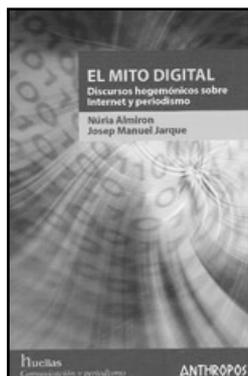# Books review

ALMIRÓN, N; JARQUE, J.M. *El mito digital: discursos hegemónicos sobre Internet y periodismo.* Barcelona: Anthropos, 2008, 176 pages. ISBN: 978-84-7658-866-6

DE MORAES, D. (coord.). *Sociedad mediatizada.* Barcelona: Editorial Gedisa, 2007, 197 pages. ISBN: 978-84-9784-160-3

This book could be described as an attempt to swim against the tide in the flood of books that address technological digitalisation in general. The authors claim that a fallacious myth exists around the virtues normally claimed in relation to ICTs and specifically their application in the world of journalism. The *digital fundamentalist narrative* is considered to be religiously mystic in its psychosocial aspect, an advocate of technological determinism and neo-liberal regarding the economy and conservative regarding policies. By analysing the related discourse as a methodological resource, the authors reach a synthesis of propositions behind the digital myth: the conception of history as progress, the consideration of the current scenario as the advent of a "new age", the notion of scientific-technical progress as a driver of social change, the hegemony of instrumental reason, the proposal of technologisation as an improvement in the quality of life, the belief in a rational society and support for a knowledge-based meritocracy. In this sense, the authors conclude that all these proposals were shared by the pre-digital techno-utopias of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, i.e. the digital myth is not as new as it may seem.

Dênis de Moraes has coordinated this volume, which reflects on the changes and new dilemmas posed by a society saturated with audiovisual impacts and uneven access to technologies and knowledge. Concepts such as diversity, exclusion, identity and democratisation are analysed by the seven intellectuals De Moraes has brought together in order to analyse the media's socio-cultural influence on an unequal society. The book is divided into two sections: the first, "Technological culture and mediatisation", includes articles by De Moraes himself on cultural commercialism and media saturation, by Jesus Martín Barbero on the revitalisation of identities and the revolution of technicities that are transforming our societies' culture, and by Guillermo Orozco on education's role in the new communication ecosystem. The book's second section, "Society in networks and communicational mutations", features articles by Manuel Castells on the need to reform copyright to ensure that the disadvantaged have access to power and by Armand Mattelart questioning the liberal project of the New World Order of Information, which is being imposed in the name of consumer freedom and freedom of trade.

Cobo Romaní, C.; Pardo Kuklinski, H. *Planeta Web 2.0. Inteligencia colectiva o medios fast food.* Mexico: Flacso, 2007, 162 pages. ISBN: 978-84-934995-8-7

This book, which can be found on the internet free of charge under Creative Commons' license, outlines a theoretical framework for the internet's digital Darwinism and a roadmap of interpretations for those interested in an indepth knowledge and understanding of Web 2.0, "a concept at a stage of planned terminological obsolescence", in the authors' words. The book's seven chapters encompass an introduction to Web 2.0, or the social web, its principles and essential elements, an analysis of Berners-Lee's concept of intercreativity, which launched the internet, and a description of the basic notions related to Web 2.0, such as collective intelligence, intelligent masses and their knowledge or architecture of participation. A detailed map of Web 2.0 applications is also laid out, as well as providing an analysis of the critical thought that has emerged in academic circles in view of this application's triumphalism. In the final chapters, the authors analyse the convergence of Web 2.0 applications and third-generation mobile devices and examine this convergence and interoperability. The book concludes with a reflection on the internet's evolution towards a semantic web, a "more intelligent, intuitive, open, effective and even commonsensical" web.

Jenkins, H. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide.* New York and London: New York University Press, 2006, 308 pages. ISBN: 978-0-8147-4281-5

Already considered a reference book, this 2008 edition translated by the Paidós publishing house approaches so-called media convergence from a viewpoint that seeks to go beyond the technological perspective. In this sense, Jenkins defines convergence as a concept that describes social, technological, industrial and cultural changes in connection to the way they are developed by the media in our culture. Included here are aspects such as content flow among different types of media platforms, cooperation among several media industries, the search for new media financing structures that operate in the intersection of old and new media and the migratory behaviour of audiences that move all around searching for the entertainment experiences they crave. Jenkins synthesises a definition of convergence as a scenario in which several media systems coexist and content flows extensively among them. Hence, convergence is viewed as a process in progress and not as a fixed relationship. To reach this conclusion, Jenkins reviews several cases in which these interconnections are present and addresses subjects such as media literacy, new forms of television, the application of ICTs in political communication and new forms of creativity in the culture industry, among others.

BENNET, W.L. (ed.). *Civic Life Online. Learning How Digital Media Can Engage Youth.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2008, 206 pages. ISBN: 978-0-262-52482-7
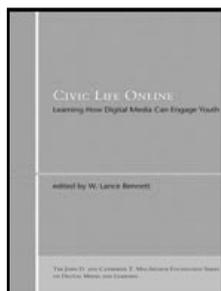
This volume regards digital media as a part of convergence among interactive media (mostly focused on games), online networks and existing forms of media. Related to this media ecology, Lance Bennet analyses digital media's adaptation to conventional politics and paints a scenario that uses the potential of technological convergence and politics, a scenario that requires ultra-creative research paradigms combining the qualities of today's (apathetic) citizens with the model of the dutiful citizen. Among this volume's most outstanding contributions are a description of the relationships between young people and digital democracy and between political candidates' and leaders' use of the internet and the expectations of young people who seek political information on the internet, a critique of the lack of communication skills among young people who relate to each other online and an article on the use of participative media and the voice of the public to foster civic commitment. Finally, the book describes the concept of "autonomous citizenship", a model of democracy in which citizenship becomes creative through experience.

BUCKINGHAM, D. (ed.) *Youth, Identity, and Digital Media.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2008, 206 pages. ISBN: 978-0-262-02635-2
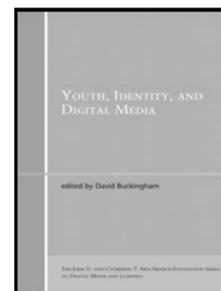
Based on the concept of identity, this volume analyses the relationships between young people and the digital media and pays special attention to the diverse ways in which the media and technologies are used in everyday life, as well as their consequences on both individuals and social groups. By viewing young people as significant social stakeholders in terms of "being" rather than "becoming", the University of London lecturer, David Buckingham, in the words of the book's publisher, endeavours to understand the digital media's role in forming young people's identities. The different authors analyse the emergence of new formats - from SMS to websites, blogs and online social networks - and show several ways in which young people use digital media to reflect their new loyalties to particular subcultures. Also analysed are the spaces that escape adult control and how young people can use media production to address social issues. The need for digital literacy entailed by the digital media can be found in the book's final section, which analyses mobile telephone use and the subsequent development of new social and communicative tools and new social norms. The construction of online identities and the way in which young people construct identities so that they align with the consumption culture (*compulsory individuality*) lead the authors to suggest that these new forms of identity entail the need for new cultural skills that schools must confront.

Other books...

SCOLARI, C. A. *Hipermediaciones: elementos para una teoría de la comunicación digital interactiva.* Barcelona: Gedisa, 2008, 320 pages, ISBN: 978-84-9784-273-0

KATZ, J. E. (ed.) *Handbook of Mobile Communication Studies.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2008, 472 pages, ISBN: 978-0-262-11312-0

MOSSBERGER, K.; TOLBERT, C. J.; MCNEAL, R. S. *Digital Citizenship. The Internet, Society, and Participation.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007, 272 pages ISBN: 978-0-262-13485-9

SOLOVE, D.I J. *The future of reputation: gossip, rumor and privacy on the Internet.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007 256 pages, ISBN: 978-0-300-12498-9