

# Social Media Abyss

Geert Lovink

Critical Internet Cultures  
and the Force of Negation

The background of the cover is a dense, colorful mosaic of small squares and rectangles in various shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. Three large, semi-transparent red circles are arranged diagonally from the top right to the bottom left. A thick, semi-transparent red line connects the centers of these three circles. The text "Critical Internet Cultures" is written in white, sans-serif font along the upper portion of this line, and "and the Force of Negation" is written in white, sans-serif font along the lower portion of the line.

Geert Lovink

## Social Media Abyss: Critical Internet Cultures and the Force of Negation



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Social Media Abyss plunges into the paradoxical condition of the new digital normal pitched against a lived state of emergency. Selfie culture is among the many Lovink's topics, along with the internet obsession of American writer Jonathan Franzen, the internet in Uganda, the aesthetics of Anonymous and an anatomy of the Bitcoin religious beliefs. We know we are under surveillance but we click, share, rank and remix with a perverse indifference to technology of capture and cultures of fear. Regardless of the incursion into personal privacy by businesses like Facebook, Google and Amazon, social media make use of is still a daily habit with shrinking devices now a fundamental element of our occupied lives. We are thrown between addiction stress and subliminal, obsessive make use of. Where does art, lifestyle and criticism venture when the digital vanishes into the history? Geert Lovink strides in to the frenzied public media debate with Social Media Abyss - the fifth volume of his ongoing investigation into critical internet lifestyle. He examines the symbiotic however problematic relation between systems and social motions, and further develops the notion of organized networks. In this age group of the free, how a revenue style of the 99% be collectively designed? There exists a heightened, post-Snowden recognition; Welcome back to the Social Issue. Lovink doesn't just post to the empty soul of 24/7 communication but rather supplies the reader with radical alternatives. Will monetization through cybercurrencies and crowdfunding contribute to a redistribution of prosperity or additional widen the gap between rich and poor?



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Among my internet culture friends recommended this if you ask me Among my internet culture friends recommended this if you ask me, otherwise I likely wouldn't attended across it all. The book is less of a wide arc and more of a number of vignettes. The author cites seemingly a huge selection of sources, almost all which I've never run into. My favorite chapter is the one of

Bitcoin [seven], for the ways it gets into the cultural design questions, "just how do the methods we design a technology affect our behavior?" My least preferred chapter may be the one Uganda [eight], because of its rambling character and lack of a primary message. I deleted my Facebook accounts two years ago, so I can commiserate upon this one. It's one of the best researched books I've ever browse. Because of this, it was an excellent exposure and a review to numerous things I wouldn't other dig into. Lovink's initial point is that "social media," ironically a sufficient amount of, is antisocial. I acquired high hopes for his MoneyLab chapter [six], but it hardly ever got totally off the ground. Overall, Lovink is asking the types of questions that all Silicon Valley CEOs need to be asking. His thesis is that the web is disappearing. In other words, why isn't there a wholesome dialogue about systems style? Why aren't data centers open public utilities? Instead, we're stuck within an increasingly worse edition of the web without significant public critique.

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