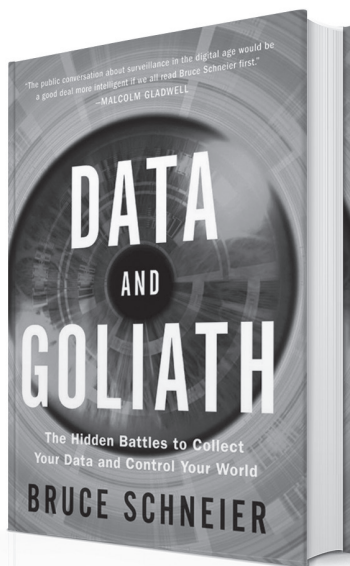


Data and Goliath:
The Hidden Battles to
Collect Your Data and
Control Your World
by Bruce Schneier

Reviewed by Dr. Jan Kallberg
and CDT Monte Ho



We all surrender privacy in some form and fashion and allow companies to gather data so these enterprises can better serve us. Our cell phone provider needs to know where we are to route calls to the appropriate cell tower. As consumers and users, we allow the cell phone company to track and follow our moves because the convenience of being able to receive a call is greater than our perceived loss of privacy. For the last twenty years, Americans have accepted that the benefit of convenience outweighs the loss of privacy. Bruce Schneier makes a strong argument that this construct should no longer be the case. The book *Data and Goliath* has a compelling message that is a Red Thread of a question through the text: “Do you accept the surrender of your data for convenience?” The author is an authority in the field of cybersecurity—a renowned computer scientist and cryptographer. Schneier has been at the forefront of cybersecurity developments since the 1990s with an appetite to address current challenges and put them in perspective.

Schneier has divided the book into three parts: “Part One: The World We’re Creating,” “Part Two: What’s At Stake,” and “Part Three: What To Do About It.” The author marches forward in the first two sections and slows down in the last part where he gives policy advice to corporations and governments. In Part Three, Schneier sets a foundation by explaining the value of basic societal principles as transparency, accountability, oversight, security versus privacy, and creates a value statement about a decent society. According to Schneier, society has more to gain from increased transparency than

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secrecy, and when secrecy is needed an anchored oversight relying on our democratic values is crucial for a proper balance. Just because the data is there, or accessible, for the government to use it does not warrant its usage without a proper assessment of the need and justification. The author provides numerous examples, which visualize the problem; US Cellular in 2012 received two judicially approved wiretaps and 10,801 subpoenas for identical information without legal review or judicial oversight.

Schneier's examples of ethically over-stretching usage of data, or access to data, point to a critical need for structured norms of accepted and non-accepted behavior. The author points out how this improved behavior can align to the corporate interest and traditional business values and still support the core interests of the government. Schneier shares his vision—and drives home this penetrating argument.

The author provides numerous examples of how the collection of data occurs and explains the utilization of massive data repositories. Schneier describes how the sense of being anonymous by not providing personal information is spurious when inferences from different data sources can provide detailed information and understanding.

Even if readers do not agree with Bruce Schneier, and we are all entitled to our own opinion, there is a significant benefit embedded in this work with the straightforward explanations of what different services do with our personal data. The 120 pages of notes with comments, sources, reflections, and the granular information is an absolute encyclopedia of electronic surveillance, concerns, and real-life events that have occurred in our society. As a reader, diving into the references and following them from source to source is a book by itself in discovery and understanding.



Cadet Monte Ho studies Computer Science at West Point. She is also the cadet executive officer of the Army West Point Cycling team, which is nationally ranked first by USA Cycling in Division II for 2016-2017. She is originally from Los Angeles, California and has participated in two Computer Science AIADs, one through the USC Institute for Creative Technologies in Playa Vista and another at Picatinny Arsenal involving SCADA/ICS. Upon graduation, she hopes to branch Cyber, Signal Corps, or Military Intelligence.

Bruce Schneier has in *Data and Goliath* brought complex issues like security versus privacy, the mechanics behind Big Data, the “hidden” surveillance is massive data generated on a daily basis and the loss of control over your information to light. The book is a significant contribution to the field that is well worth reading. 🍷

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