

encompassing proportionate retribution and honest interpersonal dealings, as well as nondiscriminatory structural patterns. But even limiting ourselves to the distributive aspects of justice, Young's focus on structure seems to drown out individual duties and virtues that might be mobilized to help correct structural injustices. In this respect, her structuralism is partly at cross-purposes with her appeal for responsibility; the conceptual disconnect between structure and individual would seem to make it difficult to motivate responsibility (why should *I* be responsible?). Given her desire to call individuals to take responsibility for structural problems, it is odd that she is not

more sympathetic to Cohen and Murphy's efforts to bridge this gap.

Responsibility for Justice is a book for the trenches. Its concerns are at least as strategic as they are scholarly: Young proposes a framework for motivating action on some of our most serious and intractable problems, such as global poverty, labor injustice, and racial inequalities. We might also use this framework to address many more problems than she explicitly discusses, such as rapidly accelerating climate change. In this sense, the book is a final gift, and a worthy addition to her legacy.

AMERICAN POLITICS

Media and Political Engagement: Citizens, Communication, and Democracy. By Peter Dahlgren. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 246p. \$87.00 cloth, \$25.99 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592711003616

— Patricia Moy, *University of Washington*

Given recent and continuing large-scale social, political, and technological changes, the spate of scholarship at the nexus of media and citizenship is not surprising. Theoretical and empirical undertakings have addressed, among other things, how notions of citizenship have shifted, the demise of journalism and its impact on local communities, and the potential for social media to mobilize citizens in disparate regions. The issues may differ, the media outlets may vary, and the outcome of interest may change from scholar to scholar. However, the underlying concern is the same, namely, how do the media contribute to (but sometimes unfortunately) undermine citizens' sense of political engagement?

Joining the conversation is Peter Dahlgren, who is no stranger to this interdisciplinary and porous domain of intellectual inquiry. His latest book in this area, *Media and Political Engagement*, offers a civic-cultures analytical framework to help us better understand how the media may work upon engagement, which he views as comprising "not just cognitive attention and some normative stance, but also an affective investment. Engagement in politics involves some kind of passion" (p. 83). In building the case for this framework, Dahlgren introduces the reader to societal-level developments that have led to this pessimistic view of the populace. He touches upon and interweaves a host of related concepts—all in 200 pages of text, no less—signaling to younger and more seasoned scholars alike that there are many inroads still to be made and paths to be taken.

Like other works in the field, this book is grounded in strong normative concerns. But unlike other scholars, par-

ticularly those interested in a particular time, space, or context, Dahlgren recognizes the moving-target nature of what constitutes good democracy. After all, the model of democracy that exists in a given country may generate a different set of expectations of whether, how, and how much citizens should be engaged. This particular acknowledgment is especially useful as Dahlgren draws upon developments, media systems, and findings from a range of different countries. As well, engagement is elusive, he says, as manifestations of democracy may reflect antidemocratic practices; for instance, high voter turnout may exist in democratic states as well as totalitarian ones. Is a country in which all citizens are forced to vote preferable to the country in which a third of all citizens vote willingly?

In setting up the backdrop for this book, Dahlgren asks the reader to look at the obvious—and look again. Sometimes the cues are subtle. For example, in introducing his book as one that addresses both political engagement and disengagement, he signals to the reader that disengagement may not necessarily be the absence of engagement. As he illustrates in Chapter 4, the absence of the forces that drive engagement might not necessarily lead one to become disengaged. This conceptual distinction is key and echoes work in related areas: Russell Hardin (*Trust*, 2006) made a similar argument in stating that an individual who lacks cynical views is not necessarily one who trusts.

With normative concerns as a logical point of departure, Dahlgren begins to build his civic-cultures framework. In doing so, he brings into relief the vast array of developments that have been brought to bear upon, and interact with, changes in the media landscape. Those looking for a very accessible macro-level view will appreciate Chapter 2, in which he provides structural snapshots. This section includes overviews of models of democracy, the political turn toward neoliberalism, the downsizing of the sovereignty of the nation-state, economic patterns, and changes in literacy rates. Dahlgren follows with an articulation of sociocultural shifts, citing how cultures have morphed, fragmented, and become more pluralistic. Coupled with the erosion of traditional institutions such as

families, schools, and churches, as well as individuals' lessened sense of social belonging, these larger patterns help scholars understand the current state of politics. To be sure, the author's snapshots are indeed snapshots for the average reader, and do not offer the level of detail that specialists in a given area might wish to see.

Chapter 3, which focuses on media-related changes, offers similarly "overarching glimpses" (p. 34) of key trends. The level of detail here is enough to whet the lay reader's appetite as Dahlgren describes the proliferation, concentration, deregulation, globalization, and digitization of the media and deftly integrates a few key references to the scholarship in each area. He also highlights key changes in the news media, discussing the decline of traditional journalism, the fragmentation of a mass audience, and the popularization of content. He also speaks—at greater length—about the logics of the media matrix and how they shape the representation of politics in the media, and ultimately how citizens engage in politics.

As for the outcomes of interest, Dahlgren invokes the standard dimensions of citizenship and related concepts, such as political knowledge, identity, agency, the public sphere, and deliberation. Readers new to the field will find these concepts intuitively appealing, and those generally conversant with the literature will appreciate how he has mapped the terrain and brought together philosophers, theorists, and researchers of various epistemological stripes. However, because the author covers so much ground and presents so much distilled information in so few pages, those most familiar with the scholarship in this area might clamor for greater nuance and detail.

Dahlgren's goal, however, is not to provide an in-depth review of the field. His glimpses into these various domains are designed merely to provide sufficient grounding for his civic-cultures analytic framework, which comprises six dimensions: knowledge, values, trust, spaces, practices, and identities. The author acknowledges that these dimensions are not mutually exclusive; rather, their presence "specif[ies] empirical entry points into the study of citizens' engagement and participation" (p. 108), and he highlights the role of the media in impacting each. Indeed, scholars working in the field of media and political engagement would be remiss if they did not address at least one of these dimensions, and it is the notion of identities that he finds most noteworthy of the six. It is the "most compelling link between civic cultures and the sense of agency that engages people and can help turn them into political participants" (p. 123).

To illustrate how his model plays out, Dahlgren examines how contemporary media facilitate the move toward civic cultures, looking specifically at television and the Internet. With respect to the former, he focuses on television vis-à-vis popular public spheres, in line with his perspective that political engagement can involve issues that are not overtly political. (The author preempts concerns

about how "television" has been redefined by technologies that allow for viewing at a later time or on another platform; he uses the term to refer to its traditional manifestations.) The broader notion of "popular politics" already has gained traction among political communication scholars in North America and Europe, and by painting a picture of how the media can create and foster alternative conceptions of politics, Dahlgren adds his voice to this growing group. It is an optimistic one.

Of course, with any theoretical or empirical research undertaking that concerns the Internet (of which Dahlgren is cautiously optimistic), findings and conclusions are temporally limited. Although the writing and publication of *Media and Political Engagement* coincided with the ascendancy of social media (think the 2008 US presidential election) and preceded momentous events such as the Arab uprisings, the case studies that are presented illuminate the staying power of questions that relate to online public spheres, social movement organizations, and what constitutes journalism in an electronic age. It is heartening to see Dahlgren, with his culturalist orientation, assess the past and the present to speculate about, and hopefully change for the better, the future.

The Price of Progressive Politics: The Welfare Rights Movement in an Era of Colorblind Racism. By Rose Ernst. New York: New York University Press, 2010. 208p. \$45.00. doi:10.1017/S1537592711003628

— Juliet F. Gainsborough, *Bentley University*

In an era of reduced caseloads and increasingly decentralized administration, those involved in the welfare rights movement face a number of challenges. In this thought-provoking new book, Rose Ernst suggests that chief among these challenges is the dominance of the racial ideology of color blindness. Relying on in-depth interviews with women activists in the welfare rights movement in different parts of the United States, Ernst explores the frames ("discursive patterns") that these women employ when they talk "about race, class, and gender in welfare politics" (p. 13). She finds that the language of color blindness has infused the thinking of many of the white women activists and serves to undermine internal and external movement cohesion. Throughout the book, the voices of individual women emerge clearly in lengthy and fascinating excerpts from her interviews, although there is less attention to how and in what ways the discursive patterns employed by these women shape welfare rights organizing more broadly. With its rich detail about women active in the welfare rights movement, *The Price of Progressive Politics* should be of interest to scholars of welfare politics, gender and race politics, and social movements.

Ernst begins the analysis by revisiting the way in which the National Organization for Women (NOW) was focused on the priorities of white, middle-class women.