Vowinckel's contribution on civil aviation, and specifically skyjacking; and finally, Justinian Jampol's study of the post-1989 use of East German material objects as both artifacts of political memory construction and as scholarly sources.

Overall, this volume provides a valuable addition to recent works that reassess the cultural Cold War between the blocs, complementing and extending the current wave of historiography that offers a more nuanced and richer understanding of Cold War domestic cultures and international cultural interchange. It thus constitutes required reading for anyone interested in the Cold War, in Soviet and Eastern European history, in diplomatic and international history, and in modern European and American history. Owing to its relatively affordable price, it can be fruitfully adopted in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on the above-listed themes.

David Tewksbury and Jason Rittenberg, *News on the Internet: Information and Citizenship in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2012; 197 pp.: £13.99

Reviewed by: Klaus Bruhn Jensen, *University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

For anyone tiring of constant utopian as well as dystopian hype concerning the internet as a democratic resource, this volume provides a carefully balanced overview of previous findings and insights and, thus, a solid ground for further research and future debates. From the outset, the authors recognize that, 'We cannot say, in the end, whether the internet is good or bad for publics and politics' (p. 17). Also, despite the fact that the conditions of news delivery have changed fundamentally over the last 20 years, they approach the field with the understanding that 'the internet is far more an integrated and evolutionary medium than an autonomous and revolutionary system' (p. 40). The key question addressed by Tewksbury and Rittenberg is whether and how the internet may serve to inform and enhance citizenship in practice in the long run.

Focusing on the interaction between audiences and the internet, the book takes up classic issues of how information circulates in society, and how citizens receive, respond to and act on this information for various political purposes. On the demand side, it bears repeating that audiences have rather limited time and financial resources to spend on the news. As noted by Herbert J Gans many years ago with particular reference to the national level: 'Many people could carry on their lives without national news; and in any event, their need for it is not often urgent. Yet at the same time, people seem to want national news' (Gans, 1979: 226). On the supply side, the book discusses how economic crises have entailed cutbacks in traditional news organizations in recent years, inevitably affecting the scope of journalistic content. This is not to deny the value of user-generated content and citizen blogs, a broader range of public opinion, or items beyond classic conceptions of 'news' and 'politics', only to note that the overall quality of the available information – its topical diversity and political relevance – depends, to a significant degree, on the resources of established journalistic organizations.

Among the central issues reviewed are the differences between online and offline news, not least when it comes to the news that audiences actually seek out and select. While findings remain mixed, one recurring implication is that, despite the wealth of

specialized sources of information online, 'there is not much evidence of internet news users taking advantage of the medium's capabilities to limit their news exposure to a small number of news sources' (p. 97). Also the larger worry – that 'knowledge and opinion are fragmenting and/or polarizing' in the digital media environment – receives little support in the reviews, even if the authors cautiously note that the uncertainty, to a large extent, 'stems from a lack of research' tracking forms of communication that are recent additions to the general landscape of news and citizenship (p. 143). The volume, thus, cautions against simply assuming that new forms of production and delivery will result in new forms of reception and use. Also, in another respect, studies suggest that internet use is subject to mechanisms familiar from mass communication, for example, knowledge gaps, so that 'more knowledgeable individuals are more likely to find online news . . . and more likely to search for additional information' (p. 116). New media are subject to old processes of social structuration.

The devil is in the detail, also online and in internet studies. Among the examples cited here is the role of Twitter as a source of news – which is frequently highlighted in other media, not least during election campaigns. For the record, a 2010 study from the Pew Research Center concluded that only 1% of the US population received news or news headlines from Twitter (p. 136). Another recent development is the emergence of websites that condense the output of many other sources, offering a Citizen's Digest of sorts. Here, it is essential to distinguish between, on the one hand, news aggregators such as Google News, which are generated through a combination of algorithmic procedures and predetermined user preferences and, on the other hand, collaborative news-filtering systems such as Reddit and Digg, in which the ranking of top stories results from the recommendations made by users. While one type of news digest is not necessarily preferable to the other, the algorithms of automatic gatekeeping are proprietary information, not transparent to either citizens or journalists, whereas the criteria underlying user recommendations can be contested, to some degree, by other users through the collaborative process of selecting, combining and passing on information.

Regardless of utopian or dystopian inclinations, much research and commentary converge on the idea that the internet has a real potential to enhance citizenship. Building on their careful review and nuanced discussion, Tewksbury and Rittenberg towards the end of the volume turn to the prospect of 'information democratization', defined as 'the increasing involvement of private citizens in the creation, distribution, exhibition, and curation of civically relevant information' (p. 147). One way of assessing the potential of the internet in this regard is to consider opposing or countervailing forces; the authors note three of these. The first is simply that news media, both online and offline, still predominantly operate as businesses, not as instruments of civil society. Specifically, major media are in a position to both mass produce and differentiate their products to various target groups across several technological platforms. A second issue, less often noted, concerns the various regulatory frameworks governing the network that delivers the news to citizens. Though originally conceived as a neutral, open, or common carrier abiding by a principle of network neutrality, the internet is currently under pressure to become two (or more) internets, so that consumers may be charged more for access to certain parts of the internet with greater bandwidth and functionalities. In addition to introducing new partitions within the public sphere, such a development would place

ordinary citizens at a further disadvantage as online producers as well as users of news. The third concern revolves around the users themselves, who may not be as committed to information democratization as many researchers (and journalists) would want them to be: 'One of the most significant forces working against any movement . . . is inertia. A social change of the magnitude we are discussing here requires a lot of work, both physical and mental' (p. 158).

A last point to consider is that information democratization may not be a good thing in every respect: 'it is possible that attempts to expand the role of citizens in the media could increase the level of social fragmentation' (p. 152). Citing Michael Schudson (1998), the authors note (p. 6) that the twentieth-century ideal of the active and well-informed citizen is a contingent or historical category, preceded by, for instance, the party-centred or partisan citizen, and followed perhaps by still more and alternative conceptions of citizenship. The breakthrough of the internet, arguably, has contributed to making participatory ideals of political democracy that emphasize information and communication seem natural, even unquestionable. In the twenty-first century, then, at long last, the twentieth-century ideal might be realized under different technological and institutional circumstances. New media continuously invite new ideas of what communication, including political communication, is and might be (Peters, 1999). The point is that more communication does not necessarily equal more democracy.

Part of the recently launched Oxford Studies in Digital Politics from Oxford University Press, USA, the present volume emphasizes US findings and examples. However, both the framework of the reviews and the call for carefully weighing the evidence for and against the democratizing potential of the internet apply equally to other regions of the world. Most importantly perhaps, more international and comparative studies are needed in the future (Goggin and McLelland, 2009), to move beyond universalistic hype about 'the internet' as such, and to evaluate its specific potential in those local and regional contexts where citizenship and democracy must be accomplished in practice.

References

Gans HJ (1979) *Deciding What's News*. New York: Vintage.

Goggin G and McLelland M (eds) (2009) *Internationalizing Internet Studies: Beyond Anglophone Paradigms*. New York: Routledge.

Peters JD (1999) *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schudson M (1998) *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Eugène Loos, Leslie Haddon and Enid Mante-Meijer (eds), *Generational Use of New Media*, Ashgate: Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT, 2012; 218 pp.: £55.00

Reviewed by: Cristina Ponte, *New University of Lisbon, Portugal*

Intergenerational relations have been recently explored in media studies. Carefully organized, this book is a stimulating contribution to further research and to informed policies aimed at assuring digital inclusion from pre-adolescents to the 'oldest olds'. By