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Book Review: THE METAVERSE and How It Will Revolutionize Everything, by Mathew Ball, Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2022, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-1324092032

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The term “metaverse” consists of “meta” and “verse”; this concept typically describes a future iteration of the Internet, consisting of 3D, shared, persistent virtual spaces connected to a perceived virtual universe. Metaverse is also defined as the potential to go beyond the physical universe by moving away from the dimension of time and space, thanks to computers, android devices, VR lenses, and various 3D user interfaces.

In other words, the world of the metaverse addresses a digital world where you prefer to live voluntarily, not as a laborer of machines. The next step is what is called consciousness transfer. Your consciousness, memories, and experiences will copy you in the digital environment, and you will live in that digital world as an immortal. It is similar to a science fiction scenario for the moment, but it is possible in theory, and no one can guarantee that the

Matrix will not be in reality in a short time. The Internet and what comes with it represent the intertwining of business and technology like a golden braid.

Mathew Ball's book, *The Metaverse and How It Will Revolutionize Everything* (2022), is detailed and observational. While talking about the future, the book also emphasizes the past. The book begins with the story of Vannevar Bush, who in the 1930s theorized that an electromechanical device he called the "Memex" could store. Ball makes a point and argues that where he didn't have data before the internet, computers had a history and stories about a time when ideas were waiting to emerge, like the Metaverse today.

The author systematically takes the reader to the heart of the book, to the answer to the book's central question: What is the Metaverse? "A massively scaled and interoperable network of real-time rendered 3D virtual worlds that can be experienced simultaneously and persistently by an unlimited number of users, effectively with a sense of individual presence and continuity of data such as identity, history, entitlements, objects, communications, and payments. Ball's book explains these ideas in three parts: (1) What is Metaverse? (2) Building Metaverse, (3) Metaverse Will Revolutionize Everything.

Matthew Ball began his career at Accenture as head of the strategy for Amazon Studios. He took part in revising business models and products of media and technology companies for the digital age. Following his professional experience at Accenture, Ball joined the Otter Entertainment company of former Fox Studios executive Peter Chernin, producer of the Planet of the Apes films and the television series *The New Girl*. With this experience in entertainment, Ball joined Amazon Studios as a senior strategy manager and worked there for three years, from 2016 to 2018.

Ball's book contains essential information about today's digital world. The book's first part discusses the Metaverse, with references to the future and the past. At the same time, Ball adds that although the term Metaverse has been trendy in the last few years, there still needs to be a consensus on the definition of the term. Discussing what Metaverse is for many vital names in the industry, Ball (2022: 47) then concretely talks about what the concept is: "A massively scaled and interoperable network of real-time rendered 3D virtual worlds that can be experienced synchronously and persistently by an effectively unlimited number of users with an individual sense of presence, and with continuity of data, such as identity, history, entitlements, objects, communications, and payments." Finally, in this chapter (2022: 74-83), Ball provides some insight into why the definition of the metaverse is often thought of as the successor to the mobile internet and is fairly defined. According to Ball, the metaverse will require the development of new standards and infrastructure, potentially requiring an overhaul of the long-running Internet Protocol Suite, adopting new devices and hardware, and even shifting the balance of power between tech giants and indie developers.

Ball discusses the metaverse's construction in the book's second part (2022: 83-213). In this section, he talks about networking, computing, virtual World engines, interoperability, hardware, and payment rails. Discussing that one of the main lessons of the computing age is that the platforms that best serve developers and users will win, Ball said that blockchains still have a long way to go. Still, many see their immutability and transparency as the best

way to ensure that the interests of these two supporters remain a priority as the Metaverse economy grows.

In the third section (2022: 243-295), Ball discusses how the Metaverse will change everything by asking “When will the metauniverse come?”. Ball discusses the answer to this question by predicting what the future will look like across various industries. In discussing this, Ball refrains from describing the Metaverse or making any claims about what society will look like after the Metaverse arrives. Instead, in this chapter, Ball emphasizes that several comprehensive questions need to be addressed if the metaverse is a “quasi-successor state” of computing and networking in the mobile and cloud era and if it is to eventually transform most industries and reach nearly everyone in the world. Pointing out that the digital age has improved many aspects of our lives, Ball also underlines that access to information has never been greater and that there has never been a time when so much information was free. Stating that many marginalized groups and individuals now have extensive and unstoppable digital megaphones in their hands, Ball says, “Those who are physically far apart can feel closer to each other. Finding art has never been easier, nor have so many artists paid for their work.”

Finally, there is an ethical and moral wall in front of these ideas (Lister, 2003). It is argued that the human self is more than our physical bodies, but there was criticism of this in the movie *The Matrix* (Gürkan, 2016). Machines were replicating the real world after the human mind could not accept a heaven-like digital world. We are still determining whether such a perfect world would be desired or whether we would like to be there. However, after reading Mathew Ball’s book, it may be easier for us to find the answers to these questions.

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