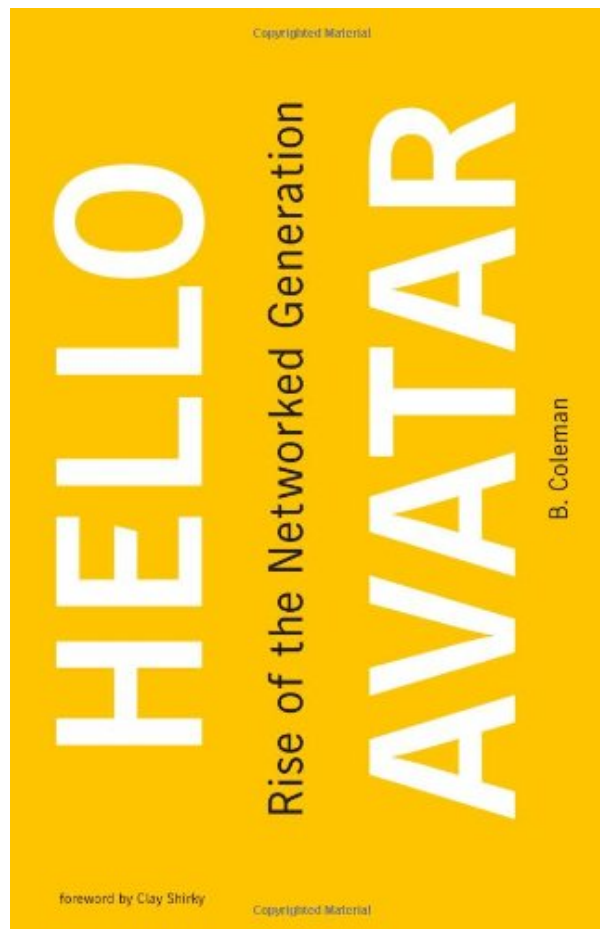


**HELLO AVATAR: RISE OF THE  
NETWORKED GENERATION (MIT PRESS)  
BY B. COLEMAN**



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## Review

As engagingly written as it is insightful and eye-opening, Hello Avatar is the indispensable guide to the new era of X-computing.

(Nicholas Mirzoeff, Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication, New York University; author of *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality*)

In Hello Avatar, Coleman explains to us what is happening at the edges of networked society in profound and revealing ways. She provokes the best in us by pushing the boundaries of our thinking about identity and culture in a digitally mediated world. She manages to operate at the most serious level of theory and the most immediate level of design and practice in the same text. Coleman's new book is a true gift, to the scholar, to the designer, and to the general reader alike.

(John Palfrey, faculty co-director, Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard University)

...a well-researched, engaging book that will amplify your curiosity for the virtual landscapes.

(Dr. Ornella Corazza Leonardo Reviews)

## About the Author

B. Coleman is Assistant Professor of Writing and New Media in MIT's Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies and Comparative Media Studies. She is Faculty Director of the C3 Game Culture and Mobile Media initiative.

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Hello Avatar! Or, `{llSay(0, "Hello, Avatar!")}`; is a tiny piece of user-friendly code that allows us to program our virtual selves. In Hello Avatar, B. Coleman examines a crucial aspect of our cultural shift from analog to digital: the continuum between online and off-, what she calls the "x-reality" that crosses between the virtual and the real. She looks at the emergence of a world that is neither virtual nor real but encompasses a multiplicity of network combinations. And she argues that it is the role of the avatar to help us express our new agency -- our new power to customize our networked life.

By avatar, Coleman means not just the animated figures that populate our screens but the gestalt of images, text, and multimedia that make up our online identities -- in virtual worlds like Second Life and in the form of email, video chat, and other digital artifacts. Exploring such network activities as embodiment, extreme (virtual) violence, and the work in virtual reality labs, and offering sidebar interviews with designers and practitioners, she argues that what is new is real-time collaboration and copresence, the way we make connections using networked media and the cultures we have created around this. The star of this drama of expanded horizons is the networked subject -- all of us who represent aspects of ourselves and our work across the mediascape.

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Digitally we are

By Susan Berry

I remember when I purchased this book through Amazon as an e-book. I was in my hotel room in Orlando relaxing after an invigorating but mentally draining day at Sleuthfest, Florida Mystery Writer of America's annual writer's conference. Going through several newspapers that I peruse regularly for events and other items that might be useful incorporating into my writing of thrillers, I ran up on a review for Hello Avatar: Rise of the Networked Generation written by B. Coleman.

The author's premise that we live in a world impacted by forms of digital mediation such as Facebook, messaging systems, the Internet, and virtual reality games is nothing new to the generations of twenty somethings and younger. Explaining the development of this impact to those like myself who are not computer geeks (or professionals, whose life's work revolves around poking around the inside of a computer's brain) but used the IBM Selectric typewriter (and still knows how to use it) and grew up with DOS and the antiquated forms of Lotus 1-2-3 and Paradox database is what drew me to Coleman's book. The author's ability to explain how the revolution came about, albeit in a somewhat summary fashion, with minimal use of jargon, was comprehensible. (The glossary was helpful as was reading the book on the Kindle with its dictionary). The origins of digital computing would and have filled a Library of Congress' worth of tomes.

Coleman's book is not a dry treatise but an engaging look at real world applications and talks with legends in the field of digital mediation, virtual reality applications, and augmented games. That is one of the biggest selling points of the book; the others, the glossary and the endnotes.

Coleman gave me an inside look at worlds that mirror the physical board and dice game, Dungeons and Dragons. Without overtly judging those who she wrote about, Coleman explores how digital media impact effects change in users. This is a nice surprise, given that one of the studies involved BDSM and cannibalism.

It was the next topic that hooked me - augmented reality in the form of a supersized and more complex version of geocaching. Her writing about games involving players physically on the ground in various

locales interacting with others through virtual reality using smartphones, tablets, and I suppose laptops, was the most interesting of chapters. Imagine a set of your friends in Geneva, Switzerland along with dozens of others in other locales playing an integrated virtual game based on traditional board games such as Life and Monopoly. The roll of the dice, spin of the wheel and taking of a card is done on a device while the moves required by the dice, wheel, and card are carried out in real time in the locale or wherever the game takes you simultaneously as others are doing the same.

While showcasing augmented reality games, Hello Avatar balances this with attention to applications for business and industry and moves on to crowdsourcing and her conclusion. (For an interesting take, see Ashley Southall's article in the New York Times on using video games to treat pain.) By doing this, Coleman reinforces her premise that digital mediation is forever here to stay and must be dealt with if one is to be successful.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Gret introduction to Avatars!

By gloria w.

This book uses little jargon and give a great introduction to the idea of avatars. I recommend it to all who are interested in the field.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Five Stars

By Jimmy Barkah

great!

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The books Hello Avatar: Rise Of The Networked Generation (MIT Press) By B. Coleman, from basic to challenging one will certainly be an extremely useful works that you can take to transform your life. It will certainly not offer you unfavorable declaration unless you don't obtain the definition. This is definitely to do in checking out a publication to get rid of the definition. Generally, this publication entitled Hello Avatar: Rise Of The Networked Generation (MIT Press) By B. Coleman is read considering that you really similar to this sort of e-book. So, you can get easier to understand the impression and also significance. Again to constantly remember is by reading this book **Hello Avatar: Rise Of The Networked Generation (MIT Press) By B. Coleman**, you could satisfy hat your inquisitiveness beginning by completing this reading publication.

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