as a means of authority and control, enabled Catholic orthodoxy to become synonymous with Christian faith, narrowing the diversity of experience and belief. It also aligned Christianity with the wealthier, educated classes of Roman culture. And it preserved the outlook of the literate minority for subsequent generations and epochs.

Religion across Media goes far beyond early Christian writing to discuss other religious traditions (Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism), other times (from ancient to contemporary), other places (Africa, Europe, North America, South Asia, and the Middle East), and other media (including both live and virtual expression and performance). All twelve contributors to this collection explore ways that forms of media shape religious understanding and experience.

These anthologies show that religions and their media circumstances reveal ways that communities experience reconciliation and conflict, freedom and oppression, awe and disdain, and unity and isolation. They also show that the study of media and religion has become international in scope, interdisciplinary by design, and concerned with experience, theory, and ethics.

The Political Web: Media, Participation and Alternative Democracy.
Peter Dahlgren. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 195 pp. $90 hbk. $28 pbk.

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Understandably, Peter Dahlgren, an emeritus professor of communication and media at Lund University in Sweden, writes primarily about European media and politics. Indeed, in his introductory chapter to *The Political Web* he uses the political transformations taking place in "Modern, post-communist Slovenia" as an example of the kinds of moves that are being made toward the development of "alternative paths to democracy." However, although his institutional references to governmental bodies tend to focus on parliamentary systems, he devotes an entire chapter to the role of alternative and mainstream media strategies used by the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement during its early development in the United States. And while the contributions of European scholars are featured most prominently in his systematic assessments of the theoretical frameworks and perspectives that help to make sense of the changes taking place around the globe, scholars from Canada and the United States are well represented.

Dahlgren's book is focused on the variety of paths being taken by different kinds of individuals in search of alternatives to traditional, arguably limited strategies for bringing about social change by democratic means. What these different paths have in common is their reliance on an array of networked digital communications resources that Dahlgren refers to quite simply as "the web." The book is organized into three sections. The two chapters in the first section are used to set the stage with an overall assessment of the current state of democracy, public participation, and the attributes of the web that establish its centrality in the current period of transition. Three chapters

in the second section provide something akin to case studies through their exploration of the discursive strategies pursued during the first six weeks of OWS, and an assessment of the characteristics and influence of "online public intellectuals." The third chapter in this section uses an assessment of the web journals through the lens of cosmopolitanism as an emergent framework for understanding transnational political agency. The two chapters in the third section are used to explore a broad range of "critical approaches" to subjectivity and media-based agency, as well as media and communication research.

This is a very well-written book. Its style is accessible, and while Dahlgren clearly has his own well-developed and critical perspective on most of the issues he explores, his treatment of the scholars and the traditions they represent is respectful, even when their contributions are being subjected to extended critique. For example, in the chapter on democracy, participation, and the media, Dahlgren finds numerous opportunities to remind the reader that politics, democratic or not, is ultimately about the exercise of power. After an extended presentation of the different "subjective dispositions" that are thought to explain why young people do, or do not, engage in political activity, Dahlgren accepts that levels of participation reflect subjective identities and dispositions that might, or might not, find support within civic culture, but "ultimately has to do with power relations." He then proceeds to discuss how it is that we continue to struggle with limited success in incorporating power into our versions of democratic theory.

Dahlgren is especially critical of the present state of thinking about social capital. In his chapter on the web environment, he refers to the version of social capital attributed to Robert Putnam as a Trojan Horse. In part, his critique of this economic metaphor emerges from his deep-seated concern about the impact that the neoliberal political project has had in a variety of societal domains in which market fundamentalism degrades the social. After reminding us that metaphors can shape our thinking, such that a concept like social capital "by logical extension turns trust and solidarity into commodities." This especially powerful chapter also includes critical engagement with the many ways that the surveillance practices of Google and Facebook are put to use in the management of consumption.

The chapter on the OWS movement is focused primarily on the communications strategies and discursive frameworks that undoubtedly reflected the unusually heterogeneous social positions and political identities that came together during its early days. Although Dahlgren shares the common view that OWS was burdened by the ambiguity of its policy positions and demands, he concludes that "OWS manages nonetheless to offer a reasonably coherent political identity of the morally enraged, economically victimized, and politically disenfranchised majority."

Dahlgren's chapter on online public intellectuals (PIs) is also very well developed. It begins with a largely successful attempt at drawing distinctions between PIs and other political actors who rely on media to realize their political objectives. They are clearly distinguished from "political pundits" and journalists. We are reminded that although the blogosphere is often thought of in terms of its assumed political weight or influence, only a very small proportion of blogs have anything to do with politics. A more critically important claim is that political blogs do not actually capture a large share of audience attention.

The next chapter is devoted to a wide-ranging exploration of "civic cosmopolitanism" as both an opportunity and challenge for web journalism. Dahlgren sets out the distinctions between cosmopolitanism and the more familiar concept of globalization. He describes it as "a moral perspective for looking at social behavior toward others" that takes on "increasing relevance as global others increasingly become a part of our everyday worlds." He uses Roger Silverstone's concept of the "mediapolis" as an alternative to the Habermasian public sphere, and then elaborates on some of the challenges for journalistic traditions in the face of massively expanded perspectives on what can and should be presented as "the truth" in a "multi-epistemic" world.

Although it is pretty clear from the beginning that Dahlgren is a critical scholar, his concluding chapters remove any uncertainty that might remain among his readers. Before turning to an assessment of the challenges that confront those who would pursue critical media research, Dahlgren leads us through the somewhat tangled underbrush in which there is buried some insight into the nature of the "subject as citizen." Although there is something to be gained by using the four thematic frameworks he sets out for the reader (rationalism, reflexivity, transparency, and contingency), even Dahlgren admits that each has serious limitations, and none can rise to a position of superiority as a basis for understanding human agency.

Fortunately, Dahlgren's concluding chapter is a bit more optimistic with regard to the possibility of resurgence in critical media research. After a brief presentation of the history and associated trajectories of the critical project within the social sciences more generally, Dahlgren describes some of the "critical trajectories" within media research, beginning with political economy and the work of Dallas Smythe and Herbert Schiller, but somewhat surprisingly ignoring the contributions of Nicholas Garnham. After a brief reference to Habermas and an idealized public sphere, he turns somewhat hesitantly toward what he refers to as the "culturalogical current" and its relationship to "the critique of ideology."

Dahlgren's final words are optimistic, or at least hopeful. He suggests that "when critical research is at its best, it can yield not only practical knowledge and interpretive understanding" but also insight into the possibilities for change.

Graduate students, and yes, their advisers as well, are likely to benefit from the examples of evenhanded and comprehensive scholarly engagement on display throughout this text.

The Press and Rights to Privacy: The First Amendment Freedoms vs. Invasion of Privacy Claims. Erin K. Coyle. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2012. 219 pp. $67 hbk.

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Between Edward Snowden's National Security Agency leaks and recent revelations that cyber hackers have stolen credit card data from possibly tens of millions of