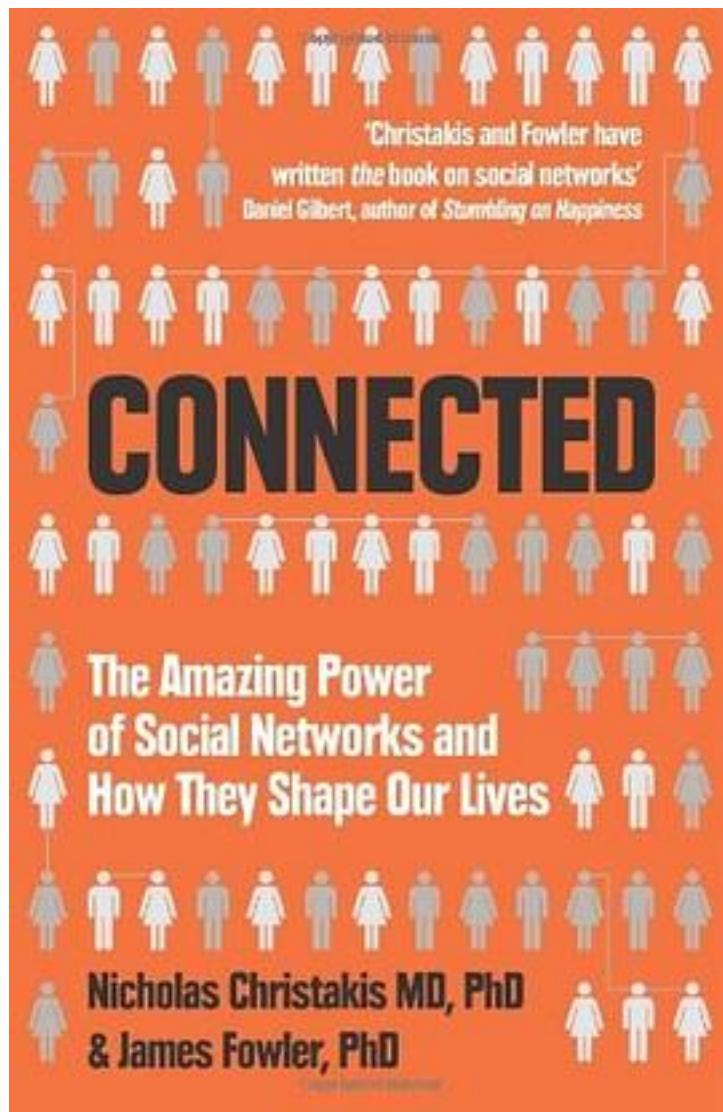


Connected



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出版者:HarperPress

出版时间:2009-9-3

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780007303595

Based on exciting discoveries in mathematics, genetics, psychology and sociology, 'Connected' is an innovative and fascinating exploration of how social networks operate. The availability of social network information has unquestionably exploded. Membership of websites such as Facebook and MySpace now reaches well into the millions, allowing people who have never met before to become 'friends'. Inevitably, these sites, along with the development of the blogosphere and the accessibility of the news, have generated a new way of thinking about society, and particularly the place of the individual within it. Yet, in spite of this development and the growing desire to understand it, people typically do not know why social networks form, how they work and why they matter. 'Connected' is the first book to focus on the formation of social networks, exploring their material relevance to people's lives -- their health, wealth and happiness, and even their political, religious and sexual behaviour. Examining a wide-range of compelling issues, such as why the rich become richer, how stampedes originate and why people imitate one another, even in acts of murder, 'Connected' looks at social life in a refreshing and captivating way. It reveals that things which seem like they would not spread through social networks, at times, do; obesity can, in fact, be socially contagious. Despite its modern day relevance, 'Connected' reveals that social networks reflect universal and fundamental human tendencies that have existed for thousands of years. It challenges well-established social theories, and also provides a fresh perspective on an issue that philosophers have been tackling for centuries -- free will. An intellectually stimulating and highly accessible read.

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