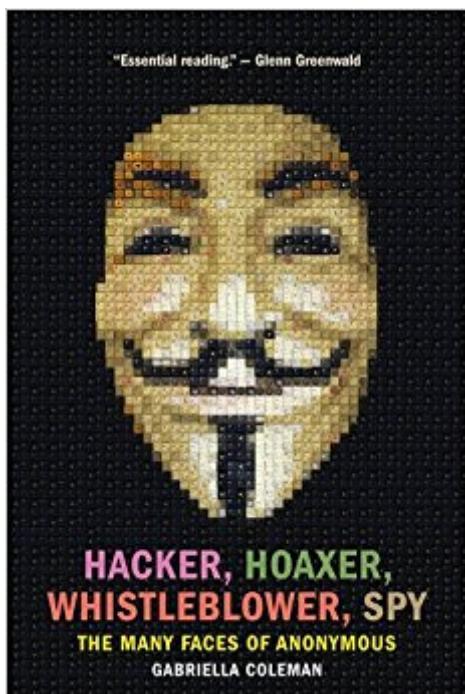


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# Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces Of Anonymous



## Synopsis

Here is the ultimate book on the worldwide movement of hackers, pranksters, and activists that operates under the non-name Anonymous, by the writer the Huffington Post says “knows all of Anonymous’ deepest, darkest secrets.” Half a dozen years ago, anthropologist Gabriella Coleman set out to study the rise of this global phenomenon just as some of its members were turning to political protest and dangerous disruption (before Anonymous shot to fame as a key player in the battles over WikiLeaks, the Arab Spring, and Occupy Wall Street). She ended up becoming so closely connected to Anonymous that the tricky story of her inside/outside status as Anon confidante, interpreter, and erstwhile mouthpiece forms one of the themes of this witty and entirely engrossing book. The narrative brims with details unearthed from within a notoriously mysterious subculture, whose semi-legendary tricksters—such as Topiary, tflow, Anachaos, and Sabu—emerge as complex, diverse, politically and culturally sophisticated people. Propelled by years of chats and encounters with a multitude of hackers, including imprisoned activist Jeremy Hammond and the double agent who helped put him away, Hector Monsegur, Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy is filled with insights into the meaning of digital activism and little understood facets of culture in the Internet age, including the history of “trolling,” the ethics and metaphysics of hacking, and the origins and manifold meanings of “the lulz.” From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Winner of the 2015 American Anthropological Association's Diana Forsythe Prize awarded by the Society for the Anthropology of Work (SAW) and from the Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology and Computing." Named to Kirkus Reviews' Best Books of 2014. "Easily the best book on Anonymous." Julian Assange. "The US government and its allies have spent years castigating, prosecuting, and jailing members of Anonymous, with the director of the NSA going so far as to warn ominously of the potential of an Anonymous-led power blackout. But Gabriella Coleman's fascinating history of Anonymous makes clear that almost all of the hacktivism attributed to this global collective has been devoted to exposing wrongdoing, not wreaking destruction, even as she also carefully shows that Anonymous is not a shadowy organization but a loosely knit collection of activists all over the globe, fighting for government and corporate transparency. The NSA's treatment of Anonymous is disturbing and extreme, and Anonymous's surprising activist turn is heartening. Essential reading." Glenn Greenwald, author of *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA and the Surveillance State*. "An engrossing, accessible, and intelligent study illuminating the ambiguities of Anonymous and its implications for the future of online political activism." Times Literary Supplement. "Coleman charts her own conceptual course, breaking with the standard narratives, particularly the click-baity cautionary tales about the dangers of Anonymous. Her book offers its share of warnings, but ones more nuanced, compelling, and empathetic than the typical hand-wringing about online mobs and the conundrum of virtual vigilante justice. Coleman is no cheerleader...But she also doesn't wag her finger from some imagined high ground." Astra Taylor, Bookforum. "This is the ultimate piece on Anonymous. It's a notoriously difficult subject to write about, but Gabriella Coleman has succeeded where others have failed, and the result is a masterpiece that is informative, interesting, and funny. A fine example of what an investigative book should be." Mustafa Al-Bassam, alias "tflow," former member of LulzSec. "In *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy*, Coleman reveals the group in all its complexity ... this in-depth account might leave readers in awe of the sheer scope of the group and how much they have achieved while shunning the traditional trappings of leaders, hierarchy and individual fame-seeking." Financial Times. "Anyone hoping to understand this mostly hidden world will find [Coleman's] book crucial and even prescient." Boston Globe. "Meticulously researched, eminently readable." Maclean's Magazine. "Coleman takes us on a thrilling journey into the uncharted landscape of hackers, trolls, and Anonymous activists who live

among us. It's both a perfect initiation for all those n00bs out there still wondering what a Hack, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy shares in the rebellious, even mordant humor of the groups it profiles, but never loses its critical perspective. A hilarious, important piece of hidden history that is very hard to put down.

• Douglas Rushkoff, author of *Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now*

“With a perceptive eye and a principled disposition, Coleman dives into the eclectic world of Anonymous to reveal the humor and political significance of this polarizing network. Following her journey through this maze and reveling in her analysis is both insightful and awe-inspiring. This book will shake up assumptions at the core of academia, industry, law enforcement, and the media. It's a must read!

• danah boyd, author of *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*

“Exhaustively researched and devilishly readable, *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy* tells the story of Anonymous' rise from 4chan to taking on governments. If there could be a definitive writer on a movement like Anonymous, Coleman would be it.

• Molly Crabapple, artist and author of the forthcoming *Drawing Blood*

“[An] eye-opening ethnography ... This all-access pass into the dark and wild corners of the Internet is timely, informative, and also frightening.

• Publishers Weekly

From the Hardcover edition.

a --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

A truly excellent book by an intelligent, researched author. My only small issue is that at times, the writer tries too hard to prove oneself and loses objectivity, and occasionally even alters the story or conversation by directing chat room participants not to discuss illegal activities. That is not reporting the story, that is creating it. Still, the book is informative and educational, and a great overview of the Anonymous subject.

Solid. The language of anthropology I don't quite get but I loved the 'trickster' history that ties centuries together. And I have renewed faith in humanity

I found this book incredibly informative and interesting. I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in learning more about Anonymous. The author's "anthropologist" approach was for the most part very good but I felt there were certain extraneous, self-effacing details that the book could've done without which is why I gave this book 4 stars instead of 5.

I've been reading this over the past few weeks when I get a free moment. I enjoyed it a lot. I remember hearing about the various Anonymous activities over the last few years. It was great to get an "embedded journalist" view of what was going on on the inside of the group.

In my view, this is the best book on Anonymous out there. Gabriella Coleman provides an unvarnished view of the Anon movement, from its early genesis and first hacks under Project Chanology to expose the cult of Scientology, through its genesis as a political force during the Arab Spring and so-called Moralfaggotry, to LulzSec and AntiSec. Today, a federal judge sentenced journalist Barrett Brown to 5 years and a fine of \$890K JUST FOR LINKING to Anonymous-hacked material from Stratfor Global Intelligence; he didn't actually hack anyone! Jeremy Hammond (sup\_g), who did the actual hack, was sentenced to the maximum allowed under his plea agreement and is currently serving a ten-year sentence at a medium-security federal prison in Manchester, Kentucky. Coleman weaves all of this together like a tightly packed thriller, keeping the reader on the edge of his seat. The book's only flaw -- and it's a very minor one -- is that she tends to be somewhat enamored of her subject, and one wonders just how objective she's being in covering some of the movement's activities. But, as an Anonymous fan myself, this is a quibble. At least she has some passion for her subject compared to many of the rather anemic works out there. Coleman really captures the love of lulz, the fun of the movement that drives so many hackers. She really, really gets it. If you have any interest in this movement and in the dozens and dozens of sub-movements it has spawned, READ THIS BOOK. As a writer of techno-thrillers like 404 and the forthcoming dEATH in dAVOS, which cover Anonymous extensively, I am forever in Coleman's debt for her insights and her bravery. Let's hope she doesn't meet the fate of Barrett Brown and so many other journalists who have taken it upon themselves to understand Anonymous and the hacker mind.

I couldn't put the book down. Gabi did a great job outlining the events and stories surrounding anonymous. It made me want learn more about the hacking world, and how can we better protect ourselves. If only we knew how vulnerable we actually are..

Wishing I had the skills I used to have in programming and in my ongoing Political Protests of Pratting Politicians Pitching Pigeon Poop this book tells the story how the "Lutz" became for me still putting the Government of Shadow Cabal of Oppression took even the world of Anonymous itself by

surprise. Well written and easy to follow along even for non-geeks who would enjoy this and have a better appreciation of Anonymous and come to understand that the GOVERNMENT ITSELF may be behind many "hacks" so do NOT blame the folks in Anonymous who simply at times do it to show how STUPID Corporations are with YOUR data.

A detailed history of the hacker community "Anon" from the perspective of a sociologist. You won't get detailed technical insight into the methods used to get into the target websites and networks, but you will get a good feeling for the very special community that organizes these attacks.

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