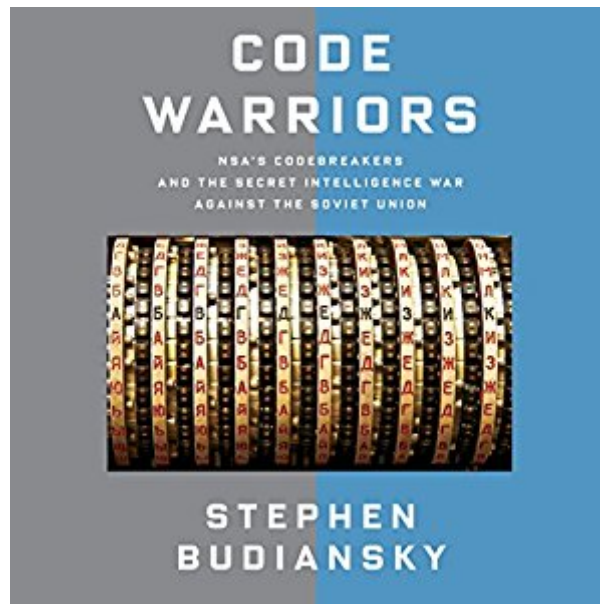


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Code Warriors: NSA's Codebreakers And The Secret Intelligence War Against The Soviet Union



Synopsis

A sweeping, in-depth history of NSA, whose famous "cult of silence" has left the agency shrouded in mystery for decades. The National Security Agency was born out of the legendary codebreaking programs of World War II that cracked the famed Enigma machine and other German and Japanese codes, thereby turning the tide of Allied victory. In the postwar years, as the United States developed a new enemy in the Soviet Union, our intelligence community found itself targeting not soldiers on the battlefield, but suspected spies, foreign leaders, and even American citizens. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, NSA played a vital, often fraught and controversial role in the major events of the Cold War, from the Korean War to the Cuban Missile Crisis to Vietnam and beyond. In *Code Warriors*, Stephen Budiansky - a longtime expert in cryptology - tells the fascinating story of how NSA came to be, from its roots in World War II through the fall of the Berlin Wall. Along the way, he guides us through the fascinating challenges faced by cryptanalysts, and how they broke some of the most complicated codes of the 20th century. With access to new documents, Budiansky shows where the agency succeeded and failed during the Cold War, but his account also offers crucial perspective for assessing NSA today in the wake of the Edward Snowden revelations. Budiansky shows how NSA's obsession with recording every bit of data and decoding every signal is far from a new development; throughout its history the depth and breadth of the agency's reach has resulted in both remarkable successes and destructive failures. Featuring a series of appendixes that explain the technical details of Soviet codes and how they were broken, this is a rich and riveting history of the underbelly of the Cold War, and an essential and timely read for all who seek to understand the origins of the modern NSA.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“The American cryptologists of the Cold War deserve as much credit as anyone for the fact that Americans, Russians, and the rest of the world were never vaporized in a cloud of radioactive ash.” This is the conclusion of Stephen Budiansky’s meticulously researched, well-balanced exploration of the history of cryptology since World War II. Edward Snowden’s revelations and several other sensational disclosures about NSA have left many Americans thinking that NSA stands for “Now Spying on Americans”, making this book an especially timely read. Code Warriors presents the many positive contributions that communications intelligence and the related field of signals intelligence have made as well as the factors that led to the practices of concern to many people today. The book begins with World War II and ends with the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Although the emphasis is on NSA and the cryptologic effort, it discusses the rest of the American intelligence community as well as allies like Britain’s equivalent of NSA, GCHQ. Cameo roles are played by well-known people like Alan Turing and lesser-known but noteworthy cryptologic legends like William Friedman and Louis Tordella. An amusing aspect of the early history was the fact that Russia was our ally during WW II, and “gentlemen” do not spy on their friends. Well, they do; they’re just extra secret about it! After the shooting war morphs into the Cold War, Budiansky puts the development of the intelligence community within the context of public feeling at the time. The average citizen felt a danger of nuclear war but “held out hope that it would still be possible to place all atomic weapons under international control---such was the faith in the UN that was as yet unextinguished in that less cynical age.

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