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THE SECRET LIFE

*three true stories  
of the digital age*

ANDREW O'HAGAN

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Andrew O'Hagan

## The Secret Life: Three True Stories of the Digital Age



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## A Top 10 Publication of Essays & Literary Criticism for Fall 2017, Publishers Weekly



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Personalities I actually am drawn toward finely written tales that bring out elements of interesting personalities and complex character types, whether in fiction or nonfiction. Three long form essays by Andrew O'Hagan have already been assembled into a publication titled, *The Secret Lifestyle*. One essay describes O'Hagan's romantic relationship with Julian Assange on an assignment to ghostwrite Assange's autobiography. Another essay explores identification theft and O'Hagan achievement in constructing for himself a new identity. Needless to say, Assange is a fascinating and complex personality, and O'Hagan unveils him to a reader's delight. Rating: Four-star (I love it) Fascinating A fascinating account of the chaotic attempt by Julian Assange to write his autobiography. O'Hagan describes the relationship he evolves with Craig Wright, an Australian who promises he's Satoshi. Fans of great writing are those most likely to take pleasure from reading these essays. The 3rd essays involve bitcoin and the identification of its mystical creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. We are in the period before Julian required refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy but nevertheless was forced to wear an electric tag and register each day at the local law enforcement station while he fought extradition to Sweden on rape allegations. His ghost writer, Andrew O'Hagan, come up with a 70,000 word draft compiled from his visits and interviews with the WikiLeaks entrepreneur despite Julian's constant procrastination over many a few months and finally refusals to ignore it, so that the publishers demanded the return of the \$2.5 million advance. For the reason that absence, Canongate Books place the book out as an unauthorised biography. This version, the story of how the book was written, provides us those torturous a few months that O'Hagan struggled to obtain it created and ends with visits to the Ecuadorian embassy - a nation not

famous for its respect for independence of speech - where Assange was holed up and isolated, most his 'close friends' and followers having abandoned him. And no wonder. The supposed champion of free of charge speech about everyone else except himself, Assange results in as an unreliable and narcissistic man who has no social graces, eats just like a pig and repeatedly turns against those attempting to help him." The others of the book about two other magic formula lives are equally interesting and I would recommend it. Hagan's strategy this sits uncomfortably with me. I held thinking of William Gibson's voice suggesting that I "distrust that particular flavor. Freak Out! My Life with Frank Zappa Dis-convenience of the digital era It appears trivial to complain about a well-written book, given the countless crises of our time, but there exists a sort of violence in Mr. This is simply not a biography but still its web pages reveal the founder of WikiLeaks unfettered and paranoid.

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