

Book Review

THE AGE OF SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM BY SHOSHANA ZUBOFF

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In *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, Shoshana Zuboff presents a compelling and deeply researched examination of how digital corporations have transformed personal data into a powerful economic resource. The book argues that a new form of capitalism has emerged in which human experience itself is treated as raw material for data extraction, prediction, and behavioral modification. Zuboff contends that this model fundamentally alters the relationship between individuals, markets, and democratic institutions.

The author traces the origins of surveillance capitalism to the early expansion of technology giants such as Google and Facebook, illustrating how user data became central to targeted advertising and algorithmic profiling. Through detailed case studies, she explains how seemingly benign digital services—search engines, social media platforms, and smart devices—collect vast amounts of behavioral data. This data is then analyzed to predict and shape user behavior, creating what she describes as “behavioral futures markets.”

One of the book’s strongest contributions lies in its interdisciplinary approach. Zuboff integrates insights from economics, sociology, psychology, and political theory to argue that surveillance capitalism is not merely a business strategy but a structural shift in power. She raises critical concerns about autonomy, privacy, and democratic governance, suggesting that unchecked data extraction erodes individual agency and concentrates power in corporate hands. Her analysis positions digital surveillance not only as a technological development but as a social transformation with long-term implications. The narrative is both analytical and cautionary. Zuboff warns that without regulatory intervention and public awareness, surveillance capitalism could undermine democratic institutions by manipulating information flows and influencing political behavior. At the same time, she calls for renewed civic engagement and stronger data protection frameworks to restore balance between technological innovation and human rights.

While the book is comprehensive and intellectually rigorous, some readers may find its length and density demanding. Nevertheless, its depth is precisely what makes it valuable for scholars, policymakers, and anyone interested in the intersection of technology and society. The work serves as a foundational text for understanding contemporary debates on digital governance, cybersecurity, and ethical technology. Overall, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* is a timely and thought-provoking contribution to social scientific literature. It challenges readers to reconsider the costs of “free” digital services and to reflect on the broader societal implications of living in a data-driven world. For researchers and practitioners concerned with digital ethics and governance, this book remains essential reading.