

Facebook is like North Korea, says ex-Facebooker

Technically Incorrect: In his new book, former Facebook product manager Antonio García Martínez says Facebook management got upset if women's skirts were too short.

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Technically Incorrect offers a slightly twisted take on the tech that's taken over our lives.



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Kim Jong-zuck?

James Martin/CNET

Many younger types imagine Facebook as a nirvana where you skateboard down corridors, code all night long and wait for the money to start rolling in.

Antonio García Martínez thinks it's a little more like North Korea.

The former (and fired) Facebook product manager today released a book called "[Chaos Monkeys: Obscene Fortune and Random Failure in Silicon Valley.](#)"

A snippet or two had already dribbled out: Martínez describing CEO Mark Zuckerberg as having [a near-psychopathic stare](#), for example.

But now several publications have offered excerpts and interviews with the author that describe Facebook as, oh, let's leave it to his own words.

"We had slogans on the walls, we were all wearing a uniform," he told [CBS This Morning](#). "It all felt very North Korean or Cuban, almost. And so in that moment, I just realized...the motive force in history, which is one egomaniac's twitchy drive and then the common man's desire to be part of a compelling story -- which is what we were, we just were bit players in Zuckerberg's story."

I fancy skateboards are in shorter supply in Kim Jong-un's fiefdom. I also fancy that even gray T-shirts with discreet logos would be frowned upon.

Still, Martinez, who worked for the company between 2011 and 2013, wants to draw your attention to the similarities between Facebook and repressive regimes.

In [excerpts published by the Daily Mail](#), he writes that the company has a KGB-like security force called the Sec that monitors employees' actions.

He writes that if you incurred Zuckerberg's wrath, it wouldn't go well: "Fuck with Facebook, and security guards would be hustling you out the door like a rowdy drunk at a late-night Taco Bell."

He claims HR gave lectures to people about allegedly distracting clothing and mentions a "male HR authority" who "did in fact pull aside female employees and read them the riot act. One such example happened in (advertising) when an intern who looked about 16 [came] in regularly in booty shorts."

Facebook politely declined to comment. I understand, however, that the company feels the distracting-clothing accusation is a mere tissue of bilge. It seems, stunningly, that Martinez may not have been the most popular employee ever to have worked there.

A clue to parts of his character might lie in his level of kindness toward women. "Most women in the Bay Area are soft and weak, cosseted and naive despite their claims of worldliness, and generally full of shit," he writes in one of the Daily Mail excerpts.

Martinez told CBS This Morning he believes that Silicon Valley isn't a meritocracy, but more a place where connections and random luck drive people to riches.

More Technically Incorrect

- [Anti-wall crusader Zuckerberg put up 'oppressive' wall, say Hawaii residents](#)
- [Nancy Pelosi pities Tim Cook for holding Republican fundraiser](#)

Not content with comparing Facebook to North Korea, he also compared it to the Roman Empire. They did, at least, seem to have some fun in the latter.

You might think that this book is merely a disgruntled former employee -- albeit one with a sailboat that he's currently working on -- emitting the contents of his spleen.

However, [The New York Times](#) describes the book as "an irresistible and indispensable 360-degree guide to the new technology establishment."

When you run a quasimonopoly -- one with significant global political power -- you might lose a little of your self-awareness.

Might a book like this make Facebook management think twice? I have my doubts.