

Digital Religion, Social Media and Culture: Perspectives, Practices and Futures (Digital Formations)

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This anthology – the first of its kind in eight years – collects some of the best and most current research and reflection on the complex interactions between religion and computer-mediated communication (CMC). The contributions cohere around the central question: how will core religious understandings of identity, community and authority shape and be (re)shaped by the communicative possibilities of Web 2.0? The authors gathered here address these questions in three distinct ways: through contemporary empirical research on how diverse traditions across the globe seek to take up the technologies and affordances of contemporary CMC; through investigations that place these contemporary developments in larger historical and theological contexts; and through careful reflection on the theoretical dimensions of research on religion and CMC. In their introductory and concluding essays, the editors uncover and articulate the larger intersections and patterns suggested by individual chapters, including trajectories for future research.

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Editorial Review

Review

«This book is a very important waypoint on the quest for a better understanding of the digital change and its influence on religion. Based on a thorough scholarly analysis of how religious communities and pastors negotiate the new media, the authors develop new perspectives for the global future. Readers come away with a grounded theoretical and empirical understanding of this new and exciting landscape of digital religion and digital spirituality.» (Viggo Mortensen, Professor in Global Christianity at Aarhus University, Denmark)

«Falling clearly in the realm of the ‘third wave of research’ exploring the relationship between religion and the Internet, this work is multidisciplinary and mature in its undertaking. Bringing together top scholars from the field, this volume develops new theories and insights based upon solid ethnographic research, case studies and an examination of the historical relationships between new media and religion. This book accomplishes what it set out to do – help us make sense of this new form of religious activity in our increasingly wired world.» (Christopher Helland, Associate Professor of Sociology of Religion, Dalhousie University, Canada)

About the Author

Pauline Hope Cheong (PhD, University of Southern California) is Associate Professor at the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, Arizona State University. She has published widely on the social implications of communication technologies, including religious authority and community, and is the lead editor of *New Media and Intercultural Communication*.

Peter Fischer-Nielsen (PhD, Aarhus University, Denmark) is Head of Communications at the Danish IT company KirkeWeb. He has published articles on new media in relation to religion, Christianity and church especially in the Nordic context and has been an editorial staff member at the influential website www.religion.dk.

Stefan Gelfgren (PhD, Umeå University, Sweden: MPhil, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom) is Associate Professor at HUMlab & Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, Umeå University. He has published mainly on the relation between social and religious changes from the sixteenth century until today.

Charles Ess (PhD, Pennsylvania State University) is Professor MSO in the Information and Media Studies Department, Aarhus University. He has published extensively in the areas of computer-mediated communication, Internet research ethics and information ethics with an emphasis on cross-cultural perspectives throughout.

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