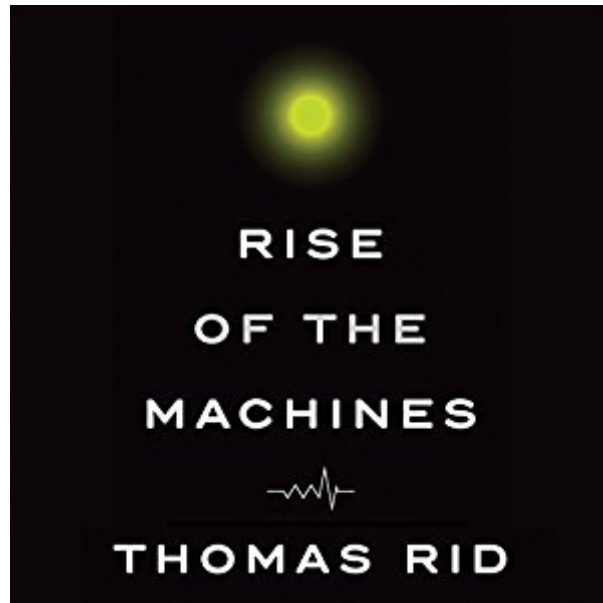


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# Rise Of The Machines: A Cybernetic History



## Synopsis

As lives offline and online merge, it's easy to forget how we got here. Rise of the Machines reclaims the story of cybernetics, a control theory of man and machine. Thomas Rid delivers a portrait of our technology-enraptured era. Springing from mathematician Norbert Wiener amid the devastation of World War II, the cybernetic vision underpinned a host of myths about the future of machines. This vision radically transformed the postwar world, ushering in sweeping cultural change. Cybernetics triggered cults, the Whole Earth Catalog, and feminist manifestos just as it fueled martial gizmos and the air force's foray into virtual space. As Rid shows, cybernetics proved a powerful tool for two competing factions - those who sought to make a better world and those who sought to control the one at hand. In the Bay Area, techno-libertarians embraced networked machines as the portal to a new electronic frontier. In Washington, DC, cyberspace provided the perfect theater for dominance and war. That "first cyberwar" went on for years - and indeed has never stopped. In our cybernetic future, the line between utopia and dystopia continues to be disturbingly thin.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a superb book. Rich in detail, sweeping in scope, the author is always in complete control of his material. I knew many of the individual pieces of this story, but Rid place them all in an illuminating context. Well worth reading--and returning to read again.

It took a few days to make inroads into this book, but once the narrative got to the 70s and 80s I

was staying up late to read more. The story ends up recounting a grand narrative of technological determinism, but in a way that never feels kitschy (a remarkable achievement given that the story hinges on a bunch of ancient tech). Highly recommended to anyone who has any interest in the subject.

This book is an extensive discussion of the historical aspects of how man and machine were integrated. The rise of the machines was driven by the Second World War and the Germans rise to a technological power during the war. Wars seem to be the catalysts for technological advancements for integrating men and machines to a more integrated relationship.

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