

EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN



HOW AMERICA  
LOST  
ITS SECRETS

EDWARD SNOWDEN,  
THE MAN  
AND THE THEFT

# How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, the Man and the Theft

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**How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, the Man and the Theft** Edward Jay Epstein  
A groundbreaking expose that convincingly challenges the popular image of Edward Snowden as hacker turned avenging angel, while revealing how vulnerable our national security systems have become--as exciting as any political thriller, and far more important.

After details of American government surveillance were published in 2013, Edward Snowden, formerly a subcontracted IT analyst for the NSA, became the center of an international controversy: Was he a hero, traitor, whistle-blower, spy? Was his theft legitimized by the nature of the information he exposed? When is it necessary for governmental transparency to give way to subterfuge?

Edward Jay Epstein brings a lifetime of journalistic and investigative acumen to bear on these and other questions, delving into both how our secrets were taken and the man who took them. He makes clear that by outsourcing parts of our security apparatus, the government has made classified information far more vulnerable; how Snowden sought employment precisely where he could most easily gain access to the most sensitive classified material; and how, though he claims to have acted to serve his country, Snowden is treated as a prized intelligence asset in Moscow, his new home."

## How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, the Man and the Theft Details

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# **From Reader Review How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, the Man and the Theft for online ebook**

## **Sarah says**

The first few chapters definitely read like someone who has never had experience with the gaming community or the "computer geek" community wrote it through the lens of a grandfather who is very angry at libertarians and is ranting. BUT stick with it, after you slog through the obvious character-sabotaging portrayals of both Snowden and his girlfriend (albeit some of it is probably not far-off the mark in terms of narcissism, idealism, and the desire to make a mark) you will find a thoroughly investigated portrayal of what happened when Snowden sabotaged the NSA along with some logical and thoughtful speculation about its implications, and some serious questions raised about Russia's role. Epstein also successfully uses his background of investigative journalism to explain historical events involving Russia/US espionage and spying to provide a better framework for his narrative.

There are so many in the camp of lauding Snowden, and, granted, some of his earlier efforts appear to be founded in whistle-blowing, but as he implicated himself further and continued to pursue a personal agenda his idealistic vision of being a whistle-blower became muddy, more self-serving and self-preserving, and cost the United States a lot when it comes to security.

This is one of those books that should be required reading for anyone on either side of the political spectrum. It really poses some thoughtful perspectives about what we trade in order to feel and be kept safe, what it requires to maintain security as a nation, and the US government's role in domestic and global security. It also will inadvertently leave you thinking about your own reliance on technology and what that means politically, socially, and personally.

Snowden's actions had a lot of far-reaching consequences which will continue to play out for a long time to come and not all of them are heroic, good, or are even in the interests of those of us who remain citizens of the US.

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## **Westminster Library says**

As an investigative journalist, I was expecting the author to give me the facts in an engaging but generally unbiased way. Or, if he was going to try to prove a point (i.e. Snowden is a traitor and not a whistle blower) and then back it up with information, I would have accepted that as well. Instead, the author never tells you his intentions and in lieu of doing his job as an investigative reporter, attacks people's characters rather than their actions.

He essentially calls Lindsay Mills a slut throughout the book (Who cares what kind of photos she posted on her blog?! What does that have to do with the theft?!) and consistently refers to Chelsea Manning as "he" and "Bradley". If this author can't even put aside his transphobia long enough to use the correct pronoun, how can I trust him to present Snowden and the others in a believable light?

Find How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, the Man and the Theft at the Westminster Public Library!

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## **Nancy Seamons says**

A very well written account of how Snowden took classified government documents and gave them to the country's enemies, while pretending to be a concerned US citizen. Guaranteed to open your eyes to real damage Snowden has done to our country and how he has drastically hindered the fight against terrorism.

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## **Burt Schoeppe says**

A detailed and well-researched look at Edward Snowden's crimes.

Gives insights into Snowden's motivations and how his claims don't fit up to the reality of his crimes.

Snowden took far more material than was required just to be a whistle blower. Much of the material he took hurt U.S. intelligence gathering and lead to the deaths of innocent people.

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## **Ran says**

So ... I wanted to know more about Edward Snowden's hack of the NSA, how he did it, and what position that leaves the United States intelligence community in the wake of said discovery. This book does accomplish all those fronts. But I found myself way more fascinated by author Edward Jay Epstein by the end of this work.

I will say that speculation and espionage, oral evidence, and other measures used in this book (and many books like it) ... I struggle with because a) I am a "trained" historian with an emphasis in archival training (hello, MLS concentration) so I focus on documentation and b) I especially like when documentation is accessible to everyone for review. This is a convoluted way for me to say that I find spy stuff super suspicious. That's not to say "spy stuff" doesn't happen. It's just that I'm so outside my depth of evaluative skills. In the book, Epstein often repeats himself on his points in order to expand on speculation. Those sections of the book kept me going, "Hmm...I don't know and there's no way for me to evaluate that on my own."

But investigative reporter and author Edward Jay Epstein published this book in January 2017 at the age of 81. That fact garnered respect from me, despite my reservations on his body of evidence. What Epstein does challenge the popular conception of Snowden as hero whistleblower and instead paints the hacker in the light of both traitor and spy. It is an interesting read which reveals the shadow of the devastation that Snowden wrecked on the National Security Agency and the United States intelligence community after 2013.

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## **Dave says**

This is not going to be the definitive book on Edward Snowden, but it is a timely release that helps to dispel a lot of the media created myths regarding Snowden. The myths pertain to Snowden being seen as a

whistleblower who only cared about transparency, and put his own well-being at risk to give the world this information. The reality of what Snowden actually did compared to the myth is deeply concerning. Epstein does a wonderful job of parsing out everything Snowden said, and then comparing it with his actions. What we get instead is the picture of a man who while having an agenda, had an agenda that ran contrary to all public statements. In my estimation, it becomes extremely difficult to defend a man who stole documents/data that went well beyond the sort of things a whistleblower would do. I think it is best if a reader comes to their own conclusions about what Snowden did as they read the case and facts presented by this author. I certainly went from thinking Edward Snowden should have been pardoned prior to this book, to believing that he should be tried for treason. Others may not share that viewpoint. The only complaints I have about this book pertain to the parts when Epstein tries to draw his own conclusions about behaviors and thoughts of Snowden and others without any proof. It shows his narrative at its weakest at these points as it is just hypothetical thought on his part, and it doesn't fit what the book is trying to set out to do; show what Snowden actually did and the impact of his actions on the United States. The second thing is not the author's fault because he did try but was unable to obtain an interview with Edward Snowden due to the latter's refusal to grant it. I would have loved to have heard Snowden's responses to some of the questions Epstein brings up throughout the book such as how he was able to access the NSA computers in Hawaii without being a systems admin and not having access to the passwords. Overall a good read, and will be interesting to see if anything ever ultimately happens from Snowden from a legal perspective.

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### **Sofia says**

As an investigative journalist, I was expecting the author to give me the facts in an engaging but generally unbiased way. Or, if he was going to try to prove a point (i.e. Snowden is a traitor and not a whistle blower) and then back it up with information, I would have accepted that as well. Instead, the author never tells you his intentions and in lieu of doing his job as an investigative reporter, attacks people's characters rather than their actions. He essentially calls Lindsay Mills a slut throughout the book (Who the hell cares what kind of photos she posted on her blog?! What does that have to do with the theft?!) and consistently refers to Chelsea Manning as "he" and "Bradley". If this author can't even put aside his transphobia long enough to use the correct pronoun, how can I trust him to present Snowden and the others in a believable light?

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### **Paul D. Miller says**

I'm aware that critics have cast doubt on one of Epstein's claims (about Snowden's whereabouts during his first days in Hong Kong). But that claim isn't central to Epstein's thesis: that Snowden, in fact though (apparently) not in intention, was and is an espionage source for Russia and China. This thesis is virtually indisputable, and is a major corrective to the received narrative about Snowden as a "whistle blower." That latter label, of course, is what Snowden wants us to believe, and he has had ample help spreading this version through Oscar- and Pulitzer-winning film and journalism. Upon reflection, those auteurs are little more than stenographers in the Court of Snowden, hagiographers for a modern cult of sainthood--or, to put it another way, propagandists. Epstein, by contrast, may need to put out a revised edition with a few corrections, but at least has done his research and written a defensible work of investigation and analysis.

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## **Jonathan Jesse says**

### **It may change how you feel about Snowden**

I never bought into the fake narrative that Mr Snowden was just a whistle blower and this book reinforced this view. What I didn't know is how many secrets he stole that didn't pertain to whistle blowing. I also didn't know Mr Snowdens full background like this book provides.

I wish Amazon could let me rate things by half stars as I would've given this 4.5 stars and not just 5. The author repeats himself and also seems to wander a bit, however the point is made.

I would recommend reading this book to learn more about the spy Edward Snowden

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## **Alex Yard says**

Full Fancy Well-Written Award Eligible Version of this review available on RunSpotRun.com, for which I received an ARC of this book.

Very engaging read, worthwhile questions asked, but the author presents his answers/theories with dubious logical techniques and petty, smug character assassination smears that only highlight the far-fetchedness of his claims.

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## **11811 (Eleven) says**

Snowden bought stock options so that makes him a gambler. His girlfriend had naked pictures and that makes her a whore. I read 20% and that makes me a fool. DNF.

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## **Lisasue says**

Brilliant book! A must-read for anyone trying to understand the implications of Edward Snowden's actions when he stole documents from the NSA. This book does a fine job of addressing the privacy and intelligence effects of Snowden's actions.

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## **Bettie? says**

How Edward Snowden changed history

Blurb:*THE effects of Edward Snowden's heist of secrets from America's National Security Agency (NSA) in 2013 can be divided into the good, the bad and the ugly, writes Edward Jay Epstein in a meticulous and*

*devastating account of the worst intelligence disaster in the country's history, "How America Lost Its Secrets".*

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## **SteveL\_E1 says**

The biography of Edward Snowden, the infamous thief of the secret agency community, is quite interesting. As it is not in a normal biography form, it is very new to read just plainly from a journalist's perspective. Rather than plainly learning about a person who made an impact, it is more interesting to learn with the author.

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## **phoenix says**

You should read this book for the facts in it, not for the author's very judgemental interpretations & simplistic assumptions because they are clearly biased by the view he wants to prove. Right from the onset Epstein insinuates guilt and crime. His stance is not neutral, and he repeatedly tries to shove his view down your throat. This irritated me a lot.

Throughout the book this attitude is very annoying, particularly his lack of thoroughness in his critical statements. For example, he limits himself to citing only two alternatives where three or more are possible. It often seems he only mentions the scenarios that would fit the bill of what he wants to "prove". And to make matters worse, sometimes he goes on daisy-chaining such limited assumptions.

Other than that, the storytelling/narrative is suspenseful and the revealed facts are interesting. A passionate read, definitely not just about Snowden, but also the NSA, Russia, spy stories, history, China. Read this book to learn facts you won't find anywhere else, but make sure you separate the facts from the author's conclusions. I'm not saying he's wrong (nor that he is right), just that given the facts it is not possible to conclude certain things. The additional facts however help you open your perspective on the possible existence of alternative truths, and thereby be more critical on this whole, very important episode in history.

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