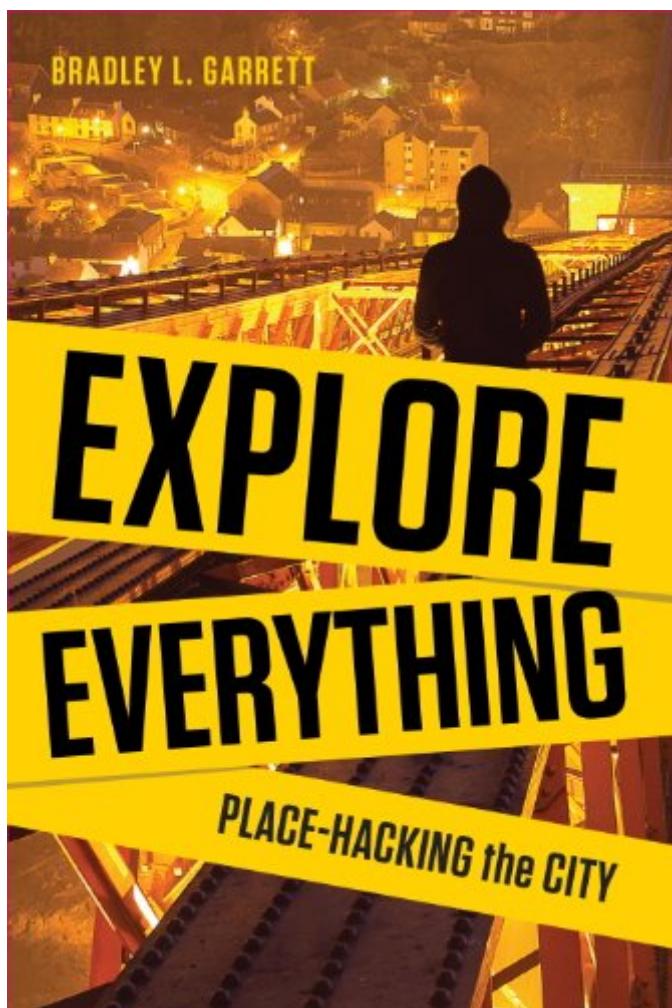The book was found

Explore Everything: Place-Hacking The City

Synopsis

Plotting adventures from London, Paris, Eastern Europe, Detroit, Chicago and Las vegas, uncovering the tunnels below the city as well as scaling the highest skyscrapers, Bradley Garrett has evaded urban security in order to experience the city in new ways beyond the conventional boundaries of everyday life. Explore Everything is both an account of his escapades with the London Consolidation Crew as well as an urbanist manifesto on rights to the city and new ways of belonging in and understanding the metropolis. It is a passionate declaration to "explore everything," combining philosophy, politics and adventure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A interesting read!

I've been a keen reader (or should I say viewer) of urban exploration books for many years. Most of them are just photo books and don't ever talk about why they are doing what they are doing. Garrett is the first to really do this is any detail. He is an urban explorer himself, but he is also a kind of

philosopher. He tells us why we should care about abandoned building, construction sites and tunnels underneath the city. The adventures of the explorers getting into the places, along with plenty of close-calls, keep you on your toes when he gives you the philosophy. All in all, it's an amazing read and I finished it heartbroken it was over. I really hope there will be a Part II!

I found out about this book when The Atlantic published a set of pictures from Bradley Garrett's blog. Although I am not an urban explorer myself, I have always been very curious about this concept and the pictures looked fascinating enough for me to follow through and purchase Garrett's book.At a high level, the book describes the author's experience as an ethnographer doing research on the urban exploration (UE) community as well as being its very active participant. The narrative is a combination of Garrett's various adventures and deep reflections on the general philosophy of UE.From his adventures I found these the most interesting:1.Descriptions of social dynamics and politics of various UE groups that compete and cooperate with each other2.Exploration of the abandoned and disused London Tube stations3.Adventure in discovery and investigation of the London Mail Rail system4.Garrett's time spent with UE group in Minnesota, helping chart various underground tunnels underneath the Twin CitiesWhile Garrett's various UE adventures are certainly interesting in it of themselves, I think the key strength of the book lays in his healthy dose of reflection, introspection, and philosophizing that is intertwined into every exploit. Here, he deeply delves into numerous issues:1.UE ethics - what does it mean to leave no trace behind? how forceful to be when entering a place? how to approach abandoned and derelict places when they are used by the indigent and the homeless for shelter2.The ethos of UE - the difference between a controlled "museum like" interaction with history and present environment vs. a non-scripted, open ended, and non-linear approach of UE. The freedom to be able to take personal risks without being smothered by an overly safety conscious society. Being able to truly connect and build a relationship with one's city of residence through the exploration of all the spaces and environments that it has to offer.3.The problems of publicizing one's UE exploits - on the one hand wanting to share the fascinating pictures of the unknown and the forgotten places with the world, on the other hand drawing the attention of the authorities to the whole UE community and making it more difficult for other explorers to access these sites4.Describing the culture of UE to the lay audience without homogenizing a very diverse set of individuals, and becoming an unwanted spokesperson for the entire communitySince I am not an urban explorer, my sense prior to reading this book was that UE was akin to self directed, amateur archeology. Something that is driven by trying to reconstruct the past lives and interacting with the histories of the abandoned and derelict places in an

unconstrained fashion. While that may be partially true for some urban explorers, this book really expanded this view for me. It showed, that for a lot of the people in the UE community, it's really about, as the title implies, the challenge of conquering the environment and solving puzzles in an urban setting. This could be figuring out how to gain entry into a specific place, charting a map of some underground tunnel/subway system, capturing all the elements of a particular system, or just simply beating out another group of people to some unexplored site. Given their drive to discover & chart, push boundaries, and seek novelty, it seems that modern day urban explorers are people in the same mold of Victorian era explorers such as Henry Stanley and David Livingstone.While I ultimately give it 5 stars, the book has a few gaps in my opinion. Since Garrett's life as an urban explorer served as the foundation of his PhD thesis in ethnography, I was surprised that he doesn't comment more about this dynamic. I understand that this book is largely about UE itself, but it would have been really interesting to learn more about what his academic colleagues and his advisors thought about the way he was conducting this research.While he does touch on this towards the end of the book, I would have also liked to see a little more commentary about blurring the line between one's own lifestyle and academic research. Given Garrett's affinity for UE lifestyle, it seems that this is something he would have been involved in regardless of his academic career. It just so happened that he was able to parlay his personal interest into furthering his academic career. Also, while the ambiguity between participant and observer in ethnography is a common occurrence, it seems that in Garrett's case, given his intense involvement into the UE cultural scene, he almost fully created his own experiences to document and explore. He is certainly very well aware of these issues and does touch on them in some way, but I just wish it was explored a little bit more.So, to summarize, this is a very thoughtful and involved look at urban exploration. In addition to some really interesting stories and anecdotes about specific adventures, I think the biggest value of this book is really in its reflective and engaging examination of the UE culture, ethos, and it's place in the modern society. I would certainly recommend this book to any curious reader.

I write as someone deeply interested in UE and in scholarship. I admire much of the work here and found it a compelling read. Perhaps in the future when I attempt my own Masters or PhD writing I will better understand the difficulty with generating a perfectly grammatical manuscript of such length. So I approach the several missing words and tautological situations without judgement. However, I'd be somewhat concerned if the inaccuracies here were indicative of the general accepted standard for PhD level research and a commercially edited and published book offered for sale. So in summary: this book is glorious and flawed, like it was assembled in the kind of heroic

rush experienced between the third rail being disempowered and the arrival of the track maintenance people.

Photography is terrific! Very interesting book in for those looking for unusual experiences in their own back yard. Would recommend.

The online review made it sound like Ruin Porn. What you get is somebodys badly written dissertation. No real drama, just endless repetitions of we hooked up at 11PM and walked in looked around and had a beer. Pictures look like they were taken with a ten year old flip phone.What amused me was their indignation at the fact that they were getting busted ahead of the Olympics.

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