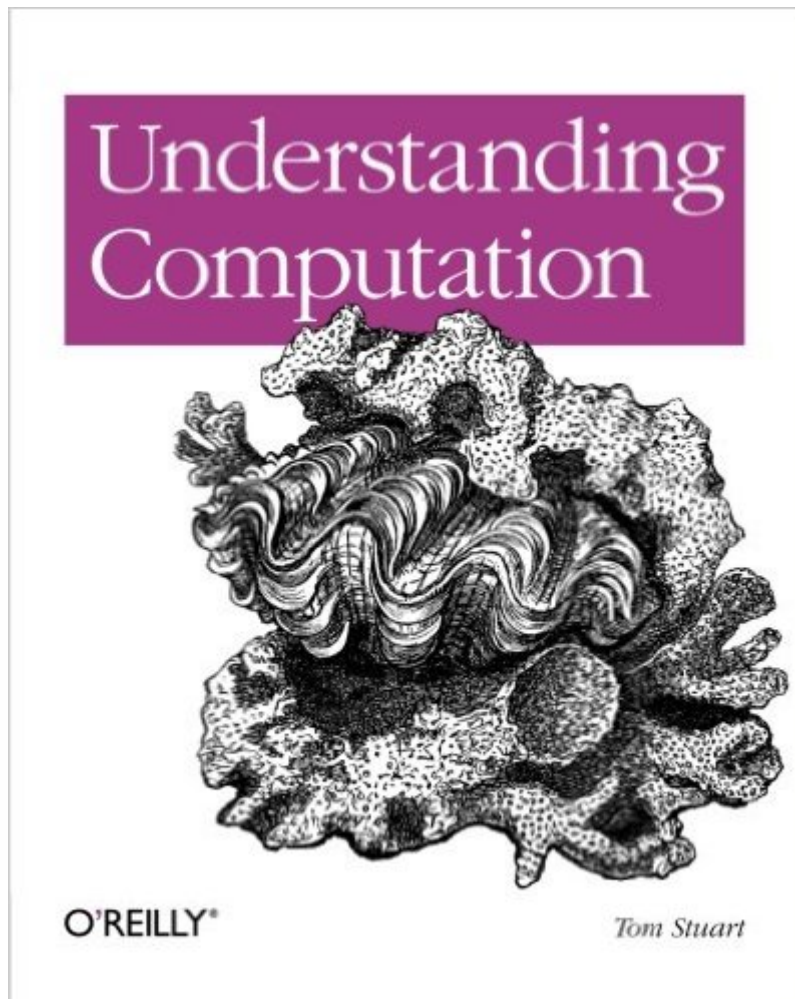


The book was found

Understanding Computation: From Simple Machines To Impossible Programs



Synopsis

Finally, you can learn computation theory and programming language design in an engaging, practical way. Understanding Computation explains theoretical computer science in a context you'll recognize, helping you appreciate why these ideas matter and how they can inform your day-to-day programming. Rather than use mathematical notation or an unfamiliar academic programming language like Haskell or Lisp, this book uses Ruby in a reductionist manner to present formal semantics, automata theory, and functional programming with the lambda calculus. It's ideal for programmers versed in modern languages, with little or no formal training in computer science. Understand fundamental computing concepts, such as Turing completeness in languages Discover how programs use dynamic semantics to communicate ideas to machines Explore what a computer can do when reduced to its bare essentials Learn how universal Turing machines led to today's general-purpose computers Perform complex calculations, using simple languages and cellular automata Determine which programming language features are essential for computation Examine how halting and self-referencing make some computing problems unsolvable Analyze programs by using abstract interpretation and type systems

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Despite the fact that there's no _real_ reason to be apologetic, I also haven't yet reached the point in my career as a software developer where I've stopped apologizing for the fact that I have no "real" Computer Science Background. And/but that's exactly what draws me to books like

"Understanding Computation" by Tom Stuart (O'Reilly, 2013). Stuart describes the books as for: "...programmers who are curious about programming languages and the theory of computation, especially those who don't have a formal background in mathematics or computer science." In other words, people like me. The people that Eric Miraglia described as the "liberal arts majors drafted into web-developer service during the dotcom boom". (source: Professional JavaScript for Web Developers 2nd ed.) Yes: the liberal artsy non-computer science degree holders that wound up doing computer sciencey type software work just the same. Smart people that nevertheless are exploring some of these concepts for the first time. For a taste of what I mean, observe the following quote: "In the end, syntax is only concerned with the surface appearance of programs, not with their meanings." If that made you smile just a little bit, because you want to peel the onion layers away and get at the semantic questions underneath... then this book is for you. Now before we go any further -- a couple words on what this book is **not**. This is not a book about software engineering. "Big O notation" does not make an appearance here in the text, not once.

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