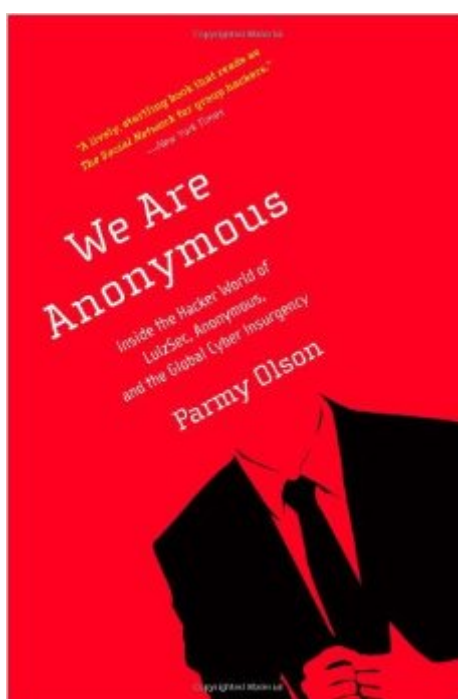


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We Are Anonymous: Inside The Hacker World Of LulzSec, Anonymous, And The Global Cyber Insurgency



Synopsis

Updated with a new epilogueA thrilling, exclusive expose of the hacker collectives Anonymous and LulzSec. WE ARE ANONYMOUS is the first full account of how a loosely assembled group of hackers scattered across the globe formed a new kind of insurgency, seized headlines, and tortured the feds-and the ultimate betrayal that would eventually bring them down. Parmy Olson goes behind the headlines and into the world of Anonymous and LulzSec with unprecedented access, drawing upon hundreds of conversations with the hackers themselves, including exclusive interviews with all six core members of LulzSec. In late 2010, thousands of hacktivists joined a mass digital assault on the websites of VISA, MasterCard, and PayPal to protest their treatment of WikiLeaks. Other targets were wide ranging-the websites of corporations from Sony Entertainment and Fox to the Vatican and the Church of Scientology were hacked, defaced, and embarrassed-and the message was that no one was safe. Thousands of user accounts from pornography websites were released, exposing government employees and military personnel. Although some attacks were perpetrated by masses of users who were rallied on the message boards of 4Chan, many others were masterminded by a small, tight-knit group of hackers who formed a splinter group of Anonymous called LulzSec. The legend of Anonymous and LulzSec grew in the wake of each ambitious hack. But how were they penetrating intricate corporate security systems? Were they anarchists or activists? Teams or lone wolves? A cabal of skilled hackers or a disorganized bunch of kids? WE ARE ANONYMOUS delves deep into the internet's underbelly to tell the incredible full story of the global cyber insurgency movement, and its implications for the future of computer security.

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Customer Reviews

** FYI: When considering this book, read the reviews people write about the book instead of just looking at the number of stars. As described in the book, one of the favorite tactics of internet pranksters is to "raid" a site/forum/review -- essentially overwhelm it with negative ratings/info in large numbers just for kicks. **I just finished reading Parmy Olson's *We Are Anonymous* and wanted to provide a review with my thoughts about the book. As someone who followed the events with Anonymous and Lulzsec as they unfolded in the news, tech journals, and twitter, I found myself eagerly awaiting the release of this book. I was very hopeful that it would provide additional "behind-the-scenes" information about the events and the people involved. The subject of Anonymous is a rather amorphous one, and fairly difficult to quantify for those not familiar with its background. I feel like the author does an excellent job of taking potentially confusing subject matter and presenting a clear narrative in a style that makes for an entertaining read. She begins in the middle -- starting the book by discussing a hack that was so audacious in scope and impact that the reader is immediately hooked. This outlandish event is even more stunning because it is not fiction -- it actually happened in Feb. 2011. The author then goes on to discuss the roots of Anonymous -- how it spontaneously emerged / evolved from a place that most of the internet's travelers would never know existed. How it grew almost organically -- changing and morphing. Its character changed rapidly over time, and continues to do so. She has done a good job of presenting these concepts that many would find difficult to grasp in a manner that someone who has never heard of Anonymous could understand.

"*We Are Anonymous*", by Forbes' London bureau chief Parmy Olson, is an exploration of the activist, or pseudo-activist, culture that emerged from the 4chan image board since 2008, when normally apolitical anonymous posters organized themselves for the first time in a series of protests against the Church of Scientology. This book's subtitle, "Inside the Hacker World of LulzSec, Anonymous, and the Global Cyber Insurgency", is more telling of its content than the title. This is not a history or sociological study of Anonymous. Origins of Anonymous are included only as background. Olson picks up the story at the point when some denizens of the chan boards fashioned themselves into political activists, culminating in December 2010's Operation Payback against companies that cut off WikiLeaks' funding, and subsequently generating splinter groups, among them the radicalized troublemakers of LulzSec. Olson provides new and interesting detail of

the internal workings of LulzSec, to which she dedicates 7 chapters, or about 100 pages, though she gathers as much information as she can about any political action taken by Anonymous or its derivatives. Outside of LulzSec, that was mostly DDoS attacks with alleged anti-censorship motives. Olson had impressive access. Gregg Housh, who organized the Scientology prank-cum-protest, lends insight into what many have claimed was a pivotal event in the evolution of Anonymous. A 4chan prankster whom the author calls "William" lets us in on the tensions between aspiring activists and the prevailing Anonymous ethos to target anyone and anything for the laughs. William prefers pranking, harassing, and extortion to political activism. Notably, Olson got a great deal of material from Jake Davis, AKA "Topiary".

This was a great book. I highly recommend that anyone interested in internet culture reads this. I understand that /b/ gets upset every time someone not steeped in their world investigates it; the nature of the subaltern is to remain that way. But anon has done some amazing things, some questionable things, and some hilarious things using the anon tag - enough to warrant this investigation. The world of anon is hard to pin down and good information can be hard to come by. What you normally get is stupid newscasts with exploding vans and warnings about weird internet hat machines. This goes deep into the history, world, and actions of those using the anon label and related groups. Ms. Olsen keys into the world of anon as an outsider; she anthropologically and intelligently comments and reports what she's found. The history is accurately documented; maybe the book misses some minutia about the history of how things went. Anyone who wasn't there or watching the whole time is going to miss some nuance, and this book does miss some little facts and raids and posts, but who cares? She delves far deeper than any other journalist who has looked into anon and produced a wonderful book in the process. If you want to see some of the interesting culture on the internet; are curious about the history of anon or their actions; if you want to look at the possible importance and relevance of hackers in today's highly digital world; if you new to the idea of anon - you need to read this book. It's in the rules new folks, you need to lurk more; read through this book and stop being an auto-hater. I'd say buy it, but dl it first if you are a skeptic, you'll find it is really the only publication out there that does any justice to the complexity and importance of anon.

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