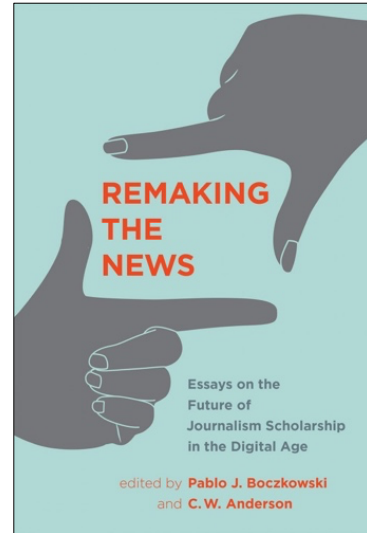


Pablo J. Boczkowski and C. W. Anderson (Eds.), **Remaking the News: Essays on the Future of Journalism Scholarship in the Digital Age**, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017, 358 pp., \$37.54 (hardcover).

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The fast-shifting landscape of journalism in the digital age urges scholars to not only redefine and retheorize the nature and impacts of journalism but also update their theoretical and methodological toolbox to do so. The edited volume **Remaking the News: Essays on the Future of Journalism Scholarship in the Digital Age**, edited by Pablo Boczkowski and C. W. Anderson, presents an updated, thought-provoking account that guides students working on the intersection of journalism and technology in the years to come. Consisting of four interrelated sections with several essays and one commentary in each, the volume brings together a group of stellar scholars who compellingly enrich and challenge each other's arguments and collectively set a high bar for journalism studies.



In the introduction, Boczkowski and Anderson lay bare their motivations and purposes for the book. While journalism scholarship has a long tradition of focusing on the “words” to illustrate what news is and how news is made and circulated, a turn toward the interlocking relationships between “words” and “things” is inevitable and also imperative amid technological advancement in recent decades. By “things,” the two editors underline the material conditions afforded by digital technologies that shift key practices and processes of news making. Such changes, as they point out, evoke destabilization in both “the object of study and the process of inquiry” (p. 2). The ferment in the field of journalism studies thus extends an invitation to ponder and discuss the current status and how to move forward.

The first section addresses the theoretical and methodological issues in journalism studies. It starts with a roadmap of key research topics by Boczkowski and Mitchelstein, who advocate for conceiving journalism as (a) an information brokerage, and (b) an agent of social change to overcome the field's inward tendency. Echoing the aim to reinvigorate journalism studies, Benson critically assesses the rising “new descriptivism” that takes complexity as an end and calls for theories and endeavors toward generalizability and systematic differentiation. As another remedy to correct the “new descriptivism,” Pickard elucidates three deep-seated but often neglected traditions: normative foundations, journalism policy, and economics of journalism for enhancing the intellectual rigor and practical relevance of journalism studies. Drawing on his own extensive fieldwork in newsrooms, Anderson advances “genealogical ethnography,” an integration of media history and newsroom ethnography, offering those “new descriptivists” an additional set of tools to capture the historicity of news making. In the concluding commentary, Dutton reflects upon the authors' arguments and charts the key attributes of

interdisciplinary scholarship in digital journalism, urging the research community to situate their inquiries in a broad social and historical context.

The second section revolves around key concepts in digital journalism scholarship in connection with canonic texts from different schools of thought. In light of classic conceptions about (news as) knowledge by Robert E. Park and William James, Nielsen conceptualizes digital news as a form of public knowledge with respect to three subtypes—news-as-impressions, news-as-items, and news-about relations. Such differentiation effectively taps into the continuum nature of news as knowledge, from “acquaintance with” to “knowledge about” and also the temporal and technological orientations of digital news. Centering on the intersection between journalism and technology, Lewis and Zamith apply Becker’s theoretical perspective of the art world to data and computational journalism, which enables researchers to grapple with “the shaping influence of (and influences shaped by) distinct but interlocking domains of collective activity, conventions, and status conferral” (p. 123). In his impressive conceptual sketch of “absence” in the networked press, Ananny surveys how different fields deploy “absence” and demonstrates how the variants of “absence,” ranging from newspapers’ whitespace and journalists’ silence to audience’s media avoidance and infrastructural holes, could challenge assumptions and enrich journalism studies. The section ends with Papacharissi’s commentary, where she connects the dots of these chapters and contends that the central question of the new media paradigm of journalism is not just about technology but also sociocultural and economic concerns.

The third section delves into the ontology of digital journalism research by focusing sharply on the seemingly irreconcilable tension between journalism as a public service and as a business. Inspired by thoughts of John Dewey, Walter Lippmann, and Paul Lazarsfeld, Stroud establishes a useful blueprint for journalism studies, attempting to resolve the tensions between industry and academia, administrative scholars and critical ones, and newsrooms’ business and democratic goals. Along the same line, Hindman proposes audience metrics as a new opportunity to unpack the ethical dimension of journalism and further suggests that the ethical use of metrics has great potential to help journalism to fulfill its civic ends. Singer turns toward the entrepreneurial side of journalism and argues that those disruptive issues in journalism, including normative boundaries, economic imperatives, and journalism roles, are indeed a ripe field for scholarly investigation. In his commentary, Neuman underscores the overlapping theme surfaced in this section—the blurring of boundaries between academy and industry, journalists and audiences, and advertiser and journalist. He further augments this line of thought by discussing the blurring conceptual and structural boundaries in the public sphere.

The fourth section progresses to the underexamined themes in digital journalism scholarship. To address the lack of knowledge about how societal power dynamics factor into the discursive authority in public space, Robinson disentangles several interlaced concepts such as authority, power, privilege, networks, and values and lines up a series of research agendas to study journalistic authority in a networked, interactive, global world. Through an analysis of journalism innovation and entrepreneurialism in both historical and contemporary settings, Prenger and Deuze depart from the dominant conception of journalism innovation as a technology-induced change and instead bring forward a more inclusive framework, consisting of both internal and external factors, to examine journalism innovation. While a plethora of scholarly accounts foregrounds the excitement about the new frontiers of digital journalism,

Wahl-Jorgensen emphasizes failure as a key research object and shifts academic attention to the unfashionable and marginalized actors in the complex media ecosystem. Schudson closes this section by placing these studies in a larger picture and pondering how they contribute to maintaining and distinguishing journalism as a field from other disciplines. Delli Carpini's postscript valuably draws parallels from the classic "Five W's and H" in journalism to synthesize the study objects of digital journalism presented in the essays in the volume and beyond.

There is little doubt that this volume sets excellent examples of journalism studies by challenging prevailing assumptions, raising provoking questions, and shedding new light on the absent, underprivileged, unsuccessful, and even nontechnological sides of digital journalism. The constellation of insights broadens scholars' capabilities to move the field forward and, what's more important, to look outward from within the discipline as well as the academia. But still, it should be noted that the book leaves some blind spots that could be tackled in future similar endeavors on field assessment. For one, I wish more scholars from the Global South could be included in the conversations about the past, present, and prospect of the field, which would hopefully encompass a wealth of themes not yet covered in this book and profoundly push digital journalism scholarship toward a global scale. For the other, the methodological breath of digital journalism research could be further enhanced. It would greatly benefit from discussing the epistemological and ontological implications of the rising computational methods in digital journalism research.