This book has important strengths as well as limitations. With a style of abstract theoretical reasoning throughout, it will be widely relevant to scholars interested in the potential impact of activism on big business. It provides a well-grounded theoretical framework that can be applied in research across industries. Moreover, the book brings a refreshing message of optimism: environmental activism can potentially transform the calculations of major business actors, changing the political possibilities of our time.

However, as an empirical case study, the work is limited in that it only studies the firms spearheading private governance. It thus does not illustrate how the opportunity structures of other gold jewelers (presumably) have restricted their leaders’ agency. Moreover, despite the author’s aim to “see business agency afresh” (p. 4), his study provides only very limited first-hand accounts of business executives living through changes in the opportunity structures of their firms. The book’s theoretical framework appears to call for more detailed, systematic qualitative research on decision-making processes at the executive level.

In conclusion, although there is room for empirical improvement, Dirty Gold offers a comprehensive theoretical framework that may prove useful in future research on the impact of environmental activism on big business. By acknowledging the independent role of the embedded business agent, Bloomfield has illustrated political possibilities that extant deterministic theories of profit-seekers fail to predict. When activism changes how only a few powerful business leaders interpret the bottom line, it may transform an industry.


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Rarely have debates about journalism been so central to the U.S. political scene as in 2016 and 2017. From growing concerns during the presidential campaign about the impact of “filter bubbles” on social media platforms to President Trump’s repeated attacks against the “fake news” media, the role and function of news organizations in sustaining democratic deliberation and providing quality information has been under heavy fire over the past two years.


The book addresses these questions in two main ways. First, it provides a compelling overview of the main transformations currently taking place in journalism and news production. Second, it engages in a much-needed exercise in epistemological reflexivity, asking not only how but also why it is essential for academics to study journalism.

Overall, the book argues against the dominant narrative that currently characterizes hot takes and opinion pieces about the media—one that could be labelled the “crisis and decline” narrative, which usually takes the following form: with the Internet, the advertising-based business model of news organizations has become obsolete. As a result, “clickbait” cat videos are multiplying, quality journalism is going down the
In contrast, the chapters featured in *Remaking the News* emphasize the heterogeneity and complexity of news production in the digital era. The authors convincingly argue that there is no single version of the “future of journalism”—or even of journalism tout court. Instead, they carefully delineate how different types of news coexist online, from “ambient” journalism on Twitter and Facebook to new and exciting forms of computational, algorithmic, and citizen journalism on a variety of digital platforms (in the chapters by Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Seth Lewis and Rodrigo Zamith, Jane B. Singer, and Sue Robinson).

The authors also concur in their analysis that the traditional boundaries that used to characterize journalism are becoming increasingly blurry, as W. Russell Neuman summarizes in his discussion. For instance, Matthew Hindman notes that journalists increasingly pay attention to audience metrics, incorporating readers’ preferences when they write, which blurs the distinction between news production and reception. Similarly, the chapters by Singer and by Mirjam Prenger and Mark Deuze show how new forms of “entrepreneurial journalism”—blogging, freelancing, media start-ups, and so forth—profoundly reconfigure the professional boundary between journalists and non-journalists.

How should academics analyze such a complex and rapidly changing ecosystem? At this point, the book turns toward a more epistemological and reflexive approach. Overall, the volume makes two main claims. First, drawing on recent work in communication as well as science and technology studies (STS), the authors pay close attention to the materiality of the technological artifacts that increasingly shape news production, distribution, and consumption, as Boczkowski and Anderson explain in their introduction. To counter technological determinism, the chapters show how new technological forms—whether social media platforms, algorithms, or different audience metrics—end up being locally and institutionally shaped and negotiated.

Second, the authors decidedly argue in favor of a multidisciplinary approach. Hence, the volume features a variety of methods, including ethnography, historical methods, survey research, and others. As Anderson writes in his chapter, such methods should ideally be used together, for instance by combining ethnographic data with the “long view” of historical research. The book also provides a wide range of theoretical frameworks. For instance, Victor Pickard draws on political economy to question the current business model of the media and its effects on news content. Lewis and Zamith use Howard Becker’s concept of “art worlds” to make sense of the interconnections between the multiple professional segments involved in making digital news. Nielsen draws on William James’s definition of “forms of knowledge” to distinguish between the forms and epistemic demands of different categories of news articles.

In addition, the volume gives room to disagreement—or at least provides distinct emphases on the perspectives best suited to study journalism. One question about which the book’s authors disagree has to do with causality. Should scholars be content with what Benson in his chapter labels “descriptivism,” or should they focus instead on explanation? While the authors provide different answers to this question, all acknowledge that it is essential to put their respective perspectives in dialogue to strengthen the foundations and future directions of journalism scholarship.

Another even broader question permeates the book: why study journalism in the first place? More precisely, should the study of journalism be primarily analytic, in the sense of contributing to theory-building across disciplines (as Boczkowski and Eugenia Mitchelstein emphasize)? Or should journalism studies be more normative and problem-oriented, providing guidelines for news organizations (as Pickard, Mike Ananny, Natalie Jomini Stroud, and Michael Delli Carpini suggest in their respective chapters)? In other words, should we study journalism because it is a case of a larger social process—say, the reconfiguration of cultural mediation at a time of rapid technological, economic, and organizational change? Or should we study journalism because it is intrinsically important for public deliberation and democratic politics?
There is no simple or single answer to these questions. In many ways, the very fact that Remaking the News provides a dialogue between such different methods, theoretical frameworks, disciplinary approaches, and epistemological foundations is a remarkable achievement in an era of increasing disciplinary specialization. It is also a sign of the increasing relevance and vitality of journalism studies in the digital age.


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With a keen interest in addressing the “God gap” between the two “warring camps”—“religious conservatives concerned with the nation’s moral decay” and “secular progressives championing civil liberties”—this valuable, compelling, and ground-breaking book attempts to address a glaring lacuna in the literature: the “broader field of progressive religious actors, including how they work together, across myriad social divides and multiple social issue areas, to achieve shared goals” (pp. 2–3). As Rhys Williams, co-editor along with Ruth Braunstein and Todd Nicholas Fuist, so aptly puts it, *Religion and Progressive Activism: New Stories About Faith and Politics* attempts to look beyond the “religious Right and the secular Left” as Williams asks the crucial question: “But what about the religious Left?” (p. 348).

To date there is little preexisting research on progressive religion in the United States. This original work matters because the authors advance understandings on the relationship between religion, politics, and civic life. The book goes beyond false and simplistic dichotomies of right versus left and progress versus tradition and provides a more accurate mapping of the American political landscape as a whole. While acknowledging that progressive religion and its accompanying political and religious labels are complicated, fluid, and overlapping, the authors also provide a framework by which to conceptualize collective activism on four dimensions: progressive action, progressive values, progressive identities, and progressive theology (p. 9).

The volume is well organized and is divided into four sections that clearly illustrate the varied patterns of religious engagement and mobilization: 1) Patterns of Progressive Religious Mobilization and Engagement; 2) Cultural Challenges of Progressive Religious Activism; 3) The Roles of Religion in Progressive Political Action; and 4) Distinctive Styles of Progressive Religious Talk in the Public Sphere.

In the first section of the book, Brad Fulton and Richard Wood draw from a national dataset of faith-based community organizing coalitions in order to explore how different types of organizations implement different modes of action. Rebecca Sager explores, on a national level, progressive religious organizations and actors in relation to the Democratic Party and their efforts to reach out to religious voters. She illustrates the nuanced challenges that the Democratic Party has faced toward that end.

Kraig Beyerlein and A. Joseph West investigate what commonalities congregations may share as they mobilize for progressive causes. And Laura R. Olsen draws from datasets on ideas and attitudes of religious activists from the Left and the Right in order to analyze collective identity among activists.

The book’s second section sheds light on the varied cultural challenges that groups face while being religious and progressive and the cultural work they engage in to overcome these challenges. Paul Lichterman and Rhys Williams show the intense cultural challenges that mainline Protestant political progressives face as they engage in progressive political advocacy. Among their compelling points, the two authors accurately point out that due to increasing disaffiliation from the church, religious claims-making is less influential in public discourse.

Mia Diaz-Edelman discusses “multicultural activist etiquette” or a “unifying mechanism” that cultivates cultural diversity within the immigrants’ rights movement.