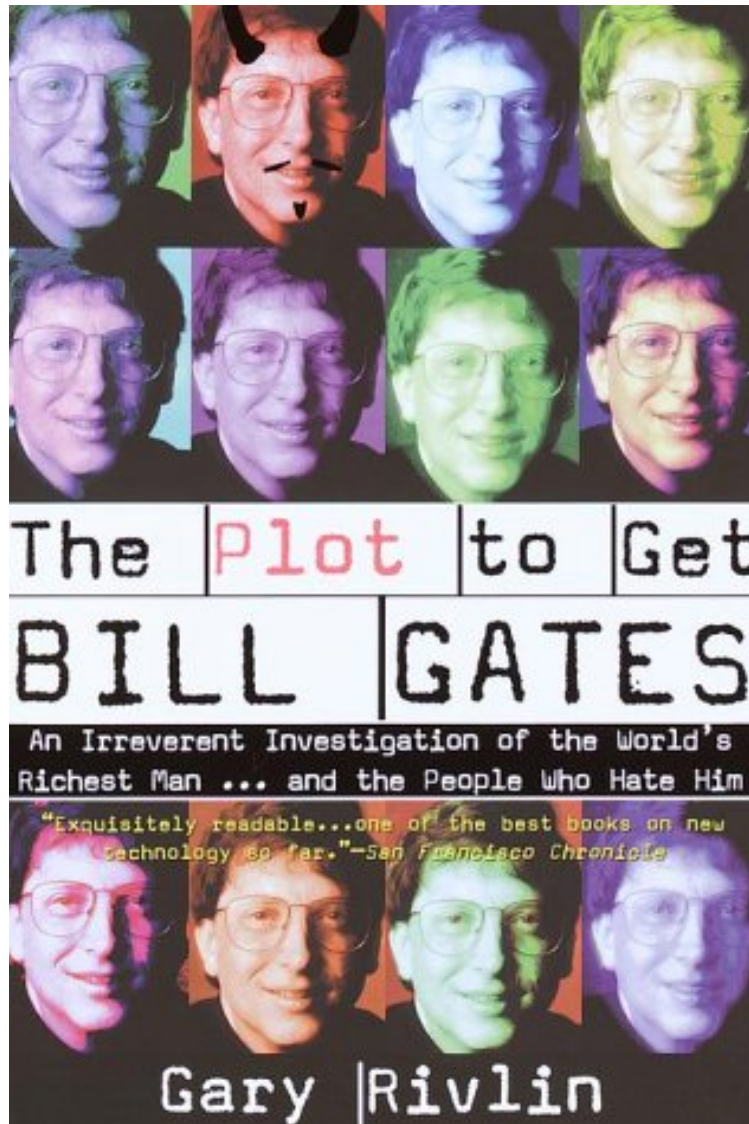


[FREE] The Plot to Get Bill Gates: An Irreverent Investigation of the World's Richest Man... and the People Who Hate Him

The Plot to Get Bill Gates: An Irreverent Investigation of the World's Richest Man... and the People Who Hate Him

Gary Rivlin

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Gary Rivlin : **The Plot to Get Bill Gates: An Irreverent Investigation of the World's Richest Man... and the People Who Hate Him** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Plot to Get Bill Gates: An Irreverent Investigation of the World's Richest Man... and the People Who Hate Him:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Don't Judge this Book By Its CoverBy Z. BlumeDespite a sensationalistic title and a poorly designed cover, *The Plot to Get Bill Gates* is a wonderful piece of reporting. Rivlin, while an obvious admirer of the technology tycoons, presents a fairly unbiased (though tilting a little in favor of Bill Gates) story about the growth of Microsoft, the computer industry in general, and the ever growing group of anti-Microsoft competitors. It does a very good job of describing all the players in this game, following the industry for the past twenty years, and explaining the technology so even computer illiterates like myself can understand. Rivlin obviously did a tremendous amount of research, interviewed hundreds of technologists, and really put his findings together well. This book is well written (though the flow is sometimes interrupted when Rivlin seems to remember something he forgot to add earlier and makes a long tangent out of it), very interesting (though nothing terribly original is presented if you are well acquainted with the technology industry), and entertaining. I would highly recommend it for people who want to learn more about Gates, other technology tycoons, the technology industry, or just want a look at how competitive companies operate and interact.

7 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Save Your MoneyBy A CustomerDon't waste your time. The author seems to know very little about the history of software, even less about the software applications and operating system discussed, and nothing whatsoever about software development. He began with an interesting premise -- that a lot of very bad business decisions have been and are being made in reaction to or even anticipation of Microsoft -- but makes a total mess of things due to his ignorance of software. That's what it all comes down to, and unless you understand the topic it's impossible to understand Gates and his competitors. And that's why almost everyone in this book seems so stiff and their actions seem so inexplicable (except Scott McNealy, who doesn't understand software either).For example, the author portrays Phillippe Kahn's abdication to the Redmond Borg as an example of how Microsoft destroys competitors by wearing them down without mentioning Lotus's lawsuit against Borland -- and Kahn has on many occasions blamed Lotus and not Microsoft for destroying Borland. The author no doubt ignored this bit of trivia because it didn't fit his premise, but it really does. Gates got where he did not just because of his monopoly -- Microsoft had a monopoly on DOS, too, but was still a fraction the size of Lotus and Ashton-Tate, among others -- but because of the blunders of his competitors. Like Bill Clinton, Bill Gates has been very lucky in the enemies Fate has sent his way, and the story of the software industry's March of Folly (Ed Esber, anyone? John Scully? IBM's bungling of OS/2?) is the true story of how Gates came to dominate the landscape.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful look at the early years of the Internet revolutionBy mark bosletWonderful look at the early years of the Internet revolution, when the computer industry was a Peyton Place of big egos and big names, and major players were fighting a epic battle for dominance. Rivlin comes to the subject with attitude and an insider's knowledge. Well worth the time and enjoyment.

To understand the magnitude of Bill Gates, one must first understand the people who hate him, most of whom suffer from an acute case of "Bill Envy." *The Plot to Get Bill Gates* is the true, hilarious story of a loosely knit cabal of Silicon Valley's wealthiest and most successful leaders and their quest to defeat the richest man in the world. These leaders are known within Microsoft as Captain Ahab's Club for their self-destructive fixation with harpooning the Great White Whale of Redmond, all two hundred pounds and \$50 billion of him. Acclaimed journalist Gary Rivlin tells their tale as a high-tech variation on *Moby-Dick*, and by taking us deep inside the world of Gates and his enemies, he vividly reveals their consuming obsession. Lead players in *The Plot* are Lawrence Ellison of Oracle, Scott McNealy of Sun Microsystems, Ray Noorda of Novell, Marc Andreessen and James Barksdale of Netscape, Philippe Kahn of Borland, and Gary Kildall (the unsung programmer who could have been Gates), with special guest appearances by venture capitalist John Doerr, consumer activist Ralph Nader, zealous attorney Gary Reback, and the Fraternal Order of Antitrust Lawyers. The author describes each man's ill-fated attempt at besting Gates, who seems to become bigger, hungrier, and more dangerous after each attack. Rivlin also conducts an in-depth investigation of Gates himself, examining each crucial step in the ascension of the slope-shouldered billionaire with bad hair and unearthing the most telling details to explain why Gates is so rich and we aren't. (The short answer: monomania.) Rivlin concludes with an illuminating analysis of Microsoft's latest upgrade of its CEO, Gates 3.1, which seems to be operating with fewer bugs than previous incarnations. Gary Rivlin's reporting is irreverent and intellectually independent, free of the romanticized portraits and techno-hype perpetuated by many in the media. As an award-winning political reporter, he brings a fresh perspective to the avaricious, bloodthirsty behavior of these new icons. The result is a savagely funny morality play about big business at the century's end.

.com Money and success do strange things to people, especially when they're not their own. Perhaps no better example of this phenomenon is Silicon Valley's obsession with Microsoft and its leader, Bill Gates, an obsession that Gary Rivlin examines with great relish and in great detail in *The Plot to Get Bill Gates*. Rivlin discovers a "king-sized obsession among one-dimensional workaholics" that's known in the industry as "Bill Envy," a phenomenon that has destroyed companies, inspired dozens of jokes (e.g., "How many Microsoft engineers does it take to change a light bulb? None. Bill Gates will just redefine Darkness™ as the new industry standard"), and for some raises the possibility of a wider conspiracy that pits Microsoft against everyone else--Silicon Valley, the Justice Department,

even Ralph Nader. From Gates's awkward adolescence to his position as the world's richest man, Rivlin takes a deep look into his character and uses him as a means to reveal the character of those that oppose him, a drama that he likens to that in *Moby Dick*. Unlike other books about Microsoft (*The Microsoft File*, *How the Web Was Won*, *Barbarians Led by Bill Gates*), Rivlin's tries not to take sides. Nevertheless, the Captain Ahabs (Ray Noorda, Scott McNealy, Larry Ellison, among others) come off looking less flawed, but certainly not as smart or as calculating or as dangerous as the white whale (Gates). While most of this material will be familiar to anyone who follows Microsoft and its competitors, Rivlin manages to keep the pages turning with dozens of entertaining anecdotes and stories about Gates and his enemies. The Plot to Get Bill Gates is a must for anyone who loves a good old-fashioned high-tech food fight. --Harry C. Edwards

From Publishers Weekly

Gates bashing has by now become an obsession in some parts of the world (at least in Silicon Valley, where rival tycoons resent him, and in the Justice Department, where antitrust lawyers burn the midnight oil). Though Rivlin (*Drive-By*; *Fire on the Prairie*) takes his shots at Gates, he also takes aim at his rivals, the heads of companies like Novell, IBM and Sun. He chalks up hatred of Gates and Microsoft to a "king-sized obsession among one-dimensional workaholics who'll do practically anything to win" Amaking Gates haters sound a lot like the tyrannical drone they themselves make Gates out to be. Rivlin has little tolerance for Gates's famous arrogance and explicitly takes apart Gates's reputation as a coding whiz. On the other hand, he is frustrated with Gates's complaining competitors, seeing them as doing little more than making business personal. Rivlin's writing, never less than lively, is sometimes truly funny. His thesisAthat the little guys banded together to slay the Microsoft dragon when they should have been minding their own businessesAis persuasive. He has succeeded in writing a disinterested account of the software wars of the 1990s: this is neither a defense of Microsoft nor a screed against Gates. But it is also a little uninterested, as well. Rivlin appears more concerned with repeating the epithets the moguls have flung at each other than with the substance of their business. As entertaining as the book is, many readers will find Rivlin's pox-on-all-their-houses attitude too smug by half. Author tour. (July) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

In a world of high finance and sometimes large egos, it's easy to hate the richest man in the worldAand many in that world have no trouble passionately hating Bill Gates. Bay Area journalist Rivlin has covered this world for several years, and he draws on this experienceAincluding a press visit to Gates's homeAin this account of how Gates has drawn attacks from obsessed competing executives, users of his products (and adamant nonusers), consumer advocate Ralph Nader, and the U.S. Department of Justice. The book's scope is broader than the title implies; it treats a number of Microsoft's competitors in some depth and provides some recent history of the computer industry. Throughout, Rivlin entertains with a light writing style and the promised irreverence, concluding with a brief set of jokes about Gates and Microsoft. Recommended for both public and academic libraries.AA.J. Sobczak, Covina, CA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.