

Angela Williams Gorrell  
Faith for a Way of Life: Christian Formation and Education in a New Media Culture  
angela.gorrell@yale.edu

Abstract

The future of youth ministry necessitates shaping learning communities that are attentive to the new media landscape by integrating theological new media literacy into Christian education and formation: catechesis in churches, Christian education in the academy, and faithful living (cultivating hybrid Christian practices and spiritual disciplines). It is essential that pastors and Christian religious educators create learning communities that reflect on, articulate, and embody faith in a new media milieu.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

This past November, a high school friend was dying. He posted his last two status updates on Facebook: an enthusiastic post dedicated to his favorite basketball team and a sobering post promising to watch over everyone and asking friends to let him know who to say “hey” to on the other side. Many people replied to his last two posts. Some described the ways he had been kind to them and others asked him to greet loved ones for them. Hundreds of people had been using social media to follow his battle with cancer.

He spent the last months of his life sharing his journey with us: the joyful, the ugly, and the mundane. In the midst of it all he continued to use the phrases, “God is in control,” “Stay strong,” and “Never give up.” I will be forever grateful for his online vulnerability and positive attitude, and his insights into the experiences of those trying to survive cancer. Each week his Facebook page was flooded with encouragement. People reminded him often that they loved him and were praying for him. For the majority of the last months of his life, he was unable to leave his hospital room and only had a few visitors because his medical team was trying to get him into remission. Social media was his connection to his friends and to the world.<sup>1</sup>

## **Social Media**

Social media is used to describe a variety of activities, online platforms, and technologies. Therefore, the term can create confusion. José van Dijck discusses four main categories for social media platforms:

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on my forthcoming book. Angela Gorrell, Working Title: *Networked Lives and Spiritual Direction: Christian Formation and Education in a New Media Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, manuscript due December 2017).

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

1. Social Network Sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)
2. User-Generated Content (e.g. YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia)
3. Trading & Marketing Sites (e.g. Amazon, Groupon, Craigslist)
4. Play & Game Sites (e.g. Angry Birds, Farmville, The Sims Social)<sup>2</sup>

However, social networking sites rarely have clear boundaries between these platform categories. This is because each platform is in unending competition with others of its type and is constantly reaching into the niche industry of others. The market more-or-less guarantees that this will always be the case.<sup>3</sup>

New media is a larger category that includes current forms of social media, “a term used to describe a whole range of digital technologies and forms of media, including computers, the internet, cell phones and smart phones, social networking software, and digital recording devices.”<sup>4</sup> The term “old media” includes newspapers, television, radio, and books. New media refers to practices like blogging and streaming and products such as eBooks. Engagement with new media has led to an expanded form of reality, *hybridity*.<sup>5</sup>

## **Hybrid Lives**

We live hybrid lives because our online and offline lives are integrated. “Hybridity” is a term some media scholars use to describe “the coming together of online and offline, media and

---

<sup>2</sup> All listed examples are from van Dijck’s example list. José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> For more on the term “new media” and a description of its main characteristics (e.g. numerical representation, modularity, automation) see Heidi Campbell and Stephen Garner, *Networked Theology: Negotiating Faith in Digital Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 40-48.

<sup>5</sup> Simon Lindgren, ed., *Hybrid Media Culture: Sensing Place in a World of Flows* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 2.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

matter, or, more dynamically, as the interplay between the online and offline dimension.”<sup>6</sup>

Interactions online shape offline experiences and offline communication and practices shape people’s online interactions.<sup>7</sup> For many people the internet functions like a place.<sup>8</sup> It has many of the essential aspects of other sorts of spaces (e.g. schools, churches, cafes, living rooms, dinner tables) for meaningful human interaction given that it is a space for dialoguing, connecting, learning, sharing, planning, and dreaming. Lynn Baab writes, “Engaging with the internet as a place where people spend time with their friends and look for information enables the internet to be considered as one of the many places on earth where humans engage with each other, where we sin in multiple ways like we do anywhere else, and where God works.”<sup>9</sup>

The internet also has similar practices to other spaces and activities (e.g. concerts, sports events, rallies, vigils, protests) that nurture human connection: lament, celebration, truth-telling and so on.<sup>10</sup> In fact, online groups have qualities found in many definitions of

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>8</sup> Lynn Baab, “Toward a Theology of the Internet” in *Digital Religion, Social Media and Culture: Perspectives, Practices and Futures*, eds. Pauline Cheong, Peter Fischer-Nielsen, Stefan Gelfgren, and Charles Ess (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 281.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 288.

<sup>10</sup> I am indebted to Christine Pohl for my understanding of the Christian practice of “truth-telling.” Christine Pohl, *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us* (Eerdmans, 2011), 111-138. Michael Foucault calls places like the internet that juxtapose several spaces or sites into one single real space and render time relative “heterotopias” (e.g. cemeteries, theaters, boats, sacred places). Heterotopias “have a function in relation to all the space that remains. This function unfolds between two extreme poles. Either their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory (perhaps that is the role that was played by those famous brothels of which we are now deprived). Or else, on the contrary, their role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed,

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

community: “sense of space, shared practice, shared resources and support, shared identities, and interpersonal relationships.”<sup>11</sup> These realizations allow learning communities to focus on asking key questions about new media: How is new media similar to and different from older forms of mediating phenomena and what are the implications? When communicating Christian beliefs, practices, and desires through new media, how is Christianity being developed and constructed?

Christian education and formation cannot neglect the integrated nature of online and offline experiences. Nathan Jurgenson critiques the separation of the digital and physical as “digital dualism.”<sup>12</sup> He explains, “Digital dualists believe that the digital world is ‘virtual’ and the physical world ‘real.’”<sup>13</sup> Jurgenson argues instead that online and offline spaces mix together to form an “augmented reality,” a reality “where the politics, structures and inequalities of the physical world are a part of the very essence of the digital domain; a domain built by human beings with histories, standpoints, interests, morals and biases.”<sup>14</sup> This is because “technology never removes humanity from itself, it never creates a space outside of fundamental social

---

and jumbled. This latter type would be the heterotopia, not of illusion, but of compensation.” Michael Foucault, “Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias,” *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 46-49, accessed August, 2017, <https://foucault.info/doc/documents/heterotopia/foucault-heterotopia-en-html>. Original Publication: Conférence au Cercle d'études architecturales, 14 mars 1967.

<sup>11</sup> Nancy K. Baym, *Personal Connections in the Digital Age: Digital Media and Society Series* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2010), 75.

<sup>12</sup> Nathan Jurgenson, “Digital Dualism versus Augmented Reality,” accessed August 21, 2017, <https://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2011/02/24/digital-dualism-versus-augmented-reality/>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

structures.”<sup>15</sup> In fact, Lindgren argues that digital dualism extends structural inequalities by concealing them:

The binary of real/virtual has been a continuing preoccupation within Internet research, stealing focus and energy from more pertinent questions relating to how the entanglement of these two domains affects how people relate to each other, how groups are formed online, and how new conditions for the production of meaning and knowledge emerge at this nexus.<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, the augmented perspective sees online and offline experiences “as mutually constitutive.”<sup>17</sup> Rather than labeling in-person interactions as “real” and digital communication as “virtual,” we should understand online and offline interactions to both be real and also mutually constitutive, but with recognizable differences. From this view, online and offline interactions are along a spectrum where various kinds of engagement can be categorized differently.<sup>18</sup> For example, interactions can be described in terms of depth of relationship (anonymous versus established) or in terms of time (asynchronous versus synchronous). This allows for the possibility of both online and offline interactions to be authentic and beneficial as well as deficient and harmful.

### **Three Challenges for Christian Education and Formation**

In general, it is difficult for people to understand how media shape perceptions and to reflect on how using new media impacts and reveals beliefs, practices, and desires. In their book *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*, Henry Jenkins and his research team

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Lindgren, *Hybrid Media Culture*, 140.

<sup>17</sup> Jurgenson, “Digital Dualism.”

<sup>18</sup> Lindgren, *Hybrid Media Culture*, 141.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

discuss three challenges of new media culture.<sup>19</sup> The book is focused on young people and the authors conclude that adults use the laissez-faire approach regarding media literacy and assume (wrongly) that children can actively reflect on their media experiences and articulate what they learn from their online participation.<sup>20</sup> However, in actuality children have difficulty parsing messages, analyzing the quality of the information they receive and separating fact from falsehood.<sup>21</sup> The authors label this as “the transparency problem.”<sup>22</sup> I argue the transparency problem is not just a young person problem though. This is a multigenerational challenge. We live in and are constantly affected by our society generally and our media culture particularly, and we sometimes recognize the effects of that culture on others, but it’s very difficult for adults—let alone far less experienced youth—to reflect on the effects of that culture on ourselves.

Jenkins and his coauthors also discuss disparities related to access to technology and the ability to meaningfully participate online. They label this, “the participation gap.”<sup>23</sup> Given that

---

<sup>19</sup> Henry Jenkins et al., *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2009), 15.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 22-24.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. However, there is good news. The Pew Research Center conducted a longitudinal study of social media usage in the United States and determined, “Whites, African-Americans and Hispanics have broadly adopted social media at the same brisk pace.” Andrew Perrin, “Social Media Usage: 2005-2015,” Pew Research Center, October 8, 2015, accessed on December 2, 2015, [http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/?utm\\_expid=53098246-2.Lly4CFSVQG2lphsg-KopIq.0&utm\\_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pewinternet.org%2Fsearch%2Freligion%2Band%2Bsocial%2Bmedia%2F](http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/?utm_expid=53098246-2.Lly4CFSVQG2lphsg-KopIq.0&utm_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pewinternet.org%2Fsearch%2Freligion%2Band%2Bsocial%2Bmedia%2F).

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

new media participation is increasingly linked to crucial opportunities in multiple areas of life—education, the economy, civic engagement—addressing fundamental inequalities in access and meaningful participation is essential. The final issue Jenkins and his team describe is “the ethics challenge.”<sup>24</sup> Given that ethical norms online are unstable, it is necessary to develop and teach ethical norms for new media engagement. These three challenges draw attention to major issues with new media engagement that pastors and Christian religious educators are uniquely positioned to address given core aspects Christian education and formation: critical and theological reflection, catechesis, and Christian practices for faithful living.<sup>25</sup> Addressing these challenges requires nurturing conversation about new media and its effects in our learning communities.

### **A Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach to New Media**

In *Interpretation and Obedience*, Walter Brueggemann uses 2 Kings 18-19 to provide insight into the relationship between Christian communities and broader culture by describing two types of conversation in these chapters: “at the wall” (the empire does the speaking here) and “behind the wall” (the believing community does the speaking here).<sup>26</sup> Both conversations are

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Throughout the paper, I use the term “pastor” to refer to people who engage in ministry at churches (ordained and unordained, volunteer and paid). I use the term “Christian religious educator” to refer to those who work or will work in the academy. I use both terms in an effort to discuss Christian education and formation in churches and the academy with an interest in bridging their work. Most pastors consider themselves Christian religious educators and many Christian religious educators are also pastors. In actuality, this book is for every kind of Christian religious educator which includes youth leaders, primary and secondary teachers, chaplains, spiritual directors, and those who work in parachurch and non-profit ministries.

<sup>26</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Interpretation and Obedience: From Faithful Reading to Faithful Living* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991) 41-42.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

interpreting reality (i.e. making truth claims), but with very different agendas.<sup>27</sup> At the wall, “the agenda is the imperial system.”<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, “behind the wall, the agenda is the delivering God of the exodus who is a decisive figure in the drama, the mortal culpability of mocking, and decisive prophetic interpretation.” Therefore, within the believing community “a different set of assumptions, a different perception of the world, a different epistemology are at work.”<sup>29</sup> The conversation behind the wall (because of the biblical text that shapes it) is shrouded with suspicion against dominant realities.<sup>30</sup>

In the case of new media, insights from 2 Kings 18-19 suggest that our learning communities need to investigate new media culture and recognize technology is being created and used for agendas that are quite different from the agenda of the Kingdom of God. However, it is also vital to remember that God’s investment in creation extends to the various developments of human culture which includes new media. Christian theology’s relationship to culture is twofold: critical and essential, “because the cultural is an expression and development of the fallen,” and “it is the only place in which the human creature can come to a recognition of a more glorious possibility.”<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 60. Brueggemann explains, “It is the witness of the whole tradition, I believe, that this posture of suspicion is the source of vitality and passion, and, I dare say, of compassion and humaneness.”

<sup>31</sup> Graham Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 57.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

## **Desiring Conversation**

Donna Freitas surveyed and interviewed college students at thirteen campuses about their concerns regarding new media. In her fascinating book, *The Happiness Effect*, she writes, “Students want to know what their peers think about social media and whether they experience the same struggles. They want, in other words, information about how their generation is handling one of the most significant and dramatic cultural shifts of our time. Most of all, they want to know that they are not alone in feeling the way they do.”<sup>32</sup> Young people want to discuss their new media experiences and their struggles with it and they desire guidance.<sup>33</sup>

In this fast-paced and busy world, reflective, attentive conversation is treasured. Most pastors (especially youth pastors) and Christian religious educators would agree that dialogue is important and yet many neglect to integrate conversation into worship services and various Christian education settings. Too many of us spend the majority of our time with our learning communities talking when we lead, rather than creating space for constructive discussion and engaging in deep listening. This is probably because it takes more time and creativity to engage congregants and students in conversation (especially in large groups). However, being human involves the yearning to be heard and appreciating the space to make sense of life in the midst of living it.<sup>34</sup> The desires to be heard and to engage in conversation about our experiences are not mere sentiments, rather grounded in what constitutes humanness.

---

<sup>32</sup> Donna Freitas, *The Happiness Effect: How Social Media is Driving a Generation to Appear Perfect at Any Cost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 10.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 245-246.

<sup>34</sup> Consider the significance and power of meaningful conversation in groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and residential programs of all kinds (e.g. LA-based, The Dream Center’s Human Trafficking Program).

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Human beings are dialogical.<sup>35</sup> Language provides human beings with the ability to understand their experiences and integrate the meanings of those experiences.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, humans communicate with other people in order to make meaning.<sup>37</sup> Meaning-making is integral for identity formation, transformative learning, and attending to God’s initiatives.<sup>38</sup> Meaningful conversation resists differences—age, socioeconomic and marital status, gender, ability, educational attainment—in the sense that no matter who you are (or who makes up your learning

---

<sup>35</sup> Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 33.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 64. Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Carol Rothenberg write, “Language, in other words, is how we think. It’s how we process information and remember. It’s our operating system.” Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Carol Rothenberg, “Why Talk Is Important in Classrooms,” accessed August 12, 2017, <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108035/chapters/Why-Talk-Is-Important-in-Classrooms.aspx>.

<sup>37</sup> Fisher, Frey and Rothenberg write, “Telling students what you want them to know is certainly a faster way of addressing standards. But telling does not necessarily equate to learning.... Oral language is the foundation of literacy, and as such, it requires focused attention in planning.” For instructional strategies for integrating purposeful student (and congregant) talk, see their book: Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Carol Rothenberg, *Content-Area Conversations: How to Plan Discussion-Based Lessons for Diverse Language Learners* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008). If we want our students and congregants to be engaged in theological social media literacy, we need to plan for meaningful conversation in our learning communities.

<sup>38</sup> Ashish Ranpura, “How We Remember and Why We Forget,” accessed August 12, 2017, <https://brainconnection.brainhq.com/2013/03/12/how-we-remember-and-why-we-forget/>. Ranpura writes, “We can remember something best if we learn it in a context that we understand, or if it is emotionally important to us.... Mnemonic strategies, contextual learning, repetitive rehearsal, and emotional arousal are all good ways to ensure that we remember the things that are important to us.” Repetition and meaningful association are vital for memory consolidation. Also, several studies have found that student talk in classrooms is linked to enhanced understanding and thus is an important facet of learning. Kimberly D. Tanner, “Talking to Learn: Why Biology Students Should Be Talking in Classrooms and How to Make It Happen,” *Life Sciences Education* 8, no.2 (Summer 2009): 90.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

community), it is essential. Providing opportunities for your students or congregants to tell stories and share feelings regarding their new media experiences makes this new media-saturated culture feel more navigable and gentler.

### **Interested Conversation**

I am advocating for a particular type of meaningful, constructive conversation about new media: interested conversation. This kind of conversation signals interested engagement in the lived experiences of congregants and students by creating space for articulation of different feelings related to new media (e.g. nostalgia, anxiety, enamored, apathy) and expressing openness to new media’s challenges and opportunities. Interested conversations recognize new media culture is affecting people’s lives and have the sense that it is somehow related to practicing faith (even if unable to articulate how).<sup>39</sup>

The underlying assumption in interested conversation is that individuals and institutions need spiritual direction regarding all aspects of life which include new media engagement.<sup>40</sup> People in learning communities that nurture interested conversations about new media experiences believe that Christian education and formation necessitates practicing discernment regarding new media culture for faithful living because the practice of faith is always negotiated

---

<sup>39</sup> There are a number of books that are shaped by similar convictions regarding new media: See Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017); Clint Schnekloth, *Mediating Faith: Faith Formation in the Trans-media Era* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014); and Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion: The Church and Social Communication in the Digital Age* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).

<sup>40</sup> I am using the term “spiritual direction” in two ways: normative meaning and habit. Generally, Christians seek God’s guidance in their lives (especially through prayer and reading scripture) and thereby invite spiritual direction. Additionally, individual and group spiritual direction are Christian practices that can be nurtured.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

within particular social landscapes that reveal and shape such practice. Generally, individuals and institutions who are curious about new media create space to discuss the implications of new media culture on practicing faith. In interested learning communities, new media engagement is deliberately examined because the community recognizes that this engagement reveals and shapes a person’s convictions, practices, and desires and thus is related to faith for a way of life.<sup>41</sup> Interested conversations integrate culturally responsive pedagogy and narrative pedagogy.

Therefore, interested conversations invite students and congregants to share stories related to their new media experiences because human being “know reality *storiedly*.”<sup>42</sup> Stories tell humans who they are, where they have been, and where they are headed.<sup>43</sup> Anderson and Foley write in *Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals*, “We use stories to construct meaning and communicate ourselves to one another.”<sup>44</sup> When humans are attentive to what has happened and

---

<sup>41</sup> I am borrowing the phrase “for a way of life” from Miroslav Volf. Miroslav Volf, “Theology for a Way of Life,” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, eds. Dorothy Bass and Miroslav Volf (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 245-263. In addition to those already cited in the paper, there are a number of excellent books based on sound research studies regarding new media: See danah boyd, *it’s complicated: the social lives of networked teens* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2014); Heidi Campbell, ed., *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Lynn Schofield Clark *The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Mizuko Ito et. al, *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013).

<sup>42</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 14.

<sup>43</sup> Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 196-197.

<sup>44</sup> Herbert Anderson and Edward Foley, *Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals: Weaving Together the Human and the Divine* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 4.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

verbalize experiences by way of stories, they can create meaningful associations between activities and thoughts and emotions which is an important facet of memory consolidation.<sup>45</sup>

Anderson and Foley explain, “Stories are privileged and imaginative acts of self interpretation. . . . We retell incidents, relate occurrences, and spin tales in order to learn what occurred, especially *to me*.”<sup>46</sup> Interested conversation creates space for honest storytelling that includes attention to people’s fears, wounds, and confusion. Human beings need to tell and listen to stories in order to make sense of experiences, reflect on experiences, and to discern God’s movement within their lives and contexts.<sup>47</sup>

### **Theological New Media Literacy**

Freitas discovered two things that helped college students she interviewed to have a healthier relationship to social media: attentiveness to faith and critical reflection. Freitas interviewed students at faith based institutions who connected their faith and religious practices to their social media engagement and seemed to benefit significantly. She explains:

What is unusual about them is that they are, more so than their peers, empowered in their use of social media. Those students who allow the devotion to their faith to permeate their online worlds use their religious traditions as a framework for navigating their behavior and posts—one they find far more meaningful and sturdier than warnings about future employers and prescriptions for curating one’s online image. They are learning the dos and don’ts of social media from a higher power, and this makes an enormous difference. . . . And while these students are just as image-conscious and as aware as

---

<sup>45</sup> Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 64. Language provides human beings with the ability to understand their experiences and integrate the meanings of those experiences. Eric R. Kandel, *In Search of Memory* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 210. Incoming information has to be thoroughly processed in order to be remembered for a long time. This requires attentiveness and meaningful association.

<sup>46</sup> Anderson and Foley, *Mighty Stories*, 5. The original quotation has words in italics.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry The Way of Shared Praxis* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 215, 250.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

everyone else that they have an audience, having God and their faith tradition filtering their online decision-making seems to help them stay grounded.”<sup>48</sup>

Freitas also interviewed college students at a prestigious institution and noticed that they were able to easily engage in critical reflection on their social media engagement. She writes:

And knowledge—in the form of critical analysis—quite literally seems to translate into power. Being able to think clearly about social media, believing that they have the intellectual skills to best Mark Zuckerberg at his own game and understand some of the more manipulative ways that social media infiltrates our lives and relationships, gives them a healthier, more empowered relationship to it.<sup>49</sup>

Pastors and Christian religious educators need to nurture learning communities that help students and congregants to integrate practicing faith and new media engagement through theological and critical reflection. Addressing the challenges of new media requires pastors and Christian religious educators who will be committed to confronting these challenges in their contexts through teaching theological new media literacy.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Freitas, *The Happiness Effect*, 110.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>50</sup> In addition to Henry Jenkins, several other researchers have written extensively and helpfully about media literacy and I am indebted to them, most especially: Julie Coiro and Renee Hobbs, “Digital Literacy as Collaborative, Transdisciplinary, and Applied,” American Education Research Association conference, San Antonio TX, April 26, 2016; Mary E. Hess, *Engaging Technology in Theological Education: All That We Can’t Leave Behind* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Langmia, Kehbuma, Tia C. M. Tyree, Pamela O’Brien, and Ingrid Sturgis, eds. *Social Media: Pedagogy and Practice* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2014); Gunther Kress, *Literacy in the New Media Age* (London: Routledge, 2003).; Howard Rheingold, *Net Smart: How to Thrive Online* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2014); and The New Media Consortium, “A Global Imperative: The Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy Summit,” 2005, accessed May 2017, [http://www.ictliteracy.info/rf.pdf/Global\\_Imperative.pdf](http://www.ictliteracy.info/rf.pdf/Global_Imperative.pdf).

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Media literacy is complex. It is not merely a skill set, though media scholars have identified important competencies for navigating media.<sup>51</sup> Media literacy is plural (contains several diverse elements), contextual (dependent on or relating to the circumstances), and socially-negotiated (discussed in the company of others).<sup>52</sup> Theological new media literacy is primarily related to depth of understanding which necessitates engaging in critical and theological reflection, seeking spiritual direction through spiritual disciplines, and practicing discernment, essential habits for Christian learning communities and foundational for faith for a way of life.<sup>53</sup> Christian transformation of individuals and communities necessitates continual reflection on what God is up to in order to faithfully partner with God’s initiatives. Therefore:

The integration between the divine and human narratives is necessary... Weaving together human and divine narratives has, as its ultimate goal, the transformation of individual and communal life.... The question, What must I do? is, therefore, paralleled by the question, What is God doing? In order to maintain an openness to God’s activity, we need regularly to interpret the human story in light of the divine narrative.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Renee Hobbs, “Media Literacy,” accessed August 30, 2017, <http://communication.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-11?rskey=f1BV0v&result=1>; and Kelly Walsh, “5 Selected Frameworks for Promoting Digital Literacy,” accessed September 13, 2017, <http://www.emergingedtech.com/2017/09/selected-frameworks-for-teaching-digital-literacy/>.

<sup>52</sup> Sally Pewhairangi, interview with Doug Belshaw, “6 top experts expose digital literacy mistakes and how to overcome them,” accessed August 27, 2017, <https://findingheroes.co.nz/2017/06/22/6-top-experts-expose-digital-literacy-mistakes-and-how-to-overcome-them/#Maha>.

<sup>53</sup> Jenkins and his co-researchers in *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture* identified eleven necessary “new media literacies,” describing them as “a set of core social skills and cultural competencies that young people should acquire if they are to be full, active, creative, and ethical participants in this emerging participatory culture.” Jenkins et al., *Confronting the Challenges*, 105-106.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Learning communities that engage in interested new media conversations are therefore (1) cognizant of the narratives that have shaped and continue to shape the community and its individuals (2) recognize the danger of a single story (3) embrace the power of the practice of story-sharing and (4) are careful to interpret the human narrative in light of the divine narrative.<sup>55</sup>

### **Critical Inquiry**

It is important to follow storytelling about new media experiences with critical inquiry regarding new media which is essential to a culturally responsive pedagogical approach to new media engagement. Paulo Freire advocates for “problem-posing education” where students (and I would add congregants) “develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation.”<sup>56</sup> Curious learning communities ask

---

<sup>55</sup> In her famous Ted talk, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie brilliantly describes how hearing only one perspective can lead to critical misunderstanding. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story,” accessed August 11, 2017, [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story). The term “story-sharing” is borrowed from Anne E. Streaty Wimberly, *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005), 2. *Soul Stories* stresses the importance of face-to-face connecting. However, I assert that social media also provides creative and interesting ways for Christian communities to engage in story-sharing (e.g. blogs). Frank Rogers Jr. in *Finding God in the Graffiti* describes various forms of narrative pedagogies. Rogers situates Wimberly’s *Soul Stories* within the personal identity approach to narrative pedagogy. Rogers writes, “Personal identity approaches to narrative pedagogy seek to... help people access the often subliminal stories that constitute their sense of self-identity... expose people to the healing and liberative communal stories of their religious and cultural traditions... and assist people in constructing a coherent sense of narrative identity that is meaningful, healing, and life-giving.” Frank Rogers Jr., *Finding God in the Graffiti: Empowering Teenagers Through Stories* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2011), 64.

<sup>56</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1966; repr., New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), 79, 83-84. This is an alternative to banking education. “It [Banking Education] turns them [people] into ‘containers,’ into ‘receptacles’ to be ‘filled’ by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is.” Ibid., 72. Banking education, turns people into objects of church strategies and plans, rather than subjects who are invited to

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

powerful questions about new media culture and accordingly are inquisitive about its mediums, users, nonusers, developers, and designers and all of their contexts.<sup>57</sup> Stephen Preskill and Stephen Brookfield in their book *Learning as a Way of Leading* discuss the importance of inquiry in education writing, “Learning to ask questions is not an interrogatory project but a way of inviting people to wonder.”<sup>58</sup> When students and congregants are invited to wonder, they are also being invited into the learning process, into discovery. Preskill and Brookfield, paralleling Freire’s points about problem-posing education, recognize the more teachers involve congregants and students in an educational setting, the less oppressive the setting is and the more people actually learn.

---

inquire, investigate, and imagine together. See also Mark Lau Branson, “Perspectives from the Missional Conversation,” in *Starting Missional Churches: Life with God in the Neighborhood* eds. Mark Lau Branson and Nicholas Warnes (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 38-39.

<sup>57</sup> I am advocating for a “religious-social shaping of technology” approach which builds on two other important approaches to technology, the first of which is “media as a social institution” (consideration of producers and users of media when discerning its implications). See John P. Ferré, “The Media of Popular Piety,” in *Mediating Religion: Studies in Media, Religion, and Culture*, eds. Jolyon P. Mitchell and Sophia Marriage (Edinburgh, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2003), 88-90. Secondly, it builds on the theory of social shaping of technology which takes into consideration a group’s social processes when thinking about the group’s relationship to media. Campbell and Gardner, *Networked Theology*, 102. Nancy Baym explains that social shaping advocates for scholars “to consider how societal circumstances give rise to technologies, what specific possibilities and constraints technologies offer, and actual practices of use as those possibilities and constraints are taken up, rejected, and reworked in everyday life.” See Baym, *Personal Connections in a Digital Age*, 45. Campbell and Garner “suggest combining the reflection on the values and processes ingrained within religious communities with a social-shaping-of-technology lens that focuses on how user communities negotiate with technology.” Campbell and Gardner, *Networked Theology*, 102-103.

<sup>58</sup> Stephen Preskill and Stephen D. Brookfield, *Learning as a Way of Leading: Lessons from the Struggle for Social Justice* (San Francisco: CA, Jossey-Bass, 2009), 127. Stephen Brookfield is a scholar of adult education and a professor at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis. Stephen Preskill is a former professor who studies leadership for social justice.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Preskill and Brookfield write:

*Questioning* is derived from the word *quest*. When we pose questions we initiate a quest, a journey into the unknown or the poorly understood. Through questions we search out the unknown and unfamiliar, but we also reexamine the familiar. Sharp, incisive, focused questioning has a way of pushing people forward to uncover more. So questioning is part of the quest to live more fully and adventurously. Not all questions, however, are created equal. We are not interested in questions that invite simple, rote response, but the more complex *how* and *why* questions for which leaders themselves lack ready answers.<sup>59</sup>

A great question is ambiguous, personal, and evokes anxiety (because it matters to us).<sup>60</sup>

Storytelling (engaging the divine and human narratives) and critical inquiry help to transform the imagination of individuals and communities. Graham Ward explains how:

Theological discourse relates then to the productive transformation of culture by directing such transformation towards a transcendent hope. It works not only to participate in but to perform the presence of Christ. In and through its working the cultural imaginary is changed, and alternative forms of sociality, community and relation are fashioned, imagined and to some extent embodied.”<sup>61</sup>

Interested conversation must move beyond dialogue and reflection to faith for a way of life in a new media culture.

### **Hybrid Christian Practices and Spiritual Disciplines**

In his chapter of *Practicing Theology*, L. Gregory Jones describes three communal settings that are important for Christian education and formation: congregational life, formal education, and situations of social engagement.<sup>62</sup> In theory, these settings specialize in

---

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2009), 106.

<sup>61</sup> Ward, *Cultural Transformation*, 172.

<sup>62</sup> L. Gregory Jones, “Beliefs, Desires, Practices and the Ends of Theological Education,” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* eds. Dorothy Bass and Miroslav Volf (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 188.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

catechesis, critical reflection, and faithful living in the world.<sup>63</sup> However, congregations, academies, and situations of social engagement are “overlapping, rather than competing, contexts of Christian faith and life.”<sup>64</sup> In this new media culture, these contexts are becoming even more interrelated. These contexts can enrich one another.<sup>65</sup> The integration of catechesis in churches, Christian education in the academy, and faithful living is necessary for articulating, seeking spiritual direction regarding, and embodying a vision of the flourishing life in a new media culture. In John 10:10, Jesus explains that he has come for people to have full, abundant lives. Our faith should be positioned toward this flourishing life that Jesus invites us to participate in and describes and embodies throughout his ministry. Articulating the implications of Christ’s vision for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (especially with regard to new media engagement) is an essential component of comprehensive, contemporary catechesis and foundational for theology that makes a difference in a new media culture.<sup>66</sup>

In light of this, genuine, modern Christian Religious education helps students and congregants to attend to interrelations between their beliefs, practices, and desires offline and

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>66</sup> I have the privilege of serving as an Associate Research Scholar at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture (YCFC) working on the Theology of Joy and the Good Life Project funded by the John Templeton Foundation. This paper was made possible through the support of this grant from the Templeton Foundation. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Templeton Foundation. For more information on the project, see YCFC’s website: Yale Center for Faith and Culture, accessed September 13, 2017, <http://faith.yale.edu>. For insights on theology centered around Christ and the flourishing life, see Miroslav Volf and Matthew Croasmun, *For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, forthcoming 2018).

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

online. Theologian Kathryn Tanner explains, “In order to figure out how to go on, one must, with some measure of reflective excretion, figure out the meaning of what one has been doing, why one does it, and what it implies—in particular, how it hangs together (or fails to hang together) with the rest of what one believes and does.”<sup>67</sup> Interested conversation will not lead to faith for a way of life in a new media culture unless the learning community consistently compares and contrasts the experiences of the learning community (human narratives) with the beliefs, practices, and desires of Christ’s vision of the flourishing life and intentionally orients the life of the learning community toward embodying Christ’s vision. Embodying this vision requires embracing Christlikeness in all the dimensions of life, including new media engagement.<sup>68</sup>

Seeking spiritual direction, engaging in critical and theological reflection, and practicing discernment regarding three main aspects of hybrid living is essential: (1) forming identity, (2) nurturing relationships, and (3) participating in the common good. These topics necessitate the special attention of pastors and Christian religious educators because they are fundamental to practicing faith and directly impacted by new media engagement. Christ’s vision of flourishing life involves forming our identities in Christ, nurturing relationships with genuine love, and participating in the common good toward Kingdom of God oriented ends.

Given that we live hybrid lives (we are constantly shifting between online and in-person engagement), it is important that pastors and Christian religious educators teach students and congregants to engage in *hybrid* Christian practices and spiritual disciplines (e.g. hospitality,

---

<sup>67</sup> Kathryn Tanner, “Theological Reflection and Christian Practices,” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* eds. Dorothy Bass and Miroslav Volf (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 232.

<sup>68</sup> 1 John 2:5-6

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

truth-telling, rhythms of rest) that help Christians to practice faith when engaging with new media. In order to do this, the practices and disciplines should involve (1) engagement online (2) engagement offline and (3) integrated engagement both online and offline.<sup>69</sup> Christian Formation and education that includes cultivating hybrid Christian practices and spiritual disciplines is essential for faith for a way of life in a new media culture.

---

<sup>69</sup> For more information and ideas regarding how to teach hybrid Christian practices and spiritual disciplines to students and congregants, please join me at my academic presentation at AYME this October.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

### Bibliography

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. “The Danger of a Single Story.” Accessed August 11, 2017.  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story).
- Anderson, Herbert and Edward Foley. *Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals: Weaving Together the Human and Divine*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
- Bass, Dorothy and Miroslav Volf, eds. *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002.
- Baym, Nancy K. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age: Digital Media and Society Series*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2010.
- Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966.
- Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2009.
- boyd, danah. *it’s complicated: the social lives of networked teens*. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2014.
- Branson, Mark Lau and Nicholas Warnes, eds. *Starting Missional Churches: Joining God in the Neighborhood*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Interpretation and Obedience: From Faithful Reading to Faithful Living*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Campbell, Heidi A., ed. *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Campbell, Heidi and Stephen Garner. *Networked Theology: Negotiating Faith in Digital Culture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.
- Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2011.
- Cheong, Pauline, Peter Fischer-Nielsen, Stefan Gelfgren, and Charles Ess, eds. *Digital Religion, Social Media and Culture: Perspectives, Practices and Futures*. New York: Peter Lang, 2012.
- Clark, Lynn Schofield. *The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Coiro, Julie and Renee Hobbs. “Digital Literacy as Collaborative, Transdisciplinary, and Applied.” American Education Research Association conference. San Antonio TX, April 26, 2016.

Crouch, Andy. *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017.

Fisher, Douglas, Nancy Frey and Carol Rothenberg. *Content-Area Conversations: How to Plan Discussion-Based Lessons for Diverse Language Learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008.

—. “Why Talk Is Important in Classrooms.” Accessed August 12, 2017.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108035/chapters/Why-Talk-Is-Important-in-Classrooms.aspx>.

Foucault, Michael. “Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias.” *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 46-49. Accessed August, 2017.  
<https://foucault.info/doc/documents/heterotopia/foucault-heterotopia-en.html>. Original Publication: Conférence au Cercle d'études architecturales. 14 mars 1967.

Ferré, John P. “The Media of Popular Piety.” in *Mediating Religion: Studies in Media, Religion, and Culture*, eds. Jolyon P. Mitchell and Sophia Marriage. Edinburgh, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2003: 83-92.

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 1966. Reprint, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012.

Freitas, Donna. *The Happiness Effect: How Social Media is Driving a Generation to Appear Perfect at Any Cost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Gorrell, Angela. Working Title: *Networked Lives and Spiritual Direction: Christian Formation and Education in a New Media Culture*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, manuscript due December 2017.

Groome, Thomas. *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry The Way of Shared Praxis*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998.

Hess, Mary E. *Engaging Technology in Theological Education: All That We Can't Leave Behind*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.

Hobbs, Renee. “Media Literacy.” Accessed August 30, 2017.  
<http://communication.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-11?rskey=f1BVOv&result=1>.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Ito, Mizuko, Sonja Baumer, Matteo Bittanti, danah boyd, Rachel Cody, Becky Herr-Stephenson, Heather A. Horst, Patricia G. Lange, Dilan Mahendran, Katynka Z. Martínez, C.J. Pascoe, Dan Perkel, Laura Robinson, Christo Sims and Lisa Tripp. *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013.

Jenkins, Henry (P.I), with Ravi Purushotma, Margaret Weigel, Katie Clinton, and Alice J. Robinson. *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009.

Jurgenson, Nathan. “Digital Dualism versus Augmented Reality.” Accessed August 21, 2017. <https://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2011/02/24/digital-dualism-versus-augmented-reality/>.

Kandel, Eric R. *In Search of Memory*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 2006.

Kress, Gunther. *Literacy in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge, 2003).

Langmia, Kehbuma, Tia C. M. Tyree, Pamela O’Brien, and Ingrid Sturgis, eds. *Social Media: Pedagogy and Practice*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2014.

Lindgren, Simon, ed. *Hybrid Media Culture: Sensing Place in a World of Flows*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

The New Media Consortium. “A Global Imperative: The Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy Summit.” 2005. Accessed May 2017. [http://www.ictliteracy.info/rlf.pdf/Global\\_Imperative.pdf](http://www.ictliteracy.info/rlf.pdf/Global_Imperative.pdf).

Perrin, Andrew. “Social Media Usage: 2005-2015.” Pew Research Center. October 8, 2015. Accessed on December 2, 2015. [http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/?utm\\_expid=53098246-2.Lly4CF5VQG2lphsg-Koplg.0&utm\\_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pewinternet.org%2Fsearch%2Freligion%2Band%2Bsocial%2Bmedia%2F](http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/?utm_expid=53098246-2.Lly4CF5VQG2lphsg-Koplg.0&utm_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pewinternet.org%2Fsearch%2Freligion%2Band%2Bsocial%2Bmedia%2F).

Pewhairangi, Sally. Interview with Doug Belshaw. “6 top experts expose digital literacy mistakes and how to overcome them.” Accessed August 27, 2017. <https://findingheroes.co.nz/2017/06/22/6-top-experts-expose-digital-literacy-mistakes-and-how-to-overcome-them/#Maha>.

Pohl, Christine. *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us*. Eerdmans, 2011.

Preskill, Stephen and Stephen D. Brookfield, *Learning as a Way of Leading: Lessons from the Struggle for Social Justice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

“The author of this paper holds copyright protection of their work. This paper is shared with you in a spirit of collegial collaboration. You do not have permission to copy, disseminate, or quote extensively from it, without the expressed, written permission of the author.”

Ranpura, Ashish. “How We Remember and Why We Forget.” Accessed August 12, 2017. <https://brainconnection.brainhq.com/2013/03/12/how-we-remember-and-why-we-forget/>.

Rheingold, Howard. *Net Smart: How to Thrive Online*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2014.

Rogers Jr., Frank. *Finding God in the Graffiti: Empowering Teenagers Through Stories*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2011.

Schnekloth, Clint. *Mediating Faith: Faith Formation in the Trans-media Era*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014.

Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.

Tanner, Kimberly D. “Talking to Learn: Why Biology Students Should Be Talking in Classrooms and How to Make It Happen.” *Life Sciences Education* 8, no.2 (Summer 2009): 82-94. doi:[10.1187/cbe.09-03-0021](https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.09-03-0021).

Taylor, Charles. *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.

van Dijck, José. *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Volf, Miroslav and Matthew Croasmun. *For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, forthcoming 2018.

Walsh, Kelly. “5 Selected Frameworks for Promoting Digital Literacy.” Accessed September 13, 2017. <http://www.emergingedtech.com/2017/09/selected-frameworks-for-teaching-digital-literacy/>.

Ward, Graham. *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Wimberly, Anne Streaty. *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*. 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005.

Yale Center for Faith and Culture. Accessed September 13, 2017. <http://faith.yale.edu>.

Zsupan-Jerome, Daniella. *Connected Toward Communion: The Church and Social Communication in the Digital Age*. Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014.