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Believe in the net: Implicit religion and the internet hype, 1994-2001

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STARTING WITH WEBER'S DISENCHANTMENT THESIS, a sociological tradition has developed that associates modernity with a crisis of meaning. The demystification of our worldview and the decreasing influence of religious traditions in specific are seen as obstacles for making sense of human existence.

In fact, modern societies are full of meaning *and* they continue to be religious. This study shows that, in an implicit form, religion can be found everywhere in our culture.

The Internet hype of the 1990s was a particularly effervescent example of implicit religiosity. The hopeful discourse about the Internet that typified this hype drew on religious ideas and language, and it inspired strong belief. This book explores the appeal of the Internet as an object of faith and it looks at how it could serve as a source of meaning.

Karen Pärna is a junior lecturer at University College Maastricht, where she teaches sociology (of religion). From 2004 to 2008 she was affiliated to the Faculty of Religious Studies of Leiden University. The present dissertation is a product of this period at Leiden.



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