

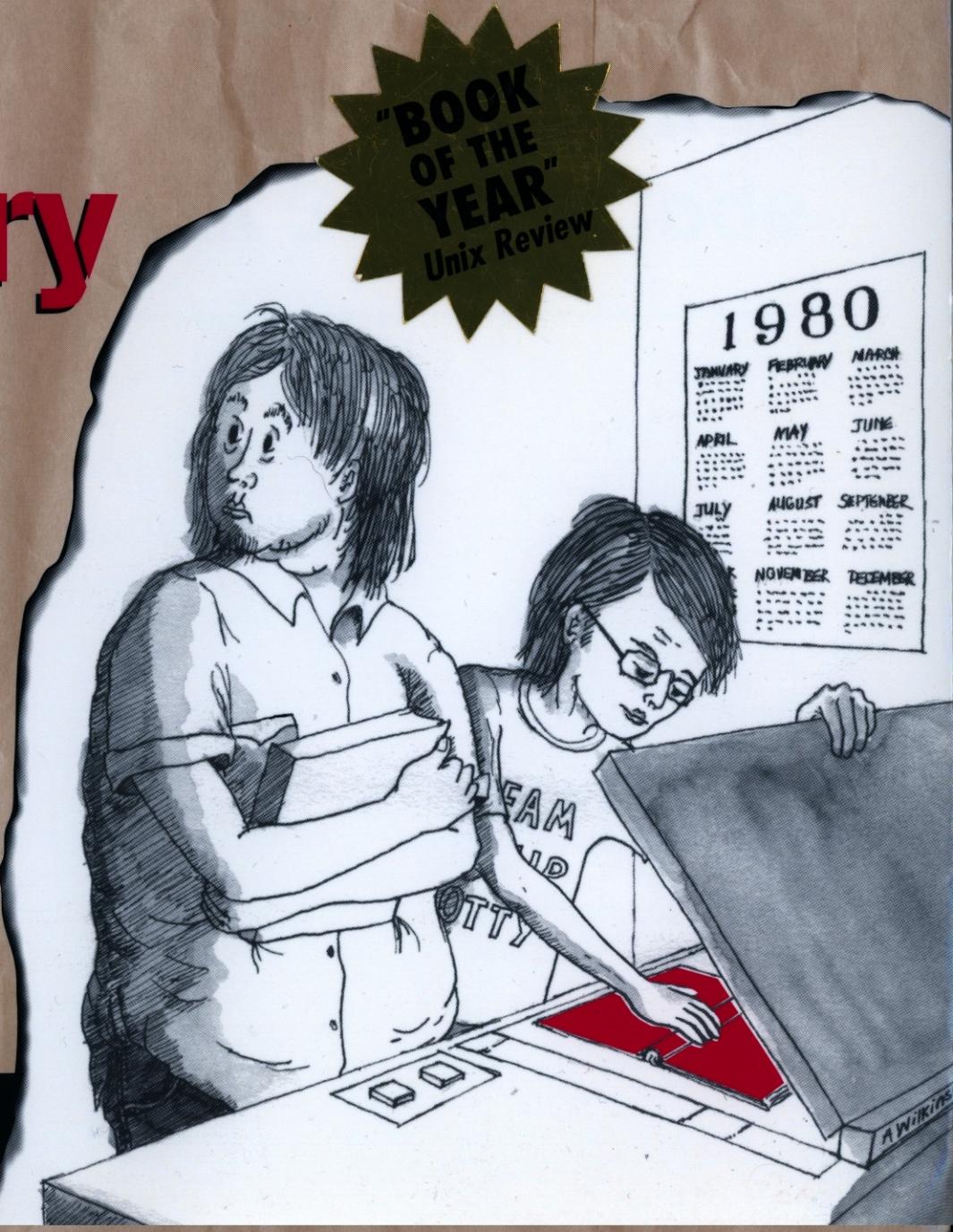
*"After 20 years, this is still the best exposition of the workings of a 'real' operating system."*

Ken Thompson

# Lions' Commentary on UNIX® 6th Edition with Source Code

## John Lions

Foreword by Dennis Ritchie



# Lions' Commentary on UNIX 6th Edition with Source Code

*Originally circulated as two restricted-release volumes:*

## UNIX OPERATING SYSTEM SOURCE CODE LEVEL SIX

and

## A COMMENTARY ON THE UNIX OPERATING SYSTEM

**John Lions**

With Forewords by Dennis M. Ritchie and Ken Thompson;

Prefatory Notes by Peter H. Salus and Michael Tilson;

a Historical Note by Peter H. Salus; and Appreciations by Greg Rose,

Mike O'Dell, Berny Goodheart, Peter Collinson, and Peter Reintjes



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# Lions' Commentary on UNIX® 6th Edition, with Source Code

The Most Famous  
Suppressed Manuscript  
in Computer History!

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- a brilliant commentary on that code by John Lions

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Lions' marriage of source code with commentary was originally used as an operating systems textbook, a purpose for which it remains well-suited. As a self-study UNIX conceptual tutorial, it has informed and inspired computer professionals and advanced operating system students for over twenty years.

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"...a computer operating system in that era was considered to be a huge chunk of inaccessible proprietary code. UNIX changed all this...what you have in your hands is the first ever and only public release of the UNIX system source code from Bell Laboratories."

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"His aim was to create a teaching document. The book did require you to apply your brain to the code, to read through the code line-by-line and comprehend what was happening. This meant that the book engaged you, it was not just documentation."

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"...the Sixth Edition remains unparalleled in terms of capability provided per line-of-code...we had acquired [in the Lions book] what amounted to a literary criticism of that computer software...Because we couldn't legally discuss the book in the University's operating systems class, several of us would meet at night in an empty classroom to discuss the book. It was the only time in my life that I was an active member of an underground."

— Peter B. Reintjes

"The UNIX Version 6 kernel is a well structured, concise program, and to this day I haven't found another program which demonstrates engineering trade-offs so well. The insight and elegance is exposed there, made accessible by the simplicity, juxtaposed with the compromises and inefficient code which simply didn't need to be optimised. Part of John Lions' achievement was recognizing this, and working it into his books."

— Greg Rose



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