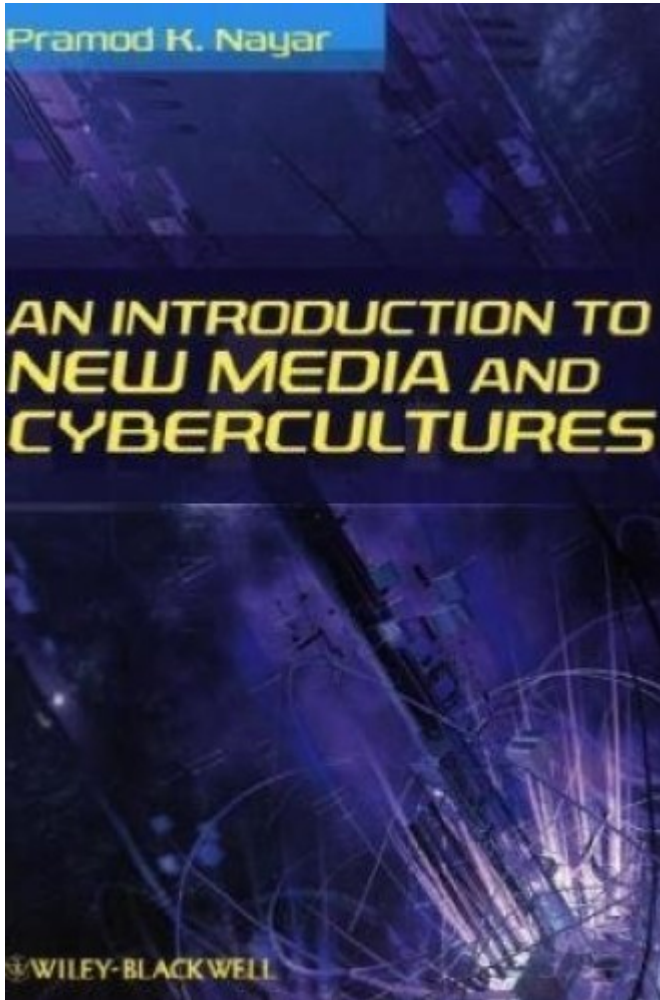


Blogging: Subculture or mainstream?

By [Adam J. Copeland](#)

October 25, 2010

In Review



An Introduction to New Media and Cybercultures

by Pramod K. Nayar

Wiley-Blackwell

Yes,

blogging about blogging can be the ultimate navel-gazing, but hear me out; I mean to intrigue.

In

a well-written book on cyberculture theory, Pramod K. Nayar claims that blogs "have become a folk cultural form." So far so good. But most of Nayar's other descriptions of blogging seem a bit dated: it's life-writing or autobiography, it's an online diary, it's inherently personal, it's subcultural. All this may have been true once, but most of the blogs I read have grown up and taken on new form and function.

Nayar

grants that "blogs are perhaps no longer subcultural considering their heterogeneity, numbers, and expanding use on the World Wide Web." But he doesn't elaborate on developments such as

- Newspaper sites that sponsor and host bloggers (see Bruce Reyes-Chow's [connection](#) with the *San Francisco Chronicle*)
- Blogs such as *Time* magazine's [Swampland](#), which is updated multiple times daily by well-known reporters with off-the-cuff thoughts and developing stories
- Networks of independent bloggers, such as the *Century's* [CCblogs network](#), of which [my blog](#) is a member

Many

pastors are now blogging on church websites, and columnists publish more formal content in print and more casual stuff on blogs (though the distinction isn't always so clear). Blogs have grown out of their subcultural status, moving from a form of journaling or life-casting to a powerful mainstream tool for expression and dialogue.

Nayar

suggests that blogs are "filling in the gaps" in public discourse. While he doesn't elaborate, the phrase is spot on. Blogging fills the gaps that existed ten years ago between professional journalism and thoughtful personal journaling. As

the gaps are filled, the distinctions are becoming less clear. Subculture has become mainstream, and a new folk cultural form evolves.