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I Love My Computer Because My Friends Live in It: Stories from an Online Life

Jess Kimball Leslie

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I Love My Computer Because My Friends Live in It is tech analyst Jess Kimball Leslie's hilarious, frank homage to the technology that contributed so significantly to the person she is today. From accounts of the lawless chat rooms of early AOL to the perpetual high school reunions that are modern-day Facebook and Instagram, her essays paint a clear picture: That all of us have a much more twisted, meaningful, emotional relationship with the online world than we realize or let on.

Coming of age in suburban Connecticut in the late '80s and early '90s, Jess looked to the nascent Internet to find the tribes she couldn't find IRL: fellow Bette Midler fans; women who seemed impossibly sure of their sexuality; people who worked with computers every day as part of their actual jobs without being ridiculed as nerds. It's in large part because of her embrace of an online life that Jess is where she is now, happily married, with a wife, son, and dog, and making a living of analyzing Internet trends and forecasting the future of tech. She bets most people would credit technology for many of their successes, too, if they could only shed the notion that it's as a mind-numbing drug on which we're all overdosing.

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