neil Gaiman, author of *The Graveyard Book and American Gods*

In sharply argued, fast-moving chapters, Cory Doctorow’s *Information Doesn’t Want to Be Free* takes on the state of copyright and creative success in the digital age. Can small artists still thrive in the Internet era? Can giant record labels avoid alienating their audiences? This is a book about the pitfalls, and the opportunities, creative industries (and individuals) are confronting today—about how the old models have failed or found new footing, and about what might soon replace them. An essential read for anyone with a stake in the future of the arts, *Information Doesn’t Want to Be Free* offers a vivid guide to the ways creativity and the Internet interact today, and to what might be coming next.

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Information Doesn't Want to Be Free: Laws for the Internet Age By Cory Doctorow Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #125267 in Books
- Published on: 2015-11-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .70" w x 5.80" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 192 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“Filled with wisdom and thought experiments and things that will mess with your mind.” — Neil Gaiman, author of *The Graveyard Book and American Gods*

“Cory Doctorow has been thinking longer and smarter than anyone else I know about how we create and exchange value in a digital age.” — Douglas Rushkoff, author of *Present Shock* and *Program or Be Programmed*

"Author, Internet guru, and practical philosopher Cory Doctorow gives hard-headed advice about how to gain fame and fortune using the Internet. Along the way, he explains a great deal about the hidden workings and dangers of modern technology. Whether you want to make money online or just surf safely, there's much to learn in this fast-moving and entertaining narrative.” — Alex Kozinski, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

"In his best-selling novel *Ready Player One*, Ernest Cline predicted that decades from now, Doctorow (Homeland, 2013, etc.) should share the presidency of the Internet with actor Wil Wheaton. Consider this manifesto to be Doctorow’s qualifications for the job.

The author provides a guide to the operation of the Internet that not only makes sense, but is also written for general readers. Using straightforward language and clear analogies, Doctorow breaks down the complex issues and tangled arguments surrounding technology, commerce, copyright, intellectual property, crowd funding, privacy and value—not to mention the tricky situation of becoming “Internet Famous.” Following a characteristically thoughtful introduction by novelist Neil Gaiman, rock star Amanda Palmer offers a blunt summary of today’s world: “We are a new generation of artists, makers, supporters, and consumers who believe that the old system through which we exchanged content and money is dead. Not dying: dead.” So the primary thesis of the book becomes a question of, where do we go from here? Identifying the Web’s constituents as creators, investors, intermediaries and audiences is just the first smart move. Doctorow also files his forthright, tactically savvy arguments under three “laws,” the most important of which has been well-broadcast: “Any time someone puts a lock on something that belongs to you and won’t give you the key, that lock isn’t there for your benefit.” These aren’t the wild-eyed proclamations that arose from the Occupy movement or the hysteria that seems to surround Edward Snowden, whom Doctorow touches on only briefly here. Instead, the author advocates for a liberalized system of copyright laws that finally admits that the Internet, for all its virtues and diverse purposes, is nothing but one great big copy machine, and it’s not going away.

Doctorow has spoken and written on these issues many times before but never quite so persuasively. Required reading for creators making their ways through the new world."—*Kirkus* (starred)

"Doctorow... might be the perfect person to parse our deeply dystopian present."—*Baltimore City Paper*

"Each of the miniessays and lengthy sidebars Doctorow offers in support of his laws is an education in itself. … [his] hard-won information-age wisdom is for everyone who consumes copyrighted material today—which is everyone." —*Library Journal* (Starred)

"Doctorow effectively holds his audience by offering some intriguing analogies with equally intriguing ramifications." —*The Boston Globe*

"Information Doesn't Want to Be Free is the most entertaining and informational book on copyright law you'll ever read." —*Shelf Awareness*

"In Information Doesn't Want to Be Free: Laws for the Internet Age, Doctorow provides a thoughtful treatise on creativity in the digital age." —*GigaOm*

Reviews for *Little Brother*:

"Doctorow throws off cool ideas the way champagne generates bubbles...[he] definitely has the goods." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

"A wonderful, important book…I'd recommend Little Brother over pretty much any book I've read this year, and I'd want to get it into the hands of as many smart thirteen-year-olds, male and female, as I can. Because I think it'll change lives. Because some kids, maybe just a few, won't be the same after they've read it. Maybe they'll change politically, maybe technologically. Maybe it'll just be the first book they loved or that spoke to their inner geek. Maybe they'll want to argue about it and disagree with it. Maybe they'll want to open their computer and see what's in there. I don't know. It made me want to be thirteen again right now, and reading it for the first time." —Neil Gaiman

"A tale of struggle familiar to any teenager, about those moments when you choose what your life is going to mean."—Steven Gould

"A believable and frightening tale of a near-future San Francisco … Filled with sharp dialogue and detailed descriptions… within a tautly crafted fictional framework." —Publishers Weekly (starred review)

"Readers will delight in the details of how Marcus attempts to stage a techno-revolution … Buy multiple copies; this book will be h4wt (that's 'hot,' for the nonhackers)." —*Booklist* (starred review)

"Marcus is a wonderfully developed character: hyperaware of his surroundings, trying to redress past wrongs, and rebelling against authority … Raising pertinent questions and fostering discussion, this techno-thriller is an outstanding first purchase." —*School Library Journal* (starred review) Little Brother

"Cory Doctorow's punchy, instructive 'Information Doesn't Want to Be Free: New Laws for the Internet Age' is a must-read for anyone who hopes to make a living selling creative work online. A buoyant and geeky manual, it teaches creators how to make today's complex intellectual property rules and technology work for them." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

"An excellent, sometimes sobering primer on copyright and creativity in the Internet age." —*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

"A readable, concise look at the breadth and scope of copyright law in the modern age." —*The Consumerist*

About the Author

Cory Doctorow is a science fiction author, activist, journalist, and blogger, as well as the coeditor of Boing Boing (boingboing.net) and the author of young adult novels like *Homeland, Pirate Cinema,* and *Little Brother* and novels for adults including *Rapture of the Nerds* and *Makers.* The former European director of

the Electronic Frontier Foundation and cofounder of the U.K. Open Rights Group, he lives in London.

Neil Gaiman is the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of more than twenty books for readers of all ages, and the recipient of numerous literary awards, including the Shirley Jackson Award and the Locus Award for Best Novelette for his story "The Truth Is a Cave in the Black Mountains." Originally from England, he now lives in America.

Amanda Palmer rose to fame as the lead singer, pianist, and lyricist for the acclaimed band The Dresden Dolls, and performs as a solo artist as well as collaborating with artists including Jonathan Richman and her husband, author Neil Gaiman. She is the author of *The Art of Asking*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ashley Downs:

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