What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer

By John Markoff

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While there have been several histories of the personal computer, well-known technology writer John Markoff has created the first ever to spotlight the unique political and cultural forces that gave rise to this revolutionary technology. Focusing on the period of 1962 through 1975 in the San Francisco Bay Area, where a heady mix of tech industries, radicalism, and readily available drugs flourished, *What the Dormouse Said* tells the story of the birth of the personal computer through the people, politics, and protest that defined its unique era.

Based on interviews with all the major surviving players, Markoff vividly captures the lives and times of those who laid the groundwork for the PC revolution, introducing the reader to such colorful characters as Fred Moore, a teenage antiwar protester who went on to ignite the computer industry, and Cap'n Crunch, who wrote the first word processing software for the IBM PC (EZ Writer) in prison, became a millionaire, and ended up homeless. Both immensely informative and entertaining, *What the Dormouse Said* promises to appeal to all readers of technology, especially the bestselling *The Soul of a New Machine*.

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What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer By John Markoff Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #981488 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Viking Adult
- Published on: 2005-04-21
- Released on: 2005-04-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.34" h x 1.24" w x 6.30" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Starred Review. Since much of the research behind the development of the personal computer was conducted in 1960s California, it might seem obvious that the scientists were influenced by the cultural upheavals going on outside the lab. Very few people outside the computing scene, however, have connected the dots before Markoff's lively account. He shows how almost every feature of today's home computers, from the graphical interface to the mouse control, can be traced to two Stanford research facilities that were completely immersed in the counterculture. Crackling profiles of figures like Fred Moore (a pioneering pacifist and antiwar activist who tried to build political bridges through his work in digital connectivity) and Doug Engelbart (a research director who was driven by the drug-fueled vision that digital computers could augment human memory and performance) telescope the era and the ways its earnest idealism fueled a passion for a computing society. The combustive combination of radical politics and technological ambition is laid out so convincingly, in fact, that it's mildly disappointing when, in the closing pages, Markoff attaches momentous significance to a confrontation between the freewheeling Californian computer culture and a young Bill Gates only to bring the story to an abrupt halt. Hopefully, he's already started work on the sequel. *Agent, John Brockman.(Apr.)*
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From the Inside Flap
Thanks to the cunning of history and the wondrous strangeness of Northern California, the utopian counterculture, psychedelic drugs, military hardware and antimilitary software were tangled together inextricably in the prehistory of the personal computer. Full of interesting details about weird but not arbitrary connections, John Markoff's book tells one of the oddest--because truest--of California tales and thereby helps illuminate the still unsettled legacy of the Sixties.
--Todd Gitlin, author of Media Unlimited and The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage

From the Back Cover
"Wonderful . . . [It] makes a mind-blowing case that our current silicon marvels were inspired by the psychedelic-tinged, revolution-minded spirit of the sixties. It's a total turn-on."
—Steven Levy, author of *Hackers*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Melissa Wilcox:

Book is usually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can realize everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. We all know that that book is important thing to bring us around the world. Close to that you can your reading ability was fluently. A guide What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about every little thing. But some of you think that open or reading a new book make you bored. It is not necessarily make you fun. Why they can be thought like that? Have you seeking best book or suitable book with you?

Susan Gagnon:

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Joseph Navarro:

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Carol McElroy:

That book can make you to feel relax. This specific book What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer was colourful and of course has pictures around. As we know that book What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer has many kinds or category. Start from kids until youngsters. For example Naruto or Investigator Conan you can read and feel that you are the character on there. So , not at all of book are generally make you bored, any it offers you feel happy, fun and unwind. Try to choose the best book to suit your needs and try to like reading in which.

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