

★ Chapter 8 Summary — “Revolt in 2100”

(Part Two: Hardware Hackers)

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★ The Main Idea

This chapter explains how, in the early 1970s, a group of dreamers in California tried to bring computers to normal people — not just big companies, government, or universities.

They believed:

👉 **“Computers should be for everyone, not only the powerful.”**

This idea was very new at that time.

🌍 1. The Place: Berkeley, California

Berkeley was known for freedom, creativity, music, activism — a very “people-power” city.

In 1973, a strange-looking computer terminal appeared in a music store hallway (Leopold’s Records).

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It looked like a squashed piano with holes where people could put their hands to type.

People were confused at first, but soon...

👉 It became a tool for anyone to type messages, share information, and connect with strangers.

This was called **Community Memory**.



2. What Was “Community Memory”?

It was basically the **first public computer network** where **anyone** could:

- post messages
- read messages
- find people with similar interests
- share information freely

Like an early form of **Reddit**, **Twitter**, or **Facebook**, but in 1973.

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It ran on a big mainframe computer hidden in a warehouse.

The goal was simple:

👉 Use computers to help people communicate directly — without government, companies, or “gatekeepers.”



3. Why It Was Revolutionary

In those days, computers were seen as:

- scary
- controlled by the military
- used by government
- not for normal people

So putting a public terminal in a record store was like a small **rebellion**.

It was saying:

👉 “We can use computers for good, for freedom, for community.”



4. Lee Felsenstein — The Key Character

This chapter focuses a lot on **Lee Felsenstein**, an engineer with a heart for activism.

He believed:

👉 **Technology should empower people, not control them.**

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He came from a background of political activism and was inspired by science-fiction stories where people fought against dictatorships.

He saw computers as tools for social change — just like books, speeches, or protests.



5. The Terminal Became a Creative Playground

People used it not only for messages, but for:

- poems
- jokes
- political statements

- fictional characters (like “Doctor Benway”)

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One user wrote crazy, funny, rebellious posts that made the system come alive.
This showed something important:

👉 **When normal people get access to computers, they become creative.**

💣 6. Why the Chapter is Called “Revolt in 2100”

The name comes from a science-fiction novel that inspired Lee Felsenstein.

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In that novel:

- a dictator controls society
- people secretly rebel using knowledge
- freedom comes from sharing information

Lee started to feel like *he* was living that story.

He believed:

👉 **Giving computers to people = fighting against control.**

The chapter uses this story as a metaphor for the real-life “revolution” happening in California.

🔧 7. The Big Picture

This chapter marks the beginning of the **Hardware Hacker Movement**, where people:

- broke computers out of big institutions

- made them cheaper
- made them accessible
- spread them to the public

This movement later gave birth to:

- personal computers
- the Homebrew Computer Club
- the Apple I
- Silicon Valley culture

Chapter 8 is the **starting point** of all that.

Core Essence in One Line

This chapter shows the moment when a few passionate people in Berkeley decided that computers should belong to everyone — and sparked the revolution that led to personal computers.