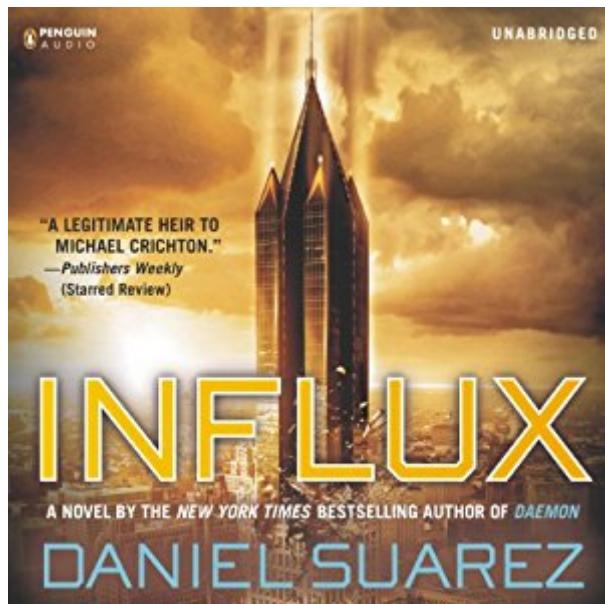


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# Influx



## Synopsis

What if our civilization is more advanced than we know? The New York Times best-selling author of *Daemon* - "the cyberthriller against which all others will be measured" (Publishers Weekly) - imagines a world in which decades of technological advances have been suppressed in an effort to prevent disruptive change. Are smartphones really humanity's most significant innovation since the moon landings? Or can something else explain why the bold visions of the 20th century - fusion power, genetic enhancements, artificial intelligence, cures for common diseases, extended human life, and a host of other world-changing advances - have remained beyond our grasp? Why has the high-tech future that seemed imminent in the 1960s failed to arrive? Perhaps it did arrive...but only for a select few. Particle physicist Jon Grady is ecstatic when his team achieves what they've been working toward for years: A device that can reflect gravity. Their research will revolutionize the field of physics - the crowning achievement of a career. Grady expects widespread acclaim for his entire team. The Nobel Prize. Instead, his lab is locked down by a shadowy organization whose mission is to prevent at all costs the social upheaval sudden technological advances bring. This Bureau of Technology Control uses the advanced technologies they have harvested over the decades to fulfill their mission. They are living in our future. Presented with the opportunity to join the BTC and improve his own technology in secret, Grady balks, and is instead thrown into a nightmarish high-tech prison built to hold rebellious geniuses like himself. With so many great intellects confined together, can Grady and his fellow prisoners conceive of a way to usher humanity out of its artificial dark age? And when they do, is it possible to defeat an enemy that wields a technological advantage half a century in the making?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This was an exciting read. I read it in one day. Didn't want to put it down! It's smoothly written, intelligently plotted, and well paced. It's chock full of action and suspense, and Daniel Suarez is not at all reluctant to torment his characters (which is a good thing). Earth-shaking events occur, which is always fun - it feels like a summer blockbuster action movie. I was genuinely freaked out by the superhuman powers of the high-tech bad guys - they seem like supervillains from a Marvel movie, especially Magneto - and the tactics the good guys use against them are plausible, fitting, and fun. I think my favorite thing was watching the main character, Jon Grady, utterly refuse to do what he's told. It's a trait I admire. :-) I also loved the character of Cotton, though you definitely won't understand that the first time you meet him...! There is some scientific and technical talk so detailed I can't follow it... but it's mostly confined to the first scene. All in all, I recommend it!

Just finished reading "Influx" by Daniel Suarez, released by Dutton. "Influx" was a novel I decided to take a chance on when I discovered it at the new release section in the Barnes & Noble near my house that I frequent at least once a week. While many of the jacket blurbs hailed Suarez as "a legitimate heir" to a favorite writer of mine - Michael Crichton - I was intrigued by Suarez's premise of a secret American Government organization sweeping away technological advances that would potentially change the course of human civilization under the rug - the BTC - Bureau of Technology Control that had a mandate from the closing days of World War Two. Suarez is as compelling story teller as Michael Crichton and Alistair McLean. Jon Grady, is a geeky scientist whose creation of a gravity mirror that creates anti-gravity fields, is compelling as he fights not only for himself and his sanity; but also for his fellow scientists and the rest of humanity that has been enslaved by the BTC. A thoroughly enjoyable and compelling read. Strongly Recommended! Five Stars!

Daniel Suarez has always had my interest with the technological thrillers that he's written. When I first was introduced to *Daemon*, it was an adventure that caused me to read the book in a very short period of time. In all his books, there's always been a hint of bleeding edge technology driving the story line, with "humanity" as a topic in tow. And this book is no exception, however Arthur C. Clarke's third law seems to apply here. As a person reads this book, the first couple of chapters really sets up a situation where someone would have to take the information as a leap of faith. The

real story doesn't really occur until maybe 30% into the book. This has deterred some people in the reviews, and I don't fully disagree with them. But now that I've read the whole book, I wouldn't really change a word. The use of "magical" science dictates the need for an explanation of the science, which means.... a dry first 1/3 of the book. The beginning really sets the book up to be more of a sci-fi novel than a thriller, but the key to this book is the turn and the finish. Unlike the beginning, the middle and end of the book is the rest of the roller coaster ride. The book can, in no way, be described as anything other than a thriller. And a fun one to boot. So my advice to anyone who starts to read *Influx*, start and push through. And you'll eventually feel drawn in, like gravity. Enjoy the ride. :-)

I was thrilled at the opportunity to read '*Influx*' before its official launch because Suarez' '*Daemon*' and '*FreedomTM*' were some of the more interesting and consequential techno thrillers I've come across in a long, long time. My expectations were therefore high and, to some extent, they were met. *Influx* is a 'what if' tale of what follows when a government always concerned with the well being of its subjects (aren't they all?) and learning lessons from catastrophes such as Hiroshima and the MAD-driven cold war that followed decides that too much or too rapid technological advances may be detrimental to humanity as a whole. And a resourceful government does what governments do best: create a super-secret program and agency tasked to keep technological progress in check. The story begins after several decades of successful suppression and said agency is nearly forgotten by its creators and is nearly all powerful now as it controls and uses tech that nobody but its inventors knew existed. Enter Jon Grady, a young genius who manages a breakthrough that could literally turn the world upside down if used (or misused) to its full potential finds himself and his discovery 'suppressed' and given the choice to either 'play ball' with the power that be or... but revealing the plot is not good form, especially when reviewing a thriller. Suarez, as always, shines when it comes to his understanding of technology and his ability to extrapolate and picture what or where we would be in a near future if the initial assumptions were true. He understands science and technology, he understands human nature and he appears to have a deep understanding of what drives or motivates political action (ain't pretty). Unlike his truly dark *Daemon* where we are forced to see 'the evil that men do' when given the opportunity and how the game changes when an AI (artificial intelligence) decides to play the game of power, *Influx* appears to sacrifice introspection and emphasize the 'thrills' part of 'thriller'. There are chases, explosions, large scale destruction and the tradeoff is less introspection and 'good' and 'evil' are a little bit more sharply distinguished than in Suarez' earlier masterpiece. In the end, '*Influx*' is an enjoyable read that some may call 'a page

turner'. I tend to agree with that. The thrills are abundant and they are by no means 'cheap'. However, the critique of human nature and political process doesn't go as deep as it did in Daemon and FreedomTM. I am not sure where Suarez will go from here but, with his deep tech background as an accepted and expected baseline, I would only hope that the sequel - and the book's grand finale appears to suggest one - added a few more insights on what a possible future resulting from humans and human societies and political systems interacting with potentially destructive technologies would look like. It's a four stars because I love Suarez and his work but... well... not every single book of his can be 'his best' and Influx is not it. NOTE: my review's title is not something I picked at random but... I am not going to reveal any more of the plot.--> Brush your teeth, it's the law!

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Influx

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