Information: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

Luciano Floridi
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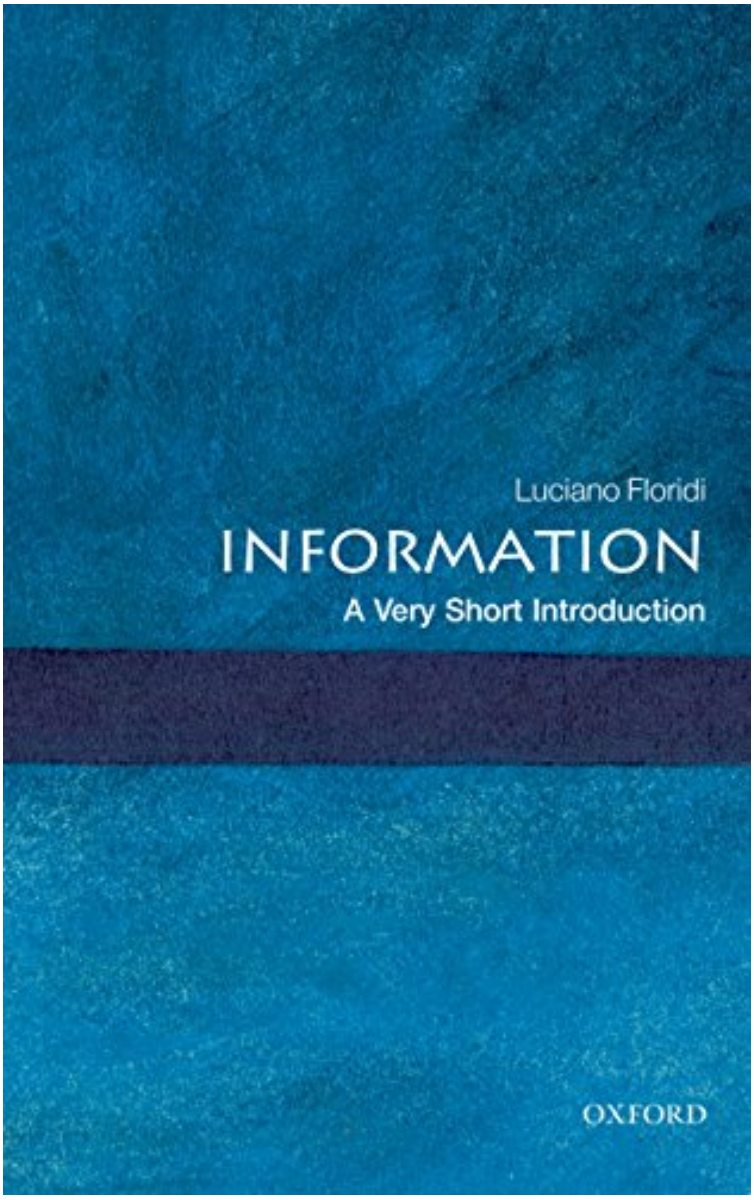

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Luciano Floridi : Information: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Information: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions):

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Comparing Floridi to Seife and LuenbergerBy Let's Compare Options PreptorialThis great little book is a quickly readable survey of information science, with an emphasis on philosophy and ethics rather than problem solving or business. Two other extremes (not counting the dozen wonderful

Dover titles on information theory for under $5 which are certainly worthwhile) include:1. Luenberger: Information ScienceDavid's book is about $90 US and our databases show it to be the most used IS textbook, even though it is a 2006 edition. In about 450 pages, it covers the practical applications as well as theory of the entire field of information science, from Shannon to smart phones and economics, minus the "wow how cool is IS" as well as the "we're drowning in info and can't get up" spins.2. Seife: Decoding the Universe: How the New Science of Information Is Explaining Everything in the Cosmos, from Our Brains to Black HolesAlso from 2006, available used for a penny on some third party offers, 296 pages.Very Short Intro (VSI- Floridi) fits nicely between the two. Seife is a wonderful page-turner and a must have if you're into information and math. His "zero" book (Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea was a best seller, and also is about 50c used-- an awesome survey of math. Seife covers both practical problem solving and "meta" issues, but is much less thick and ponderous than Floridi, which has to be studied a little more carefully to get the nuances (not a bad thing). But Floridi isn't all "heavy" -- he talks about a researcher in the "near future" (a million years from now) evaluating our current information leaps!All three texts cover Shannon, but Floridi and Luenberger do so more with generality and reverence, whereas Seife goes into DEEP detail about redundancy, logarithms, the relationship of amplitudes/ signals to codecs (as in Shannon's connecting log forms to entropy), etc. including a great appendix ON logs. If you enjoy math as well as story telling, Seife delivers.Floridi is of course much more "up to date" in stats (zettabytes!) etc. since he's more current, but you don't really gain or lose anything there, since much of Floridi is about challenging and re-defining at the conceptual, ideational and definitional levels. If you want detailed, applied, usable problem solving, get Luenberger, if you want a "can't put it down" fun read that touches on the fact that we're "really" living in the Matrix, 13th floor, Tron, etc.-- Seife is the ticket. Both Seife and Floridi give that "wow" feeling that we are really information living in information for the sake of, well, information! They both adequately portray the revolutionary wonder of moving from matter to energy to information in our world view, getting more and more universal (or at the risk of induction, which they both trash-- general), at each leap.The difference is, Floridi is dry and methodical, Seife is fun and amazing, but you need a little more "math love" with Seife on the other hand. Luenberger is, well, a text. Yes, the best text BUT I include him here mostly for the readers that are looking for less wonder and philosophy and more practical "What does all this mean for careers, business, applications, search engines... etc. All three rate 5 stars, for what they intend to be.Library Picks reviews only for the benefit of shoppers and has nothing to do with , the authors, manufacturers or publishers of the items we review. We always buy the items we review for the sake of objectivity, and although we search for gems, are not shy about trashing an item if it's a waste of time or money for shoppers. If the reviewer identifies herself, her job or her field, it is only as a point of reference to help you gauge the background and any biases.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Useful Beginning for My Exploration of the Information AgeBy fitzallingI decided to explore the Information Age with 3 books. Since I hoped that Professor Floridi's book would provide foundational knowledge, it was first. The next two will be Adam Segal's "The Hacked World Order" and Thomas Davenport's and Julia Kirby's "Only Humans Need Apply." I will review these books as I finish them.Professor Floridi explores information in its various forms - largely digital, but also analogue, quantum, genetic, biological systems, economic (with a brief exposure to game theory) and the ethics of information. Claude Shannon plays an early, and important, role in the development of the mathematical theory of communication. But, if you experience an involuntary cautionary response to the word "math," don't worry, the book doesn't contain much of it. I wish that the book included a little more of the math underlying Claude Shannon's theory of communication, but perhaps Professor Floridi realized that this would be too much for a reader such as me.The book provides a useful overview of the field. Some of the observations will seem self-evident and little more than common sense. Some I had not encountered before such as "information minus meaning equals data" or said another way "data plus meaning equals information." What algorithms or models that one uses to impose meaning on data is left to the reader.Igave the book 4 stars and not 5 because of his approach to the ethics of information. Some of the ethics arise from law, which seemed relatively unremarkable. However, he also make the claim that information embodied, for example, in paintings or the environment seem to have ethical rights. The Professor and I could find common ground in agreeing that defacing the Mona Lisa or dumping harmful chemicals into streams and rivers is a very bad idea. I am not sure that I am ready to go as far as he does in extending the concept of independent ethical rights.The book served the purpose that I described above. Much of the book visited areas with which I had prior familiarity and some of it explored new territory. I occasionally had to review portions of the book to draw out its meaning. It provided a useful foundation for my investigation of the current status of the Information Age. I recommend it.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Typographical errorsBy Michael RoseAlthough I consider this a worthwhile book, it is spoilt by many typographical errors.For someone without a mathematical background, the errors might cause confusion, putting them completely off the text.I would appreciate receiving a corrected version of the Kindle book. Please remember, there may be more typographical mistakes.Here are 17 I found:1. Chapter 1, page 6, location 233: ldquo;1 exabyte corresponds to 1018 bytesrdquo;. An exabyte is 2^60 bytes, which is about 10^18 bytes.2. Chapter 2, page 28, location 528 ldquo;byte (by eigh pound;)rdquo; Is the word ldquo;eightrdquo; intended?3. Chapter 2, page 28, location 528 ldquo;256 (28) characters.rdquo; The number 28 should be 28.4. Chapter 2, page 28, location 530 ldquo;128 (27)

characters.rdquo; The number 28 should be 27.5. Chapter 2, page 33, location 589 ldquo;a and 6rdquo;. Should be ldquo;a and brdquo;.6. Chapter 2, page 33, location 600 ldquo;battery (6) being flat (G).rdquo; ldquo;(6)rdquo; should be ldquo;(b)rdquo;.7. Chapter 3, page 40, location 685 ldquo;when [275e] once it is writtenrdquo;. What should ldquo;[275e]rdquo; be?8. Chapter 3, page 41, location 701 ldquo;In the AS systemrdquo;.rdquo;ASrdquo; should be ldquo;ABrdquo;.9. Chapter 4, page 50, location 813. I think the term ldquo;[DBF]rdquo; and subsequent occurrences should be ldquo;[DEF]rdquo;.10. Chapter 4, page 56, location 916. ldquo;2) P-+ Srdquo; should be ldquo;2) P-Srdquo;.11. Chapter 5, page 67, location 1056. In ldquo;23, where 2 is the number of states and 3 the number of coins.rdquo;, ldquo;23rdquo; should be ldquo;23rdquo;.12. Chapter 5, page 67, location 1056. In ldquo;all 23 states simultaneouslyrdquo;, ldquo;23rdquo; should be ldquo;23rdquo;.13. Chapter 5, page 67, location 1056. In ldquo;containing 2n possible statesrdquo;, ldquo;2nrdquo; should be ldquo;2nrdquo;.14. Chapter 6, page 81, location 1230. Should ldquo;Merriesrdquo; be ldquo;Memesrdquo;?15. Chapter 7, page 100, location 1487. Should ldquo;PG4)rdquo; be ldquo;P(4)rdquo;?16. Chapter 7, page 102, location 1503. The following occurrences of ldquo;P(B\AC)rdquo; should be ldquo;P(B/AC)rdquo;.17. Chapter 8, page 112, location 1653. In ldquo;fomg/informationrdquo;, should ldquo;fomgrdquo; be ldquo;inforgrdquo;?For the record, I've communicated these errors to Professor Floridi

We live an information-soaked existence - information pours into our lives through television, radio, books, and of course, the Internet. Some say we suffer from 'infoglut'. But what is information? The concept of 'information' is a profound one, rooted in mathematics, central to whole branches of science, yet with implications on every aspect of our everyday lives: DNA provides the information to create us; we learn through the information fed to us; we relate toeach other through information transfer - gossip, lectures, reading. Information is not only a mathematically powerful concept, but its critical role in society raises wider ethical issues: who owns information? Who controls its dissemination? Who has access to information?Luciano Floridi, a philosopher of information, cuts across many subjects, from a brief look at the mathematical roots of information - its definition and measurement in 'bits'- to its role in genetics (we are information), and its social meaning and value. He ends by considering the ethics of information, including issues of ownership, privacy, and accessibility; copyright and open source.For those unfamiliar with its precise meaning and wide applicability as a philosophical concept, 'information' may seem a bland or mundane topic. Those who have studied some science or philosophy or sociology will already be aware of its centrality and richness. But for all readers, whether from the humanities or sciences, Floridi gives a fascinating and inspirational introduction to this most fundamental of ideas.ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Splendidly pellucid. * Steven Poole, The Guardian *About the AuthorLuciano Floridi is Professor of Philosophy and Ethics of Information at the University of Oxford, Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute, and Fellow of St Cross College, Oxford. Among his recognitions, he has been appointed the Gauss Professor by the Academy of Sciences in Gouml;ttingen, and is recipient of the APA's Barwise Prize, the IACAP's Covey Award, and the INSEIT's Weizenbaum Award. He is an AISB and BCS Fellow, Editor in Chief of Philosophy Technology and of the Synthese Library, and was Chairman of EU Commission's 'Onlife' research group. His most recent books are: The Philosophy of Information (OUP, 2011), Information: A Very Short Introduction (OUP, 2010), and The Cambridge Handbook of Information and Computer Ethics (CUP, 2010).