

# COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TRENDS



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## Youth and New Media

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## On the Occasion of the Ong Centenary Year

Thomas J. Farrell

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# Questions of Identity

## Editor's introduction

Theories of identity lay behind much communication research. How do people, for example, make use of various media to construct a sense of identity? Do the media and their content shape personal or cultural identity? What do people bring to their communication interactions? How do individuals interact with the range of media? Do those media limit or promote an individual's sense of self? Does the sense of self remain stable or does it change with media interaction?

With the review essay by David Zemmels in this issue, *COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TRENDS* returns to young people and media but this time with a focus on identity construction. If the media do shape individual identity, one may well discover this in the lives of a younger generation whose sense of identity develops throughout their childhood and teen years. Thus the need to pay particular attention to the interaction of youth and media. Zemmels has a particular interest in new media and places the study of its effects in the context of various theories of identity. He introduces key thinkers of the last 40 years from Marxist or materialist perspectives to poststructuralist ones to psychological ones to historical ones. Other theories focus on technology and identity and everyday practices. With these approaches in the background, Zemmels then offers a reconceptualization of youth, as he reviews the literature on youth culture and on the role of new media within that culture. Among other things, he calls attention to how new media have changed the landscape of youth and media. From that new perspective, he draws on recent literature to identify places for study.

The starting points that he suggests matter to any number of communication research approaches. Practitioners, of course, will want to investigate how to use media as a point of entrance into the lives of youth. Teachers, educators, or even religious leaders will ask what shapes youth identity, so that they may better address the next generation. Researchers will ask how we might understand or explain the processes. Theorists will compare the data from these studies to the models they have developed.

Zemmels' essay raises a number of key questions, though the theories he reviews have their roots in

Western industrialized societies. Readers of *TRENDS* from around the world may well ask whether these mechanisms of identity work the same way in Asia, Africa, Latin America, or even parts of Europe. While identity seems a constant in human life, how people come to it seems to vary by time and place.

The second essay in this issue of *TRENDS* looks back to the work of Walter Ong, S.J. Ong, a long-time associate of this publication, author of several key essays, and origin of the name of its associated research institution—the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture—was himself keenly interested in identity. He grounded his approach, though, in language, the word, and the voice of address. Many of his writings, particularly those addressing orality and literacy, raise questions about interiority, about the personhood of individuals. The spoken word, he notes, addresses that interiority differently from the written word. And this, of course, influences a person's sense of identity.

This year, 2012, marks the centenary of his birth. Thomas Farrell offers a reflection on Ong as a Catholic thinker, as a model for one investigating communication questions from a stance informed by a religious perspective. In Farrell's view, this gives Ong a sensitivity to those questions of interiority, of address—how do people respond to one who calls their name? Ong wrestled with such questions from his earliest writings on rhetoric to his later essays in *TRENDS* on digital media.

\*

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# Youth and New Media: Studying Identity and Meaning in an Evolving Media Environment

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## 1. Introduction

The media landscape continues to change rapidly with the evolutions in digital media and online socializing. The fracturing of the very conception of audiences as consumers complicates mass communication research into current media practices and influences. Contemporary media research could benefit from a reconceptualization of the relationship among the media themselves, the consumers and producers of new media, and peoples' engagement with media, particularly for research involving young people.

This review begins by outlining a working definition for the term *new media*, then an outline of historical theorizing about the overlapping nature of subject and cultural construction of identity, the role of media in society, the importance of everyday practices in media research, and ultimately how these relate to new media environments.

The review next presents an overview of media research on influence on society, with a focus on the role of young people in such research. Traditional media research has viewed young people as a special group in need of protection from media and their potentially negative influences. However, research has begun to recognize young people as good subjects for research on media engagement, although the literature remains minimal to date. As early adoptors of new technologies, young people tend to be at the forefront of new media interaction, thus shaping it through their practices. As a result, young people can serve as excellent indicators of future trends in new media. Next, this review considers a body of research on the ways new media transform youth culture in the home and at school. Finally, the review identifies new epistemological frameworks for media research in the digital age. This includes the logic of new media, the participatory practices that define the contemporary users of digital media, and issues surrounding risk and privacy for young people using social networking sites.

### *A. New media: A definition*

The terminology surrounding the social phenomena under study is often vague. Defining on-line media practices using terms like “digital,” “virtual,” and “interactive” tends to delimit the scope of analysis in different ways. “New media” has become something of a catchall term used to describe any and all emerging and evolving digital technologies, mostly the result of the last two decades of innovations in personal computing, the Internet, and cellular telephony (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003; Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2002). This analysis uses the term “new media” to broadly describe “the intersection of traditional media with digital media” (Ito, 2010) and the “remediation” (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) that inevitably follows the emergence of each new medium. Remediation describes the process by which a medium “appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of real” (p. 66). This process of remediation has existed as long as media themselves, but digital media greatly accelerates it. Therefore, in this review, the “new” in new media refers to digital communication formats but also to old forms of media reconstituted and redistributed as digital media content over the Internet to personal computer, cellular phones, iPods, and so on.

Moreover, by using the term “new,” we must recognize that media encompassed by this term are currently new, but “always on the verge of growing older” (Ito, 2010). For this discussion, the media under study are new at this historical moment: This discussion describes the social interaction with the new technologies for on-line representation, but without a value judgment about their relative “newness.” Time and posterity may ultimately need to decide how we define and remember the current condition.

## 2. Media and the Construction of Identity

Notions of identity hold a central place in an understanding of the role of media in the everyday lives of contemporary society. Researchers typically view childhood and adolescence as a key period in identity formation (Buckingham, 2008b). Survey-based research offers compelling evidence that new media occupy a pivotal role in the lives of youth. These therefore become a potentially critical element in the construction of identity: 9 out of 10 teens (ages 12-17) are fully wired, compared to 66% of adults (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005), and young people embrace multitasking by consuming more media in their daily lives, but not spending more time doing it (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005). This generation spends more time with media than with any other activity, except sleeping, putting today's children "in the vanguard of a revolution in both technology and culture" (Heim, Brandtzeig, Kaare, Endestad, & Torgersen, 2007, p. 426).

Therefore, this review begins by tracing the history of subjectification as it has evolved and now applies to Internet-based socializing.

### A. Subjectification

The contemporary roots of subjectification lie in the theorizing of Louis Althusser (1984), who provided an important epistemological "break" from the Marxian theories of cultural identity by placing the individual at the center of that process rather than focusing on how ideology manifests itself within capitalist society (Agger, 1998; Hall, 1985, 1996). Althusser endeavored to develop a systematic theory of how a culture perpetuates itself through its people. Based on Althusser's famous example of "hailing" the subject on the street, "interpellation" defines the process by which a subject is constituted. It takes place through, and is reproduced by Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs): family, religion, education, media, art, etc. These IDAs inculcate the subject into the social order. In Althusser's view, the subject remains relatively stable and fixed, once interpellated into existence (Althusser, 1978).

Beginning in the 1970s, poststructuralists such as Jacques Derrida (1976, 1978) began to problematize such a strict closure of meaning and argue for more ambiguity in the constitution of the subject

(McKarrow, 1993; Spivak, 1988). Althusser held too simplistic a vision of the subject (Therborn, 1980) while actually reflecting and essentially reproducing capitalism (Laclau, 1977; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). His theories could no longer account for the "diasporic" nature of society at the end of the 20th century (Appadurai, 1996), where the foundations of meaning seem much more contingent and contextual. Contrary to the Althusserian contention that ideology is ahistorical and fixed, history and cultural context are injected into matters of subjectification (Therborn, 1980). Subjectification takes place in an environment of competing interpellations, where the failure of one interpellation normally means the success of another.

Judith Butler builds on Althusser's concept of interpellation, but from another direction. She argues that it does not take into account the importance of the language used to constitute the subject, as in Althusser's act of hailing one into existence. She further argues interpellation can occur by means other than voice: "the subject need not always turn around in order to be constituted as a subject, and the discourse that inaugurates the subject need not take the form of a voice at all" (Butler, 1997, p. 31). Butler claims society constitutes an individual by naming, and that constituted subject could be surprised at the way the "socially constituted self" might look. Indeed, interpellation can occur without the subject being present: The subject need not even know of "being constituted for that constitution to work in an efficacious way" (p. 31). From this philosophical perspective the media take an important and active role in the construction of cultural norms and their relationship to the constitution of personal identity.

By historicizing the construction of subject, it follows that as Edward Said (1983) argues, the contingency and contextuality at the foundation of the meanings of texts also follows. Like social subjects, social texts do not exist in isolation, but must interact with others to have meaning. We must take into account the context in which meaning is constituted, and the multiplicity of contexts available. Thinkers in this tradition use the metaphor of *intertextuality* to conceptualize social texts as transient entities situated within a broader cultural "economy" of textual interaction. Intertextuality refers to the interplay of texts, or the



quality of a text as “all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts” (Genette, 1997). New media, in the way they incorporate traditional and digital media texts, must only broaden and accelerate in interaction between both social subjects and texts, making this concept more relevant than ever.

If new media are much more interactive than the traditional media that came before them, then how does injecting interactivity affect assumptions about media and identity? While not definitively pinning down that answer, Slavoj Žižek (1989) offers a very different notion of subject formation, which helps in conceiving identity in new media spaces. Žižek seems to see the subject as imaginary to the extent that it exists only as a “quilting point” or nodal point where many diverse and even competing ideological positions converge (feminism, democracy, etc.). Žižek’s idea of multiple ideologies existing simultaneously at interconnected nodal points mirrors the dispersed but overlapping nature of the Internet, tying the technological practices of the Internet to issues of identity.

**Identity and technology.** With regard to the history of scholarship at the intersection of technology and identity, some of the earliest works focused on the mediated existence of the body and related identity politics, with Donna Haraway’s (1991) “Cyborg Manifesto” providing a notable example. More recent perspectives look at identity from different theoretical and methodological perspectives: the networked society (Castells, 2010), the digitalization of society (Clippinger, 2007), and the psychology of youth (Turkle, 1995)—a seminal work that examines identity from a psychological perspective, focusing primarily on youth. Each in different ways examines fluidity of identities in mediated digital spaces.

**Identity and youth.** The scholarship here points to the relationship between youth and media as closely intertwined with the concept of identity, yet “identity is an ambiguous and slippery term” (Buckingham, 2008a, p. 1). Conceptualizations of identity continue to evolve and transform because psychological, social, cultural, and philosophical scholars posit countless “definitive” theories of identity construction and management.

In a comprehensive survey of the current thinking about youth and identity, Buckingham (2008a) identifies what he sees as the fundamental paradox of identity: The term implies both similarity and difference. People understand identity as something unique about

each individual, something that we own. But identity also implies a connection to a broader social group, such as cultural identity, national identity, and other affiliations of shared interests and values. The common denominator is that a wide range of disciplines and intellectual paradigms often view adolescence as a critical period in identity formation.

Buckingham (2008a) continues by identifying five key approaches to framing identity and the implications for the study of youth and new media. First, he maps out the study of identity as a psychological account of it as a developmental process, citing the work of scholars such as G. Stanley Hall, Erik Erikson, and James Marcia. Second he points out a sociological approach, which he sees as very similar in that sociologists see young people as “a passive recipient of adult influences, a ‘becoming’ rather than a ‘being’ in their own right” (p. 4). He does note a recent trend towards attempts to understand youth cultures on their own terms, rather than from an adult notion of socialization. Buckingham identifies a third more interdisciplinary perspective that focuses on the relationships between individual and group identities. This perspective understands identity as a “fluid, contingent matter” which is “more appropriate to talk about identification rather than identity” (p. 6). Erving Goffman’s work on identity presentation and management occupies a central place in this perspective. Fourth, he describes what he terms “identity politics,” which refers to activist social movements that explicitly question social power in social identity research, resisting repressive construction of identity by others (Butler, 1991, 1997). Fifth, Buckingham contrasts the modern social theory approaches of Anthony Giddens and Michel Foucault. Giddens sees identity as a “self-reflexive” malleable project that individuals have to work on. Rather than a liberating process or experience, Foucault would see this as an example of self-monitoring or self-surveillance.

In summary, theorizing about subjectification has evolved from simply “hailing” on the street to language’s constructing the subject without his or her presence or knowledge, which in turn creates the opening for theorizing of mass media as no longer just representing reality, but constituting it. In research of new media environments, long standing theoretical perspectives regarding identity can provide an important lens for examining users in the new media environments: the formation and maintenance of personal and group identities and how that relates to their analog world subject positions. It remains to be seen whether new

conceptualization and theoretical frameworks can build on, or must displace, traditional theorizing about the construction of Self and Other.

### *B. The study of everyday practices*

Pierre Bourdieu set himself the project of bringing social theory and the study of specific practices together. He uses Marxist theory as a departure point, but he focuses on the practices of everyday life more than the individual subject. Marx gave little agency to the subject in society. Bourdieu wants to give more, but also theorizes that agency is reproducible and reproduced through the “structuring structures” of society.

Bourdieu (1980) argues for a “break” from traditional social scientific approaches of analysis and offers his *logic of practice*, which, “aims simply to bring to light the theory of practice which theoretical knowledge implicitly applies and so to make possible a truly scientific knowledge of practice and of the practical mode of knowledge” (p. 27). Bourdieu incorporates the logic of practice into his notion of the *habitus*, “which is constituted in practice and is always oriented

towards practical function” (p. 52). Persons acting on their habitus constitute culture, rather than ideology or some other dominant force.

The principles behind practices often remain hidden from those who practice them and are handed down from one generation to the next, often unquestioned. Bourdieu sees individuals as agents who internalize the habitus, act through it, and (re)produce it primarily in our families, but also in our schools, churches, and other institutions of everyday life. These everyday practices are also adaptable within the structuring structures as “regulated improvisations.” Everyday practices therefore constitute a circular reproductive system that is generative, not fixed. In this way, habitus naturalizes the relationship between everyday practices and society.

The media researcher can benefit from Bourdieu’s theories in our heavily mediated society. Agency manifests itself through these practices, which researchers can study using the dialectical relationship between material practices and the concept of habitus, which guides social practices and which researchers can observe from the outside, and thus describe.

## **3. Media Influence on Society: Old Concerns, New Problems**

Identity intertwines with media and culture; therefore the history of media coincides with decades of research aiming to understand their influence on society. Each new communication medium brings with it great promise for personal expression but also great concerns about perceived negative effects on the mass population. Both perspectives probably tend to the extreme, and the relationship between media and society falls somewhere in between.

### *A. Competing utopian and dystopian paradigms*

The history of media and their relationship to society represents a range of utopian and dystopian traditions. Proponents of the former see opportunities for participation, self-expression, play, learning, and support of democratic values (Giddens, 1991; Goldman, Booker, & McDermott, 2008; Poster, 1997). The latter see an end of innocence, traditional values, and authority. For these, society laments a loss of innocence and tries to recover an imagined time gone by where life contained more certainties (Appadurai, 1996; Shaw &

Chase, 1989); they often assign the blame to media. In the United States academic research that has provided evidence of the potentially negative effects of each new medium—evidence that would seem to support popular fears and concerns (Grimes, Anderson, & Bergen, 2008)—runs parallel to these social anxieties. This results in a long-standing tension between democratic enlightenment and media effects paradigms for media research in the social sciences.

The utopian tradition posits that media represent significant opportunities for democratic participation in the public sphere, and even more so with the advent of the Internet (Dahlberg, 2001). With regard to youth, this tradition sees media education as a central location where society can enhance the role of youth, as critically engaged democratic citizens, most effectively. From this perspective, educators develop students’ capacity for reflection and self-expression through engagement with those power structures that limit such acts (Livingstone, 2004). Often referred to as “media literacy,” the democratic promise evolves from the pro-

ductive tensions that arise from educators' desire to protect and prepare students to live in a media saturated society (Poyntz, 2006).

The opposing paradigm sees media in much more sinister terms, exhibiting a long history of "moral panics" and "social anxieties" about the negative effects of media going back to the VCR, television, radio, comic books (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008; Wartella & Reeves, 1985; D. Williams, 2003), and even as far back as the late 1800s and dime novels (Grimes, et al., 2008). The lengthy list of physical and psychological social ills attributed to media includes addiction, anti-social behavior, violent behavior, sexual deviancy, obesity, and so on. Issues of children's exposure to Internet-based media are "magnified by technological potential to digitize all text, images and sound and, hence, to facilitate convergence across hitherto distinct media platforms and services" (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008, p. 2), making oversight of the perceived influence even more difficult than in the past, which heightens popular fears and anxieties.

### *B. The child as political opportunity and nostalgic fantasy*

In a cultural analysis of media research on violence and aggression in media and society over the last 100 years, Grimes et al. (2008) argue, "we see a body of scientific work whose origin derives less from empirical evidence than it does from political opportunism" (p. 31). Each new form of media is "quickly connected to the ongoing and often intractable problems of that society" (p. 50), and is often used by politicians for political gain. These politicians provide the funding for science to study *the problem*, often framed as the effects of media on society. To continue the funding, science must address *the media problem*.

When looking at the media problem, researchers usually direct attention towards categories of people considered the less educated thus more vulnerable social groups—in other words, subsections of society in need of paternalistic oversight. In the context of this social/scientific construct, Grimes et al. (2008) define the typical object of study as the *Other*, a group whose membership does not include those at the top of the dominant social structure but instead reflects those perceived as "lower on the socio-economic ladder than the population/race/ethnic origin/religion of the dominant population" (p. 50). Research typically relegates children to this "lower" segment of media audiences, no matter what the socio-economic station of their parents, and so often make them the primary focus of

media effects research. In media research, children do not appear as typical audience members, and so become, in effect, separated and differentiated from the general population (Wartella & Reeves, 1985).

The continuing worries over media effects appear to be more complex than simple concern for the child's well-being. Research agendas regarding children tended to reflect and take on the form proposed by public debate, "rather than research shaping public concerns or policy" (Wartella & Reeves, 1985, p. 120). The central question emerges as whether media are good or bad for young people, but such questions inevitably take on an either/or choice frame, with answers presented in totalizing terms that do not appear to have a problem generalizing both *child* and *media* (Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003).

Further, Henry Jenkins (1998) argued that the discursive invention of "childhood" has been used for the last 100 years as a potent political metaphor in postwar society. Buckingham (2000) points out that the discursive concept of childhood often represents a nostalgic fantasy of the past, one whose traditional certainties time and culture have eroded and undermined at the end of the 20th century. In these cultural constructions, society and its members perceive children as becoming more violent, antisocial, and sexually active, thus embodying larger social fears for declining social standards and norms.

From this perspective, social concerns about the child and childhood, "have long been established as discursive sites through which adults can conceptualize and (re)construct the past, present, and future aspects of society" (Selwyn, 2003, p. 351). The discursive invention of the child becomes a matter of power, used to exert control over young people, denying them rights as "autonomous and active agents" (Buckingham, 2008b, p. 183), thereby justifying and reinforcing their dependency on adults.

Beginning in the 1990s, the utopian/dystopian debate continues: "Computer technology has ushered in a new era of mass media, bringing with it great promise and great concerns about the effect on children's development and well being" (Wartella & Jennings, 2000, p. 1). The uncertainty may continue but core dynamics have seemed to change. By the beginning of the 21st century, the notion of "child computer user" has the potential to become perhaps even more paradoxical and complex in political, academic, and popular discourses than past notions of the child consumer of media.



Social resistance to recognizing agency for youth in these discourses comes down to a matter of parental, educational, and political control (Livingstone, 2003). In offline life, sources of power and control over discourses are often related to factors such as physical presence of, and inculcation by, Ideological State Apparatuses (IDAs)—Althusser's term for organizations such as the military, police, schools, etc. However, due to the physical structure and protocols of the Internet, attempts

to control or censure communication messages are dealt with as disruptions in the network, and messages are simply rerouted (Castells, 2001). Since there is no center the Internet (nor beginnings or ends for that matter), the concepts of power centers and cultural capital in media, such as broadcast media networks, are disrupted. Thus, these sources of power and control have far less influence over on-line discourses, and that may be seen as a threat to power and control in society.

#### 4. (Re)conceptualizing Child and New Media for Research

Assumptions about the effects of digital media on the child computer user as a social group continue to follow a different logic in academic research and public policy. As noted, past scientific research and popular cultural assumptions about the child and media have not served young people as social beings well, and little direct empirical evidence exists for how youth construct and maintain self and build communities with others in new media spaces.

Internet-based new media, like the media that preceded them, undoubtedly have an influence on society and the children within it, but “if media have changed in the past 50 years, so too have the contexts of childhood, whether this is charted in terms of the social structures of family or community, of consumer and labor market expectations, or of values and identities” (Livingstone, 2002, p. 21). Yet, there is “a serious lack of knowledge in public and academic domains about the social meanings, uses, and consequences of new media” (Livingstone, 2002, p. 2) in the lives of children. Relatively little research has tried to answer basic questions about how and why youth engage and make meaning with new media in the context of their everyday lives. Most research in the field tends to focus on “what the media do to children” as opposed to “what children do with media” (Heim, et al., 2007). By reversing the equation, scholarly research has begun to rethink the tradition of treating youth as special audiences, allowing a more complex and nuanced understanding of the relationship between media, youth, identity, and community to emerge.

Following the generations identified as Silent (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Gen X (1965-1980), people have variously described the current generation of young people (born 1981-2000) as

the net-generation (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Tapscott, 1998), Generation M (for media) (Roberts, et al., 2005), digital kids (Hsi, 2007), Millennials (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Lenhart & Madden, 2005), and “digital natives” inhabiting the world along side the “digital immigrants” of past generations (Prensky, 2001). Most research tends to focus on the learning style of this generation (Buckingham, 2003; Dede, 2005; Livingstone, 2004; Poyntz, 2006) and particularly by the informal self-learning practices whereby they build their own *digital fluency*. Sherry Hsi (2007) finds that digitally fluent youth exhibit the following practices:

- Build their own skills and knowledge in new media spaces
- Take on different identities and multiple roles (social and gaming spaces)
- Voluntarily spend time working on a set of technology-based skills
- Co-construct a social reality and establishing norms for participation
- Take ownership of media creations and on-line expression (remix culture, etc.)
- Consume multimedia created by others and created by themselves
- Demonstrate fluency by simultaneously operating and managing multiple devices and media types; multitasking and attention switching is common
- Work on complex problems that require distributed teams to solve (participatory media culture as described below).

At the latter end of the Millennial generation, there appear to be young people with a new set of practices for online interaction. Perhaps it is too early to distinguish them as a new generation (or adding a post-perhaps), but we may reasonably describe them as

“late-Millennials.” Studies indicate that youth less than 18 years of age progressively produce more new media. A Pew study (Lenhart & Madden, 2005) found that “57% of online teens create content for the Internet. That amounts to half of all teens ages 12-17, or about 12 million youth.” These numbers represent a fundamental shift in the basic relationship between media and youth: a breakdown in the producer/consumer dialectic that had remained relatively consistent throughout the prior history of mass media. This generation is steeped in media *and* understands the fundamentals of digital media production and distribution. Teens with access to digital technology and the Internet probably have a very different understanding of media in their lives than any previous generation. This generation not only consumes media as defined in the traditional mass media sense, but also—with the digital media production tools now available at little cost and requiring little training (from digital video cameras to camera cell phones to free video and audio editing software)—can produce media and distribute media via the Internet for consumption on mobile phones and many other digital devices. Rather than mass media consumers, they are the “me media” generation shaping and contributing to the media economy with a potentially global audience.

From these fundamental shifts comes something new for *the media problem*: the growing “digital generation gap” (Buckingham, 2000; Livingstone, 2003), adding fuel to the uncertainty surrounding the notion of childhood in the late modern era. This results in a deepening conflict, if not an outright paradox: the notion of a generation of children having an innate ability to learn and use new technology and perceived as techni-

cally more proficient in its use than adults. At the same time, researchers and politicians continue to construct them as vulnerable, passive subjects who they consider as not competent agents in their use of media. Not only do young people play a key role in the form and content available through new communication, entertainment, and information technologies, other see them as the expert in the use of media technology who can explain the complexities of new media technology and practices to their parents. This creates a paradox of seemingly irreconcilable perceptions about youth and media, and represents a constant struggle to fill the “gap between parental strategies and children’s tactics for media usage” (Press & Livingstone, 2006, p. 190).

Along with a reconceptualization of children as media participants and their relationship to media lies a need to reconceptualize their engagement with media technology itself. Past research of this kind has generally failed to integrate the study of media practices across multiple media channels. Heim et al. (2007) argue, “one cannot simply examine one technology at a time in order to understand the complex patterns of media use among children.” For example, much of the research on youth and individual media technologies focuses on specific technologies such as cellular phones (Kaare, Brandtzege, Heim, & Endestad, 2007; Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010; Ling & Yttri, 2005), a strategy less useful in an age of “media convergence” (Jenkins, 2006). Youth multitask by consuming more media, but not spending less time doing it (Roberts, et al., 2005), which strongly suggests that young people of this generation probably view media use as integrated, if not interchangeable, across multiple digital devices.

## 5. Transformations in Youth Culture

With each evolution in media come changes to social structures of society. A review of the literature marks the transformations society presently undergoes, especially for young people, and the ways new media technologies change our notions of self, family, home, and school.

### A. Transformations of home and family

Parental and political claims of media effects continue to spread beyond the individual child. Growing

social concerns include the transformation of the social constructs of home, school, and community (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Gergen, 1994). New media play an increasingly significant role in the ongoing changes as media technologies become more mobile and migrate out of the shared family spaces (Drotner, 2008b; Livingstone, 2002). Wireless connectivity enables telephone and Internet access anywhere and on the go.

Livingstone (2002) notes that leisure time became more focused on the home because of media.

Many of the cultural changes in the last 50 years revolve around “doing things as a family,” which has become synonymous with media time. More recently, the location of “screen-based” media such as TVs, VCRs, and computers began to migrate away from the main family space, and towards more individualized spaces, particularly the bedroom or playroom. This results in homes with media-rich environments featuring distinct family (living room) and personal (bedroom) “cultures.”

This trend in youth and leisure time in the home couples with what Livingstone (2002) calls the “social constructions of independence.” The conception of children in home has evolved: children grow up faster, but attain adult status later, giving rise to the class called “adolescence.” She argues, “The dominant narrative of childhood, and hence the relations between parents and children, concerns the balance between dependence and independence” (p. 172). The new family class of adolescence has emerged and “the media are of growing importance to this group in all domains: *identity, culture, education, and consumption*” (p. 173).

Also directly affecting the home culture is the aforementioned “digital generation gap,” the notion of children as having an innate ability to learn and use new technology, playing a key role in acquiring skills of Internet, then explaining to adults. This creates a constant struggle between parental strategies and children’s tactics for media usage (Buckingham, 2000; Livingstone, 2003; Press & Livingstone, 2006).

### *B. Transformations in social practices*

Young people often express the value of having a space in which they can talk without adults’ eavesdropping. Facebook and other social media present youth with a new opportunity to build and maintain social connections that resemble the public acts of “hanging out” at school, in coffee shops, and around shopping malls (Ito, 2010). For several decades, shopping malls were a primary location for building and maintaining social bonds for youth (Crawford, 1992), but now teens are seen as nuisances in public places even as they are targeted as consumers (boyd, 2008b). Add to this the decline of public leisure facilities, after-school activities, and “street corner culture” (Livingstone, 2002), and these changes in teen social geography probably account for the apparent success of SNS channels of communication like Facebook.

Social Networking Sites also provide a forum for social interaction that was not readily available to

young people prior to Internet-based forms of communication. Relationships can be formed and maintained through SNS that bring together “consequential strangers” (Blau & Fingerman, 2009), people who are relative strangers in our lives but who are far more important than we may realize, from a car mechanic to someone we meet while walking the dog. When we have problems, they are more likely to help than close friends and family by providing meaning, comfort, social connections, and expose us to new ideas and perspectives. Two examples of SNS that serve this purpose are Yahoo Answers (answers.yahoo.com) and Formspring (formspring.me). These types of sites typically provide the opportunity for questions to be asked and answered by site participants, usually anonymously, so without fear of embarrassment. In these situations, consequential strangers can provide some of the same benefits as close friends and family, as well as many other potential areas of support, but within the relative safety of online anonymity for the users.

### *C. Transformations in learning practices*

Media access across multiple screens allows young people to develop informal learning practices, because they no longer depend on educational structures as sources of new information (Drotner, 2008a; Gee, 2008; Wenger, 1998). Sefton-Green (2006) points out that in the everyday experiences of youth in contemporary media culture, a blurring of the boundaries between formal and informal learning has occurred, as with the boundaries of public and private. Taking advantage of informal learning practices and other out-of-school daily experiences youth have with new media offers a place where teaching and learning can be enhanced (see Gee, 2004).

Along with the blurring of the lines between formal and informal education comes the concern that if children become active agents in the meaning making process, then direct challenges to traditional educational practices may follow (Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003). Once again, media seem to play a significant role. Researchers find it increasingly difficult to “separate assumptions about learning and education from the wider media culture” (Sefton-Green, 2006, p. 283), which leads toward more complex ideas about meaning making by active audiences. More directly, Sefton-Green (2006) makes a direct association between media and learning: If the assumptions about direct media effects no longer hold, can a valid transmission model of pedagogy still remain valid?

Some also express concern about the use of technology in the classroom as well. The discourses that typically surround efforts to integrate technology into the educational environment embody many of the characteristics of *technological determinism* (Bromley, 1997; O'Sullivan, 2000). From this point of view, technology stands as a neutral good for society but has little effect on its users no matter how they use it, nor in what context; technology exists as "an autonomous force that is somehow independent of human society and acts upon it from outside" (Buckingham, 2008a, p. 11). He describes a related discourse in education as "information determinism," where people regard information as a neutral good and that, somehow by providing access, learning will follow. He argues that success will not occur only by providing better access to information; it lies in how that access is integrated into academic thinking and pedagogy, especially as it relates to the every day experiences of today's youth.

#### *D. Transformations in media literacy*

Most of the discussion about how to integrate media technology with learning practices falls under the rubric of "media literacy" (Buckingham, 2003; Lemke, 1998). Questions about media literacy often embody broad concerns about students and their relative preparation for later success in learning and life (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). As with media influence in general, the concerns about defining and educating the media-literate young person resurfaces as each new medium emerges (Anderson, 2008).

Livingstone (2003) summarizes current definitions of media literacy in a four-component model. A literate student should know how to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages across a variety of contexts. This last component—creation—forms the basis

for Voithofer's (2005) definition of new media as combining production as well as reception of educational media. This skills-based approach assumes that people can attain a deeper understanding of media and their conventions and possibilities if they experience the creation of symbolic texts first hand. New media texts are increasingly visual, creating a call for increased visual literacy (Bolter, 1998). What was once limited to television production studios has today become a skills-based approach advocated across many disciplines that have not historically considered production methods beyond writing.

Livingstone (2002) notes that the transformation in the notion of literacy "involves a shift from a rule-based model of education to the more immersive 'learning by doing'" (p. 229). She argues that literacy does not involve "serious" uses of the computer alone, because learning can also come from playing electronic games to generate the skills and competencies that matter most for Internet communication technology (ICT) use (see also Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003). Livingstone later notes, "Interestingly, 'learning by doing' is a model in tune with liberal approaches to early childhood education, but this is generally replaced as children get older with the rules-based approach" (p. 233).

Hsi (2007) offers another way to conceptualize media literacy in the age of the Internet as "digital fluency," as mentioned above. She defines the term to include an understanding of digital tools to gather, design, evaluate, critique, own, synthesize, and develop communication messages, but adds another layer. She argues for the importance of also understanding that the Internet and other forms of electronic expression are not neutral, but implicated in the diffusion of power in society.

## **6. New Conceptualizations for Media Research**

The following discussion presents some conceptual frameworks that can help guide research analysis in new media spaces and define the conceptual structures and boundaries in which to situate analysis. At the nexus of competing interpellations, overlapping social structures, new literacies, democratic discourses, and social anxieties, lies a new logic for media. This logic summarizes several key conceptual differences

between an approach to the analysis of *new media* and traditional perspectives on *mass media*. This new logic leads to a new participatory culture and the media practices of new media users that arise from it.

#### *A. The logic of new media*

The Internet transcends spatial boundaries that structure real life and replaces them with a rhizomatic



connection of computers (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Therefore, the logic of new media lies in a dialectical relationship between media technology and contemporary culture (Manovich, 2001). The new media culture embodied by this logic, and therefore a significant conceptual framework for research, has two distinct but interrelated characteristics: emerging and evolving media technologies in digital form *and* the social practices (communication, entertainment, information) that have emerged from, evolved around, and been enabled by the specific technologies. Despite this distinction, the two inextricably intertwine in new media practices.

To some extent, the idea that Marshall McLuhan (1994) famously postulated many years ago—the medium is the message—may be more appropriate than ever before (Logan, 2010). McLuhan argued that media themselves, not the content they carry, should form the focus of study. In terms of research, common sense might suggest that digital technologies and cultural practices remain separate objects of analysis in many ways. Technologies describe architectural structures comprised of wires, computers, and human interfaces. Social practices are material manifestations of culturally structured symbolic interaction and representation. “Things” in the world comprise one; social practices that construct and are constructed by culture comprise the other.

Despite that, the two domains remain inextricably intertwined. One structures the other in new media environments. This idea does not necessarily present something new: Raymond Williams (1975) made powerful arguments for a dialectical view of television technology as both shaping and shaped by its use and appropriation in society. We can say the same for new media, but the affordances of new media technologies significantly transform the dialectical relationship into something new and unique to new media participation.

Taking this idea of the architecture of social media defining the act of communication, Lev Manovich (2001) suggests that new media, particularly social media in the context of identity and community formation, are a complex negotiation between our multiple selves (on-line and off-line) and the computer structures and operations through which we represent these selves to others.

In other words, in this contemporary moment, “life takes place on screen” (Mirzoeff, 2002). This is the logic of new media, and perhaps what is new about them, as compared to traditional media. As dana boyd (2008b) claims, “Login to Twitter. Login to Facebook. What you see is a world that you’ve con-

structed.” Lev Manovich (2001) sums this up by suggesting, “new media follow the logic of the postindustrial or globalized society whereby every citizen can construct her own custom lifestyle and select her ideology from a large number of choices” (p. 42). This logic explicitly rejects the notion that participants in “networked publics” remain passive agents constituted as subjects through their media consumption. Instead, a key characteristic of new media comes from the recognition of participants as active agents in new media environments and the primary producers of content for those spaces.

Howard Rheingold recently affirmed the view that the networked structure matters in analysis because “the technical architecture effects human communication” (Rheingold, 2009). Rheingold continues by arguing that for the researcher, the level of understanding of the architecture of the site and its human interface has a significant impact on questions of power, control, and freedom of expression. As a source of discursive power, the technical structures of the Internet are much more closely tied to subjects’ abilities to speak and participate, or have a “voice,” a metaphorical construct proposed by Mitra and Watts (2002) for the study of power in networked public spaces. This suggests that the technical architectures of new media, especially in the form of social media, allow the subjects to construct the media to a greater degree than any communication media before them, even as media may attempt to hail them as subjects.

In other words, the relationship between the technical architecture and the participant defines the “place” where the overall experience of participation in social media is constructed. As outlined above, critical theorists have been concerned about the role of media in constructing, or interpellating, the individual as subject. Each social medium has a technical architecture that affords and constrains the various options for the construction of self in different ways, while the participants (understood as producers/consumers), in turn, define the site and its aesthetic through their choices and contributions. Foucault argues that the construction of self is a cycle whereby culture constitutes our identity, but we in turn create that culture through our social practices (Foucault, 1972; 1979). This provides a very useful way of thinking about self in social media.

### *B. New social operating system*

The previous section suggests that new technological innovations deeply intertwine with material

social practices. Social practices construct, and are constructed by, these relationships. We may therefore think of it as a circular process, rather than a linear or hierarchical one. The best opportunities new media spaces can offer for inquiry probably come at the nexus of multiple overlapping social spheres, creating social nodal points most commonly thought of as on-line communities.

The heart of on-line social practices lies in its participatory nature, where socializing takes on the very character of the Internet itself. Barry Wellman (Rainie & Wellman, 2010) suggests the notion of community is moving from groups to social networks, which become a new “social operating system.” This review refers to this new operating system as the process or practice of “online social networking” (OSN). The nodal intersections of OSN activities for socializing are referred to as social network sites (SNS), such as Facebook, Foursquare, etc. boyd and Ellison (2007) define SNS more thoroughly as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.

As the rhetorician James P. Zappen (2005) notes, the dichotomy between mass audience and media producer is replaced by a complex negotiation between on-line and real selves, representations of selves, listeners, and readers, and our many selves and the computer structures and operations through which we represent these selves to others. We have moved away from media understood as consumption of, and audiences interacting with, books, magazines, television, films, and radio, and instead, have begun to understand media as artifacts that not only encompasses the intersection of these older media, re-represented as digital media (Bolter & Grusin, 2000), but also represent widespread *participation* in digital media production (Burgess & Green, 2009; Roberts, et al., 2005) versus simple consumption, and in *networked publics* rather than as audiences (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Russell, Ito, Richmond, & Tuters, 2008).

This *participatory culture* in *networked publics* holds a central place in a reformulation of media research that focuses on the new social operating system.

**Participatory culture.** As already discussed, new media represent artifacts of a culture and society undergoing a major transition in the relationship of media to consumers and producers, which has a particular impact on media studies research (Kellner, 1995). A new conception for the relationship between society and media has emerged: Youth culture has become situated within an interactive “participatory environment” (Jenkins, 2006, 2009), with the primary difference being in form, audience, and distribution of media (Sefton-Green, 2006).

“Participatory culture” describes one with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices (Jenkins, 2009, p. xi). Youth form a core user group in these participatory media cultures, and they increasingly accomplish their social interactions in contemporary culture through networked gaming environments and SNS such as MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube (boyd, 2008b).

An important characteristic of new media, and specifically OSN, that we must acknowledge is the constitutive role of the users themselves, not just in the consumption, production, and distribution of media content, but in personal voice and sociability (Jenkins, 2009). Henry Jenkins (2006) describes this as “participatory media culture,” which differs sharply from traditional conceptions of audiences as passive media spectatorship, and also conceptually separates these types of social practices from engagement of new media that researchers define more accurately as information gathering and entertainment via the Internet.

**User-generated content (UGC).** SNS in the participatory culture exist almost exclusively to support the interplay of *user-generated content* (Ochoa & Duval, 2008; Thurman, 2008). People of all ages participate, but youth tend to dominate: “All new media are generally produced by youth, for youth, in the youth sphere, not within the constraints of an educational institution” (Sefton-Green, 2006, p. 296).

UGC refers to digital media that has many forms and is shared through many channels, both visual and textual. Each SNS has a unique technical architecture that structures, and is structured by, the content produced and/or provided by its participants. UGC provides an integral element, indeed a necessity, in the social economy circulating in network public spaces

(boyd & Ellison, 2007). On these sites, participants almost entirely produce it, with little or no formal training in the technologies of production and distribution—one of the characteristics of participatory media cultures in Jenkins' definition above. For these reasons, UGC forms a primary cultural artifact for analysis.

**Networked publics.** We can no longer think of participants in OSN as mass audiences of consumers, but now as producers of UGC and distributors of digital media in networked spaces. "Changes in how power and information are distributed across society, geography, and technology" (Russell, et al., 2008, p. 43) have redefined the traditional relationship between cultural production and consumption. People now live, work and play in a number of fragmented, partial, and overlapping *networked publics*, defined by "the rise of many-to-many distribution, aggregation of information and culture, and the growth of peer-to-peer social organization" (p. 43).

The nature of networked publics is strongly influenced by network technologies, the affordances and limitations in architectures, and how communication is structured: "What distinguishes networked publics from nonmediated or broadcast publics is the underlying structure. New forms of media—broadcast or networked—reorganize how information flows and how people interact with information and each other" (boyd, 2008a, p. 23).

boyd (2008a) identifies four technical properties of digital communication, which play a significant role in configuring networked publics: *persistence*, *replicability*, *scalability*, and *searchability*. Because of the four properties, a great deal of information online does not go away, remains infinitely reproducible, and stands in need of structuring and organization, giving rise to new search technologies. These properties are intertwined and codependent, and they help produce three dynamics that shape people's experience with networked publics: *invisible audiences*, *collapsed contexts*, and *the blurring of public and private*. A potentially invisible audience engages with this information, an audience not present in the moment of engagement or present but lurking in the background. Collapsing contexts refers to how "the lack of spatial, social, and temporal boundaries makes it difficult to maintain distinct social contexts" (boyd, 2008a, p. 34). Without control over context, ideas of public and private as two distinct spheres have become outdated to today's young people, giving new meaning to the concept of privacy online.

**Genres of participation in networked publics.** Ito (2010) employs "the notion of genres of participation" (p. 15) to differentiate between two types of SNS: *friendship-driven* and *interest-driven*. Ito defines friendship-driven web sites as such because they reflect "the dominant and mainstream practices of youth as they go about their day-to-day negotiations with peers and friends" (p. 15-16). They find that for most youth, the sites MySpace and Facebook rest on local networks. These sites have become, "their primary source of affiliation, friendship, and romantic partners, and their lives mirror this local network" (p. 16). In other words, OSN participation and socialization often reflects offline local social networks, especially for youth (boyd, 2008a; Hargittai, 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008).

Practices such as "specialized activities, interests, or niche and marginalized identities" (Ito, 2010, p. 16) as the primary purpose of the sites define interest-driven web sites. Unlike friendship-driven social media sites, participants can easily access most of the content generated by people they do not know offline, and who need not accept them as friends, although users can limit access to some content to a defined subgroup. Using the SNS definition by boyd and Ellison (boyd & Ellison, 2007), participants have the option to construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, but need not connect this profile to offline identities. They may articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, but that does not limit the ability of the participant or others within the system to view and traverse the network. This fundamental architectural difference seems to distinguish the sites defined as "interest-driven." The type and goal of the UGC appears very different, perhaps because of the technical structure as much as the intended audience.

The author suggests a third genre of participation exists somewhat between the previous two and shares some characteristics of each. We might appropriately term these *collaboration-driven* sites. We can conceptualize this genre as a subset of *interest-driven*, but with some fundamental differences in the affordances and limitation of the site architectures. These sites focus on supporting and maintaining "collective intelligence," a term coined by French cybertheorist Pierre Lévy (1997) and used by Jenkins (2006) to help define online participatory culture. In the late 1990s, the "dot.com" bubble expanded in attempts to commercialize the Internet as a profitable digital economy. Lévy (1997) envisioned an alternative future for the



Internet, one with the purpose of learning, playing, and communicating with one another in what amounts to a qualitatively new way of living. Lévy saw a new space of knowledge formed by cyberspace.

In terms of boyd and Ellison's SNS definition (boyd & Ellison, 2007), participants construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, but identity in this profile can remain ambiguous. Rather than a list of other users with whom they share a connection, the connection becomes a shared problem, project, or idea on which participants can collaborate, and collaborators can view and traverse the network freely, but with monitoring by site managers. This genre encompasses communities dedicated to wiki, crowd sourcing, and other such collaborative sites, enabled by new media technologies, which support the construction and contribution of knowledge. Jenkins (2006) described these participants as members of knowledge communities that form around mutual intellectual interests, where no traditional expertise exists, and the pursuit and assessment of knowledge is at once communal and adversarial.

### *C. Privacy and safety in networked publics*

Returning once again to anxieties about media and their effects, we note how traditional social concern focused on protecting youth from the risks and threats to privacy from commercial websites, advertising networks, and online scams (Henke, 1999), but the ambiguity of the concept of privacy has made it difficult for scholars to define, and more so with the fluidity of online activities. Marwick, Diaz, and Palfrey (2010) note that, "definitions have ranged from the famous conception of the 'right to be let alone' (Warren & Brandeis, 1890), to the 'right to control information of oneself'" (Westin, 1967, p. 6).

Research in this area tends to focus on external threats to youth and privacy, such as the collection of personal data by marketing firms and other data-mining companies (Moscardelli & Liston-Heyes, 2004; Xie, Teo, & Wan, 2006). However, anxieties about new media influence have eased somewhat with the understanding that youth today perhaps have more competence with new media technologies and possess more literacy about media in general and marketing practices specifically (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Palfrey & Gasser, 2008).

More recent concerns about privacy arise less from issues of "consumer privacy" and more from the risks to youth and privacy brought on by "public living" in participatory media cultures afforded by

new media sites like Facebook, YouTube, etc. (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Schrock & boyd, 2008; Youn, 2009). At the center of these discourses lie, as boyd (2008a) notes, the blurring of public and private as an important dynamic for shaping experience in networked publics. Some see the disclosure of personal information to companies and to SNS by youth as "risky" behavior leading to violation of privacy (Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009; Fogel & Nehmad, 2008).

Bound up in the social anxieties about young people using the Internet are some very real areas of potential concern. Significant fears exist over "online predators" and pedophiles (Palfrey, Sacco, & boyd, 2008; Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008), online harassment and cyberbullying (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Wolak, et al., 2008; Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007), and more recently, sexting (Albury & Crawford, 2012; Albury, Funnell, & Noonan, 2010; Judge, 2012), which refers to "sexual communications with content that includes both pictures and text messages, sent using cell phones and other electronic media" (Wolak & Finkelhor, 2011, p. 2).

Mobility in online participation has risen, with 75% of teens having a mobile phone (Lenhart, et al., 2010) and one in four teens owning a smartphone (Lenhart, 2012). Cell phone texting and calling "have become indispensable tools in teen communication patterns" (Lenhart, et al., 2010, p. 2). Used primarily for peer-to-peer communication, mobile device usage can be more difficult to regulate and supervise than computers, causing concerns about excessive usage and social isolation (Crawford & Goggin, 2010). Because most of these devices have built-in cameras and access to a network, they often play a role in a perceived increase in sexting (Judge, 2012; Ringrose, Gill, Livingstone, & Harvey, 2012), in this case defined specifically as the sending and receiving of nude or semi-nude sexually explicit images (Lenhart, 2009). However, the Lenhart study found that very few young people (ages 12-17) have sent sexually explicit messages (4%), but more have received them (15%). Three main reasons or motives for sexting emerge:

1. Exchanges of images solely between two romantic partners;
2. Exchanges between partners that are then shared outside the relationship;
3. Exchanges between people who are not yet in a relationship, but where often one person hopes to be.



Despite the fears and warnings, youth continue to share personal information online. SNS allow young people to connect with close friends, express themselves, and connect with far-away friends (Livingstone, 2008). For young people, the social benefits so prevail in their minds that “the benefits . . . outweigh privacy concerns, even when concrete privacy invasion was experienced” (Debatin, et al., 2009, p. 100). Unfortunately, few studies of the social benefits vs. the risks of OSN for young people exist, with Livingstone (2008; Livingstone & Helsper, 2010) as the notable exceptions.

People may exaggerate the potential danger as well. Research suggests that providing personal information online does not, by itself, increase the risks. For example, while research has linked some sharing to increased sexual solicitation (Wolak, et al., 2008), most youth interact online with people they already know (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Wolak et al. (2008) found that 83% of Internet users, ages 10-17, primarily interact with people they know offline in low-risk situations, although the remaining 17% did receive a “high-risk unrestricted interactors” classification. Sharing personal information with a friend clearly differs from doing so with a stranger (Schrock &

boyd, 2008), so the far larger percentage of youth appear at little personal risk in OSN.

Further, providing personal information does not necessarily suggest a lack of concern for privacy. Livingstone (2006) points out the importance of understanding that children conceive of privacy differently from adults, “Children seek privacy, but as a means to an end, not an end in itself” (p. 132). She argues that privacy in networked publics provides opportunities to act in silly ways, to experiment, to seek advice, to meet new people, but “most of all, to engage in uninterrupted, unobserved immersion in peer communication” (p. 132). Youth may act more openly but they still want to control their actions, information, and choices when sharing personal information and socializing online, and this control “includes privacy *from* adults, especially parents and teachers” (Marwick, Diaz, & Palfrey, 2010, p. 11).

The significance of privacy for youth culture in social media needs to remain an important concern for researchers (Grant, 2006; Ito, 2010). In addition to tensions for youth over who sees what information, the question remains of what kind of personal information should be deemed private for networked publics.

## 7. Conclusion

The mass media culture has become fragmented and dispersed with the wide range of new media channels made available through Internet technologies, which is challenging traditional notions of media research, especially concepts of identity formation, the role of media in society, the media consumer/producer dialectic, and the value of young people as subjects in media research.

One challenge to address is in the relationship between identity and media, where it has long been argued that in contemporary society, identity is largely constructed through media engagement. In new media spaces, the construction of identity is now understood as overlapping and competing interpellations existing simultaneously at interconnected nodal points. Those points are where “networked individuals” are constituted within “networked publics.” This new conception of interpellation has been labeled the “new social operating system” because of the increasing importance of communication technologies in shaping social practices.

Another challenge is that the very nature of the media consumer appears to be changing. Rather than a passive consumer of media, the user is actively engaging media. Key to this conception is recognizing that participants are also becoming active producers of new media and distributing them in global networked publics. Traditional theoretical approaches to media research of “mass media culture” do not seem to adequately describe the current condition. New epistemological frameworks for the digital age may be needed to address the emerging logic of new media, one in which media users in large part define themselves through their choices of media channels and content, but also where media engagement has become situated in a “participatory media culture;” a perspective that is more useful in examining the everyday practices of new media users across the three genres of participation identified.

With the emergence of networked publics made possible by new media technologies, social anxieties

and moral panics over the effects of media are once again heightened. Children continue to be seen as a vulnerable group in need of special protection from media, even as children can be perceived as expert in the technologies of media. Instead, young people should be reconceived as active agents in meaning making through media engagement. They have been shown to be excellent indicators of broader trends in media technology and practice, making them good subjects for study, and social engagement in networked public seem to have a particular appeal to youth culture, more so than older generations. This assertion is born out through both qualitative methods of research (Heim, et al., 2007; Ito, 2010; Livingstone, 2002, 2003, 2007; Sefton-Green, 2006) and quantitative analysis of social media use (Lenhart & Madden, 2005; Lenhart, et al., 2005; Roberts, et al., 2005).

While the impact of social media in terms of identity management, socializing, learning, and literacy remains important to the field, the focus of analysis should be on how young people's "communication, friendship, play, and self-expression are reconfigured through their engagement with new media" (Ito, 2010, p. 1), as much as how to protect them from their own risky behaviors and predatory practices of others.

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# Walter J. Ong, S.J., as an American Catholic Thinker: On the Occasion of the Ong Centenary Year

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Walter J. Ong, S.J. (1912-2003), a member of the religious order in the Roman Catholic Church known as the Society of Jesus, flourished from the early 1950s through the early 1980s in terms of his public ministry. Retired from teaching English at Saint Louis University in May 1984, he has more than 400 publications to his credit. For Ong the Jesuit priest, his publications were part of his public ministry as a Jesuit priest, as were his classroom teaching, public lectures, and professional service. People who want to can still read his publications today. Many of his scholarly publications are not explicitly about religious faith, his own religious faith or anybody else's religious faith, as for example, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982). But some of his scholarly articles and books are explicitly about religious faith—for example, *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (1986). Nevertheless, in most of his publications Ong saw to it that the abbreviation "S.J." (for the Society of Jesus) appeared after his full name someplace in the publication.

Non-Catholics who may be interested in reading Ong's non-religious publications may think him an interesting thinker who just happened to be a Catholic priest. We tend to think that authors are supposed to check their religion in at the coat-check when they enter the public arena of public discourse, including the public arena of the academic study of religion. Fair enough. When I read an author's publications, I usually like to know where the author is coming from, as we say. After all, an author's publications can be understood as the autobiography of the author, at least to a certain extent. A publication is a public expression of the author's consciousness, at least to a certain extent. Where is this author coming from? In the case of Ong's books, I think that readers should understand, for example, that he is an American, not an Asian (his fam-

ily name is English); that he is a Catholic, not a non-Catholic; that he is an American Catholic, not a French Catholic, even though he lived in Paris for three years and loved to speak French. Ah, but if you are yourself American Catholic, what are your expectations of an American Catholic priest who advertises that he is a member of a religious order by publishing "S.J." after his name and who advertised that he was a priest by wearing clerical garb wherever he lectured in the United States? Do you perhaps see American Catholics through the prism of recent Catholic immigrants such as Irish-American Catholics or Italian-American Catholics or German-American Catholics? Ong's mother and her family were German-American Catholics. But Ong's father and his father's family were Protestants. For Ong, his family life involved inter-faith dialogue. As a result, Ong himself was intimately familiar with U.S. Protestant culture. In addition, he did his doctoral studies in English at Harvard University when it was still a bastion of that culture. Furthermore, he wrote his massively researched doctoral dissertation about a Protestant martyr, the French logician and educational reformer Peter Ramus (1515-1572). (Ramus was killed in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in France in 1572.)

What are we to think of a Jesuit writing about the work a Protestant martyr? Besides the fact that he was a Protestant, why should American Catholics today or anyone else be interested in a book about a logician and educational reformer (unless they happen to be interested in the history of logic and/or the history of education)? After all, before the 1930s, how many Americans ever even heard of Peter Ramus? Before the 1930s, he had dropped off most people's radar screens.

Even today, Ramus is not well known except to specialists, even though he and his followers had enormous educational influence in the 16th and 17th cen-

turies in England, Germany, and the Massachusetts Bay Colony, for example. The educational influence of Ramus and his followers was probably on a scale with the educational influence of the early Jesuits. A lot more historical research could still be done on the educational influence of Ramus and his followers, as Hotson (2007) and Mack (2011) show.

In any event, as an American Catholic, Ong admired the 19th-century groundswell among certain American Catholic leaders, including Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland, Bishop Keane, and the Catholic converts Isaac Hecker and Orestes Brownson. As a result, Ong thought that American Catholics should cultivate an historical awareness of their American Catholic heritage. However, like so many other things that Ong proclaimed in his life, this thrust in Ong's thought in the 1950s did not galvanize his fellow American Catholics to action. Indeed, over his lifetime, nothing that Ong proclaimed and championed galvanized his fellow American Catholics to action, not even to the limited action of studying his work. Compared to Ong, other Jesuits such as John Courtney Murray and Bernard Lonergan and Karl Rahner won large followings among Catholics. Moreover, over his lifetime, nothing that Ong proclaimed and championed galvanized anybody to action, except for Marshall McLuhan (and later on, me). To be sure, Ong in his lifetime received a respectful hearing from both Catholics and non-Catholics. He was not neglected or ignored. Nevertheless, to this day, McLuhan and I are the only authors who were galvanized by Ong's most distinctive thought to take the ball from him and run with it on our own, as we say.

As a result of the seeming indifference that Ong's most distinctive thought met with in his lifetime, my aim in the present essay is to bring the now deceased Ong back to life, as it were—to galvanize people today to study his work, and to galvanize more people today to work with his most distinctive ways of thinking. My thesis is that Ong was not simply an American thinker, though he was that; not simply a Catholic thinker, though he was that; but an American Catholic thinker. In other words, he was not simply a thinker who happened to be a Catholic, though he was that; he was not simply a thinker who happened to be an American, though he was that; but he was an American Catholic thinker. In the course of the present essay, I will explain what I mean by this briefly, not exhaustively.

#### A. *Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan*

A young Canadian convert to Catholicism, Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980), proved a significantly influential figure in Ong's career, directing his attention to questions that he would explore in depth later on throughout his life.

The young Canadian taught English at Saint Louis University from 1937 to 1944, except for a one-year leave-of-absence in 1939-1940 during which he returned to Cambridge University to work further on his doctoral dissertation.

During McLuhan's years of graduate study at Cambridge University in the 1930s, he had been deeply impressed by G. K. Chesterton, himself a convert to Catholicism. Today we would probably refer to Chesterton as a public intellectual. He was the author of poetry, detective novels, literary criticism (books on Chaucer and Dickens), biographies (of Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas), religious apologist, newspaper columnist, and platform debater (with George Bernard Shaw). Articulate, Chesterton was. And a stylist. Civil and courteous, too. In any event, among other things, Chesterton famously advocated an alternative to both capitalism and communism: distributism (or distributivism). McLuhan was impressed with distributism and more generally with Chesterton. In 1936, McLuhan published an article about Chesterton. In the spring of 1937, McLuhan followed Chesterton's example and converted to Catholicism. (In the academic year 1936-1937, McLuhan taught English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.)

As part of his Jesuit training, Ong pursued graduate studies in philosophy at Saint Louis University, one of the leading centers of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy in North America. At the same time, he also worked on a Master's in English. He did his Master's thesis on sprung rhythm in the poetry of the Victorian Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins under McLuhan's direction. After Ong had completed his Jesuit studies in theology and had been ordained a priest and had completed his Jesuit training, he advanced to Harvard University for his doctoral studies in English.

For his Ph.D. in English at Harvard, Ong set out to write his doctoral dissertation about Peter Ramus (1515-1572). Perry Miller in English at Harvard, the author of *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (1939), served as the director of Ong's dissertation. Years before Ong started his doctoral studies at Harvard, McLuhan had called his attention to Miller's 1939 book. Years after Ong had received his Ph.D. in



English from Harvard in the May 1955 commencement exercise, after Miller had died, Ong dedicated his book *In the Human Grain: Further Explorations of Contemporary Culture* (1967), “To the memory of Perry Miller / *Cor ad cor loquitur* [Heart speaks to heart, the motto inscribed on John Henry Cardinal Newman’s coat of arms].” Earlier when Ong’s *Ramus and Talon Inventory* (1958) was published, in which he lists and briefly describes the more than 750 volumes by Ramus and his followers that he had tracked down in more than 100 libraries in the British Isles and Continental Europe, it carried the dedication “For / Herbert Marshall McLuhan / who started all this” interest and research about Ramus and Ramism.

By way of digression, I should mention that Miller reports in his 1939 book that he found only one self-described Aristotelian in 17th-century New England. All other college-educated New Englanders were self-described Ramists. The founders of Harvard College in 1636 were Ramists. In the early years of Harvard College, Ramism dominated the curriculum. In the 17th century, Ramism dominated the curriculum at Cambridge University in East Anglia, where many New Englanders had been educated. When John Milton was a student at Cambridge University, he studied Ramist logic there. Later in his life, he wrote a textbook in logic based on Ramus’ logic. Ong and Charles J. Ermatinger translated Milton’s textbook in logic in Yale’s *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (1982).

Ong’s family ancestors left East Anglia on the same ship that brought Roger Williams to Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1631. At that time, his family name was spelled Onge. His family name is probably related to the English name Yonge.

In any event, when Ong was visiting libraries in Continental Europe to track down volumes by Ramus and his followers, he lived in a Jesuit residence in Paris for three years in the early 1950s. During this time he had breakthrough insights aided by the work of the French philosopher Louis Lavelle regarding the aural-visual contrast. Following Lavelle’s example, Ong worked with the aural-visual contrast in his own ways in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (1958).

Through this book and related articles in the 1950s, Ong attracted a follower, his Canadian friend and former English teacher at Saint Louis University in the early 1940s, Marshall McLuhan. Ong’s publications in the 1950s inspired McLuhan to write his controversial book *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962).

Subsequently, McLuhan published *Understanding Media* (1964), and then he devoted the rest of his life to exploring themes regarding the media, returning to themes in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* only in passing in his subsequent books. Ong never published a book comparable to McLuhan’s *Understanding Media*. However, Ong devoted the rest of his life to exploring further and in his own ways certain themes that McLuhan had explored in his own ways in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. As a result, I like to say that Ong is not McLuhan, and McLuhan is not Ong. Nevertheless McLuhan had influenced Ong at the beginning of his studies.

McLuhan (1962) envisioned the possible end of the world of literacy and the concomitant emergence of what he termed retribalization. To be sure, he stopped well short of predicting that this possibility would actually occur. But he did spell out this possibility. However, Ong was not quite so dramatic and apocalyptic. As an alternative to the possibility of retribalization, McLuhan also spelled out a somewhat rosy possible future. Unlike his friend and former teacher, Ong never suggested what the future might hold, even though he expressed hope about the future in *The Presence of the Word* (1967), the expanded version of Ong’s 1964 Terry Lectures at Yale University.

In the September 15, 1962 *America*, Ong reviewed McLuhan’s *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. Toward the end of his generous review, Ong makes the following observations:

If humanity is to retain meaningful possession of the knowledge it is accumulating, breakthroughs to syntheses of a new order are absolutely essential. McLuhan aids one such breakthrough into a new interiority, which will have to include studies of communications not merely as an adjunct or sequel to human knowledge, but as this knowledge’s form and condition.

In a later published assessment of McLuhan’s book, Ong acknowledged that it is a flawed work. Nevertheless, his original observations about it can help us understand Ong’s own work. In the major body of scholarly work that Ong generated over the decades, he himself indeed truly developed breakthrough syntheses of a new order, just as McLuhan did in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*.

When Ong writes about the need for breakthroughs to syntheses of a new order being absolutely essential, he seems to imply that there are syntheses of an old order around that can serve as baseline measures against which we can compare and contrast

the proposed new breakthrough syntheses that emerge. But what are those older syntheses? Can we name any of them?

We might refer to one older synthesis as Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. As part of his Jesuit training, Ong was educated in Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. In some of his articles in the 1940s in the *Modern Schoolman* and elsewhere, Ong discusses certain points in Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. However, at a certain juncture in his life, Ong stopped using Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy explicitly in his publications. For this reason, it strikes me as fair to say that Ong's breakthroughs to syntheses of a new order replaced and superceded for him in his life and thought the older synthesis of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. Ong's breakthroughs to syntheses of a new order are deeply original.

If we define postmodernist thought as being based on an analysis and critique of modernity, few other authors can claim to have matched Ong's multivariate analysis of modernity. Moreover, certain 19th-century Catholic popes should be recognized for their critiques of modernity. For example, when Pope Leo XIII called for the renewed study of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, he did so because of his critique of modernity. Furthermore, certain critiques of modernity advanced by Catholics such as Ong deserve to be recognized as a critiques of modernity that are at least as comparable in scope and depth to the critiques advanced by the various members of the Frankfurt School and their followers in academia today. Philip Gleason of the University of Notre Dame got it in the title of his book, *Contending with Modernity* (1995). Contending with modernity is the name of the game not only for Catholics in Western culture today, but for non-Catholics as well, including the authors in the Frankfurt School and their academic followers today. Pope Leo XIII thought that one way Catholics could contend with modernity was by studying Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. As a result of his initiative, Karl Rahner, Bernard Lonergan, Walter Ong, and other Jesuits and many other Catholics studied Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy whose renewal was one of the greatest intellectual contributions of Catholics in the 20th century. But we are now in the 21st century, and Catholics should explore new ways of contending with modernity. One way would be to explore Ong's multivariate analysis of modernity from the early 1950s onward. In addition,

Catholics today might want to consider certain strategies that Ong himself advanced regarding how to proceed to contend with modernity

### *B. The basics of Ong's thought*

Let's examine Ong's above-quoted statement in his review of McLuhan's *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. Ong's more challenging claim is that communications somehow provides the form and condition of human knowledge. Drawing on Lavelle's work with the aural-visual contrast (1942), Ong basically aligns philosophic thought and scientific thought with visual cognitive processing. In short, formalized visual cognitive processing is the form and condition of Western philosophic and scientific thought. If we think of the well-known distinction between philosophy and poetry, then following Ong's way of sorting things out, we would align poetry and rhetoric with aural cognitive processing. In short, aural cognitive processing is the form and condition for thought expressed in poetry and rhetoric. But we can align the Hebrew Bible with aural cognitive processing. In short, the Hebrew Bible is an anthology of thought and expression based on aural cognitive processing where Greek philosophical thought rests on visual cognitive processing.

From a very early age, most people in Western culture today are culturally conditioned in visual cognitive processing. Formal education in Western culture is set up to culturally condition school children in visual cognitive processing. When school children have achieved what reading teachers refer to as functional literacy in their reading ability, then they have been culturally conditioned in visual cognitive processing. But school children today who have not attained functional literacy in their reading ability remain embedded in aural cognitive processing, something to which Jonathan Kozol has called attention in terms of illiteracy in America today. Kozol (1992, 2005) is right to call our attention to illiteracy in America today. Moreover, if you understand the import of Ong's thought, you will probably also understand the import of Kozol's books in a new way.

Thus far, I have focused on Ong's way of working with the aural-visual contrast that he borrowed from Lavelle. But following Ong's own use of plural terms, I have suggested that he himself had breakthroughs (plural) to new syntheses (plural). With respect to both aural cognitive processing and visual cognitive processing, he worked out syntheses involving each one—syntheses involving aural cognitive pro-

cessing and syntheses involving visual cognitive processing. I have also spoken of cultural conditioning. Cultural conditioning around aural cognitive processing involves a number of factors identified and discussed by Ong. In a similar way, cultural conditioning around visual cognitive processing also involves a number of factors identified and discussed by Ong. However, it is beyond the scope of this short essay to detail those other factors here. (For more along these lines, see Farrell, 2000.)

Because of Ong's emphasis on cultural conditioning, he was at times charged with being a cultural determinist or a technological determinist. It strikes me as an odd charge to make about a Catholic thinker who explicitly celebrates free choice in decision making. But I would allow that Ong does indeed attribute a determinative role to cultural conditioning in influencing our cognitive processing and consciousness. However, because Ong was trained in Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, we need to remember that for Ong, the human mind is not material but immaterial. The centuries-old philosophic logion tells us that whatever is in the intellect was first in the senses. So aural cognitive processing is about what was first in the senses. Similarly, visual cognitive processing is about what was first in the senses.

My favorite essay by a Lonergan scholar is by Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Neither Jew nor Greek but one human nature in operation in all" (1965, reprinted, slightly revised, 1993). Crowe of course alludes to a famous passage in scripture by St. Paul. For the terms Jew and Greek in Crowe's title, I would substitute the expression aural cognitive processing and visual cognitive processing. We humans share one human nature regardless of our cultural conditioning in aural cognitive processing or visual cognitive processing. However, if we understand the basic import of Crowe's 1965 essay, is there any value added by substituting the two terms from Ong for the two terms borrowed from St. Paul? If we were to use the initial substitution of Ong's two terms to go on to consider the various other factors that Ong identifies and discusses in connection with aural cognitive processing and visual cognitive processing, then we would be fleshing out and deepening our understanding of Crowe's 1965 essay considerably.

But so what? Who today cares about the various factors that Ong identifies and discusses in connection with aural cognitive processing and visual cognitive processing? In broad strokes, consider the well-known

way of speaking of an authoritarian government versus a form of democratic government. Authoritarian government is based on aural cognitive processing. But forms of democratic government are based on visual cognitive processing. For this reason, democracy promotion today should take into account cultural conditioning of aural cognitive processing and the transition to cultural conditioning in visual cognitive processing.

Next, consider the well-known contrast of an agrarian economy versus a modern capitalist economy. An agrarian economy, such as the medieval agrarian economy that served as the model for Chesterton's distributism, is based on aural cognitive processing. By contrast, a modern capitalist economy is based on visual cognitive processing and the other factors that accompanied the dominance of visualist cognitive processing in Western culture after the emergence of the Gutenberg printing press in the 1450s.

As I have mentioned, whatever is in the intellect first came through the senses. Both aural cognitive processing and visual cognitive processing are based on what has come into the intellect through the senses. The senses are our bodily senses. But the human intellect is not material but immaterial. So our self-appropriation and self-possession today should involve our self-conscious and deliberate efforts to transcend both the aural cognitive processing and the visual cognitive processing of our Western cultural conditioning. Through such deliberately cultivated self-transcendence, we will be working toward forging new forms of cultural conditioning in Western culture today.

### *C. Recommended reading*

Ong developed his multivariate analysis of the emergence of modernity in Western culture in the following works: (1) *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958), mentioned above, (2) *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies* (1962), (3) *In the Human Grain* (1967a), mentioned above, (4) *The Presence of the Word* (1967b), mentioned above, (5) *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (1971), (6) *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture* (1977), (7) *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness* (1981), the published version of his 1979 Messenger Lectures at Cornell University, (8) his lengthy introduction to Milton's *Logic* in Yale's *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (1982), mentioned above, (9) *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982), (10-



13) *Faith and Contexts*, 4 vols. (1992-1999), and (14) *An Ong Reader: Challenges for Further Inquiry* (2002). Ong's *Orality and Literacy* is his most widely known book. It has gone through more than 30 printings in English and has been translated into 11 other languages.

The late Thomas M. Walsh of Saint Louis University compiled a bibliography of Ong's publications (2006), including bibliographic information about reprintings.

My book *Walter Ong's Contributions to Cultural Studies* (2000) provides a reader's guide to 11 of Ong's books and selected essays.

Next, Ong's own suggested strategies for Catholics to contend meaningfully in non-violent ways with modernity can be found in the following essays: (1) "The Mechanical Bride: Christen the Folklore of Industrial Man" (1952b); (2) "'A.M.D.G.' [*Ad majorem Dei gloriam*]: Dedication or Directive?" (1952a); and (3) "The Faith, the Intellectual, and the Perimeters" (1957). Ong reprises his reflections on AMDG in *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (1986, pp. 78-81, 87), the published version of Ong's 1981 Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto.

#### D. Conclusion

Finally, I would like to comment on the title of Peter Steinfels' book *A People Adrift* (2003). Are American Catholics today indeed a people adrift? If some are, then they should stop drifting and start living meaningful lives of non-violent religious faith in their individual personal decision making, following the directive that Ong explains in his essay about the Ignatian motto *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*. In addition, if the American Catholics who are drifting want to stop drifting and start finding new ways to express their religious faith with some of their co-religionists, then let them turn their creative spirits to constructing new ways to christen, as Ong puts it, elements and aspects of the contemporary secular world around them. Let those who are drifting and want to stop drifting join together with some of their fellow Catholics to construct a new religious mystique to express their religious faith about elements and aspects of the contemporary world in which we live today.

If you believe that at the moment of ensoulment God creates a specifically human immaterial soul for the previously infrahuman life-form, then you believe that God's creation is ongoing in the world today. In other words, God's creation did not stop at the end of the two accounts of creation in Genesis. Moreover, if

you think that the immaterial soul is the source of human reason, then you should consider that creative acts of human reason that produce our various forms of technology and modern science are spiritual acts (i.e., acts of the immaterial or spiritual soul). In large measure as a result of modernity and the creativity of the immaterial human soul, people of religious faith today as well as people of no religious faith live in a divine milieu, a world alive with the creative human God-given immaterial spirit. We in modern technological society are participants in the divine milieu in ways people in agrarian economies never imagined. These people had constructed their own participation mystique in the divine, as does every generation. In the history of Christianity, the Victorian Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins constructed his own imaginative participation mystique using a Christian framework of thought. The French Jesuit religious writer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., also used his imagination to construct a participation mystique. (I have borrowed the expression "divine milieu" from Teilhard, 1960). Ong suggests directions for such a participation mystique in the 21st century.

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## Book Reviews

**Bardhan, Nilanjana and Weaver, C. Kay** (Eds.). *Public Relations in Global Cultural Contexts: Multi-paradigmatic Perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011. Pp. 297. ISBN 978-0-415-87285-0 (cloth) \$150.00; 978-0-415-87286-7 (paper). \$39.95.

*Public Relations in Global Cultural Contexts: Multi-paradigmatic Perspectives* is a strong collection of essays by "public relations scholars geographically located across three continents, and with cultural roots and affiliations in more" (p. ix). The collection of essays offers differing perspectives in the global public relations environment in order to bring alternatives to current thinking and research. The strongest review for this edited book may be found in well-articulated excerpts from each chapter that clearly expose the multi-paradigmatic perspectives.

The first chapter, titled "Introduction: Public Relations in Global Cultural Contexts," is where co-editors Bardhan and Weaver introduce each scholar's essay within the context of their aim to (a) "provide space for different theoretical and methodological perspectives to articulate how public relations is implicated in culture building in a globalizing world" and (b) "encourage public relations scholarship to move beyond the approach that equates country with culture, an approach that has so far dominated most theorizing of public relations in the context of globalization" (p. 22). The co-editors clearly articulate that while advocating the value of multi-paradigmatic perspectives in public relations, they do lean toward the critical paradigm in this book because they subscribe to the view that critical theory provides much needed insight into the role that public relations plays in shaping culture in the context of globalization (p. 15).

Chapter 2, "Critical Perspectives in Global Public Relations: Theorizing Power" by Lee Edwards, "couples Arjun Appadurai's theory of the work of the imagination with Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power to explore how public relations participates in the distribution of power in the context of globalization" (p. 17-18). Edwards argues that the chapter reminds us that

to examine *only* normative practicalities of global public relations, or *only* the resistance of activist discourses, produces an incomplete representation of the effects of public relations in

global contexts. Recognizing the power of public relations discourses to produce new imaginaries, or fields of the possible, in the context of cultural flows, reveals the multifaceted nature of the power exercised by global public relations practices, regardless of who initiates them. (p. 45)

In Chapter 3, “How Intercultural Communication Theory Informs Public Relations Practice in Global Settings,” Michael Kent and Maureen Taylor argue that

although most of us will never be able to gain expertise about every country and every culture, all of us can enact a dialogic orientation that will allow us to understand those cultures. . . . It is equally important to understand how diverse stakeholders and publics view the world, the range of such beliefs, and how our own beliefs and ethnocentrism lead us to see the world in incomplete ways. The future of intercultural communication is not in knowing where a nation or culture falls on a social science dimension or scale. Rather, the future of intercultural competency is in the ability of practitioners to ask: What do different theories of intercultural communication provide that will help me to make sense of interactions and communication? How can I engage others relationally and dialogically? (p. 71)

Kent and Taylor “conceptualize public relations as an organic process of evolving relationships, an approach that allows a move away from traditional, managerial approaches to international public relations and a move toward a co-creational understanding of public relations as third culture building” (p. 18).

Nilanjana Bardhan follows up on this “third-culture building” model recommended by Kent and Taylor, in Chapter 4, “Culture, Communication, and Third Culture Building in Public Relations within Global Flux.” Specifically, Bardhan, “explores the shortcomings of the social scientific conceptualization of ‘culture’ and ‘communication’ in current public relations scholarship. . . . The chapter is anchored in the premise that at the ground level on the global stage, the public relations success of an organization is ultimately dependent on how individual practitioners, representing the client organization, jointly accomplish intercultural communication and relationship building with strategic members of culturally diverse publics” (p. 19). Bardhan argues that “by proposing third culture building as a model through which to theorize and practice transcultural public relations, I have demon-

strated in this chapter the suitability of interpretive and social constructionist approaches for conceptualizing the dynamic relationships between culture and communication in transcultural public relations” (p. 99).

Chapter 5, “Intercultural Typologies and Public Relations Research: A Critique of Hofstede’s Dimensions,” by Jeffrey Courtright, Rachel Wolfe, and John Baldwin, is designed to get individuals—whether practitioners, students, educators, or others—to examine the strengths and limitations of using a framework like that of Dutch organizational psychologist Geert Hofstede to understand cultural differences in public relations. The authors argue for alternatives to Hofstede’s four contrasting dimensions—individualism/collectivism, power/distance, uncertainty/avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. For example, in this chapter the authors apply principles from the work of Kenneth Burke to reinterpret Hofstede’s findings in analyzing the Dove “Campaign for Real Beauty” (p. 133). The authors summarize well the implication for multiple types of readers:

We, therefore, hope that this chapter has provided a better understanding of one of the most used typologies of culture in the literature today. After reading, this chapter, public relations scholars and practitioners should be more aware of the pitfalls related to the application of Hofstede’s dimensions and conduct research in ways that respect their strengths and limitations. Teachers of public relations, among other things, may expand upon various issues associated with particular dimensions (e.g., what do “masculine” and “feminine” cultures really mean and is it a helpful distinction?). We also hope that students may appreciate even more the importance of understanding culture through various lenses. For all readers, this chapter should serve as an important step in enhancing understanding and appreciation of the importance of culture in public relations in a rapidly globalizing world, and intricacies of understanding it. (p. 133)

Chapter 6, “The Need for a Postmodern Turn in Global Public Relations,” by Derina Holtzhausen, “focuses on what postmodern theory can contribute to both the theoretical and applied understanding of the role of public relations in processes of globalization” (p. 19). Holtzhausen explains the “differences between postmodernism and critical theory and global and international public relations, as seen from a postmodern perspective.” In addition, the chapter provides a post-

modern critique of global and international public relations and concludes with an in-depth discussion of a definition of public relations as activism (p. 140).

Chapter 7, “Critiquing the Generic/Specific Public Relations Theory: The Need to Close the Transnational Knowledge Gap,” by Robert Wakefield, attempts “to examine public relations as practiced in transnational organizations, with a focus on transnational corporations.” It looks at “a theory of international public relations—the generic/specific theory—as one scholarly attempt to guide practitioners in this complex and mostly uncharted arena of public relations” (p. 186). “The generic-specific theory explores tensions between using a generic approach to public relations practice, and attending to the specific needs of local societies, communities, and cultures in which organizations operate” (p. 20). Wakefield warns of “the hostilities that transnational corporations (TNCs) could well attract if they fail to engage in meaningful, culturally informed, and long-term relationship building practices in local communities” (p. 20).

Chapter 8, “Public Relations and Marginalization in a Global Context: A Postcolonial Critique,” by Mohan Jyoti Dutta, and Mahuya Pal, “provides a detailed explanation of concepts central to postcolonial theory such as ‘Orientalism,’ ‘modernity,’ and the notion of the ‘Third world.’ They theorize the integral connections between the nation-state, Western flows of neoliberal capitalism, colonization, civil society, and the history of public relations” (p. 20). Specifically, the authors argue that “bringing a postcolonial lens to public relations theory, research, teaching, and practice reconceptualizes the practices of public relations in the realm of activist politics that works in solidarity with the poor and the marginalized to create spaces of structural transformation” (p. 221).

Chapter 9, “Chi-based Strategies for Public Relations in a Globalizing World,” by Jensen Chung, “brings the Eastern philosophy of *I-Ching* to bear upon consideration of how to practice public relations in global cultural contexts” (p. 21). Specifically, Chung provides insight into “how spiritual notions of energy flow and harmony can give rise to *chi-shih* strategies in public relations, and how these contrast with commonly held Western goal-oriented and financially motivated communication values” (p. 21). Chung cautions that (a) the selection of the strategy depends on the degree of *yin-yang* contrast, which has to be assessed by practitioners; (b) when put into practice, the *chi* approach could involve potential ethical risks;

and (c) the emphasis on relationships and networking might legitimize the power-motivated in-group and out-group dichotomy, paving the way for nepotism and unfairness, if not corruption, in public relations practices (p. 246-247).

Chapter 10, “Public Relations, Globalization, and Culture: Framing Methodological Debates and Future Directions,” by C. Kay Weaver, “presents an in-depth examination of the methodologies that inform systems and critical theorizing of public relations, and positions these approaches as ‘cultures’ in their own right. The chapter also identifies the blind spots and weaknesses of both systems ‘Excellence’ and critical approaches” (p. 21). Weaver argues that the *kaupapa* Maori research is important because “they allow none of use to claim the intellectual high ground: Excellence and critical theorists alike are capable of contributing to the continuing colonization of cultures while they, ironically, celebrate new advances in theory and practice” (p. 268).

The book also includes an author index and subject index.

Overall the editors were successful in compiling a book of essays that “focus on two greatly understudied concepts in public relations scholarship—globalization and culture” (p. ix). The collection of essays effectively begins to demonstrate how globalization brings significant challenges for public relations practice and scholarship. The book is effective as a whole. However, as the excerpts suggest, using each chapter as a separate unit is a strong way to deepen understanding about the strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and conceptualization of globalization and culture.

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**Hill, Annette.** *Paranormal Media: Audiences, Spirits, and Magic in Popular Culture.* London and New York: Routledge, 2011. ISBN: 978-0-415-54462-7 (cloth) \$131.00; 978-0-415-54463-4 (paper) \$39.95; 0-203-83639-1 (e-book), no price listed.

In this book on paranormal media, Annette Hill uses a variety of research methods to investigate what has become a very popular form of media. Programs dealing with the paranormal in various forms seem to continue to appear in considerable numbers.

The book itself shows many layers of thought and research. Just what is it that makes such programming so popular? Where do ideas of the paranormal come from? How new is this “new phenomenon”? How are



media and the paranormal related? Attempts to answer these questions can be found inside this book, which is an eminently readable one.

Humankind always seems to want to know that there is “something else” beyond the quotidian, humdrum experience of their lives. For many, if not most, it is religion and the belief that there is a supreme being or beings, but as long ago as Kant and Nietzsche there was the suggestion that God was dead and this was taken further by the late Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and others, who believed or believe that there is no God. Yet despite this, belief seems to have hung on. The website: <http://www.humanism.org.uk/campaigns/religion-and-belief-surveys-> (accessed 23rd March, 2012) states that religious belief is declining in the United Kingdom; figures given on this website vary considerably from those of the National Secular Society (accessed 23rd March, 2012), who give an even lower figure for those who have belief. The Pew Forum, however, states that in the United States there is a very competitive market of faiths looking for adherents, since over a quarter of the people polled had changed from the faith into which they were born (<http://religions.pewforum.org/reports> accessed 23rd March, 2012). Tariq Modood (2011, p. 51) notes that secularism in Europe seems to be increasing, but that it is rarely militant. In the meantime, as Hill says (p. 2) there has been a paranormal turn in popular culture. Humankind does not seem to want to think that THIS is all there is. What surprises me is that while so many paranormal experiences have been proved to be fraudulent (either to entertain or to garner money from participants in the experiences, or both), people still attend paranormally-oriented events and the paranormal tourist destinations about which Hill writes in Chapter 5. Many people now watch paranormal programming from the comfort of their own living rooms. I suppose this is a way to get some of the thrill without actually having to be there, which might potentially be rather frightening. This, of course, has resonance with the work of Dayan and Katz (1992)—television enables us to participate at an event without our actual presence. For me, it also resonates with programs that I watched as a teenager—scary dramas, mainly dealing with unexplained hauntings—that terrified the wits out of us. Not only do we want something more than the present life, but we also want to be frightened and to like it when we are.

Here Professor Hill demonstrates how, despite contemporary secularity, such programming would not work without a history based on religion or religions, on myths and stories that most people know. One won-

ders if the trend towards secularity will mean that such stories and myths die and that new generations will not be able to interpret or understand inferences in the same way that most people now cannot understand inferences to, say, Greek or Babylonian myths and stories—even if these continue to be present in our cultures to some extent. While many people do not believe in things that cannot be proven scientifically, Hill shows (pp. 24ff) that scientific advances actually helped the growth of the spiritualist movement that was developed by Swedenborg and others. Mediums began to use new technologies as part of their demonstrations—spirit photography, for instance. As long ago as 1896, William James, suggested that:

I confess that at times I have been tempted to believe that the Creator has eternally intended this department of nature to remain baffling, to prompt our curiosities and hopes and suspicions, all in equal measure, so that although ghosts and clairvoyances, and raps and messages from spirits, are always seeming to exist and can never be fully explained away, they also can never be susceptible of full collaboration. (James, 1909, p. 580 in *The Confidences of a Psychological Researcher*, cited in Hill, p. 28).

Hill shows that ghost shows have been “part of the industrialization of mass cultures” since the 19th century (p. 29), following the historical development of the genre. In the United Kingdom recently there has been a rash of programs that deal or seem to deal with the paranormal and these vary from visits to haunted buildings to what are really magic shows. They bring in quite large audiences. It is here that the “armchair ghost hunters” come into play. As I mentioned above, this is perhaps where the audience is interested, wants to be frightened but, at the same time, needs to feel safe.

As well as the armchair ghost hunters, there is psychic tourism, to which Hill dedicates another chapter. Old cities in the U.K., like York, Edinburgh, and London, have developed such tourism. Guides take the tourist to supposedly haunted sites for what Hill (p. 100) describes as sensory journeys. These nearly always take place at night and in the quiet. Here, the audience—the tourists—become part of the show themselves. It is they who have the experience. As Hill mentions, audience members often hold hands, and so the experience of one audience member may easily be passed on to another. From those in my own family who have visited the Edinburgh haunting evenings, I



know that even the most sceptical have had some sort of experience.

In one of her chapters Hill writes of the things that many have experienced and which convince those people that “there is something [other] out there.” It is probably that we have all had some sort of experience that could be described as at least feeling that there is something supernatural going on. This type of experience may be what drives the psychic tourist, those who visit mediums and so on—some, of course, just go because they can. The growing area of ghost tourism, as Hill says, produces a strong sensory experience:

a structure of feeling, where the structuring principles of the ghost hunt as an event connect to history, and ghost stories, paranormal beliefs, and mix with the creativity of people’s cultural practices. The event organizers and the participants work together in a purposeful shaping of a unique cultural experience. (p. 107)

Hill’s chapter “Beyond Magic” (pp. 128-150) considers the work of Derren Brown, whose oeuvre combines psychology, magic, and showmanship. She notes (pp. 137 ff) that there is a strong connection between psychology and magic. Magic was, and in some cultures still is, used for many purposes: healing, for instance. Here, she analyses Brown’s show in the light of the historical development of such shows and with the assistance of interview material from audience members. Brown admits to using psychology for the purposes of misdirecting his audience. The audience look for both rational and irrational reasons for what they are viewing (p. 145). However, sceptical they are, they tend to want a reason for what they have seen or believe they have seen.

Without an audience, there would be no show. There would be no point. Transubstantiation, if one is a Catholic, is the belief that the bread and wine before us at the Mass becomes the body and blood of Christ. This is, in essence, magical. The difference is, however, that transubstantiation would still occur whether or not there were an audience. Without his audience, Derren Brown would have neither a reason to perform his show, nor anyone to whom to perform, nor—important here—an income stream. It is his audience who makes his show. As Hill shows, the attentive audience which sits quietly and watches a show is a relatively new thing. The audience were very much part of the show in Shakespeare’s time and perhaps this type of show is a throwback to that sort of audi-

ence participation. Like the medium, the magician must make his/her audience believe in him/her. This is often done by picking somebody out of the audience (although we all know that the skill is one of the oldest tricks in show business). Participation of one of their own number aids the audience’s illusion. Believable performance is now part of the repertoire of performers of all sorts, including politicians (see pp. 163-164). Politicians, being truthful or not, have lost elections or their position due to their lack of ability as believable performers. Two politicians from history that this affected were Richard Nixon and Sir Alec Douglas Home, whose tv performances let them down badly.

For Hill, the paranormal has gone mainstream and such events may be transformative. She suggests (p. 167) that they are connected with our desires to engage with life and death. As one of her respondents says, “nobody knows when you die, so we all want to know” (p. 167). The book says much about emotions. How often have we met somebody who has had no belief in spiritualism, but who decides to go to see a medium following the loss of a loved one? We still want to be in contact with that person and this medium may be able to help us open that channel. All of this is part of our culture which, as Hill says, “is both ordinary and extraordinary” (p. 169).

The human being is a sensory being. We want and need sensory experiences: “a sensuous knowledge in the visible and invisible in social relations” (p. 171). At the same time, we fear death, we miss those who have died, we want answers to unanswered and unanswerable questions. We may look for a paranormal reason for an anomalous event (p. 177). Events, positive or negative, can be disquieting. In the West, there has been—or so we are told—a move away from religion, which might once have provided answers to some of the questions we have. Professor Hill (p. 187) quotes a classical conductor as saying that through his/her “experience of working with an orchestra that together they transported themselves through music to a mystical realm.” A final quotation from a respondent is: “we’ve all got to die. I’d like to tell someone, there is something up there. I’d like to give a message if I could.” While Annette Hill says these are voices from the greatest show on earth (p. 187), I would like to think that it is mankind’s need to re-enchant modern life and that perhaps this will lead some back to the belief which lies behind some of such experiences, that of an everlasting after life.

Like Professor Hill's previous books, this is both eminently readable and useful. It is based on sound research and would be useful to students and academics in sociology, media and cultural studies, and also to those interested in religious practices. I would highly recommend it.

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- Modood, T. (2011). *Post-immigration "difference" and integration: The case of Muslims in Western Europe*. London: British Academy.

**Hjarvard, Stig and Mia Lövheim** (Eds.). *Mediatization and Religion: Nordic Perspectives*. Göteborg, Sweden: NORDICOM, 2012. Pp. 210. ISBN 978-91-86523-44-2 (paper) SEK 240, €28.

The intersection and interplay of media and religion have gained increasing scholarly attention with biannual international research conferences and a growing body of theoretical perspectives. The rise of the Internet and its use by both formal and informal religious groups prompted some of this work, but the decades before the Internet saw phenomena as diverse as televangelism in the United States (prompted in its turn by the then newer technology of cable television) and a religious press developed as part of a missionary outreach by Christian churches, each leading to research interest. The more recent work on media and religion has given more attention to religions other than Christianity as well as to smaller religious groups—the Internet allows any of these with online access to publish their work and further fosters interaction among otherwise isolated individuals who may share minority religious views.

Stig Hjarvard and Mia Lövheim present here a valuable addition to the body of published work in this area, extending it in two important ways. First, they offer a "Nordic perspective," giving greater awareness to the writing of scholars whose work is perhaps better known in their own countries than internationally. Second, their choice of essays develops and supports the theoretical stance of "mediatization," extending the media and religion nexus. In their introduction they point out that a "culturalist" perspective has strongly

influenced past scholarship on media and religion (p. 11). Then they report here a move that consciously examines mediation and the influence of media on religion. Mediatization generally considers the role of communication media in social and cultural formations. Lundby and Thorbjørnsrud describe these as "transformations [that] are long term, deep and lasting." They relate these to "media logic," or communication that evokes, uses narrative, and promotes emotional responses (p. 96). For them mediatization works on three levels: a narrative transformation (how the media construct stories), an institutional transformation (the role that the media play in society, influencing other institutions such as religion, education, or politics), and a cultural transformation (how the other transformations resonate with cultural, ideological, or collective responses) (p. 97).

The book's contributors represent an interdisciplinary group, with scholars from the "sociology of religion, film and media studies, and theology" (p. 9). The editors divide the 10 contributions into four sections addressing the mediatization of the national church, the mediatization of social conflicts, religious identity in a media environment, and religion and popular culture. In an opening essay in Section 1, Hjarvard proposes a typology of three forms of mediatized religion. First, and probably the most traditional, comes religious media, that is media produced by churches or produced by others for religious purposes. The second category moves closer to mediatization: journalism on religion or how the news media cover religion. In this, the news media frame religion to some extent and shape how non-church members, for example, understand religion. Third, Hjarvard proposes what he terms, "banal religion." This refers to "representations of de-contextualized and non-intentional religious meanings" (p. 35) such as one might encounter in a television drama or in a film that includes a wedding or in the religious symbols incorporated in a video game. He then uses this typology to consider the larger mediatization question and shows how each type correlates with dominant genres, the institution in control of the type, the religious content, the role of religious agents, the communication functions, and the challenges to (in the Nordic context) the Protestant Church (p. 40).

Peter Fischer-Nielson examines how the Internet mediatizes religion, through an empirical analysis of the "Internet communication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark," focusing on "the changed communicative conditions for the church"

(through individuals' involvement) and on "changed institutional practices" (through pastors' use of the Internet) (p. 45). The study proposes a way to use mediatization theory as the basis for such empirical study and presents data gathered from samples of over 1,000 users and 1,000 pastors. In addition to the raw data, Fischer-Nielson presents an analysis of the theological changes in the Church joined to the changes in communication.

The last two chapters in this section on the mediatization of the national church present case studies of how the Scandinavian mainstream press framed religion in the light of national debates on homosexuality and of how the Finnish media wrestled with secularization, again in the context of debates on homosexuality.

Section 2, on the mediatization of social conflicts, presents studies of conflicts, which happened to involve religion. However, the theoretical approach seems equally well suited to examine any mediatized conflict. Lundby and Thorbjørnsrud use the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in Norway as a starting point, looking both backward to cultural changes in Norway and forwards to the aftermath of the publication—protests and terrorist attacks. All of these occurred in the media world, offering a look at mediatization, seemingly in real time. Sumiala's case wrestles with the aftermath of school shootings in Finland. She pays particular attention to how the media (in some ways replacing the Church) ritualized death and managed the national mourning. The ritualization process included ritualizing the killers as well as the sites and the mourning. And the process occurred not only in mainstream media but in social media. She briefly mentions (as a proposal for further reflection) the ways in which the media, with their dominant social presence in a secularized society, propose the key frames for understanding death and immortality. Her question calls to mind a comment by George Gerber that the media have replaced the Church as an information source (and source of meaning) in the contemporary world.

Section 3 of the book examines religious identity. Scholars have already explored "the formative impact of new media on social, cultural, and political debate" (p. 129) so it should probably come as no surprise that these media will also influence religion. Where once churches and religious institutions helped form people's cultural and individual identity, their role has diminished in the secular societies of the Nordic countries. Lövheim here explores how young Muslim

women bloggers have gained a voice through online media, even in the face of marginalization by religious communities and by national discussion. The former emerges from religio-cultural factors while the latter, from their immigrant status. An analysis of the blogs allows Lövheim to explore religion in the lives of these women, sources of authority, and the larger social context in which they write. A complementary essay by Galal completes this section by examining Muslim television programming as a source of identity for immigrants in the non-Islamic cultures of the Nordic countries. Before setting out the argument, Galal notes, "Although I reject the idea that satellite media or any other media in itself creates religious identities . . . , it is relevant to look further into the discursive and symbolic resources that Islamic media is [sic] offering across borders potentially reaching an audience in the Nordic countries" (p. 147). The issue becomes not a formation of identity but the creation of a space for belonging. Though Galal focus on Islamic religious programming, one might also investigate the extent to which the programming carries cultural identity messages, which one might separate from the religious.

The last section of the book considers religion in popular culture. This refers less to any institutional church or religious practice than to the ways that popular culture (television and film primarily) take on religious functions or present de-contextualized religious images and symbols. In the first case study, Petersen offers "a reception study of Danish *Twilight* fans and uncovers *how* processes of mediatization of religion occur in the particular socio-cultural setting of this fan group" (p. 163, italics in original). The film series (and the novels from which they arise) explore the supernatural as well as phenomena taken as religious by a mostly secular young audience. They respond with both "devotion" and with "fan-related rituals" (p. 163). Using focus groups and in-depth interviews, Petersen charts several themes: the rejection of institutional religion (and often a fundamental ignorance of the beliefs of the institutional churches), a fascination with the supernatural, the transformation of religious imagination, and the performance of religious emotions.

The last essay in the volume returns to the theoretical, exploring how popular religion fits or does not fit with the mediatization hypothesis. Recognizing religion as one among other social institutions affected by mediatization allows Lied to refine the model proposed throughout the book, drawing parallels and identifying differences.

As a whole this volume offers much material for reflection. It certainly introduces many voices new to the media and religion discussions and it presents enough case study data to inform its theoretical proposals. It certainly indicates a growing maturity of the media and religion area.

Each essay has its own notes and reference list. The book features an index.

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**McLuhan, Eric and Marshall McLuhan.** *Theories of Communication*. New York: Peter Lang, 2011. Pp. xiv, 253. ISBN 978-1-4331-1213-3 (cloth) \$149.95; 978-1-4331-1212-6 (paper) \$36.95.

At the very beginning of the introduction, Eric McLuhan states his (and his father's) key theory of communication: "communication entails change." He goes on, "the *sine qua non* of communication therefore is the matter of effect" (p. vii). And, this, of course falls under the domain of rhetoric. Anyone looking for a typical summary text of various communication theories will find this book puzzling—certainly not what the typical reader expected. But the book more than rewards a careful reading, for it introduces a much more complete understanding of communication, particularly in the face of the empirical studies and theories of communication developed through the social science methods of the past 40 years. The more ancient path to knowledge works its way through rhetoric, and various people trained in rhetoric raise questions about effects: not just the effects from efficient cause, but the more profound effects stemming from formal and final cause. In all this, the lodestar for the McLuhans lies in formal cause. Understand that, and one has a good grasp of both communication and of Marshall McLuhan's writings.

The volume consists of 16 chapters plus five appendices, most of them reprinted from the writings of the McLuhans. The original work comes from Eric McLuhan and more directly addresses the idea of the theories of communication as found in various key figures of Western learning: Aristotle, Cicero, Francis Bacon, Thomas Aquinas, and Marshall McLuhan. In each, Eric McLuhan attempts to lay bare the approach to rhetoric: the audience and the effect sought on the audience (p. 189), always with an eye on formal causality. More sweepingly, the last essay discusses "the theories of communication of Judaism and

Catholicism" (p. 227). This essay also provides a kind of summary of the McLuhans' general approach:

Five of the chapters above . . . discuss the use of the five divisions of rhetoric as a means of structuring material for a particular mode of efficacy. The five divisions, taken together, constitute the *logos* of rhetoric, the *logos prophorikos*, which always aims at transformation of the audience. (p. 227, italics in original)

The approach, Eric McLuhan tells us, was more or less taken for granted by the Western rhetorical tradition and served to discover, structure, and present knowledge. The five divisions appear over and over again, with one or another individual stressing different aspects. Much of this story appears in Walter Ong's book on Peter Ramus (1958), showing how the tradition shifts over the centuries; here McLuhan tellingly applies that history of rhetoric to the history of our understanding of communication.

The impetus, of course, begins in the works of Marshall McLuhan. The older McLuhan, like the larger tradition, does not typically or directly call attention to the workings of rhetoric or communication, but points the way by assuming the rhetorical mode of analysis throughout his writings. In fact, Eric McLuhan suggests that many find his father's writings on the media so difficult because they fail to understand formal cause (pp. 201–225). Because of its debt to Marshall McLuhan, the book reprints 13 of his essays, written between 1944 and 1988, the latter co-authored with his son. Keeping with the elder McLuhan's preparation in literary criticism, the essays address Wyndham Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and I. A. Richards, as well as the dominant communication media of the 20th century.

Because the book differs from what so many might expect, it poses real challenges to students of communication (perhaps especially in its easy assumption of a deep knowledge of Western thought and literature). However, it well repays a close reading. One cannot take it all in at a single sitting, but one should not expect that from any well crafted rhetorical presentation. While those prepared in the dominant paradigm of communication or media studies may balk at the approach taken here, every graduate student in communication should wrestle with the book, even if (or especially if) one wishes to reject its reasoning.

The book contains endnotes; each essay follows the conventions of literary rather than social science.



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Ong, W. J. (1958). *Ramus: Method, and the decay of dialogue; from the art of discourse to the art of reason*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

**Pungente, John, S.J., and Monty Williams, S.J.** with foreword by **John English, S.J.** *Finding God in the Dark II: Taking the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius to the Movies*. Toronto/Montreal: Novalis, 2011. Pp. 328. ISBN 978-2-89646-316-9 (paper) CAD\$29.95.

The *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, have stood the test of time. I know many non-Catholics who have found them helpful and spiritually renewing. The system that St. Ignatius developed seems to fit into any era and here Pungente and Williams have taken a second opportunity, following their first *Finding God in the Dark*, to use modern media, in this case film, to assist those undertaking the spiritual exercises.

This second version of their book brings in more up-to-date films, some of them perhaps ones that might not be expected to fit with spiritual exercises, but which actually seem to be most apposite choices. In their preface, Pungente and Williams write that they do not wish to use the films to moralize, but to enable people to use them to access their own spiritual lives, to develop their ways of communicating with God, and to learn how God speaks to them. The original book won several prizes and was used worldwide by a variety of groups. The authors seem thus to have fulfilled their remit: to make spiritual direction available to those who did not have the means to access this way of leading a fuller life. I know both Pungente and Williams, and I think their love of film and their belief in the efficacy of the spiritual exercises comes through very strongly here.

The Introduction (pp. 9–30), explains the history and ethos behind the *Spiritual Exercises* and why the authors have chosen to use film as a means to further them. Cinema is, they suggest, a form of church and a sacred space. A phrase that struck me was “So, when we watch a film, what we feel depends on our basic commitment” (p. 19). The commitment of time and self that is needed to follow the *Exercises* is one of the reasons that so few people are able to follow them. Giving up a month to spiritual exercises is beyond a time span that most can allow, even if the result would be beneficial to

their lives. However, the authors do suggest how the exercises they propose can be used for shorter periods. The conclusion of the Introduction gives an outline to suggest how the reader should use this book. This is particularly important, perhaps, for those who are following the *Exercises* without a spiritual director. However, I am sure that the book is useful also to those who are spiritual directors and who can access materials utilized here.

The main part of the book is divided into week-long slots, each with a series of exercises, and each individual exercise is again divided into three parts. The first part of each begins with a scripture verse and a section from St. Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*, together with an introduction to the theme of that exercise. There is also a series of questions upon which the retreatant should reflect. The second part deals specifically with the film used for that particular exercise—information about the film that also queries some points of the story. The film is then related to the theme of the exercise and, finally, there are questions that help to reflect on the relation of one’s self to the exercise. The third part is the spiritual direction, together with questions for prayer and reflection. The order of these parts sometimes varies.

What struck me as I leafed through the book was that doing the whole series of exercises is probably quite exhausting, and not just for the retreatant! I have to confess that I have only ever undertaken a one day retreat, and that when I was forced to at my state, non-denominational school (although I suppose it was, in those days, nominally Anglican). I once had the great pleasure of being a Signis jury member at a film festival. My friends and colleagues were very envious. How difficult could it be to go to a nice place, eat great food, meet famous people, and watch a lot of movies? It wasn’t difficult, but opinions among jury members varied, and starting at 8:30 am and finishing after 11 pm meant that by the end of the week we were all flagging. To combine watching movies with undertaking spiritual exercises, with the consequent soul searching that this requires, must be even more exhausting. However, I am sure that it is very rewarding and, when I have time away from family and work commitments, I think I may follow the book—although not necessarily all at once.

The book is interestingly and often humorously written. The films chosen are sometimes, as I said, surprising. They are films of many different types: *Brokeback Mountain* to *Toy Story 3*, by way of *The Motorcycle Diaries* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. While those using this book may have seen

some of the films, watching them while following the exercises will enable a new viewpoint on them and help draw the retreatant to self-reflection and contemplative prayer. Often these are things that modern life precludes. Additionally, the book could be used in many different settings: by groups or individuals, in academic situations, pastorally and in parishes. An acquaintance of mine in Italy has been using films to teach Religious Education for some years and has found that by doing so he has drawn into his classes those who would not normally have attended. Using films for the exercises, as Pungente and Williams do here, will, I am sure, assist the retreatant enormously and I would highly recommend this book.

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**Shattle, Hans.** *Globalization and Citizenship*. Lanhan MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2012. Pp. vii, 217. ISBN 978-0-7425-6845-7 (cloth) \$78.00; 978-0-7425-6846-4 (paper) \$26.00.

This is one of a series of books on globalization, the 18th in the series, edited by Manfred Steger, a well know scholar on the subject and his colleague Terrel Carver. The advantage is that we have books on globalization and almost every conceivable topic from the media to Islam and culture to Postcolonialism. The problem is that this tack may lead to a sense of repetition or superficiality. This book starts well with a brief but interesting chapter on how the two concepts of citizenship and globalization are separately defined and how they relate in the field of politics. So far so good. The three traditional definitions of citizenship: rights and duties; empowerment and participation; and allegiance, belonging, identity and loyalty, all are examined within the context of globalization. Then Shattle explores three current debates about this relationship in terms of norms of citizens, institutions (expanding citizenship beyond the nation—as in the European Union citizenship), and the sociological “debate . . . over whether certain groups of people are already, in effect, global citizens” (global activists who work globally) (p.19).

When we get to Chapter 2 on global media and the Arab Spring, we find instead of a research- and theory-based discussion, a long and detailed description of the use of social media in Tunisia and Egypt repeating in great detail how these two political transitions took place. The problem for communication readers is that

this is already a familiar story and the author does not go much beyond description, leaving the reader wondering just what about these events had to do with globalization (social media were certainly a vehicle and are global, but this is an almost taken-for-granted assumption) and especially its connection with the notion of citizenship. Rather than bring some of the interesting insights about citizenship from the first chapter, the reader is left to make the connections for herself.

Chapter 3 focuses on two global citizens, Lui Xiaobo and Julian Assange, again with a great deal of description of what happened with the Chinese dissident who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 after more than 20 years of active campaigning for a more democratic state and a number of years in prison. The detail of the case of Lui provides Shattle an opportunity of showing how a major power like China tried to limit citizen rights of freedom of speech and assembly guaranteed by China’s own constitution. With the case of Julian Assange of Wikileaks fame and the leaking of a number of confidential documents from the U.S. Defense and State Departments, the author uses the same analysis of a major power attempting to limit the power of Assange and his assumed co-conspirator Bradley Manning in making information available to the public. The latter case is a bit harder to make but the basic issue of citizenship is highlighted: What rights do citizens have in terms of free speech in a global world? Media again are at the heart of the dilemma because the loss of national credibility is at stake for both the U.S. and China in how they justify their actions against dissidents who gain world attention.

In Chapter 4 Shattle embarks on a two chapter treatment of migration and globalization/citizenship. In this chapter he treats a series of stories from several EU countries that face the issue of rising illegal immigration. He begins his analysis with explaining to readers the EU establishment of free labor migration within the organization of 27 European countries. He also noted some discrepancies in different national laws about some migration rules. The real issue, however, concerns the immigration, legal and illegal, from outside the EU, in several member states, e.g., France, Italy, and Greece. He devotes a good deal of time to the head scarf law that affected Muslim women in France, but he also describes the politics of anti-immigrant sentiment from the far-right party there that has increased its standing in recent national elections. Greece, as it turns out, is the funnel through which, according to the

author, accounts for 90% of illegal immigration into the EU as a whole. He notes but does not elaborate on the economic crisis in the EU and in Greece in particular that accounts for some of the increase in anti-immigrant sentiment. He gives attention to both Italy's and Switzerland's harsh clamp down on immigrants, legal and illegal. In the end, however, he gives a good deal of information but does not make the connections between immigration and globalization.

In the chapter on U.S. immigration issues, we get a general introduction about the history of immigration in the U.S. and then a treatment of Arizona's tough illegal alien act from 2010 and the pushback from various U.S. activist groups. Since the book could not cover the recent outcomes, the story is left a little up in the air. In the very recent debate over immigration by the Tea Party and "Birthright Citizenship," we get a brief rendering of the issue, but not the ultimate legal or political outcomes. Still, it is informative and useful description. Finally he gives a brief account of the Dream Act proposal to Congress and its failure to advance beyond committee. There is no direct reference to citizenship/globalization theory in concluding this section.

In his brief conclusion, the author returns to his original definitions of citizenship as consisting of rights and duties; democratic empowerment and participation; and sentiments of allegiance, belonging, loyalty, and identity. He argues that the cases he has developed in the book tend to focus on the latter two. He thinks that even though there has been an expansion of transnational activism that leads to a sense of empowerment and participation by global actors, there is an equally clear response by groups in Europe and the U.S. that push against the citizenship of immigrants within national borders. The sense of empowerment and participation that activists feel in dealing with global problems of citizenship in many parts of the world does not mean, in the author's estimation, that activists do not also have a sense of national identity as examples of Liu Xiaobo in China and Wael Ghonim in Egypt illustrate. Both decided to stay in their own countries despite offers to immigrate. The emphasis on the technologies of communication that Schattle often returns to throughout the book should remind readers that much of what concerns globalization has an important basis in mediated communication.

The book contains footnotes for each chapter with numerous references and a detailed index.

—Emile McAnany  
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**Stout, Daniel A.** *Media and Religion: Foundations of an Emerging Field*. New York and London: Routledge Publishers. 2012. Pp 204. ISBN 978-0-8058-6383-3 (cloth) \$120.00; 978-00-8058-6384-0, (paper) \$34.95.

There are few more suitable scholars than Daniel Stout to author a textbook on media and religion at this crucial juncture in the evolution of the media and religion academic discipline. As editor of the *Journal of Media and Religion*, which has won recognition as the premier academic journal in the field, and as editor of the *Encyclopedia of Religion, Communication, & Media* as well as his own research on the media and the Mormons, Stout is well-positioned to take the discipline that stage further and paint an overview of the discipline in the first textbook on media and religion for undergraduate students.

After introductory chapters on historical highlights of media and religion, and world religions, the book moves to survey religion and popular culture and to discuss media criticism. This is followed by chapters on news and religion; the entertainment media; and advertising, public relations, and religion. One of the most original and challenging parts of the book is a play at the end, entitled "Redeeming Value," in which the dilemmas of religion and censorship are laid out to stimulate and provoke classroom discussion through the characters in the play.

Inevitably, there will be different emphases in a pioneering text. But some will question the author's leaving film as a relatively brief section within the chapter treatment on the Entertainment Media. So many moral and spiritual dilemmas have been played out in visual culture, with the cinema becoming one alternative altar of theological reflection. After all, while some see religion and film as a sub-discipline separate from the main media and religion one, for college students a media and religion course may well be the student's sole exposure also to the subject of Film and Religion. The text would be strengthened with a chapter-length treatment of religion and film, both in terms of the culture wars—such as between the Church and Hollywood—as well as the visual portrayal of religion and spirituality.

The book's discussion of the various branches of Christianity and the media is particularly instructive. Notwithstanding this, the book, like so much else in the media and religion literature, strongly focuses on the Western monotheistic religious tradition. The text gives little attention, for example, to Eastern reli-



gions. Many of the examples about media and religion past and present brought in the book come from the American context.

Stout, like some other scholars of media and religion, goes to great lengths in arguing that media and religion has to be qualified in the widest possible contours with religion entering many spheres of contemporary modern life. The book breaks new ground in discussing at length physiological mental states. While in the past Western religions tended to frown upon ecstatic expressions of religious experience, the author postulates that Internet, television, and radio give expression to these. And, clearly any treatment of media and religion has to incorporate this. To be true, it corrects the discussion of different academic approaches to the study of media and religion in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Media and Religion*, where psychological and physiological approaches to the discipline were ignored.

But most noteworthy is Stout's incorporation into his schema of the Numinous. The Numinous comprises anything possessing ritual, belief, deep feeling, or community. While religion is clearly not just the monotheistic religions but also other religious forms, the Numinous begs the question of how far does one take "Religion." "Numinous experiences are similar to religious ones and may occur outside institutions, and such experiences do not necessarily involve the supernatural," the author writes (p. 4). But what is the student reading this text supposed to make of this in understanding "religion" in the media-religion matrix? Since, as the author admits, all cultures possess rites, symbols, and venerated objects, it appears to this writer to raise more questions than provide answers.

In a section entitled "Getting beyond Dualism," Stout argues against assuming that media and religion exist "in perpetual conflict," but that media and religion have moved on, and that the media today are used also to project religion. Yet, one does not have to be at the expense of the other. Islam's encounter with the West is but one example of the continuing media-religion culture war. Indeed, the author edited a well-received volume on media culture wars. Culture wars—or dualism—exist today no less than in the past, and even if it is alluded to as an undercurrent in the book's discussion of media criticism, dualism has a rightful place in the media and religion literature.

In pushing the contours of religion well beyond institutional religious forms, the book appears not to give due weight to off-line religious organizations—as

distinct from theologies. Stout's beginning point appears at times to be where off-line religion ends—rather than giving due regard to the central roles which off-line religion organizations play even today. How religious organizations are incorporating computer technology, pastoral training in media relations, as well as the impact of the media on theologians all have a rightful place in media and religion texts. True, church pews in Europe may be emptying, but mainline religions like Islam and like Christianity in Africa and Latin America are flourishing. Polls on the Internet and religion suggest that even today most prefer the physical experience of worship in the off-line church, mosque, and synagogue. While the Internet is an important source of religion information, it has not replaced off-line religious communities.

It is still early days to know the final shape of the media-religion academic discipline. But one likely effect of Stout's admirable textbook will surely be to stimulate student interest and generate demand for introductory and advanced university courses on the subject.

As befits a textbook, each chapter concludes with a list of key terms and their definitions, and a set of "questions to ponder." The book itself has endnotes, references, and an index.

—Yoel Cohen  
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## Briefly noted

**Esposito, John L. and Dalia Mogahed.** *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think.* New York: Gallup Press, 2007. Pp. xv, 205. ISBN 978-1-59562-017-0 (cloth) \$22.95.

Based on The Gallup Organization's survey data, this book reports on the Islamic world. Chapters cover topics such as "Who are Muslims?" and Muslim preferences for types of government (democracy or theocracy). Other chapters examine radicalism in the Muslim world, the outlooks of Muslim women, and the "clash of cultures." In an era where many in the United States both know little about Islam and fear Islamic radicalism or terrorism, this book presents data-based evidence about the larger Islamic world. Among its many findings, the most obvious, perhaps—that the Muslim world and the West have failed to understand each other—is explained in much greater detail.



Understanding this alone can help to bridge the knowledge and culture gap.

**Jelinčić, Daniela Angelina** (Ed.). *Cultural Tourism Goes Virtual: Audience Development in Southeast European Countries*. Zagreb: Institute for International Relations, 2009. Pp. 212. ISBN 978-953-6096-49-7 (paper) €30.

Among the many changes that followed the development of the Internet, tourism has emerged as one that combines business, national promotion, and recreation. This volume reports a research study that examines not the Internet's impact on marketing or tourist organization but on "cultural organizations/heritage sites in order to see if they make use of new technologies to enhance their business transactions" (p. 13). The study looked for examples of best practices, Internet presentations, and digital culture in national policies. Its researchers also hoped to stimulate more Internet usage in the cultural sector. The research design directed individual participants to collect data on the level of digitization in each country, the level of electronic business activity, the level of digitization in the cultural sector, and the relation between the cultural sector and the electronic business sector. The second part of the design contrasted the activities of those who practiced online activities with those who did not.

Researchers collected data on each of the countries in Southeastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia. After presenting their general data and, in many instances, case studies within each country, the researchers often added a list of recommendations so that those whom they studied could make better use of the new communication technologies. A final chapter by Jelinčić presents a regional overview and summarizes the findings topic by topic, adding general recommendations.

Each chapter presents its own reference list, including the URLs for the relevant websites of the organizations and heritage sites participating in the study.

**Krug, Gary**. *Communication, Technology, and Cultural Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005. Pp. xvii, 241. ISBN 978-0-7619-7200-6 (cloth) \$112.00; 978-0-7619-7201-3 (paper) \$59.00.

No one questions the fact that technology forms an inescapable part of life, to the points where we neither take much note of it nor can survive without it,

except of course when something new comes along. Krug offers "an act of anamnesis," a remembering. While that Greek term often occurs in liturgical or theological settings, Krug uses it to supplement the typical remembering in research or academia. "I seek to explore the relationships between systems of language, technology, and the social institutions and beliefs within which people create themselves" (p. xii). We remember but with an eye to understanding ourselves, our culture, and how we got to where we now live.

Individual chapters offer both history and commentary, introducing key thinkers along the way. They address technology as culture, technologies of language (writing, reading, text), and technologies of image. Later chapters explore the social consequences of each: the self as emerging from literary epistemology and letter writing, the impact of the military-industrial complex on technology, technology and social order (a case study of pornography), and the transformation of information through technology.

The book is well sourced, with notes, a lengthy reference list, and an index.

**Lederman, Linda C.** (Ed.). *Beyond These Walls: Readings in Health Communication*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xxxii, 408. ISBN 978-0-19-533250-6 (paper) \$54.95.

This collection of 26 readings on health communication provides an overview of an increasingly complex and increasingly vital area of applied communication. In a preface to instructors, Lederman writes that she designed the collection of "research articles and essays . . . to accompany and supplement leading overview textbooks in health communication." She also notes that "health communication has historically had two major aspects: (1) interpersonal approaches to health communication (e.g., doctor-patient communication, self-disclosure of health-related information, social support and wellness) and (2) mediated approaches (e.g., promoting public health and wellness through persuasive campaigns and examining the Internet as a source of health-related information)" (p. xi). Designed for an advanced undergraduate or graduate course, this book covers these two key areas in addition to newer areas.

Lederman has arranged the material under seven headings: history and contemporary challenges to health communication; patient-provider communication; the changing role of patients in health care; health communication in organizations, groups, and teams; social sup-

port beyond health-care providers; health promotion; and media literacy and health issues. Each section presents readings from leading scholars who address both the state of knowledge and the research methods employed in this area of applied communication.

Each chapter features notes and references; some have study or reflection questions. The book does not have an index, but the table of contents does present a brief description of each contribution.

**Lehmann, Niels, Lars Qvortrup, and Bo Kampmann Walther** (Eds.). *The Concept of the Network Society: Post-Ontological Reflections*. Frederiksberg, Denmark: Samfundslitteratur Press and Göteborg, Sweden: NORDICOM, 2007. Pp. 210. ISBN 978-87-593-1189-9 (paper) 228 kr.

This edited collection on the nature of the network society forms part of a series of seven volumes emerging from a four-year national research program in Denmark, “Media and Democracy in the Network Society.” While each book examines a different aspect of the question, this one poses more fundamental or philosophical questions. The changes in communication possibilities and patterns of the late 20th century correlate with changes in thinking about society, even in a “theory of the world.” One must take into account the epistemological conditions of any inquiry. As members of a knowledge society, people have become more self-consciously aware of their position of observation, while at the same time knowing others engaged in similar activities.

Essays in this collection wrestle with questions of knowledge, the validity of knowledge, the stance from which knowledge claims emerge. Bo Kampmann Walter investigates “the theoretical rationality of the concept of the network society” while his editorial colleague Lars Qvortrup explores “network, knowledge, and complexity.” Other chapters examine a post-deconstructive aesthetics—making the network of art more self-aware—and a theory of society focused on difference.

While challenging, this volume raises important issues introduced by the changing social reality of the networks people so often take for granted.

**O’Donnell, Victoria**. *Television Criticism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007. Pp. xvii, 261. ISBN 978-1-4129-4167-9 (paper) \$50.00

“Just as critics of books evaluate works of fiction and nonfiction by holding them to established standards, television critics utilize methodology and theory to comprehend, analyze, interpret, and evaluate television programs” (p. 4). This book presents an accessible introduction to the act of criticism, urging it so that the critic might “gain greater understanding and appreciation about television programming, as well as about your own culture and the social forces within it” (p. 4). As a general introduction, the book discusses the work of the critic; the business side of television; formal aspects of television such as style—camera shots, framing, lighting, and so on—narrative, and genres; theoretical approaches to criticism, including rhetorical criticism, representation and audience, and postmodernism. The book concludes with some guidelines for criticism and some sample critical analyses. The chapter on television genres is quite comprehensive, including not only a list of genres (comedy, talk show, news, magazine shows, drama, soap opera, science fiction, reality shows, sports, children’s television, games shows, etc.) but also a very helpful table that brings together each genre, its subgenres, characteristics, and approaches to plot and character.

For ease of classroom use, each chapter contains exercises and suggested readings. The book itself has a reference list and an index.

The author and publisher have very recently issued a second edition of the book, which, according to the publisher, includes an updated discussion on viewers’ uses of television and on the impact of the Internet on television.

**Pérez, Miguel A. and Raffy R. Luquis** (Eds.) *Cultural Competence in Health Education and Health Promotion*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008. Pp. xxii, 279. ISBN 978-0-7879-8636-0 (paper) \$68.00.

This text addresses ongoing concerns of the American Association for Health Education: to develop an awareness of and skill with culture for health educators. Drawing on the work of 12 specialists as well as their own expertise, the editors assemble a range of materials to support the training of health educators. Chapters include an overview of the demographic changes in the United States that call for greater cultural knowledge, a discussion of the disparities in health among ethnic groups, and basic definitions of cultural competence. Other chapters introduce ideas of complementary and alternative medicine, spir-

itual approaches to health, and theoretical models for multicultural populations. The book also presents material on specific skills: needs assessment; communication competence; and strategies, practices, and models for delivering culturally appropriate health education. The book concludes with cultural approaches to specific populations, particularly the ageing and the LGBT community.

As befits a textbook, each chapter begins by stating its learning objectives and providing an overview. After the discussion, the chapters end with key “points to remember” and a case study. The chapters also have individual reference lists, though the book has a common index. In addition, several appendices present the Position Statement of the American Association for Health Education, web resources for understanding health disparities and for working with the elderly, and a list of “Known health disparities among racial and ethnic groups.”

**Rothenbuhler, Eric and Mihai Coman** (Eds.). *Media Anthropology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005. Pp. x, 350. ISBN 978-1-4129-2555-6 (cloth) \$119.00; 978-1-4129-0670-9 (paper) \$73.00.

This book contains 30 brief chapters by authors across the communication and anthropology fields from a number of countries. It represents a discussion of what anthropology might mean for the communication field in terms of both the kinds of content as well as different approaches to audience reception. The editors lay out the book’s purpose: “. . . designed to provide a useful source for a large number and diversity of scholars, to be useful in teaching, and to represent the diversity of thinking in media anthropology across various fields and disciplines . . .” (p. ix). The editors’ introductory chapter discusses a number of issues that confront communication scholars adapting anthropological theory and methods to their areas of inquiry. As well, the editors suggest that cultural anthropologists have become increasingly interested in the media and its uses. The book is divided into four parts: Histories and Debates (Chs. 2 through 5); Concepts and Methods (Chs. 6 through 15); Events, Stories, Activities (Chs. 16 through 25); Theory and Practice (Chs. 26 through 30). There is extensive bibliography at the end of each chapter, a detailed general index, and a section about authors.

**Strömbäck, Jesper, Mark Ørsten, and Toril Aalberg**. (Eds.). *Communicating Politics: Political Communi-*

*cation in the Nordic Countries*. Göteborg, Sweden: NORDICOM, 2008. Pp. 276. ISBN 978-91-89471-63-4 (paper) SEK 280, €30.

This book adds a welcome perspective to political communication studies, coming as it does from the Nordic countries. In a field dominated by studies of U.S. political communication, communication scholars will benefit from both the general overviews and the case studies describing political communication in a variety of governmental systems. In addition to the introductory and concluding chapters by the editors, the book includes 13 chapters divided into more general discussions and particular analyses.

The first section of the book takes the reader country by country through the Nordic lands, each one titled similarly, “Media and Politics in . . .” Chapters deal with Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. For those less familiar with international political communication, these chapters prove very valuable guides. The second section of the book includes chapters on representations of the European Parliamentary elections in Sweden, political print ads in Denmark, Finnish web-based campaigning, news coverage of Swedish parliamentary campaigns from 1979 to 2006, political journalism in Swedish public service broadcasting, nonverbal political elements in Danish television documentaries, framing political issues in Norway, and organizing campaign coverage in Norway.

The editors point out one value of the book: an English-language publication allows scholars who usually publish in their native languages to reach a wider international audience. Another value emerges from the studies themselves: While the Nordic countries all tend to follow a “Democratic Corporatist Model,” differences do exist, things that an outsider might not immediately recognize. The editors describe the model as having three simultaneous features: “a high degree of political parallelism has coexisted with a strongly developed mass-circulation press; . . . a high degree of political parallelism has coexisted with a high level of journalistic professionalization; . . . a significant involvement of the state in the media sector has and continues to coexist with strong protection for press freedom and a deeply held respect for journalistic autonomy” (p. 268). Opening up this model to wider scholarly discussion offers significant benefits to political communication scholars, many of whom still tend to view their studies through a North American lens.

