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Book Review: Tobias on Locks and Insecurity Engineering

Reviewed by Theodore P. Barron, CPP |
24 May 2024

Tobias on Locks and Insecurity Engineering: Understanding and Preventing Designing Vulnerabilities in Locks, Safes, and Security Hardware. By Marc W. Tobias, JD. Wiley; www.wiley.com/en-us; 720 pages; \$80.00.

Tobias on Locks and Insecurity Engineering by Marc W. Tobias offers insights and understanding of design vulnerabilities in locks, safes, and



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security hardware. While the book is directed toward engineers involved in lock and key system design, it emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the existence of potential vulnerabilities within any security design. The book provides suggested criteria for a proactive approach to identify and mitigate the risk of failure for these devices.

The book serves as a comprehensive engineering reference, delving into both mechanical and digital aspects of lock science. With meticulous organization and well-indexed content spanning approximately 700 pages, Tobias ensures accessibility for readers navigating the complexities of security hardware design.



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Drawing from his expertise in liability law, Tobias provides valuable insights

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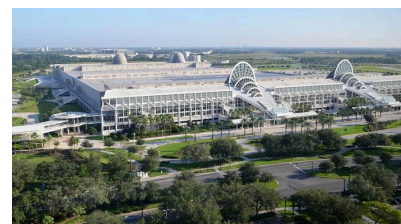
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into the consequences and costs associated with design flaws. Through detailed analysis, he states the origins of these flaws and advocates for a management and engineering culture that prioritizes resilience in risk strategy and forward thinking on design.

While providing technical details on its primary subject, the book also offers compelling arguments that underscore the importance of addressing security vulnerabilities through every phase of design. Tobias’s law enforcement field operations and legal perspective add depth to the discussion, highlighting the implications of negligence in design and the imperative for proactive risk management.

Overall, this book offers a straightforward and level examination of security engineering principles, while urging practitioners to adopt a vigilant mindset and embrace continuous improvement in their designs. The book provides an excellent resource for engineers, management professionals, and law enforcement who are tasked with safeguarding against the ever-present threats to the multiple arrays of security systems we now employ to safeguard ourselves and our companies.

Reviewer: Theodore P. Barron, CPP, is the former chair of the ASIS Bay Area Chapter San Francisco, California. He is

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also a former vice president of security at Wells Fargo Bank where he was responsible for the development and management of key physical security programs within the corporate security department.

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